

**FEEDBACK FROM CONSULTATION ON
REVIEW OF PARKING OPERATIONS & CHARGES**

Agenda Item 6b

Portfolio Area: Environment & Sustainability
Report Presented by: Cllr Roger Walters

Background Papers: Report to Cabinet 12 October 2009
Corporate Implications: Please refer to table at end of report
Options: N/A
Risks: N/A

Executive Summary

This report provides feedback on the public consultation exercise carried out regarding the proposals within the Review of Parking Operations and Charges.

On 12 October 2009, Cabinet considered a report on a Review of Parking Operations and Charges within the Braintree District and agreed that the Council should undertake full consultation on the following recommendations before making a decision:-

- (a) That the 'medium' parking tariff (Option 3 at Appendix 2 of the report) be agreed and applied from 1 April 2010.
- (b) That the Council's four rural car parks be transferred to the Parish Councils/or charges be introduced as outlined in the report.
- (c) That free parking for blue badge holders (maximum 3 hours stay) be maintained.
- (d) That charges be introduced for parking at Causeway House, Braintree, on Saturdays (*subject to the outcome of the accommodation review*).
- (e) That a flat charge of 50p all day for parking in all of the Council's car parks be introduced on Sundays.

A public notice was placed in the local press w/c 15 November 2009 inviting comments on the proposals and letters were also sent out to all District & County Councillors, all Parish and Town Councils, the three Town Centre Strategy Groups and the Chambers of Commerce.

The consultation concluded on Monday, 7 December 2009, and this report sets out the feedback from the consultation process.

The law requires that two periods of statutory consultation be undertaken: the first was carried out in December alongside the public consultation; the second will be carried out once Cabinet has agreed the new tariff and the legal process should be completed in time for implementation by 1 April 2010.

Decision

1. To note feedback from the public consultation set out within this report.
2. To approve the recommendations contained within the Review of Parking Operations and Charges as replicated in (a) to (e) above.
3. To agree to an increase to £5 per day for long-stay parking at White Horse Lane car park, Witham.
4. To authorise the necessary amendments to the Council's Off-Street Parking Places Order to take account of the agreed changes.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides feedback on the public consultation exercise carried out regarding the proposals within the Review of Parking Operations and Charges, as outlined in the Executive Summary.

RESPONSES

Feedback was received from Members, Local Councils and the public. Suggestions included:-

- Initial 30 minutes' free parking.
- Support for White Horse Lane, Witham, being converted to commuter parking.
- Increased use of season tickets.
- Support for blue badge holders, but also its enforcement.
- Support for weekend charges at Causeway House
- Concern about any charges on Sundays
- Some opposition to charges being imposed on rural car parks.
- Sponsorship being encouraged from local businesses.
- George Yard season tickets being confined to the top floor only.

The suggestion of initial free parking would involve a major loss of income and is not recommended.

Similarly, increased use of concessions will have the same effect. Nevertheless, there will be a review of concessions following the introduction of new ticket machines in April when opportunities to work with local businesses can be considered.

Discussions with parishes on their rural car parks are ongoing.

Business Council have been consulted on the proposals and have a specific concern about current 'pay on entrance' charges for the larger car parks. They would like 'pay on exit' charges instead to give the public more flexible payment arrangements. This is a proposal that the Council will be considering next year where feasible.

The People's Panel were asked for their views on the proposals for the recommended '60p for the first hour' option and 64% were in favour.

CONCLUSIONS

There was no adverse feedback received in respect of increasing charges in line with the medium tariff, however, some respondents objected to the introduction of new charges (in rural car parks and in all car parks on Sundays).

Respondents supported the continuation of free parking for Blue Badge holders (maximum 3 hrs).

As a result of feedback regarding White Horse Lane car park, Witham, it is proposed that the long-stay tariff be increased to £5 per day given that it is primarily used by commuters. This would bring the charge in line with that of providers of similar car parks in the locality.

The introduction of a 0-3 hr band which includes half an hour's free parking is not recommended, given the high risk of a significant reduction in revenue.

Concessions are appropriate in some circumstances, as it presents an opportunity to maximize income during off-peak periods. There is a proposal within the original report to introduce a pilot scheme for 3 months within George Yard car park from 1 April 2010 (a reduced tariff of 70p between 3pm and 6pm on weekdays). Once the new 'Pay & Display' ticket machines have been in operation for say 6-9 months, it will be possible to consider offering other concessions in our car parks based on the usage data provided by the machines.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members approve the proposals outlined in the Executive Summary to this report and agree to a further increase to the proposed charge in respect of White Horse Lane car park, as outlined above.

Corporate Implications		
Financial:	Requirement for capital to invest in new ticket machines Potential for additional revenue	
Legal:	Yes - compliance with statutory legislation	
Equalities & Diversity:	Equality inclusive	
Customer Impact:	The proposals will impact upon all users of the Council's car parks.	
Environment & Climate Change:	Any increase in charges may encourage people to use more sustainable methods of transport, although the benefits would potentially be offset by any parking concessions (if offered)	
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Local Committees - during January 2010	Town & Parish Councils & Business Community
	Public - two statutory periods of public consultation in respect of changes to car parking charges.	Staff - No
Key Decision:	Yes (affects all residents and business District-wide.)	
Public/Private Report:	Public	
Officer Contact:	Paul Partridge	
Designation:	Head of Operations	
Ext No:	2207	
Email:	paupa@braintree.gov.uk	