

Cheshire East Council

Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	> 10 th October 2017
Report of:	> Frank Jordan, Executive Director of Place
Subject/Title:	> CEC Parking Charges and Off-Street Parking Order
Portfolio Holder:	> Cllr David Brown

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. A review has been conducted into the Council's current arrangements at its off street car parks. This has identified a number of proposed actions which it is considered would improve the way the car parks are operated and managed to support residents and businesses in the key towns in the Borough.
- 1.2. Parking charges have, in the main, not changed over the last 10 years or so. If charges had increased by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) since 2007 the income to the Council would be £1,209,438 higher in 2016/17.
- 1.3. This report proposes an increase in parking charges of either 10p or 20p to each tariff. A full breakdown of the proposed tariff increases is detailed in **Appendix A**. The Council recognises the current low inflationary climate along with our current levels of parking charges and as a result, proposes the 10p or 20p increase which suggests a 3 year inflationary cycle.
- 1.4. The overall purpose of this proposal to amend parking charges is to ensure that the Council can continue to provide suitable, adequate, safe and well maintained parking provision. Charging for parking can be justified provided it is aimed at the fulfilment of the statutory purposes including, but not limited to, the cost of provision of on-street and off-street parking, and the costs of enforcement.
- 1.5. In October 2015, the Council consolidated all the off-street parking orders of the former district councils but only applied this to some of the free car parks (some are already included).
- 1.6. This report also proposes to include all appropriate free car parks within an updated Consolidated Order. This would enable enforcement action to promote responsible and considerate parking, especially in spaces marked for blue badge holders.

- 1.7. In addition, the review has identified a number of historic, informal and temporary pricing incentives. These result in inconsistency in parking use and availability across car parks in some of our towns. This report proposes amendments to the Council's parking order to change/ remove these incentives.
- 1.8. All the proposals set out above would be subject to public consultation to enable any amendments to the Order.

2. Recommendation

2.1. Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1) Approve consultation on the following amendments to the Borough's parking order by:
 - i. Increasing the parking charges on the current pay and display car parks as detailed in **Appendix A**
 - ii. Removing historic parking incentives including 'Free after 3pm' and buy one get one free offers.
 - iii. Removing all reference to the Parking Place previously known as Manor Road Car Park, Manor Road, Nantwich CW5 5LX as it has ceased to be an operational car park under the management of Cheshire East Borough Council
 - iv. Amending the hours of charging and maximum waiting period at the Grosvenor Centre Car Park in Macclesfield to 8.30am to 6.00pm (Monday to Saturday) 9.5 hours and 11am to 4pm on a Sunday 5 hours
 - v. Amending the maximum waiting period on Congleton Car Parks: Back Park Street; Chapel Street; West Street; and Princess Street to 8 hours from 10 hours as the charging hours are from 9am to 5pm
 - vi. Amending the charging hours to 3 hours maximum stay at Antrobus Street Car Park in Congleton with charges as 2-3 hours £1.10
 - vii. Amending the wording in the Order on Princess Street car park in Congleton to a maximum period of 8 hours with charges 2-4 hours £1.10 and 4-8 hours £1.60.
 - viii. Including all appropriate Council free car parks within the Consolidated Order.
- 2) Following a period of statutory consultation, consideration and resolution of any objections, delegate the final approval of the proposed amendments to the parking order to the Executive Director Place in

consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Infrastructure. In the event of any unresolved objections, delegate authority to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Infrastructure to determine whether and how to proceed and notwithstanding any outstanding objections, to authorise the making and bringing into force of the variations set out and the actions/activities necessary to facilitate these actions//activities to be undertaken by the Parking Services Team in conjunction with legal services.

- 3) Authorise the Executive Director for Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Infrastructure to make further inflationary increases on the parking tariffs in the future.

3. Other Options Considered

- 3.1. A review of inflationary increases to parking charges has been undertaken using both CPI and RPI (Retail Price Index) based on full calendar years. The CPI review suggests a 26% increase, whilst the RPI review figure is higher at 33%. CPI data meets the quality standard required for designation as 'National Statistics', whereas the RPI ones don't. CPI is also the Bank of England's target measure for inflation.
- 3.2. If CPI inflationary increases were applied, a 1 hour stay in Jordangate multi-storey in Macclesfield would rise from 50p to 70p, with a 6-12 hour stay rising from £3.30 to £4.20. The Council recognises that parking charges must not be set for the purpose of raising revenue, and having invested in the parking service, the proposed increase reflects the revenue necessary to effectively manage the parking provision.
- 3.3. The Council recently introduced a parking incentive for Crewe Town Centre to encourage more shoppers and visitors to the town. Charges were lifted at all nine of the Crewe town centre car parks from noon on each Saturday between February 4 and April 15, inclusive.
- 3.4. An evaluation of the incentive was undertaken by South Cheshire College through the town centre working group. 70 businesses took part in the evaluation with 30% of those businesses reporting an increase in trade, 25% weren't sure and 45% reported no increase in trade. Within the 30% who experienced an increase; 10 businesses reported a 10% increase, 7 businesses reported a 25% increase and 3 businesses reported a 50% increase. The evaluation confirmed that businesses felt that Saturday was the most beneficial day for any further parking incentives to encourage shoppers and visitors.
- 3.5. This use of type of evaluation framework in the future will allow the Council to better focus future requests for parking incentives to ensure any incentive reflects the local need.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1. The 'Free after 3pm' incentive has been running on a temporary basis since mid 2013. Counts undertaken on the affected car parks in May 2017 show an average of less than 4 cars using the incentive between 3:00 and 3:30pm. The exception is Snow Hill in Nantwich which is being utilised by parents at Malbank School with an average of 42 cars parking between 3:10 and 3:30pm. The Consolidated Order does not need to be altered to remove this incentive as it was only ever meant to be temporary. The affected car parks are Whalley Hayes in Macclesfield, Oak Street in Crewe, Snow Hill in Nantwich, South Street in Alderley Edge, Back Park Street in Congleton and Princess Street in Knutsford.
- 4.2. Cheshire West and Chester Council have recently announced the removal of the 'Free after 3pm' incentive, which is planned to be replaced with more targeted measures to address different users and at a variety of times throughout the day in order to encourage longer dwell time. A study of the 'Free after 3pm' incentive found it had only a limited effect on increasing footfall.
- 4.3. The Buy One Get One Free (BOGOF) incentive is currently delivered at 4 car parks in Macclesfield. This proposal was introduced late 2012 to encourage longer stays in the town, however this incentive can be abused as a person can buy 2 hours parking and get 4 hours for £1.00, service users can then return to their vehicles and purchase a further 4 hour ticket thus getting a full days parking for £2.00 instead of the all-day tariff which was £3.30 or £4.30 at Christ Church. These are all long-stay car parks and very close to the town centre. The car parks affected are Commercial Road, Gas Road, Jordangate MSCP and Christ Church car park.
- 4.4. The Council was served notice by the landowners of Manor Road Car Park in Nantwich, advising that they wished to terminate the Council lease with effect from the end of May 2016. From that time, it ceased to be an operational car park and as such, all reference to it as a 'Parking Place' needs to be removed from the Consolidated Order.
- 4.5. In order to meet the fire evacuation requirements and mirror the operational hours of the Grosvenor Shopping Centre in Macclesfield, the Council amended the opening and closing times of the Grosvenor Centre Multi Storey Car Park (MSCP). The car park is now opened at 8.30am and closed at 6.00pm (Monday to Saturday). Whilst parking is free on a Sunday, the car park opens at 11.00am and closes at 4.00pm, again to reflect the fire regulations with the operational hours of the Shopping Centre to which the car park is attached. Changes are now required to the Consolidated Order to reflect these operational changes.
- 4.6. Four car parks in Congleton, namely Back Park Street, Chapel Street, West Street and Princess Street have charging hours from 9.00am to 5.00pm and the Consolidated Order needs to be amended to reflect this as an 8 hour maximum stay. The Order currently states 10 hours which is incorrect and therefore requires amending.

- 4.7. Princess Street car park in Congleton has been operating as a long stay car park with a maximum stay of 8 hours. The Order needs to be updated to reflect this. The price band and hours in the current Order need to be amended and show 2-4 hours £1.10 and 4-8 hours £1.60.
- 4.8. In order to support residents, businesses and people who are visiting and shopping in the area, it is important to ensure an appropriate turnaround of parking spaces on all of our car parks and undertake a sensible enforcement approach towards those who park irresponsibly. In order to facilitate and support enforcement activities, we propose to include all appropriate free car parks within the Consolidated Order. These are:-
- London Road – Holmes Chapel
 - Park Way – Holmes Chapel
 - Well Lane – Alsager
 - Fairview – Alsager
 - Station Road – Alsager
 - Fanny's Croft – Alsager
 - Hawk Street – Sandbach
 - Crown Bank – Sandbach
 - Well Bank – Sandbach
 - Westfields – Sandbach
 - Chapel Street – Sandbach
 - Brookhouse – Sandbach
 - Sea Bank – Middlewich
 - Civic Way – Middlewich

5. Background/Chronology

- 5.1. In September 2015, the Council brought together all of the different off-street parking orders and consolidated them into one. It gave us the strong platform to make any further amendments.
- 5.2. A number of temporary parking incentives have been delivered since 2012 with no specified end date or overarching objectives. This lack of detail has prevented effective evaluation of the overall benefits. More recent trials have been delivered over a specified time period and evaluated to assess

the benefits to particular user groups, the example being the recent incentive in Crewe to improve footfall in the town.

- 5.3. Recent amendments to the Consolidated Order, similar to this proposal, have sought to capture a number of changes and improvements in order to reduce the volume of consultation and reduce costs.

5.4. Timeline

- Cabinet approval sought – 10 October
- (If approved) consultation commences – mid December
- Consultation closes mid January
- Implementation – February

6. Wards Affected and Local Ward Members

- 6.1. All Wards and Ward Members are affected by the proposal.

7. Implications of Recommendation

7.1. Policy Implications

- The proposal will enable the Council to continue to invest in the local infrastructure and highways by providing safe and well maintained parking facilities and support increase in trade to our local businesses. By allowing sensible enforcement of the parking restrictions, we can keep our roads clear for the safe passage of emergency vehicles in line with the provisions in Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004. This supports our 4 year Corporate Plan which focuses on the Economy, Environment, Health, Education and Communities.

7.2. Legal Implications

- Any approved changes to the parking order or prices are subject to statutory consultation via public adverts in newspapers and official notices being placed on each site affected. The proposal to give 21 days notice of the intended variations, to invite and then take into account representations in respect of the same, comply with the legal process requirements.
- If, following that process, the proposed variation is made, there are further notification requirements designed to ensure that the public are made aware of the changes and when they will take effect. There is also a period of six weeks following the making of the variation order during which a challenge by way of judicial review may be brought

7.3. Financial Implications

- It is estimated that annual income from pay and display parking would be increased by circa £220k pa if the proposed parking increases are approved.
- A review has been undertaken of the free car parks that are not currently included in the Consolidated Order to assess the remedial works required so as to facilitate enforcement to ensure an appropriate turn around of car parking spaces. Whilst on some, it would only be necessary to insert a terms and conditions board, others require elements of resurfacing and relining. Costs associated with these works are circa £86k for all 14 free car parks; this would be funded from existing car park maintenance budgets. Civil Enforcement Officers would then be able to enforce contraventions such as parking in a space designated for a valid Blue Badge Holder, parking out of bay, and overstaying the maximum waiting time period.
- There will be a cost implication relating to the publication of the statutory notices. The estimated publicity costs for the statutory notices, in the region of £5000, have already been included in the relevant service budgets.
- The remaining changes to maximum stay hours and charging hours are not expected to have any financial implications.

7.4. Equality Implications

- The enforcement of our car parks and other parking provisions ensures that designated disabled spaces are free for use by valid blue badge holders.
- Improved management and availability of the Council's off-street parking facilities is expected to reduce demand for on-street parking, thereby reducing indiscriminate parking in residential areas and improving accessibility.

7.5. Rural Community Implications

- The Council's parking facilities provide a vital link for our rural communities to access services in our towns and villages. In order to ensure the effective use of these facilities, it is essential that the facilities are managed appropriately including turnover of spaces and enforcement.

7.6. Human Resources Implications

- The addition of the free car parks within the Consolidated Order will provide additional requirements for our Civil Enforcement Officers, which

have recently been increased in response to resident and member requests,

7.7. Public Health Implications

- The proposal will assist with reducing carbon emissions through reduced congestion and also help encourage use of public transport and more sustainable modes such as walking and cycling.
- Effective parking services can also impact on air quality by reducing vehicle emissions as we strive to ensure the free flowing movement of traffic in our towns.

7.8. Implications for Children and Young People

- None

7.9. Other Implications (Please Specify)

- None

8. Risk Management

- 8.1. Failure to make best use of the Council's off-street parking facilities will have a detrimental effect on town centre businesses and nearby residential areas which are subject to daily parking issues.
- 8.2. Following consultation, full consideration will be given to any objections received in response to the statutory notices and adherence to the Council process will mitigate any risk of challenge.
- 8.3. A detailed Communications Strategy will be prepared in advance of any car park changes to ensure residents and users are made aware of any proposed amendments. The Communication Strategy will be focussed on mitigating the reputational and political risk.

9. Access to Information/Bibliography

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

10. Contact Information

Contact details for this report are as follows:

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Appendix A

Town	Current Tariff	Proposed Tariff	Tariff Increase
Macclesfield			
	£0.30	£0.40	£0.10
	£0.50	£0.60	£0.10
	£0.60	£0.70	£0.10
	£0.70	£0.80	£0.10
	£1.00	£1.10	£0.10
	£1.10	£1.20	£0.10
	£1.70	£1.80	£0.10
	£2.10	£2.20	£0.10
	£2.30	£2.40	£0.10
	£2.50	£2.60	£0.10
	£3.10	£3.20	£0.10
	£3.30	£3.40	£0.10
	£3.40	£3.50	£0.10
	£3.90	£4.00	£0.10
	£4.30	£4.50	£0.20
	£5.50	£5.70	£0.20
Knutsford			
	£0.40	£0.50	£0.10
	£0.50	£0.60	£0.10
	£0.60	£0.70	£0.10
	£0.80	£0.90	£0.10
	£1.00	£1.10	£0.10
	£1.70	£1.80	£0.10
	£2.10	£2.20	£0.10
	£2.50	£2.60	£0.10
	£3.10	£3.20	£0.10
	£3.30	£3.40	£0.10
	£3.90	£4.00	£0.10
	£4.30	£4.50	£0.20
Alderley Edge			
	£0.40	£0.50	£0.10
	£0.80	£0.90	£0.10
	£1.80	£1.90	£0.10
	£2.10	£2.20	£0.10
Congleton			
	£0.30	£0.40	£0.10
	£0.50	£0.60	£0.10
	£1.00	£1.10	£0.10
	£1.50	£1.60	£0.10

Town	Current Tariff	Proposed Tariff	Tariff Increase
Wilmslow			
	£0.50	£0.60	£0.10
	£0.60	£0.70	£0.10
	£0.70	£0.80	£0.10
	£1.00	£1.10	£0.10
	£1.10	£1.20	£0.10
	£1.70	£1.80	£0.10
	£2.10	£2.20	£0.10
	£2.30	£2.40	£0.10
	£2.50	£2.60	£0.10
	£3.10	£3.20	£0.10
	£3.30	£3.40	£0.10
	£3.40	£3.50	£0.10
	£3.90	£4.00	£0.10
	£3.30	£3.40	£0.10
	£4.30	£4.50	£0.20
Crewe			
	£0.70	£0.80	£0.10
	£1.10	£1.20	£0.10
	£2.10	£2.20	£0.10
	£2.60	£2.70	£0.10
	£2.90	£3.00	£0.10
	£4.50	£4.70	£0.20
Nantwich			
	£0.60	£0.70	£0.10
	£0.70	£0.80	£0.10
	£1.00	£1.10	£0.10
	£1.10	£1.20	£0.10
	£2.10	£2.20	£0.10
	£2.60	£2.70	£0.10
	£2.90	£3.00	£0.10