

**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**PORTFOLIO HOLDER DELEGATED DECISION**  
by  
**COUNTY COUNCILLOR PHYL DAVIES**  
**(PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HIGHWAYS, RECYCLING AND ASSETS)**  
**APRIL 2019**

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Traffic and Travel Manager

**SUBJECT:** Review of Car Park Charging

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**REPORT FOR:** Decision / Discussion / Information

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**1. Summary**

To review options for council operated Car Park charges, in light of the savings target of £200K associated with parking charges.

Providing safe and convenient parking is vital to the economy of Powys, ensuring that our towns remain easily accessible for people who choose to drive. Appropriate parking management supports the objectives of Powys County Council, offering access to many amenities and places to visit and enabling our residents and businesses to achieve their potential.

**2. Proposal**

To rationalise the current matrix of parking charges, increase/simplify daily parking charges.

**3. Options Considered / Available**

Several options have been considered as summarised below:

- Option 1 - Rationalising tariffs
- Option 2 - Provision of 1 hour parking free for all when combined with Option 1
- Option 3 - Provide a limited number of bays in each car park free for 30 minutes [shop and go spaces]
- Option 4 - Provide parking for free after 3pm
- Option 5 - Voucher discount scheme
- Option 6 - On street charging

### 3.1 Existing charges

The existing tariffs were last changed in June 2015 to the following:

Vehicle type	Short Stay		Long Stay				
	Up to 1 Hour	1 – 2 Hours	Up to 1 Hour	1 - 2 Hours	2 – 4 Hours	Over 4 Hours	Overnight
Car motorcycle	£1.00	£1.50	£0.70	£1.30	£2.50	£3.20	£0.00
Vehicle + trailer			£1.90	£1.90	£3.80	£3.80	£6.30
Goods to 3t			£2.20	£2.90	£4.00	£4.00	£6.30
Goods >3t bus			£2.40	£3.40	£4.40	£5.30	£6.30

Currently

- 54% of short stay users and 32.5% of long stay users pay for 1 hours parking. Potentially all these would benefit from free parking equating to £371k of ticket sales.
- 46% of short stay users and 36.3% of long stay users pay for 2 hours parking. This equates to £374k of ticket sales.
- 17.7% of long stay users stay for 2-4 hours
- 13.4% of long stay users stay for over 4 hours
- Less than 0.1% were overnight sales

Blue Badge holders receive free parking in any space within the pay and display car parks.

### 3.2 Option 1 - Tariff rationalisation including reduced permit charges

#### 3.2.1 Proposed Tariffs

The current tariff matrix is considered overly complicated and it utilised the maximum permitted variances the old car park machines were capable of utilising; hence some tariff bands needed to have the same value. It is considered that this should be simplified for ease of use by customers. The majority of the larger vehicles or trailers will take up at least 2 spaces and the charges need to reflect this. Therefore, it is proposed the charge for larger vehicles be double that of a car taking a single space.

The following table indicates the proposed simplified tariff.-

Vehicle type	Short Stay		Long Stay			
	Up to 1 Hour	1 – 2 Hours	Up to 1 Hour	1 – 2 Hours	2-4 hours	Over 4 Hours
Car motorcycle Goods <3t	£1.00	£2.00	£1.00	£2.00	£3.00	£4.00
Vehicle + trailer Motorhome Goods >3T Bus			£2.00	£4.00	£6.00	£8.00

Sales of overnight tickets are minimal and produce an annual income of less than £3k. It is not considered appropriate to enforce overnight for this minimal income and therefore this charge is to be discontinued.

### 3.2.2 Permit prices

Permits are available for regular users of car parks. Predominantly these will be people who work in a town and travel by car. The current permit was linked to full day tariff and offered a 50% discount on a worker working 5 days per week for 46 weeks of the year.

Instead of altering the cost of a permit to reflect the revised charging, it is proposed to maintain the existing charges for permits. This will in effect provide a greater reduction for the worker working full time. The table below indicates the potential saving for a regular car user parking 5 days a week 46 weeks per year.

	Permit charge	Equivalent daily cost	Saving %
Annual	370	920	60
6 months	205	460	55
3 months	115	230	50
1 month	40	76	47

Freezing the permit prices makes them even more economical with the potential to offer a substantial 60% discount on parking for a regular user and equates to an equivalent of paying just £1.61 per day.

The annual cost of £370, when compared to the daily charge will be beneficial to someone who on average parks 2 days per week in a pay and display car park.

### 3.2.3 Income Prediction

Income comparison of the proposed changes based on information on actual ticket sales during part of 2017-18 is:

	Income from Proposed Changes	2018-19 Budget	Difference
<b>Car park income</b>	£1,555,116	£1,275,000	£280,017
<b>Permit Income</b>	£160,000	£160,000	£0
<b>PCN Income</b>	£200,000	£200,000	£0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£1,885,646</b>	<b>£1,635,000</b>	<b>£280,017</b>

### 3.3 Option 2 – Option 1 but providing 1 hour free parking to all

To aid regeneration and encourage footfall within our town centres the option to provide 1 hours free parking has been considered. A high proportion of current users of the car parks are only staying for 1 hour and therefore this will benefit a significant

proportion of users. It may also encourage those that traditionally drive 2-3 times around a town looking for a free on street parking place before driving off if none available. This proposal may therefore increase footfall and reduce congestion and improving the environment for pedestrians. The machines within a town can be networked and drivers required to input full registration marks so that a free hour will only be issued once per day to any one vehicle.

Allowing the free hours parking would estimate to raise the following income:

	<b>Proposal year</b>	<b>Current Budget</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Car park income</b>	£1,243,755	£1,275,000	<b>-£31,245</b>
<b>Permit Income</b>	£160,000	£160,000	£0
<b>PCN Income</b>	£200,000	£200,000	£0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£1,574,384</b>	<b>£1,635,000</b>	<b>-£31,245</b>

Providing the free hour parking would mean we would not achieve the savings target of £200k an indeed would create an additional budget pressure of £31k or a total shortfall of £231k.

### **3.4 Option 3 - Shop and go spaces**

Some other authorities offer a limited number of spaces within off street car parking as free to use 'shop and go' spaces.

Whilst these are limited in number they do offer additional free parking whilst limiting the potential loss in income of a blanket 1 hour free provision as Option 2 above. These spaces would be on a first come first served basis and to cater for the 'shop and go' type shopper and therefore should be restricted to a time less than an hour [30 or 45 minutes] similar to on-street type restrictions.

It is however difficult to predict the income difference that such a proposal would create as it would be unknown how many of the existing visitors paying for 1 hour would make use of the facility.

This could be introduced in combination with option 1 but would not attain the full financial improvement.

### **3.5 Option 4 Provide parking for Free after 3pm**

Some other authorities also offer parking free after 3pm to align with parents and schools closing. In the last 12 months it is estimated nearly £115k ticket sales were between 3pm and 6pm.

This could be an alternative to providing 1 hours free parking but would still potentially have a significant impact on overall income.

### **3.6 Option 5 Voucher discount scheme**

Voucher discount schemes are permitted within the County's parking policy whereby towns/businesses could offer discounts or money back to pay for the parking to

shoppers when they purchase goods. Whilst this scheme has worked in the past for specific advertisement campaigns by individual businesses, current experience is that this would be difficult to run by a town/businesses to provide discounts after buying a P+D ticket. It is therefore considered that take up would be limited and this would not impact upon car park use and income at this time.

This scheme however is available within the Council's current Parking Policy and could be made to work in a specific town if desired. Since the costs involved would be chargeable to the promotor of the scheme this would be cost neutral to this Authority.

### **3.7 Option 6 On street charging**

On street charging could be an option however the legislation governing income from on street charging is more restrictive and can only be made to cover costs. Whilst costs of enforcing and maintaining machines signs and lines etc can be attributed to this, it should only be considered to aid enforcement.

Introducing on street charges would make enforcing more efficient as at present an enforcement Officer has to make 2 observations in on street limited waiting bays within the hand held computers. Logging every vehicle takes time especially on busy town centre locations.

Introducing pay and display would mean it is a simple check in the windscreen to see if a valid ticket is displayed. The machines can also be networked preventing repeated issue of tickets to someone using different machines or moving to an adjoining street.

## **4. Preferred Choice and Reasons**

It is clear that providing any or part of the services for free will impact significantly on existing income and will place a budget pressure on the service and also not attain the required financial improvement identified in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

The preferred choice is Option 1 as this will closest attain the financial improvement identified in the MTFs.

## **5. Impact Assessment**

5.1 Is an impact assessment required? Yes

5.2 If yes is it attached? Yes

## **6. Corporate Improvement Plan**

6.1 The financial strategy within the corporate improvement plan states that we *will have to be more efficient in the use of our resources*. Resources also includes the income the Authority receives through charging for the services it provides. However, increasing charges may be considered to by businesses as not supporting

the economy as generally people consider increased parking charges may affect town centre footfall.

**7. Local Member(s)**

7.1 This applies with equal force across therefore individual Member comments have not been requested on this report.

**8. Other Front Line Services**

Does the recommendation impact on other services run by the Council or on behalf of the Council?                      No

If so please provide their comments

**9. Communications**

Have Communications seen a copy of this report?      Yes

The Communications Manager states - The report is of considerable public interest and requires use of news release and appropriate social media action to publicise the decision.

**10. Support Services (Legal, Finance, Corporate Property, HR, ICT, Business Services)**

10.1 The Principle Legal assistant has reviewed the proposal and, having considered, believes the proposals to be lawful.

10.2 Finance – The Finance Manager Place and Resources notes the contents of the report. The options proposed within the report will generate an estimated saving of £280k against the saving for car parks charges review of £200k. The potential over achievement of £80k can partially offset the additional savings target of £100k identified from abandoning car park charging for Blue Badge holders.

**11. Scrutiny**

Has this report been scrutinised?                      No

If Yes what version or date of report has been scrutinised?

Please insert the comments.

What changes have been made since the date of Scrutiny and explain why Scrutiny recommendations have been accepted or rejected?

**12. Data Protection**

If the proposal involves the processing of personal data then the Data Protection Officer must be consulted and their comments set out below.

The proposal does not alter any current arrangements for processing data.

**13. Statutory Officers**

The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) commented as follows: "I note the legal comments and have nothing to add to the report."

The Head of Financial Services (Deputy Section 151 Officer) notes the comments of the Finance Manager.

**14. Members' Interests**

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If the Portfolio Holder has an interest, he/ she should declare it, complete the relevant notification for and refer the matter to Cabinet for decision.

<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation:</b>
<b>To rationalise the car park charges as set out in Option 1 and to follow the statutory procedure of the necessary Notice of Variation to implement the changes within all the County's pay and display car parks.</b>	<b>To best achieve the identified savings target the service</b>

<b>Relevant Policy (ies):</b>	
<b>Within Policy:</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Within Budget:</b>	<b>Y</b>

<b>Relevant Local Member(s):</b>	<b>None Specific, as affects the whole of Powys</b>
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<b>Person(s) To Implement Decision:</b>	<b>Tony Caine</b>
<b>Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:</b>	<b>Legal procedure to commence upon approval</b>

<b>Is a review of the impact of the decision required?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>If yes, date of review</b>	
<b>Person responsible for the review</b>	
<b>Date review to be presented to Portfolio Holder/ Cabinet for information or further action</b>	

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Tony Caine</b>
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**Background Papers used to prepare Report:**