

CABINET

4 FEBRUARY 2009

REVIEW OF CAR PARK CHARGES 2009/10

REPORT OF HEAD OF ACCESS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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RECENT REFERENCES:

CAB 1597 Review of Car Park Charges 2008/09 – 16 January 2008

CAB 1462 Off-Street Car Park Charges 2007/08 Further Amendments – 30 May 2007

CAB 1410 Review of Car Park Charges – 14 February 2007.

CAB 1183 Discounted Parking for Low Emission Vehicles – 19 January 2006.

CAB 1169 Review of Car Park Charges – 14 December 2005.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report presents proposals to increase car parking and on street parking charges for 2009/10. The proposals include fairly modest increases to weekday parking charges (including season tickets) and parking waivers/ bay suspensions.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the parking charge increases as set out in this report be agreed for implementation as from 1 April 2009.
2. That the Head of Legal Services be authorised to give public notice of the variation in charges as set out in the report under Sections 46A and 35C of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended).

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DETAIL:

1. Introduction

1.1 This report considers revised charges for off and on street car parking across the District in accordance with the policy to revise these from April each year. The report also includes a proposal to increase the charge for parking waivers and bay suspensions.

1.2 Car parking charges in the District were last reviewed in January 2008 (CAB1597 refers) and increases were implemented from the beginning of April 2008. The schedule attached to this report as Appendix 1 shows the current and proposed parking charges. Income from off street parking charges so far in 2008/09 is below the projected budget reflecting reduced usage levels compared to those seen in 2007/08.

2.0 Proposed Car Parking Charge Increases for 2009/10

2.1 A list of proposed revised car park charges for 2009/10 is set out in Appendix 1 to this report. In addition, an increase in the cost of parking waivers /parking bay suspensions is proposed.

2.2 In summary the proposed changes are as follows:

- An increase to the cost of season tickets in Winchester Town car parks to bring the cost into line with agreed discount rates of 20% for annual tickets and 13% for quarterly tickets. These were not increased during 2008 with the exception of Barfield Close Group E.
- Off-street 2 hour charge in Winchester town car parks increased from £2 to £2.20 and from £1.50 to £1.70 for car parks out of the immediate central area. The on-street charges will be changed to reflect this proposed off-street charge;
- Off-street 4 hour charge in Winchester town car parks increased from £2.70 to £3.00 for car parks out of the immediate central area;
- An increase in the up to 4 hour charge at River Park car park to bring it in line with St Peters car park to reflect concerns that River Park was being used for longer term car parking.

- Increase the cost of parking waivers and to introduce a charge for the suspension of parking bays for building works or building/builders vehicles. Currently bay suspensions are free and waivers to parking restrictions cost £10 for a period up to 1 week. It is proposed to introduce a £7 per day cost for a parking waiver as opposed to the current cost of £10 per week. For bay suspensions it is proposed to introduce a charge of £20 to cover the costs of the process to the Parking Office.
- 2.3 It is not proposed to increase the park and ride charges. Following charge increases in April 2007, ticket sales reduced for a time but are beginning to return to levels of sales during 2006/07. It is suggested that Cabinet review the cost of the park and ride service when considering the costs of operation of the bus service for the South of Winchester Park and Ride Scheme. It is important that the new service is an attractive option for the potential user base of major employers on Romsey Road and discussions are continuing to arrive at options which maximise income through creating high volumes of usage.
- 2.4 It is not proposed to increase rural car park charges.
- 2.5 It is proposed to make increases to the cost of annual and quarterly season ticket prices this year for Winchester town car parks. These have not been increased for two years except for season tickets in Barfield Close which were increased last year from an annual cost of £340 to £400, as these were unrealistically low when compared to the cost of season tickets in the Chesil Street car parks and the annual cost of using the park and ride service. Season ticket discounts are calculated on the basis of being in use 230 days a year. Following a parking review in 2001 it was noted that discounts applying to Season Tickets had reached levels of between 33% and 50% and as such were likely to encourage long term town centre parking which was contrary to the policy of encouraging commuters to use the Park & Ride. Consequently Cabinet agreed discount levels of 20% for annual tickets and 13% for quarterly tickets. The increases in season ticket charges identified in this report as set out in Appendix 1 would reintroduce those discount levels already agreed by Cabinet. Furthermore the identified change for Park & Ride tickets next year would set discounts at a similar level.
- 2.6 It is proposed to increase the cost of parking waivers in relation to builder's vehicles and to introduce a cost for the suspension of parking bays as set out above. This is considered to be reasonable and reflects the true cost of waivers and suspensions.

3.0 Sunday Parking

- 3.1 It has been mooted as part of the on-going budget discussions that parking charges could be introduced in Winchester town car parks. This has been discussed with various groups and representative bodies and it has been decided not to propose such charges at this time.

4.0 County Council view

- 4.1 Hampshire County Council has been consulted on the proposed charges for 2009/10 and their policy remains the same as reported to Cabinet last year. In general terms the County Council support rises in central car parks but not at the Park and Ride car park in order to encourage greater use of park and ride services and to deter commuters and visitors from seeking to park in the town centre. The County Council has concerns over the free half hour on-street parking as this leads to more drivers driving around looking for free spaces which is detrimental to the environment, air quality and increases congestion. It feels that the City Council's parking policy and associated charging structure could go further in terms of discouraging central car parking and encouraging existing, and future, park and ride services. The County Council has also requested that should Sunday car park or on-street charging be introduced that the effects be carefully monitored in terms of any possible knock-on effects to on-street parking. These comments are acknowledged and have been considered carefully in the formulation of these proposals, whilst trying to reflect the current economic situation and the desire to help business, and will be considered further as part of the Winchester Town Access Plan, planning for the South of Winchester Park and Ride and next year's parking charges proposals. The City Council remains committed to park and ride and the changes to car park charges this year begin to address the County Council's concerns but further thought will be given to this over the next 12 months. On this basis the County Council is content that these proposed changes proceed.

5.0 Budget Implications

5.1 The table below shows the estimated total amount of income that would be generated by the proposed revised scale of charges and fees. It should be noted that all estimates for 2009/10 car parking income are based on current levels of usage and make no allowance for changes in parking behaviour. The current financial climate could influence parking behaviour over the forthcoming financial year.

	Projected Income 2009/10 (£000)
Car Park Charges	3,861
On street permits	230
Penalty Charge Notices	370
Season tickets	456
Waivers/ Suspensions	20
Total estimate of income 2009/10	4,937
2008/09 Base Budget	4,937
Increase over current projected income for 2008/09.	0

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

6 CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

6.1 The proposals accord with the corporate priority for safeguarding our high quality environment.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

7.1 There are significant budget implications associated with the setting of car parking charges for 2009/10. It is estimated that the proposals presented would generate car parking fee income in 2009/10 equivalent to the level that had been estimated to be received in 2008/09.

7.2 Staff resources are available to implement the proposed changes to the charges as outlined above.

7 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None.

8 APPENDICES: Appendix 1: Proposed charges 2009/10.

