

## **Appendix 4**

### **RECORD OF OFFICER DECISION**

#### **APPROVAL FOR AMENDMENTS TO THE WILTSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN (LTP) 2011-2026 – CAR PARKING STRATEGY: OPTION 1**

##### **Decision made**

To approve

- i. The implementation of Option 1 through a variation notice to the relevant Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs).
- ii. The proposed car parking charges as set out in **Appendix 1**.

**Made by;** Parvis Khansari, Service Director, Highways and Transport

##### **Background**

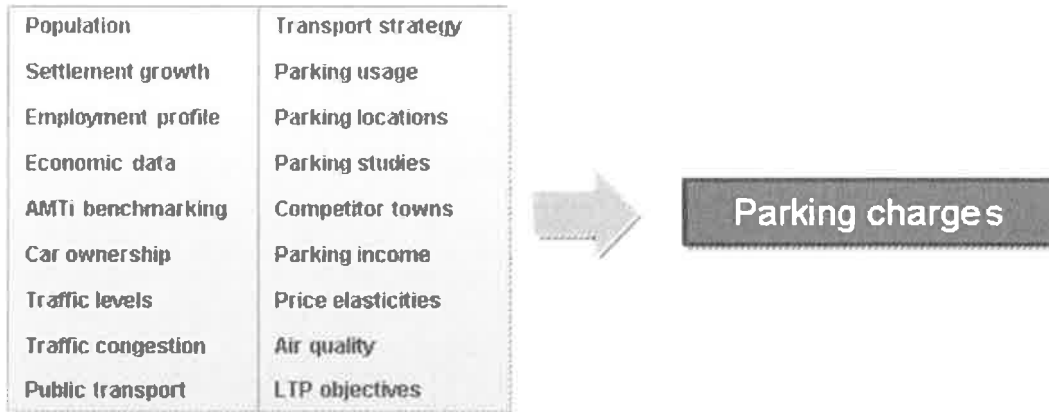
1. As the Service Director for Highways and Transport, I am responsible for any matters relating to highways and transport in the County of Wiltshire on behalf of Wiltshire Council. The power to make a decision in respect of this matter is delegated to me pursuant to Wiltshire Council's Constitution and the following resolution agreed by cabinet at its meeting on 29 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.*

##### Policy context

2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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 below).



5. 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

6. 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.
7. 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 11 to 15).
8. One of the options, Option 1 (the subject of this report), 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. Given this, in the consultation it was stated that the

council is minded to apply an inflation increase to cover the next five years (based on Bank of England forecasts). In doing so, this would provide both certainty to users and reduce implementation costs.

#### Legal process

9. Any significant changes to the terms and conditions applicable to car parks require the processing of a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 ('the 1984 Act') and the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.
10. However, where the only change proposed is an increase in parking charges (as is the case with Option 1), there is no statutory requirement to make a new TRO. Such changes can be implemented by a 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.

#### Public consultation exercise

11. A public consultation exercise was held between 28 September and 23 November 2017.
12. 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
13. The questionnaire also included a question (termed Option 8) on: 'Proposals for alternative ways to fund from the local community'.
14. 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.

15. 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.

#### Public consultation results

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

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Number</b>
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

17. 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 & 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

18. 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

19. Separate written comments (i.e. non-questionnaire returns) have been received from the following town / city councils (see **Appendix 2**):

- 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.

20. Separate written comments were also received from the following (a summary of the comments is attached at **Appendix 3**):

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

### Reason for decision

21. To implement Option 1 following the conclusion of the public consultation exercise.

22. I confirm that in making this decision I have considered the following in line with Wiltshire Council's Constitution:

- Key decision requirements ;
- Views of relevant cabinet member(s), committee chairman, area board(s) ;
- Consideration of the area boards and delegated decision checklist for officers on the issue of when and how to involve local councillors and area boards in decisions about local services ;
- Implication of any council policy, initiative, strategy or procedure ;
- Consultation in accordance with the council's consultation strategy ;
- Range of options available ;
- Staffing, financial and legal implications ;
- Risk assessment ;
- Involvement of statutory officers and/or directors ;
- Regional or national guidance from other bodies ;

- The council's constitution .

### Conflict of Interest

23. Not applicable.

### Options considered

24. 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?*

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

Proposal	Number of Comments	Officers Response
Reduce Wiltshire Council councilor 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"> <li>• Regeneration</li> <li>• Restraint</li> <li>• Revenue</li> </ul> <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>

Proposal	Number of Comments	Officers Response
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>
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 were replaced as part of the new £1 coin implementation process.</p>

Proposal	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 chose 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 goes 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>Councilors only receive free parking when undertaking council activities and 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	Parking services is currently exploring new technology options. However, the costs of implementation must always be carefully considered against the benefits.
Poor questionnaire	22	The nature of the questionnaire was largely determined by the difficult choices and options available to the council.
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.



Proposal	Number of Comments	Officers Response
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 don't 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.
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	While opportunities for introducing these measures are kept under review, they are currently not considered relevant to Wiltshire's circumstances.

Proposal	Number of Comments	Officers Response
Increase the number 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"> <li>• Regeneration</li> <li>• Restraint</li> <li>• Revenue</li> </ul> <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>
Residents permit 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>

Proposal	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"> <li>• Regeneration</li> <li>• Restraint</li> <li>• Revenue</li> </ul> <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	

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

27. Overall, it is considered that none of the alternative funding proposals suggested could realistically replace the income uplift forecast under Option 1.

Approved by: [SIGNATURE] 

Parvis Khansari, Service Director, Highways and Transport

Date: 2 January 2018