

FEES AND CHARGES 2021 – CAR PARKING AND CHRISTMAS PARKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2020 TO SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES

1. INTRODUCTION

Each year, prior to the next years parking clocks being advertised for sale, the Planning and Infrastructure Portfolio Holder reviews the cost of parking clocks and pay and display charges to consider whether any adjustments should be made.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Car Park charges in the New Forest District have not increased since January 2018. In the period since the last increase, our operating costs have increased significantly. In 2018 the expenditure on the parking service was £1.832m per annum. The current cost of providing the service is £2,076m, an increase of 13%. During 2019 and 2020 the Council has also invested in car parking infrastructure with environmental improvement schemes in Fordingbridge, which was completed in 2019, and Brockenhurst which will be completed in 2020/21. In addition, we have improved the maintenance of the soft landscape areas to ensure the car parks are more attractive and welcoming to visitors by having a dedicated team working on our car parks.
- 2.2 We are also investing in electrical charging points and a total of 26 of these will be available in 9 car parks by the end of this year with another 4 in Lyndhurst by spring 2021.
- 2.3 Improvement and enhancing of the car parks remains a priority. Two very comprehensive Car Parking Surveys have been undertaken at Lymington and Totton which will help to inform us of the Parking needs for these two towns in future years.
- 2.4 As a policy, NFDC has never tried to make a substantial income from car park charges but have and will continue to invest in car parking infrastructure using some of the surpluses generated. This is to ensure that we continue to support local businesses and provide local residents and visitors alike with the benefits of low-cost parking. Even with our proposals the charges remain competitive with other authorities. Following a comprehensive review, the following changes are suggested (to come into force from 1st January 2021).

3. PARKING CLOCK CHARGES

3.1 Short Stay Shoppers Clocks:

Current annual cost is £25. The original Officers recommendation suggested increasing this to £30. However, I am keeping the price held at £25.00 to reflect the fact that those who had a 2020 shoppers clock were unable to get their full value from the clock throughout the year due to the town and village car parks being made free by NFDC in April and May as part of our response to Covid. This will be reviewed again in time for 2022.

3.2 Annual Long Stay clocks:

Current annual cost for 2020 is £120. Again, Officers suggested an increase for this annual long stay clock, this will remain at £120.00 but will then increase to £140.00 in 2022. Again, this is for the same reasons as 3.1 above.

3.3 Quarterly Long stay clocks:

I intend to keep the price held at £35.00 for one more year. I hope that we will have a system in 2022 which will enable our customers to pay for their parking clocks or a suitable replacement system on a monthly direct debit thus meaning that there will be no further requirement for a quarterly long stay clock and our customers can spread the cost of payment over a longer period from 2022.

4. CHARGES

Currently, NFDC has a mixture of tariffs with the major split being between the town and village car park tariff and the amenity (coastal) car park tariff.

4.1 Town Centre Car Parks

Due to the nature of the Town Centre Car Parks, it is suggested that these tariffs all remain frozen at the 2020 prices to assist Town Centre Businesses and encourage local residents to shop locally.

4.2 Amenity Car Parks

With regards to Amenity car parks these tariffs should remain frozen at the 2020 prices from 1st January to 31st March and 1st October to 31st December. All Amenity tariffs will be increased by £1 per tariff from 1st April to 30th September. For example, 2 hours increases from £2 to £3 and 4 hours increases from £4 to £5.

4.3 Free parking days in support of local businesses

In addition to the above charges the council would also like to confirm its intention to have 5 days this year (2020) when charges do not apply in Town Centre Car Parks to assist businesses. These days are:

Small Business Saturday (this year on the 5th December 2020) The last weekend before Christmas (19th/20th December 2020) and, in addition, to try to help avoid the rush for free parking close to Christmas, another free 2-day period the weekend before (12th/13th December 2020). (One of these days is a direct replacement for the additional day which Town and Parish Councils are given for their Christmas events which in the main are not being held this year).

5. IMPROVING AND ENHANCING THE CAR PARKS.

5.1 The Council will continue to invest in its Car Parks and an improvement programme will focus on areas such as ease of use, lay out, access, lighting and traffic flows. Community issues at a number of our car parks will also be reviewed.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL, CRIME AND DISORDER AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS.

- 6.1 We hope to have electric vehicle charge points up and running before the Christmas period this year in 9 of our car parks and if these prove a success we will look at how we can build upon this network of charging points with the obvious benefit to the environment.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Keeping the Parking Clock and town and village tariffs frozen for 2021 will support the local economy. The increase in the spring and summer Pay and Display charge income will contribute towards offsetting the increased running costs by around £125,000 and will allow a programme of improvements to the car parks as well as offsetting the reduction in income due to the additional day of free parking for Christmas.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 In these difficult times these proposals continue to support our local economy and businesses. Our parking clocks provide extremely good value for money to all and the increased tariffs on the amenity car parks between April to September still compare very favourably with other coastal car parks in other districts.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- That the 2020 price for Parking Clocks remain the same for 2021.
- That the 2020 Town and Village car park tariffs remain the same for 2021.
- That the 2020 Amenity car park tariffs remain the same from 1st January to 31st March and 1st October to 31st December 2021 but that the Amenity car park tariffs increase by £1 per tariff from 1st April to 30th September in 2021.
- That the Council allocate 5 days of free parking in Town Centre Car Parks to support local businesses during December 2020.

10. PORTFOLIO HOLDER ENDORSEMENT

- 10.1 I agree to the recommendation above.

Signed: CLLR E J HERON

Dated: 27 October 2020

For Further Information please contact:

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Background Papers:

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Last date for call-in - 3 November 2020