



EXTRAORDINARY CABINET: 28 FEBRUARY 2018

COUNCIL: 28 FEBRUARY 2018

Report of: Director of Development and Regeneration

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor J Hodson

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SUBJECT: REVIEW OF PAY AND DISPLAY PARKING AND CHARGES

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To consider proposed changes to the existing charging structure of the Council's pay and display car parks in Ormskirk Town Centre.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

- 2.1 That the Director of Development and Regeneration be authorised to make an Order to introduce revised pay and display and parking permit charges set out in paragraphs 6.1, 6.3 and 6.6 of this report on the Council's pay and display car parks in Ormskirk Town Centre.
- 2.2 That the Director of Development and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, be given delegated authority to consider and determine any objections received to the Order made.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

- 3.1 That the Director of Development and Regeneration be authorised to make an Order to introduce revised pay and display and parking permit charges set out in paragraphs 6.1, 6.3 and 6.6 of this report on the Council's pay and display car parks in Ormskirk Town Centre.
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4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 The Council currently maintains and operates nine pay and display car parks in Ormskirk town centre.

4.2 There are three long stay car parks – up to 9 hours:

Hutton Way
Hants Lane
The Stiles

4.3 There are six short stay car parks – up to four hours:

Park Pool
Lunesdale
Park Road
Bus Station
Market Way
Wheatsheaf Walk

4.4 Parking charges are made on all designated pay and display car parks Monday – Saturday inclusive, between the hours of 8.30 am – 5.30 pm. The first hour of parking is free on the Park Road car park.

4.5 Current charges on the Council's pay and display town centre car parks are as follows:

Short Stay (except Park Road, as outlined above)

Up to 1 hour	70p
Up to 2 hours	£1.10
Up to 3 hours	£1.60
Up to 4 hours	£2.00

Long Stay (except Hants Lane)

Up to 1 hour	70p
Up to 2 hours	£1.10
Up to 3 hours	£1.60
Up to 4 hours	£2.00
Up to 9 hours	£3.00

Long Stay (Hants Lane)

Up to 1 hour	40p
Up to 2 hours	60p
Up to 3 hours	£1.00
Up to 4 hours	£1.20
Up to 9 hours	£1.70

5.0 CURRENT POSITION

- 5.1 As set out in paragraphs 4.5 above, the current parking charges are not consistent across all car parks in Ormskirk Town Centre and this can cause some confusion for users.
- 5.2 Park Road car park was originally charged in line with other town centre car parks, however, when the Two Saints Retail Park was constructed an agreement was negotiated whereby the Council would manage and enforce on the new parking area in front of the retail park. A management fee was paid to the Council to cover this on the basis that we also provided a free 1 hour parking on the adjoining Park Road car park, which then became part of the overall Two Saints car park. The management fee coupled with the retention of parking charges on the retail car parking area offset the loss of income from the Park Road car park arising from the inclusion of a free parking period on this car park.
- 5.3 In 2012 notice was given to the Council by the owners of the Two Saints retail park to terminate the management agreement with the Council. The notice also required the Council to physically separate the Council owned car park from the Two Saints retail park car park. Whilst the separation of the two car parks was implemented, no action was taken in respect of the charging regime on the Council owned car park.
- 5.4 As set out in 3.5 above, Hants Lane car park offers discounted short and long stay parking which is inconsistent with other long stay and short stay pay and display car parks. In addition some 50 parking permits are also available on the Hants Lane car park which are currently charged at £195 per annum or £24 per month.
- 5.5 In 2014, in response to representations from local businesses, the Council reviewed the maximum length of stay in its short stay pay and display car parks and extended the time from 2hrs to 4hrs. The charging regime on the Councils car parks has not however been subject of review since April 2011.
- 5.6 As part of the Ormskirk Town Centre Strategy, the Council has been in discussions with local businesses to discuss measures/initiatives that might improve the vitality and attractiveness of Ormskirk to shoppers and other visitors.
- 5.7 From those discussions, it is clear that local businesses consider that the Council should review the current pay and display charging structure to make it more simple, consistent and easily understandable, i.e. through the implementation of a common charge across all the town centre pay and display car parks. They have also indicated that the current car parking regime does not encourage visitors to stay for an extended period and suggested that the vitality of the town centre would be helped by the introduction of low cost parking for short stay

shoppers/visitors. As a result of these discussions a suggestion of a car parking charge of £1 for three hours was put forward by a local business group, for consideration by the Council.

6.0 PROPOSALS

- 6.1 Having considered the representations of local businesses, I am of the view that the Council should amend its town centre pay and display car parking charges to provide a uniform and simple approach across all the town centre car parks, incorporating a £1 for 3hrs promotional charge. The effect of my proposals on charges would be as follows;

Short stay car parks (except Park Road)

	Existing	Proposed
Up to 1 hour	£0.70	
Up to 2 hours	£1.10	
Up to 3 hours	£1.60	£1.00
Up to 4 hours	£2.00	£2.00

Park Road

	Existing	Proposed
Up to 1 hour	Free	
Up to 2 hours	£1.10	
Up to 3 hours	£1.60	£1.00
Up to 4 hours	£2.00	£2.00

Long stay car parks (except Hants Lane)

	Existing	Proposed
Up to 1 hour	£0.70	
Up to 2 hours	£1.10	
Up to 3 hours	£1.60	£1.00
Up to 4 hours	£2.00	£2.00
Up to 9 hours	£3.00	£3.00

Hants Lane

	Existing	Proposed
Up to 1 hour	40p	
Up to 2 hours	60p	
Up to 3 hours	£1.00	£1.00
Up to 4 hours	£1.20	£2.00
Up to 9 hours	£1.70	£3.00

- 6.2 As can be gathered from the above, the implementation of a £1 for 3 hours car park charge would increase the charge for users only wishing to stay for 1 hour maximum, however, reduce the 2 and 3 hour charges. In looking at the charge across the 3 hours this equates to a charge of circa 33p per hour, which is inexpensive considering the standard of the parking facilities on offer.
- 6.3 In relation to the issue of parking permits, these have not been the subject of an increase for a number of years and as a result are extremely low in cost in today's market. I therefore propose that the annual cost of the permits be increased from £195 to £250 which would still provide a discounted charge equating to some 80p per day.
- 6.4 There are no statutory concessions for Blue Badge holders on private land, or in local authority car parks, but most car park operators will provide spaces for them. There are designated disabled spaces on all the Council's pay and display car parks and currently all blue badge holders can park for up to 3 hours free in marked disabled spaces or in any other available space. Payment is required for parking for more than 3 hours.
- 6.5 It is not unusual for blue badge holders to have to pay for parking in Council controlled car parks, privately operated car parks or NHS car parks. Locally St Helens Council charge blue badge holders to park and Wrexham Council has recently voted to introduce charges for the use of its car parks by Blue Badge holders.
- 6.6 The principle behind the blue badge scheme is that it is all about the provision of good accessibility, not affordability, for users. All of the Council's pay and display car parks provide good access to the town centre shopping and services for customers with mobility issues. As such I believe that in looking to introduce a consistent charging regime across all our town centre car parks that all users should be subject of the new charges.
- 6.7 The advantage of aligning the car park charges across all car parks is that the charges are then consistent and easily understandable whereby the public user is not confused by the fact that different tariffs exist for different car parks. The introduction of the £1.00 for 3 hours initiative will also send a clear message to the West Lancashire community and beyond that we are looking to provide inexpensive quality parking in support of the town centre business community.
- 6.8 Alongside the introduction of the new parking charges we would undertake a major marketing campaign to support the proposals.
- 6.9 As part of the Council's commitment to ensure good access to our town centre for all, we will review the design of each car park to ensure that all disabled bays are located in the most accessible part of the car

parks and continue to meet the guide lines for the number of spaces provided.

- 6.10 There are currently eighteen parking ticket machines located on the pay and display car parks and these machines are due to be replaced shortly. The machines will be the latest generation of ticket machines with additional functionality to help users and businesses.
- 6.11 The programmed installation of the new pay and display ticket machines will also provide additional further opportunities for promoting the town centre retail offer and providing a further conduit for working with the business community in providing vouchers and promoting other offers.
- 6.12 In conclusion, whilst car parking charges are primarily levied to encourage people to consider accessing town centres via means other than the car e.g. walking, cycling or public transport, that aim needs to be counterbalanced by the need to safeguard the vitality and viability of town centres. Car parking charges and operations do need to move with the times to reflect changes within the retail and visitor offers of town centres. The proposals contained within this report will in my view go some way to help achieve both objectives.
- 6.13 The Council is required to make an Order under the Road Traffic Regulations 1984 and the Traffic Management Act 2004 to bring the proposed changes into effect which incorporates a formal public notification of the proposals. Responses to that notification therefore need to be considered and determined accordingly and as such a relevant delegation is sought to enable this process to be undertaken and subsequent action taken on the proposals, as appropriate.

7.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Efficient off-street parking management enables the Council to provide cost effective parking to users to the benefit of both the community and businesses alike. It also contributes to wider town centre traffic management operations by providing adequate parking spaces and controlling turnover of such spaces using parking time restrictions as appropriate. No significant effects upon crime and disorder arise from the proposals.
- 7.2 Fewer machine receipts will be issued thereby reducing the impact upon the environment and less cash collections and engineer call outs should reduce the carbon footprint.

8.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The introduction of the proposals will reduce the number of over vends and the issue of Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) with a resulting detrimental effect on revenues associated with the car parks.

- 8.2 Due to the nature of the proposals, it is difficult to provide any exact figures in relation to the impact on car parking revenue of the taking forward the proposed changes to car parking charges. I anticipate however that the introduction of a £1 for 3 hours parking charge and a harmonisation of charging across all of the Council's town centre car parks will lead to an increase in revenue from the Park Road and Hants Lane car parks and no significant impact on car parking revenue for the remaining town centre car parks.
- 8.3 On balance, I consider that the increase in revenue from ticket sales set out in 8.2 will counterbalance the loss of revenue set out in 8.1 from a reduction in PCN's and over vends and consequently that the proposals set out in my recommendation will be cost neutral. Overall car parking revenue would however be closely monitored.

9.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 Car parking revenue is important in order to provide the funds required to maintain the car parks to a high standard and to facilitate maintenance and/or replacement of essential infrastructure such as lighting and ticket machines. A report will be submitted to Council should the introduction of the new pay and display charges on the Ormskirk Town Centre car parks have a significant adverse impact on car parking revenue.

Appendices

1. Equality Impact Assessment

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Equality Impact Assessment

There is a direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders, therefore an Equality Impact Assessment is required. A formal equality impact assessment is attached as an Appendix 1 to this report, the results of which have been taken into account in the Recommendations contained within this report