

REVIEW OF CAR PARKING FEES AND CHARGES

Item CE 23/45 referred from Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee of 6 November 2023

Consideration was given to a set of proposals for existing on-street and off-street car parking fees and charges, as summarised in 1.1.3 of the report, for implementation from 1 April 2024, taking into account the guiding principles for the setting of fees and charges established by the Borough Council and a number of specific principles relating to the provision of a successful car parking service. Members' attention was drawn to the high level inflation since the fees and charges were last reviewed in 2021 and implemented in April 2022, impacting on the cost of providing the parking service.

The Director of Street Scene, Leisure and Technical Services brought to Members' attention a few clarifications/amendments in respect of the following points set out in the report:

- (1) 1.4.3 should read "... Income (for Haysden Country Park) after the first 6 months is above profile, with a year-end forecast of £89,000.";
- (2) 1.8.3 should read "... The (Ryarsh Lane) car park has 114 spaces and the allocation of tickets is currently limited to 142..."; and
- (3) 1.21.1 should read "It is RECOMMENDED that the Committee considers the following car parking proposals for formal public consultation in November this year, implementation from 1st April 2024, and makes recommendations to Cabinet ...".

It was proposed that, in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England & Wales) Regulations 1996, formal public consultation be undertaken on the proposed changes to the on-street and off-street charges with the outcomes to be reported to the Joint Transportation Board in respect of the on-street car parking charges and to the Cabinet in respect of the off-street car parking charges for consideration.

Particular reference was made to the set of car parking proposals considered by the Committee in September 2023, including the introduction of Sunday and Bank Holiday parking charges and extension of evening charges to 8pm, and Members noted it was proposed that formal public consultation on both the set of car parking proposals, considered by the Committee in September 2023, and the set of car parking fees and charges proposals, recommended in this report, be undertaken at the same time later in November this year, with the outcomes reported to Cabinet in the New Year.

Members had an in-depth discussion with regard to the ongoing engagement with the West Malling Chamber of Commerce in respect of the West Malling car parks and noted that their feedbacks on the proposals were invited through the public consultation process.

In addition, a proposal for Officers to investigate the card reader facility of ticket machines was supported by the Committee, in light of the significant cost associated with cash collection from the ticket machines.

RECOMMENDED*: That

- (1) the following car parking proposals be taken forward to formal public consultation in November this year and the outcomes reported to future meetings of the Joint Transportation Board and the Cabinet as appropriate, with implementation from 1 April 2024:
 - (i) the schedule of proposed charges for off-street short and long stay parking in Tonbridge as shown in Table 1 of the report, be approved;
 - (ii) the schedules of proposed Peak and Off-Peak Season Ticket charges in Tonbridge as shown in Tables 2 and 3 respectively, be approved;
 - (iii) the charges for the Tonbridge Town Centre Residents Season ticket be increased to £90 for a 3-month ticket and £360 for an annual ticket respectively as set out in 1.6.4 of the report;
 - (iv) the designated area for the Tonbridge Town Centre Residents Season ticket be extended to include residential properties in the area shown in orange in the Plan attached at Annex 1 and as detailed in 1.6.1 of the report;
 - (v) the schedules of proposed charges for long stay and short stay parking in West Malling as shown in Tables 4 and 5 respectively and as detailed in 1.8.4 of the report, be approved, including increasing the charge for Ryarsh Lane car park annual season ticket to £290;
 - (vi) the schedule of proposed charges for parking in Borough Green Western Road car park as shown in Table 6, be approved;
 - (vii) the schedule of proposed charges for Residents Permits as shown in Table 7, be approved; the charge of 6-month Residents Permits offered to non-UK registered vehicles belonging to residents be increased to £28.50, as detailed in 1.9.2 of the report;
 - (viii) the schedule of proposed charges for Business and Carers Permits and Dispensations as shown in Table 8, be approved;
 - (ix) the charge of Visitor Permits be increased to £14 for a book of 10 permits, with the current offer of 10 free permits to new applicants being retained, as set out in 1.10.2 of the report;

- (x) the schedule of proposed charges for Haysden Country Park car park as shown in Table 9, be approved; and
 - (xi) the schedule of proposed charges for on-street Pay & Display parking in Tonbridge as shown in Table 10, be approved.
- (2) investigation be undertaken in respect of the facility of card reader ticket machines and/or adding card reading facility to existing car park ticket machines, and the outcomes be reported back to a future meeting of the Committee.

***Recommended to Cabinet**