

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

## REPORT TO: ENVIRONMENT AND PROSPERITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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**Date of Meeting:** 20 December 2011  
**Report of:** Head of Community Services  
**Subject/Title:** Car Park Income: Response to Corporate Scrutiny Committee Question. Sept 2011

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Rod Menlove

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### 1.0 Report Summary

1.1 Income from car parking and parking enforcement continues to fall short of budgeted levels although still close to last year's figure. The report seeks to set this in context.

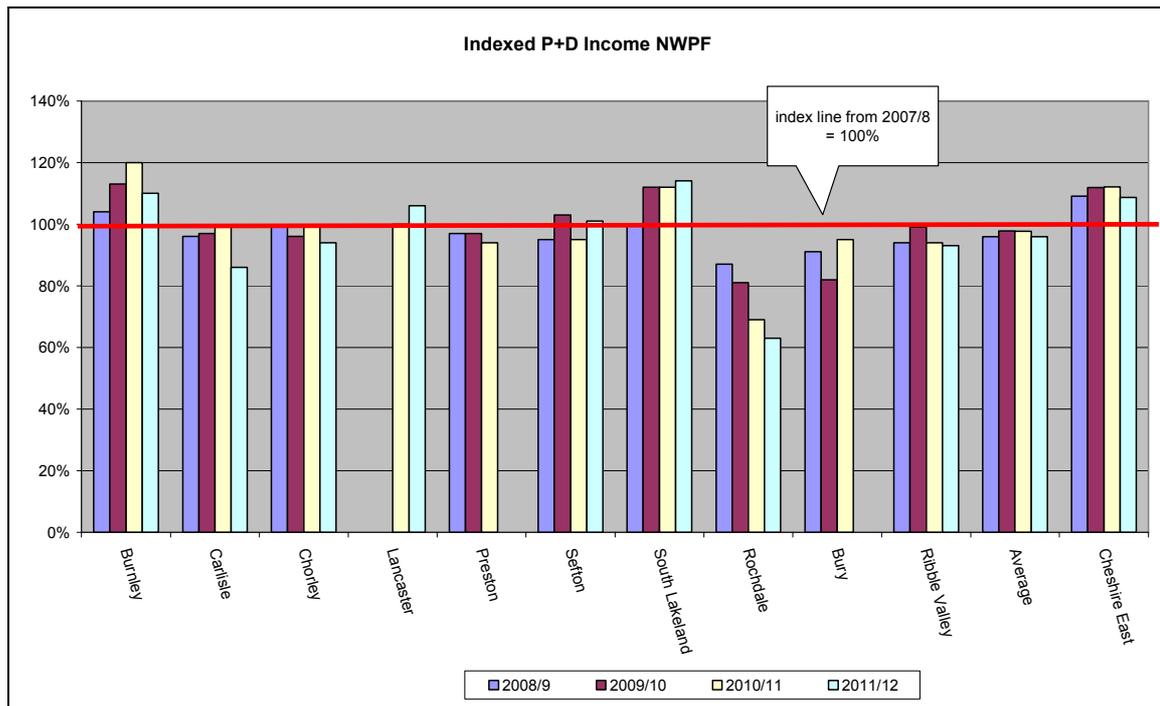
### 2.0 Decision Required

2.1 The Committee is asked to note the report and is invited to make any recommendations it may have, to the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services.

### 3.0 Pay and Display Income

3.1 Car Park Income is struggling nationally in response to reduced customer spending power. Authorities are experiencing shortfalls of between 5 and 15% against parking income budgets, undoubtedly linked to the pressures in the economy. Growth in use of the internet for shopping has also affected high street trade and vehicle use to park in towns.

3.2 A regional comparison is shown, from returns by members of the North West Parking Forum. Taking year 2007/8 as 100%, pay and display income in following years is shown as a % against that base. Most authorities in the region show declines with Cheshire East maintaining a reasonable position against the average.



3.3 Cheshire East Car Park income has shown a 5% increase against months prior to the recent tariff rise of August 19<sup>th</sup> 2011 and analysis shows that parking demand was more price sensitive in some towns compared with others and supports other indications of the difficulties in these towns. Income from Congleton car parks fell in this recent period against last year in spite of not having any price increase applied.

3.4 Some authorities have imposed larger % increases in fees than CEC and have seen smaller % increases in income. Research for 'Yorkshire Forward' (Regional Economic Development Forum) suggested that the major factor in determining the level of footfall and customer stay was the retail and visitor offer of a Town Centre rather than the cost of parking.

## 4.0 Fines

4.1 Income from fines (see table below) has been steadily increasing as patrol teams have returned nearly to full strength (25 officers) following earlier difficulties including a death in service and long term sickness absence at the end of last year.



8.1 Reported at MYR, despite improvements in the latter half of the year, a shortfall against budget of £572k was anticipated due to continuing economic recessionary pressures and a corresponding reduction in customer demand compared to 2010-11. Pay and Display (£403K) or 8% shortfall on budget, Car Parking Fines (£169k) or 16% shortfall on budget.

## **9.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)**

9.1

## **10.0 Risk Management**

10.1 Further risk to parking income due to customers' choices is unavoidable other than to ensure all car parks and meters are well maintained and fit for purpose.

10.2 Penalty income is derived to some extent; however continued efforts are being made to improve the effectiveness of the enforcement team based on evidence of contravention and risk to road safety and congestion.

## **Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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