

1 Background

Off-Street Car Parking Charges

The Council recognises the contribution effective management of off street car parking makes to the overall management of the public realm, including wider traffic management issues. Effective management is underpinned by a parking strategy which recognises the importance of an effective pricing policy. This in turn supports the wider delivery of the Council's aims and objectives as outlined in the Corporate Plan.

Last year Cabinet Members approved the following arrangements:

Cabinet approves that off street pay and display and permit charges be frozen for 2015/16, subject to consideration by Council as part of the budget process which was confirmed

That officers bring back a further report, following consultation, setting out how visitor parking in residents parking zones should be best managed in the future – an option for improvements has recently been the subject of public consultation; the feedback provided by residents is currently being considered and a report will be presented to Cabinet in the near future.

Usage Position

Pay and Display Usage

Parking usage is monitored as part of the monthly corporate monitoring of parking and the following table shows the latest full year comparison:-

	Lancaster		Morecambe		TOTALS
	Short Stay	Long Stay	Short Stay	Long Stay	
<u>Last Full Year Comparison</u>					
2013/14	685,992	151,836	321,923	153,324	1,313,075
2014/15	666,891	154,134	286,505	150,600	1,258,130
Variance	-2.9%	1.5%	-11%	-1.8%	-4.2%

The above information shows a similar trend to recent years with overall usage reducing despite the slight increase for Lancaster Long Stay shown in the above table. Morecambe's short stay usage is the largest variance with an 11% reduction.

Parking charges are a useful mechanism for assisting in the control of demand for parking space and contributing to wider traffic management objectives. Similarly it is also important that parking charges reasonably reflect the shopper and visitor experiences in the various centres and achieve a greater visitor dwell time. The current parking strategy therefore supports the principle of differential car park

charging between Lancaster and Morecambe and options for differential charging arrangements are included in this report.

Permit Sales

All car park permits were increased by 5% during the 2014/15 review and this led to a 5% reduction in sales. Permit charges were frozen for 2015/16 and the previous year's sales have been maintained. In order to try and maintain this position there are no proposals to increase permit charges for 2016/17.

Introduction of Park and Ride

The Heysham to M6 Link Road is scheduled for completion in mid-2016. The scheme includes the provision of a 650 space Park and Ride site which will be managed by the County Council. The Parking Strategy includes a number of aims to assist the development of the use of the new facility including monitoring the use of long stay car parks in Lancaster and considering reducing the number of long stay parking spaces. However, until the details of how the service will operate are known, it is difficult to be more specific. An update on the implications for parking management will be included in the review of charges for 2017/18.

On-Street Parking

Pay and Display Charges

Maintaining synchronised parking charges for on and off-street parking is an important part of managing the demand and usage of parking and also contributes to wider traffic management objectives.

Lancashire County Council last increased its on-street pay and display charges in June 2014. The current on-street and short stay car parking charges are as follows:-

Parking Charge	On-Street	Car Parks
Up to 1 hour	£1.40	£1.30
Up to 2 hours	£2.30	£2.40

The 1 hour differential charge is currently in place to encourage greater use of car parks and to discourage customers from driving around the limited number of on-street parking spaces and adding to traffic congestion and increasing pedestrian safety problems. Although the 2 hour differential has not been maintained there are very few 2 hour on-street parking spaces.

The County Council is reviewing its on street charges as part of its 2016/17 budget proposals and is considering the following increases:-

Parking Charge	Current	Proposed
Up to 1 hour	£1.40	£1.50
Up to 2 hours	£2.30	£2.60

The above increases are subject to County Council's Cabinet Member approval on 3rd February 2016. An update on this decision will be provided at the meeting. For the purposes of this report Officers have assumed that the proposals for increased on-street car parking charges for 2016/17 will be approved.

Residents Parking

Arrangements are already in place for residents who have a resident permit to be able to use off street car parks in Lancaster at various times when the car parks are less busy. This facility supplements the limited number of on street parking spaces.

Two requests have been received during 2015 to extend this facility to the following parking zones:-

- 1) To allow resident permit holders in Castle Zone B in Lancaster to use Dallas Road Car Park
- 2) To allow resident permit holders in Central Drive Zone N in Morecambe to use Billy Hill Car Park

These changes can be made via a Notice of Variation of Charges and can be implemented in April 2016.

2 Financial Position

The 2016/17 draft revenue budget outlined in the table below assumes that income from evening charges and permits will be similar to the projected 2015/16 revised estimate level. With regard to daytime fee income the 2016/17 base budget has been increased by £18,000 in line with a successful year to date prior to December. The 2015/16 revised budget was not adjusted as this amount was used to offer free parking in the district for two Saturdays within December following the recent floods. Inflationary increases of 1.5% have then been added to the base budgets in line with the Council's existing policy on fees and charges.

	2015/16 Estimate	2015/16 Revised	2016/17 Estimate	Inflation Included
Fees	£2,201,700	£2,201,700	£2,253,000	£33,300
Evenings	£100,000	£100,000	£101,500	£1,500
Permits	£146,400	£146,400	£148,600	£2,200
TOTAL	£2,448,100	£2,448,100	£2,503,100	£37,000

The annual review needs to consider options for covering additional inflationary increases of £37,000 across the above headings.

3 Proposal Details

3.1 Off Street Parking Charges (Generally)

Pay and Display

Option 1A

To increase all **Up to 1 hour** parking charges across all car parks in Lancaster and Morecambe from £1.30 to £1.40 and from £1.10 to £1.20 on the Festival Car Park in Morecambe.

Williamson Park, Lancaster

To increase the **Up to 1 hour** charge from 0.90p to £1.00

To increase the **Full Day** charge from £1.50 to £1.60

Option 1A is expected to achieve additional income in the region of £41,000.

Option 1B

To implement the following tariff increases in Lancaster:-

To increase the **Up to 1 hour** charge from £1.30 to £1.40

To increase the **evening parking** charge from £1.40 to £1.50

To increase the **Up to 3 hours** long stay charge from £2.40 to £2.60

Williamson Park

To increase the **Up to 1 hour** charge from 0.90p to £1.00

To increase the **Full Day** charge from £1.50 to £1.60

Option 1B is expected to achieve additional income in the region of £40,000.

Option 1C

To implement the following tariff increases in Lancaster:-

To increase the **Up to 1 hour** charge from £1.30 to £1.40

To increase the **Up to 3 hours** long stay charge from £2.40 to £2.60

To increase the **Up to 5 hours** long stay charge from £3.90 to £4.30

To increase the **Up to 10 hours** long stay charge from £6.50 to £7.00

Williamson Park

To increase the **Up to 1 hour** charge from 0.90p to £1.00

To increase the **Full Day** charge from £1.50 to £1.60

Option 1C is expected to achieve additional income in the region of £41,500.

3.2 On Street Resident Permit Holders Using Car Parks

To extend the current facility for resident permit holders to use the following car parks at certain times for consistency across all zones and car parks:-

Castle Zone B – Dallas Road Car Park, **before 8.00am and after 4.00pm, Monday to Friday, before 10.00am and after 4.00pm Saturday and all day Sunday**

Central Drive Zone N – Billy Hill Car Park, **before 10.00am and after 4.00pm, Monday to Saturday and all day Sunday.**

As previously mentioned these changes can be introduced via a Notice of Variation of Charges and can be implemented for April 2016. They are not expected to have any significant budgetary impact.

4 Details of Consultation

The local Chambers of Commerce and of Trade, the Federation of Small Businesses, Lancaster BID and Morecambe Town Council have been consulted over the off-street pay and display options included in the report and their comments are attached at **Annex A (i)**. Any further comments, if received, will also be made available at the meeting.

As previously mentioned the County Council is proposing to increase its on street pay and display charges and a further update will be available before the meeting. Ward Members have been consulted about resident permit holders being able to use designated car parks at certain times.

5 Options and Options Appraisal

5.1 Off Street Pay and Display Charges (as set out in Section 3.1)

Advantages	Disadvantages	Risks
<p>Option 1A This option limits the increases to one tariff across all car parks in Lancaster and Morecambe thereby maintaining all the other tariffs at the existing charging levels</p> <p>Not increasing all the other parking tariffs would maintain the freeze that was approved for 2015/16</p> <p>The increases would maintain consistency with on street charges (if approved by the County Council) and retain the agreed differential charging</p> <p>Increased charges at Williamson Park are broadly in line with the main proposals</p>	<p>This option affects the most popular tariff in Lancaster and Morecambe and therefore a large proportion of customers would be affected</p>	<p>It has been assumed that the County Council will approve increases to its on street pay and display charges and if this does not happen and Cabinet approves this option the agreed differential in charging would not be maintained</p> <p>Increasing charges at Williamson Park could reduce the number of visitors</p>

<p><u>Option 1B</u> This option limits the increases to Lancaster’s car parks and would maintain the freeze that was approved for 2015/16 for Morecambe’s Car Parks</p> <p>The increases would maintain consistency with Lancaster’s on street charges (if approved by County) and retain the agreed differential charging</p> <p>This option acknowledges the ongoing reductions in usage in Morecambe</p>	<p>This option would introduce differential charging on car parks in Lancaster and Morecambe</p> <p>Increasing evening charges in Lancaster could affect the night-time economy</p>	<p>Differential charges in Lancaster and Morecambe would lead to confusion on charges and this would result in operational and enforcement problems</p> <p>It has been assumed that the County Council will approve increases to its on street pay and display charges and if this does not happen and Cabinet approves this option the agreed differential in charging would not be maintained</p>
<p><u>Option 1C</u> As per Option 1B plus:-</p> <p>Usage on long stay tariffs in Lancaster has increased in recent years and these increases would discourage customers who are commuting</p> <p>Unlike Option 1B this option would not affect evening charges and the night-time economy</p>	<p>This option would introduce differential charging on car parks in Lancaster and Morecambe</p>	<p>As per Option 1B</p>

5.2 To extend the facility allowing resident permit holders in residents parking zones to use off street car parks at certain times

Advantages	Disadvantages	Risks
<p>This is consistent with the other residents parking zones where off street car parks are available nearby</p> <p>This provides residents with the opportunity to park elsewhere where on street parking spaces are limited or are full</p>	<p>Dallas Road Car Park is extremely busy and spaces could only be used subject to availability</p>	<p>Castle Zone B resident permit holders may still find it difficult to park</p>

6 Officer Preferred Option

The Officer Preferred Options are:-

To implement **Option 1A** in respect of Off Street Pay and Display Charges:–

- Increase all **Up to 1 hour** parking charges across all car parks in Lancaster and Morecambe from £1.30 to £1.40 and from £1.10 to £1.20 on the Festival Car Park in Morecambe
- Increase the **Up to 1 hour** charge from 0.90p to £1.00 and the **Full Day** charge from £1.50 to £1.60 at Williamson Park in Lancaster.

This maintains consistent charging across all the main car parks in Lancaster and Morecambe and avoids any confusion over charging arrangements that would lead to operational and enforcement problems.

To extend the facility allowing resident permit holders in residents parking zones to use off street car parks at certain times