

CAR PARKING FEES AND CHARGES UPDATE

Head of Service/Contact: Ian Dyer, Head of Operational Services

Urgent Decision?(yes/no) No

If yes, reason urgent decision required:

Annexes/Appendices (attached): Annex 1 – Fees and Charges 2020/21
Annex 2 – Updated Equality Impact Assessment of West Hill car park.

Other available papers (not attached):

Report summary

This report seeks the agreement of the Committee to confirm the Off Street Parking Places Order April 2020, as proposed and advertised following the Environment & Safe Communities Committee in October 2019, with one modification as outlined below. In total 43 representations were received and are detailed within this report.

Recommendation (s)

- (1) That the Committee agrees to make one modification to the proposal submitted in October 2019 as follows:

That users of the Rainbow Leisure Centre who park in Hook Road car park for a stay of up to 3 hours receive a £1 discount on the standard parking fee, therefore being charged £2 for their stay rather than £3.

- (2) That the Committee confirms the rest of the Order as outlined below by agreeing to:

a) The fees and charges in Annex 1

b) Hook Road being opened on a Sunday from 8:30am to 5:30pm

c) The removal of maximum stay tariffs in all Borough Council car parks available from 1pm and 3pm

d) The introduction of a pre-payable evening rate in the Ashley Centre car park, available from 6pm – 11:59pm.

- e) The introduction of standard day time charges in Bourne Hall car park between 7am and 9am Monday to Saturday
 - f) The introduction of charging in Bourne Hall, Dorset House and Ewell High Street car parks on Sundays and Bank Holidays
 - g) To the removal of the up to 30 minute tariff in the car parks at Dorset House and Ewell High Street.
 - h) To the introduction of a weekly ticket in the car parks at Dorset House and Ewell high Street.
 - i) To the introduction of charging in West Hill car park from 6:30pm – 8:00am
 - j) To the introduction of charging in West Hill car park on Sundays and Bank Holidays
 - k) To the introduction of charging for blue badge holders in West Hill car park in line with the rules in other Epsom town centre pay and display car parks.
 - l) To the introduction of an Ashley Centre parker card for those who work in Epsom town centre
- (3) That the Committee authorises the Head of Legal to give such notice(s) and/or make such order as is considered necessary in order to give effect to the above recommendations.

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 In considering parking fees and charges in this report the Committee will need to consider and balance the effective management of parking spaces and the economic impact on the Borough and its community.

2 Background

- 2.1 In October 2019 a paper was brought to the Environment & Safe Communities Committee proposing car park fees and charges for 2020/21.
- 2.2 Following approval from the Committee a proposed Traffic Order named the Off Street Parking Places Order April 2020 was created and on 14th November notices were placed in the Epsom Comet and in the car parks impacted by the changes.

Environment and Safe Communities Committee 28 January 2020

- 2.3 Members of the public had until 4pm on Thursday 5th December 2019 to submit any objections or representations in writing to either the Chief Legal Officer or to a designated email account.
- 2.4 In total 43 objections or representations were received through these methods. A further 7 emails were received after the time period had ended and therefore were not considered in this review.
- 2.5 The objections and representations were read and considered in full by the Members of the Car Park Working Group. They will be summarised in this report.
- 2.6 Items that did not received any objections or representations and will therefore proceed as per the recommendations in October 2019 are:
- To open Hook Road car park on a Sunday from 8:30am to 5:30pm
- To remove the maximum stay tariff in the car parks at the Ashley Centre, Town Hall and Hope Lodge currently available from 1pm and 3pm
- To introduce a pre-payable evening rate in the Ashley Centre Car park from 6pm – 11:59pm, so long as the user leaves by midnight.
- To introduce an Ashley Centre Parker Card for those who work in Epsom Town Centre.
- 2.7 The Epsom BID team, Surrey County Council and Surrey Police were also consulted separately for their feedback. The response from the BID team recognised and appreciated that fees had not increased in 2019/20 and in some cases for a number of years before that. It highlighted the challenging times being faced by Town Centre businesses and that any real or perceived impediment to them would be viewed as a negative. The response was also supportive of the proposals to introduce Ashley Centre Parker Cards, open Hook Road on a Sunday and re-introduce a pre-payment option in the Ashley Centre car park in the evening. The County Council and Police did not raise any objections but requested that any displaced parking is considered.
- 2.8 As a point of reference the introduction of charges on Bank Holidays in the Ewell car parks would be kept in line with other Borough car parks in that the usual daily tariff would apply rather than a fixed rate. A paper considering the introduction of a fixed rate fee on a Bank Holiday will be brought to a future Committee meeting.
- 2.9 The current policy remains consistent with the County Council policy that any on-street parking restrictions continue to apply on a Bank Holiday.

Environment and Safe Communities
Committee
28 January 2020

Fees and Charges – Epsom

- 2.10 Two representations were received in relation to the increase in parking charges in Epsom. One recommended free parking in Epsom for two hours, the other highlighted concerns about the impact on the retail market in the Town Centre if prices were to increase.

The Car Park Working Group noted the concerns raised but were minded to continue with the charges proposed in October 2019.

Rainbow Leisure Centre / Hook Road

- 2.11 The Committee proposed in October that the discounted time period allowed for Rainbow Leisure Centre users parking in Hook Road car park should be reduced from 3 hours to 2 hours.

- 2.12 The discounted rate given is £1. The current fee for parking in Hook Road for up to 2 hours is £1.60 and £2.60 for up to 3 hours. These are due to increase to £2 and £3 in April. With the proposed changes Leisure Centre users staying over 2 hours would be subject to the standard parking tariff.

- 2.13 In total 13 representations were received in response to this proposal including one from the General Manager of the Leisure Centre.

- 2.14 The objections were raised for the following reasons:

The Leisure Centre has over 850 over 60's Members who attend classes and socialise after spending 2-3 hours at the Centre.

The new Play Park offers sessions which are 2 hours in duration. Parking to attend these sessions will therefore mean that visitors will stay longer than the discounted time.

Some children may have their dinner at the Centre following a class.

The Centre provides a social hub for Members as well as keeping people active.

There is already pressure on the Leisure Centre car park which is often full but the proposed changes may direct further cars to the Centre rather than Hook Road.

- 2.15 It should be noted that of the 13 representations received only 6 directly mentioned Hook Road car park. Some of the wording in other responses indicated that the contributor believed the Leisure Centre car park itself would be subject to the changes which is not the case.

- 2.16 Following discussion and consideration of the representations received the Car Park Working Group have made an amended recommendation in Proposal 2 (see 3.2)

Environment and Safe Communities Committee 28 January 2020

Bourne Hall Car Park

- 2.17 The Committee proposed in October that the standard tariff is applied in Bourne Hall car park between 7am and 9am on Monday to Saturday. It also proposed the introduction of charging on Sundays and Bank Holidays. Currently the car park is free to use at these times.
- 2.18 In total 22 representations were received to these proposals. Twenty representations referenced the proposal to introduce charging between 7am and 9am. Three also referenced the introduction of Sunday charges (one referencing both items proposed).
- 2.19 The objections raised were for the following reasons:
- Increase of cost for parents dropping to schools in the vicinity of Bourne Hall (potentially £1.50 to £5 per week).
- Risk to road users or child safety if parents decide to use other places to collect or drop off children such as neighbouring roads.
- One local school being a Catholic school meaning that catchment areas were wider and therefore parents were more likely to drive their child to school.
- Transport links to the Centre being 'poor', particularly on a Sunday, so many have to drive.
- The impact for visitors to the church at Bourne Hall on a Sunday, which also operates a debt centre.
- 2.20 Following discussion and consideration of the representations received the Car Park Working Group agreed to continue to recommend the changes proposed in October noting that the problem of parking is one faced by all schools across the Borough but that no others have the privilege of free parking in an otherwise charging car park in the mornings. It is also noted that the issues arising at school collection time in the afternoon, when a charge is levied in the car park, are not substantial. The Working Group also proposed that the Centre at Bourne Hall and the church can discuss parking options as part of the hiring fee.

Ewell Village Car Parks

- 2.21 Two representations were received in relation to changes to the tariffs in Dorset House or Ewell High Street car parks. The first highlighted particular concern about the 'over 4 hours stay', due to increase from £3.60 to £5. It also referenced the weekly ticket being introduced at a fee of £28. The second representation appeared to be from a user who parks at one of the car parks to commute to London and would therefore potentially be impacted by the same fee increase.

Environment and Safe Communities Committee 28 January 2020

- 2.22 Following discussion and consideration of the representations received the Car Park Working Group wished to continue to recommend the changes proposed in October highlighting that the car parks were often busy and the increase in longer stays would encourage 'churn' of benefit to the local retailers. The price of the weekly ticket was to discourage use of the car park for residential parking.

West Hill Car Park

- 2.23 The Committee proposed in October to introduce 24/7 charges in West Hill Car Park, where it is currently free to park in the early mornings, evenings and on Sundays and Bank Holidays. It also proposed that charges for blue badge holders be introduced within the car park in line with all of the other pay and display car parks within the Borough.

- 2.24 In total four representations were received in relation to the proposed changes at West Hill Car Park. All objections received were in relation to parking for the church situated opposite the car park. Concerns raised were as follows:

A lack of available parking for the church congregation, including retired and disabled users.

On-street parking restrictions in nearby roads limited alternative options.

The use of the car park by Epsom Street Pastors who are a voluntary group who operate in the evenings in Epsom.

- 2.25 Following discussion and consideration of the representations received the Car Park Working Group wished to continue to recommend the changes proposed in October highlighting the desire for consistency in the Borough Council's approach to blue badge parking, that the car park itself is relatively small and that free parking would lessen the likelihood of availability for those groups attending the church and that alternative parking is available on-street at certain times, including a Sunday.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 That the charges proposed by Committee in October 2019 are brought into operation in April 2020 with the one amendment being made to the charge for Rainbow Leisure Centre users parking in Hook Road Car Park as outlined in 3.2.

- 3.2 That a two-tiered discount be introduced in Hook Road car park providing all Leisure Centre users staying for up to 3 hours with a £1 discount.

A stay of up to 2 hours will therefore remain at £1 (rather than the full rate of £2).

Environment and Safe Communities Committee 28 January 2020

A stay of up to 3 hours would be charged at £2 for Leisure Centre users (rather than the full rate of £3).

- 3.3 That the Council notify the Rainbow Leisure Centre of the proposed modification if approved by Committee.

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 In 2018/19 4,400 visitors parked in Hook Road Car Park and used the Rainbow Leisure Centre for a stay of between 2 – 3 hours. The effect of the change proposed in 3.2 would be that each user of a similar type and duration in 20/21 would pay an additional £1, rather than £2 as previously proposed.
- 4.2 The opening of Hook Road car park on a Sunday between the hours of 8:30am and 5:30pm would not generate any significant additional costs as the car park could be opened by existing officers on patrol. There would be a cost for programming the tariffs in to the machine and to amend the signage which will be met from within existing budgets.
- 4.3 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** the proposals in this report support the tariffs for 2020/21 as detailed in appendix 1. The additional income anticipated as a result of these tariffs meets the budget target for increased income as detailed in the Fees and Charges report also on this agenda. This income has been built into the revenue budget for 2020/21 for Environment and Safe Communities Committee approval, also on this agenda.

5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 5.1 As stated in the report in October 2019 if any objections are made to the proposals, the Council must consider these and may make modifications to the proposals. If the modifications are significant and may affect certain persons, they should be given further opportunity to make representations about the modifications.
- 5.2 It is proposed that if the modification in Recommendation 1 and detailed in 3.2 is agreed that the Council notify the Rainbow Leisure Centre management of this change. As the change is to a preferred rate to that previously proposed there is not the need to re-advertise.
- 5.3 If confirmed the Order will be advertised in the usual way to bring it in to effect from April 2020.
- 5.4 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** None for the purposes of this report.

Environment and Safe Communities
Committee
28 January 2020

6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

- 6.1 The proposed introduction of charging at Bourne Hall from 7am to 9am has led objectors to highlight a safety risk to children being dropped off elsewhere to attend school. Each school should have a School Plan agreed with Surrey County Council to enable pupils to attend school safely.

7 Partnerships

- 7.1 The Borough Council have taken in to account the views of the Rainbow Leisure Centre and the hirers of Bourne Hall and will continue to engage with them.

8 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 The risks remain as highlighted in the October Committee report. From the outcome of the consultation the risk to highlight is that users of Bourne Hall car park in the morning may seek alternative locations to drop off their children.
- 8.2 The Equality Impact Assessment for West Hill car park has been updated and is attached in Annex 2.

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 9.1 That Members consider the key points raised in the representations and advise whether they wish to proceed with the recommendations previously agreed in principle.
- 9.2 That Members consider the revised proposal for Rainbow Leisure Centre users parking in Hook Road car park and determine whether or not they are in favour.

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);