

**TITLE OF REPORT: PROPOSED CAR PARKING TARIFF INCREASES FOR 2016/17**

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING CONTROL  
EXECUTIVE MEMBER: COUNCILLOR JULIAN CUNNINGHAM

**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report requests that Cabinet agrees the proposed car parking tariff increases in North Hertfordshire District Council's off street car parks in accordance with the Council's fees and charges policy as set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2016-2021, which was agreed by Full Council on 3 September 2015.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Cabinet agrees to adopt the proposed car park tariff increases for 2016/17 for various long stay off street car parks in Baldock, Hitchin, Letchworth Garden City and Royston as set out in Table 1 at paragraph 8.4.
- 2.2 That Cabinet agrees to the proposed increase in season tickets prices by CPI (November 2015) plus 2% for 2016/17 as set out in Table 2 at paragraph 9.2 for each of its long stay car parks in Hitchin, Letchworth Garden City and Royston.
- 2.3 That Cabinet agrees not to increase resident permits, visitor permits, business permits or visitor tickets for resident permit zones for 2016/17 and the prices remain as set out in Table 3 at paragraph 9.3.
- 2.4 That Cabinet agree that the proposed tariff increases as stated in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 above are implemented as soon as practicable, and that officers in consultation with the Executive Member for Policy, Transport & Green Issues proceed with the implementation as required.

**3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To implement an increase in car parking tariffs and season ticket prices in accordance with the Council's fees and charges policy as set out in its Medium Term Financial Strategy.

**4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 See Section 8 of the report.

**5. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS**

- 5.1 This report has been prepared in consultation with the Executive Member for Policy Transport and Green issues.
- 5.2 All Members were informed about the car park tariff proposals in MIS on 4 March 2016 and encouraged to submit any comments to the Executive Member for Policy Transport and Green Issues.

5.3 Comments received have been taken into account as part of reviewing the proposed tariff increases.

## **6. FORWARD PLAN**

6.1 This report contains a recommendation on a key decision that was first notified to the public in the Forward Plan on the 5 February 2016.

## **7. BACKGROUND**

7.1 The Council's approved Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2016-21 states that, as a general principle underpinning the Council's financial management arrangements, the Council will seek *'to increase its fees and charges annually by the rate of inflation (CPI) plus 2% (as adjusted to also reflect the impact of VAT increases or relevant comparative data obtained via benchmarking) except where legal requirements, contractual obligations, market forces or other special circumstances render this inappropriate'*. Parking tariffs fall within this policy.

7.2 Paragraph 5.6.30 of the Council's Constitution (approved 16 July 2015), states *'it is for cabinet to determine charges for car parking'*. The proposals for car parking tariffs and season ticket increases are set out sections 8 and 9 below.

## **8. CAR PARKING TARIFF PROPOSALS**

8.1 Parking tariffs were last increased in May 2015. The proposal for 2016/17 is similar to the approach taken for 2015/16, which is to limit the increases to a small number of car parks across the District and to a small number of price bands so as to ensure the on-going vitality of its town centres.

8.2 Officers in consultation with the Executive Member considered a number of options and it was agreed that the proposed increases should be based on the following principles in accordance with the policies as set out in the NHDC Parking Strategy:

- that the actual costs of implementing the changes be minimised,
- that the Council continues to support the aim of the Parking Strategy, which is to support its town centres and continue the freeze on 1 hour charges across the District,
- that the Council seeks to resist significant increases in long stay charges where possible to protect surrounding residential streets from increased on-street parking from commuters and from town centre workers, and
- that the charges remain consistent with each of the town centre car parks.

8.3 The 2016/17 revenue budget, approved by Full Council on 11 February 2016, planned that income from parking charges would increase in line with the Council's fees and charges policy, as laid out in Annex A to the MTFs. This results in an increase of 2.1% on the full year parking income budget, which represents the increase in CPI plus 2% as measured over the twelve months to November 2015. It is therefore proposed to increase car parking tariffs in the Council's off street car parks and that the tariff increases are focused on the long stay charges in Baldock, Hitchin, Letchworth Garden City and Royston.

8.4 Table 1 below outlines proposed changes together with the projected revenue increase based on current usage figures. It is proposed to implement these changes as soon as possible from 2 May 2016 subject to Cabinet's approval.

**Table 1: Proposed Off-Street Car Parking Tariff Increases for 2016/17**

Town	Car Park	Charge Band	Current Tariff	Proposed Tariff	Projected Additional Income
Baldock	Twitchell	Up to 3 Hours	0.70	<b>1.00</b>	£625
Baldock	Twitchell	3 Hours +	1.20	<b>1.50</b>	£2,078
Hitchin	Bancroft	3 Hours +	4.50	<b>4.70</b>	£2,288
Hitchin	Lairage MSCP	3 hours +	4.00	<b>4.20</b>	£3,048
Hitchin	Woodside	3 Hours +	4.50	<b>4.70</b>	£3,195
Letchworth	Hillshott	3 Hours +	4.50	<b>4.70</b>	£926
Letchworth	Garden Square MSCP Short Stay	4 Hours	4.00	<b>4.20</b>	£307
Letchworth	Garden Square MSCP Long Stay	3 Hours +	4.50	<b>4.70</b>	£1,634
Royston	Civic Centre	3 hours +	3.00	<b>3.20</b>	£2,283
Royston	Warren	3 Hours +	3.40	<b>3.60</b>	£1,903

8.5 All other car parking tariffs will remain unaltered. The current car parking tariffs are attached at Appendix A.

## **9. SEASON TICKETS AND RESIDENT PERMIT ZONES**

9.1 Over the last few years, the Council has increased season ticket prices in each of its long stay car parks in Hitchin, Letchworth and Royston in accordance with its fees and charges policy.

9.2 Following discussion with the Executive Member for Policy, Transport & Green Issues and in accordance with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), it is proposed to increase Season Ticket prices by CPI (November 2015) plus 2% in the Council's long stay car parks in Hitchin, Letchworth and Royston for 2016/17. The new prices, as proposed in Table 2, are the result of uplifting the present tariffs by the November CPI plus 2% and then rounding to the nearest pound. This proposed increase should increase income from season tickets by approximately £4,700, assuming the same level of demand for 2016/17. This proposed price increase is considered marginal and should not deter the use of the long stay car parks, as season ticket holders will still be receiving a reasonable discount over full day pay-as-you-use charging.

**Table 2: Proposed Season Ticket Increases for 2016/17.**

<b><u>Hitchin, Letchworth and Royston</u></b> In all valid off-street parking places identified in the North Hertfordshire District Council (Off-Street Parking Places) Order 2014	<b>Existing Season Ticket charges 2015/16</b>	<b>New Season Ticket charges 2016/17</b>
One Month	£74.00	£76.00
Three Months	£183.00	£187.00
Six Months	£340.00	£347.00
Twelve Months	£629.00	£642.00

- 9.3 There is no proposal to increase resident, business or visitor permits and visitor ticket books for each of the Council's resident permit parking zones across the District for 2016/17. These were last increased in April 2013 where the subsidy target was met and such zones are considered to be self financing. It is proposed that these will remain at the current prices as outlined in Table 3.

**Table 3: Resident Permit Parking Zone Charges:**

<b>Town and Zone</b>	<b>Type of Permits</b>	<b>Current Charges for 2015/16</b>
<b>Baldock</b> Zone A	Resident Parking Permit	£84.00 per annum, £42.00 six months
	Resident Parking Permit	£84.00 per annum, £42.00 six months
	Business Permit	£84.00 per annum, £42.00 six months
	Visitors Permit	£84.00 per annum, £42.00 six months
	Ticket Book (10 tickets per book)	£12.00 per book

## **10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The Council's Constitution sets out at 5.6.30 that it is for Cabinet to determine charges for car parking.
- 10.2 The proposed tariff changes will be required to be published as a Notice of Variation to the North Hertfordshire District Council (Off-Street Parking Places) Order 2014 in the local papers under section 35C of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and in compliance with Section 25 of part V of the Local Authorities' Traffic Order (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. Such Notice of Variation will give a minimum of 3 weeks notice of when the new parking tariffs will be implemented. Site notices will be displayed in all affected car parks.

## **11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 The cost of publishing the notices advertising the increased car parking tariffs and season ticket prices in the local press, amending tariff boards and making adjustments to the car park payment machines will be covered by existing budgets.
- 11.2 The Council's policy with regard to discretionary fees and charges is that an inflationary increase equivalent to CPI plus 2% as measured at November should be applied annually to tariffs. This equates to a 2.1% increase in the parking income budget set for 2016/17. The projected additional income from the proposed changes to tariffs included in Table 1 is based on usage recorded for the calendar year 2015. While the actual impact on parking activity from the increase in tariffs is not known, if usage in 2016/17 remains similar to that recorded for 2015, it is projected that the additional income from the proposed increases to tariffs will be sufficient to meet the budgeted parking charge income level for 2016/17.

## **12. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1 The risks to car parking income have been identified and include the impact of the 2015/16 tariff review. There is also a financial risk that the review of tariff structure does not produce as much income as would be generated from a flat inflationary increase across all tariffs.

## **13. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 13.1 The Equality Act 2010 came into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2010, a major piece of legislation. The Act also created a new Public Sector Equality Duty, which came into force on the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2011. There is a General duty, described in 13.2, that public bodies must meet, underpinned by more specific duties which are designed to help meet them.
- 13.2 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of its functions, give **due regard** to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 13.3 There are not considered to be any direct equality issues arising from this report, since there is a range of charging/payment options which will still remain available to cater for the widest needs of local car park users.

## **14. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

- 14.1 As the recommendations made in this report do not constitute a public service contract, the measurement of 'social value' as required by the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 need not be applied, although equalities implications and opportunities are identified in Section 13.

## **15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 15.1 There are no new human resource implications arising from the contents of this report other than what is required to implement the new tariffs.

## **16. CONTACT OFFICERS**

### ***Report author***

- 16.1 Louise Symes, Strategic Planning and Projects Manager  
01462 474359 [louise.symes@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:louise.symes@north-herts.gov.uk)

### ***Contributors***

- 16.2 Ian Fullstone, Head of Development and Building Control, 01462 474480  
[ian.fullstone@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:ian.fullstone@north-herts.gov.uk)
- 16.3 Antonio Ciampa, Accountancy Manager, 01462 474566 [antonio.ciampa@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:antonio.ciampa@north-herts.gov.uk)
- 16.4 Shah Mohammed, Assistant Accountant, 01462 474240 [shah.mohammed@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:shah.mohammed@north-herts.gov.uk)
- 16.5 Steve Crowley, Contracts & Project Manager, 01462 474211 [steve.crowley@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:steve.crowley@north-herts.gov.uk)
- 16.6 Fiona Timms, Risk Manager, 01462 474251, [fiona.timms@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:fiona.timms@north-herts.gov.uk)
- 16.7 Nurainatta Katevu, Property and Planning Lawyer, 01462 474364  
[nurainatta.katevu@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:nurainatta.katevu@north-herts.gov.uk)
- 16.8 Kerry Shorrocks, Corporate Human Resources Manager, 01462 474224  
[kerry.shorrocks@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:kerry.shorrocks@north-herts.gov.uk)
- 16.9 Liz Green, Head of Policy and Community Services, 01462 474230  
[liz.green@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:liz.green@north-herts.gov.uk)

## **17. APPENDICES**

- 17.1 Appendix A: NHDC Current Car Parking Tariffs for 2015/16.

## **18. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 17.1 3 September 2015 Full Council: Item referred from Cabinet: 28 July 2015 – Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-2021.