



# COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	<b>COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
Name and date of Committee	<b>CABINET - 6 JULY 2020</b>
Report Number	<b>AGENDA ITEM (9)</b>
Subject	<b>REVIEW OF PARKING CHARGES AND RELATED MATTERS</b>
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr. Mike Every - Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance Email: <a href="mailto:mike.every@Cotswold.gov.uk">mike.every@Cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Maria Wheatley - Parking Manager Tel: 01285 623228 Email: <a href="mailto:maria.wheatley@publicagroup.uk">maria.wheatley@publicagroup.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To enable Cabinet to review tariffs and season ticket prices for each of the Council's car parks and increase charges in line with the agreed budget for 2020/21.
Annexes	Annex A - Current tariff charges Annex B - Proposed tariff charges Annex C - Current season ticket charges Annex D - Proposed season ticket charges Annex E - Proposed locations for free 20 minute bays
Recommendation/s	<i>That Cabinet agrees;</i> <i>a) the proposed tariff pricing and season ticket charges;</i> <i>b) the introduction of free 20 minute parking bays.</i>
Corporate priorities	Respond to the challenges presented by climate change emergency
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Budget consultation - The Medium Term Financial Strategy and draft Budget for 2020/21 was developed in consultation with the Council's statutory officers, Publica management, Ubico management, and members of the Cabinet. Consultation was also carried out with members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Audit Committee and with the District's residents, businesses and community organisations.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

The annual budget review in December 2019 identified that parking charges for use of the Council's off-street car parks had not been increased since 2010. The Cabinet meeting minutes of 26<sup>th</sup> February 2020 Item 9 state:-

“car park charges will be reviewed for 2020/21, and thereafter every two years; the budget proposal anticipates that changes will generate around £435,000 in additional net revenue from car parking through both extra income and cost savings. These would include the first increases in parking charges since 2010. A schedule of proposed changes to car parking day ticket and season ticket prices were available for the budget consultation. The proposed budget assumes a saving of around £35,000 resulting from the removal of the option to pay by cash at Council car parks; this saving is included within the overall additional net revenue of £435,000. Free parking after 3 pm in all car parks where this is currently in operation will be retained, while new dedicated twenty minute free parking bays will be introduced at some of the Council car parks to enable residents to make short trips to the District's towns free of charge”.

## **2. MAIN POINTS**

- 2.1.** Many of the costs relating to service provision have increased over the last 10 years. The latest budget consultation confirmed there was support from the general public to increase parking charges. 44% of respondents agreed with the rises with 36% disagreeing with them.
- 2.2.** With a view to decreasing the Council's carbon foot print it will be increasing the number of electrical vehicle charging points, decreasing the number of trips by the Councils cash collectors and ensuring the latest energy saving technology is used where possible. The Council will be encouraging its customers to use technology to pay for parking by calling, texting or using an App on their mobile phone. Using a personal mobile phone instead of touching a pay and display machine, will reduce the risk of germs being spread.
- 2.3.** Charging in all the car parks was suspended at the 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020 as a direct result of the government led lock down in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. The charges were re-introduced 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 for the majority of the car parks with a provision for NHS and care workers to apply on-line for permits to park for free until 30<sup>th</sup> August 2020. A review of these free permits will take place before the expiry date to establish whether an extension should be made to this timescale. The review will be undertaken by the Cabinet Member responsible for Parking Services taking into consideration the prevalence of the COVID-19 virus and the impact on car park revenue. The Chipping Car Park in Tetbury is managed by the Council on behalf of The Feoffees of Tetbury, a local charity. The charity requested their charges be reinstated 18th May 2020 to enable them to use the income to support the local community such as the food bank.
- 2.4.** All daily and hourly tariffs have been reviewed for each car park. See Annex A for current pricing and Annex B for proposed charges with a change date of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020. The income from parking services provides support for many other local services including public conveniences, often located in or near our car parks.

- 2.5.** Season ticket prices are also proposed to be increased from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020. See Annex C for current charges and Annex D for proposed season ticket charges. It is proposed to simplify the season tickets available by removing the option for the 5 hour season ticket and removing the option for the 1 month season ticket as these are very rarely sold. It is also proposed that The Beeches car park will no longer have a season ticket option to prevent season ticket holders from other car parks moving here as the car park is often full on weekdays. The small number of season ticket holders for this car park will be offered an alternative.
- 2.6.** In order to support local residents and businesses it is proposed that new 20 minute free bays be introduced in several car parks across the district. See Annex E for proposed free 20 minute parking bays.
- 2.7.** Consideration has been given to where the 12 free 20 minute bays should be located. Taking the proximity of facilities and shops into account 4 car parks have been identified where free bays would be useful and viable. See Annex E for full list of car parks and method of identifying the viable sites. Each free space will equate to a reduction of income for that car park. It is intended that these are in place no later than 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020.

	Number of free spaces	Estimated loss of income per annum
Brewery Car Park, Cirencester	4	£6,500
Forum Car Park, Cirencester	4	£6,370
Church Street, Tetbury	2	£1,275
Old Market Way, Moreton in Marsh	2	£125
	12	£14,270

- 2.8.** A 1 hour no return policy will be introduced in the Brewery Car Park, Cirencester to ensure cars cannot park there all day and protect the spaces for short stay shoppers.
- 2.9.** Work is being carried out to look at reducing the number of cash payments being made in the car parks by encouraging more card and payments via phone. This will reduce the number of trips by our cash collection agents, reduce vandalism of and theft from machines, and reduce the spread of germs. This will allow the Council to reduce the number of machines in some car parks and make small savings.
- 2.10.** The new Whiteway Car Park, Cirencester will be operational by September 2020, and will be for annual permit holders only each with a guaranteed space. This will remove 150 all day parking spots from central Cirencester where demand is high. Prior to the pandemic the Council were aware of the pressure in certain Cirencester car parks for season ticket holders and there is currently a waiting list. A review will take place of all season ticket allocations across Cirencester by the end of August 2020. The Cabinet Member for Parking Services will consider allocating as many season tickets as possible from the waiting list, whilst maintaining the availability of casual parking spaces for visitors to the town.

- 2.11. The price modelling is based on historical usage figures, and as usage may change post lock down the estimates may be less accurate. The table below shows the estimated additional income.

	Annual additional income	Additional income from proposed tariffs between Sept 20 and Mar 21
Daily and hourly charges as per Annex B	£381,694	£222,655
Season ticket charges as per Annex D	£30,968	£18,064
Totals	£412,662	£240,719

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. The budget for 2020/21 provided for a net increase of income of £435,000 from parking services income per annum. As a result of the Covid-19 lock down, income from car parks reduced to almost nil across the District. This was followed by a decision to suspend all parking charges.

increase to all charges £412,662 per annum

12 x 30 minute bays -£14,270 per annum

Net estimated increase £398,392 per annum

- 3.2. Capital investment in car park improvements over the last 5 years has included some major refurbishments across the district. The table below shows details. During 2020 we will be making significant improvements to Rissington Road Car Park, Bourton-on-the-Water.

2019/20	New Rugby Club, Cirencester	£188,799
	Refurbish Sheep Street, Cirencester	£542,927
2018/19	Upgrade all pay and display machines to accept contactless card payments	£51,936
2017/18	Refurbish West Street and Church Street car parks, Tetbury	£58,462
	Refurbish Beeches, Cirencester	£74,185
2015/16	Refurbish Forum, Cirencester	£267,485

### 4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. Any changes to the existing terms and conditions, and or charges in the car parks will require a variation to the Off-Street Parking Order.

## **5. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1.** There is a risk that the anticipated income from car park fees will not be realised after lock down following the pandemic, has been lifted. Future usage may decrease following many businesses having adapted to new ways of working including home working. This may continue after lock down is lifted resulting in a lower demand on parking spaces and season tickets. On-line shopping has increased and many people may continue to shop this way rather than on the high street. More people have been choosing to cycle or walk during the lockdown also decreasing the demand of parking spaces. The figures used to estimate future income related to parking behaviour before the pandemic, and so projected use of the spaces may differ from what was previously anticipated.

## **6. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 6.1.** No impact on any specific groups. Vehicles displaying a valid blue badge are able to park for free in all the Council's car parks.

## **7. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1.** Increased number of electrical vehicle charging points, a decrease in cash collections and investment in more efficient car parks will all provide or encourage a positive impact on climate change.

## **8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 8.1.** The alternative would be to not increase the parking charges, or to increase them be a lesser amount, but this would result in a budget gap which would need to be addressed by other means.

## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 9.1.** The following documents have been identified by the author of the report in accordance with section 100D.5(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 and are listed in accordance with section 100 D.1(a) for inspection by members of the public:

- Report Medium Term Financial Strategy & Budget to Cabinet dated 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020 and associated minutes.

These documents will be available for inspection at the Council Offices at Trinity Road, Cirencester during normal office hours for a period of up to 4 years from the date of the meeting. Please contact the author of the report.

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