

Called In Item Title:	Call-In of the Proposed Parking Tariffs for 2025-26
Decision Date:	Tuesday 11th February 2025

This decision was taken by Cabinet, for Proposed Parking Tariffs for 2025-26, at the meeting held on Tuesday 11th February 2025, can be viewed here: [Cabinet Meeting Tuesday, 11th February, 2025, 7.30 pm](#)

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- (1) Noted the summary of comments and responses received to the Proposed Parking Tariff consultation at section 8.2 and the more detailed comments at Appendix C. Agreed to adopt the proposed off-street and on-street car park tariffs for 2025/26 as set out in Tables 1 to 6 at Appendix B as outlined in paragraphs 8.2.11 and 8.2.12 of this report, referred to as Option 3.
- (2) Agreed not to increase the charges for Season Tickets for each of its long stay car parks or business permits for its car park at St. Martins Road in Knebworth for 2025/26.
- (3) Agreed to increase the charges for resident permits, visitor permits, business permits and visitor tickets for resident parking zones for 2025/26 as set out in Section 8.4 of this report.
- (4) Agreed that the proposed tariff changes, as recommended and approved in paragraphs 2.2 above, are implemented as soon as practicable, and that officers in consultation with the interim Executive Member for Planning and Transport proceed with the implementation as required.
- (5) Agreed that the proposed increases for resident, visitor and business permits and visitor tickets in resident parking zones, as recommended and approved in paragraphs 2.4 above, are implemented as soon as practicable, and that officers in consultation with the interim Executive Member for Planning and Transport proceed with the implementation as required.
- (6) Agreed to the implementation of customers paying for parking sessions whilst parked and charging within 'designated electric vehicle charging bays only' later in the financial year 2025/26 as set out in section 8.5 of this report and that the Service Director - Regulatory in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Transport proceed with the implementation as required.
- (7) Agreed that Officers proceed with the issuing of the necessary Notice of Variation to the 2024 Off1Street Parking Traffic Regulation Orders and the 2023 On-Street Consolidation Order as required to implement the increases recommended at 2.2 and 2.4 and approved above.
- (8) Noted as part of the pay on exit scheme set out in paragraph 8.3.1 of this report that visitors will be charged the maximum period of stay for that car park if they do not 'Check Out' after completing their parking session.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

To implement an increase in car parking tariffs and permits within resident parking zones in order to effectively manage their use and in accordance with the Council's fees and charges policy as set out in its Medium- Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). To set car parking tariffs that support the achievement of modal shift away from private car use and to help support the vitality of town centres.

Audio recording – 20 minutes 8 seconds

Councillor Daniel Allen, as the Interim Executive Member for Planning and Transport, presented the report entitled 'Proposed Parking Tariffs for 2025/26' and advised that:

- Each year the Council had to adjust parking charges to keep in line with inflation.
- As no increase had been applied in 2024/25, a 4% increase would be applied to cover 2024/2025 and 2025/2026.
- Three options were proposed and these were outlined in the report.
- Consultations had taken place in December 2024 with all the Area Forums, Letchworth, Hitchin and Royston BIDs, Royston Town Council and Knebworth Parish Council.
- A summary of the comments received from these organisations was set out in paragraph 8.2 of the report, with more detailed comments at Appendix C.
- Details for the option 2 proposal were set out at Appendix A.
- Option 3 retained all the same proposals in option 2, with a proposed change to a 50p flat rate car parking tariff increase in Royston after 3pm as outlined at Appendix B.
- This report proposed a 2% inflationary increase to be applied on resident, visitor and business parking permits and visitor parking tickets in resident permit parking zones.
- At present visitors who parked in designated Electric Vehicle (EV) charging bays could do so without paying a parking fee. This report proposed the implementation of a charge for parking whilst charging an electric vehicle later in the financial year.
- Existing parking machines across all the town centre car parks and in Knebworth would be replaced with new payment options including a pay on exit scheme/post payment scheme and would be moving towards a ticketless system, as detailed in paragraph 8.3.1 of the report.
- Visitors would be required to register their vehicle at the start of the parking sessions and pay on exiting the car park. This would allow visitors to park for longer to enjoy the town centre facilities.
- Installation of the new parking machines would commence on 17 February 2025 and would run over a six-week period across all the towns.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Dave Winstanley
- Councillor Ian Albert
- Councillor Mick Debenham

In response to questions, the Strategic Planning and Projects Manager advised that:

- The introduction of the after 3pm off peak flat rate parking in Letchworth should help to spread footfall throughout the day.
- An offer of funding had been received from both Royston Town Council and Royston BID to subsidise parking costs with follow up meetings due to take place once tariffs had been approved at Cabinet.
- Traffic regulation orders had been amended to increase the length of stay allowed whilst using an EV charging parking bay to the maximum possible in the car park during the day to accord with the On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) government grant scheme awarded to the Council and to ensure that the vehicle must be charging whilst parked in the designated bay.
- There were currently very few EV charging bays across the car parks in the district and these provide a low income for the Council.

- The Council had entered a concession contract with Blink Charging UK which would provide additional EV charging parking bays across the district.
- Some designated EV charging bays would be allocated which would not be charged for parking in initially and there would also be dual parking bays, where visitors could pay to park and charge, or just pay to park. It would take time to monitor usage of these bays.
- The flat rate after 3pm parking subsidy scheme agreed with Royston BID had been in place for over ten years.

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor Ian Albert
- Councillor Daniel Allen

Points raised during the debate included:

- Members supported the principles of the report and recognised that further meetings would be needed in Royston regarding subsidies.
- How the recommendations had changed following consultations and the importance of the input from the Royston BID.

Councillor Daniel Allen proposed and Councillor Dave Winstanley seconded and, following a vote, it was:

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Regulatory in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Transport proceed with the implementation as required.

- (8) Agreed that Officers proceed with the issuing of the necessary Notice of Variation to the 2024 Off1Street Parking Traffic Regulation Orders and the 2023 On-Street Consolidation Order as required to implement the increases recommended at 2.2 and 2.4 and approved above.
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