

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXTRAORDINARY CABINET

06 January 2020

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

Part 1- Public

Executive Key Decisions

1 REVIEW OF CAR PARKING FEES & CHARGES

This report seeks Cabinet approval of a number of recommendations considered at the meeting of the Street Scene & Environment Services Advisory Board on 30th October 2019. There will be financial implications for the Borough Council and these are detailed in paragraph 1.4 of the report

1.1 Background

1.1.1 At the meeting of the Street Scene & Environment Advisory Board on 30th October 2019 Members considered a joint report of the Director of Street Scene, Leisure and Technical Services and the Director of Finance and Transformation with proposals for fees and charges for existing car parking across the Borough to be implemented from 1 April 2020.

1.1.2 In addition, the report sought approval for the introduction of car parking charges in a number of the Council's smaller car parks in the northern Parishes, highlighted a review of initiatives to improve digital access for customers, the intention to introduce electric vehicle charging points and the provision of free parking arrangements for the Blood Transfusion Service and the Breast Screening Unit in Tonbridge.

1.1.3 These decisions were due to be considered at the Extraordinary Cabinet arranged to meet immediately following the meeting of the Street Scene & Environment Services Advisory Board of 30th October 2019. However, due to the complexity of the discussions during the meeting of this Board, Cabinet decided to defer these decisions to a future meeting of Cabinet to give Cabinet Members time to reflect fully on the detail of the discussion and the recommendations.

1.2 Timescale

1.2.1 Due to statutory consultation arrangements and the programming of meetings, the various categories of charge will follow different timescales. The outcome of consultation on all the charges will be reported to meetings of either the Street Scene & Environment Services Advisory Board or the Joint Transportation Board.

This will enable Members a further opportunity to consider the charges, prior to final approval by Cabinet.

- 1.2.2 With regard to charges for the existing car parks and the new locations in the northern Parishes consultation will take place between 17th January 2020 to 9th February 2020. Due to the anticipated level of responses, the outcome of the consultation will be split, with the revised charges being reported to Street Scene & Environment Advisory Board on 5th March 2020, for approval at Cabinet on 17th March 2020. It is the intention that the revised charges will 'go live' on 5th April 2020. For the proposed charges in the new locations in the northern Parishes the outcome of the consultation will be reported to Street Scene & Environment Services Advisory Board in June 2020, for approval at Cabinet on 30th June 2020. The new charges will be able to 'go live' from late July 2020 onwards, with the exact date dependent on the outcome of the consultation and the completion of capital works to the car parks (where appropriate).
- 1.2.3 With regard to the variation of existing on-street charges, these will be reported to the Joint Transportation Board on 9th March 2020 and consultation will take place between 13th March 2020 to 5th April 2020. The outcome of the consultation will be reported to the Joint Transportation Board and onto Cabinet on 18th June 2020. Following the sealing of the order by Kent County Council, the new charges should go live on 12th July. The timescale for the introduction of the new on-street charges in the new location in Tonbridge will be slightly quicker as the Joint Transportation Board has already approved Phase 11 of the parking plan for consultation. Consultation will take place between Friday 17th January 2020 to Sunday 9th February 2020 and the outcome reported to the Joint Transportation Board on 9th March 2020. Following Cabinet on 17th March 2020 and the sealing of the order by Kent County Council, the new charges should go live on Sunday 3rd May 2020.

1.3 Legal Implications

- 1.3.1 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.
- 1.3.2 Changes to parking charges are 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.

- 1.3.3 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.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.4.1 The review of car parking fees and charges was progressed 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 anticipated that the recommendations outlined in the report to the Street Scene & Environment Advisory Services Board will generate estimated gross income of £336,000 net of VAT and refunds in a full year. This estimate is based on the assumption that current usage and refund levels remains constant and that ticket sales remain uninfluenced by price increases and that there is a similar distribution of tickets in each pricing band. Some of the proposals will incur additional ongoing revenue costs which will be identified through the forthcoming budget cycle. Such costs will need to be taken into account to determine net income associated with one or more of the proposals.
- 1.4.2 Within the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy additional income from parking charges of £140,000 is budgeted every two years to negate increased costs due to general inflation. As outlined in the report to the Street Scene & Environment Advisory Board capital investment will be required in the Council’s car parks in Snodland, Martin Square, Aylesford, Tonbridge Castle grounds, Tonbridge High Street and Lyons Crescent if the introduction of the car parking charges are approved. At this stage it is anticipated that a capital cost of between £200,000 to £250,000 will be required.
- 1.4.3 The number of consultations being progressed will require additional temporary staff resource to support the Parking Team. A budget allowance of £3,000 has been included in the 2019/20 revised Revenue Estimate.

1.5 Risk Assessment

- 1.5.1 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.
- 1.5.2 It is important that the Parking Service develops in line with customer needs and expectations, particularly with regard to the digital agenda and growth in electric/hybrid vehicles.

1.6 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.6.1 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.

- 1.6.2 Blue Badge holders can park free of charge in the Council's car parks for up to 23 hours. For Blue Badge holders living in a parking permit area, a Resident Parking Permit is not required as long as the valid Blue Badge and clock is correctly displayed. The Blue Badge scheme has recently been extended by Central Government to include people with "hidden disabilities". This includes people with learning disabilities, autism and mental health conditions.

1.7 Policy Considerations

- 1.7.1 Asset Management
- 1.7.2 Community
- 1.7.3 Customer Contact
- 1.7.4 Climate Change

1.8 Recommendations

- 1.8.1 It is **RECOMMENDED TO CABINET** that it approves the following proposed charges reported to the October meeting of the Street Scene & Environment Advisory Services Board for consultation as outlined in the report:
- 1) introduce the schedule of charges for short and long stay parking in Tonbridge as shown in Table 1 of the report;
 - 2) revise the parking arrangements at Tonbridge Castle to maximise public use whilst still retaining appropriate parking arrangements for staff;
 - 3) adopt the schedules of Peak and Off-Peak Season Ticket charges in Tonbridge as shown in Tables 2 and 3;
 - 4) increase Ryarsh Lane annual season ticket charges to £255;
 - 5) introduce the schedules of charges for short stay parking in West Malling shown in Table 5;
 - 6) introduce the schedule of charges for Blue Bell Hill car park shown in Table 6;
 - 7) introduce the schedule of charges for parking in Borough Green Western Road car park shown in Table 7;
 - 8) increase Residents Permits to £45 per year and introduce a rising scale of charges for those parking more than 2 cars in the road;

- 9) introduce the schedule of charges for Business Permits and dispensations shown in Table 8, subject to consideration of a 'means tested regime' at the next annual review;
- 10) visitor permits be retained at £12 for a book of 10 permits, with the current offer of 10 free permits to new applicants retained;
- 11) introduce the schedule of charges for Haysden and Leybourne Lakes Country Parks shown in Table 9;
- 12) introduce the schedule of charges for on-street pay & display parking in Tonbridge shown in Table 10 and incorporate the existing parking bays in the northern end of the High Street and Lyons Crescent; and
- 13) parking charges on Sunday and Bank Holidays remain free of charge.

1.8.2 It is further **RECOMMENDED TO CABINET** that:-

- 1) car parking charges be introduced to the Council's existing car parks in Aylesford, Martin Square Larkfield and Snodland, as outlined in the report, and a period of formal consultation be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Statutory Regulations;
- 2) a Capital Plan evaluation be undertaken for consideration at the Finance, Innovation and Property Advisory Board for the provision of new parking machines, CCTV (subject to the outcome of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee), signage and Improvements in Aylesford, Martin Square Larkfield and Snodland car parks, Tonbridge Castle Grounds and on street parking bays in Tonbridge High Street and Lyons Crescent;
- 3) a report be presented to a future meeting of the Street Scene and Environment Services Advisory Board on initiatives to support the priorities outlined in the Council's Digital Strategy;
- 4) the Parking Service back office administration system be upgraded with the existing suppliers;
- 5) parking initiatives to support the Council's commitment to a sustainable low-carbon future be incorporated in the emerging Climate Change Strategy, with a report on the introduction of electric car charging points across the Council's car parks being considered at a future meeting of the Street Scene and Environment Services Advisory Board;
- 6) the parking concessions for the Blood Transfusion Services and Breast Screening Unit, as outlined in the report, be approved;

- 7) the possibility of additional parking provision in the Castle Fields area of Tonbridge be investigated; and
- 8) the long term future of the Sovereign Way East car park be reviewed as part of a future review of assets in Tonbridge Town Centre to determine the best use of the site.

Background papers:

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Nil

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