

Executive Report

Ward(s) affected: Holy Trinity, Friary & St Nicolas

Report of Director of Service Delivery

Author: Andy Harkin

Tel: 01483 444535

Email: andrew.harkin@guildford.gov.uk

Lead Councillor responsible: David Goodwin

Tel: 01483 824616

Email: david.Goodwin@guildford.gov.uk

Date: 21 January 2020

Off-Street Parking Business Plan 2020-21

Executive Summary

The report updates the Executive on progress made in delivering the recommendations approved in January 2019 and seeks approval for changes to arrangements for 2020-21. The report highlights a number of improvements completed, including contactless payment at Bedford Road MSCP, increases in electric charge points and significant investments to maintain the high standard of our car parks. The report highlights work to look into how we can support green initiatives by creating energy from Solar panels. The Guildford Parking Annual Report (Appendix 1) highlights an increase in ticket sales of 2% and revenue of 0.3%. Appendix 2 shows that our car park charges compare well and are better value than most major shopping destinations in the region. The Report sets out recommendations for pricing from April 2020.

Recommendation to the Executive

- (1) That the Monday to Saturday and Sunday 'daytime' charges across off-street car parks be held at the current levels to support the town centre economy, except for those at Farnham Road MSCP, Bedford Road Surface, Commercial Road 2, Mary Road and Old Police Station car parks.
- (2) That a discounted 'early-bird' rate of 90p per hour be introduced at Farnham Road MSCP, instead of the present £1 per hour, for those that enter the car park before 7.00am, and that the maximum daily charge of **£7.20** be levied for these users, instead of the standard **£8.00**.
- (3) That the hourly Monday to Saturday 'daytime' rate in Bedford Road Surface, Commercial Road 2, Mary Road and Old Police Station car parks for stays up to 3 hours in duration be increased from £1.30 per hour to £1.50 per hour, and that from April 2021 all tariffs across the town centre car parks be increased by 10p per hour, or equivalent thereof, in respect to season tickets and contract parking rates.
- (4) That the Monday to Friday and Monday to Saturday season ticket and pre-payment card charges in York Road MSCP be increased by 5%.

- (5) That approval be given to on-street residents' permit holders for Areas A, B and D to park in all the town centre pay and display car parks until 10am the next day (Monday to Saturday) rather than 8am, if they purchase and display a valid pay and display ticket for the previous evening between 6pm and 10pm,
- (6) That the decking of Leapale Road MSCP car park be coated to improve the service life of the structure, in a similar fashion to that already present in Bedford Road MSCP and Castle MSCP, and that as part of the project, the spaces be increased in size / reduced in number (from 384 to around 300), to improve circulation within the car park and encourage greater use, particularly by users with mobility issues, those with young families, and electric vehicles.
- (7) That the EV charging spaces be enforceable, and that the necessary changes to the traffic regulation order required to achieve this be advertised, objections invited, and that if any representations are received, these be considered and determined by the Parking Manager in consultation with the Lead Councillor.
- (8) That the performance of Parking Services in 2018-19, as detailed in Appendix 1, be noted.

Reasons for Recommendation:

- i) In recent years, the incremental increases in tariffs have not impacted the overall usage of the car parks. This is in spite of the challenging conditions being experienced by the retail sector within 'the high street'. The relatively modest changes to the pricing structure introduced in York Road MSCP and North Street car parks in April 2019 have continued this trend (see Appendix 1).

As was the case in 2019-20, the plan for 2020-21 is again to hold the price of parking in the vast majority of car parks with a few notable exceptions, namely Farnham Road MSCP, Bedford Road Surface, Commercial Road 2, Mary Road and Old Police Station car parks,

- ii) Farnham Road MSCP is the primary long-stay car park within the town. To reflect this, the charges in this car park are lower than the short/medium-stay town centre car parks.

Access to this car park, for those travelling from all directions other than the west, involves driving around the Bridge Street gyratory system. At peak times, congestion can be an issue, albeit that this is a wider issue, rather than one specifically caused by the operation of this car park.

To encourage users of Farnham Road MSCP to arrive within the car park before the morning peak of the rush hour, it is proposed that the hourly rate for those arriving before 7am Monday to Saturday, be reduced from the current £1 per hour, to 90 pence per hour, for the duration of their stay. The maximum daily charge for users that arrive earlier will reduce from £8.00 to £7.20. It is hoped these changes will reduce congestion and assist with the town's Air Quality and Climate Change target.

- iii) Currently, all the main short and medium-stay town centre car parks have a standardised charging structure. Whilst this is the case, it is evident that the surface car

parks are often more popular than the multi-storey car parks. Indeed, queues can sometimes form on the approaches to the surface car parks, at times when ample spare capacity is available in nearby multi-storey car parks. This can lead to congestion.

Whilst preliminary findings of a recently undertaken Parking Study suggests car park users are more greatly influenced by convenience, rather than tariff, it is felt appropriate to adopt a pricing differential to encourage greater use of the larger-capacity, multi-storey car parks. A 20p differential in the hourly tariff between the surface and the multi-storey car parks may encourage changes in the behaviour for those users that might be more sensitive to price considerations.

Again, it is hoped these changes will assist with the town's Air Quality and Climate Change targets by reducing queuing on the approaches to the smaller-capacity surface car parks.

Therefore, Option 2 (section 12.2) is recommended to achieve these aims.

- iv) In April 2019, the Monday to Saturday 'daytime' charge in York Road MSCP was increased by 30 pence per hour, from £1.00 per hour to £1.30 per hour. However, the decision was taken to increase season ticket and pre-payment cards at a lower rate over a number of years until equity was reached with other similar town centre car parks.

The 5% season ticket increase proposed for 2020-21 is in keeping with this plan to achieve equity over time.

- v) There tends to be significant spare capacity within the town centre car parks in the evenings and overnight. Meanwhile, permit-holding residents within certain parts of Areas A, B and D have raised concerns about the availability of on-street space in the vicinity of their homes, at these times.

Whilst possible changes to the operational hours of the town centre CPZ, being considered by the Guildford Joint Committee as part of the current on-street parking review, may go some way towards addressing these issues, there is scope to offer local permit-holding residents greater flexibility to use the pay and display car parks overnight.

Although Area D permit holders can already do so for free, they have to pay the normal daytime charges if they remain within the car park after 8am.

The proposal modifies this dispensation, by extending it to permit-holding residents of Areas A and B. Although all permit holders will be expected to purchase and display a valid 'overnight' ticket, costing £1, it will allow them to park until 10am the next day (Monday to Saturday), rather than 8am, when the normal 'day-time' charges start. Therefore, they effectively get £3.60-£3.80 worth of parking for £1.

Is the report (or part of it) exempt from publication? No

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To review the pricing structure within several of the town centre car parks.
- 1.2 To review major improvement works that we intend to undertake during 2020-21 (section 3.8).
- 1.3 To report on Parking Services performance in 2018-19 (Appendix 1).

2. Strategic Priorities

- 2.1 The Parking Service contributes to all three fundamental themes of the Council's Corporate Plan. Effective parking strategies also contribute to the Surrey Transport plan and help mitigate climate change and improve air quality.
- 2.2 The Annual report (Appendix 1) sets out how the Parking Service has operated to support and deliver the objectives detailed in the Parking Strategy. The aims of the Parking Strategy are to:
 - encourage the use of more sustainable transport modes including park and ride,
 - review the provision of car parks to encourage drivers to park and return directly along main routes using a **"drive to, not through"** approach,
 - look to maintain capacity for off-street parking in interceptor car parks which take traffic off the roads before it reaches the town centre, thereby reducing congestion and pollution,
 - provide a range of parking options to support a vibrant economy,
 - annually review parking tariffs and usage in order to maintain a hierarchy of charges with on-street parking in the town centre having the highest tariff and the cost of parking reducing the further a driver parks from the centre,
 - keep park and ride bus fares low compared with town centre parking charges and to promote it as an alternative to parking in or near the town centre,
 - develop more park and ride sites,
 - monitor external indicators to ensure that the local economy continues to be successful,
 - maintain safe traffic flow,
 - where necessary, prioritise space for residents and where it is supported by the local community.
- 2.3 Future areas for development potentially include:
 - introducing bus lane camera enforcement using our CCTV control room,
 - explore ways to encourage utilisation of car parks during quieter periods,
 - deploying greater enforcement resource particularly in the evenings and on Sundays,
 - introducing Sunday on-street restrictions close to the town centre,
 - using new technology and other changes to improve efficiency,
 - changing restrictions to give greater priority to permit holders and reduce limited waiting bays.

3. Background

Projected Budget Position

- 3.1 Although income and tickets for 2018-19 were slightly improved on 2017-18, the projected income and tickets for 2019-20 is expected to increase as detailed below, based on 8 months ticket sales. However, this is still some way below the projected budget of £8,904,500.

Year	Ticket Sales	Income
2017-18	3,240,170	£8,259,695
2018-19	3,305,864	£8,284,819
2019-20 (projected)	3,332,418	£8,351,366

Pricing Review

- 3.2 We continue to see a modest growth in car park usage despite increases in tariffs (**Appendix 1**). Therefore, we have conducted a pricing review of our current car parks. As part of this review, we have undertaken a comparison of car parking charges in nearby towns similar to Guildford. These show that we still remain competitive and provide comparable parking should we increase charges by 10 pence per hour (**Appendix 2**).
- 3.3 We have also considered the challenging national retail environment and consider that ensuring parking charges remain good value may assist. We are therefore recommending a limited price increase (Option 2) as set out in paragraph 12.2. A Parking Study has recently been undertaken (see section 4.2). This study indicates that our car park users, value convenience above cost. Therefore, the sensitivity to modest price changes is unlikely to change user behaviour significantly.

Works Undertaken during 2018-19

- 3.4 A summary of the progress made in delivering previous recommendations approved by the Executive are as follows:

2018-19 Works Update	Progress
Daytime tariff increase	Completed
Season Ticket increase by 3%	Completed
Contract Parking charges increased by 5%	Completed
Garage charges increase by 3%	Completed
Controls implemented at Millmead House and Lawn Road car park	Completed
Parking controls introduced at Sutherland Memorial Park, Burpham, Kingston Meadows, East Horsley and Chantry Wood car parks	Completed
System of control in car parks around Stoke	Completed

2018-19 Works Update	Progress
Park, Lido Road, Wild Wood, Greenpark, Burchatts Farm Barn and Guildford College	
Controls implemented in Merrow allotment car park	Ongoing consideration with parking review
2019-20 Works Update	Progress
*York Road MSCP, Mon-Sat per hour rate increase	Completed
York Road Season Ticket & Pre-payment card increase 5%	Completed
Bedford Road MSCP, Farnham Road, GLive, Lawn Road, Mary Road, Millbrook, Millmead House (front), Robin Hood, St Josephs and York Road car parks be amended on Sunday from £1.50 per visit, to £1.50 for up to 3 hours, and £2.50 for visits between 3 and 6 hours.	Completed
* North Street, Mon-Sun daytime charge (30 min bays) increase by 20p from 80p to £1 per half-hour. See below	Completed

*It is too early to report on the full impact of the price increases highlighted above. However, an early indication shows no negative effects in revenue at York Road and North Street as follows:-

- York Road changes within the 6 months for 2019 (Apr-Sept) have remained stable at £417,400.
- North Street changes were estimated to generate £7,970; so far within first 6 months of 2019, (Apr-Sept) an increase of 5% (£2,310) has been seen.

3.5 Additional maintenance works 2018-19

- Tunsgate Quarter redevelopment was completed and the car park below brought back into use in June 2018,
- Re-coating decking works carried out at Castle car park, in March 2019,
- Drainage and maintenance works were carried out in Bedford Road and Castle car park,
- Right hand traffic signal established at exit of Millbrook car park,
- Bays were relined at Portsmouth Road, Millbrook car park and Bedford Road MS level 1.

Additional maintenance works 2019-20

- Re-coating decking works carried out at Bedford Road MSCP to be completed in early 2020.

Parking in Parks & Countryside car parks

3.6 The Parks and Countryside Service operate a number of car parks. The table below shows the car parks that Parking Services are enforcing on behalf of

Parks. These car parks are, however, increasingly being used by commuters, students, those meeting coaches and by parents during school pick up/drop offs. This reduces access for users of the parks including clubs that are based there. Proposals to introduce controls were drafted and a consultation exercise was undertaken. As a result of the consultation, the proposals were amended and the controls have now commenced at the following locations:

Park car park	Proposed applicable times	Revised applicable times	Number of hours parking is free
Stoke Park Guildford College	6am to 8pm	6am to 5pm	4 hours
Stoke Park Nightingale Road	6am to 8pm	6am to 6pm	4 hours
Stoke Park Lido Road	6am to 8pm	6am to 6pm	4 hours
Stoke Park Burchatts Farm Barn*	6am to 8pm	6am to 5pm	4 hours
Sutherland Memorial Park, Burpham	6am to 8pm	6am to 5pm <i>Weekdays only</i>	5 hours
Kingston Meadows, East Horsley	6am to 8pm	6am to 6pm	4 hours
Chantry Wood, Guildford	6am to 8pm	6am to 6pm	5 hours

Note: There is a no-return restriction at these destinations

Where appropriate, new machines and signage were installed and where car parks have two P&D machines one is card only but all others will accept cash, card and pay by phone.

Following the implementation, the Council received petitions concerned about the controls in Sutherland Memorial Park and Kingston Meadows. The Executive authorised Parks and Countryside services to undertake a further review of the parking controls, which Parking Services will support. The aim of this review is to increase flexibility whilst also maintaining priority for parks users.

Bedford Road MSCP Replacement of Pay & Display Machines

- 3.7 New contactless P&D equipment has been introduced into Bedford Road MSCP, which allows users to pay by card as well as by coin and phone.

Drive away "Regulation 10" enforcement

- 3.8 We have introduced bodycams for our staff that help protect the staff and have the additional benefit of giving our officers the capability of evidencing drive-aways, where the CEO was prevented from issuing the ticket on the car. We are in the process of updating our IT system and should be able to issue "Regulation 10" postal PCNs soon, which should reduce idling around school drop-offs and pick-ups.

Planned Improvements 2020-21:

- 3.9 **Leapale Road Improvements** – The decking of Leapale Road MSCP is to be re-coated to improve its structure and service life. This is in conjunction with improving circulation within the car park, and encourages greater use, especially by users with mobility issues, young families and electric vehicles, as there will be larger spaces and EV charging points.
- 3.10 **Refurbishment Process** – A number of planned maintenance and improvements to car parks, described in paragraph 7.2.
- 3.11 **Solar PV Panel** – in line with the Council’s strategy to use local renewable energy sources, Parking services are planning to install Solar PV panels on the roof of Farnham Road MSCP, at a cost of approximately £70,000. This is Salix funded and has a 7.4-year payment period. This will generate electricity, which will power the car park lighting and feed into the national grid.
- 3.12 **EV Provision** – two additional EV charging spaces are being planned in each of the following town centre car parks:
- Bedford Road MSCP
 - Bedford Road Surface
 - Castle MSCP
 - Commercial Road
 - Farnham Road MSCP
 - G-Live
 - Mary Road
 - Millbrook
 - Old Police Station
 - York Road MSCP.

4. Parking Services Update

4.1 Park & Ride

Guildford has a network of Park and Ride sites. With plans to develop the town centre, and limited scope for absorbing increased traffic flows, the continued development of Park and Ride is important.

The town currently has four sites: Artington (742 spaces), Merrow (338 spaces), Spectrum (254 spaces) and Onslow (550 spaces). Nine electric buses were introduced to the service in January 2019 each with a capacity of 36 passengers and one-wheelchair user. Other benefits aside from greener travel, include free Wi-Fi and USB charging. The table below shows a comparison of passenger journeys over the first six months of 2018-19 period compared to the previous year.

Passenger Journey Comparison (Apr – Sep)

Apr-Sept	Artington	Merrow	Onslow	Spectrum	Total
2018-19	151,366	101,517	49,173	88,394	390,450
2017-18	172,006	114,971	46,172	87,576	420,725
change %	(-) 12.76	(-) 12.43	(+) 6.29	(+) 0.93	(-) 7.46

The cost of park and ride in 2018-19 is set out below.

Funding 2018-19	£
Bus contract price (net of fare income)	239,980
Car park running costs (rent, site maintenance, general rates and other costs)	434,107
Total cost	674,088
Guildford On-street parking surplus	467,951
Paid from Guildford On-street parking reserve	206,137
Total funding	674,088

The operation of the P&R sites is funded by the on-street parking account, which generates a surplus. However, there have been reductions in on-street parking revenue, combined with the change in agency agreement with Surrey County Council in 2018, reducing the proportion of the surplus available to the Committee by 20%. The GBC/GJC surplus combined with the GBC Waverley reserve will be used to bridge the gap, which will be depleted from 2019-20 onwards, leading to a likely shortfall.

To improve the financial position, Parking Services is looking at ways to reduce costs and increase revenue:

- by changing the on-site provision in September 2019 and removing static guards, who were no longer required, **£84,900** savings are expected per annum which will improve the financial position from 2019-20.
- increased usage of the P&R sites by those visiting the town would reduce the subsidies currently paid to the bus operator to provide the link to the town centre from the Onslow and Spectrum sites. In this regard, we are exploring options to relax the planning permissions, which may enable the bus operator to operate the service over an extended period, and in turn, this may help improve patronage and the opportunity for it to operate on a purely commercial basis,
- the relaxation of the planning permissions at existing P&R sites may provide other opportunities to make savings / generate income and in turn, improve the financial position such as,
 - potential relocation of a bus depot to the Artington P&R site, utilising underused space,
 - potential to utilise underused space at Onslow P&R for local business parking,
 - proposed changes to extend the operational hours of the on-street controls within the central areas of the CPZ may increase patronage to the P&R and the additional income generated from the changes may aid the financial position,

If the projected decline in the on-street surplus is not arrested, or savings increased by the P&R sites themselves, the ability of the Committee and Guildford Borough Council to continue to fund the P&R service wholly from the on-street account, without requiring subsidy from other funding sources, is uncertain.

4.2 Guildford Parking Study

A number of the town centre surface car parks are seen as potential sites for development as part of the Local Plan. Parking Services, in partnership with our Planning and Major Projects colleagues, have commissioned a Parking Study to identify the additional demand for parking that is likely to be generated by development both from within the borough and immediately beyond, and where best to provide the appropriate parking now and in the future.

4.3 Enforcement

The table below shows the Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) generated in our car parks. Of these, 17% (1909) were cancelled on appeal. The vast majority of cancelled PCNs were categorised as “mitigating and other circumstances”. These often relate to human errors, such as wrong registration entered on a visitor scratch-card or Pay by Phone App, or parking in a different car park for the ticket used.

Number of Penalty Charge Notices Issued

Guildford PCN Issues	2017-18	2018-19
On-street	23,885	15,572
Off-street	10,368	11,199
Total Issued	34,253	26,771

Number of Penalty Charge Notices cancelled

PCN Cancellation Reasons 2018-19	No. Off Street	No. On Street	% Off Street	% On Street
Motorist producing tickets which were not clearly display	236	70	12	6
Mitigating and other circumstances	303	404	15	32
Contract and other parkers entitled to park but not displaying correct permit	154	257	8	20
Machine faults and other equipment problems	183	29	9	2
Civil Enforcement Officers errors	66	102	3	8
Blue Badge Holders not parking according to the scheme	54	146	3	12
Problems with signs	36	28	2	2
Other issues	943	219	48	17
Total	1975	1255	100	100

Enforcement performance data can be seen in Appendix 1.

5. Consultations

- 5.1 The amendment of parking charges is completed via Notice, rather than by the full amendment order process. Therefore, there is no formal consultation period, and no requirement to report any feedback. However, if the changes do generate significant correspondence, this will be raised with the Lead Councillor.

6. Key Risks

- 6.1 If ongoing funding of maintenance via our reserves is not continued this could affect the lifespan and safe operation of the car parks.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 The costs for new Pay and Display machines funded by the Car Park Maintenance Reserve funds in 2019-20 totalled £76,215. Around £40,000 was used at Bedford Road MSCP and around £26,000 in Parks car parks.
- 7.2 Corporate Property Services have made a bid for Car Parks Maintenance Reserve (CPMR) funding (£765,000) for intended works programme for the off-street car parks. The main works outlined below aim to be completed in 2020-21:

Car Park	Costs	Work Details
Leapale Road	£465,000	Deck surface replacement/coating, Structural repairs, replacement signage
Farnham Road	£145,000	Structural repairs, additional barriers, deck coating and drainage repairs
Castle Street	£73,000	Structural repairs-roof turret timbers, stair core repair & decorate, minor repairs, decorating & cleaning
York Road	£72,000	Structural & drainage repairs, minor repairs, decorating & cleaning
Bedford Road	£10,000	Minor repairs, decorating & cleaning

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 If consultations are required for the recommendations then advice will be sought with the Legal department.

9. Human Resource Implications

- 9.1 None identified.

10. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 10.1 There are no equality and diversity implications as a result of this report.

11. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications

Solar PV Panel at Farnham Road car park

- 11.1 In line with GBC strategy to use local renewable energy sources, Parking Services is planning to install a Solar PV panel on the roof of Farnham Road car park. This will generate electricity, which will power the car park lights and feed into the national grid. It is also better to use locally generated electricity than to rely on large energy infrastructure to transport it across the country. There are also local community benefits through the retention of more economic value locally.

Electric Charging Points and Green Car Scheme

- 11.2 The demand for electric charging points is increasing as electric vehicles become more popular, with low emission grants available for new cars and the growing

need to find ways to improve air quality and public health. The Council has installed ten electric charging points in public car parks across Guildford with a further five on order. To access the charging facility, the motorist buys and displays a parking ticket while the vehicle is charging.

In support of electric vehicles, the Council has a green scheme, which enables owners of electric vehicles to obtain a “Green Parking Permit” free of charge, giving owners free hours of parking or discounted parking in off-street car parks. There are 121 Green Scheme permit holders signed up to the scheme, which is an increase from 95 last year.

Farnham Road ‘early bird’ tariff

- 11.3 At peak times, congestion can be an issue in and around Guildford town centre. To encourage early users of Farnham Road MSCP to arrive before the peak rush hour, it is proposed that the hourly rate for those arriving before 7am (Monday-Saturday), be reduced from the current £1 per hour, to 90 pence per hour, for the duration of their stay. The maximum daily charge for users that arrive earlier will reduce from £8.00 to £7.20. Early bird users will receive the same discount as VV cardholders. It is hoped these changes will assist with the town’s Air Quality and Climate Change target and in reducing congestion around the town centre gyratory.

12. Summary of Options

Review of Pricing Options & Budget projections

- 12.1 Option 1 – No increase on pricing, no change to current situation. If Option 1 with no changes was chosen, the forecasted 2020-21 budget for off-street parking would be £8,229,120, which is based on this year’s projections rather than the projected budget of £8,904,500.
- 12.2 Option 2 – increase the rate for the four most convenient surface car parks in the town centre by 20 pence per hour for the first three hours, it is estimated to generate a 13% increase in revenue of £136,500 per annum. See table below.

Pricing Review - Option 2	Current rate (1-3 hrs)	Proposed rate (1-3 hrs)	2019-20 Projected	2020-21 Budget
Mary Road	£1.30	£1,50	£361,410	£408,393
Bedford Road Surface	£1.30	£1.50	£257,100	£290,523
Commercial Road 2	£1.30	£1.50	£177,740	£200,846
Old Police Station	£1.30	£1.50	£253,750	£286,738
Total			£1,050,000	£1,186,500

If Option 2 was implemented for four car parks, the forecasted 2020-21 budget for off-street would be £8,365,620, which is based on this year’s projections rather than the projected budget of £8,904,500.

- 12.3 Option 3 – increase charges at all off-street car parks by 10 pence per hour up to 3 hours. This would generate an estimated 6.5% increase in revenue of £420,000 per annum. If Option 3 was implemented for all car parks, the forecasted 2020-21 budget for off-street parking would be £8,767,160, which is based on this year's projections rather than the projected budget of £8,904,500.

13. Conclusion

- 13.1 The information provided in this report and Appendices should provide the Executive with an update on how the Parking Services has performed in 2018-19, the progress made in 2019-20 and details of the proposed changes recommended in 2020-21.

14. Background Papers

Last year's Off-street Annual Business Plan report.
Parking Strategy 2016.

15. Appendices

Appendix 1: Guildford Parking Annual Report 2018-19.
Appendix 2: Comparison of short stay parking charges in other centres.