

AD HOC RURAL ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

1st DECEMBER 2015

REPORT OF HEAD OF COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

STRATEGIC CAR PARK CHARGES AND DESIGNATION PROPOSALS

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. To request that members approve the proposed car parking tariff changes in Melton Borough Council's off street car parks in accordance with the Council's inflation policy for 2015/16 and the Car and Coach Parking Strategy (2015), as agreed at REEA on 4 November 2015. The options considered and financial appraisal associated with the proposed tariff changes are provided in Appendix B.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that:-

- (a) **The proposed car park tariff changes for 2016/17 for various off street car parks in Melton Mowbray as set out in Appendix B (Option1, Option2 or a ,member preferred alternative) is approved**
- (b) **The proposed re-designation of Burton Street Car Park to a short stay car park is approved.**
- (c) **The current 1 hour tariff current payable at the Mill Street Car Park is removed to align itself with other long stay car park tariffs.**
- (d) **The changes and proposed tariff increases as stated in (a), (b) and (c) above are implemented in line with the powers and duties delegated to the Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods (outlined in section 6) in order to proceed with the implementation as required.**

3.0 KEY ISSUES

Background

- 3.1 The Car and Coach Parking Strategy was adopted by members of the Rural, Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee on 4th November 2015. Under this policy framework and in advance of the Delivery Plan being adopted by members it was agreed that an ad hoc REEA should be held on 1st December 2015 to consider changes to Melton Borough Council Car Parking Tariffs and Designation in the context of the approved Strategy.
- 3.2 Members last approved an increase of tariffs on 7 September 2011 which became effective from April 2012.
- 3.3 Officers in developing the strategy and since approval have carried out a number of activities to support the recommendations presented to members, these have included:-

- Undertaking an assessment of the current usage of the car parks, which established that the highest amount of ticket sales were for short stay duration periods across three key centrally located car parks – St Marys, Wilton Road and Burton Street.
- Reviewing and harmonising the tariffs in line with the recommendations outlined in the recently adopted Car and Coach Parking Strategy (2015), including reassignment of Burton Street as a short stay car park and changing tariffs to encourage better usage of long and short stay car parks with a price difference that favours longer stay periods as well as a review of Tuesday parking tariffs to improve parking behaviour and traffic management.
- Using the interactive parking model commissioned as part of the Car and Coach Parking Study to determine current and future demand/usage figures and to use as the basis for calculating both the anticipated revenue and attrition rates associated with vehicle occupancy taking into account the economic circumstances of the town centre.
- Undertaking a bench-marking exercise to demonstrate that MBC tariffs are in line with neighbouring towns.
- Understanding any lease and income arrangements with third parties across the car parks.

The current comparison of parking charges is attached as Appendix A.

- 3.4 Following an initial consultation with the BID Board, other key stakeholders and car park operators in the town, including the Melton Town Estate to discuss options, the following proposed tariff structure was arrived at taking into account the Car and Coach Parking Strategy.

Introducing a free 20 min period

The strategy identifies that this type of change incentivises behaviour that allows short spaces to be used with a higher turnover of vehicles and also incentivises short shopping visits and alleviates pressure on on-street parking, which is currently free. The strategy did suggest that it is possible to charge for this short period, however, officers feel a free incentive will help address some of the underutilisation of short stay car parks on non-Tuesdays and help the town economy.

Extending the Maximum stay in short stay car parks

Introducing a tariff for longer stays in short stay car parks could be a potential measure to provide flexibility of use to the short stay car parks during peak demand for long stay car parking whilst deterring such use when capacity remains for long stay parking.

General Increase in tariff

The current parking tariffs in Melton are easily understood and the strategy indicates that they show a feeling of fairness due to the generally consistent increase per hour in parking costs. The general increase has been determined to take into account a number of factors:- RPI, the rising costs of maintenance, the council's long term improvement programme and to address the current issue where there is a small difference between the short and long stay parking charges for the same duration of stay.

Tuesday Car parking charges

The strategy suggested that the Council seek to modify the tariff regime on Tuesday to promote a different distribution of parking behaviour. The main thrust behind these charge

changes is so that we incentivise correct choice of car park (i.e. long or short stay) and therefore the proposals allow for longer periods in a long stay car park to be substantially cheaper.

It also highlighted as an example the potential charges for Tuesday. Officers have presented 2 options for members to consider, Option 1 is a moderated Tuesday Charge from the example provided in the strategy by the consultants and Option 2 reflects the example provided in the strategy. Appendix B includes both options for Tuesday and members are asked to consider and approve one of the options or to propose any alternatives.

Re-designation of Burton Street Car Park to Short Stay.

Short stay car parks focus short stay on the town centre and are generally very close to the town centre. Where a review of usage shows a change of use by users then a re-designation of car park should be considered.

There is some evidence from ticket sales that Burton Street is currently used more for short stay parking. This change will help cater for demand for short stay car parking on the south approach to the town centre and potentially free up more short stay parking within the town centre.

Mill Street Car Park Changes

To clarify its status as a long stay car park, it is proposed to remove the 1 hour tariff from this car park; this will help balance the removal of long stay parking at Burton Street and provides a clearer parking tariff across the town.

Cattle Market Car Park

The cattle market car park is not a pay and display car park and is currently managed by the Market Partners. The charge applies on Tuesdays and other market days and is aligned to the charge in the other long stay car parks. As such an increase is proposed on this basis.

- 3.5 The charges and changes proposed are based on an understanding that the Council has two roles: one as a car park operator and one as a strategic policy maker, subsequently the proposals take a balanced view that considers the relative increase by RPI and the vitality of the town centre economy.

4.0 POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are clear links to some of the priorities in the Corporate Plan specifically:
- Promoting a vibrant and sustainable economy, focused on growth and prosperity
 - Developing a thriving Melton Mowbray town centre that is the heart of the Borough.

5.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This should be seen by members as a package of measures aiming to offset some of these increases with items such as free for 20 mins etc. and the tariff proposed balances the needs of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) with the desire to increase footfall at quieter periods, regulate traffic flow and meet the need of local businesses in the town centre. It meets the council's approved charging policy taking into account coinage issues.
- 5.2 The 2 proposals would see an increase in overall revenue of between £38k and £94k or £38k and £106k with the higher level based on a high level of enforcement and no reduction in the current usage of the 1 hour rate. In reality the position is likely to be in the

middle of these ranges as customers currently paying for 1 hour switch to 20 mins for free. In addition the level of enforcement may need to be examined in order to balance the costs of this against the level of income received. An RPI only increase in income received by the council over the period since the last increase would represent approximately £74k and the MTFS had assumed an increase of £80k without the introduction of any free period. However the proposals also bring into being a range of other measure such as free for 20 minutes which meet the council's economic objectives thereby resulting in a package of measures that balance the need for growth in line with RPI in conjunction with stimulating the local economy and influencing traffic flow.

5.3 As the council in its draft budget at its present time is generally seeing a healthy budget subject to the spending settlement for 2016/17, additional revenue arising as a result of these proposals could be put into a car parking reserve to address some of the condition issues and also if investment is needed to address some of the issues identified in the strategy such as RinGo (pay by mobile phone) and signage until such time as this may need to be reviewed in the future. The capital programme contains a number of required improvements works in 2017/18 and later years that will require funding and with the shortage of alternative capital resources this will provide much welcome funding.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The proposed tariff changes will require changes to the current Car Parking Order (CPO) as per the appropriate legislation. The constitution deals with this matter by delegating to the Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods the following delegation:

'In consultation with the Head of Central Services authority to make new car parking orders or variations to existing car parking orders required as a result of changes to car parks approved by policy committees including undertaking the necessary public consultation and the consideration of objections received as a result. Objections considered as contentious by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods will be reported to the appropriate Committee for consideration. The delegation to include changes to the layout, change of use, tariff or acquisition or disposal of a car park'

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

7.1 There is no direct connection to community safety arising from this scheme.

8.0 EQUALITIES

8.1 A full Equalities Impact Analysis was completed as part of Car and Coach Parking Strategy (2015), there are not considered to be any direct equality issues arising from this report, since there are a range of charging options which will remain available to cater for the widest needs of local car park users.

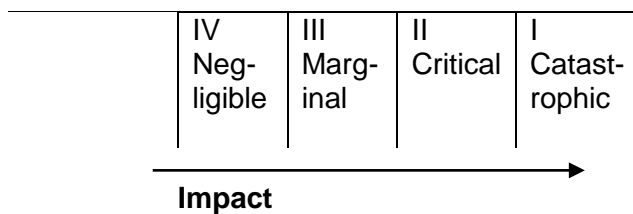
9.0 RISKS

9.1 Probability



Very High A				
High B				
Significant C		3		
Low D		4		
Very Low E			1,2	
Almost Impossible F				

Risk No.	Description
1	The proposals do not positively impact on behaviour of usage
2	Current tariff structure doesn't reflect users needs and results in complaints to the Council and reduced usage
3	Target date for Implementation Of 1 st April is not achieved
4	Assumptions regarding the level of income are incorrect resulting in a budget shortfall



10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1 Car Park charges and designation can impact climate control as they influence traffic flow and the use of cars. The proposals are designed to positively impact this by ensuring car park usage is appropriate and that their respective designation minimises traffic in the town.

11.0 CONSULTATION

11.1 The Melton Car and Coach parking Strategy was developed following consultation with stakeholders and the Melton BID.

Although no specific details around prices was discussed with the BID at their meeting on Thursday 19th November 2015, they were made aware that an Ad hoc meeting of this committee was taking place to consider recommendations that would include:-

- An overall price increase
- Re-designation of Burton Street to Short Stay from Long Stay
- A free 20 mins proposal
- A longer period being considered for shorter stay car parks

12.0 WARDS AFFECTED

12.1 All wards with a business will potentially be affected.

Contact Officer: Harry Rai - Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods

Date: 11 November 2015

Appendices: A- Current charges and comparison.
B- Financial Appraisal and Comparator Analysis of Proposed Changes

Background Papers: Melton Car & Coach parking Strategy October 2015

Reference: X drive/cttee/REEA/2015-16/ad hoc/011215/HR- Car Parking