

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Partnerships, Planning and Policy (Introduced by the Executive Member for Resources, Policy and Performance)	Executive Cabinet	24 October 2013

REVISED CAR PARK TARIFFS

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To update members on the results of trial on the change of car park tariffs in the town centre car parks.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- That the trial tariffs be adopted permanently from 8 December 2013
- That the temporary trial tariff scheme be extended until 7 December 2013.
 - On short stay car parks, 1 hour parking reduced to 50p
 - On short stay car parks, the facility to park for up to 4 hours (rather than 3 hours)
 - On all car parks free parking after 5pm on weekdays
 - On all car parks, free parking after 1pm on Saturday
- The Revised Tariffs during the trial were:

a. Flat Iron:

Up to	Existing Charge	New Charge
1 hour	70p	50p
2 hour	Not available	£1.00
3 hours	£1.00	£2.00
4 hours	Not Available	£4.00

b. Short Stay:

Up to	Existing Charge	New Charge
1 hour	70p	50p
2 hour	Not available	80p
3 hours	£1.00	£1.00
4 hours	Not Available	£2.00

c. Long Stay:

Up to	Existing Charge	New Charge
3 hours	£1.00	£1.00
4 hours	£1.40	£1.40
All Day	£3.50	£3.50

5. The changes to conditions trialled were:
 - Consecutive ticketing will be prohibited.
 - No return to the same car park within 2 hours.
 - Tickets not transferable between car parks.
6. The trial re-designated Portland Street car park as Short Stay and Farrington Street as Long Stay which were both previously 'Mixed' stay car parks.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

7. Following the car park prices trial, this report considers the merits of the trial and recommends the permanent introduction of the trial tariffs and parking conditions.
8. Due to the formal consultation periods required the existing trial needs to be extended until 7th December after which the permanent schedule will be in place.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Key Decision? Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Reason Please bold as appropriate	1, a change in service provision that impacts upon the service revenue budget by £100,000 or more	2, a contract worth £100,000 or more
	3, a new or unprogrammed capital scheme of £100,000 or more	4, Significant impact in environmental, social or physical terms in two or more wards

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

9. The objectives of the trial were met:
 - a. Make Chorley an affordable destination.
 - b. Increase the churn of vehicles on the Flat Iron car park, thus increasing its capacity.
 - c. Make visitors aware of alternative car parks to the Flat Iron.
 - d. Increase the number of visitors to Chorley town centre.
10. Findings of the trial show that:
 - a. The Flat Iron car park is the primary destination for shoppers.
 - b. Over 60% of visitors say that pricing does influence their decision on where to park.
 - c. Many shoppers commented that our car parks were cheaper than neighbouring towns such as Bolton, Preston & Wigan.
 - d. Availability of spaces on the Flat Iron has improved.
 - e. The vast majority (66%) of businesses have seen an increase in business on Saturday afternoons with only 20% having seen no difference.
 - f. 20% of businesses have seen an increase in business across the rest of the week.
 - g. 40% of businesses say their customers haven't changed the car park they use compared to 31% who say they had.
 - h. 34% of businesses say the new tariffs increased the time their customers stayed whilst only 20% say that their customers didn't stay as long.

- i. 46% of businesses feel that their customers consider both price and availability of spaces when choosing to come to Chorley whereas 51% consider it is on price alone.
 - j. Footfall figures from both Market Walk and Booths show that more visitors have stayed longer on a Saturday afternoon.
 - k. The Chorley Traders Alliance has commented that many of their members have different ideas on how parking should be managed but in general trade has been more resilient since the trial tariffs were introduced.
11. The underlying anecdotal evidence from businesses and visitors is that the trial has been worthwhile and should continue to be promoted as a positive attractor to visiting Chorley.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

12. Reverting back to the original tariffs – neither as attractive to shoppers and visitors nor guaranteed to restore lost revenue.
13. Withdraw the ‘free after 1pm’ on the Flat Iron car park only – could confuse visitors by having different offers on different car parks but revenue would increase.
14. Changing the free period to another day / time – promote confusion in the tariff system to the consumer with potentially little improved benefit on the trialled scheme.
15. Invest in ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) system to enable pay-on-exit – would require investment of ~£100k to include a barrier on exit system. No PCN’s would be issued.
- a. Due to the fact that Chorley Council operates its car parks under Traffic Management Act (TMA) 2004 it means that we cannot issue PCN’s off-site i.e. by post as required by standalone ANPR systems. Systems in place elsewhere operate under the 1994 TMA which is contract law and we cannot revert back to that act.
 - b. By introducing a barrier system on exits it prohibits vehicles from leaving without paying hence, nobody would receive a PCN because they couldn’t physically leave without payment being made. If payment is made the ANPR system would automatically raise the barrier upon approach thus reducing queues. No barrier / ticket would be required upon entry as ANPR would record entry times.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

16. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all		A strong local economy	X
Clean, safe and healthy communities		An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	X

BACKGROUND

17. The Flat Iron car park currently accounts for approximately 50% of total car park revenue from 30% of the spaces available. This car park is considered the most desirable parking destination for visitors and often becomes full with visitors searching for spaces.
18. Many of the Long Stay car parks are only used by permit holders during the week. Although designated Long Stay, all of these car parks are within a short distance from the town centre retail district.

19. The current Short Stay car parks only permit stays up to 3 hours but several requests, primarily from hair & beauty salons, say a 4 hour limit would be preferred by their customers.
20. Once visitors are within our car parks there is no signage telling them how to get to the next available car park to ensure they stay within Chorley and don't leave with the impression of insufficient parking.
21. Options were produced on car parking pricing schemes to attract more visitors to the town centre for the Town Centre Team to consider, and the option to encourage a quicker turnover of customers on short stay, especially the Flat Iron, whilst offering an element of free parking on all car parks was the preferred choice. The following proposals were adopted for trial which commenced on 12 October 2012.
- On short stay car parks, 1 hour parking reduced to 50p
 - On short stay car parks, the facility to park for up to 4 hours (rather than 3 hours)
 - On all car parks free parking after 5pm on weekdays
 - On all car parks, free parking after 1pm on Saturday

22. The Revised Tariffs during the trial were:

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23. The changes to conditions trialled were:

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FINANCIAL IMPACT

25. See Appendix 1
 - a. For the year (Oct 2011 – Sept 2012) on old tariffs revenue was £719,038
 - b. For the year (Oct 2012 – Sept 2013) on new tariffs revenue is £596,625

26. To make an allowance for the estimated adverse affect of having alternative and temporary car parking arrangements currently available, the total decline in income in paragraph 25 above should be adjusted by circa. £20,000. Appendix 1 provides the detailed analysis of income over both time and sites with Saturdays only shown in Appendix 1a. The anticipate reduction in annual car parking income as a result of these charges is £100k, of which Saturdays account for circa £71k.

27. Other factors affecting revenue:
 - c. We introduced free parking at the Macdonalds site in November which took revenue away from Fleet St short stay.
 - a. Approximately 50 vehicles are parking for free on the sites of the old tax office and Swan with 2 necks on Water Street which will potentially impact on ticket sales.
 - b. We used 30 spaces on the Flat Iron for the Big Wheel, which also acted as an attraction, and in fact revenue was actually up 13.8% during December on this car park. A similar attraction is planned for 2013.
 - c. The re-opening of Market Street will introduce a further 29 free 30-minute on street parking bays which may impact on nearby short stay revenue.
 - d. The resurfacing of the main car parks in Q4 will displace vehicles and potentially negatively impact revenue for the duration.
 - e. Based on annual figures there has been a 15% reduction in the uptake of Long Stay permits by the private sector.

28. Other Considerations:
 - a. Re-opening Market Street will provide additional spaces with 30 minutes free parking which will impact upon short stay revenue.
 - b. The potential new ASDA development will provide a further 400 alternative parking spaces.
 - c. The redevelopment of the former Macdonalds site will lead to a formal short stay car park with a further 70 spaces and reverse the decline of Fleet St revenue.
 - d. Any enhancements made to Portland St car park will increase its desirability.
 - e. The Town Centre Masterplan will consider the provision of car parking in relation to the other aspects it is looking at.
 - f. Chipside & Legion contracts are currently up for renewal (end Sept 2014). It is currently proposed that Chipside are given a 2yr extension and Legion a 5yr extension.
 - g. Legion costs ~£62k for enforcement and cash collection
 - h. Chipside costs ~16k for ticket processing (which includes resident permits)
 - i. PCN revenue is ~£75k which largely covers costs of enforcement

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

29. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	X	Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal	X	Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

30. The report sets out that the introduction of the revised car parking charges will impact on the Council's budget by reducing annual income in the region of £100,000. This amendment to the budget can be accommodated by the matching and re-classification of PCSOs expenditure from recurring in the base line budget to being financed from New Homes Bonus receipts (NHB). The classification and use of NHB funding was approved in the budget report at the Special Council meeting on 28/02/13. This matching of recurrent and non-recurrent funding to relevant expenditure is also contained within the Health, Environment and Neighbourhoods Review also on this agenda.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

31. Due to the statutory requirements relating to the advertising of these changes, it is necessary to continue the trial tariffs until 7 December before implementing the permanent change from 8 December 2013.

LESLEY-ANN FENTON
DIRECTOR OF PARTNERSHIPS, PLANNING AND POLICY

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Trial of Revised Car Park Tariffs	13/08/2012	***	http://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=3665
Extension of Trial Tariffs	07/03/2013	***	http://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=3851

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Conrad Heald	5507	30/09/2013	***