

CABINET

20 SEPTEMBER 2011

Title: Changes to Parking Policy and Charges at the Borough's Car Parks	
REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CRIME, JUSTICE AND COMMUNITIES	
Open report	For Decision
Wards Affected: Abbey , Eastbury, Heath, Village, River, Longbridge, Whalebone, Chadwell Heath	Key Decision: Yes
Report Author: Trevor Prowse, Divisional Director of Environment and Enforcement	Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 5772 E-mail: trevor.prowse@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Divisional Director: Trevor Prowse	
Accountable Director: Darren Henaghan, Corporate Director of Customer Services	
Summary: The Barking and Dagenham Draft Local Implementation Plan (LIP), agreed by Cabinet on the 23 November 2010, outlines the Council's continuing strategy to achieve a safe, sustainable and accessible transport system. The borough has some of the busiest roads in London, and suffers from the problems traffic congestion causes. In order to support the delivery of the LIP, this report seeks to introduce a series of local policy changes at the Borough's car parks. The objectives of these changes are to <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. increase capacity for short term visitor and shopper car parking in our town centres;2. improve facilities for safe overnight parking;3. improve accessibility to our car parks for vulnerable groups; and4. promote the use of more sustainable modes of travel such as cycling or public transport to reduce traffic congestion in the borough. This report describes in detail the proposed policy changes for the borough's existing public car parks and proposes the adoption of the parking spaces around four council buildings as additional public car parking space and the introduction, subject to consultation, of on-street pay and display schemes in three shopping parades. These proposals have been developed following detailed consultation as part of the process of establishing a statutory traffic management order. This included	

advertising the proposals within the local media and directly with affected service users.

Cabinet, on the 23 August 2011, agreed to the introduction of a Paid Parking Permit Scheme for staff. This scheme requires staff to purchase permits to park in the car parks described in Appendix A. Cabinet asked a series of questions about the impact of the scheme on staff, which are addressed in section 5.3 of this report.

Comments of the Chief Financial Officer

A detailed comprehensive financial modelling exercise has been undertaken to support the delivery of this scheme. This will be self-financing as well as being able to meet the relevant proportion of the savings target approved by Members in the 2011/12 budget. However, as the actual take-up of the scheme at this stage is unknown, in the absence of these known variables, the model involves the use of assumptions. These assumptions may prove to have over or under rated the revenue return.

Income from off-street parking is subject to VAT and therefore the charges quoted in this report are inclusive of VAT.

After the deduction of incremental costs arising from the implementation of this scheme any resulting revenue surplus must be ring-fenced to be spent on further traffic and parking schemes, public transport or on street maintenance etc.

Comments of the Divisional Director for Legal & Democratic Services

This report recommends the expansion of public off-street car parking in the Borough which will be achieved by opening up some of the Council's private car parks to the public.

This can be achieved by designating the car parks as to be public off-street car parks under Section 32 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 ('RTRA'). This enables the Council to create off-street car parks for the purpose of relieving and preventing congestion. Once the car parks are designated then charges can be set under section 35 of the RTRA.

In addition this report proposes revised charges to some of the existing public car parks which can be done under section 35 of the RTRA.

As part of the process of the introduction of a new charging arrangement, an advertisement was placed and a number of comments were received. The comments related to the principle of charging and were considered and responded to. It is confirmed that the measures and actions proposed in this report are consistent with the use of the powers contained in the RTRA.

Recommendation

The Cabinet is recommended to agree:

- (i) That Parking Charges Orders in respect of the existing public car parks set out in Appendix A Schedule 1, be varied so as to allow for increased or decreased charges (as the case may be) in accordance with the charging scheme set out in Appendix A, Schedule 1;
- (ii) The Council takes steps to establish the new pay and display public car parks identified in Appendix A, Schedule 2 as off street parking places under the Road Traffic Management Act 1984;
- (iii) That Parking Charges Orders in respect of the proposed new pay and display car parks set out in Appendix A, Schedule 3 be introduced to allow for parking charges to be levied in those car parks; and
- (iv) That parking should remain free for the public on Sundays in all car parks operated by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

Reason(s)

The proposals are part of a series of actions with the objective of securing a safe, sustainable and accessible transport system. This is part of delivering the Policy House objective of better homes through developing good quality transport, including public transport, roads and footpaths, and also better future through a borough that is great for doing business in and where businesses are supported to thrive, and also a borough that reduces its waste and CO2 emissions.

1. Background

- 1.1 Barking and Dagenham's Local Implementation Plan, (the Borough's Transport Strategy) outlines the Council's continuing strategy to achieve a safe, sustainable and accessible transport system. This was approved by Cabinet on the 23 November 2010.
- 1.2 The LIP describes the transport opportunities and challenges within the borough and describes the trend of increased car ownership, congestion and slower journey times.
- 1.3 Barking Town Centre and the Heathway are key shopping destinations, and provide good interconnectivity with alternative modes of transport. The proportion of road journeys made within the borough by cyclists are relatively low for London.
- 1.4 In order to support the delivery of the draft LIP, this report seeks to introduce a series of local policy changes at the Borough's car parks. The objectives of these changes are to:-
 - increase capacity for short term visitor and shopper car parking in our town centres;
 - improve facilities for safe overnight parking;
 - improve accessibility to our car parks for vulnerable groups; and

- promote the use of more sustainable modes of travel such as cycling or public transport to reduce traffic congestion in the borough.
- 1.5 This report describes in detail the proposed policy changes for the borough's existing public car parks and proposes the adoption of the parking spaces around four council buildings as additional public car parking space.
- 1.6 The existing public car parks discussed in this report are:
1. London Road;
 2. The Heathway, and;
 3. Axe Street
- 1.7 In addition, the parking spaces around four council buildings, the location of which is described in Appendix A Schedule 2, are proposed to be adopted as additional public car parking space. These buildings are:
1. The Civic Centre, Dagenham,
 2. John Smith House, Barking.
 3. Roycraft House, Linton Road, Barking, and;
 4. Stour Road Offices, Dagenham.
- 1.8 Reviews of parking facilities are regularly undertaken to ensure that they continue to provide the range of options for parking which are necessary to support businesses, residents and visitors to any particular area.
- 1.9 Residents will be encouraged to rent parking spaces in the London Road multi storey car park. It will be opened 24 hours per day in order that it can also provide additional parking facilities for the developing evening and weekend economy of Barking Town Centre.
- 1.10 A similar arrangement is to be put in place at the Mall car park and, as part of this review, changes to the charges made at Pay and Display car parks are also recommended for approval.
- 1.11 An important part of the Council's Parking Strategy is to make further Council owned car parks available for use by the public.
- 1.12 In addition, three schemes are proposed to support shopper parking in smaller shopping parades. Detailed consultation with shop owners and residents in the proposed areas will take place prior to any introduction of a scheme. The proposed shopping areas are:
1. Broad Street, Dagenham
 2. Faircross Parade, Barking
 3. High Road, Chadwell Heath.

2. Proposals

London Road Multi Storey Car Park

2.1 Existing Policy

London Road is a public car park open from 6 am until 9pm Monday to Saturday. There is a small area for business permit holders, and a dedicated area on the ground floor for blue badge holders. The rest of the facility is used for general parking and permit holders. A range of permits are available, including staff parking permits.

Current Parking Charges at this site are:

Time Length	Price
Up to 1 hour	£1.00
Up to 2 hours	£1.50
Up to 4 hours	£4.00
Up to 6 hours	£7.00
Over 6 hours	£12.50
Business Permit	£450.00

2.2 Current Issues

Usage of the car park by business permit holders and shoppers is low at all times, however the car park is very well used by Barking and Dagenham Council Staff during the week. On Saturdays the car park is almost empty.

The current pricing structure does not encourage short term use, especially by shoppers. As the car park closes overnight and on Sundays, take up of local business and residents permits is also limited as consistent access is not available.

Consultation with the business community and local residents has shown a preference to increase the hours of opening at London Road. Town centre residents identified a requirement for the added convenience of overnight parking for visitors.

2.3 Proposed Revised Policy

London Road will open 24 hours a day 7 days a week, including statutory holidays. Dedicated parking spaces will be made available for long term permit holders, in particular local residents. Blue Badge Parking will be available on the Ground Floor.

To promote security, the car park will initially be staffed overnight. The lighting and CCTV system is also under review in conjunction with the Barking and Dagenham Crime and Disorder Partnership and any improvements identified as necessary by the review will be completed before the policy

change is made. Signage improvements will also be made on the approaches to the car park.

To promote use of the car park by visitors and shoppers the short term car parking charges will be reduced. Alongside maintaining the existing day time business and staff permits, new 24 hour 7 day a week permits will be introduced for long term business and resident parking.

Parking charges at this site are now proposed as:

Time Length	Price	Percent increase / decrease
Up to 1 hour	£0.50	50% decrease
Up to 2 hours	£1.00	33% decrease
Up to 4 hours	£2.00	50% decrease
Up to 6 hours	£4.00	43% decrease
Over 6 hours	£8.00	36% decrease
8pm to 8am	£2.50	New price option
Business / Resident Contract annual permit	£700.00 for 24hrs £450.00 for 6am to 8pm	New permit option

2.4 Expected Outcomes

- Greater use of the facility for short term visitor and shopper car parking, particularly serving the evening economy.
- Increased uptake of more flexible long term parking options for residents and business.
- A move to more environmentally sustainable modes of transport for the current free permit holders. This is expected to reduce congestion and reduce carbon emissions.

Heathway Multi-Storey Car Park

2.5 Existing Policy

The Heathway Multi Storey Car Park is open from 6.30am to 7.30pm Monday to Saturday. During this time access is provided through the adjoining Mall Shopping Centre. Outside these hours access is provided to the residents of Millard Terrace through the use of an electronic access token which raises and closes the security barrier on the entrance to the car park.

Parking for Blue Badge holders is provided on the same level as the main access to the Heathway Shopping Centre. There is a dedicated area for Millard Terrace Residents and the remainder of the car park is used as general parking.

Current Parking Charges at this site are:

Time Length	Price
Up to 1 hour	£0.50
Up to 2 hours	£1.00
Up to 4 hours	£1.70
Up to 6 hours	£3.00
Over 6 hours	£4.00

2.6 **Current Issues**

Use of the car park is low. This is in stark contrast to the level of demand for short term parking on the Heathway itself. This type of parking adds significantly to the congestion in and around this key shopping area.

Investment is needed to improve maintenance and signage to the car park. Lighting at this car park and other safety measures will also be reviewed in consultation with the Barking and Dagenham Community Safety Partnership and any improvements implemented.

Feedback from local shoppers and residents is that the current opening hours are restrictive and local businesses felt that the current parking charges discourage short term parking.

2.7 **Proposed Revised Policy**

The Heathway Multi-storey will open from 6 am to 9pm Monday to Sunday. Sunday Parking will be free.

The existing secure out of hours access scheme for Millard Terrace Residents will remain, and will be extended to provide long term local resident and business parking and will be made available to other local residents and businesses.

Parking for Blue Badge holders is provided on the same level as the main access to the Heathway Shopping Centre. As at present there will be a dedicated area for Millard Terrace Residents and the remainder of the car park will be used as general parking.

To promote use of the car park by visitors and shoppers, the short term car parking charges will be reduced.

Parking charges at this site are now proposed as:

Time Length	Price	Percent increase / decrease
Up to 1 hour	£0.30	40% decrease
Up to 2 hours	£0.75	25% decrease
Up to 4 hours	£1.50	12% decrease

Up to 6 hours	£3.00	0% increase / decrease
Over 6 hours	£5.00	20% increase
Business / Resident contract annual permit	£700.00 for 24hr £450.00 for 6am to 8pm	New permit option

2.8 Expected Outcomes

- Greater use of the facility for short term visitor and shopper car parking.
- Increased uptake of more flexible long term parking options for residents and business.
- A move to more environmentally sustainable modes of transport for the current free permit holders. This is expected to reduce congestion and reduce carbon emissions.

Civic Centre, John Smith House and Stour Road Car Parks

2.9 Current Policy

The Civic Centre, Stour Road and John Smith House Car Parks provide free private parking for staff, Elected Members and visitors. The rear of the Civic Centre is secured overnight, however no restrictions are placed on parking in the other areas around the building. At John Smith House, two dedicated Doctors Bays are provided.

Blue Badge Parking is provided at all sites.

2.10 Current Issues

All of the car parks are very well used by staff and during weekdays are often full to capacity for extended periods during office hours. Pressure on parking spaces has reduced following the closure of 90 Stour Road to Revenues and Benefits customers; however this capacity has been rapidly taken up by staff.

The roads around these buildings, in particular along Ripple Road and at the junction of Green Lane and Whalebone Road South are highly congested.

Visitors to John Smith House find it very difficult to park.

Staff and visitors unable to park at the Civic Centre regularly park along Rainham Road South and other residential roads.

2.11 Proposed Policy

The Civic Centre, Stour Road and John Smith House Car Parks will be adopted as public car parks and a new charging system introduced between 8am and 8pm Monday to Friday.

30 priority staff parking bays will be created at the front of the Civic Centre. This will support the recently adopted policy to make available standard staff parking permits for all members of Council staff in other areas of the car parks.

Provision will be made at the front of the Civic Centre, John Smith House and 2 Stour Road for Blue Badge Holders.

An additional dedicated Doctors Bay and an additional Ambulance Bay will be created at John Smith House.

Parking charges at these sites are now proposed as:

Time Length	Price
Up to 2 hrs	£0.20
Up to 3 hrs	£0.50
Over 3 hrs	£2.50

2.12 **Expected Outcomes**

- A move to more environmentally sustainable modes of transport for the current free permit holders. This is expected to reduce congestion and reduce carbon emissions.
- More parking capacity created for visitors especially to the doctors surgery at John Smith House and the Civic Centre.

Roycraft House

2.13 **Current Policy**

Roycraft House provides free private parking for senior staff at Roycraft house and 3 spaces are provided for use by the chamber of commerce. Access to the car park is through a barrier system. Visitors to Roycraft House are expected to park in pay and display bays along Linton Road or within London Road Multi-Storey Car Park.

Limited Blue Badge Parking is provided.

2.14 **Current Issues**

Roycraft House car park is a key central Barking car parking location that could be used for shopper and visitor parking.

Parking spaces in this car park are reserved for individual members of staff and access prevented to visitors and other potential users. During much of

the day many spaces remain empty as the allocated users are either absent from work or making visits across the borough.

2.15 Proposed Policy

Roycraft House is adopted as a public car park and a new charging system introduced between 8am and 8pm Monday to Saturday.

Increased Blue Badge Parking is provided close to the entrance of the building.

20 priority staff parking bays will be created, alongside bays allocated to Care Line vehicles and other users of the building.

Parking charges at this site are now proposed as:

Time Length	Price
Up to 1 hour	£0.50
Up to 2 hours	£1.00
Up to 4 hours	£2.00
Up to 6 hours	£4.00
Over 6 hours	£8.00
Overnight 8pm to 8am	£2.50

2.16 Expected Outcomes

- Additional parking capacity is created for visitors and shoppers to the town centre.
- The car park is more accessible and better utilised as the restricted parking system is being removed.
- A move to more environmentally sustainable modes of transport for the current free permit holders. This is expected to reduce congestion and reduce carbon emissions

Small Shopping Parades

2.17 Current Policy

Parking at all shopping parades is provided free of charge. The parking controls at each shopping parade are produced following detailed consultation with shop keepers and local residents. In general, time restrictions are provided at most sites.

2.18 Current Issues

Shop keepers in many of our smaller shopping parades rely on short term customer parking to support their business.

In some shopping areas a minority of motorists park for extended periods so they can work locally or commute into central London. This reduces the spaces available for customers of the shopping parade. This can also result in customers parking inappropriately in local residential roads.

2.19 Proposed Policy

Within three shopping parades it is intended to consult residents and shop keepers with the view to introducing pay and display charges. Adequate parking for blue badge holders will also be created. The three shopping parades are:

1. Broad Street, Dagenham
2. Faircross Parade, Barking
3. High Road, Chadwell Heath.

The charges proposed at these sites, if adopted, are:

Time Length	Price
Up to 1 hour	£0.20
Up to 2 hours	£0.50
Up to 3 hours	£1.50
Up to 6 hours	£5.00

2.20 Expected Outcomes

- This approach has been used successfully in neighbouring boroughs and has successfully created additional parking capacity for visitors and shoppers.
- The introduction of additional blue badge parking spaces will improve accessibility to the area for motorists with mobility issues.

Other Pay and Display Car Parks

2.21 No changes are proposed at other existing Pay and Display car parks.

3. Financial Issues

3.1 Once in place, these changes should mean that the savings targets for parking services should be achieved from 2012/13. Throughout 2011/12,

there will be difficulties as the changes will only affect part of the financial year however Parking Services are endeavouring to minimise the shortfall with a number of interim measures.

- 3.2 The level of income will only become known once the arrangements are in place and take up can be assessed.
- 3.3 There is a need to initiate a marketing strategy for the London Road and Mall Car Parks. These are facilities that are under used in terms of pay and display parking.
- 3.4 Reviews of security in the car parks may result in additional expenditure on maintenance and improvements.

4. Legal Issues

- 4.1 The legal issues and implications of the proposals set out in this report are set out in the comments of the Divisional Director for Legal & Democratic Services above.

5 Staffing Issues

- 5.1 Additionally, Cabinet agreed on the 23 August 2011 to introduce a parking permit scheme for staff. This scheme requires staff to purchase a permit to park in the following car parks:

- Roycraft House
- London Road
- The Heathway Multi-storey
- The Civic Centre
- Stour Road
- John Smith House.

Cabinet raised a number of questions about the scheme and impact on staff. Those questions and the responses appear below:

1. Has consultation with the Unions taken place?

Extensive consultation has taken place both with staff and the Unions and the proposals have been adapted to take into account their comments. The Unions remain collectively opposed to the introduction of staff parking charges.

2. Have we considered the burden of the new charge on staff who were already faced with higher costs of living as well as the local government pay freeze?

Benchmarking has taken place with other neighbouring London Boroughs and Barking and Dagenham's charge of £1.00 a day is lower than the

London average. For example, London Borough of Lewisham charge the equivalent of £2.00 a day, Enfield the equivalent of £1.60 a day and Havering the equivalent of £1.40 a day.

Staff also have the option to purchase a pre-paid book of 10 permits which can be used as and when required. For example, this can be used for part time workers or staff wishing to car share.

The price of the permits has also been fixed for two years so there will not be an increase in cost during this time, and a discount of £30 (equivalent to 6 weeks) has been applied to price of the annual permit to take into account annual leave and bank holidays.

Residents have to pay to park in the borough and in view of the commitment to support residents in tough times the scheme aims to treat both residents and staff equally.

3. How will the enforcement of the scheme be managed?

The staff parking scheme was introduced on the 1st September 2011. When any new parking control scheme is introduced, initially informal warning notices to vehicles parked without an appropriate permit are issued. From 30th September 2011 formal enforcement will take place.

4. Should staff that are designated as Essential Car Users, and therefore required to use a car by the Council to properly perform their duties, be required to purchase a staff parking permit?

It is not possible to grant Essential Car Users with a free permit. Discussions with the unions are still taking place to set new criteria for the Essential Car User Allowance. However, staff that are required to use their cars for work purposes and will need to park in Controlled Parking Zones will be provided with an operational permit free of charge.

5. Whether the charge to staff should be proportionate to salaries?

This option was rejected by the majority of respondents to the consultation. Nevertheless, the option has been provided for staff to purchase priority permits at £30 per month and the Chief Executive and other Chief Officers pay £40 per month.

5.2 As an alternative to the staff parking permit, there are other travel options that are available to staff. Annual season ticket loans are available to staff so they can purchase an annual season ticket for the rail network and London Transport train and bus services. The loan is non-taxable, interest free and does not include any administrative fees and it will be for the whole cost of the season ticket. The loan is recovered by 11 monthly deductions from staff salary.

- 5.3 The 'Cycle to Work Scheme' was introduced in 2010 and gives staff the opportunity to purchase a bike at a reduced rate through salary sacrifice. Staff can choose a bike and accessories up to the value of £1,000. Deductions are set up to be taken straight from gross salary thereby saving staff the income tax and national insurance normally paid on the amount.
- 5.4 It is not expected that staff will have difficulty in accessing car parking spaces even if car parks can now be used by the public. The staff parking permit is transferable between car parks and can be used at all the identified car parks in the borough.

6. Other Implications

6.1 Risk Management

The proposals in this report have the objective of producing a safe, sustainable and accessible public transport system. The proposals seek to improve access for visitors and shoppers to the Heathway and Barking Town centre. They are also designed to reduce congestion across the borough by promoting a switch away from car use for existing free permit holders.

The expected increase in use by shoppers and visitors may be slow to materialise. This financial risk will need careful monitoring and to this end officers are recommending that the charges at these car parks are kept under review as part of the 2012/13 budget setting process.

6.2 Contractual Issues

There are no specific contractual issues in relation to changes to fees and charges.

6.3 Customer Impact

The new car park charges will increase accessibility to our car parks for customers with mobility issues. Provision of blue badge parking spaces is proposed in all car parking areas under discussion.

The lowering of fees at London Road and The Heathway is expected to have a positive effect on vulnerable residents wishing to visit these shopping areas.

Extending the opening hours of the borough's car parks and providing a wider choice of car parking options for customer, visitors and residents will have a positive effect.

As part of the Traffic Management Order needed to adopt the car parks in the borough, extensive and statutory consultation has been undertaken as required by the Road Traffic Act. 9 objections were received in answer to the proposed change to the car parks and all objections have been answered and there have been no further appeals submitted. Therefore the Traffic

Management Order that supports the introduction of these payments has been sealed.

6.4 **Safeguarding Children** – Please see section 6.6

6.5 **Health Issues** – Please see section 6.6

6.6 **Crime and Disorder Issues**

Concern has been expressed that anti social activity may occur in the car parks. In particular perceptions of safety at the Heathway multi storey car park needs to be improved and a further assessment is needed at London Road as this is to be open for 24 hours a day.

Car Parks can be intimidating especially at night. The car park is monitored by CCTV cameras however there is an acknowledgement that to feel safe in a car park requires more than just CCTV coverage. At London Road a car park attendant will be on duty at all times and if required, will be able to escort members of staff and customers to their car.

A review of the lighting situation will be undertaken at all car parks and customer and staff feedback will be sought on how they feel the car park is managed and any issues they have. Further work will be undertaken in conjunction with the Crime and Disorder Partnership to identify and introduce any necessary security or design measures to reassure visitors to the car parks.

6.7 **Property / Asset Issues**

The proposals in this report represent an improved use of the Council's parking assets.

7. **Options appraisal**

A range of options have been under discussion over many months with regard to the changes necessary to the charging regime to address the needs to shoppers, residents and businesses and the results set out in this report represent the culmination of those discussions.

List of appendices:

Appendix A – Location of Car Parks that are to be adopted as public car parks.