

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING and TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

12 January 2016

**Joint Report of the Director of Street Scene, Leisure & Technical Services
and the Director of Finance & Transformation**

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Key Decision

1 REVIEW OF CAR PARKING FEES AND CHARGES

Summary

This report brings forward recommendations for car parking fees and charges for implementation from 1st April 2016. In addition, the report identifies a number of fees and charges for review over the forthcoming year.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Fees and charges for parking in the Borough are regularly reviewed in the context of current and planned service improvements and the operational management of the parking service as well as having regard to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

In bringing forward the proposals in this report, consideration has been given to the set of guiding principles for the setting of fees and charges established by the Council. The guiding principles can be summarised as follows;

- Fees and charges should have due regard to the Council's Medium Term Strategy and should reflect the Council's key priorities.
- If there is to be a subsidy from the Council tax payer to the service user this should be a conscious choice.
- The Council should look to maximise income subject to market conditions, opportunities and comparable charges elsewhere, in the context of its key priorities and other corporate aims and priorities.
- Fees and charges should be reviewed at least annually (unless fixed by statute or some other body).
- Fees and charges should not be used to provide a subsidy from the Council tax payer to commercial operators.
- There should be consistency between charges for similar services.

In addition to the above, consideration also needs to be given to a number of specific principles relating to the provision of a successful car parking service. In summary the Council should:-

- Seek to optimise the availability of parking.
- Manage assets in a fair, commercial and efficient manner.
- Generate adequate income to offset the cost of the parking service
- Balance the management of the car parks to meet the needs of all users
- Have in place suitable inspection and maintenance regimes to ensure it provides safe and well maintained opportunities for the public to park their vehicles.

This report considers current and potential fees and charges for parking, and following careful consideration of the aforementioned principles, brings forward a number of proposals. In summary the proposals are as follows:

- Short stay parking charges in Tonbridge to increase by 10p per hour including a 10p increase to the 30 min tariff.
- Residential preferential parking permits be increased to £40 across the whole Borough with new and existing applicants continuing to receive 10 visitor permits free of charge. The existing charge was introduced in 2011.
- Visitor permits be increased from £10 to £12 for 10 permits.
- Country parks – an increase from 80p to £1 for the first 4 hours, and the retention of season tickets (increased from £25 to £30 per annum) for regular users.
- Long stay parking in Tonbridge to increase by 10p per hour, capped to a maximum of £5.50.
- The charging and management regime for Lower Castle Fields car parks be brought in line with the other car parks within the town centre.
- Blue Bell Hill car park – revised charges to reflect the quality and convenience of facilities provided and the cost of the provision to the Council.
- West Malling – the introduction of a charging regime to the short stay car park to improve the availability of parking to the public and to offset costs. An increase in Season ticket charges in Ryarsh Lane to £150 per annum to offset costs.
- Borough Green – charges in the Western Road car park to increase by 10p and a charge of 40p be introduced for the first 2 hours.
- Evening and Sunday charging/concessions – to be the subject of separate reviews and a report back to Members.
- Peak and Off-Peak Season tickets – increases to reflect market conditions/demand.

- Business permits/dispensations for on-street – increases applied with the exception of permits for carers.
- Charges in other car parks – to be the subject of separate reviews and a report back to Members.

It is important for Members to note that whilst the Council regularly reviews its fees and charges for services provided for the local community, the last annual review of car parking charges in 2015 did not recommend any increases or other changes. Consequently there has been no increase in any parking charges in the Borough for the last 2 years.

1.2 Investment in the Parking Service

- 1.2.1 The review seeks to achieve a balance between proactively managing parking on behalf of residents and businesses and securing a financial return to support the cost of the parking service. Many items contribute to this cost, such as maintenance of the car parks, enforcement, business rates, lighting, security measures, renewal of signs and lines and a considerable investment in the parking action plan to improve the management and convenience of parking throughout the Borough. Members will also note that car parking charges paid by users are subject to VAT. It is also true to say that many of the Council's car parks are potentially valuable land assets were they not to be given over for parking purposes, representing an 'opportunity cost' to the Council..
- 1.2.2 Over the two year period since the previous report to this Board, the Council has implemented a significant number of parking management initiatives. In the context of this review of fees and charges, it is worth setting these out so that Members as well as local residents and businesses can understand the totality of the parking service beyond the purely financial considerations and obtain a better perspective on the positive impacts that the parking service has on local parking conditions.
- Approximately £42,000 has been invested since 2014 on a range of on-street parking measures across the Borough.
 - Improvement works to the value of £64,000 have been carried out at a number of car parks including resurfacing and enhancement to the Bradford Street car park, construction of a retaining wall in Lower Castle Field Car Park, refurbishment of the Borough Green car park steps and relining throughout many car parks.
 - The Council's Capital Plan includes a substantial amount of expenditure to cater for capital renewals of equipment in car parks. The Council will be looking to renew the old ticket machines to bring them up to standard and to be capable of accepting the new coinage that will be launched later in

the next financial year. This has yet to be tendered but the pre-tender estimate for the contract is iro £160,000.

- The improvement work is underpinned by a continuing and consistent programme of maintenance work to keep the car parks safe and convenient for our customers. This programme also includes work on-street to keep all the signs and lines in the Borough clear and legible to support the enforcement work of the Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO). Annual provision for this programme of maintenance work is about £96,000. Business Rates are around £211,000 each year and to round off this section on maintenance and safety, CCTV provision amounts to £210,000 each year to keep the car parks safe and secure.
- The enforcement service, including the CEOs and the support team have recently been relocated to Kings Hill. This move, coupled with a change to the shift patterns has resulted in a more effective deployment of the CEOs. In real terms this means that staff are routinely patrolling later into the evenings at more varied locations across the whole Borough. The CEO team are critical to promoting a well ordered parking environment in the Borough that is responsive to local needs and pressures. Its costs are only partially recouped from income deriving from the issuing of penalty charge notices.
- The increasing operational activity has led to a rise in conflict. In recognising this we are proceeding with the provision of body worn cameras.
- There is also a need to invest in IT systems to assist both in the effectiveness and responsiveness of our CEOs and the back office IT parking management systems. Mobile technology has advanced and part of the evolving role of the CEOs now includes enforcing 'pay by mobile' systems. It is vital that the handheld devices used by the CEOs are fit for purpose and are renewed and updated to enable them to be as efficient as possible and to limit any errors.
- In addition, there is also a staff cost associated with implementing Local Parking Plans and the phased programme of more ad hoc parking interactions. This is integrated with other transportation related work but the input in an average year comes to about £60,000

1.2.3 Taking all these elements together, they amount to a significant investment by the Borough Council in seeking to provide a comprehensive and integrated parking service on behalf of residents and businesses, and provide an important context for the review of parking fees and charges that follows.

1.3 Comparative Charges

- 1.3.1 Comparison with the parking fees and charges of other Kent districts and private sector operators should not be a driver of what might be appropriate in this Borough, since local circumstances, such as the availability of short and long-stay parking, the convenience of the car park locations, and any “through the till” refunds offered by nearby businesses (such as Sainsburys, Waitrose and Iceland) are critical in such considerations. However, comparative charges do act as a guide and can be viewed by the public as to what might be considered the ‘going rate’ for parking. In addition, it is important to note that this Council does not currently charge at times that are now routinely charged for in many other districts such as charging on Sundays, public holidays, evenings, early morning and overnight. For these and other local reasons comparisons of charges outside the Borough and even within must be carefully qualified.
- 1.3.2 The scope of the review exercise covers consideration of all existing services and charges and includes an assessment of whether current circumstances justify them being maintained as they are or increased. In overview, a comparison of parking charges levied by neighbouring authorities would indicate the proposals are generally in line with others, although it is anticipated that most other Council’s will be bringing forward increases in the next financial year.

1.4 Off-Street Parking in Tonbridge – Daily Short and Long Stay Charges

- 1.4.1 Detailed in Table 1 below are the current and proposed charges for daily short and long stay car parking charges in Tonbridge.

TABLE 1

Short Stay		
Period – Hours	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
30 minutes	£0.50	£0.60
1 hour	£1.10	£1.20
2 hour	£1.90	£2.10
3 hour	£2.50	£2.80
4 hour	£3.00	£3.40
Long Stay		
1 hour	£1.10	£1.20
2 hour	£1.90	£2.10
3 hour	£2.50	£2.80
6 hour	£3.50	£4.10
All day	£5.20	£5.50

- 1.4.2 The proposals represent an uplift in charges by a minimum of 10p (the lowest denomination the pay and display machines accept), and 10p per hour increase

on each tariff, with the exception of the all-day tariff. Members are reminded that the current charges have remained unchanged for the last 2 years. This modest level of increase recognises the balance between the costs of provision and management of the Council's primary parking stock and the desire to support the economic sustainability of the town centre.

- 1.4.3 The all-day tariff is not recommended to exceed £5.50 as this is linked to the current all-day rate in the Tonbridge railway station car park, privately operated by Meteor.

1.5 Lower Castle Fields Car Park, Tonbridge

- 1.5.1 In the past the Lower Castle Fields car parks (including the Swimming Pool car park and the Deaconsfield over-flow car park) have been treated slightly differently to the other car parks in the town.
- 1.5.2 Currently refunds for the first hour's parking are available to those using the swimming pool and a concession is applied on Saturdays so that charges only apply until 1pm to support attendance to the Saturday afternoon sporting fixtures. In addition the existing charges are slightly below others in the town centre, including the Upper Castle Field car park adjacent to the Castle.
- 1.5.3 Whilst it is not intended to change the arrangement for refunds for swimming pool users, the availability of free parking on a Saturday afternoon has led to the car park being regularly used by shoppers, which has the perverse effect of limiting parking availability for users of the swimming pool and the other leisure facilities in the vicinity. The current regime has become impractical and unhelpful and the time has now come for these car parks to be viewed simply as part of the town's overall parking stock that provides for a variety of users. The Chairman of Tonbridge Sports Association has been advised of the proposed charges and his views will be available at the meeting.
- 1.5.4 It is proposed to change the charges and management regime to mirror those that apply to the Upper Castle Fields car park and others and to extend the charging period to include Saturday afternoons. This charge will ensure a consistency of approach across the Council's car parks in Tonbridge town centre.

TABLE 2

Lower Castle Fields Car Park		
Weekdays		
Period – Hours	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
1 hour	£1.00	£1.20
2 hour	£1.70	£2.10
3 hour	£2.30	£2.80
6 hour	£3.30	£4.10
All day	£4.90	£5.50

Saturdays		
1 hour	£1.00	£1.20
2 hour	£1.40	£2.10
3 hour	£2.00	£2.80
6 hour	Not offered	£4.10
All day	£2.90	£5.50

1.6 Season Tickets, Tonbridge

- 1.6.1 The Council currently offers Season Tickets to park all-day in the Sovereign complex (Sovereign Way East, Sovereign Way North and Vale Road) and Lower Castle Fields car parks. They are available on a monthly, quarterly, half-yearly and yearly basis.
- 1.6.2 The take-up of Season Tickets is good, with 225 issued. The most popular way of paying is annually (64.8% of sales), then half-yearly (28.4%), then quarterly (4%) and the remainder (2.8%) are monthly.
- 1.6.3 The current Season Ticket tariff provides an incentive to purchase annually, with shorter periods being weighted to reflect the additional administration required. The price of the Season Tickets take into careful consideration the charges applied at the Railway Station car park which has the advantage of being located immediately next to the Station. The current price of the Tonbridge Station season ticket is £1128.50

TABLE 3

Season Tickets, Tonbridge		
	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Monthly	£95	£100
Quarterly	£265	£275
Half-yearly	£480	£500
Annual	£850	£900

- 1.6.4 The Parking Team has been approached by a number of people working in Tonbridge on a part-time basis requesting a more flexible approach to season tickets. It is suggested that consideration be given to an option to offer season tickets on a pro-rata basis. Subject to the outcome of the review a report will be submitted to Members at a future meeting.

1.7 Off-Peak Season Ticket, Tonbridge

- 1.7.1 The Council offers an “Off-Peak Season Ticket” in Tonbridge that allows anyone to park between 4pm and 9am the next day (and all day Saturdays) for £240 per year in any of the Council’s car parks. The off peak availability of parking is of particular use to residents living in central Tonbridge. Members will note from Table 4 below that it is the intention to make an appropriate increase in the charge to £260 per year.

TABLE 4

Off Peak Season Ticket, Tonbridge		
	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Off-peak season ticket (4pm-9am & Saturdays)	£240	£260

1.8 West Malling Car Parks

- 1.8.1 West Malling has over recent years become a thriving town and this has brought with it greater pressures on parking. The Council has worked with a Steering Group involving representatives from the Parish Council and Chamber of Commerce to deliver a parking plan for the town, previously focussed on on-street parking. The aim of the steering group has been to oversee a parking plan which seeks to manage the difficult balance of parking demand from local residents, shoppers and other visitors, businesses and employees and commuters. Making the most efficient use of the limited parking stock and securing optimum turnover of spaces is part of that approach.
- 1.8.2 The Council has two important car parks in the town, both of which are operated at a significant cost to the Council. Parking is currently free of charge in the short stay car park and a nominal fee of £50 is charged in the Ryarsh Lane car park for an annual season ticket. The current approach to charging in the West Malling car parks has meant there are a number of operational problems, and together with the cost of the current provision by the Council, it is felt the time is right for a more fundamental review of how charging regimes can help manage the overall parking availability..
- 1.8.3 The current Season Ticket for the Ryarsh Lane car park is set at £50 per year and even though demand exceeds supply the costs per space far exceed the income achieved.
- 1.8.4 Privately managed, alternate long-stay parking is available relatively nearby at West Malling station – provided by Meteor and Kenden. Although it is recognised that this is less convenient for the town, the comparative cost of the parking is shown below in Table 5.

TABLE 5

West Malling Long Stay Parking				
Parking provider	Daily Charge	Off peak Charge	Saturday Charge	Annual Charge
Meteor (West Malling Station)	£4.50	£4.00	£2.50	£807.50 (£3.17 per day)
Kenden (West Malling Station)	£4.00	£4.00	£1.50	£640 (£2.50 per day)
Ryarsh Lane car park	Not available	Not available	Free	£50 (20p per day)

- 1.8.5 The Ryarsh Lane season ticket charges have understandably been attractive for local businesses to purchase for their staff. However, there is a tendency for businesses to retain permits even when not always required. The relative low cost of the permits seems to make this practice worthwhile and prevents spaces to be resold to those on the waiting list. It is, therefore, suggested that the season ticket prices be increased to a level which will encourage a better turn-over of spaces and cover the Council's operating costs. The proposal is to increase the cost of the season ticket to £150, which still only represents a charge of 60p per day.
- 1.8.6 There have been historic problems with inappropriate long-stay parking taking place in the High Street (Tesco) car park which is designed to operate on a short stay basis to support local shopping and other town centre visits. Parking used to be restricted to 4 hours, but the car park was popular with those working in the town, and it was common for cars to be parked all day.
- 1.8.7 To address this issue the Council introduced a 3 hour time limit, with a requirement for drivers to take and display a ticket, which contains their vehicle registration number. An additional ticket could then not be obtained, to prevent over-staying.
- 1.8.8 Unfortunately, despite this system there is still abuse of the short-stay parking time limits, as drivers have adopted the practice of entering a registration that is almost correct, then claiming that this was done in error. The Council took a strong enforcement line against this practice with the support of the West Malling Parking Review Steering Group, but has since lost appeals at the Traffic Penalty Tribunal Service.
- 1.8.9 This has resulted in the Council having the high costs of running a town centre car park with take & display machines, but with no income to enable recovery of the costs and no effective means of applying an appropriate management regime.

- 1.8.10 It is now felt that the most effective and practical way of managing the car park is by the introduction of a parking charge. Setting charges would allow more flexibility in the management of the car park, focussing on encouraging short stay and relatively quick turnover of spaces to optimise availability. Such an approach would also address the costs of running the car park. It is not the intention to introduce a charge for on-street parking in the High Street at this stage, but this may need to be reviewed in the future depending on operational experience.
- 1.8.11 The proposed parking charges for the High Street car park to operate Monday to Saturday, 8am to 6pm are shown in Table 6.

TABLE 6

West Malling Short Stay	
Period	Proposed charge
30 minutes	£0.30
1 hour	£0.60
2 hours	£1.20
3 hours	£1.80
Over 3 hours (See Note 1)	£5.00

Note 1: Whilst the car park is a short stay car park a number of existing businesses in the high street such as hairdressers have identified a need for a charge of over 3 hours. It is envisaged that take up will be low but will help these businesses.

- 1.8.12 Members of the West Malling Parking Steering Group have been advised of the proposed charges and their views will be available at the meeting.

1.9 Blue Bell Hill Car Park

- 1.9.1 Blue Bell Hill car park is a commuter car park in the north of the Borough that is easily accessible and has good onward coach links towards London via the M2.
- 1.9.2 Blue Bell Hill car park is 'Park Mark' accredited and as such it offers high-quality parking with a good surface, lighting and CCTV.
- 1.9.3 Parking charges apply, Monday to Friday. The charges were originally set at a low introductory rate when the car park was opened in 2004, and has not been increased since.
- 1.9.4 The low charges were an incentive for commuters to use the car park rather than to park in nearby residential areas. However, since the establishment of the car

park there has still been some on-street commuter parking in nearby residential areas, and the Council has introduced on-street parking controls to deter this.

- 1.9.5 The costs of providing the car park significantly exceed the income from ticket sales and the car park has now become regularly used on Saturdays.
- 1.9.6 The proposed charges shown in Table 7 below are intended to recover the Council's costs of providing the car park.

TABLE 7

Blue Bell Hill Car Park		
	Current Charge	Proposed charge
Daily	£2.00	£2.50
Weekly	£7.00	£9.00
Monthly	£26	£32
Quarterly	£70	£85
6 Monthly	£125	£160
Annual	£220	£280

1.10 Borough Green West Road Car Park

- 1.10.1 When the last parking review was carried out in Borough Green careful consideration was given to the operation of the Western Road car park and the setting of an appropriate charge that took into consideration the availability of free on-street parking nearby and the parking charges within the Borough Green Station car park, privately operated by Meteor. Demand for the car park is currently strong and warrants consideration of further management controls.,
- 1.10.2 Parking for up to 2 hours is currently free, but there is a requirement to "Take & Display" a ticket from the machines. The Council's Parking Team has become aware that some people are taking advantage of this and are repeatedly displaying a free ticket. For this reason and to promote a more frequent turnover of spaces to support the functioning of the village centre, it is proposed that an appropriate charge be introduced for the first 2 hour period.
- 1.10.3 The proposed changes to the Western Road car park are detailed below in Table 8.

TABLE 8

Borough Green Western Road Car Park		
	Current Charge	Proposed charge
Up to 2 hours	Free	£0.40
2 to 4 hours	£0.80	£0.90
4 to 6 hours	£1.30	£1.40
6 to 9 hours	£1.90	£2.00
All day	£5.00	£5.10

1.11 Residential Preferential Parking Scheme (Residents Permits)

- 1.11.1 Residents permits across the Borough are currently set at £35 per year, and have not been increased since 2011. There is an exception to this for Borough Green, where the charge is currently £24 per year.
- 1.11.2 It is proposed that Residents Permits be increased to £40 per year, and this new charge be applied across the whole Borough.
- 1.11.3 The Parking Team has received a number of requests for restrictions to be placed on the number of permits that can be issued to each property. The purpose of the Scheme is to give priority parking to residents over non-residents, and it is therefore not the intention to consider limiting numbers of permits to residents. Consideration could, however, be given to introducing a tiered pricing structure for additional resident parking permits per household in the future, if Members felt this was worthy of investigation.

1.12 Business Permits and Dispensations

- 1.12.1 The Council offers a variety of “business permits” and dispensations shown below in Table 9.

TABLE 9

Business Permits & Dispensations		
Permit type	Current charge	Proposed charge

Business permit (for businesses located within a permit scheme)	£130	£150
Carers permit	£50	£50
Dispensations		
Property Maintenance	£100	£150
Property Maintenance (with yellow lines)	£100	£150
Tonbridge High Street (Banking)	£100	£150

1.12.2 Members will note that it is the intention to increase the costs of the permits/dispensations with the exception of Carers, to recognise the service they provide to vulnerable members of the community.

1.13 Visitor Permits

1.13.1 The Council has a system of issuing Visitor Permits to holders of Residents permits to enable their visitors to park within the restricted area. The Visitor Permits effectively operate as one-day permits.

1.13.2 Visitor Permits currently cost £10 per sheet of 10 permits, and every permit holder is given a free sheet of 10 permits when they take out or renew their permit.

1.13.3 It is proposed that the charge for Visitor Permits be increased from £10 to £12 for 10 permits, and the offer of 10 free Visitor Permits for new applications and renewals be retained.

1.14 Leybourne and Haysden Country Park Car Parks

1.14.1 Members will be aware that charging is in place for car parking at both of the Council's Country Parks. The last increase was applied in 2014 with charges rising from 70p to 80p for up to four hours and from £2.80 to £3.00 for over four hours.

1.14.2 In addition to the charges above, an annual season ticket can also be purchased which provides parking at both Country Parks. The season ticket was introduced in 2008 at an annual charge of £25 and has not been subject to any increase since then.

The existing charges, together with the proposed charges, are detailed below in Table 10.

TABLE 10

Haysden/Leybourne Lakes Country Parks		
Period	Current Tariff	Proposed Tariff
0-4 Hours	80p	1.00
4+ Hours	3.00	4.00
Annual Season Ticket	25.00	30.00

1.14.3 Members may be interested to note that the current charging structure in relation to Kent County Council's (KCC) Country Parks is:

- £1.50 to £2.00 (park dependent) flat rate Monday to Friday
- £2.00 to £3.00 (park dependent) flat rate weekend and Bank Holidays
- £40 season ticket (covers eight sites across Kent)

1.14.4 It can, therefore, be seen that in comparison to the charges applied by KCC, this Council's proposed charges continue to offer excellent value for money.

1.14.5 Members of the Park's Customer Panels have been advised of the proposed charges and their views will be available at the meeting.

1.15 Tonbridge On-Street Pay and Display

1.15.1 The Council currently operates some very limited on-street pay and display parking in Tonbridge up to a maximum stay of 3 hours. The purpose of on-street pay and display is to provide relatively short stay parking that is convenient to customers of local businesses, with a regular turn-over of spaces.

1.15.2 All of the pay and display parking is located close to other parking facilities that offer longer parking opportunities. It is proposed that the current on-street pay and display charges be changed to reflect both the wider re-alignment of parking charges and also provide an incentive towards shorter stay parking. No proposals have been brought forward for extending on-street pay and display parking and this is an matter that could be reviewed further at a later date.

1.15.3 The proposed on-street pay and display parking charges are shown in Table 11 below.

TABLE 11

On-Street Pay & Display		
	Current Charge	Proposed charge

Up to 30 minutes	£0.40	£0.50
Up to 1 hour	£1.00	£1.00
Up to 2 hours	£1.80	£2.00
Up to 3 hours	£2.50	£3.00

1.16 Charging Period

1.16.1 The current charging times within the Council's car parks do not extend beyond 6pm or apply on Sundays or Bank Holidays. Whilst initial consideration within this review has been given to the existing approach, any changes have significant implications including the impact on surrounding residential areas and the levels of resource for enforcement.

1.16.2 Taking these implications into account it is suggested that no changes be brought forward at the present time, but the issue be considered as a separate review in the future.

1.17 Other parking charges

1.17.1 This report has focussed on the Council's main car parks. There are a number of other smaller car parks owned and managed by the Council and it is the intention to review these over the coming months and report back to Members.

1.17.2 It is recommended that any parking charges not discussed within this report should remain unaltered at this time.

1.18 Legal Implications

1.18.1 The powers allowing the Borough Council to carry out parking management activity are contained in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, supplemented by formal agreement with Kent County Council as the Local Highway Authority, in respect of its powers under the Traffic Management Act 2004. In particular, section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation 1984 Act imposes a general duty on local authorities exercising functions under the Act to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of safe and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway.

1.18.2 Changes to parking charges should be made via an Amendment Orders to the Council's on and off-street parking Traffic Regulation Orders, using the procedures set out in the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

1.18.3 Part 2 of The Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (England) General (Amendment) Regulations 2015 introduced a statutory requirement for a 10 minute “grace” period to time limited parking, whether on-street or off-street, including Pay and Display, regardless of the intended duration of stay, effectively adding the facility to park for an additional 10 minutes to all parking periods.

1.19 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.19.1 This review has examined the complete range of current parking fees and charges within the context of a set of guiding principles, the cost of parking service to the Council and ongoing investment in the parking management service. It is also worth noting that around 900,000 tickets each year are, or have the potential to be, refunded as part of the dual ticketing arrangements in the Angel and Botany short-stay car parks in Tonbridge. It is anticipated that the recommendations outlined in this report will generate additional income of £354,000, net of VAT and refunds. This estimate is based on the assumption that current usage remains constant and that ticket sales remain uninfluenced by price increases and that there is a similar distribution of tickets in each pricing band. It is important to note that whilst the proposals will generate income there are also a number of areas of recurring and one-off expenditure costs.

1.19.2 A further review of resources associated with enforcement will be required, which will be the subject of a future report to the General Purpose Committee. There will be a need for significant capital investment in new ticket machines, back office parking systems, mobile technology and personal safety equipment for the CEOs. This capital investment is anticipated to be iro. £250,000.

1.20 Asset management

1.20.1 It is worthy of note that many of the Council’s car parks represent a significant asset in terms of resale and for development. It is essential given the context of the Medium Term Financial Strategy that the Council seeks to ensure that the assets are managed in the most economically advantageous way and may in some cases include disposal of the asset.

1.21 Risk Assessment

1.21.1 The estimated additional income is modelled on predicted future parking patterns and demand matching what currently takes place. It does not reflect any potential adverse customer reaction or the possibility of increased take up of the dual ticketing arrangement in Angel and Botany car parks.

1.22 Equality Impact Assessment

1.22.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.23 Policy Considerations

1.23.1 Asset Management

1.23.2 Community

1.23.3 Customer Contact

1.24 Recommendations

1.24.1 It is recommended to Cabinet that it **APPROVE** the following proposals with effect from 1st April 2016;

- 1) Introduce the schedule of charges for short and long stay parking in Tonbridge shown in Table 1.
- 2) Introduce the schedule of charges for parking in Lower Castle Fields car park shown in Table 2.
- 3) Adopt the schedules of Peak and Off-Peak Season ticket charges in Tonbridge shown in Table 3 and 4.
- 4) Introduce the schedules of charges for short and long stay parking in West Malling shown in Table 6.
- 5) Introduce the schedule of charges for Blue Bell Hill car park shown in Table 7.
- 6) Introduce the schedule of charges for parking in Borough Green Western Road car park shown in Table 8.
- 7) Increase the Residents permits to £40.
- 8) Introduce the schedule of charges for business permits and dispensation shown in Table 9.
- 9) Visitor permits to be increased to £12 for a book of 10 permits.
- 10) Introduce the schedule of charges for Haysden and Leybourne Lakes country parks shown in Table 10.
- 11) Introduce the schedule of charges for on-street pay & display parking in Tonbridge shown in Table 11.
- 12) Bring forward separate reviews to Members on Evening and Sunday charging, on existing car parking concessions and those car parks not addressed within this report.

Background papers:

contact: Andy Edwards

Nil

Kuntran Kumaralingam

Robert Styles
Director of Street Scene, Leisure & Technical Services

Sharon Shelton
Director of Finance & Transformation