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| Subject: | REVIEW OF ON AND OFF-STREET PARKING CHARGES |
| Meeting and Date: | Cabinet – 15 January 2024 |
| Report of: | Mike Davis, Strategic Director (Finance and Housing) |
| Portfolio Holder: | Councillor Charlotte Zosseder, Portfolio Holder for Community and Corporate Property |
| 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 Community Services Manager, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community and Corporate Property, 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

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. Proposals include:

- Increasing existing hourly charges by 20p
- Introducing charging in 4 rural car parks, Borrow Pit Car Park, and Victoria Park Car Park.
- Amending the charging structure for Tides Car Park.
- Introducing charging for application and installation of requested disabled bays on-street.
- Increasing permits by the inflationary amount of 8%.

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 Resident parking schemes are continually reviewed as these are key to the residents and their ability to park close to their home, all new schemes are presented to the Joint Transportation Board for guidance and advice.
- 2.4 The availability and effective management of parking is an important factor in relieving and preventing traffic congestion thereby 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.

3. **Proposals for 2024/25**

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 Car parking provision does not come for free, and the maintenance of the facilities provided are all at a significant cost to the Council. There are several car parks that have no charges but are well used. Some of these car parks also suffer from a low turnover, reducing the availability of spaces for all users. It is suggested that these should have charges introduced to relieve and prevent traffic congestion by the better management of the availability of parking spaces, and to generate income. The suggested car parks are as follows:
 - Borrow Pit, Walmer; Reach Road, St Margarets at Cliffe; High Street, Ash; High Street, Wingham; High Street, Eastry and Victoria Park, Deal. The parking tariff within these car parks will match the existing tariffs and payments will be cashless only.
 - Tides, Deal. There will be a free parking period of 3 hours for Tides users only. Other uses of the car park will be charged at £1.80 per hour.
 - St Margarets Bay Car Park charges will apply all year round.
- 3.4 We have identified an increase in charges for both on and off-street pay & display of 20p per hour.

Permits

- 3.5 An inflationary increase of 8% has been proposed for most resident and business permits. A higher increase has been proposed for the Zone B+ Permit to bring it in line with the charge for the on-street only version of this permit which changed to emissions-based charging in 2021.
- 3.6 The introduction of charging for the application and installation of disabled bays is proposed at £250.00. As we conduct this process on behalf of KCC, this is the

guidance and maximum cost permitted. This will aid in covering the costs of the implementation of these bays and to deter non-eligible applications.

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 2024/25 as set out in the recommendations and **Appendix 1**.
- To agree to delegate the decision-making process for the Transport & Parking Services Manager or Community Services Manager in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Community and Corporate Property 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 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 enables a more efficient and consistent parking operation;
- 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;
- To support local businesses and the tourism agenda.

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.

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 potentially generate additional income of c.£200k.

7 **Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

7.1 The changes implemented 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**

- 8.1.1 Comment from the Director of Finance (linked to the MTFP): Accountancy has been consulted and has no further comments (JS).
- 8.1.2 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.
- 8.1.3 Comment from the Equality Officer: This report seeking approval of the annual review of parking charges as set out in Appendix 1 does not specifically highlight any equality implications, however in discharging their duties members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>
- 8.2 Other Officers (as appropriate):

9 **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Schedule of Proposed Charges

Appendix 2 – Pay & Display Charges Comparison with Neighbouring Authorities

10 **Background Papers**

Parking Services Papers

Contact Officer: Clare Connellan, Transport & Parking Services Manager