

PARKING FEES AND CHARGES

Report of the: Head of Customer Services and Business Support

Contact: Joy Stevens

Urgent Decision?(yes/no) no

If yes, reason urgent decision required:

Annexes/Appendices (attached): Annexes 1 - 4

Other available papers (not attached): None

REPORT SUMMARY

This report seeks the views of the Committee in respect of possible adjustments to off street parking fees and charges for 2016-17.

RECOMMENDATION (S)

Notes

- (1) That the Committee approves the changes to car park fees identified in Annexe 1.
- (2) That the Committee approves the changes to business and residential permit fees in Annexe 2.
- (3) That the Committee approves the changes to Parker card fees in Annexe 3.
- (4) That the Committee approves the changes to fees for parking dispensation permits in Annexe 4.

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

- 1.1 In considering parking fees and charges amendments in this report the Council will need to consider and balance the effective management of parking spaces, the promotion of economic vitality and the current financial situation.

2 Background

- 2.1 Epsom & Ewell Borough Council has 8 pay as you go car parks close to Epsom Town Centre and 2 permit only car parks. There are also 3 pay as you go car parks in Ewell Village.

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- 2.2 The 8 car parks close to Epsom Town Centre provide 1868 spaces including 70 Blue Badge and 5 parent and child spaces. The 3 car parks in Ewell provide 217 spaces, 13 for Blue Badge parking.
- 2.3 Each year about 1.85m cars are parked in Council car parks on a pay as you go basis. At the busiest times over 400 cars per hour enter the Ashley Centre car park.
- 2.4 Each of the main car parks around Epsom Town Centre attracts users for a variety of reasons. The Ashley Centre, Town Hall and Hope Lodge car park are the main shoppers' car parks. Depot Road, Upper High Street and Hook Road provide parking for longer stay users but also for specific visits eg. Depot Road and Upper High Street are used for visits to the Cinema and visits to other businesses in Upper High Street. Hook Road is used by people visiting the Rainbow Centre and by commuters and businesses.
- 2.5 Some of the car parks also work together acting as overflows if specific car parks are busy or full e.g. Hope Lodge acts as an overflow for the Town Hall and Upper High Street as an overflow for Depot Road.
- 2.6 Car park fees are designed to maintain the car park infrastructure roles to meet the demands e.g. that the shoppers' car parks can accommodate shoppers and are not parked up by commuters and town centre workers before the shoppers arrive.
- 2.7 Car park use varies according to the time of day, day of the week and time of the year. The weather, the economy, retail promotions, cinema programming and special events of various types also have a significant impact.
- 2.8 Peak demand periods are crucial so far as retail viability is concerned so for example a high proportion of income is generated in the run up to Christmas.
- 2.9 Parking is also very much a habit purchase. Many motorists use the same car park and seek to park in the same location or even the same space on each trip. This means the level of use of individual car parks is consistent, unless there is a specific change in Epsom eg. Cinema, fewer offices in East Street.
- 2.10 Many tariffs have not been increased since 2013 or earlier.
- 2.11 However, in April 2014 a new maximum tariff charge was introduced across six of the Epsom Town Centre car parks. The maximum tariffs are in time bandings starting from 13:00. It is proposed that this approach is continued for 16/17.
- 2.12 The proposed fees & charges are designed to maintain Hook Road, Upper High Street and Depot Road as longer term parking options in Epsom Town Centre with Town Hall, Hope Lodge and the Ashley Centre for shorter term parking.

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- 2.13 Although in April 2014 it was agreed by Environment Committee and approved by Full Council to provide the option for longer stays at Town Hall and Hope Lodge and to introduce new tariffs for these longer stays accordingly when barrier controlled parking is introduced. This is because in a barrier controlled Car Park a maximum charge for 24 hours is always required.
- 2.14 These tariffs will not be introduced in Town Hall and Hope Lodge until the barriers are operational, which means there is no information available to measure the success of this approach. It is therefore suggested that this approach is continued for 2016/17 to capture more data. The only change is to bring the 5 hours tariff in line with the Ashley Centre Car Park.
- 2.15 The 3 hours tariff remains higher in Town Hall and Hope Lodge than the Ashley Centre to encourage people to stay for up to 2 hours.
- 2.16 It is proposed that the split rate Sunday tariff which was introduced in April 2014 is increased to the same charge across all car parks in Epsom Town Centre.
- 2.17 It is proposed to increase the hourly charge in Ewell village as no increase has been implemented since 2013 which means that parking for the Ewell village shopping area has not increased for 3 years.
- 2.18 The changes in car park fees being suggested are based on detailed analysis of the current length of stay or tariff purchased in the car parks.
- 2.19 The changes in the fees for permits are based on a recommended increase of 6% rounded to the £5 or £10.
- 2.20 It is proposed that the annual fee for Parker Cards increases to £15.
- 2.21 The fees for Parking Dispensation permits have been increased to bring Epsom and Ewell Borough Council more in to line with current fees in surrounding councils in Surrey.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 To amend fees and charges as indicated in Annexes 1 - 4.

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** In 14/15 car parks income performed strongly with income levels for the full year being 8% above budget. This was mainly due to increased volumes as fees and charges remained largely unchanged.

The 15/16 budget was set to accommodate the increase in volume and the current performance that was reported at Q1 shows car park income estimated to be on budget. The suggested increases shown in Annexe 1 represent a significant opportunity to increase revenue to contribute towards the Council's deficit over the next 4 financial years.

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The estimated increase in revenue shown in Annexe 1 is based on current volumes for the individual tariff lines. The analysis has not accommodated any adverse change in the volume of users due to the suggested rise in tariffs.

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

5.1 There are no specific issues arising from this report but the Council's resources will need to be applied to ensure that it fulfils its statutory obligations and delivers its policy on equalities.

6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

6.1 None

7 Partnerships

7.1 The Council works in partnership with the business community to deliver economic vitality objectives.

8 Risk Assessment

8.1 Parking income could be adversely affected by changes within the local community and economic factors.

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

9.1 Visitor numbers to Car Parks are showing an average increase of over 2%. Fees were not increased in 2015 and many fees have not increased for 3 years since 2013.

9.2 Annexes 1 - 4 set out a number of proposed fees for consideration.

9.3 The proposed changes to fees are designed to maintain Car Park infrastructure roles across Epsom and Ewell for short, medium and long term parking.

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL