

ANNUAL REVIEW OF PARKING MANAGEMENT 2020/21

Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee - 29 October 2019

Report of Chief Officer Finance & Trading and Chief Officer
Environmental & Operational Services

Status: For decision

Also considered by: Cabinet 7 November 2019

Key Decision: Yes

Executive Summary:

This report is the annual review of parking management for 2020/21.

It proposes consultation on revised tariffs in some Council car parks and on-street, to help regulate demand, supporting economic vibrancy and viability and improving the lives of the community.

This report supports the Key Aims of:

Providing value for money, and supporting and developing the local economy.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Margot McArthur

Contact Officer John Strachan Ext. 7310

Recommendation to Cleaner and Greener Advisory Committee:

That the Committee considers the 2020/21 parking management proposals and its views be submitted for Cabinet's consideration, prior to public consultation.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

That the views of the Advisory Committee be considered and parking management proposals for 2020/21 be agreed for consultation, with the results of the consultation being reported back to Cabinet for consideration.

Reason for recommendation:

To help regulate and manage the use of on and off-street parking facilities in the District, ensuring car parking charges support a sustainable local economy and support the development and improvement of parking facilities.

Introduction

- 1 This report considers the setting of parking charges in the Council's car parks and the fees for on-street parking, operating between April 2020 and March 2021 inclusive.
- 2 The report proposes consulting on increased charges in selected on and off-street parking locations across Sevenoaks District.
- 3 In particular, regulating parking patterns following the recent development of two new multi-decked car parks.
- 4 Charging policies aim to encourage vehicles to park in newly developed "off-street" parking locations, easing on-street kerbside congestion during the day.

Background

- 5 The Council operates a number of public car parks and on street pay and display facilities in towns and villages in the District. It is important to regulate the use these finite resources, balancing the parking needs of commuters, local businesses, residents, shoppers, workers and other visitors including tourists.
- 6 Regular fees and charges reviews help to ensure that our parking facilities encourage visitors to our towns while promoting a healthy turnover of parking spaces. Parking charges are one aspect of effective parking management. Other measures subject to regular monitoring and review are charging hours and the maximum stay periods that vehicles can park.
- 7 Parking income contributes to the operational costs of car parks, including non-domestic rates, insurance, cleansing, general maintenance, utilities, enforcement and security. Income also contributes to the cost of developing new parking facilities, such as the two new multi-decked car parks.
- 8 Parking income also helps to maintain and improve car park assets, including new lighting, resurfacing and improved signs and lines, ensuring they remain welcoming, safe and fit for purpose.
- 9 The Council continues to improve and expand parking provision through the development of multi-decked car parks both at Sevenoaks Station and most recently with the opening of the Sevenoaks Town multi decked car park in the heart of Sevenoaks town. Providing hundreds more long stay parking spaces for workers, helping to boost to the local economy and attract new businesses in to the town.

Supporting documents

- 10 Appendix A provides information on the current parking charges in neighbouring towns and Southeastern Rail car parks.

- 11 Appendix B presents existing parking charges alongside the proposed charges.

Sevenoaks Parking

- 12 Sevenoaks town continues to thrive, containing many popular high street and speciality shops, boutiques and eateries as well as the popular Stag Theatre. The town has a busy daytime, evening and weekend economy, supported by the car parks and on-street parking facilities that the Council provides.
- 13 Sevenoaks car parks operate close to or at their maximum capacity at peak times each day. It is essential that the Council closely monitors, manages and adjusts parking management to optimise parking capacity.
- 14 Parking pressures increased over 2018/19, while Buckhurst 2 car park closed to allow development of the new Sevenoaks Town car park. The Council honoured its commitment to accommodate displaced customers over this period, using temporary alternative on and off-street parking available close to town including operating a temporary “park and ride” service.
- 15 The Council continues to support and encourage alternative sustainable transport. Our parking management patrol team now uses two electric vehicles. The Council has installed electric vehicle charging facilities in both new multi-decked car parks, and there is a project running to extend vehicle charging across other car parks across the District.

Car parks in Sevenoaks

Blighs

- 16 Blighs car park continues to operate at or just beyond full capacity at peak times during the day. It is proposed that the half, one, two and three hour tariffs are reviewed to encourage greater turnover and use of Buckhurst 1, South Park and Suffolk Way car parks.

Buckhurst 1, South Park and Suffolk Way

- 17 Pressure on these “shoppers” car parks has eased following the opening of the new town car park. There are no proposals to change the current charging regime in these car parks.

Council Offices car park

- 18 The Council’s staff car park in Gordon Road will continue to provide free “all day” parking at weekends, to assist shop workers and local residents.

Sevenoaks Town

- 19 This new 480-space car park has eased parking pressures across the town, particularly addressing the acute shortage of long stay worker parking.

- 20 Season ticket and daily parking usage continues to grow, following the opening of the car park in April 2019. Officers continue to monitor this closely to ensure that the car park operates as efficiently as possible and that it meets its income profile.
- 21 A proportion of the income from this car park will repay the loan that part funded its development.
- 22 It is proposed to increase the £4.60 daily fee to £5.50. Season ticket charges will increase proportionately.
- 23 The “historic” £35 off-street resident permit will be discontinued. Current permit holders will be able to take up the £300 annual resident season ticket, which reflects the market value of an annual resident parking bay in the town.

St Johns and St James

- 24 There are no proposals to change the tariffs in these car parks.

Bradbourne

- 25 The new Bradbourne Car Park continues to be a popular with commuters using Sevenoaks Station and we continue to monitor it closely to ensure that it operates as efficiently as possible. There are no proposals to change the tariffs in this car park at this time.

Car parks in other areas

Bevan Place, Park Road and Station Road (Swanley)

- 26 There are no proposed changes to the tariffs in these car parks.

Darent, Quebec Avenue and Vicarage Hill (Westerham)

- 27 There are no proposals to change the tariffs in these car parks.

On street parking

Ashley Close, Morewood Close (East) and St Botolphs Road

- 28 On street parking charges in these roads help to regulate the on-street commuter parking around Sevenoaks Station, revised charges will help to bring greater parity between the on and off-street commuter parking charges around the station.

Holly Bush Lane and Plymouth Drive

- 29 Increased parking charges are proposed at these two locations, encouraging use of the new town car park for long stay customers and making these spaces available to a wider sector of the community.

Morewood Close (West)

- 30 Moderate charge increases are proposed at this location, where parking charges have remained unchanged for a number of years.

Other areas

- 31 There are no proposals to change the parking charges in Swanley, Westerham and Knockholt.

Resident Permits, Visitor Vouchers and Non-Resident Permits

- 32 A review of parking in Sevenoaks will take place in late 2019 and early 2020. There are no proposed changes to resident permits, non-resident permits or visitor vouchers until the findings of the review are known.

Key implications

Financial

- 33 Sevenoaks District Council has now built two new multi-decked car parks, one in the main serving commuters at Sevenoaks Station, the other providing long stay worker parking in Sevenoaks Town.
- 34 While these initiatives fall outside the scope of the Council's statutory functions, these projects have been extremely important to the community, supporting local economies and benefitting the lives of residents. A proportion of parking income directly contributes to the cost of funding these developments.
- 35 This review takes account of the more flexible approach that Members will recall adopting in the Fees and Charges Review 2019-20. Allowing greater focus on achieving a balanced budget and efficiencies, while taking account of national economic climate and cycles and the needs of our customers and communities.
- 36 Furthermore, Member's will be aware that the income profiled in last year's Fees and Charges review fell short of the Council's 10-year balanced budget target for that year, this has necessitated an additional uplift compared to normal years, to make up that deficit. The proposals in this report meet the assumptions in the 10-year budget.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

- 37 Changes to the car park charges will require amending the off-street Parking Order.

Equality Impacts

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.

Sevenoaks District Council supports the Blue Badge Scheme allowing free parking in its off-street car parks and in on-street pay and display parking bays.

Community Impact and Outcomes

Measured and reasonable parking charges encourage the use of sustainable transport and healthier lifestyles.

Both new multi-decked car parks have attained the Safer Car Parks Award.

Both new car parks are equipped with Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points, with normal parking charges applied and the electricity provided by the Council free of charge (though subject to the EV network provider’s fees).

Human Rights

There are no human rights issues or implications.

Conclusions

Proposed new parking charges for 2020/21 are given in Appendix B of this report.

- Appendices**
 - Appendix A - Parking Charges for Neighbouring Authorities and Southeastern Rail car parks
 - Appendix B - Proposed On and Off-Street Parking Charges

Background Papers None

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