

**Amendments to the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan (LTP)
2011-2026 – Car Parking Strategy**

Purpose of Report

1. To:
 - (i) Provide details of the consultation responses in relation to Options 1 to 7.
 - (ii) Outline suggestions from respondents for alternative ways in which the estimated income increase from the options could be met by other means (Option 8).
 - (iii) Set out the draft recommended option proposals.
 - (iv) Set out the implementation timetable of the draft recommended option proposals.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. The Wiltshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) Car Parking Strategy is relevant to the following Business Plan 2017 - 2027 priorities:

Priority: Growing the economy

The car parking strategy can:

- Support the local economy (e.g. by making it easy for shoppers and visitors to park) and facilitate development growth (e.g. by enabling the planned housing and employment growth set out in the Wiltshire Core Strategy to 2026).
- Enhance the built and natural environment (e.g. by reducing the amount of land required for parking and by improving the look of streetscenes through the appropriate enforcement of parking contraventions).
- Manage residents' needs for car parking near their homes (e.g. by introducing residents' parking zones).
- Improve journey time reliability for road users (e.g. by designing and managing on-street parking facilities to reduce traffic conflicts and delays).
- Help fund public transport provision through the income generated on council owned car parks.

Priority: Strong Communities

The car parking strategy can:

- Enable community groups to take over (ownership and/or management) identified off-street car parks in accordance with the Council's Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Policy.
- Enable community groups to run identified car parking services in accordance with the Council's Delegation of Services to Town and Parish Councils and Funding of Delegated Services Policy.
- Make Wiltshire a safer place (e.g. by ensuring that car parks are 'safer by design').
- Encourage the use of sustainable travel modes and reduce reliance on the private car (e.g. by setting parking charges at appropriate levels).

Priority: Protecting the Vulnerable

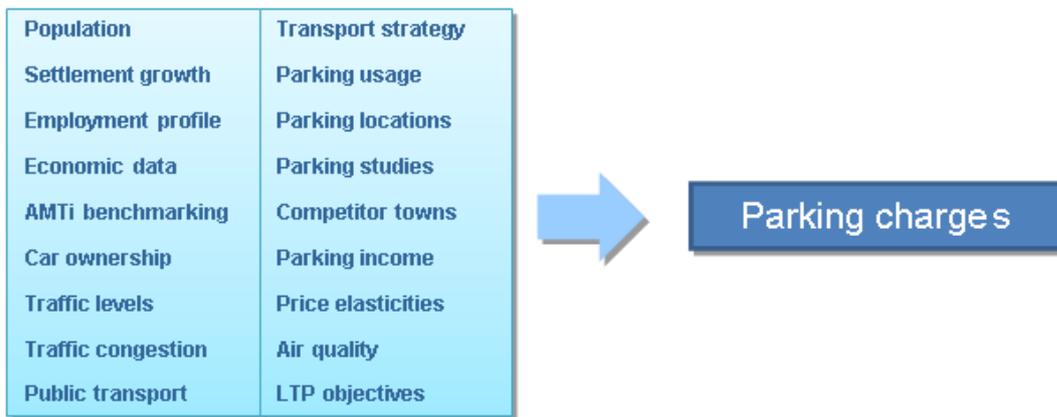
The car parking strategy can:

- Provide access to key services and facilities for special needs groups and mobility impaired (e.g. by providing appropriate Blue Badge spaces).

Background

Policy Context

3. The current Wiltshire LTP Car Parking Strategy was approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 17 March 2015 following a comprehensive review and consultation exercise in 2014 which attracted over 5,000 responses from individuals and organisations.
4. While there are a number of aspects to car parking management, in essence a balance needs to be found between three key factors:
 - **Regeneration:** using parking measures to support town centre regeneration.
 - **Restraint:** using parking controls as a means of restraining / managing traffic and improving environmental quality, or to encourage the use of sustainable transport modes.
 - **Revenue:** securing sufficient revenue to cover the costs of providing car parking, and using any surplus revenue to fund other important local services.
5. In order to help find the right balance between the above factors, relevant economic, social and environmental data was used to inform the review. A key outcome of this process was a move to a more 'fine grained' approach to car parking management, and in particular charges, based on the local circumstances of each car park / settlement (see table below).



6. Policy PS3 of the LTP Car Parking Strategy includes that “Parking charges will be set by the Council following consultation with the public, stakeholders and area boards”.

Operational Cost Pressures

7. The Council’s parking services is facing significant operational cost pressures. These include business rate payments, essential equipment upgrades and maintenance works, and inflation costs. The demands on the service are also increasing; particularly requests from residents, schools, businesses and parish / town councils asking for extra parking enforcement and maintenance to be undertaken. It is also important to note that surplus revenue from parking charges supports other transport measures including non-commercial, but essential local bus services. This is one of the main reasons why the Council has been in a position to retain the vast majority of these bus services, in contrast to other local authorities which have seen significant cuts to services.
8. The 2016/17 net income budget for car parking was £3.695 million. This consisted of a gross income budget of £7.666 million and a gross expenditure budget (including business rates overheads and depreciation) of £3.971 million. The net income budget (£3.695 million) contributes towards the provision of public transport revenue support and concessionary fares which had a net expenditure budget of £7.838 million in 2016/17.
9. To address the pressures facing the Council and the parking service as outlined and other pressures highlighted in the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), it was considered that a number of charging policies and practices needed to be looked at and possibly reviewed.
10. As outlined above, the Council continues to fund a number of transport measures, including supported bus services from car parking income. Failure to adequately meet the increasing cost and demand pressures facing parking services could result in an adverse impact on the Council’s ability to continue to fund some of these transport services.
11. To help address the pressures outlined above, a number of technology and operational improvements, with a ‘one off’ total cost of £125,000 and ongoing costs of £133,000 per annum, have been identified by officers as set out in paragraphs 61 to 66.

12. To address the operational and demand pressures outlined above, and to fund a number of proposed technology and operational improvements, seven possible charging options (and an additional option asking for proposals for alternative funding streams from local communities) were identified and included in a recent public consultation exercise (see paragraphs 16 to 20) that was approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 12 September 2017.

Charging Options Rejected by the Cabinet Member

13. Based on early discussions with the Cabinet Member prior to the Cabinet meeting on 12 September 2017, a decision was taken to reject the following charging options:
- The introduction of evening charges at all car parks. Reason: While a number of key competitor towns have evening charges, it was felt that their introduction in Wiltshire would harm the evening economy.
 - Changes to Blue Badge holders charging regime. Reason: In view of the Council's priority to 'Protect the Vulnerable' in its Business Plan 2017 – 2021, it was considered that this option should not be taken forward.

Previous Environment Select Committee Resolution

14. A report to Environment Select Committee at its meeting on 19 September 2017 asked members to consider its role in the process to make any amendments to the Wiltshire LTP Car Parking Strategy.
15. The resulting resolution was as follows:

The Committee endorsed the contents of the report and the options presented for Public Consultation and agreed to await the outcome of the detailed Consultation before considering the Strategy again, at its 16 January 2018 meeting, prior to the Strategy returning to Cabinet on 30 January 2018.

Public Consultation Exercise

16. A public consultation exercise was held between 28 September and 23 November 2017.
17. The consultation was hosted on the Wiltshire Consultation Portal (<http://consult.wiltshire.gov.uk/portal>) and included a link to the questionnaire which sought responses on the options agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on 12 September 2017:
- Option 1: Seeking ways to mitigate against an inflation increase across all parking charges
 - Option 2: Introduce Sunday and Bank / Public Holiday charging at all car parks
 - Option 3: Charge in all Wiltshire Council car parks
 - Option 4: Move the free event parking offer in November and December to other times of year
 - Option 5: Base season ticket prices on the standard rate charges

- Option 6: Harmonise residents' parking permit charges
 - Option 7: Reduce the period of time or parking grace from 15 minutes to 10 minutes in all car parks
18. The questionnaire also included a question (termed Option 8) on: 'Proposals for alternative ways to fund from the local community'.
19. In addition to the questionnaire, the following supporting information was made available:
- Range of parking charges in Wiltshire
 - Off-street parking charges in key competitor towns
 - Schedule of proposed increased car parking charges
 - Proposed charges in currently free car parks
 - Proposed season ticket charges
 - Equality Analysis Evidence Document (EAED)
 - Frequently Asked Questions
 - Link to the Joint Strategic Assessment webpage.
20. A variety of means were used to inform people of the consultation. A news release was issued on 28 September 2017 (as a result, the consultation was picked up by several local news outlets). In addition, an article was included in the 11 September 2017 edition of the Parish Newsletter and the October 2017 and November 2017 Cabinet Member Highways Newsletters. Information was also contained on the Wiltshire Council Facebook and Twitter feeds.

Main Considerations for the Council

Overall Consultation Responses

21. In total, 1,377 people and organisations responded by completing questionnaires:

Respondent	Number
Local resident	1171
Someone who visits or works in the area	71
A local business or commercial concern	24
A councillor	29
An existing resident car permit holder	40
An existing car season ticket holder	16
Someone representing an organisation	18

22. The organisations represented were as follows (plus two responses where the organisation was not provided):
- Federation of Small Businesses
 - Federation of Small Business for Wiltshire
 - Malmesbury and St Paul Without Residents' Association
 - Malmesbury Town Council
 - Melksham Railway User's Group
 - Melksham Town Council

- Melksham Without Parish Council
- Old Baptist Chapel, Chapel Lane, Chippenham
- Salisbury and District Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Salisbury Federation of Small Businesses
- Southwick Country parkrun
- St Edmunds Community Group
- St Paul Malmesbury Without Parish Council
- Trowbridge Town Council
- Warminster Town Council
- Westbury Town Council

23. The questionnaire responses by settlement are shown below:

Amesbury	38	Bradford on Avon	41
Calne	14	Chippenham	113
Corsham	55	Devizes	164
Downton	13	Malmesbury	105
Marlborough	101	Melksham	51
Mere	3	Pewsey	23
Royal Wootton Bassett	151	Salisbury	334
Tidworth	1	Tisbury	5
Trowbridge	100	Warminster	21
Wilton	9	Westbury	27

24. Separate written comments (i.e. non-questionnaire returns) have been received from the following town / city councils (see **Appendix 1**):

- Chippenham Town Council
- Corsham Town Council
- Devizes Town Council
- Labour Group, Salisbury City Council
- Marlborough Town Council
- Melksham Town Council
- Salisbury City Council
- Trowbridge Town Council

25. Separate written comments were also received from the following (a summary of the comments is attached at **Appendix 2**):

- Businesses
- Councillors
- Individuals
- Salisbury Business Improvement District / Salisbury Chamber of Commerce / Federation of Small Businesses
- Southwick Country Parkrun
- TransWilts Community Interest Company

Option 1 - Consultation Responses

26. The overall questionnaire response to Option 1 'Seeking ways to mitigate against an inflation increase across all parking charges' was as follows:

Option	Number supporting
An inflationary increase to current pay and display parking charges	808 (63%)
Support a reduction in the equivalent funding of public transport and other highway services	480 (37%)

Option 2 - Consultation Responses

27. The overall questionnaire response to Option 2 'Introduce Sunday and Bank / Public Holiday charging at all car parks' was as follows:

Option	Number supporting
Wiltshire Council implementing Sunday and bank holiday charges in all its car parks (including those that are currently free during the week)	534 (40%)
Spreading the income requirement across the chargeable car parks within that local community with the resulting cost increase to parking charges	399 (30%)
A reduction in the equivalent funding of public transport and other highway services	394 (30%)

Option 3 - Consultation Responses

28. As part of the consultation, charges were proposed to be introduced in the following currently free car parks (or part of):

- Market Place, Devizes
- Station Car Park, Melksham
- Central, Amesbury
- Burnham Road, Malmesbury
- Southwick Country Park, Trowbridge
- Westbury Leigh, Westbury
- Smallbrook Lane, Warminster

29. The overall questionnaire response to Option 3 'Charge in all Wiltshire Council car parks' was as follows:

Option	Number supporting
Wiltshire Council implementing charges in all its car parks	691 (53%)
Spreading the income requirement across the chargeable car parks within that local community with the resulting cost increase to parking charges	314 (24%)
A reduction in the equivalent funding of public transport and other highway services	309 (24%)

30. A locational analysis of the questionnaire responses to Option 3 is set out in **Appendix 3**.

Option 4 - Consultation Responses

31. The overall questionnaire response to Option 4 'Move the free event parking offer in November and December to other times of year' was as follows:

Would you support the council withdrawing the use of its free event parking offer in November and December?	Number supporting
Yes I would support this	762 (56%)
No I would not support this	589 (44%)

32. A total of 390 respondents provided comments in answer to the question: *If you said no why is this?* The majority of comments made related to the following themes:

- The option only provides a small financial benefit to Wiltshire Council.
- The decision should be left to a town council's discretion.
- Local retailers need help at Christmas to combat the internet and encourage people to shop locally.

Option 5 - Consultation Responses

33. The overall questionnaire response to Option 5 'Base season ticket prices on the standard rate charges' was as follows:

Option	Number supporting
Wiltshire Council amending its season ticket prices so that they reflect at least 50% of the normal daily charge	879 (66%)
Spreading the income requirement across all chargeable car parks across Wiltshire with the resulting cost increase to parking charges	201 (15%)
A reduction in the equivalent funding of public transport and other highway services	250 (19%)

Option 6 - Consultation Responses

34. The overall questionnaire response to Option 6 'Harmonise residents' parking permit charges' was as follows:

Option	Number supporting
Harmonising the charges for residents' permits and limited waiting permits across Wiltshire	486 (37%)
Harmonising the charges for residents' permits and limited waiting permits charges across Wiltshire with the introduction of a two tiered charging regime with a second permit being a higher charge	498 (38%)

Spreading the income requirement across all car parks across Wiltshire with the resulting cost increase to parking charges	112 (9%)
A reduction in the equivalent funding of public transport and other highway services	219 (17%)

35. A locational analysis of the questionnaire responses to Option 6 is set out in **Appendix 3**.

36. A number of responses regarding the on-street residents' permit scheme in Salisbury requested that the operational hours should be extended from 8am – 6pm to 8am – 8pm to discourage commuters and visitors to the city from parking in residential areas.

Option 7 - Consultation Responses

37. The overall questionnaire response to Option 7 'Reduce the period of time or parking grace from 15 minutes to 10 minutes in all car parks' was as follows:

Would you support Wiltshire Council reducing the parking grace period from 15 minutes to 10 minutes across all its car parks?	Number supporting
Yes I would support this	655 (48%)
No I would not support this	704 (52%)

38. A total of 381 respondents provided comments in answer to the question: *If you said no why is this?* The majority of comments made related to the following themes:

- The option only provides a small financial benefit to Wiltshire Council.
- 10 mins is too short a time – 15 minutes is a reasonable time period.
- No real positive impact on the turnover of parking spaces.

Option 8 - Consultation Responses

39. With regard to Option 8, 'Proposals for alternative ways to fund from the local community', a total of 666 respondents provided comments in answer to the question: *Do you have any other suggestions how funding could be found to cover the increases needed?*

40. To aid comprehension, all the comments to the above question have been categorised as follows:

Suggestion	Number of Comments	Officers Response
Reduce Wiltshire Council councillor expenses / staff salaries	85	<p>The salary scales for Wiltshire Council staff are nationally negotiated with the trade unions on an annual basis and therefore the Council is bound by the national negotiations. In the past few years the majority of council staff have received just a 1% annual pay award and increments have also been frozen for the last two years. If staff salaries were reduced, the Council would not be able to recruit and retain staff with the right skills to deliver its services in the communities.</p> <p>Councillors receive a basic allowance which increases annually in line with the annual pay award. So again, there has been just a 1% increase in recent years.</p>
Maintain or cut parking charges (e.g. to increase use and therefore revenue, and to support town centres)	77	<p>As set out in paragraphs 4 and 5, the Council needs to find a balance between three key factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration • Restraint • Revenue <p>To help achieve this, a more 'fine grained' approach to car parking management, and in particular charges, was supported and introduced as a result of the last review in 2014 based on the local circumstances of each car park / settlement.</p>
Harmonise parking charges across Wiltshire	67	As above.
Look for savings efficiencies and income opportunities elsewhere in Wiltshire Council	51	<p>The Council has an ongoing process of looking for efficiencies and income opportunities. It prioritises service provision and directs funds to those services which protect the most vulnerable. Unlike car parking, there is limited choice as to who provides services to the vulnerable or whether you want to use them or not.</p> <p>The Council will continue to review efficiencies and income opportunities and allocate funding in relation to its stated priorities.</p>

Suggestion	Number of Comments	Officers Response
Reduce public transport subsidies / Charge more to concessionary fare users	48	<p>Wiltshire Council consulted on the future of public transport in 2016. The consultation returned over 11,000 responses, the second highest response rate to any consultation held by Wiltshire Council. When analysing the responses it was clear that the general public is very supportive of public transport and wholesale reductions to bus subsidy were not taken forward. Instead, Wiltshire Council agreed to save £500,000 from those bus services that were less well used and did not meet the £3.50 per passenger trip subsidy as defined in the Wiltshire LTP. Those savings have since been achieved and demonstrate that there has been a reduction in subsidy for public transport.</p> <p>With regard to charging for a concessionary fares bus pass, or requesting that users of the concessionary pass make a contribution, this is not possible as legislation is clear that no charge can be made for the issue of a concessionary fares pass and it must be free to the user at point of use.</p>
Increase the current income of the parking service (e.g. better enforcement, increased fines and ensuring all ticket machines work)	42	<p>Parking services has recently recruited to long standing vacant civil enforcement officer positions allowing more effective enforcement.</p> <p>As part of this parking review, parking services has detailed a yearly expenditure profile for a rolling replacement programme to ensure the pay and display ticket machines operate efficiently and reliably. During the summer of 2017, all of the pay and display ticket machines in Salisbury were replaced as part of the new £1 coin implementation process.</p>

Suggestion	Number of Comments	Officers Response
Increase council tax (precept) / business rates	30	<p>Business rates are a national form of taxation with the levels of taxation and rates of taxation determined by central government. The Council cannot choose to set a local charge for businesses other than through the creation of a business improvement district. The majority of the business rates the Council collects go to central government.</p> <p>Council tax is a tax that is set locally and there is a limit on how much Council tax can be increased each year without balloting every household regarding any proposed increases. Recognising the pressure on household budgets, only in the last two years has Wiltshire Council had to raise council tax.</p>
Charge in Wiltshire Council staff car parks / Charge on all on-street bays	28	<p>The decision not to require Wiltshire Council staff to pay for parking was taken at a corporate level and plays an important part in staff retention and recruitment. A number of council staff must be able to park close to council buildings for emergency responses and many require vehicles for their duties. For operational reasons it is vital that parking arrangements, including free parking or parking reimbursement, meet this requirement.</p> <p>Councillors only receive free parking when undertaking council activities and it is not available for private use.</p> <p>The potential for charging on all on-street bays will be considered as part of ongoing town centre reviews.</p>
Introduce new technologies (e.g. pay on exit, variable charging, etc)	27	<p>Parking services is currently exploring new technology options. However, the costs of implementation must always be carefully considered against the benefits.</p>
Poor questionnaire	22	<p>The nature of the questionnaire was largely determined by the difficult choices and options available to the Council.</p>

Suggestion	Number of Comments	Officers Response
Support / Encourage more use of sustainable transport modes (e.g. to help make buses more commercially viable)	20	Subject to available funding, the Council seeks to support and encourage sustainable transport modes through a variety of means, including the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Wiltshire Local Transport Plan.
Explore commercial opportunities (e.g. events on car parks, sponsorship, etc.)	17	Parking services already uses Wiltshire Council car parks for events, such as filming locations, and the possibility of advertising in the car parks is currently being considered (advertising space is already sold on the back of pay and display tickets).
Transfer car parks to town councils / Seek further support from town councils	15	Localism opportunities such as these already form part of the Wiltshire LTP Car Parking Strategy (e.g. the Community Asset Transfer Policy, and the Delegation of Services to Town and Parish Councils and Funding of Delegated Services Policy).
Charge for Blue Badge parking and / or reduce the number of Blue Badge parking bays	14	The option of charging Blue Badge holders to park was considered but rejected by the Cabinet Member early on in the process.
Review Park and Ride operations	13	Wiltshire Council has worked with the bus company Salisbury Reds over the past few years to significantly reduce the subsidy paid to operate buses serving the five park and ride sites in Salisbury. Three of the sites now do not have dedicated buses operating to them - the commercial bus network simply diverts into these sites, making a saving of around £600,000 per annum. Work is ongoing with Salisbury Reds to further reduce costs at the other two sites.
Lobby central government to increase Wiltshire Council's overall funding level	8	This is undertaken through a variety of channels including the Local Government Association.

Suggestion	Number of Comments	Officers Response
Force supermarkets / out-of-town shops to introduce parking charges	6	<p>The Wiltshire LTP Car Parking Strategy states the following:</p> <p><i>Policy PS5 - Managing publicly available private non-residential parking</i></p> <p><i>There will be a presumption that any planning application which includes provision for publicly available private non-residential parking will be required to provide an accompanying car park management plan and, subject to a case-by-case analysis, to implement parking restrictions and charges consistent with those of council run car parks in the local area.</i></p>
Introduce congestion charging / road user charging /workplace parking levy	6	<p>While opportunities for introducing these measures are kept under review, they are currently not considered relevant to Wiltshire's circumstances.</p>
Increase the number of car parking spaces (e.g. to increase revenue, support town centres, etc.)	5	<p>As set out in paragraphs 4 and 5, the Council needs to find a balance between three key factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration • Restraint • Revenue <p>To help achieve this, a more 'fine grained' approach to car parking management, and in particular charges, was supported and introduced as a result of the last review in 2014 based on the local circumstances of each car park / settlement.</p>

Suggestion	Number of Comments	Officers Response
Residents permits scheme should be introduced in Marlborough	5	<p>The Wiltshire LTP Car Parking Strategy states the following:</p> <p><i>Policy PS8 - Residents' parking zones</i></p> <p><i>In those residential areas which suffer from the significant effects of on-street commuter and/or shopper parking, the Council will, subject to available resources, investigate and where appropriate introduce residents' parking zones in consultation with local residents and businesses.</i></p> <p>A process (Appendix B in the LTP Car Parking Strategy) has been developed that sets out how the Council will investigate, implement and operate residents' parking zones across the authority area.</p>
Introduce a retail reimbursement scheme	4	<p>Parking services has worked with town councils, individual retailers and community groups on this type of scheme and would welcome working on any other suggested schemes put forward.</p>
Introduce evening / overnight parking charges	4	<p>The option of introducing evening charges was considered but rejected by the Cabinet Member early on in the process.</p>
Install green technologies (e.g. chargeable EV points, solar panels, etc.)	4	<p>When motorists use EV parking bays it is a requirement that payment is made for the stay within the car park. Parking services is extending its stock of solar powered pay and display machines to further reduce expenditure.</p>

Suggestion	Number of Comments	Officers Response
Increase long-stay parking charges / reduce or maintain short-stay parking charges	4	<p>As set out in paragraphs 4 and 5, the Council needs to find a balance between three key factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration • Restraint • Revenue <p>To help achieve this, a more 'fine grained' approach to car parking management, and in particular charges, was supported and introduced as a result the last review in 2014 based on the local circumstances of each car park / settlement.</p>
Other comments	100	

41. The 'Other comments' referred to above relate to comments on a wide range of other subjects and / or individual settlements or car parks.

Option Proposals

42. This section sets out the draft recommended option proposals. It should be noted that these are subject to consideration by the Corporate Leadership Team and Cabinet Liaison.

Option 1 - Seeking ways to mitigate against an inflation increase across all parking charges

43. Option 1 was to apply an inflation increase to all parking charges - despite rising operational costs and increasing service demands, the Council has not applied any inflationary increases to car parking charges since 2011. As this option could be implemented via a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) variation notice (this involves publishing a notice of the changes in a local newspaper at least 21 days before the changes come into effect and also placing a similar notice in the car park(s) affected), Cabinet agreed the following proposal at its meeting on 12 September 2017:

Agrees that, subject to any responses received during the public consultation, Option 1 is implemented as soon as possible through a variation notice to the Traffic Regulation Orders and delegates authority to the Associate Director for Highways and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste to consider any suggestions from respondents for alternative ways in which the estimated income increase from the option could be met by other means, and, with the advice of legal and parking services, to negotiate and agree any resulting legal agreements.

44. An officer decision on the consultation responses and proposed implementation of Option 1 was made by the Director for Highways and Transport on 2 January 2018 (see **Appendix 4**).

45. The TRO variation notice is planned to be published in early January 2018 with the revised charges being implemented on 1 February 2018.

Option 2 - Introduce Sunday and Bank / Public Holiday charging at all car parks

46. Currently, Sunday charging is applied only in Salisbury, and Bank / Public Holiday charging in Amesbury, Bradford on Avon, Melksham, Salisbury, Trowbridge, Warminster and Westbury. By comparison, charges are applied Monday to Sunday (including Bank / Public Holidays) in all or most council car parks in the following key competitor towns: Bath; Bournemouth; Newbury; Southampton; and Swindon. In addition, Bank / Public Holiday charges are applied in: Cirencester and Frome. In the interest of improved fairness (i.e. between different towns in Wiltshire and between those people who park on Sundays and those who park Monday to Saturday) and efficiency (i.e. charging for the use of the car park service and asset), and based on the consultation response, it is proposed that Sunday and Bank / Public Holiday charging is applied in all relevant Wiltshire Council car park facilities (see **Appendix 5**).
47. If this option proposal is approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 30 January 2018, then Policy PS3 of the LTP Car Parking Strategy needs to be amended as follows:

Policy PS3 - Parking charges

Parking charges will be set for each Wiltshire Council car parking facility (on and off-street) taking account of the following factors:

- *the service role and strength of the local economy*
- *the utilisation of existing parking spaces*
- *traffic conditions on the local highway network*
- *the availability of sustainable transport modes*
- *the need to avoid 'searching' traffic*
- *parking charges in neighbouring areas*
- *the convenience and quality of parking locations*
- *the ability to manage on-street parking*
- *local environmental conditions*
- *relevant price elasticities of demand*
- *the requirement to provide an efficient Council parking service*
- *relevant LTP goals and objectives*

To reflect its greater convenience, where they are applied, charges for on-street parking will be set at a premium over the equivalent off-street parking charge.

~~*Sunday parking charges will be considered where there is an identified traffic congestion or air quality issue, or where there is a strong and established parking demand from shoppers or visitors.*~~

Parking charges will be set by the Council following consultation with the public, stakeholders and Area Boards.

Option 3 - Charge in all Wiltshire Council car parks

48. There is a small number of parking facilities (or part of) where currently charges are not applied. In the interest of improved fairness (i.e. between different towns in Wiltshire) and efficiency (i.e. charging for the use of the car parking service and asset), and based on the consultation response, it is proposed that the following action is taken in relation to each of the car parks identified in paragraph 28 (see **Appendix 6** for further details):

Car Park	Proposal
Central Car Park, Amesbury	Remove facility of free 'yellow' parking bays.
Market Place, Devizes	Introduce charges as set out in Appendix 6.
Burnham Road, Malmesbury	Introduce charges as set out in Appendix 6.
Station Car Park, Melksham	No charges to be introduced. Discuss the future management of the station car park with Great Western Railway, Network Rail and the TransWilts Community Rail Partnership.
Southwick Country Park, Trowbridge	Explore the possibility of an asset transfer / service delegation of the facility to the local community before 3 September 2018. If this is not possible, introduce charges as set out in Appendix 6.
Smallbrook Lane, Warminster	Introduce charges as set out in Appendix 6.
Westbury Leigh, Westbury	Explore the possibility of an asset transfer / service delegation of the facility to the local community before 3 September 2018. If this is not possible, introduce charges as set out in Appendix 6.

49. At its meeting on 17 March 2015, Cabinet approved a number of car parking localism opportunities (as set out in the LTP Car Parking Strategy) and delegated authority to the Associate Director for Highways and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, and with the advice of legal and property services, to negotiate and agree any resulting legal agreements.

Option 4 - Move the free event parking offer in November and December to other times of year

50. The Council currently provides a number of free parking spaces to town / city councils to allocate on a discretionary basis to help support local events, initiatives and businesses. However, a number of town councils have used this initiative to provide free parking in the Christmas shopping period when parking demand is already high. Given this, and based on the consultation response, it is proposed that this initiative is withdrawn for use by town / city councils in the months of November and December.

Option 5 - Base season ticket prices on the standard rate charges

51. Season tickets are available for designated car parks (they are not valid in on-street parking areas). While a season ticket does not guarantee a parking space, they do offer considerable savings when compared to standard charges. As a result however, and particularly as they are popular with commuters, season tickets can increase car use (particularly at peak times), discourage the use of sustainable transport modes (as people have already paid for parking) and reduce the availability and turnover of parking spaces (as commuters often park for eight hours).
52. The increased take up of season tickets has impacted on the income of the Council due to the lower cost of parking for season ticket holders; currently, depending on the car park, season ticket holders receive up to an 85% discount on full day rate ticket prices. To address the income impact and help deal with the implications of season tickets outlined above, and based on the consultation response, it is proposed that all season tickets should be based on a standard discount percentage of 50% of the day rate for five days a week and for 48 weeks of the year (see **Appendix 7**). It should be noted that the proposed season ticket charges shown in **Appendix 7** are based on the existing day rates (i.e. the rates prior to the inflation increase set out under Option 1) as these were the season ticket charges set out in the consultation.

Option 6 - Harmonise residents' parking permit charges

53. Residents' parking permits are issued to residents living within residents' parking zones for use with their own vehicle. Permits issued can only be used with the vehicle assigned to the permit and are only valid for one year. Currently, there are considerable differences between the rates charged across Wiltshire (i.e. Salisbury residents' permits cost £20 for permits in limited waiting zones and £40 for permits in residents' only zones, whereas £90 is charged in other areas). Many neighbouring authorities also charge more for a second residents' parking permit.
54. Two options were included in the report to Cabinet at its meeting on 12 September 2017 (it should be noted that text detailing these options was not included in the consultation questionnaire):
- Option A: Increase the residents' permit in limited waiting zones from £20 to £60 and the permit in residents' only zones from £40 to £90.
 - Option B: Introduce a two tiered charging regime where residents' permits in limited waiting zones would be £60 for the first permit and £80 for the second permit (at the same address). The charge for the permits in residents' only zones would then be £90 for the first permit and £110 for the second permit (at the same address).
55. At the time of writing this report, officers are still in the process of considering the recommended proposal to be presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 30 January 2018.

Option 7 - Reduce the period of time or parking grace from 15 minutes to 10 minutes in all car parks

56. The Council currently offers a grace period for parking overstays of 15 minutes. The statutory period is 10 minutes.
57. In view of the consultation response, it is proposed that the grace period of 15 minutes is retained.

Option 8 - Proposals for alternative ways to fund from the local community

58. Overall, it is considered that none of the alternative funding proposals suggested could realistically replace the income uplift forecast under Options 1 to 7.

Timetable to Implement Options 2 to 6

59. To implement the amendment notice to the existing TROs in relation to charging options 2 to 6 the key stages would be:
- (i) Preparation of the TROs and supporting documents allowing for advice to be sought from the Council's legal team to ensure that once implemented, the TROs will be legally enforceable and not subject to challenge.
 - (ii) Required processes for public and other consultation on the TROs.
 - (iii) Preparation of a report to the relevant Wiltshire Council Cabinet Member who will consider any objections received during the TRO public consultation exercise before making a decision.
 - (iv) Required processes, as set out in the relevant legislation for the implementation of the TROs.
60. The proposed overall timetable to implement options 2 to 6 is set out below:

	Jan 18	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Cabinet meeting								
TRO documents drafted liaising with council's legal team								
Documents checked / approved								
Advert sent to press and appears in local press								
TRO public consultation								
Objections received and report drafted and submitted to Cabinet Member								
Cabinet member report process								
Cabinet Member decision advised to people who made representations								
TRO(s) sealed and advertised								
TRO(s) operational								

Technology Improvements

61. The paragraphs below set out a number of technology improvements which can help address the rising demand from residents, schools, businesses and parish / town councils for parking enforcement at a time of constrained resources.
62. Local authorities are not currently allowed to use mobile Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) management for automatic enforcement and sending Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) in the post. However, placing a civil enforcement officer (CEO) in an ANPR vehicle, so allowing drive pass checking of resident parking areas, is permitted where the CEO issues physical PCNs on illegally parked vehicles. Implementation of this system option will allow faster and more efficient checking due to the speed of movement of a car, which allows checking at speeds of up to 30 mph with modern technology. The forecast estimate identifies a 'one off' cost of £40,000 and operational revenue costs of £5,000 per annum.
63. The Council's parking services is currently facing constant requests from schools to address parking enforcement issues outside schools. Use of a static ANPR system is permitted on safety grounds where there is a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) outside of an establishment such as a school. The static ANPR system will offer a fixed deterrent to reduce the unsafe and illegal parking on yellow lines, zig zags, etc. The proposal would be for the Council to purchase three cameras for a 'one off' cost of £60,000 with an on-going annual management and maintenance cost of £10,000. The schools or local community in question would fund the erection and removal costs.
64. Body Worn Video Cameras (BWVC) ensure that enforcement decisions are undertaken in a transparent way and, where evidence is required, that this is robust and available in a timely fashion. In addition, they ensure the safety of CEOs who often face both verbal and physical abuse and can be subject to accusations of inappropriate behaviour; currently two to three such incidents per month. Regrettably, this is an increasing occurrence locally and nationally. Many comparative councils have already introduced BWVCs in recognition of the risk to officers and for their protection. This will become an escalating risk to the Council and a potential staffing claim when issues occur. Alternatively, the Council could look at double shifting staff to work together and ensure safety. However, this will severely hamper staff effectiveness of resources and potential income.
65. Wiltshire Police has recently trialled and are introducing BWVC equipment for their officers. BWVC was first introduced to Wiltshire Police in 2006 and has been used by officers in neighbourhood policing and response teams in a number of small initiatives since then. The Council would work in partnership with the police and utilise the police BWVC system. The 'one off' cost of purchasing the system is £25,000 and £2,000 per annum is required to maintain the system.

Operational Improvements

66. To help meet the challenge of reduced overall council funding, maintenance of council car parks has been reduced to a minimum level. If continued, this could result in safety issues and claims for compensation from users. There are also areas where parking enforcement can no longer be undertaken as the signs and lines are not being maintained at an appropriate level. To apply the adequate level of maintenance at car parks as prescribed by the agreed standards, £116,000 of revenue funding per annum is required.

Safeguarding Implications

67. There are no direct safeguarding implications as a result of the proposals put forward in this report.
68. The Equality Analysis Evidence Document (EAED) identifies a number of potential indirect implications on identified Protected Characteristic groups (see paragraphs 77 to 79).

Public Health Implications

69. There are no direct public health implications as a result of the proposals put forward in this report.
70. The EAED identifies a number of potential public health related impacts on identified Protected Characteristic groups (see paragraphs 77 to 79). Public health issues also formed part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment undertaken for the review of the LTP Car Parking Strategy (see paragraphs 73 to 74).
71. A potential impact of implementing the proposed options is reduced car trips and circulating traffic, and possibly encouragement for people to use more sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling and buses. In turn, this may have a positive impact on air quality, carbon emission, reliance on fossil fuels, activity levels and communities.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

72. There are no direct environmental and climate change implications as a result of the proposals put forward in this report.
73. The LTP Car Parking Strategy was subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) which includes consideration of a number of relevant topics:
- Biodiversity
 - Land, soil and water resources
 - Air quality and environmental pollution
 - Climatic factors
 - Historic environment
 - Landscapes (and townscapes)
 - Population
 - Healthy communities

- Inclusive communities
- Transport
- Economy and enterprise

74. The main purpose of an SEA is to evaluate whether a plan or strategy will result in any significant environmental effects, both positive and negative. No significant effects were identified in the SEA Environmental Report.
75. A potential impact of implementing the proposed options is reduced car trips and circulating traffic, and possibly encouragement for people to use more sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling and buses. In turn this may have a positive impact on air quality, carbon emission, reliance on fossil fuels, activity levels and communities.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

76. There are no direct equalities implications as a result of the proposals put forward in this report.
77. A draft Equality Analysis Evidence Document (EAED) covering all seven proposed charging options was included as a supporting document in the public consultation.
78. The possible impacts of implementing Option 1 to 6 on each identified Protected Characteristic group are considered to be as follows (a revised EAED covering Options 1 to 6 is attached at **Appendix 8**):

Age:

Issue: Young people and the elderly are more likely to be on low incomes and are therefore more likely to be adversely impacted by any higher parking charges.

Response: Surplus revenue from parking charges supports other transport measures including non-commercial, but essential local bus services. This is one of the main reasons why the Council has been in a position to retain the vast majority of these bus services, in contrast to other local authorities which have seen significant cuts to services.

Religion and Belief:

Issue: Introduced or higher parking charges for people attending places of worship on a Sunday.

Response: The proposed Sunday parking charges are significantly less than the Mon-Sat charges. Surplus revenue from parking charges supports other transport measures including non-commercial, but essential local bus services. This is one of the main reasons why the Council has been in a position to retain the vast majority of these bus services, in contrast to other local authorities which have seen significant cuts to services.

Other:

Issue: People on low incomes are more likely to be adversely impacted by any higher parking charges.

Issue: People living in rural areas with little public transport and who therefore need to use a car to access shops and services in the towns, are more likely to be adversely impacted by any higher parking charges.

Issue: Increased parking charges may have some influence on reducing the numbers of people accessing local towns and businesses (i.e. increased charges may result in people not visiting certain areas so often).

Response: Surplus revenue from parking charges supports other transport measures including non-commercial, but essential local bus services. This is one of the main reasons why the Council has been in a position to retain the vast majority of these bus services, in contrast to other local authorities which have seen significant cuts to services.

79. If the implementation of Options 1 to 6 is not agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on 30 January 2018, then this could have the following possible impacts on each identified Protected Characteristic group:

Age / Other

Issue: The loss of additional parking revenue may impact on the Council's ability to support some non-commercial local bus services which provide access to essential services and facilities.

Disability:

Issue: The maintenance of car parks has been reduced to a minimum and if continued could become an issue in terms of accessibility particularly for disabled people.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

80. There are no direct risk implications as a result of the proposals put forward in this report.
81. The relevant risks for the proposed Cabinet decision are considered to be as follows:
- (i) Failure to meet the Council's budget requirement.
 - (ii) Inability to effectively enforce regulations and increasing likelihood of insurance claims.
 - (iii) Reductions in supported bus services as a result of lower surpluses in off-street parking income.
 - (iv) Parking services unable to operate efficient parking management processes.
 - (v) Reduced ability to adequately deal with abuse incidents against civil enforcement officers.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

- 82. There are no direct risk implications as a result of the proposals put forward in this report.
- 83. The relevant risks for the proposed Cabinet decision are considered to be as follows:

Risk	Action to mitigate the risk
Reputational impact of increasing parking charges by a five year inflation figure.	The consultation material outlined why a five year inflation increase in parking charges is justified and necessary.
Adverse impact of increased parking charges on businesses and local economies.	The public consultation provided the opportunity for comments to be made by all interested parties. Some relevant economic data (e.g. links to Joint Strategic Assessments) was included in the consultation material.
Adverse impact of increased parking charges on some Protected Characteristic groups.	An EAED has been developed to identify the potential impacts and any necessary actions.
Increase in inappropriate parking (e.g. in residential streets) as a result of increased parking charges.	Town parking reviews will continue in line with a prioritised programme. Better management and control of parking will be enabled by the increased investment from parking income and use of modern technologies.

Financial Implications

- 84. There are no direct financial implications as a result of the proposals put forward in this report.
- 85. Accountancy is supportive of the proposals to implement Options 1 to 6. Due diligence on the assumptions has been undertaken. Future income levels and impact will be monitored through the budget monitoring process.

Legal Implications

- 86. There are no direct legal implications as a result of the proposals put forward in this report.
- 87. Any significant changes to the terms and conditions applicable to car parks will require the processing of a TRO under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 ('the 1984 Act') and the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. In deciding whether or not to make a TRO, and exercising any of their powers under the 1984 Act, the Council also has a duty to (having regard to the matters specified in Section 122 (2)) secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking

facilities on and off the highway. The matters referred to in Section 122 (2) are; the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises; the effect on the amenities of any locality affected; the importance of regulating and restricting the use of roads by heavy commercial vehicles; the national air quality strategy; facilitating the passage of public service vehicles including the safety and convenience of persons using public service vehicles and any other matters the Council considers to be relevant. Failure to adhere to any of the statutory processes could potentially result in the proposed changes being successfully challenged in the High Court.

88. The making of a TRO includes a statutory public consultation process over a period of 21 days to permit responses including any objections to be made. Any objections must then be considered before an Order is made.
89. For these purposes, a significant change would include:
 - (i) Imposing a charge where one did not previously exist.
 - (ii) Introducing free parking areas into a charging car park.
 - (iii) Changing the class of vehicle permitted to use a car park.
90. Failure to adhere to the statutory processes could potentially result in:
 - (i) The new charges being successfully challenged in the High Court resulting in loss of income and/or loss of reputation for the Council.
 - (ii) Delay arising from the Council being unable to increase the charges on the anticipated implementation date.
91. Where the only change proposed is an increase in parking charges, there is no statutory requirement to make a new TRO. Such changes can be implemented by notice. This involves publishing a notice of the changes in a local newspaper at least 21 days before the changes come into effect and also placing a similar notice in the car park(s) affected. However, the Council's LTP Car Parking Strategy provides that, before any parking charges are set, the Council will consult the public, stakeholders and area boards. Such consultation should, therefore, be carried out before notice of the increases is given.

Options Considered

92. The options considered are as set out in this report.

Conclusions

93. Except for Option 7, the majority of questionnaire responses were in support of the option in question being implemented.
94. Option 1 can be implemented separately through a variation notice to the relevant TROs. An officer decision on the consultation responses and proposed implementation of Option 1 was made by the Director for Highways and Transport on 2 January 2018. The TRO variation notice is planned to be published in early January 2018 with the revised charges being implemented on 1 February 2018.

95. With regard to Option 8, it is considered that none of the alternative funding proposals suggested could realistically replace the income uplift forecast under Options 1 to 7.
96. Given the results of the consultation, it is proposed that, subject to consideration by the Corporate Leadership Team and Cabinet Liaison, and the decision of Cabinet at its meeting on 30 January 2018, Options 2 to 6 are implemented via an amendment to the existing TROs (which includes a statutory consultation period). The outcome of the TRO amendment process would be subject to a Cabinet Member decision.

Proposal

97. That Environment Select Committee comments on the consultation responses and the draft recommended option proposals ahead of Cabinet considering both at its meeting on 30 January 2018.

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5 January 2018

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Non-Questionnaire Responses from Town Councils
- Appendix 2: Summary of Non-Questionnaire Responses (not including Town Councils)
- Appendix 3: Locational Analysis of Options 3 and 6
- Appendix 4: Record of Officer Decision
- Appendix 5: Proposed Sunday and Bank Holiday Charges
- Appendix 6: Proposed Actions in Currently Free Car Parks
- Appendix 7: Proposed Season Ticket Charges
- Appendix 8: Equality Analysis Evidence Document (EAED)

Background Papers

The following documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

None