

West Wiltshire District Council

Cabinet

3 November 2004

Review of car parking charges

1. Purpose of Report

To propose a revision to off-street car parking tariffs and related issues in accordance with the recommendations of the parking Policy Project Group (PPPG)

2. Background

Aims of car parking provision.

- Provide access to retail shops, services, and leisure facilities.
- Maintain the vibrancy of our town centres
- To be self-funding
- To support the emerging Market Town Regeneration Strategy and Economic Development Strategy
- The parking Policy Project Group considered the issue in detail and have recommended the principles for charging (Appendix 1)

Current situation

- The last review of car parking charges was implemented in May 2000.
- The Council resolved to support the Local Transport Plan on 26 July 2000 the report noting a target charge of £4.00 all day by 2004.
- There is a wish to provide a 1 hour free period.
- Enforcement of on-street parking restrictions has been reduced.
- Pressure on available car parking spaces has increased.

Constraints

- There is a need to maintain or increase income.
- 87% of cars entering our car parks stay less than 1 hour
- Higher long term charges will cause displacement of parking to residential streets
- National, regional, and local policy to discourage car based commuting.

Trowbridge car parking strategy

- Consultants are currently undertaking a study, their brief is within the aims given above.
- No conflict is expected with this charge review, their report is expected to recommend the level and distribution of parking, signs and routes to car parks and the implementation of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE).

Private Car parks

- Include supermarkets, rail stations etc. The trend is towards restricting stays and charging to cater for their target customers, and respond to local authority charges.
- Shires car park charges 20p 1 hour, 40p 2 hours, 50p 3 hours, £5 4 hours, thereafter £5 per hour 7 days per week. Trowbridge station charges £1.30 per day but is expected to rise soon.

3. Key Issues

Charges in West Wiltshire are lower than neighbouring areas. This section deals with how they could be increased within the aims and constraints described in section 2.

Neighbouring authority comparison

Table 1. Charges in the town centres of neighbouring districts

	1 hour	2 hours	4 hours	All day (8hrs)
West Wiltshire (existing)	25p -40p	50p-80p	£1.00	£1.80
(proposed)	40p	60p	£1.40	£3.00
Kennet (Devizes)	40p	80p	£1.60	£3.20
Mendip (Frome)	40p-60p	50p-£1.20	90p -£1.50	£2.60 - £4.20
North Wiltshire (Chippenham)	65p*	65p	£1.60	£3.15
Salisbury	90p	£1.60	N/a	£3.60

Notes: * two car parks are free for 1 hour one outlying car park has 40p for first hour
Charges apply 8.00 -1800 6 days per week in all neighbouring areas including Sundays in Mendip.

Pay & Display

A number of possibilities for a free hour with various tariffs have been modelled, two of these are likely to be practicable. One gives free parking up until 10.00 a.m. in all car parks, the other provides a free hour in selected car parks in each town. The number of spaces has been allocated pro rata with resident population with the number of free spaces in our Castle and St Stephens Place car parks in Trowbridge that must remain free in any case, being governed by covenants. The locations suggested for free spaces are shown in Appendix 2.

Predictions of the expected income at the tariff broadly used by our neighbouring authorities of 40p 1 hour, 60p 2 hours, thereafter 40p per hour, £3.00 all day, have been made for both options. These are shown in the financial implications, and include both our own and consultant's experience of the effects of charge increases. However every town and situation is different so predictions cannot be precise. Immediately after any increase it is normal to have fewer cars parking but this recovers within a few months. Should Decriminalised Parking Enforcement be implemented a further increase in income of between 5-10% might be expected.

Enforcement:

Parking Machines

- Any free or low charge period makes enforcement more difficult without machines that require the entry of the vehicle registration number.

- Any option requires 8 new machines at £4,000 including installation each in car parks where charges are already made. The two car parks recommended to have charges introduced will also need a new machine each.
- Machines generally last in excess of 8 years. Even in free car parks machines can pay for themselves, as fewer staff are needed for enforcement. The existing 28 machines will require modification for the new tariff and further modification or replacement as they wear out. Capital sums for this work have been included in the financial implications.

Season Tickets

These are not intended to provide a discount for car based commuting. We sell about 36 a year and represent 200x the all day charge. The corresponding charge under the proposed tariff would be £600. Shorter term season tickets down to three monthly are recommended priced pro rata plus £5 for administration.

Residents tickets

These are available for people who live in the vicinity of a car park and cost £112 p.a. They are restricted to one car park and do not guarantee a space. Of our neighbouring authorities only Mendip's tariff shows such tickets at £160 p.a.

Residents tickets were priced at £100 in 1996 (100x the all day charge then) to ease the introduction of charges to people who had been used to free parking. The corresponding charge would be £300. Potentially residents can occupy a chargeable car park space all day, each of which is now expected to yield at least an average £350 per year, and it is difficult to see why the charge longer term should be lower than a season ticket. However existing ticket holders (or residents near existing free car parks that become chargeable) should continue to enjoy a lower rate of £300 increased annually by £10 plus twice index linking to the nearest £10.

Additional car parks

The Council has areas of land adjoining Weymouth Street and Western car park Warminster which are surfaced and marked out for car park spaces. They are presently not subject to a car parking order. If included an annual income of about £6,500 can be expected, an additional car parking machine at £4,000 will be needed.

There is a free 23 hour 24 space car park at the corner of Bradford Road Trowbridge. This it is attractive for rail commuters using the station nearby. This prevents it being used by residents and users of the Stallard Recreation Grounds. If included within the car parking order an income of about £5,700 p.a can be expected. An additional car parking machine costing £4,000 will be needed.

There are some other areas of Council owned land which are used informally for parking. The Technical & Professional Services Manager intends to bring a report to the Corporate Management Team and Cabinet about how the value of these under utilised assets can best be realised.

Charging periods

To be consistent with neighbouring districts weekday charging (subject to selection of a free until 10.00 a.m. option should commence at 08.00 and end at 18.00. With the increase in Sunday shopping and tourism some car parks are already well used on

Appendix 1 – Agenda Item No: 6

Sundays so charging on Sundays should be considered, at this stage 40p for any period may be considered appropriate.

Weight limit

The current weight limit is 1425kg unladen for commercial vehicles. It is often very difficult for a parking attendant to know whether a vehicle is being used for private or commercial purposes or it's unladen weight. A more practical approach is to limit use by taxation class that the parking attendant can ascertain from the vehicle's licence disc. This should be "private" or "private/light goods" which do not exceed 3500kg maximum gross weight (about "Transit" size). Some of these vehicles may be too large to fit within normal parking bays so a requirement to do so should be retained.

Financial Implications

Pay and Display Option	2004/5 Capital Expenditure	Revenue Income	2005/6 Capital Expenditure	Revenue Income	2006/7 Capital Expenditure	Revenue Income
Current	£489,000					
Neighbouring authorities	£40,000		£12,000	£579,900	£10,000	£639,400
Free hour selected car parks	£40,000		£12,000	£536,600	£10,000	£596,100
Free to 10.00a.m.	£40,000		£12,000	£499,800	£10,000	£546,000

- The above table shows the income and expenditure for both capital and revenue arising from the various options. The projected revenue income has been reduced in the short term based on experience of previous charge increases.
- The current 2004/05 car parking budget consists of revenue expenditure of £453k, capital expenditure of £25k, and total. revenue income of £584k. This income figure includes excess charge income, season and residents tickets.
- All options require additional capital expenditure of £62k spread over 3years to cover the purchase and replacement of car parking machines.
- All options will provide free car parking for those car parks listed in Appendix 3.

Option 1 increasing charges in line with neighbouring authorities with no free car parking will generate additional revenue income of £91k

Option 2 increasing charges in line with neighbouring authorities and providing a free hour at selected car parks will generate additional revenue income of £48k.

Option 3 increasing charges in line with neighbouring authorities and providing free parking to 10.00am at all car parks will generate additional revenue income of £11k.

- Clearly, the option selected will also need to take into account the Council's difficult financial situation for 2005/06 as detailed in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Appendix 1 – Agenda Item No: 6

- There is no capital budget in 2004/05 for the £40k purchase of car parking machines. Funding may be available from existing schemes, if this is not possible then Cabinet approval will be necessary to increase the 2004/05 Capital Programme. For 2005/06 and 2006/07 capital bids will be made as part of the Service and Resource Planning process.

Legal implications

The order made must be advertised for at least 28 days formal consultation, and all representations that are received must be considered before the decision is final. A 28-day period must then elapse before implementing the new charges.

Timetable

3 November 2004	15 December 2004	9 February 2005	1 April 2005
Select preferred charging option Commence consultation	Receive informal consultation Make Car Parking order	Receive formal representations Amend/ confirm Order	Implement new charges

Human Rights

The human rights implications of the actions recommended in this report have been considered and are acceptable and the checklist has been addressed.

4. Options

Existing	Recommendation	Alternatives	Comments
Pay and Display Tariff			
25/30/40p 1 hour, £1.00 4 hours, £1.80 all day.	1 hour 40p 2 hours 60p 4 hours £1.40 6hrs £2.20 All day £3.00	Phase in over 3 years	Gradual increase reduces displacement, facilitates introduction of DPE
Season/ Residents tickets			
£360/ £112	£600 season tickets £300 existing residents	Phase in over 3 years, increase by £80/ £63 p.a.	Maintain link with cost of all day parking
Excess charges			
£60/£30 14 days £4 overstay	As existing (statutory) No overstay provision	Increase overstay to £10 paid in 1 hour	Current overstay charge encourages paying for 2 hours less than stay
Charging hours			
M-F 08.30 -1800 Sat 08.30-15.00	Mon- Sat 08.00 - 18.00	Include Sunday 40p any period?	Consistency with Neighbouring authority reduces confusion . Sunday now tourism/shopping day, no charge in KDC
Weight Restrictions			
Commercial vehicles 1425kg unladen	Private /Private light goods vehicles less than 3,500 kg Max Gross Weight fitting in bay	Include light goods vehicles less than 3500kg MGW in bay	Easier for public to understand and enforce by use class shown on licence disc

Appendix 1 – Agenda Item No: 6

Additional car parks			
Weymouth St unused, Stallards free 23 hours	Charge in both car parks	Stallards 2 hours max except residents	Weymouth St is central, Stallards peripheral.
Inflation Provision for periods over 2 hours			
None	2 x inflation index from 2006/7 (2008/9 if phasing adopted)	Link with Neighbouring authority	Avoids sudden high increases maintains income.
Provision for organisations to pay for free periods			
Existing town council leases	Extends existing to other organisations and establishes basis of charge	No provision or ad hoc negotiation	Provides for local decision making with variety of funders
Free Hour			
Town Council leases	Consider 1 hour selected car parks	Free to 10.00 a.m. will not maintain income	Only NWDC has free hour in 2 car parks. Difficult to enforce

5. Key Decision

Statement of reason for key decision	The option selected is the best fit within the constraints and members' wishes.
Options considered and rejected	Other options shown above
Date of Implementation	1 April 2005

6. Background Papers

Car park tariffs from the web sites of Kennet DC, North Wiltshire DC, Salisbury DC, and Mendip DC.
Local Transport Plan 2001/6 WCC; Appendix 11, Parking Plan

7. Recommendations

These recommendations are intended to reflect the views of the parking Policy Project group shown below.

Order

1. That the preferred option for a car park order should include:
 - A pay and display tariff of 40p one hour, 80p two hours, £1.60 four hours £3.50 all day. Annual season tickets £600, with shorter whole month periods pro rata plus £5, existing residents tickets £300p.a.
 - Excess Charge Notices remaining at £60 reduced to £30 if paid within 14 days, but no provision be included for a £4 accidental overstay charge.
 - Charging hours amended to 08.00 to 18.00 Monday- Saturday.
 - For car parks with a maximum stay of four hours or less to prohibiting return on the same day.
 - For all car parks with a free or low charge period prohibiting purchase of a ticket including that period more than once on the same day.
 - Restricting parking to private or private/light goods vehicles with a maximum gross weight of 3,500 kg which fit wholly within a marked parking bay other than a bay marked out for a coach, bus, or heavy goods vehicle. A coach, bus, or heavy goods vehicle may park in specifically designated space.

Appendix 1 – Agenda Item No: 6

- Introducing charging in the car parks in Weymouth Street, Warminster, and Stallards, Trowbridge
- Consideration of an option for a free hour in the selected car parks listed in Appendix 2 of this report.

Consultation

2. To consult on the preferred option for the order alongside the budget consultation for 2005/6. The results are to be submitted for consideration at the Cabinet meeting of 15 December.

Future Changes

3. From 2006/7 pay and display charges over 2 hours be index linked to twice inflation, rounded to the nearest 10p for each 2 hour period until a charge of £5 for all day parking is reached. Season tickets and existing residents tickets are index linked in the same way rounded to the nearest £1 with £10 added annually to existing residents tickets until they equate with season tickets.

Provision for further free parking

4. That agreements may be made with organisations that wish to extend free public short term parking in return for the anticipated pay and display income.

Plain English Guidance Given TS 12/10

Richard Wiltshire
Portfolio Holder

Geoff Pell
Transport Officer

Ian Jamieson
Head of Finance

Date of Preparation of the Report: 12 October 2004

Appendix 1 Recommendations of the Parking Policy Project Group

The Group agreed that the following relevant recommendations should be made to Cabinet;

- Parking under the control of the Council should be allocated or priced to give preference to disabled people, residents, short term shopping and personal business, traders needing a vehicle to provide services in residential areas, and people who start work before public transport is running.
- A programme of phased increases in long term charges to approach those suggested in the Local Transport Plan provided agreement can be reached to ensure these are consistent with neighbouring areas. Some revenue from increased charges to be used to reduce or remove charges for short-term parking.
- That membership of the Group should be widened to increase the members representing each community.

Appendix 2 - Car parks recommended to have a free hour

The number of spaces reflect the number of residents of the town or community area compared with Trowbridge and apportioned with the number of free spaces in Trowbridge.

Bradford; Newtown, Barton Farm, 50 spaces in Station car park

Melksham: Lowbourne, King Street, and Bath Road

Trowbridge: Castle place Multi Deck short term and St Stephens Place ("Old Tesco") (already and remaining free)

Warminster: Western. (Central & Chinns Yard are currently subject to Town Council agreement)

Westbury: Warminster Road & Westfield House(both are currently subject to Town Council agreement plus some of High St)

Appendix 3 - Car Parks that are currently free and will remain free

Newtown, Bradford on Avon

Castle Place Multi-deck, Trowbridge

St Stephens Place (Old Tesco) Trowbridge

Westbury Leigh