
Subject:	REVIEW OF ON AND OFF-STREET PARKING CHARGES
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 28 February 2022
Report of:	Roger Wragg, Head of Commercial Services
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Martin Bates, Portfolio Holder for Transport, Licensing and Regulatory Services
Decision Type:	Key Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted

Purpose of the report: To consider the outcome of the annual review of parking charges and to seek approval to implement items that have been proposed as set out in Appendix 1.

Recommendation:

1. Note the outcome of the annual review of parking charges.
2. Agree to the proposed parking charge options as set out in Appendix 1.
3. That each of the Transport and Parking Services Manager and the Head of Commercial Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Licensing and Regulatory Services, be authorised to take all necessary legal and procedural processes to give effect to agreed recommendations as set out in Appendix 1, including the giving of notices and the making or amendment of any orders under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and also the making of arrangements with the Dover Harbour Board pursuant to section 33(4) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

1. Summary

1.1 This report seeks Cabinet agreement for the parking charges for both on and off-street parking as set out in the proposal section of this report and Appendix 1. In January 2011 it was agreed that parking charges would be reviewed annually and in line with that decision it is considered appropriate to review charges once again.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 Parking provision throughout the District is regularly under review and the needs of the local economy and residents alike are always taken into consideration.

2.2 In considering the appropriate level for parking charges the Council must have regard to guidance on parking policy and charges given in the Secretary of State's Statutory Guidance to the Local Authorities on the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions, expanded upon in Operational Guidance to Local Authorities: Parking Policy and Enforcement. This states that parking policies, including enforcement, should be proportionate and should not undermine the vitality of town centres, so authorities should not set them at unreasonable levels.

2.3 Parking charges were last increased in Dover District in June 2020, after having been previously frozen for 4 years.

2.4 Resident parking schemes are continually reviewed as these are key to the residents and their ability to park close to their home. A full review is currently underway the

option of reducing the size of some permit zones is an area that is being explored, the service is also in the process of implementing additional permit zones. Resident permit schemes are an ongoing activity, all new schemes are presented to the Joint Transportation Board for guidance and advice.

- 2.5 The service is always looking at new initiatives and efficiencies that could benefit the Council and the local community, one of the options that are currently under review is the utilisation of ANPR cameras to manage the Council's car parks and to carry out parking enforcement outside schools.
- 2.6 The availability and effective management of parking is an important factor in both maintaining and increasing the vitality of our town centres, with a difficult balance needing to be struck between the use of charges as a mechanism to ensure that parking spaces are rotated rather than being full all day against the risk that the cost of parking dissuades residents and visitors alike from using town centre businesses.
- 2.7 In undertaking this annual review of the Council's parking charges, it has been recognised from the outset that the pandemic has clearly had a significant impact on parking demand.

3. **Proposals for 2022/23 and 2023/24**

Charging Structure

- 3.1 In reviewing the current parking charges, we have examined both current usage levels and the charging policies in adjacent authorities to ensure that the Council's charges are set at a level which whilst ensuring effective demand management of the available parking spaces would not disadvantage our town centres in comparison with neighbouring towns.
- 3.2 Comparisons with our neighbour's charging regime has been carried out and can be seen in **Appendix 2**.
- 3.3 We have identified an increase in charges for both on and off-street pay & display areas covering both 2022/23 and 2023/24, guaranteeing no further increase in charges in 2023/24.
- 3.4 Charging was introduced in Borrow Pit Car Park, Deal last year, it is proposed that this charging is removed due to displacement of vehicles into on-street residential areas.

Resident Zones

- 3.5 The proposed changes to resident zones are summarised below, which are all intended to improve the availability of spaces for residents
 - Adjustments to the current resident zones in Sondes Road, Ranelagh Road, Stanley Road, Clanwilliam Road, Deal, and at Coombe Valley Road, Dover by the introduction of a pay & display charge system instead of limited waiting for non-permit holders;
 - Reduction in limited waiting period in town centre on-street parking areas from 2 hours to 1 hour;
 - Increase the enforcement period for resident permit zones generally from; Mon to Sat, 08.30 to 17.30 to Mon to Sat 07.00 to 20.00 and extend to include Sundays for those resident zones close to car parks which include Sunday charging.

Rural Areas

- 3.6 The Council also manages several car parks outside town centres, serving the rural Communities, these have historically been managed as free car parks.

- 3.7 The introduction of parking charges in rural car parks was previously presented to Cabinet on 15th January 2018, a decision was taken to defer this pending further work and consultation with the Parish Councils.
- 3.8 It is thought that given the current economic situation, there is no case for introducing charging in these rural car parks. If charging were to be introduced, this would have to be on a cashless charge system and we believe that a wider trial of this method of sole payment is required prior to implementation within wider areas.

Enforcement of Dover Harbour Board Car Parks

- 3.9 Dover DC has been given the opportunity to provide enforcement for a selection of the Dover Harbour Board (DHB) car parks located in the Western Docks. This is a mixture of charging and permit only car parks, Dover DC would issue Penalty Charge Notices to vehicles parked in contravention of the restrictions in the car parks and would receive a percentage of parking charge income from the DHB. In order to achieve this, it will be necessary for Dover DC to enter into arrangements with Dover Harbour Board form them to provide parking spaces pursuant to section 33(4) Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Provisions can then be made for enforcement under the Off Street Parking Places Order.

4. **Identification of Options**

4.1 Option 1. **This is the preferred option.**

- To agree the proposed options for both On & Off-Street parking for 2022/2023 and 2023/24 as set out in the recommendations and **Appendix 1**.
- To agree to providing enforcement of DHB car parks
- To agree to charging to not currently be introduced in Rural Car Parks
- To agree to delegate the decision-making process for the Transport & Parking Services Manager or Head of Commercial Services in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Licensing and Community to be authorised to take all necessary legal and procedural processes to give effect to agreed recommendations as set out in the recommendations and **Appendix 1**.

4.2 Option 2. To retain the current management and charging arrangements

5. **Evaluation of Options**

5.1 Option 1 is recommended for the following key reasons:

- To support a continued and reasonable “turn over” of available parking spaces which aids the tourism agenda and local businesses;
- To support those living in residential zones by enabling them to park near their homes;
- To maintain low cost parking options for visitors;
- To support the budget and mitigate the financial impact of Covid 19;
- To enable a more efficient and consistent parking operation

5.2 Option 2 is not recommended for the following reasons:

- Will inhibit continued and reasonable “turn over” of available parking spaces;
- Will not adequately support those living within the resident zones;
- Will not support the budget and mitigate the financial impact of Covid 19.

6. **Resource Implications**

- 6.1 The income and expenditure in connection with on-street charging and on and off-street enforcement activities is required:

- to repay any funds for parking measures that have been borrowed from the General Fund;
- to contribute towards the provision or maintenance of parking facilities;
- to contribute towards improvements to passenger transport services or infrastructure; and,
- to contribute towards other highway improvements.
- to contribute to environmental improvement in the local authority's area.

6.2 The overall impact of the charges listed in Appendix 1 is likely to see an increase in revenue, forecast to generate additional income of approximately £356k based on current parking demand.

7. **Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

7.1 The changes implemented in the last parking review through emissions based permit charging to encourage the use of more efficient and lower emission vehicles will continue to make a significant contribution towards the Council's Climate Change objectives.

8. **Corporate Implications**

8.1 Comment from the Director of Finance (linked to the MTFP): Accountancy has been consulted and has no further comments. (AT)

8.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Solicitor to the Council has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no further comments to make.

8.3 Other Officers (as appropriate): The Principal Climate Change and Sustainability Officer has been consulted and has no further comment to make.

9. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Schedule of Proposed Charges

Appendix 2 – Pay & Display Charges Comparison with Neighbouring Authorities

10. **Background Papers**

None.

Contact Officer: Clare Connellan, Transport & Parking Services Manager