

REPORT TITLE: PARKING CHARGES REVIEW

9TH MARCH 2022

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Martin Tod – Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery

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WARD(S): ALL WARDS

PURPOSE

The Council, as part of the Air Quality Management Area action plan, has committed to consider a differential parking charge tariff based on vehicle emissions. This report recommends that a consultation is undertaken on how that might be done and that a further report be brought back to Cabinet in due course setting out the results of the consultation and next steps.

In addition to the previously agreed changes to City Centre Parking outlined in the 2022/23 Fees and Charges Paper (CAB3326), this proposal:

- Seeks approval to consult on an Air Quality Surcharge in the Winchester air quality management area.
- Proposes extra measures to reduce car movements in the central air quality zone and improve air quality by removing the free half hour ticket for City Centre On Street Parking and introducing a free hour ticket in Park & Walk Car Parks.
- Recommends increasing central zone Season Tickets to ensure they remain consistent with parking day rates and an improved Season Ticket offer for park and ride.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That changes to the parking tariff in Winchester Town (in addition to the previously agreed changes to City Centre Parking outlined in the 2022/23 Fees and Charges Paper (CAB3326)) as set out in paragraph 11.4 below be advertised and implemented in October 2022.
2. That a consultation is undertaken in the summer (for a 6 week period and will report back to Cabinet in the autumn) for a scheme to charge vehicles based on vehicle emissions.
3. That the Head of Programme and Head of Legal Services be authorised to enter into a new parking management agreement with New Alresford Town Council for Arlebury Park car park, New Alresford.

IMPLICATIONS:**2** COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

- 2.1 This proposal primarily supports the Climate Change, Living Well and Vibrant Local Economy priorities of the council plan - by improving air quality, supporting lower carbon travel and wellbeing through increased active travel in the city centre while ensuring that it remains affordable to visit to use the centre and enabling local businesses to reduce the cost of using the Park & Ride for their staff.
- 2.2 The car park charges suggested in this report have been carefully considered in relation to their impact on the local economy. It is important to read this report alongside the car parking improvement programme report, also on this agenda, which sets out plans for improving parking and access across the district.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Table 1 below shows the forecast financial impact of the proposed amendments to the parking charges.

The figures below, take account of the requirements of the on-street parking agency agreement with Hampshire County Council, whereby the county council receive 50% of any surplus on-street income. It is important to note that if the arrangements return to HCC in 2023 then the £80k per annum additional income share below would cease to be received by the city council.

- 3.3 The figures also take into account anticipated associated changes in parking behaviours, as a result of removal of the free half an hour on street charge, the introduction of a free hour tariff in park and walk car parks and the increase in charges in central car parks.

Table 1

Proposals	2022/23	2023/24
Potential changes to income from changes to car park charges*	50,000	100,000
Potential Income from removal of free half hour on-street charge	40,000	80,000
Potential change to income from introduction of free one hour in park and walk parking	-25,000	-50,000
Overall potential additional income	65,000	130,000

<u>Expenditure:</u>		
One off costs (signage, software, publicity)	(£20,000)	
Total Expenditure	£20,000	
Forecast Net Change	£45,000	£130,000

Note - The additional forecast income assumes an allowance for users switching to other cheaper car parks.

- 3.4 Staff resources are available to implement the proposed changes to the operations and charges as set out in this report. One-off costs of approximately £20,000 will be required to cover the costs of changes to signing, software and to publicise the new rates.
- 3.5 As identified in the Parking and Access Strategy (CAB2874 refers) there is a need to support a number of new initiatives to implement the aims of the Strategy and any additional income (as identified in the table above) generated by adjustments to parking charges, designed to influence drivers' behaviour, can be used to support projects. These include improvements to parking facilities such as signing (35,000), cycle provision (£50,000), improvements in market towns (£25,000) and supporting bus services including park and ride. This is considered further in a separate report, also on this agenda, setting out a parking and access improvements programme of works over the next two years.

4 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The car parking charges amendments proposed in this report will be published in line with the requirements of the On-street and Off-street parking regulation orders.

5 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The process of implementing this change can be accommodated from within existing staff resources but there would be a one off external cost of £20,000 to amend software and signing associated with the proposed tariff changes.

6 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

None as a result of proposal in this report.

7 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 7.1 The Winchester BiD board received a presentation on budget options including car parking charges on 7th January. They stressed the need to

support business – especially through good value staff parking and to provide a good business offer in terms of cost to users. Some concern was expressed about a surcharge on more polluting vehicles subject to seeing the details of such a scheme.

- 7.2 Meetings have taken place in 2021 with key stakeholders in the market towns which generated a list of issues and opportunities in respect of parking, access and traffic management. These discussions are ongoing and the agreed list of actions is being progressed.
- 7.3 Hampshire County Council has been consulted and support the changes as set out in this report.
- 7.4 There will need to be communications to residents and visitors alike to make them aware of the changes once agreed, and signpost them towards alternative options which exist so that they are able to choose the best option for them.

These communications should also include highlighting where existing options exist. For example it is possible to park for a week in a park and ride for £3.15 a day (£15.75 a week) and it may be that a review of such existing offers may identify some simple improvements without changing prices, which take advantage of the capability of the phone payment system offered through RingGo, which is now used by over 50% of customers.

- 7.5 A consultation will be undertaken in the summer (for a 6 week period and will report back to Cabinet in the autumn) for a scheme to charge vehicles based on vehicle emissions.

8 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 Applying differential tariffs depending upon the vehicles emissions is an action in the air quality management area (AQMA) action plan and the proposals in this report support the air quality objectives and carbon reduction targets.

9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSEMENT

- 9.1 Equality issues as a result of the proposed changes to car parking charges have been considered as part of the EIA as set out in Appendix 2
- 9.2 The changes proposed in this report include a choice of different parking tariffs available within the City. The Council's policy on blue badge holder parking and charges is unaltered in that blue badge holders are able to park for free in all pay and display car parks. In relation to the removal of the free half an hour on-street tariff, a new free hour tariff is proposed in all park and walk car parks which will provide an alternative which will encourage better parking choices.
- 9.3 Poor air quality is associated with severe health inequalities – and is can be particularly damaging to young children and older people. Improving air

quality through reducing the number of the most polluting vehicles driving into the centre to park will help address this.

- 9.4 Equality issues will be considered through a full EIA in relation to the differential emission based tariff scheme and this will be included in a subsequent report later in the year.

10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 There are no changes proposed in this report will impact on current data sets or arrangements.

11 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 11.1 It is anticipated that the revised charges proposed in this report which build upon the approach to charge more for central parking and hence encourage the use of park and walk car parks and park and ride will achieve a further shift away from central parking. The risk is that this doesn't happen and that people pay the extra charge and carry on parking in the same place which would therefore not help achieve the objective of reducing city centre traffic. Full removal of the free half an hour on-street charge and replacing it with a free 1 hour tariff in park and walk car parks helps to offset this risk along with an attractive offer in terms of alternatives.
- 11.2 There is also a risk that people will stop paying to park if prices rise beyond a level which they consider to be reasonable and potentially could choose to visit other places as alternatives to Winchester and the market towns/ villages. Our main mitigation is to freeze or reduce park and ride and park and walk charges and options so that the value sensitive drivers continue to have a much cheaper offer within a short walk or bus trip from the city centre. Whilst some increase in charges in central Winchester car parks are proposed it is not proposed to increase charges in other car parks. This is offset by having cheaper tariffs in park and walk and park and ride car parks.
- 11.3 A further risk is if the associated displacement of centre parking to cheaper car parks can be accommodated. If too many drivers seek to park outside the centre, pressure on inner ring and Park and Ride may cause problems if demand exceeds capacity. However these risks can be managed and mitigated by increasing the capability of the Park and Ride operation by providing additional bus capacity. There is currently sufficient parking capacity at park and walk and at the Park and Ride sites to cope with typical levels of use and therefore there is scope to accommodate an increase in patronage which might be generated by the proposals in this report.

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
Exposure to challenge	The changes will be formally notified in accordance with the on-street and off-street Traffic Regulation Order requirements.	
Innovation – developing new charges based on vehicle emissions	This needs to be assessed carefully in terms of equality impacts	Improving air quality in the city centre.
<p>Reputation - <i>Increasing parking charges too much and/or without clear justification could attract criticism from the public and businesses whose staff and customers rely on public parking. . Increasing pressure on inner and outer ring car parks by increasing charging differentials with centre car parks could cause capacity issues.</i></p>	<p>Ensure that it is explained that the adjustment to the charging regime is intended to influence driver behaviour in line with the Parking and Access Strategy. Other actions needed to implement the Strategy will also require reinvestment in our parking stock including the Park and Ride operation.</p>	<p>Marketing and signing of alternatives. Good communications to explain the approach and to encourage change in parking behaviour.</p>
<p>Achievement of outcome</p> <p>Will peoples behaviours change or will they just pay the extra cost?</p> <p>Can displaced car parking be accommodated?</p> <p>Will people chose to visit another town?</p>	<p>Providing attract and well-advertised parking choices / options</p> <p>Park and ride bus services can be adjusted to meet demand and capacity is available at park and walk car parks</p> <p>Alternative cheaper parking is provided under the proposals</p>	<p>Marketing and promotions</p>
Property – none specific to this report		
Community Support - <i>Changing the pricing</i>	Public consultation undertaken in relation to	Public consultation will be

<i>strategy could attract criticism if not supported by residents, businesses and visitors</i>	the Parking and Access Strategy formulation has helped to understand local opinions, including supporting the use of charging to encourage change. and this information has informed recommendations on parking charges.	undertaken for the differential parking tariff scheme to gauge support and then reported back to Cabinet to agree a way forward. .
Timescales - No significant risk but recommended changes are introduced in 2022/23		
Project capacity – N/A		
<p>Financial exposure - <i>If car parking charges are set too high use will decrease and income reduce and if people decide to visit places other than Winchester the local economy could be detrimentally affected.</i></p> <p><i>Business and tourist areas are still recovering from the impacts Covid and additional charges will further impact this.</i></p>	<p>Best estimates relating to changes in behaviour resulting from the proposed charges have been modelled in relation to income. Income will need to be closely monitored and reviewed.</p> <p>The proposed tariffs provide a cheaper alternative to centre parking including a free 1 hour tariff in park and walk car parks.</p>	<p>Marketing park and ride to visitors/ tourists.</p> <p>Working with Stagecoach to provide additional levels of park and ride if required at certain high demand times of the year.</p> <p>Promotional information to make people aware of alternatives.</p>

12 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Background

- 12.1 The Council, as part of the Air Quality Management Area action plan, has committed to consider a differential parking charge tariff based on vehicle emissions. This report recommends that a consultation is undertaken on how that might be done and that a further report be brought back to Cabinet in due course setting out the results of the consultation and next steps.
- 12.2 This report also presents some further changes to car parking charges in addition to those agreed in fees and charges paper to Cabinet in November 2021.

Details of Proposal

12.3 This report proposes some additional changes to the parking tariff in Winchester Town in addition to the previously agreed changes to City Centre Parking outlined in the 2022/23 Fees and Charges Paper (CAB3326) which agreed to increase charges in centre car parks by 3%. The full charging schedule including both changes suggested in this paper and those agreed in CAB3326 is shown in Appendix 1. It is intended that all of the changes will be advertised and implemented together in October.

12.4 The additional proposed changes are:

- A 3% increase in season tickets prices in Centre car parks as listed below and set out in Appendix 1.
- The introduction of a free 1 hour period in all 'Park & Walk' car parks as listed below and set out in appendix 1
- Removal of the free half an hour tariff for on-street pay and display parking in Winchester.
- Improved value for commuters at park and Ride by introducing a new quarterly season ticket offer at £175.
- Increased promotion of the Ringo pay by phone Wallet and associated discounts available at park and ride whilst making it easier to use for customers.
- An increase in the 6 hour tariff charge available in The Brooks and Middlebrook Street car parks from £6.20 to £6.40. This reflects the 3% increase applied to other charges as agreed in CAB3326.
- Introduction of a Saturday tariff in Arlebury Park, New Alresford in line with other New Alresford car parks. This is part of a negotiation regarding the renewal of the parking management agreement for this car park between the City Council and The Town Council.
- It should be noted that the new tariffs agreed for the Mid Hampshire Railway car park in New Alresford at the Decision Day on 1st March 2021 (DD28) will be implemented this spring and are included in Appendix 1 of this report.

Centre Car Parks
The Brooks
Middle Brook Street
Colebrook Street
Guildhall Yard*** (Sat-Sun only)
Friarsgate
Jewry Street
Cossack Lane
Upper Brook Street
St.Peters
Tower Street
Gladstone Street
Park and Walk Car Parks
Chesil Street
Cattle Market
Worthy Lane
Coach Park
River Park Leisure Centre

Differential Charging for higher polluting vehicles.

- 12.5 The Council, as part of the Air Quality Management Area action plan, has committed to consider a differential parking charge tariff based on vehicle emissions. Looking at the parking sessions in Winchester booked through Ringo we can start to see the composition of vehicles in terms of older diesel and higher carbon emitting vehicles. At present (in December 2021) around 50% of all parking payments in Winchester were made through Ringo. This shows for example that around 40% of vehicles parking in Winchester were older diesel vehicles. Further work will be done on this to help guide and inform the development of a scheme and this will also be informed by the results of a consultation.
- 12.6 It is important that equality issues are carefully considered before implementing such a scheme. As such a full equality impact assessment will be undertaken which will inform the development of a potential scheme.
- 12.7 In relation to particulate based charging there are a number of schemes being run by other local authorities including those listed below, a review of best practice and lessons learnt from other authorities will be undertaken:
- *Westminster charging a 50% surcharge on hourly parking rates on pre-2015 diesels*
 - *Portsmouth introducing a Clean Air Zone charged at a flat rate (in their case for commercial vehicles) based on the UK Government system of*

charging for diesels below Euro 6 and petrol vehicles below Euro 4.

<https://cleanerairportsmouth.co.uk/clean-air-zone-faqs/>

- *Croydon has introduced discounts based on levels of emissions ie 90% discount for zero emission vehicles, and 25% discount for vehicles with up to 185 g/km co2 and full rate above that.*

12.8 It is proposed to consult on the following issues/ considerations:

- The criteria to be used for the differential charges. There are examples of schemes in different local authority areas including a flat rate surcharge on diesel vehicles and a surcharge on vehicles above certain emission levels.
- Whether to add a flat rate charge (e.g. £2) or a percentage increase (e.g. 25%) to car park prices for certain vehicles exceeding set thresholds/ criteria.
- The level of the charge
- Whether to implement within car parks or on street or both
- Whether to implement via Ringo (pay by phone) only (with the higher charge automatically included for payment via machine) or Ringo and new payment machine capable of inputting registration numbers.
- Whether to start with a trial area and what area to include in the scheme.
- Which groups might need to be excluded from the charge (e.g. blue badge holders) and what changes will need to be made to payment options and what concessions should be included to address any equality issues identified.

12.9 Following this consultation a report with detailed proposals be brought back to Cabinet later in the year.

13 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

13.1 The option of not increasing any parking charges was considered but it was felt that as the Council has an agreed air quality strategy, which was fully consulted upon, that some changes are required in order to deliver objectives and actions in that strategy. This approach also supports meeting wider objectives in relation the Winchester Movement Strategy and carbon reduction objectives. Increasing central charges further was also considered but felt that this would not to be the right time due to businesses still recovering from the impacts of Covid.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

[Winchester movement Strategy](#)

[Parking and Access Strategy](#)

Previous Committee Reports:-

Other Background Documents:-

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – table of proposed charges

Appendix 2 Equality Impact Assessment

(Appendices 1 & 2 attached as separate documents)