

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

13 NOVEMBER 2019

- Subject:** **Parking Strategy Review and Proposed Changes to Charges and Conditions in Council Car Parks**
- Head of Service:** Richard Moore, Head of Transportation & Environment
- Decision Issues:** These matters are within the authority of the Policy & Resources Committee
- Classification:** This report is open to the public
- CCC Ward(s):** **All**
- Summary:** *A parking strategy review has been commissioned to consider policies and charges relating to council car parks. The recommendations in the review are set out and a series of changes are proposed for public consultation*
- To Resolve :**
- a) To note the ‘Steer’ Parking Strategy review and endorse the key findings and recommendations**
 - b) The Committee to consider any future disposal of city centre car parks identified in the current Local Plan on a case by case basis following specific public consultation and provided there is evidence of overall spare capacity (note : decisions to dispose of Rosemary Lane and the Ivy Lane frontage of Longport car park have already been made by the council)**
 - c) To undertake public consultation on the closure of Northgate Car Park**
 - d) To consider any additional city centre car park disposals through the review of the next Local Plan**
 - e) That the Off Street Parking Places Order (OSPPO) changes contained in Appendix 7 are taken to public consultation**
 - f) That the car park improvements identified in paragraph 2.6 are included in the council’s capital budget**
 - g) That a decision on whether to provide zero emission buses in the next Park & Ride contract will be made when tenders are evaluated in April 2020**
- Next stage in process:** Public Consultation for the OSPPO proposals and closure of Northgate car park will be undertaken

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. Introduction

1.1 Parking tariffs and operational aspects of council's car parks are considered in the context of the district's parking and transportation strategies. The current parking strategy is set out in Chapter 6 of the Transport Strategy which was formally adopted by the council in July 2017.

In order to check whether the current parking policies are appropriate in order to meet the council's primary aims and objectives it was decided to commission an independent review.

Following a competitive tender process, consultants 'Steer' were appointed to undertake that review and their brief can be viewed as a background document in Appendix 1. In summary their brief was to check that the parking strategy was achieving the main objectives described as follows :-

"The parking strategy looks to balance the need for parking with the need to manage the use of the private car. This will be achieved by increasing car parking spaces at Park and Ride sites, setting parking charges to influence travel choice and a gradual reduction in the number of city centre parking spaces, provided that there is clear evidence of an adequate overall supply. The council aims to manage the availability and cost of parking to balance the impact of car use with the need to provide access to services and opportunities and meet business needs".

1.2 The final version of the 'Steer' report was received in July 2019 and it contains a number of recommendations for the council to consider. The report is attached as Appendix 2 to this report. It is proposed that these recommendations are endorsed and progressed as set out in resolutions (b) - (g).

1.3 Parking tariffs are set out in the Off Street Parking Places Order (OSPPO). These can be agreed on an annual basis or set in advance for future years.

1.4 In the 2016/17 OSPPO, the council set tariffs in Canterbury's car parks over a 4-year period in order to use the predicted income to help fund a number of transport and parking improvements such as the ANPR system, Station Road West multi-storey, Wincheap Park & Ride expansion and the extension to the riverside cycling and walking route.

1.5 It is proposed to adopt this approach again for the next 4 years in order that consideration can be given to funding the initiatives recommended in the 'Steer' report, to undertake other transport/parking improvements and also to use the revenue to help close the deficit in the council's overall funding position.

2. Detail

2.1 The 'Steer' report contains 10 main recommendations. In light of the council's recent decision to declare a climate change emergency and recognising that our parking strategy is the most important tool that the council has to directly influence travel behaviour change, the table below sets out the main recommendations along with a high level assessment of the proposed action in terms of its climate change impact :-

Table 1

Recommendation	Proposed Action	Climate Change Impact
1. Introduce measures to boost Park and Ride usage	Rebalance parking supply in favour of Park & Ride by closing some car parks as identified in the Local Plan	Positive
	Improve Park & Ride marketing	Positive
	20% P&R discount for regular users	Positive
2. Consolidate parking supply	Closing a number of smaller car parks	Positive
3. Improve the visitor welcome	Car park resurfacing/improvements, variable message signs and wayfinding	Neutral
4. Increase short-stay tariffs	Increase the minimum payment to the equivalent one hour tariff in all car parks	Positive
5. Apply differential charges based on emissions and time of arrival	20% tariff discount for EV and plug-in hybrid vehicles at ANPR car parks	Positive
	20% tariff premium for arrivals in the am peak (7.30-9.00am) on weekdays at ANPR car parks in Canterbury	Positive
6. Increase EV charging facilities	At P&R sites, Holmans Meadow, Neptune, William Street, Gorrell Tank	Positive
7. Rationalise charging approaches in Whitstable and Herne Bay	Remove the free parking in Whitstable before 10.00am	Positive
	Remove the free parking in William Street car park after 6pm	Neutral
	Introduce a seasonal tariff in Neptune	Neutral
8. Consider an electric bus fleet for Park & Ride	Electric bus option to be considered in new Park & Ride contract (Oct 2020)	Positive
9. Reduce the discount offered on Business User and Other Permits	Increase all business user permits by 10% in 20/21 and in 21/22	Positive
	Increase the cost, or delete, 'Hotel/Guest House' permits (no increase since 2013)	
	Delete 'Faith & Community' permits (only 33 permits currently in use)	
10. Introduce an overnight charge in all main car parks	Implement a £2.00 flat rate overnight charge	Neutral

2.2 The first two recommendations reflect the fact that compared to other historic cities where Park and Rides operate very successfully, Canterbury is the only city where the proportion of city centre spaces (59%) is greater than the proportion of Park and Ride spaces (41%). Most other cities i.e. Bath, Cambridge, Winchester, York, provide 50-60% of the overall parking supply as Park & Ride spaces. The review states that if users in Canterbury perceive that there is a good possibility of obtaining a space in the city centre, they are more likely to choose that option, given the greater convenience of city centre parking.

2.3 A number of city centre car parks are allocated for disposal in the Local Plan in order to re-balance this supply. If they are all delivered and the Park & Ride sites are expanded as proposed, then Park and Ride spaces would account for 52% of the overall supply which would be similar to other cities.

2.4 The council has already made decisions to close Rosemary Lane car park (Regeneration and Property Committee 26/01/17 minute ref 519) and the Ivy Lane frontage to Longport car park (Policy & Resources Committee 24/02/16 minute ref 624). A decision is now being sought on whether to consult on the closure of Northgate car park (part of which is owned by Sainsburys) which, as well as being in line with the parking strategy, would also enable the expansion of the Northgate Medical Practice. A further report would be brought back to the committee with the results of the public consultation in line with previous commitments made by the council before making a decision on whether to proceed.

2.5 Decisions on the other car parks allocated for disposal in the Local Plan will be progressively made following public consultation and ensuring there is spare capacity overall.

2.6 In order to maximise the use the Park & Ride as a tool to keep vehicles out of the city centre, the council could take a similar approach to Oxford where 70% of all parking spaces are provided at Park & Ride sites. It is recommended that this approach is considered as part of the next Local Plan review.

2.7 The review also recommends improvements to the appearance and facilities in district car parks to ensure a positive overall visitor experience. To meet this objective the following initiatives/improvements are proposed:

- Improvements in Watling Street, St Radigunds Street, Market Street, Keams Yard, Shaftesbury Road, Gorrell Tank
- Variable message signs showing the number of available spaces in Canterbury car parks
- EV charging points at Park & Ride sites, Neptune, William Street, Holmans Meadow, William Street.
- ANPR at Whitefriars car park

2.8 There are also a number of recommendations related to tariff changes aimed at tackling congestion and improving air quality:

- Increase the minimum payment to the equivalent one hour tariff rate in all car parks to deter drivers from driving into the city for very short stays
- Apply differential tariffs based on emissions and time of arrival
- Rationalise tariff charging periods in Whitstable and Herne Bay
- Introduce pay and display charging on the last remaining free car parks
- Reduce the discount offered on Business User and other permits
- Introduce an overnight charge in all main car parks
- Introduce reserved bays in ANPR car parks

The detailed proposals relating to all these recommendations are set out in Appendix 7.

2.9 The 'Steer' report concluded that the council should wait for improvements in electric bus technology before implementing an electric bus park & ride fleet. One of the reasons for this was their assessment that buses would require 'in field' charging as the overnight battery charge would not be sufficient. However since this report was finalised the council has trialled an electric bus on the Sturry Road Park & Ride route and this demonstrated that an overnight charge was sufficient and therefore in theory electric buses could be a feasible option.

2.10 In order to assess whether these 'Steer' recommendations are both affordable and financially appropriate, the annual revenue implications have been assessed and these are shown in the table in Appendix 3. It should be noted that an estimate has been included for electric park & ride buses but this figure could be significantly higher depending on the charging infrastructure requirements of tenderers. Whether the cost can actually be afforded will need to be determined once the tenders are returned next April/May.

In summary though, at this stage it is estimated that adopting all these 'Steer' recommendations would result in additional costs as follows:

20/21	£116,100
21/22	£343,200
22/23	£366,200
23/24	£366,200

2.11 Therefore in setting tariffs for the next 4 years, the council needs to consider how to fund these recommendations (assuming they are supported), fund other transport/parking improvements that council may wish to deliver as well as the need to use car parking revenue to help close the council's overall funding gap and maintain essential services.

2.12 Taking into account all these factors, the proposed tariffs for the next 4 year period are shown below :-

Table 2 : Possible Tariff Changes for 20/21, 21/22, 22/23 and 23/24 in Canterbury

	Historic and Proposed Hourly Rate Tariffs				Cost Per Vehicle
Year	Whitefriars	Central Premium	Central	Wincheap	Park & Ride
2018/19	£1.90	£1.80	£1.70	£0.80/£2.20 *	£3.50
2019/20	£1.90	£1.80	£1.70	£0.80/£2.20 *	£3.50
2020/21	£2.00	£2.00	£1.90	£1.00	£3.50
2021/22	£2.10	£2.10	£2.00	£1.10	£3.50
2022/23	£2.20	£2.20	£2.10	£1.20	£3.50
2023/24	£2.20	£2.20	£2.10	£1.20	£3.50

* current tariff 80p up 5 hours, £2.20 5-24 hrs

Table 3 : Possible Tariff Changes in 20/21, 21/22, 22/23, 23/24 in Herne Bay & Whitstable

	Historic and Proposed Hourly Rate Tariffs		
Year	Whitstable	Herne Bay	School Lane
2018/19	£1.20 (Oct-Mar), £1.70 (Apr-Sept)	£1.00	up to 30mins 20p 30mins to 2 hours 40p 2 to 24 hrs £1.20
2019/20	£1.20 (Oct-Mar) £1.80 (Apr-Sept)	£1.10	up to 30mins 20p 30mins to 2 hours 40p 2 to 24 hrs £1.20
2020/21	£1.40 (Oct-Mar) £2.00 (Apr-Sept)	£1.30	up to 30mins 50p 30mins to 2 hours £1.00 2 to 24 hrs £2.00
2021/22	£1.50 (Oct-Mar) £2.10 (Apr-Sept)	£1.40	up to 30mins 50p 30mins to 2 hours £1.00 2 to 24 hrs £2.00
2022/23	£1.60 (Oct-Mar) £2.20 (Apr-Sept)	£1.50	up to 30mins 50p 30mins to 2 hours £1.00 2 to 24 hrs £2.00
2023/24	£1.60 (Oct-Mar) £2.20 (Apr-Sept)	£1.50	up to 30mins 50p 30mins to 2 hours £1.00 2 to 24 hrs £2.00

2.12 There are also a number of other OSSPO changes that are proposed as follows :-

Station Road West	Proposal
Creation of a long-stay tariff rate on the upper deck and a tariff for reserved bays	Hourly rate tariff to be capped at 5 hours per day
Business User Permit - Annual Cost	£1200 (20/21) £1320 (21/22)
Residents Permit - Annual Cost	£975 (20/21) £1000 (21/22)
Reculver Country Park Car Park	
Introduce half day tariff rate for coaches	£5 for up to 5 hours
New Dover Road Park and Ride	
Introduce a tariff rate for coaches	£6 per day
Add a premium for vehicles arriving after 4pm for cricket club events	£8 per vehicle
Hampton, Swalecliffe Avenue, Reculver Drive, Ocean Drive car parks	
Introduce a pay and display tariff on these car parks which are currently free	£1.00 per day £2.00 per day (weekends and bank holidays)
William Street Car Park	Remove the parking discount offered to leisure centre users

2.13 The financial implications of all the proposed tariff changes are shown in the tables in Appendices 4 and 5.

In summary, it is estimated that implementing all these tariff changes would generate additional revenue as follows:-

	Canterbury	Whitstable	Herne Bay/School Lane
20/21	(£443,800)	(£102,000)	(£165,000)
21/22	(£695,800)	(£152,000)	(£198,000)
22/23	(£927,800)	(£197,000)	(£227,000)
23/24	(£927,800)	(£197,000)	(£227,000)

2.14 Combining the cost of the 'Steer' recommendations with these tariff changes would result in additional revenue as follows:-

20/21	(£594,700)
21/22	(£702,600)
22/23	(£985,600)
23/24	(£985,600)

2.15 In order to compare these proposed tariffs with other towns and cities, benchmarking data is shown in Appendix 6. It should be noted that apart from Ashford, Canterbury is the

only authority that has a linear rate tariff system. This in itself is a much fairer system for customers as they only pay for the time they use, whereas in all the other benchmark towns and cities customers pay the maximum charge in the relevant time band period.

2.16 The full list of proposed changes that require an amendment to the Off Street Parking Places Order is shown in Appendix 7 and the next stage in this process is public consultation. The minimum statutory consultation period for changes under the Road Traffic Regulation Act is 3 weeks but it is recommended that this period is extended to 6 weeks to be in line with the council's annual budget consultation period.

3. Relevant Council Policy/Strategies/Budgetary Documents

These proposals help to fulfil the objectives of the Corporate Plan, Local Plan and the Canterbury District Transport Strategy. The financial implications are considered within the context of the Council's overall budget position.

4. Consultation planned or undertaken

Public consultation will be carried out between 25th November to 3rd January. The proposals will be formally advertised in the 'Kentish Gazette', and public notices will be displayed in all of the affected car parks. The views of the Regeneration and Property Committee and Area Forums will be sought.

5. Options available with reasons for suitability

- a. That the proposals shown in Appendix 7 are taken to public consultation.
- b. That amendments are made to the proposals shown in Appendix 7 and public consultation is undertaken.
- c. That none of the proposals shown in Appendix 7 proceed to public consultation.

6. Reasons for supporting option recommended, with risk assessment

Option a) is recommended for the following reasons :-

The proposals will help to meet the objectives of the parking strategy, many of the proposals will have a positive impact of climate change and the additional revenue raised would be used to fund other transport/parking improvements that council may wish to deliver as well helping to close the council's overall funding gap and maintain essential services.

7. Implications

(a) Financial

The financial implications are set out in the appendices and summarised in the main body of the report.

(b) Legal

The proposed changes will require amendment to the Off Street Parking Places Order and these are made under the provisions of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984

(c) Equalities

An Equalities Assessment relating to these proposals is attached in Appendix 8

(d) Environmental including carbon emissions and biodiversity

A high level assessment of the parking strategy review recommendations is set out in Table 1. All the proposals are considered to have positive or neutral environmental or climate

change impact. An environment assessment template will be completed before any final decisions are made.

8. Conclusions

A review has been undertaken to assess whether the current district parking policies are meeting the stated objectives. A number of recommendations have been made and it is proposed that these are progressed in a number of different ways as set out in the report recommendations (b) - (g).

In terms of the proposals that require amendment to the Off Street Parking Places Order, it is important that all residents and businesses to have an opportunity to comment on these through the public consultation process before any final decisions are made.

Contact Officer:

Richard Moore

Head of Transportation & Environment

email : richard.moore@canterbury.gov.uk

Appendices

Appendix 1 Parking strategy review: consultant's brief ([background document online](#))

Appendix 2 Parking strategy review: final report

Appendix 3 Financial implications of consultant's recommendations

Appendix 4 Financial implications of proposed tariff changes

Appendix 5 Combined financial implications of consultant's recommendations and tariff changes

Appendix 6 Benchmarking data from comparator towns/cities

Appendix 7 List of OSPPO changes to be taken to public consultation

Appendix 8 Equalities Impact Assessment