



## **Report to Cabinet**

**Subject** Introduction of Charging for Car Parking and Tariff for 2009/10

**Date** 5<sup>th</sup> February 2009

**Author** Senior Management Team

### **1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To recommend that Cabinet introduce pay and display car park charging at the Council's car parks with effect from August 2009
- 1.2 To recommend that Cabinet approve the tariff for 2009/10, agree the amount of permits available for local traders' car parking requirements and approve all the other proposals outlined in this report.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Council has previously resolved to introduce charging in its public car parks. However, no decision on the implementation date or the charging tariff was made. Previous presentations and Cabinet papers on this subject (see background papers section for more details) have been placed in the Members room for reference purposes.
- 2.2 At its meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2008 to consider the prospective budget, the Policy Review Scrutiny Committee recommended to Cabinet that consideration be given to the introduction of car park charging.
- 2.3 In a recent public survey residents of Gedling Borough Council were asked to choose between three options in order to help close the Council's anticipated budget deficit over the next five years, which has developed due to challenging local and national economic circumstances.
- 2.4 From the three options offered, 64% of respondents supported the introduction of charging for parking in the Borough's shoppers' car parks.

### **3. Scope and Objectives**

- 3.1 In addition to the shopping car parks the Council owns other car parking areas for which charges could be made. These include car parks in Arnot Hill Park and some designated parking areas in close proximity to shopping car parks which are currently used by local residents. These car parks and parking areas are likely to come under pressure from overflow parking by those wishing to avoid the charges in the shoppers' car parks, so it is recommended that charging or permit regimes are also applied to them. Similarly, the car park at Burntstump Country Park, which is principally intended for the benefit of park users, is heavily used by visitors to the Park Hospital and the Police Headquarters. Therefore, it is also recommended that charging be introduced for parking in this car park.
- 3.2 The scope of the project has been drawn up and is attached to this report at Appendix A. Clearly the key objective for introducing car park charging is to generate income to not only off-set the anticipated budget deficit but also to ensure that the current Council priorities are achieved and maintained and that, in the future, Members can make commitments on service enhancements and developments with regard to these parking areas, in the knowledge that a income stream is available to deliver proposed improvements. It is proposed accordingly that revenue provision of £200,000 per annum is included in future budgets specifically for car park repairs and improvements.

### **4.0 Proposals**

It is proposed that, in accordance with the Policy Review Scrutiny committee's recommendation, car park charging be introduced to the Council's car parks with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2009, the meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2009 confirmed this measure to counteract the current budget deficit and is subject to the Car Parking Orders and statutory consultation exercise being completed. The main details of the proposal are as follows:-

#### **4.1 Car park categories**

- 4.1.1 The main shopping areas of Arnold, Carlton, Mapperley and Netherfield form the core of the Councils shoppers' car parks for which charging is proposed. However other car parks within the Councils ownership may benefit from being included in the Public Car Parking management arrangements.
- 4.1.2 It should be noted that the Council does not own all of the designated car parks in Arnold, Mapperley and Calverton so agreement for charging on

any sites not in the Council's ownership will be needed from the relevant landowners.

- 4.1.3 Each car park has been assigned a category for charging proposals based on usage and suitability and taking into consideration the effect on the local traders. Appendix B shows the category proposed for each of the car parks and the period for charging.
- 4.1.4 With regard to Arnot Hill Park, it is proposed that the Bowling Green Car Park be treated as a "category B" car park, with the same charging tariff as the secondary shopping areas on weekdays only. No charges will apply at weekends or on Bank Holidays. In order to accommodate customers visiting the Civic Centre, the current 1 hour parking restriction applied to the spaces round the island opposite the main entrance will continue to apply, although it is proposed that this 1 hour parking restriction be extended to cover the other spaces in front of the Civic Centre leading from the main access road to the island. Permits will be available to enable visitors to the Civic Centre (and Members attending daytime meetings) to park in these spaces for longer if necessary, but there will be no charge for parking here. The remaining spaces in the other car parks will be by "permit only" from 9.30 am until 4.30pm Monday to Friday, with permits being made available to Members, visitors and appropriate staff as under the current Arnot Hill Park regime.
- 4.1.5 When meetings or events are taking place in the Civic Centre and it is anticipated that large numbers of visitors are expected to arrive by car, the overflow car parks will be opened. Visitors will still be required to obtain and display the visitor permit in the vehicle as these areas will be covered by the new parking order. It is intended that the meeting organiser, in planning the event, will arrange for the overflow car park to be opened and send out the appropriate parking permits with the relevant papers.

## 4.2 Method of Charging

- 4.2.1 There are many methods for the collection of charges, ranging from on-site permanent attendants to mechanised methods. Following a comparison of all the main methods of charging (see previous cabinet papers) it is considered that 'pay and display' would allow the introduction of charging without extensive alterations to the existing car park layouts and is the preferred and proposed option.
- 4.2.2 The estimated costs of installation assume the use of solar powered machines that accept coins and notes and which do not give change. This is the approach adopted by all of the other Nottinghamshire districts which have introduced a car parking regime. Only Nottingham City Council with

its more expensive city centre car parking provides the more sophisticated and expensive equipment giving change, with on site operatives to deal with machine faults and refunds etc.

#### 4.3 Car Park Orders

4.3.1 The introduction of charging will require the Council to make new car parking orders. Appendix Ci is a copy of the current car park order. The new order will be in substantially the same form but will also include the relevant changes to allow for the charging provisions shown in the attached appendix Cii.

4.3.2 Consideration has also been given to including further additional car parks owned by the council in the order such as leisure car parks. The purpose of this would not be to introduce charging at these sites, but to allow the Council to formally manage issues such as enforcement of disabled parking etc. using the Council's Civil Enforcement Officers.

4.3.3 The new orders should ensure a full car park management arrangement for all of the Council's car parks.

#### 4.4 Tariff Structure for 2009/10

4.4.1 The proposed tariff structure is intended to promote short stay and deter long stay parking; a relatively low charge for an initial period will be followed by a higher rate of charge for periods of stay above 4 hours. Previous consultation with the town centre businesses has suggested that they regard such an approach to be important in making the car parks more available to shoppers and thereby encouraging trade and enhancing the economic viability of the shopping centres.

4.4.2 In accordance with standard practice, it is not proposed that there will be any concessions for disabled users, though dedicated disabled spaces will continue to be provided and regular enforcement will secure their availability for disabled parkers.

4.4.3 The permit scheme and sale of 'contract spaces' introduced in Arnold in April 2003 has been very successful and should be expanded and applied to the other car parks charging regime. It is proposed that approximately 14% of the available spaces are made available to local traders for purchase at significantly subsidised rates, which will make reasonable provision for their long term parking needs for staff whilst also securing for the Council useful and reliable advanced payments. It is proposed that the new charges for parking permits are effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009.

4.4.4 Appendix D shows the proposed tariff for the car park categories and costs of business and residential parking permits. Appendix D1 shows the potential annual income from this tariff structure.

#### **4.5 Operational Issues**

4.5.1 Enforcement is proposed to be carried out using the current partnership arrangements with Notts Parking Partnership and utilising NCP – contract services staff. The annual revenue costs for this enforcement will be offset by the car parking fines issued for non-compliance with the car parking orders. The Council will employ an inspector to monitor the performance of this contractor, determine inspection routes, and deal with ticket machine faults, replacement solar powered batteries and monitor income levels. The Technical Services Manager is already the Council's qualified parking adjudicator for 'on street' parking disputes and will fulfil the role of car parking adjudicator for 'off street' parking disputes.

4.5.2 Cash Collection will need to be procured. The Notts Parking Partnership contract with NCP does contain the option to procure this service. However, the Head of Corporate Services has procured arrangements for other cash collections and officers will consider the most cost effective arrangement for cash collection on the basis of at least one collection per site per day as a minimum requirement. In busy periods it is likely that two or more collections per site will be necessary.

4.5.3 Generally it is proposed that charges will apply for parking within the core car parks between the hours of 0800 and 1800 Monday to Saturday inclusive.

4.5.4 With regard to Burntstump Country Park and Arnot Hill Park (the Bowling Green car park) it is proposed at this stage that charges will apply between 0900 to 1500 hours, Mondays to Fridays only, although particularly in the case of Arnot Hill Park, this will be kept under review. No charging will take place on any car park on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

#### **4.6 Community Involvement**

4.6.1 Consultation with relevant and interested bodies is proposed to be carried out through the Car Park orders statutory consultation process, however as mentioned above extensive consultation has been previously carried out. The Head of Leisure Services will also consult with Arnot Hill Park users with regard to the parking proposals outlined for Arnot Hill Park.

4.6.2 The extent and timing of the consultation, as well as consideration of the comments could impact on the implementation timescale.

4.6.3 It is proposed to delegate the consideration of objections to The Head of Direct Services and the Head of Democratic and Community Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Direct Services and Property.

#### 4.7 Opportunities for additional income

4.7.1 If the proposed charging is introduced the remaining privately owned town centre car parks are likely to become over subscribed.

4.7.2 The larger operators such as Asda have previously indicated they would make arrangements to control this. For the smaller landowners the Council may wish to offer a managed service whereby the Council introduces charging to the private car park, provides and manages the equipment, maintains the car park to agreed maintenance levels and provides the enforcement. In return the Council would retain a pre-determined percentage of any income.

4.7.3 In all cases the land owners would need to be contacted and a formally binding legal agreement entered into.

### 5.0 Resource Implications

5.1 The following full time posts will need to be created to support the introduction and operation of car park charging.

a) Car park co-ordinator/ inspector. To carry out surface safety inspections, monitor/ repair ticket machines, monitor enforcement and cash collection.

b) Case Support Assistant to provide administrative support on adjudication issues, monitor complaints and make all necessary arrangements for formal hearings and record judgements.

5.2 If proposals set out in this report are agreed, a full report and job descriptions for these posts will be submitted to the Council's Personnel & Resources Committee in April 2009 for formal approval.

### 6.0 Financial issues

6.1 The implementation of pay and display car park charging will require the Council to fund the initial 'set up' costs which include the procurement of ticket machines, new signage and civil engineering works (ticket machine installation works, kerbing, slabbing and lighting etc). It is estimated that these capital works will cost in the region of £145,000.

- 6.2 In addition an ongoing revenue cost of £150,000 per annum is required to operate the service. This includes the costs of the Car Park Enforcement Officers, Monitoring Officer, adjudication and administrative support, cash collection, ticket machine maintenance and replenishment of tickets.
- 6.3 The potential to advertise on tickets needs to be explored and could generate a small income stream. Internally, Leisure Services, Housing Benefits, Electoral and Direct Services could all take advantage of this advertising opportunity.
- 6.4 The current parking permits scheme and sale of 'contract spaces' in Arnold Car Parks will discontinue from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009, being replaced with a new parking permit scheme and tariff as outlined in Appendix D.
- 6.5 The income projection assumes occupancy of 80 percent of each car parks estimated utilisation. This calculation also allows for some displacement from car parks to side streets. Experience from other Authorities which have implemented car park charging suggests that displacement reduces over a short period of time and if it remains persistent at any key sites, Nottinghamshire County Council are prepared to assist with residential parking permit schemes although we may need to contribute towards the cost of these.
- 6.6 Previous Cabinet papers highlighted the need to improve the car parks and an annual base maintenance budget of £200,000 (£50,000 in 2009/10) would enable the car park areas to benefit from re-surfacing and maintenance works, improvements to lighting and potential CCTV implementation. It would also allow contributions towards the implementation of residential parking permit schemes and potentially enable any approved initiatives suggested through our local business links to enhance the town centres.
- 6.7 The likely net position of introducing car park charging is:-

|                              | <b>2009/10</b> | <b>2010/11</b> |
|------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Ongoing revenue implications | £100,000       | £150,000       |
| Base maintenance budget      | £50,000        | £200,000       |
| Contingency                  | £40,000        | £10,000        |
| Projected Income             | (£740,000)     | (£1,110,000)   |
|                              |                |                |
| Net Income                   | (£550,000)     | (£750,000)     |

- 6.8 Further income in the region of £75,000 per annum could be generated through managing private car parks. A formal legal agreement with private

land owners in the Arnold and Mapperley areas will be required but would assist in the overall car park management within the borough.

- 6.9 It is recommended that pricing tariffs are reviewed by Cabinet every 6 months to monitor income projections and car park utilisation.

## **7.0 Recommendations**

Members of the Cabinet are asked to agree the following:-

- The introduction of Car Park charging with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2009 or as soon as practicable after making of the necessary Car Parking Order.
- Agree the Car Park Categories as set out in Appendix B and the periods for charging at each car park.
- Agree that the method of charging be pay and display.
- Agree the pay and display charging tariff for the period of August 2009 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010, and the parking permit tariff for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010, both as set out in Appendix D.
- Authorise the Head of Democratic and Community Services to take all necessary steps to make and bring into effect the relevant Car Park Orders in accordance with the proposals set out in the report.
- Authorise the Head of Corporate Services to amend the Capital Programme for 2008/09 to include £145,000 expenditure to provide the initial funding to procure equipment and services required to implement the charging arrangements.
- Authorise the Head of Direct Services to procure equipment and services and take all necessary steps to implement car park charging arrangements, including agreeing with the owners of private car parks as mentioned in the report for the management of any charging arrangements introduced in those car parks.
- To delegate the consideration of objections received pursuant to the statutory consultation and any necessary decisions pursuant to the applicable regulations to The Head of Direct Services and the Head of Democratic and Community Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Direct Services and Property.



**8. Wards affected**

All

**9. Background papers**

N/A

**10. Equality Impact Assessment**

An equality impact assessment has been produced based on the details provided in this report and the proposals outlined indicate no overall concerns with regard to any equality or diversity issue.