

ANNUAL REVIEW OF PARKING CHARGES FOR 2014/15 – RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Cabinet – 6 March 2014

Report of: Chief Officer Environmental and Operational Services

Status: For decision

Also considered by: Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee 24 October 2013 and Cabinet on 7 November 2013 and 9 January 2014

Key Decision: Yes

Executive Summary: This report informs Members of the outcome of the public consultation for the proposed increases to car park and on-street parking charges for 2014/15.

This report supports the Key Aim of the effective management of Council resources.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. R Hogarth

Contact Officer(s) Gary Connor x7310

Recommendation to Cabinet: It be RESOLVED that:

Members confirm whether any of the proposed car park or on-street parking charges approved by Cabinet on 9 January 2014 should be amended in light of consultation responses, with a view to implementing the proposals on or as soon after 1 April 2014.

Reason for recommendation: to meet the Council's budgets for parking for 2014/15.

Introduction and Background

- 1 On 9 January 2014, Members of Cabinet considered and approved proposals for increasing certain parking charges to contribute to the Council's overall budget target for 2014/15.
- 2 This report concerns objections and comments received in respect to the proposed car park and on-street charges following public consultation to amend the Council's Car Parks Order and on-street Traffic Regulation Order.
- 3 For Cabinet Members' information, a summary of the car park and on-street parking charges proposals as approved on 9 January, subject to consultation, is attached as Appendix A.

- 4 For information, in relation to parking in the vicinity of rail stations, the charges for parking in the car parks operated on behalf of Southeastern Trains have recently been revised and the day charges are now as follows: £6.70 at Sevenoaks (an increase of 20p), £6.00 at Swanley (no increase) and £3.50 at Knockholt (no increase). Annual season ticket charges at Sevenoaks are now £1,212 for Car Park 4 (off Morewood Close) (an increase of £36) and £1,467 for Car Park 1 (adjacent the station) (an increase of £56).

Consultation Responses

- 5 The consultation period ended on 15 February 2014. In addition to the Notice in the local newspaper and displayed in the car parks, letters were sent to all season ticket holders advising them of the proposals.
- 6 Twelve comments were received in response to the consultation. These include a response from the Westerham Town Council, the Westerham Town Partnership, the Westerham Society and from Kent Police. The comments received are attached in full, i.e. in verbatim, in Appendix B for Members' perusal and consideration. They relate to the following areas:-

Subject:	Number of Comments:
Westerham parking charges (comments 1 to 6)	6
Season ticket charges – Sevenoaks station car parks (comments 7 and 8)	2
On-street charges – St Botolphs Road area (comments 9 to 11)	3
Comment by Kent Police (comment 12)	1

- 7 In respect to the Westerham parking charges, in the main Comments 1 to 4 relate to the proposed charge for the 15 minute parking period and the effect upon the proposals put forward by the Westerham Town Partnership and considered by Cabinet on 9 January. Comment 5 expresses support for the 15 minute proposal. Comment 6 relates more generally to parking charges in Westerham and Sevenoaks.
- 8 In respect to the season ticket charges at Sevenoaks station, the comments concern the cost and to the availability of spaces.
- 9 In respect to the on-street parking charges, the comments relate to the availability of spaces in the roads off St Botolphs Road, i.e. in Ashley Road, Ashley Close and Chestnut Lane, and generally suggest that the on-street parking charges be increased or aligned with those for the station car parks or that additional parking facilities be provided.

Changes to the On-Street Road Traffic Order

- 10 For information, comments relating to an increase in on-street parking charges are not considered to be pertinent or valid objections under the terms of the legislation for the Order making process. Therefore, they would not be required to be reported to the Sevenoaks Joint Transportation Board for consideration and approval.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

Financial

- 1 The proposals contribute to the budget provisions for parking for 2014/15.

Legal implications and risk assessment statement.

- 2 There are set legal processes in respect to amending or implementing new parking charges and these are being followed.
- 3 Once the parking charges to be adopted for 2014/15 are confirmed, the formal completion of the Order making process can be completed with a view to implementation on, or soon after, 1 April 2014. However, as a result of the timing of this meeting, there is a risk that the ticket machine companies may not be able to provide the amended tariff programmes for the ticket machines in time for a start at the beginning of April. However, every effort will be made to achieve this.
- 4 By not adopting the charging proposals approved, or by failing to provide alternatives, the budget expectations for parking income for 2014/15 might not be realised.

Equality impacts

- 5 There is a low risk that any of the options presented will have an adverse impact on people with 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act. There are no apparent issues of direct relevance to parking charges as our car parks are open to use by anyone who chooses to do so. Free parking is generally available in roads just out from the town centres, although in some cases this might be limited to 2 hours. Free parking is offered for those with disabilities who hold a Blue Badge and this remains unaffected. Any issues will be monitored through complaints received.

Community impact and outcomes

- 6 The introduction of parking charge increases is likely to have an impact to some degree upon those people from the local community and visitors from outside the district who use the parking facilities, although it is impossible to quantify any likely resultant effect. Rather than pay any higher charges, people may instead decide to park for shorter periods, may lessen the frequency of their visits or may choose to go elsewhere.

Human rights

7 There are no human rights issues or implications.

Appendices Appendix A – Car Park and On-Street charges approved for consultation

Appendix B – Public consultation comments received

Background Papers: The proposed Sevenoaks District Council (Off-Street Parking Places) (Amendment 3) Order 2010.

The proposed Kent County Council (Various Roads in the District of Sevenoaks) (Prohibition and Restriction of Waiting and Loading & Unloading and On-Street Parking Places) (Amendment 4) Order 2013.

Mr Richard Wilson
Chief Officer Environmental and Operations Services