

CAB2292(TP)
FOR DECISION
WARD(S): ALL

CABINET (TRAFFIC AND PARKING) COMMITTEE

21 FEBRUARY 2012

DISCOUNTED PARKING FOR LOW EMISSION VEHICLES

REPORT OF HEAD OF ACCESS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Contact Officer: Dan Massey Tel No: 01962 848534

RECENT REFERENCES:

[CAB1183\(TP\)](#) – Discounted Parking for Low Emission Vehicles, 19 January 2006

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report reviews the Council's policy of offering discounted season tickets in the pay and display car for low emission vehicles.

In the six years since Cabinet last considered the issue, motor manufacturers have made considerable improvements to the level of emissions from cars and changes have also been made in the classification of the Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) bands for vehicle taxation. This report proposes continuing to offer discounts for Low Emission Vehicles for season tickets in the car parks, but changing the thresholds at which the discount levels are offered. It also proposes using the same level of discounts for residents' parking permits. It is hoped that the proposed changes to thresholds recommended in this report will continue to encourage change towards low emission vehicles.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1 That the discounts for pay and display annual season ticket holders using low emission vehicles should be set at 75% for vehicles which emit less than 75 g/km* and 50% for vehicles which emit between 76 and 90 g/km*.
- 2 That Electric Vehicles (EV's) benefit from the 75% discount level.
- 3 That the same level of discounts should apply to residents' parking permit holders with low emission vehicles.
- 4 That to minimise the administrative costs, these discounts only apply to annual season tickets.
- 5 That this schedule of discounts is reviewed on a three year basis.
- 6 That all current discounted season ticket and resident permit holders be granted an additional year's renewal at the current discounted price in order to allow time to adjust to the proposed threshold changes.
- 7 That the Head of Legal Services be authorised to prepare the necessary draft Traffic Regulation Orders and associated notice to be advertised.

* g/km = grammes of CO₂ produced with each kilometre travelled

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DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Cabinet last considered the issue of discounted parking for Low Emission Vehicles (LEV's) in January 2006. At that time the proposals adopted continued the work started in conjunction with the County Council as part of the MIRACLES project. The policy established at that time was that the lowest emission vehicles would be offered a discount on season ticket charges compared to the standard parking charges. The same level of discounts would apply to qualifying residents' permit holders.
- 1.2 The agreed policy is that vehicles to be discounted could most easily be identified by using the level of CO₂ emissions, since this measurement has been adopted nationally for both vehicle excise duty (VED) and company car tax purposes. Since the last Cabinet report, changes to VED taxation bands have simplified the band B from 101 to 120 g/km to 101 to 110 g/km. But the Council's policy has not yet been updated to reflect those changes.
- 1.3 The current level of discounts are set that vehicles with CO₂ emissions of 101 to 120 g/km (what was VED band B, but is now bands B & C) are entitled to a 50% discount, and those with CO₂ emissions of 100g/km or less (VED band A) are entitled to a 75% discount.
- 1.4 In terms of take up of the scheme, currently 38 (6% of) season tickets qualify for a discount. Of these 30 qualify for a 50% discount and 8 for a 75% discount. This currently represents an incentive to individuals costing the Council approximately £25,000 net of VAT (£30,000 gross) through reduced income per annum.
- 1.5 In addition a total of 159 resident permits are also discounted, this also represents 6% of resident permits in use, and equates to reduced income of approximately £2,000 per annum.
- 1.6 There are difficulties in operating a low emission discount scheme which prevents potential fraudulent use. Previous reports concluded that the only option that could be easily introduced was to restrict availability to season tickets in the pay and display car parks where the season ticket can show the registration number of the vehicle which is known to be eligible for the discount.

2 Discussion

- 2.1 When the policy of discounted parking for low emission vehicles was first introduced the number of qualifying vehicles was very limited, however in recent years the number has grown considerably as improvements have been made to vehicle technology. Now 86 different vehicles have emissions less than 100 g/km and over 430 different vehicles have emissions between 101 and 120 g/km.
- 2.2 Since all vehicle 'log books' detail the official emission level of the associated vehicle, it is now proposed that all future discounts are simply based on the level of CO₂ emission rather than the VED tax band, which may change and therefore could create some confusion.
- 2.3 There are environmental and public awareness benefits in continuing to offer discounts for the lowest emission vehicles, but it is recommended that this policy applies to the lowest emission vehicles only in order to help continually push towards a low carbon environment. There is no policy benefit in offering a discount to encourage the acquisition of low emission vehicles if the level is set so that many 'ordinary' vehicles are eligible as this will not encourage further change.
- 2.4 This year will see a number of motor manufacturers' release a variety of 'all-electric' and 'extended-range' electric cars, the latter is an electric vehicle with an on-board petrol generator which can be used to recharge the batteries whilst in motion to extend the range that can be travelled. All of these vehicles will have considerably lower emission levels than conventionally powered vehicles and it is these types of vehicle that the policy of discounted parking is set to encourage.
- 2.5 All electric vehicles (EV's) have an effective emission rating of 0 g/km, whereas the extended-range electric vehicles are likely to have emission levels below 50 g/km. The best conventionally fuelled and hybrid-engined cars now have emission levels less than 90 g/km.
- 2.6 It is therefore proposed that those vehicles with an emission level of 50 g/km or less benefit from a 75% discount, and those with CO₂ emissions of 90g/km or less should be entitled to a 50% discount. The changes proposed will also helpfully encourage a further change towards more low emission vehicles.
- 2.7 The low emission vehicle discounts would be available for only for annual season tickets in the pay and display car park and for residents' permit holders.
- 2.8 The proposed policy is in line with the recent Air Quality ISG report (CAB2295 refers) which recommends "That the car park season ticket and residents parking pricing structure should continue to encourage the use of low emission vehicles" It also supports the ongoing work within the transport element of the City Council's overall Climate Change Programme.

- 2.9 To allow those who benefit from a current discounted season ticket time some continuing benefit from the existing policy thresholds it is proposed that all current discounted season ticket and resident permit holders be granted an additional years renewal at the discounted price.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

3 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND CHANGE PLANS
(RELEVANCE TO):

- 3.1 These proposals will continue to encourage more sustainable transport and in particular the improvement of air quality in Winchester. It will also support the work in relation to climate change and the priority to reduce CO2 emissions across the District.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 4.1 The administrative cost of applying discounts for season tickets and residents' parking permits is already included within existing budgets.
- 4.2 The current direct cost to the Council of providing these existing discounts is approximately £27,000 per annum net of VAT (£32,000 Gross). The proposed recommendations will ensure that this level of financial support is maintained at current levels and does not increase disproportionately, which is what would happen if the discount levels remain unchanged, whilst also encouraging further change towards lower emission vehicles.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None.

APPENDICES: None.