

## FEES AND CHARGES 2018 – CAR PARKING

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Each year, prior to the next year's parking clocks being advertised for sale, the Planning and Transportation 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 2012. In the period since the last increase, operating costs have increased significantly. The last time the fees and charges for car parking increased, annual revenue expenditure on the parking service was less than £1.5m per annum. The budgeted expenditure in 2017/18 is £1.832m, With Business Rate increases accounting for £181,000 of this increase, an overall increase in costs over the period of 22%. The Council also made a significant investment in new meters in 2016/17, at a cost of over £200k.
- 2.2 As a policy, New Forest District Council has never tried to make a substantial income from car park charges. 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 very competitive with other authorities and therefore following a comprehensive review, the following changes are planned from 1st January 2018 and be fixed for a period of two years.

### 3. PARKING CLOCK CHARGES

#### **Short Stay Shoppers Clocks:**

Current annual cost is **£20**. It is intended to increase this annual fee to **£25**. After the increase, motorists will still be able to park for up to 3 hours on as many occasions as they like in all the towns and villages throughout the district for less than 7 pence per day.

#### **Annual Long Stay clocks:**

Current annual cost is **£100**. It is intended to increase this annual fee to **£120**. After the increase motorists will be able to park for up to 20 hours a day every day of the year in all long stay parking areas with the exception of Bath Road, which is 72 hours. This allows motorists to be able to park in towns, villages and coastal amenity car parks for less than 33p per day.

#### **Quarter clocks:**

The current cost of a 3 month clock is **£25**. It is intended to increase this to **£35**. This allows motorists to be able to park in towns, villages and coastal amenity car parks for less than 40p per day for up to 20 hours parking. With postage, card processing charges and production costs, quarterly clocks, compared to annual clocks, cost the council an additional £10 a year to administer per clock.

#### **4.0 PAY AND DISPLAY CHARGES**

- 4.1 Currently, the Council has a mix of tariffs with the major split being the town and village tariff and the (higher) amenity tariff.
- 4.2 Research on all the tickets purchased in June this year (total sales) has shown that currently 1 and 2-hour ticket sales account for almost three quarters of all pay and display machine ticket sales (73.3 %). The total number of tickets sold in June 2017 was 101,184. The number of 2 hour tickets purchased is higher than in winter due to the 1 hour option not being available to purchase between March and October from an amenity car park ticket machine.
- 4.3 A comparison with historical data from 2007/8 confirms that the overall annual percentage for the 1 and 2-hour tariffs was similar to this year's current projection (77%).
- 4.4 To assist the local businesses it is essential that there is a significant turn over in local town centre car parks. A number of car parks across the New Forest are experiencing over capacity issues during peak time, therefore to assist with trying to reduce the short term parking we are increasing the 1 to 3 hour parking tariffs. It makes sound economic sense to alter the first 3 tariffs from 80p to £1.00 for up to 1 hours parking, as well as standardising the 2 hour charge from £1.50 (Town Centre Parking) and £1.80 (Amenity Parking) respectively to £2.00 for up to 2 hours parking and increasing the £2.20 charge for 3 hours parking to £2.50 with the short stay car park at Lymington Quay remaining unchanged at £4.00 for 3 hours. This will make the payment charge simpler and more transparent to the public.

#### **5. 4 DAYS' FREE PARKING**

- 5.1 The Council would also like to confirm its intention to have 4 days a year when parking charges do not apply in town centre car parks, to support local businesses.
- 5.2 For the last 4 years the Council has supported the national initiative "Small Business Saturday" by providing free parking. Small Business Saturday is a national initiative to encourage people to use and support local independent shops and business. This year, Small Business Saturday is being held on 2 December 2017.
- 5.3 In each of the last seven years, town and parish councils have been given the option to nominate a day when car parking charges are suspended to support specific local events in the run-up to Christmas. The Council wishes to continue with this support to help promote the Christmas activities for our Towns and Villages.
- 5.4 In addition to the two days identified above the Council, for the first time this year (2017), wishes to further support local business by suspending parking charges on the last weekend before Christmas. In 2017 this will be on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> December.

#### **6. IMPROVING AND ENHANCING THE CAR PARKS.**

- 6.1 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, traffic flows, community safety aspects and future use of parking provision such as electric charging points. Capacity issues at a number of our car parks especially at Ringwood, Fordingbridge and Lymington will need to be reviewed and the planned survey at Totton will look at parking provision in that area.

There is also a need to improve maintenance of the soft landscape areas to ensure the car parks are more attractive and welcoming to visitors as the car parks are often their first stop off point when visiting the area.

## **7. ENVIRONMENTAL, CRIME AND DISORDER AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There is a need to further invest in our car parking infrastructure and address the capacity issues in certain car parks during peak periods. Work to undertake parking surveys to establish how we can provide the correct balance of short and long stay spaces needs to be carried out, especially in Totton. The use of electrical charging points needs to be considered as more vehicles are being manufactured and will rely on using alternative sources of energy.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The increase in Parking Clock and Pay and Display charge income will contribute towards offsetting the increased running costs that have been identified in section 2 of this report and will allow a programme of improvements to the car parks as identified in sections 6 and 7.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 The increase in charges will also enable the Council to invest more into the maintenance and necessary improvements required to the car parks, to ensure they remain a safe and suitable public asset, servicing the needs of the New Forest residents, and the vast amount of visitors the New Forest attracts each year. Overall, we believe this is a very fair deal for the residents and businesses in the New Forest District by providing low cost parking in a way that no other authority seeks to do. In addition, this will also enable us to continue to allow disabled badge holders to park for free in all our car parks for the foreseeable future. The proposed clock and tariff changes would remain fixed for a minimum period of 2 years.

## **10. RECOMMENDATION**

- 10.1 That the increase in parking charges for 2018 with regards to parking clocks and pay and display tickets, as set out in Sections 3 and 4 of this report be agreed; and
- 10.2 That the Council allocate 4 days of free parking in Town Centre Car Parks to support local businesses, as set out in Section 5 of this report.

## **11. PORTFOLIO HOLDER ENDORSEMENT**

- 11.1 I agree to the recommendation above.

Signed: EJ HERON

Dated: 18 September 2017

<b>For Further Information please contact:</b>  Colin Read Executive Head of Operations and Deputy Chief Executive Tel: 023 8028 5588 Email: <a href="mailto:colin.read@nfdc.gov.uk">colin.read@nfdc.gov.uk</a>	<b>Background Papers:</b>
---	---------------------------

Date notification of this Decision given – 18 September 2017

Last date for call-in – 25 September 2017