

CABINET (TRAFFIC & PARKING) COMMITTEE

18 JANUARY 2011

RURAL CAR PARK CHARGES – RESULTS OF ADVERTISEMENT OF ORDER
REPORT OF HEAD OF ACCESS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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RECENT REFERENCES:

[CAB 2090](#) Car Park Charges – Results of Advertisement of Order – 1 December 2010

[CAB 2061](#) Car Park Charges & Operation Review – 13 October 2010

[CAB 1915 \(TP\)](#) Car Park Charges Review – 5 November 2009

[CAB 1796](#) Review of car park charges 2009/10 – 4 February 2009

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report summarises the responses made to the advertisement of proposals to vary parking charges for Winchester District's rural car parks. The proposals were advertised following the consideration of report [CAB 2090](#) in December 2010, which suggested changes to the charges for off street car parking charges in the District's rural towns car parks, commencing in February 2011 and for the financial period 2011/12. Members agreed to advertise revised proposals from those set out in the report.

The revised proposals were developed as a response to local concerns that the original suggested increase to hourly charges was too high and would be detrimental to trade in the towns. The re-advertised proposal reduced the increase to one hour charges and included instead increases to half day and all day charges.

The recommended pricing proposal takes account of representations which have been made to the revised proposals, and is less than that advertised to address the concern that the increases would unduly impact on workers and other long stay visitors.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the changes to off-street parking charges set out in paragraph 2.10 (Option 3) be agreed, for implementation as soon as possible after 1 February 2011.

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DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 At its meeting of 13 October 2010, Cabinet approved the recommendations set out within [CAB 2061](#) (see Appendix 2), which proposed changes to the charges for off street car parking in the District, commencing in January/February 2011 and for the financial period 2011/12.
- 1.2 The relevant recommendations agreed in [CAB 2061](#) were that parking charges for short stay visits to towns in the rural area of the District would be increased by 20p per hour for 1 hour, 2 hour and 3 hour stays.
- 1.3 The primary reason for the recommendations was to generate sufficient funds across the District to cover the cost of the increased VAT liability which came into effect on 4 January 2011.
- 1.4 In response to the original advertisement of the order, a number of objections were received relating to the increases in the cost of short stay parking in the rural market towns (20 objections received). The objections were primarily focused on the cost of parking for 1hour disproportionately increasing from 30p to 50p and the potential impact on the retail vitality of those towns. It was also made clear in a number of objections that a lesser increase in the cost of one hour parking from 30p to 40p would be more acceptable.
- 1.5 As a result of the objections, it was decided at the 1 December 2010 meeting of the Cabinet (Traffic & Parking) Committee to undertake further consultation on an alternative set of parking charges for both short and long stay visits to towns in the rural area of the District. This provided for a lesser increase of 10p per hour for 1 hour stays, a 20p increase for 2 hour and 3 hour stays and also suggested a 30p increase for 4 hr stays and a 50p increase for all day visits.
- 1.6 To meet a similar level of additional income, the revised proposals required higher increases to the cost of longer stay visits, as the number of such tickets issued is considerably less.

2 Consultation and Discussion.

- 2.1 Following the Cabinet meeting on 1 December 2010 the required statutory notices were placed at all parking locations affected by the proposed changes

and a notice was placed in the local press. This provided the opportunity for representations to be made in respect of the revised proposals. A letter was also sent to parish councils and business representatives/groups in the three market towns, offering face to face meetings before the end of the consultation period.

- 2.2 In total, 3 responses to the proposals were received by the official closing date of 30 December 2010. A list summarising the objections and comments made is set out in Appendix 1. The objections received relate to the impact of the proposed charges on shops and traders in the market towns and the issue of the impact on local workers from the increased all-day parking charges.
- 2.3 In the formulation of the proposed revised car parking charges, a comparison of charges in other towns of similar characteristics and size was made to ensure that the Winchester District charges are not out of line with other places which compete for trade.
- 2.4 The changes to weekly daily rates proposed are larger than the 2.5% increase in VAT but are still considered reasonable when compared to other similar towns. Car park charges in Wickham, Alresford and Bishops Waltham have not been increased since 2007.
- 2.5 In view of comments previously made it was considered that the implementation date for the proposed car parking charges should be delayed until Monday 31 January 2011 for those charges agreed at the Parking and Traffic Committee on 1 December 2010. The planned implementation date for the recommended changes to charges in the rural areas as set out in this report would be implemented during February 2011 in order to allow time to organise the necessary changes to machines, signing etc.

Financial appraisal

- 2.6 The initial financial appraisal relating to parking fees across the District was discussed in [CAB 2061](#) (see Appendix 3). This set out a baseline target of £44,000 increased income from rural parking charges as a result of Option 1 below. Since that time more accurate and up to date information on parking income has been used to model the potential income from different parking regimes. Other options are also set out and discussed below.
- 2.7 The current level of fees in Winchester District's rural car parks is:

1/2 hour	1 Hour	2 Hour	3 Hour	4 Hour	All day
£0.00	£0.30	£0.60	£0.80	£1.20	£1.50

The free half hour off-street parking is available in Basingwell Street car park in Bishops Waltham and The Square in Wickham. It is not proposed to remove this concession under any of the options considered.

- 2.8 Option 1: This option was advertised as a result of CAB 2061 in October 2010:

1/2 hour	1 Hour	2 Hour	3 Hour	4 Hour	All day
£0.00	<u>£0.50</u>	<u>£0.80</u>	<u>£1.00</u>	£1.20	£1.50

Revised modelling and analysis of the car parking data has indicated that the additional income from this tariff of fees could be £40,000 per annum.

- 2.9 Option 2: This option was advertised as a result of CAB2090(TP) in December 2010:

1/2 hour	1 Hour	2 Hour	3 Hour	4 Hour	All day
£0.00	<u>£0.40</u>	<u>£0.80</u>	<u>£1.00</u>	<u>£1.50</u>	<u>£2.00</u>

This option has reduced the increase in the cost of 1 hour parking, but increased the cost of the 4 hour and all day parking. It is anticipated that this tariff of fees would generate an additional £44,000, which is in line with the financial appraisal as discussed and agreed in CAB 2061 in October 2010.

- 2.10 Option 3: This option has been developed following further consideration of the objections and comments received:

1/2 hour	1 Hour	2 Hour	3 Hour	4 Hour	All day
£0.00	<u>£0.40</u>	<u>£0.80</u>	<u>£1.00</u>	<u>£1.30</u>	<u>£1.80</u>

This option has also reduced the increase in the cost of 1 hour parking, and has increased the cost of the 4 hour and all day parking but to a lesser amount than in Option 2. It is anticipated that this tariff of fees would generate an additional £38,000 which is £6,000 less than the financial target discussed and agreed in CAB 2061 in October 2010.

- 2.11 Whilst Option 3 generates less income than Options 1 & 2, it is felt that this more fairly addresses the concerns of the consultation responses and therefore it is this option that is recommended for implementation.
- 2.12 Season tickets are available in New Alresford and Bishops Waltham for all day users and offer a considerable saving against the purchase of tickets on an everyday basis. Furthermore, no increases are being made to the cost of season tickets commensurate with all day charges, so these represent the most economic method for payment for workers.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

3 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

- 3.1 The proposals accord with the corporate priority for safeguarding our high quality environment. There is a potential impact on businesses which could

affect the Strategy's economic prosperity outcome, and the Local Economy Scrutiny Panel has asked for monitoring reports to assess the success of the new charging arrangements and any feedback from businesses following implementation. Benchmarking activity indicates that the impact on Winchester District should not be very significant, as other similar destinations are already making comparable charges and they have already become the 'norm' in most other Hampshire towns.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 4.1 CAB 2061 (Appendix 3) which was reported to and agreed by Cabinet on 13 October 2010 examined the financial appraisal relating to the proposed changes. It clearly identified how the impending VAT rise set for implementation in January 2011 had budget implications for the City Council.
- 4.2 The increase in VAT to 20% from 4 January 2011 will result in a direct reduction in parking income. It is not feasible given the current financial position to allow car park revenue to fall.
- 4.3 It is anticipated that the implementation of the recommended Option 3 will generate an additional £38,000 per annum. This would reduce anticipated income levels by around £6,000 per annum against those identified in CAB2061. However, using revised income figures it is thought that the implementation of the original Option 1 would have only generated an additional £40,000 per annum and therefore would have also resulted in a shortfall against that originally predicted.

5 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 5.1 As discussed in CAB 2061 – see Appendix 2.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Objections and representations submitted following public advertisement of the proposals.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Consultation Responses

Appendix 2: [CAB 2090](#) Car Park Charges – Results of Advertisement of Order – 1 December 2010

Appendix 3: [CAB 2061](#) Car Park Charges & Operation Review – 13 October 2010

(Appendices 2 and 3 are attached for Committee Members only. They are also available on the Council's Website:

<http://www.winchester.gov.uk/CouncilAndDemocracy/ElectedRepresentatives/Committees/>).

Appendix 1: Consultation Reponses

Objectors Address	Summary of Objection / comment	Response
Bishops Waltham Parish Council #1	<p>Considered the revised proposals and wondered if WCC would consider increasing the free parking time from 1/2hr to 1hr.</p>	<p>The proposal would result in a considerable loss of income; the charges have been developed to cover the cost of the increase in VAT to 20% from 1 January 2011 which would otherwise result in a direct reduction in parking income. It is not feasible given the current financial position to allow car park revenue to fall.</p>
Resident, The Square, Wickham #2	<p>When charges were first proposed a few years it was contrary to the wishes of local traders. It is hard to understand why citizens that already pay road tax need to have additional parking charges loaded upon them.</p> <p>When this was introduced, the parking fees were 10p per hour, and now it is proposed to increase this to 40p, albeit there have been interim increases. It is not understood how this 300% increase in 3 years fits in with inflation at 3-4% per annum.</p> <p>This is another tax by any other name, a tax necessary because of local government wasteful spending. The motorist is just an easy target for raising revenue where there is no moral reason for doing so. Ultimately, increasing charges transfer all of our spending/shopping to the internet leaving the town centre empty along with the car parks.</p>	<p>As well as raising revenue, parking charges, control and enforcement also ensures that there is a turnover of spaces which assist trade in the towns.</p> <p>Parking charges have remained unchanged since 2007, when the price was set at 30p for the first hour. The proposal is now to increase that charge to 40p.</p> <p>The proposal is part of a package of measures designed to generate sufficient income to offset the additional VAT burden from January 2011</p> <p>In terms of a percentage increase, the proposed changes do represent a significant change. However, the proposed new levels of charging of 40p for one hour, 80p for two hours and £1 for three hours are approximately 1/3rd that of parking in Winchester and this will represent the first increase in rural charges in four years, and the proposed charges will remain in line with those charged in similar locations across Hampshire</p>
Resident, Bitterne Park, Southampton, #3	<p>As a worker in the village, the previous proposal to freeze the all-day parking in the Long Stay Car Park in Bishops Waltham was appreciated.</p> <p>The proposal to increase all day parking charges will adversely affect workers in the village, If you put the charge up to £2.00 that is an extra £2.50 per week.</p> <p>I am not in a position to be offered a Season Ticket so I guess I lose out. I do</p>	<p>The revised proposals came about as a result of a high level of concern to the level of increases affecting short stay parking.</p> <p>The impact of the proposal on all-day parkers is noted and it is now planned to reduce the increase from that originally suggested</p> <p>Season tickets are available in Bishops Waltham for all users and</p>

Objectors Address	Summary of Objection / comment	Response
	<p>not think that once a Notice has been posted it is then fair to keep changing it. Please get your decision right first time in the future.</p> <p>Please advise your plans for Parking should the Sainsbury Store come to be built - What will the normal worker do then?</p>	<p>offer a considerable saving against the purchase of tickets on an every day basis. Furthermore, no increases are being made to the cost of season tickets.</p> <p>The revised pricing proposals have been developed as a consequence of public consultation.</p> <p>The proposals for a new Sainsbury's store are not considered as part of this process. However it was agreed at Cabinet on 1December 2010 that should permission for a store be granted in the future, car parking charges in Bishops Waltham would be reviewed in light of this.</p>