

WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCILSTRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 16TH JUNE 2021EXECUTIVE – 28TH JUNE 2021

Report by the Director of Environment and Community Services on a review of parking charges in the Borough.

SUMMARY

A review of parking charges was last undertaken in February 2019 and resulted in new parking charges being introduced with effect from 1st May 2019. This report takes account of the increased costs associated with running the parking service since the last review and the need to ensure that the charges continue to reflect the Council's parking policies aimed at reducing and managing traffic levels and promoting the use of sustainable transport (the encouragement of walking, cycling and public transport over car usage). This considers the need for car users to contribute an appropriate amount, through parking permits and other on street charges for the impact of car use in the borough. There is also an essential need to ensure the regular turnover of vehicles in places where there is high demand. It is proposed to increase resident parking permit charges, doctors parking bay charges and resident visitor, traders and temporary permit charges by 8.7% and to increase pay and display/pay by phone charges by a base increase of 8.7% rounded to the nearest £0.10, leading to percentage increases ranging from 7.7%-10.3%. Included in the increase in charges is a proposal to increase the permit charge for each second and subsequent vehicle in each household and to apply this at a rate of an additional 30% to the first permit charge. The proposals also include a recommendation to investigate and implement at trial sites, reserved parking bays for electric vehicles adjacent to lamp column charging points and to investigate the possibility of trialling a maximum charging period in these bays to improve their availability for owners of electric vehicles.

The Director of Resources comments that the estimated budgetary effect of the changes and increase in parking charges, including the increase in the charge for second and subsequent resident permits proposed in this paper, are an increase in income of £612,000 in 2021/22 and £1,264,000 in 2022/23 and a full year, for which negative General Fund revenue budget variations are recommended for approval. Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 gives local authorities statutory powers to impose parking charges and provides for the creation of a ring-fenced account (the Parking Account) into which the monies

Parking Charges Review 2021

raised from traffic regulation must be placed. All income received into this account must be spent on highway, road or environmental improvement projects, including footway/pedestrian schemes and the Council provides an annual return of this account to the Mayor of London. The expected increase in income arising from the proposals in this paper is therefore ring-fenced towards these projects within the Borough.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Strategic Planning and Transportation Overview and Scrutiny Committee are recommended to support the recommendations in paragraph 3.
2. If the OSC approve any views, comments or additional recommendations on this report these will be submitted to the Executive for consideration.
3. The Executive is recommended to:-
 - (a) agree to the increase, in the parking charges as detailed in Appendix A and outlined in this report;
 - (b) agree that all parking charge increases/changes will be effective from 1st October 2021;
 - (c) approve negative General Fund revenue budget variations of £612,000 in 2021/22 and £1,264,000 in 2022/23 and a full year.
 - (d) delegate the Director of Environment and Community Services in conjunction with the cabinet member to:
 - (i) Investigate and implement trial sites of reserved parking bays for electric vehicles adjacent to lamp column charging points as described in paragraph 19 and,
 - (ii) Investigate the possibility of trialling a maximum charging period for charging electric vehicles at certain reserved parking bays to provide a regular turnover of these bays as described in paragraph 20.

BACKGROUND

4. The Traffic Management Act 2004 gave local traffic authorities powers and a duty to keep roads clear and traffic moving. The Council's own policies on sustainable transport, air quality and traffic management also seek to create an environment to encourage modal shift and less of a reliance on the car.
5. The introduction of parking restrictions and controlled parking zones is generally towards creating environments with the right balance of users and

minimising the negative environmental impacts of localised parking and movement stress. The Council is also keen to improve local air quality and promote the use of sustainable forms of travel whenever possible.

6. Parking charges set by the Council are reviewed regularly and charges generally take into account increased costs associated with the provision of the service and the Council's policies aimed at reducing and managing traffic levels, promoting the use of sustainable transport and ensuring a regular turnover of vehicles in places where there is high demand.
7. Until 2013 parking charges set by the Council were normally reviewed each year and charges generally increased to take account of increases in inflation and increased costs associated with the provision of the service. The last review of parking charges was undertaken in February 2019 (Paper No.19-33 Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee (CSOSC)) and previous to that a review was undertaken in September 2016 (Paper No. 16-368 CSOSC). Paper No.19-33 approved an increase in all parking and permit charges by 10% except car clubs of which an increase of 3% was approved.
8. The Barnet Council High Court judgement in July 2013 established that Councils have discretion to set parking charges to reflect its parking costs. Proper reasons may include "the need to 'restrain' competition for on-street parking, encouraging vehicles to park in existing off-street parking areas, securing an appropriate balance between different classes of vehicles and users, and selecting charges which reflect periods of high demand."

REVIEW OF PARKING CHARGES 2021

9. Reviews of Parking Charges take account of the last time charges were reviewed and of the need to review them in relation to the economic climate and the desire to assist residents and businesses. It is also necessary to review how the charges are set and to consider any changes as appropriate.
10. Whilst the service seeks to generate efficiencies where possible a number of costs associating with running the parking service have increased. These costs include the investigation and review of controlled parking zones (CPZs), parking enforcement, IT systems, maintenance and replacement of pay and display machines, and the renewal/replacement of signage.
11. The wider introduction and operation of CPZs fits under Outcome 3 of the Mayor's Transport Strategy - 'London's streets will be used more efficiently and have less traffic on them'. The Strategy also states that traffic reduction strategies should be developed at borough level with the aim of reducing traffic levels across London. This includes 'improving the effectiveness, sustainability and reliability of alternatives to the car'. CPZs can influence car ownership and/or unnecessary usage by prohibiting new developments from purchasing parking permits, by increasing the costs of short trips, and making more efficient use of street space to make walking and cycling environments

Parking Charges Review 2021

more attractive. It can also improve access to public transport. These measures together can contribute towards improving air quality and the environment and, in turn, and provide a healthier lifestyle for everyone.

12. At the local level, the Mayor's Transport Strategy translates to the Local Implementation Plan (LIP), and the Council's Third LIP, approved in April 2019, includes targets to reduce car ownership in the borough from a baseline of 83,018 in 2013/14 - 2015/16 to 73,800 by 2041, along with a target for a 15-20% reduction in total vehicle kilometres in the borough by 2041.
13. Approximately 85% of the borough's road network has CPZ controls in place. The number of requests to introduce new CPZs and to review existing ones remain at a high level which has resulted in a very busy work programme in recent years. It is expected that demand in this area of service will continue to remain at current levels resulting in a high workload and, in turn, resulting in the introduction of new CPZs (including extensions and amendments to existing CPZs). The exact number and size of each new CPZ will be dependent on the outcome of a consultation. Introducing CPZs discourages vehicle trips by limiting access to on-street car parking through restrictions and/or charging.
14. It is proposed to increase resident parking permit charges, resident visitor permit charges and temporary parking permit charges by 8.7%. This increase in parking charges is considered to be in line with the Mayor's Strategy and consistent with targets in the Council's LIP that aim to discourage / reduce ownership and use of the car. At the same time as increasing the first resident permit charge, it is proposed to increase the charge for second and subsequent resident permits purchased per household in line with the Council's policy to reduce car ownership/use. The second and subsequent resident permit charge will be set at 30% more than the first permit charge, an increase from the existing +20% uplift for second and subsequent permits.
15. As part of this review, the resident permit charges for second and subsequent permits have been realigned so that the new 30% uplift is directly based on the first permit charge. Increases in resident permit charges in recent years have resulted in historical deviations where inflationary increases have been applied directly to the second permit charge rather than based on the first permit charge.
16. It is also proposed to increase daily visitor charges (pay and display and pay by phone) ranging from 7.7% to 10.3% rounded to the nearest 10p. Increasing these charges is aimed at reducing use of the car and/or could increase the turnover of parking space.
17. No increases to the charges of on-street car club parking permits is proposed at this time. Car clubs are encouraged by council policy and they offer an alternative to private car ownership, freeing up kerbside space. It should be

noted that free-floating car club (Zipcar Flex) payments to the Council are governed by contractual increases which specify an RPI increase. Wandsworth has one of the highest take-up rates of car club membership in the country, with more than 38,000 people signed up. By applying no increases to these charges at this time the Council recognises the contribution car clubs make in achieving reductions in car ownership/use.

18. In recognition of their contribution to improving air quality, no increase in charge is being proposed to greener parking permits at this time. The number of ultra-low emission vehicles (including electric) registered in Wandsworth has grown to 1,924 at the end of Q3 2020, a year-on-year increase of 48%. This shift to greener vehicles is encouraged.
19. The council has successfully rolled out 400 lamp column charging points for electric vehicles (EVs) in the borough with a further 200 due for installation imminently. In some locations, residents are not always able to access the charging facilities as parking is not reserved for EV users. It is proposed that new dedicated "EV Only" parking bays are investigated and implemented at selected trial sites and that the impacts of this are monitored.
20. Currently electric vehicles may park in any dedicated "EV Only" bay without the need for payment for parking or the display of a parking permit provided the vehicle is connected to the charging point. For Source London managed parking bays, once a vehicle is charged a motorist incurs prohibitive costs and so vehicles do not remain parked on the bays longer than necessary ensuring availability for other electric vehicle owners. In designating electric vehicle only charge points adjacent to lamp columns, consideration will be given to trialling a time limit to encourage turnover of use whilst recognising that lamp columns provide a slow charge which would point to a maximum stay of no less than four hours.
21. No increases in charges are being proposed to business parking permits at this time. These permits are set at a higher level than the resident parking permits. With the easing of the COVID-19 restrictions, freezing the price of these permits is aimed at helping businesses return to normal operation as soon as possible.
22. Under section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulations 1984 (as amended), income from on-street parking and on-street and off-street parking enforcement is ring-fenced in a dedicated parking account. Once the costs of the on-street parking and on-street and off-street parking enforcement have been met, any surplus income can only be used to fund the following:
 - Making good any deficit on the parking account in the four years prior to the current financial year
 - The provision and operation of public passenger transport services

Parking Charges Review 2021

- Highway and road improvements (including footway/pedestrianisation schemes) and maintenance
- Environmental improvements
- Meeting the cost of anything which facilitates the London Transport Strategy

23. The Council publishes its parking account on its website each year showing how the surplus income has been used. In 2019/20 the surplus of income after the costs of on-street and off-street parking and enforcement were taken into account, was applied as follows:

	£000s
Shopmobility	195
Community Transport	7
Concessionary Fees	14,291
Special Needs and Education Transport	2,559
Upgrade of parking machines-coinage	121
Highways Improvements and Maintenance	10,108
Total	27,281

Cost Implications

24. Any implementation costs for the changes in parking charges as set out in this report will be met from existing budgets with the Parking Operational Service.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

25. The Director of Resources comments that the estimated budgetary effect of the changes and increase in parking charges proposed in this paper are an increase of income of £612,000 in 2021/22 and £1,264,000 in 2022/23 and a full year, for which negative General Fund revenue budget variations are recommended for approval.
26. Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 gives local authorities statutory powers to impose parking charges and provides for the creation of a ring-fenced account (the Special Parking Account) into which the monies raised from traffic regulation must be placed. All income received into this account must be spent on highway, road or environmental improvement projects, such as footway/pedestrian schemes and the Council provides an annual return of this account to the Mayor of London. The expected increase in income arising from the proposals in this paper are therefore ring-fenced towards these projects within the Borough.

Parking Charges 2021

The Town Hall
Wandsworth
SW18 2PU

PAUL CHADWICK
Director of Environment and Community Services

8th June 2021

Background Papers

There are no background papers to this report.

All reports to Overview and Scrutiny Committees, regulatory and other committees, the Executive and the full Council can be viewed on the Council's website (www.wandsworth.gov.uk/moderngov) unless the report was published before May 2001, in which case the Committee Secretary (June Haynes, 020 8871 7857; email June.haynes@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk) can supply it if required.