

A5 - APPENDIX A

Extract from November 2017 Executive – Durable Budget Report

6 CAR PARK CHARGING STRATEGY

- 6.1 At the conclusion of the previous budget process, the Finance Portfolio Holder gave a commitment that the current charging strategy would be looked at. It has been reported in previous Durable Budget reports that it was intended to report back to the November Executive meeting so that it is properly linked into the budget process.
- 6.2 For members information Table 7 illustrates the current car parking charges. Members are reminded that the current level of charges are the same as those charged back in 2011, although they are around 14% lower in real terms when inflation is taken into account. The charging periods are as follows:

Charging Periods:

Monday - Friday: 9am – 6pm
Saturday: 8am – 6pm
Sundays: Free of charge
Bank Holidays: Free of charge

NB: It should also be noted that the Council currently operates 8 additional days of free parking and operates the popular ‘pop and shop’ scheme.

Table 7- Car Parking Charges 2017/18

Banding	London Road	Municipal Offices Monday to Friday	Municipal Offices Saturday	Commercial Rd Wadcroft School Lane and Queen St
1 Hour	N/A	£1.00	N/A	£1.00
2 Hours	£1.50	£2.00	£1.50	£2.00
3 Hours	£3.00	£3.00	£3.00	£3.00
All Day	£6.00	£6.00	£6.00	£6.00

Pop & Shop bays only – School Lane car park: Maximum stay 1 hour

- 6.3 It is important to note that the issue of car park charges cannot be viewed in isolation they need to be considered as part of the Council's overall budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy. The projected budget gaps that the Council is facing over the coming years are clearly illustrated in Table 1. The history of raising income through local charges means that the Council is reliant upon the current level of income it receives from car park charges to ensure that the savings targets do not increase and it also provides funding for offering a good quality parking offer (as evidenced by the recent parkmark award). To that end, any change in strategy that members may wish to consider needs to ensure that the overall income yield remains at least the same.
- 6.4 The conclusion is that the current level of charges remains relevant and that there should be a freeze to existing charges for a further three year period (1st April 2018 to 31st March 2021). In addition to this, it is also proposed that the Council introduces two additional parking bands in all car parks to provide the user with greater choice over the length of stay by introducing a 4 hour charge for £4 and a 5 hour charge of £5.
- 6.5 The charging periods for Saturday parking currently starts at 8am whereas the weekday charging period starts at 9am it would seem sensible to align the charging periods for Saturday parking to the weekday charges i.e. charge from 9am on Saturday rather than 8am. This also follows feedback from Town Centre businesses and users from the recent event at the corn Market Hall.
- 6.6 The following table illustrates the proposed charges from 1st April 2018.

Table 8- Proposed Car Parking Charges from 1st April 2018

Banding	London Road	Municipal Offices Monday to Friday	Municipal Offices Saturday	Commercial Rd Wadcroft School Lane and Queen St
1 Hour	N/A	£1.00	N/A	£1.00
2 Hours	£1.50	£2.00	£1.50	£2.00
3 Hours	£3.00	£3.00	£3.00	£3.00
4 Hours	£4.00	£4.00	£4.00	£4.00
5 Hours	£5.00	£5.00	£5.00	£5.00

All Day	£6.00	£6.00	£6.00	£6.00
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*The proposed charging period is from 9am daily including Saturdays

- 6.7 At this stage it is difficult to say what the impact of these changes will have on the overall budget position as some users who previously stayed for three hours may wish to extend their stay and conversely those users that had an all-day ticket may opt to use one of the two parking bands. The impact of these new charges will be closely monitored and future budgets will be adjusted to reflect any changes in income levels. It is envisaged however that the overall income budget will be maintained.
- 6.8 If members were minded to approve the charges this would effectively mean that the charges in 2020/21 would be at the same level as in 2011 which could represent a real terms reduction of around 22%.
- 6.9 The Council currently has a budget that can be used for one-off parking incentives (such as periods of free parking and/or other town centre event related items). Currently this is a time limited budget with the current budget provision ending in March 2018
- 6.10 Members need to consider whether they wish the previous practice of having a short term town centre initiatives budget to continue and if so for how long.
- 6.11 If this scheme is to continue an early indication of where this will be spent would be appreciated so that the forward planning for things like statutory car parking notices can be done in the most efficient and cost effective way.