

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Full Council – 15 December 2015

Council Fees and Charges - Parking

Report of the Assistant Director – Operational Delivery

(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Habgood)

1. Executive Summary

This report sets out proposed changes to the charging process that supports traffic management of the urban areas of Taunton Deane by seeking to influence driver behaviour with the following outcomes:-

- Remove the incentive for long stay in the most central car parks freeing up space for shorter term stays; and
- Long term investment in the parking assets.

It seeks approval for increasing pay and display charges, implementing Blue Badge charges and Sunday charging.

It seeks approval for changes to car park tariffs; removal of the zero tariff if a valid Blue Badge is displayed and the introduction of a Sunday tariff.

2. Background

Parking charges have not been amended since 2011 but the costs of operation have been increasing.

Parking assets have not had an adequately funded programme of maintenance for some years and the maintenance of assets has become reactive through reports of damage / issues, or the maintenance inspection program via Deane DLO's Highways Inspector. Some car parks are receiving regular temporary reinstatement maintenance due to the overall condition of the surface of the car park, this increases the risk of claims against the Council.

There are a number of strategic projects that are being considered but as yet are unfunded. These are pay on exit and variable message signage. This fees and charges report sets in place a funding stream to support these enhancements.

As part of JMASS Phase One the roles of Parking Services Managers were combined across the two Council areas into a single role which also incorporated the civil contingencies functions. Increased use of the parking assets and new projects have placed this team under significant pressure.

3. The Proposals

Car Park Tariff – It is proposed to change the parking charges to a set hourly rate, using multiples of this rate for the number of hours required. This is a change to the current practice. At present the longer someone parks the cheaper it becomes on an hourly basis. Appendix 1 shows the current and proposed charges across the car parks. The rationale behind this change is to make the charging profile clearer and removes the saving which is higher in the central car parks freeing up space for shorter stay and higher turnover of bays. The proposal does not exclude longer term stays in those car parks for those where the convenience is worth the additional cost. The income modelling is based on the full year 2014/2015 with a reduction of 10% being made to allow for changes in driver behaviour.

Removal of Blue Badge zero tariff – It is proposed to remove the zero tariff but if a valid Blue Badge is displayed and payment is made, an allowance of an additional 60 minutes will be provided. This will be against the standard car park tariffs as identified in Appendix 1. There is no customer data and therefore Blue Badge income is taken from the number of spaces at 25% occupancy. Whilst the number of disabled spaces is not being increased at this stage there will be a need to consider the impact of charging and the level of disabled bays that are considered necessary.

Sunday tariff – It is proposed to implement Sunday charging across all of the car parks that are currently chargeable. This charging is on the basis of the new tariffs identified in Appendix 1. There is no customer data and therefore the income estimates for this are based upon the whole of the parking assets only taking £1,500 for each Sunday of operation, and then removing the estimated costs of enforcement and cash collection.

4. The Investment

Increased allocation to the maintenance budget – It is proposed that there will be an increase to the maintenance budget of £150,000 per annum taking it from £144,000 to £294,000 in the first three years increasing to £488,000 thereafter.

Contribution to pay on exit infrastructure and variable message signing – There are projects being explored for pay on exit and variable message signage. These will improve the customer experience and may have a positive impact on length of stay. It is proposed to set aside £150,000 per annum for this project. The total cost is not yet known but likely to be in the region of £450,000.

Project resources – Due to the complexity of this project there is a need to have some dedicated project resources to deliver it. Therefore further investment of £40,000 per annum will be needed over the duration, estimated at three years.

Team resources – The team resources are not sufficient to deliver the increased level of maintenance works and the level of parking income modelling being requested by the Council. The team is currently made up of 1.6FTE covering both Councils. There is a need to increase the resources to support the investment but also the increasing use of the car parks and demands upon the service. This proposal increases resources by one Grade D employee (£25,000 inclusive of employment costs).

CCTV – it is proposed that the CCTV systems that were switched off a number of years ago should be reconnected (6 no.). In order to reconnect these six cameras there are one off costs of £22,500 and continuing costs of £4,000 per camera.

5. Risks

Parking income fluctuates through-out the year and is subject to external influences such as weather, road works and town centre events. The figures used within this report are based on modelling of the occupancy levels within the car parks where this data exists. As we do not currently charge for Blue Badge holders or Sunday charging no data exists and officers have had to use their knowledge to produce a model that is conservative.

There is uncertainty in the level of enforcement that Somerset County Council (SCC) operate for on-street parking on a Sunday. There are two proposals that may impact on the on-street parking arrangements and traffic management.

Sunday charging – At present Residents' Parking Permits are not required on a Sunday, therefore members of the public / commuters may, in an attempt to avoid paying parking charges in our car parks, use side streets that are normally protected by residents permitting. Parking permits are in place in a number of streets around the town centre and were put in as a means of preventing commuters taking up residential parking spaces.

Blue Badge charging – Holders of Blue Badges are able to park on double yellow lines at any time, subject to any other restrictions that might be enforce. This is free to them and therefore they may choose to park on street rather than pay to park in Council operated car parks. This could have some implications for traffic management and may see an increase in on-street parking.

The discussions with SCC are not far enough advanced to determine their view on this. SCC may need to extend the scope of their Resident's Permits to cover Sundays to mitigate this risk. Ultimately this is an SCC decision.

6. Finance

The package of proposals provides funding to support some immediate maintenance to ensure there is a long term investment plan as well as support for two interconnected projects to deliver pay on exit and variable message signage for five car parks. These being Paul Street, High Street, The Crescent, Wood Street and Canon Street, Taunton.

Once the above projects are completed the project funding will be moved into the general maintenance budget.

Despite the amount of work required to deliver these changes, officers will have time to achieve this for the 1 April 2016

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Pay & Display	800k	800k	800k	800k
Blue Badge	60k	60k	60k	60k
Sunday Charges	60k	60k	60k	60k
Subtotal of income	920k	920k	920k	920k
Maintenance	150k	150k	150k	340
Projects	150K	150k	150k	0

Project resource	40k	40k	40k	0
Team resources	25k	25k	25k	25k
CCTV	22.5k	0	0	0
On-going	24k	24k	24k	24k
Subtotal of investment	411.5k	389k	389k	389k
Income less investment	509k	531k	531k	531k

7. Recommendations

It is recommended that Full Council supports the proposals set out in Section 3 of this report.

Contact: Chris Hall
Assistant Director – Operational Delivery
01823 356499
c.hall@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Appendix 1 - The Council's current and proposed charges across the car parks

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Shopper 1	Up to	Current	Proposed
Canon Street Coal Orchard	1 Hour	£1.20	£ 1.20
Crescent (maximum stay 4 hours) High Street	2 hours	£2.00	£ 2.40
Orchard Levels 1, 1A, 2, 2A, 3 and 3A	3 hours	£2.70	£ 3.60
	4 hours	£3.40	£ 4.80
	5 hours	£5.70	£ 6.00
	6 hours	£6.10	£ 7.20
	7 hours	£7.00	£ 8.40
	Over 7 hours	£7.60	£ 9.60

Shopper 2	Up to	Current	Proposed
Ash Meadows (maximum stay 3 hours)	1 Hour	£1.10	£ 1.00
Belvedere Road	2 hours	£1.80	£ 2.00
Castle Street	3 hours	£2.10	£ 3.00
Elms Parade	4 hours	£2.60	£ 4.00
Fons George (maximum stay 6 hours)	5 hours	£3.70	£ 5.00
Orchard Levels 4, 4A, 5 and 5A	6 hours	£4.40	£ 6.00
Wood Street	7 hours	£5.20	£ 7.00
	Over 7 hours	£5.90	£ 8.00

Commuter Car Parks	Up to	Current	Proposed
Enfield	1 Hour	£1.10	£ 1.00
Kilkenny	2 hours	£1.80	£ 2.00
Tangier	3 hours	£2.10	£ 3.00
Victoria Gate	4 hours	£2.60	£ 4.00
	5 hours	£3.50	£ 4.50
	6 hours	£4.30	£ 5.00
	7 hours	£4.60	£ 5.50
	Over 7 hours	£5.10	£ 6.00

Wellington	Up to	Current	Proposed
South Street	1 Hour	£0.70	£ 0.70
	2 hours	£0.90	£ 1.00
	3 hours	£1.30	£ 1.50
	4 hours	£1.80	£ 2.00
	All day	£2.30	£ 2.50
Longforth Road	2 hours	£0.90	£ 1.00
North Street	3 hours	£1.30	£ 1.50
	4 hours	£1.80	£ 2.00
	All day	£2.30	£ 2.50

Unchanged tariffs	Up to	Current	Proposed
Whirligig	1 hours	£1.60	£ 1.60
	2 hours max	£3.00	£ 3.00
Tangier Coach Park	All day	£6.00	£ 6.00