

PARKING CHARGES

To: Highways and Infrastructure Committee

Meeting Date: 21st January 2020

From: Steve Cox, Executive Director: Place and Economy.

Electoral division(s): All

Forward Plan ref: Not Applicable **Key Decision:** No

Purpose: To propose new on-street parking charges in Cambridge City which form part of the Council's 2020/21 Business Plan

Recommendation: The Committee is asked to approve the new charges.

<i>Officer contact:</i>	<i>Member contacts:</i>
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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Parking charges were last increased in April 2018. National best practice recommends Authorities review charges periodically and take account of their effectiveness in meeting policy objectives.
- 1.2 The Secretary of State recommends that authorities set charges at levels which are consistent with the aims of the authority's transport strategy, including its road safety and traffic management strategies.
- 1.3 Authorities should never use parking charges just to raise revenue or as a local tax. However, where the demand for parking is high, the delivery of transport objectives with realistic demand and management prices for parking may result in surplus income. In such cases local authorities **must** ensure that any on-street revenue not used for enforcement is used for legitimate purposes only and that its main use is to improve transport provision in the area so that road users benefit.
- 1.4 The authority's auditor may decline to certify the accounts of a local authority that has used on-street parking income (and all enforcement income) in a way that is not in accordance with the provisions of section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act.
- 1.5 In considering the appropriate level for parking charges the Council must appropriately consider the parking policy and charges guidance set out in the Secretary of State's Statutory Guidance to Local Authorities regarding Civil Parking Enforcement. The guidance states that charges should be proportionate, and not set at unreasonable levels. The guidance also indicates that when setting on and off-street parking charges, authorities should consider lower charges for off-street than on-street. This would encourage drivers to park off-street, thus minimising on-street congestion caused by vehicles searching for spaces.
- 1.6 When setting charges, authorities should consider the following factors:
 - Parking charges can help to curb unnecessary car use where there is adequate public transport or walking or cycling are realistic alternatives.
 - Charges can reflect the value of kerb-space, encouraging all but short-term parking to take place in nearby off-street car parks where available. This implies a hierarchy of charges within a local authority area, so that charges at a prime parking space in a busy city centre would normally be higher than those either at nearby off-street car parks or at designated places in more distant residential areas. Such hierarchies should be simple and practicable, and applied consistently so that charge levels are readily understandable and acceptable to both regular and occasional users;
 - Charges should be set at levels that encourage compliance with parking restrictions. If charges are set too high they could encourage drivers to risk non-compliance or to park in unsuitable areas, possibly in contravention of parking restrictions. In certain cases they could encourage motorists to park in a neighbouring local authority area which may not have the capacity to handle the extra vehicles. In commercial districts this may have a negative impact on business in the area; and

- If on-street charges are set too low, they could attract higher levels of traffic than are desirable. They could discourage the use of off-street car parks and cause the demand for parking spaces to exceed supply, so that drivers have to spend longer finding a vacant space.

1.7 Local authorities need to decide on a desirable occupancy rate for paid on-street parking spaces. High occupancy rates may in the long term encourage the use of alternative forms of transport (if available) or diversion to another destination, but they may increase congestion in the short term as vehicles search for available spaces. Lower occupancy rates may result in a less efficient use of the limited kerb space available.

2. MAIN ISSUES

2.1 The availability and effective management of parking is an important factor in both maintaining and increasing the vitality of Cambridge City centre, 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 city centre businesses.

2.2 Given the limited capacity within the City centre and surrounding roads, there is no easy solution to this challenge. The demand for parking spaces clearly varies throughout the day, week and year.

2.3 The proposed new tariffs are detailed in Appendix 1. Each parking area has been carefully reviewed and the demand has been assessed which is why tariffs are not one standard amount across the city. The changes are a consistent increase across all the tariffs, stay lengths and parking areas, the aim being to dissuade non-essential use of on-street parking spaces whilst accepting the need for specific short-stay options to support local businesses and the community. There are no plans to amend hours of operation. Usage will be monitored and it is hoped to see a continual shift primarily to Park and Ride and off-street parking resources. Should there be increase in revenue it will be utilised as prescribed in legislation to improve roads and transport provision.

2.4 The areas affected by these charges cover several different local requirements with local amenities, resident parking and local businesses considered. The review gave careful consideration to locations and the demand and impact on the surrounding areas. The Council have recently introduced “multi-vendor” options by pay by phone and expanded the contactless payment options to almost 25% of machines. The Parking Team are currently working on centralising data on usage to enable motorists to be made aware of areas available for parking and where spaces are limited.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 A good quality of life for everyone

The effective management of parking improves accessibility to businesses which supports commercial viability. The review is aimed at ensuring the spaces are being used appropriately by a number of visitors using local businesses or community facilities.

3.2 Thriving places for people to live

There is no significant implications for this priority

3.3 The best start for Cambridgeshire's children

There is no significant implications for this priority

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

The proposed changes in parking charges is policy and objective driven rather than being necessarily financially driven. Consequently it is important that these proposals are not viewed in terms of their financial outputs alone, but in the context of their contribution towards the aims and objectives of the Local Transport Plan.

Estimating any additional income that these changes may generate is inherently difficult, because of the possibility, especially in the short term, that there will be public resistance to the change. As a result, the income estimate in this paper allows for some reduction in demand. We are, however, confident that the changes will produce sufficient income to cover the cost of implementation for both staff and contractors.

Any surplus generated is re-invested in environmental, highway and transport improvement projects in accordance with current legislation.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no implications.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

Following approval these changes will be applied meeting all legal and Transport regulations

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

No adverse effects have been identified. The County Council will continue to maintain its support for Blue Badge holders and offer them free use of our bays.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

All changes will be agreed by Committee and advertised as required by Legislation

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

Changes in charges will be advertised in the normal way.

4.7 Public Health Implications

This will continue to support our policies to support walking, cycling and increase public transport use and contribute to the reduction of traffic movement and related pollution.

Sign offs

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Name of Financial Officer: Helen Boutell
Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement?	Yes Name of Officer: Gus DaSilva
Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Monitoring Officer?	Yes Name of Legal Officer: Nicola Molloy
Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Richard Lumley
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	Yes Name of Officer: Sarah Silk
Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Richard Lumley
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	Yes Name of Officer: Tess Campbell

Source Documents	Location
<i>Instruction and guidance on Legislation.</i>	https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1984/27/section/45 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1984/27/section/46 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1984/27/section/55