

TITLE	Off Street Car Park Charges
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 29 September 2022
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport and Highways - Paul Fishwick

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

To recommend to the executive proposed increases to the off-street, car parking charges.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive:

Agrees to the increases to the parking charges as detailed in Appendix 1

BACKGROUND

The Council has not increased off street car parking charges since 2018, unlike many other Local Authorities and although this has primarily been welcomed, the current tariffs have not been subject to inflationary increases in line with the councils' other fees and charges.

The income collected for parking is essential for helping to maintain the Councils roads and footways to ensure they are of high quality and safe for all users. If the fees and charges are not increased, then the Councils ability to continue to maintain the highway to the current standards will be significantly compromised.

Current predictions for 22/23 estimate a loss of income of between £0.6m and £0.8m and although it is hoped that parking usage will increase over time, there is no guarantee as the 'new hybrid ways of working' for many people does not appear to be showing any signs of reverting back to a pre-pandemic position.

This is a significant drop in income and the proposal detailed within this report is primarily to address the shortfall to ensure we can sustain highway services that the residents of the Borough have benefited from over the last few years.

The current fees and charges for parking in the Borough are some of the lowest regionally if not nationally. Benchmarking information within appendix 1 lists comparable Local Authority data in greater detail.

It should be noted that even with the proposed increases, the Boroughs parking charges will remain at the lower end compared with other Local Authorities

Proposal

To increase the charges for off street parking for the first time in 4 years as detailed in appendix 1 of the report, to address the current shortfall in income that has resulted from the pandemic.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	(£50k) Costs of around £50k and estimated additional income of £100k	The cost is expected to be covered from the additional income generated	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	(£600k)	N/A	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Year 2 income levels are forecast to be ongoing year on year		

Other Financial Information

The numbers included in the table above are best estimates based on current parking trends. However, parking behaviour changed as a result of the pandemic causing the level of income generated from car parking tickets to reduced significantly. If demand for car parking increases, then the level of income in future years will also increase.

It is however important to note that forecast income for 2022/23 is £600k to £800k below budget, therefore the forecast income figures shown in the table above will bring income level back close to pre-covid levels and more in line with budgets but will not generate additional income over and above current car parking income budgets.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

Due consideration has been given to the need for those living, working and visiting the borough, those operating businesses and the need to support economic recovery in the borough's commercial centres as well as increased population, resident development and car ownership/use.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty has been taken and an equalities assessment is not required as no change to existing policy or procedures is involved. The report will assist in providing equality of charges across all car parks and exempt valid blue badge holders as disabled spaces will remain free.

Climate Emergency – This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030

There has been no increase to borough parking charges since 2018. Increasing charges will encourage better use of the car parks.

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

N/A

List of Background Papers

See Appendix 1 attached.

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Appendix 1

Proposals to increase parking charges.

Proposed Period of operation 24 hours Monday to Sunday (inclusive)	Current charges (8am-6pm Monday to Saturday inclusive)	Proposed Charges 6am to 10pm Monday to Sunday (inclusive) Evenings 10pm to 6am Monday to Sunday (inclusive) free vend
Up to 1 hour	80p	£1.30
Up to 2 hours	£1.20	£2.50
Up to 4 hours	£2.00	£4.50
Up to 6 hours	£3.00	£6.50
Over 6hrs	£4.00	£9.00
Extended day Market traders Cockpit Path car park only.	£4.00	£6.50
Evenings 10pm-6am	£0.00	Free vend ticket required to register vehicle in car park.
<p>This proposal is estimated to bring in an additional £591K based on post Covid levels of parking usage. Current parking usage levels are still below pre covid levels but expected to recover further in 2023/24.</p>		

Season tickets

Under the proposed charges above, season ticket fees will increase as shown in the below table.

Season ticket charges					
	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	12 Months	Overnight 12 Months
Current	£82.23	£240.35	£450.34	£900.68	£292
Proposed	£168.50	£506.50	£1,013.00	£2,026.00	£Nil Free vend

Time scales for Implementation and costs

A minimum of 12 – 16 weeks to draft and advertise the proposed new parking order.

Design and order new signs for all car parks 12-16 weeks lead time £25- £30,000.

Configure Tariff files 6–8-week lead time £15,500.

Update RingGo configuration 6 weeks lead time Nil costs under new contract.

Advertise new Traffic Order 28 days subject to objections which could lead to IEMD or full council report £6,000 (legal, Traffic Management services and advertising costs).

It is estimated that the earliest implementation date would be Jan 2023

Benchmarking

The proposed increases and new tariffs have been benchmarked against other local authorities as detailed below. The data demonstrates that even with the increase in charges the Council would still retain some of the lowest charges for parking

Bench Marking					
Location	30 mins	1 hour	2 hours	All day	Overnight
Wokingham (existing charges)	£0.50	£0.80	£1.20	£4.00	Free
Bracknell Forest The Avenue MSCP	£1.60	£1.60	£2.70	£9.00	Open all day
Windsor & Maidenhead Alma Road Windsor	£1.70	£1.70	£3.40	£14.00	
Windsor & Maidenhead The Broadway Maidenhead	£0.70	£1.40	£2.40	£15.00	
Basingstoke Long Stay car parks	£2.20	£2.20	£2.20	£10.60	£2.20
Surrey Heath Main Square MSCP	£1.80	£1.80	£1.80	£7.00	£2.20
Reading Broad Street	£1.60	£1.60	£4.10	£14.20	£4.10
Waverley BC (Farnham Town)	£1.00	£1.00	£2.10	£14.00	
Andover (Test Valley)	N/A	N/A	£1.00	£5.90	
Reigate (Upper west Street)	N/A	£1.30	£2.20	* £6.20	* Up to 10 hours
Redhill (Gloucester Road)	N/A	£1.30	£2.50	* £5.50	* Up to 10 hours
Egham (Runnymede)	N/A	£1.30	£2.50	*£5.50	* Max stay 6 hours
Newbury (Kennet Centre)	N/A	£1.50	£2.70	£12.00	
Petersfield (East Hants)	N/A	£1.00	£1.40	£7.00	8am - 6pm

Godalming(Waverley)	N/A	£1.10	£2.20	*£20.00	* Up to 10 hours 8am to 6pm
Walton (Elmbridge)	N/A	£1.40	£2.80	*£9.50	*9 + hours 8am to 7pm
Fleet (Hampshire) Church Road	£0.20	N/A	£1.00	£7.00	20p 30 mins or £1.00 overnight
Wokingham (Proposed charges)	N/A	£1.30	£2.50	£9.00	10pm to 6am Free Vend (with ticket)

Additional benchmarking covering Overnight, Sundays and Bank Holidays is shown below:

Bench Marking Overnight, Sundays and Bank Holidays				
Location	Overnight	Sundays	B/Holidays	Comments
Wokingham	Free	Free	Free	Current
Andover	Free	Free	Free	
Reigate	N/A	£1.00	As Sundays	£1.00 up to 2 hours £2.00 up to 4 hours £4.00 over 4 hours
Redhill	N/A	£1.00	As Sundays	£1.00 up to 2 hours £2.00 up to 4 hours £4.00 over 4 hours
Egham	N/A	As Mon – Sat	As Mon – Sat	
Newbury	£2.00	As Mon – Sat	As Mon – Sat	
Petersfield	Free	As Mon – Sat	As Mon – Sat	10am to 4pm
Godalming	N/A	Free	As Mon – Sat	
Walton	Free	As Mon – Sat	Free	
fleet	£1.00	£1.00	£1.00	
Wokingham 10pm to 6am	Free vend	As Mon- Sun	As Mon – Sun	Proposed

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