

# Chichester District Council

THE CABINET

7 November 2023

## Review of Parking Charges

### 1. Contacts

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### 2. Recommendations

**2.1. Cabinet approves the proposal as set out in 5.1 of this report to go out to consultation on the proposed increases to the car parking charges from 1 April 2024. Following the consultation, a further report will be brought back to Cabinet to recommend to Council any increases.**

### 3. Background

3.1 In accordance with the review of Fees and Charges Policy all charges should increase in line with the annual inflation rate as of September in each year. Any variation to the policy is recommended to Cabinet and Council if required. Car park users expect charges to be reasonable and proportionate. The Council generates income from car parking to cover the costs and to allow for future investment. Car parks occupy valuable sites and parking charges need to reflect this. If they are not serving their purpose effectively, or their usage could be consolidated, there may be another economically beneficial use to which a site could be put.

3.2 West Sussex County Council set the charges for on-street parking and any amendments to off-street charges would be closely monitored for deflection onto the highway.

3.3 There are a number of points to consider when reviewing parking charges:

- Users should cover the cost of parking provision – i.e. each car park should be able to cover its own costs. There are a number of car parks at present which are not covering their own costs and therefore are being subsidised by income from other car parks in the district.
- Parking charges provide essential income to support other key services provided by the Council.

- Parking charges assist with reducing congestion and on-street parking, encouraging alternative forms of travel and to enable adequate turnover of spaces. The Council's policy is to increase fees and charges in line with inflation, or to reflect local circumstances where appropriate.
- National evidence suggests it is an area's broader retail, commercial, leisure and / or tourism offer that is the primary factor affecting its vibrancy, rather than solely parking charges.
- Blue Badge holders are able to currently park within CDC car parks free of charge.
- Spaces are not turning over adequately in the currently free of charge car parks and there is evidence of long-term parking with action being taken against owners of abandoned vehicles where possible.
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that a 'free of charge' period of parking can encourage customers to rush back to their vehicle before the end of the free period of parking has finished rather than encouraging visitors to stay for longer.

3.4 A series of options relating to parking charges was considered at the Parking Forum in September 2023. These options have been considered further and 5.1 below sets out the proposed amendments to come into force from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. These options will be subject to a period of consultation and a further report brought back to Cabinet and Full council for approval of the options. Notices will be placed in the car parks before any change and advertisements will be implemented. Notices will be installed within the car parks before any changes come into effect.

#### **4. Outcomes to be Achieved.**

- 4.1. To ensure Chichester District parking charges remain competitive with neighbouring centres leaving our business centres in a strong position and do not cause unacceptable parking deflection into residential areas.
- 4.2. The proposed charges assist with delivering the objectives of both assisting with capacity issues in the higher demand car parks and helping to cover administration and maintenance costs of each car park.
- 4.3. To increase income in line with the Council's financial strategy and to adhere to the Council's approved Fees and Charges Policy.

#### **5. Proposal**

- 5.1. It is proposed that the following amendments to parking charges are undertaken from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, further details are outlined in Appendix 1:
  - Increase existing Pay and Display tariffs by the current **Office of National Statistics (ONS)** rate of inflation in the council's five-year

financial model (6.7%) with some variations due to roundings and demand.

- Increase season tickets by the current ONS rate of inflation.
- Amend the current flat rate of Sunday tariffs in the city centre long stay car park to reflect those for Monday to Saturday.
- Introduce car park charges to the rural car parks on Sundays.
- Extend the charging period in the city's short stay car parks from 6pm to 8pm. (With Cattle Market, Basin Road and the Avenue de Chartres car parks remaining at the charging end time of 6pm).

5.2 The charges proposed are considered modest and competitive when compared with other neighbouring authorities. Details of charges in other similar centres are included in Appendix 2 and 3.

## **6. Alternatives Considered**

6.1 A series of options were considered by the Chichester District Parking Forum. These included CDC covering the cost of MiPermit transaction fees; freezing the charges in the Avenue de Chartres and Grange Road car parks; freezing charges in rural car parks; removing the free period of parking in rural car parks and introducing charges to those car parks in rural areas which are currently free of charge.

6.2 Do nothing –this would not assist with covering the costs of the provision of the car parks service or assist with car park usage or turnover.

## **7. Resource and Legal Implications**

7.1. To implement changes to charges and car parks there will be minor costs associated with the provision of new signs and necessary adjustments to the machine tariffs as well as changes to back office software; these costs are contained within the service's revenue budget.

7.2. The Parking Order will require amendment once the charges and amendments are agreed and will be advertised for consultation.

7.3. Additional income will be generated as a result of the amendments to the parking charges. Whilst it is challenging to accurately estimate the total amount of income received as a result (given that parking behaviour may be affected by the changes), it is estimated that there could be an additional £55,000 per annum as a result of the change in Sunday tariff, an additional £30,000 per annum as a result of the inclusion of Sundays in rural areas and an estimated increase in income of approximately £130,000 as a result of the extension of the charging period in short stay city car parks by two hours.

## 8. Consultation

- 8.1. The proposed changes to parking charges were discussed by the Parking Forum in September 2023. Paragraph 6.1 above sets out the alternative proposals considered. Members of the Parking Forum were generally less supportive of these options and preferred the options as presented for implementation, with a view that any increases should be fairly applied across the district and a recognition that the majority of customers expect to pay for parking. The Forum also discussed the balance between ensuring that there are sufficient charges in place to cover costs and encourage turnover but at the same time supporting the local economy.
- 8.2. Amendment to the Parking Order will include a further period of public consultation.

## 9. Community Impact and Corporate Risks

- 9.1. Any increase in charges could cause people to park within neighbouring residential areas and reduce the economic effectiveness of the localities they serve. The modest nature of the increases and other mitigation proposed is designed to minimise this risk.

## 10. Other Implications

	Yes	No
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>		X
<b>Climate Change and Biodiversity</b> Congestion due to drivers queuing to locate a parking space can have an impact on air quality. When parking charges are set at the correct level this can assist with encouraging alternative forms of transport or parking is less congested areas.	X	
<b>Human Rights and Equality Impact</b>		X
<b>Safeguarding and Early Help</b>		X
<b>General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)</b>		X
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>		X
<b>Other</b>		

## 11. Appendices

- 11.1 Proposed Chichester District Parking Charges 2024
- 11.2 Winchester parking charges 2023-2024
- 11.3 Horsham parking charges 2023

## **12. Background Papers**

None