

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Woodley Car Parking Trial</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	The Executive on 28 July 2016
<b>WARD</b>	None specific
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Heather Thwaites, Director of Environment
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Malcolm Richards, Executive Member for Highways and Transport

## **OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

The Woodley Town Centre Management Initiative (WTCMI) has proposed an alternative charging regime to the evening and Sunday during the public consultation. The WTCMI expressed concerns over the viability of the town during the hours of operation for the new charges. This trial is aimed to see if the proposal is financially viable.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Executive is asked to:

- 1) approve a trial to 31 March 2017 to increase the 1 hour parking charge increase in the Woodley car parks (Crockhamwell Road, Headley Road, Lytham Road East, and Lytham Road West) from 70p to 80p;
- 2) instruct Officers to amend signage and equipment in the car parks as required;
- 3) suspend the implementation of the evening and Sunday charging in Woodley, as agreed by the Executive on 31 March 2016, until the trial results are considered;
- 4) agree that the results of the trial will be brought back to Executive for a longer term decision to be made regarding car parking charges in Woodley.

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

This report proposes the trial of 1 hour daily rate parking charge increase in Woodley as proposed by the Woodley Town Centre Management Initiative.

## **Background**

On 31 March 2016 the Executive approved the implementation of Evening and Sunday charges.

The Council currently charges users in most of the car parks it operates with those charges applying between the hours of 8am and 6pm, Monday to Saturday. In order to support the necessary maintenance on the highways asset, for which car parks form part, the council also approved the charge implementation with a view towards mitigating revenue funding cuts which will impact the highways asset and other services.

In line with the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) legal process, which establishes the ability for the council to implement charging in car parks and enforce the compliance with these charges, the council followed consulted on the new charging regime. During the consultation, some groups expressed concerns about the impact on their communities. These concerns were addressed in the report to the Executive and considered at the time of the decision. The Woodley Town Centre Management Initiative (WTCMI) proposed an alternative to the evening and Sunday charges in Woodley which is potentially financially viable. The proposal is to increase the 1 hour parking charge in the Woodley car parks (Crockhamwell Road, Headley Road, Lytham Road East, and Lytham Road West) from 70p to 80p instead of implementing evening and Sunday charges in these car parks. Although other alternative charging regimes were included in the consultation response, these were not considered further as they were not financially viable.

## **Issues to be Considered**

Whilst the WTCMI proposal has some merit, there is the risk that it may not be financial viable. Therefore, the 10p charge increase is proposed in lieu of the evening and Sunday charges for a trial period to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 in order to measure the income generated in comparison with that predicted in the evening and Sunday charging proposals. It will also be a useful comparison as to how evening and Sunday charges have been implemented in other parts of the borough. The 10p charge increase trial is not being implemented more widely, partly as it was not proposed by other Town and Parish councils.

In addition, the WTCMI proposal does not meet the aims of the user pays principle of evening and Sunday charges. It places an additional burden on daytime users of the town centre. The impact of this will also be measured at the end of the trial by monitoring the daytime use in Woodley over the trial to see if there is a change in the daily use compared to previous years. In addition, a survey will be undertaken to determine the evening and Sunday use in comparison with the survey carried on at the end of February 2016, which established a baseline use of the car parks in the evenings and on Sundays.

Finally, the evening and Sunday parking survey demonstrated that the parking during these hours is well used and within the assumptions used in the charging proposals (10% of daily use in the evenings and 50% of daily use on Sundays). Broadly speaking, the use is similar in the various town centre locations (see Table 1 below). The trial will help establish the financial viability and impact on the businesses and community through the usage surveys, comparing Woodley and other town centre areas to the baseline data.

Table 1 – Evening and Sunday Parking Usage

Location	Daily Use	% of total spaces
Wokingham night	247	21%
Wokingham Sunday	413	36%
Woodley night	96	22%
Woodley Sunday	429	98%
Twyford night	41	77%
Twyford Sunday	25	47%
Earley night	21	47%
Earley Sunday	27	60%
Wargrave night	22	69%
Wargrave Sunday	22	69%
Winnersh night	20	15%
Winnersh Sunday	7	5%

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

***The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.***

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year from 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2016 to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2017	0	N/A	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)- is trial period is adopted	0	N/A	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)- if trial period is adopted	0	N/A	Revenue

### Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

The above trial is forecast to generate £50K per annum, however this will replace the lost income from the £150K anticipated annual income from rolling out Evening and Sunday car parking charges borough wide as Approved at Executive. That £150K savings has already been factored into the MTFs and taken from 2016/17 onwards so no further savings are proposed. Without the Sunday and Evening charges or this trial operating in Woodley will lead to a financial pressure of £4,166 per month.

### Cross-Council Implications

The impact on business and community groups will form part of the assessment of the trial.

<b>List of Background Papers</b>
31 March 2016 Executive Report - Introduction of Sunday and Evening Charging

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