

# Cabinet

14 December 2023

## Proposed changes to on-street Pay & Display Parking

### Recommendations

That Cabinet approves

1. the increase of on-street charges in Leamington, Warwick, Kenilworth, Stratford and Rugby as set out at paragraphs 4.3 and 4.4, subject to completion of the required statutory process'.
2. requests the Executive Director for Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning to undertake an annual review of the on-street Pay and Display charges that considers the District and Borough off-street pricing structures.
3. requests the Executive Director for Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning to undertake a review of the existing on-street Pay and Display hours of restriction to create a more consistent and simplified model across the town centres, and authorises the Executive Director for Communities to take such steps and to make any changes as are necessary to achieve such a model subject to the completion of the required statutory process.

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 It is proposed that the Council increases on-street pay and display charges in Leamington, Warwick, Kenilworth, Rugby and Stratford-on-Avon, effective from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024, to bring them in line with existing off-street car park charges in those areas as recommended by the Department for Transport (DfT) and to ensure consistency across the county. There will be no change to parking charges in other areas at this time.
- 1.2 It is further proposed that the Council undertakes an annual review of all District and Borough off-street parking charges, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning, to ensure on-street charges remain inline with off street parking charges moving forward.
- 1.3 A review and standardisation of hours of restriction across all bays is also proposed to enable paid parking to address the existing inconsistency and the subsequent confusion caused by differing approaches across the county.

## **2. Financial Implications**

- 2.1 All changes will incur low level internal legal and operational costs, but these will be managed within existing service budget.
- 2.2 Where the review concludes that it is appropriate to increase Pay & Display rates in the identified towns, this will increase income received. However, any surplus generated from parking payments or through enforcement must be invested in Highways improvements or mobility purposes as set out under the Road Traffic Act (RTA) 1984 (3a).

## **3. Environmental Implications**

General guidance from the Department for Transport (DfT) recommends that on-street pay and display pricing is designed to support short-stay use of limited parking capacity within areas of high demand. The price of parking should be such that it encourages those who wish to stay longer to either use alternative methods of transport, or to park in off-street car parks. These are generally located on the periphery of the core centres, thus reducing through traffic in these areas with consequent environmental and air quality benefits. The proposed review will be undertaken with this principle in mind.

## **4. Supporting Information**

- 4.1 The Department for Transport (DfT) Guidance recommends that when setting on and off-street parking charges, authorities should consider lower charges off-street than on-street. This would encourage drivers to park off-street, thus minimising on-street congestion caused by vehicles searching for spaces and supporting the environmental benefits mentioned above. The DfT further recommends that regular and planned price increases are favoured over larger sporadic increases which can cause confusion.

### **Increase to existing Pay and Display charges**

- 4.2 The on-street pay and display charges have remained at their current charges since 2018, these were applied at a flat rate across the County (apart from Kenilworth which is currently slightly lower at £1.00 per hour).
- 4.3 It is proposed to implement an increase to the hourly on-street pay and display charges to all on-street locations from £1.10 up to £1.40 to reflect the advice given by the DfT and after reviewing the District and Borough off-street charges. This increase is broadly in line, although slightly below, RPI inflation that has occurred during the period 2018-2023.
- 4.4 To support the town economy and a regular turnover of visitors, it is proposed to introduce a 15 min stay to all locations at a reduced rate of 25p. This is a 10% reduction in the current pricing rate (28p) and creates a simple flat rate for these very short parking sessions such as for collections and deliveries.

## **Annual review of on-street parking charges**

- 4.5 It is proposed that officers undertake a county wide annual review of the individual District and Borough off-street pricing structures in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning and to formally consult as required by statute on the suggested adjustments arising from that review. A County-wide benchmarking exercise confirmed that off-street parking charged by the District and Borough Councils are subject to annual reviews with the recommended adjustments consulted on and implemented each year.
- 4.6 Such a review will enable the Council to ensure that the pricing of on street parking moving forwards supports the approach recommended in DfT Guidance and avoids the need for larger periodic price rises.

## **Review of existing on-street restricted hours**

- 4.7 There is a considerable disparity in the hours of restrictions in bays offering pay and display parking. The hours of restriction vary across the County, generally speaking their commencement is consistent within each town, starting at either 7am or 8am across all bays. However, bays offering paid parking vary in when the restricted hours end. This can be between 5pm and 10pm often with considerable variance in streets neighbouring each other.
- 4.8 This variance causes confusion for visitors unsure whether payment is required, and how long to make payment for and results in a number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCN's) being issued to visitors falling foul of the different restricted hours.
- 4.9 This variance also impacts on the enforcement effectiveness requiring Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO's) to patrol in a disjointed manner later in the day. There are high levels of non-compliance in many areas of the County due to the challenges faced by our enforcement provider which are emphasised by this disparity.
- 4.10 It is proposed that officers undertake a review of all existing hours of restrictions in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning with a view to standardising and streamlining the approach. Standardised hours of restriction will increase visitor confidence and convenience and increase the enforcement effectiveness and increase compliance levels.

## **5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps**

- 5.1 Following Cabinet approval (if granted) to increase pay and display charges, the Authority is required by statute to issue a public notice to be published locally in all affected areas and for the notice to be in place for 21 days. The Authority will affix notices on all pay and display machines informing customers for 28 days prior to the change and advertise as required in local press.

- 5.2 If Cabinet approves a review of on street charges to consider alignment with the District and Boroughs, officers will engage and consult with all District and Borough Councils. This review would then take place annually with any changes to pricing implemented once a year.
- 5.3 If Cabinet approves a review of the restricted hours for all pay and display bays, any subsequent changes to existing restrictions will require a full Traffic Regulation Order consultation and change, alongside new on street signage.
- 5.4 In respect of annual reviews proposed within this report, any changes to charges required following each review will be subject to any relevant statutory or governance process applicable at that time to include the approval of Portfolio Holder where constitutionally required.

## Appendices

### 1. Appendix 1 – On-Street Parking Payment Schedule

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): Councillors Sarah Boad, Sarah Feeney, John Holland, Sarah Millar, Kate Rolfe, Tim Sinclair, Parminder Singh Birdi and Rik Spencer.