

<b>Report title</b>	<b>Parking Fees &amp; Charges Review</b>
<b>Report author</b>	Linda Norman, Corporate Head of Customer, Digital and Collection Services
<b>Department</b>	Parking Services
<b>Exempt?</b>	No
<b>Exemption type</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Reasons for exemption</b>	Not Applicable

**Purpose of report:**

- To resolve

**Synopsis of report:**

**This report reviews the current charges in the Council's car parks, including the charges for permit and contract parking**

**Recommendation(s):**

**The Committee is asked to approve:**

- modest fee increases of £0.05 (Out of Town) and £0.10 (Town),
- introduction of recreational charging at open space car parks of £2.80 after 3 hours
- introduction a new charging structure which includes 30-minutes free parking at Pooley Green and Egham Library to support SCC Cycling and Infrastructure projects,
- flat evening (£2) and overnight (£3) parking fees,
- New procedures for granting temporary waiver of parking charges to support community events subject to costs being contained within budgets.
- an increase of £30 (OFT) & £60(T) for annual permits,
- standardisation of parking orders in terms of return and waiting times,
- a thorough review of permits to introduce more flexible options.

**1. Context and background of report**

- 1.1 The Council faces a significant financial challenge, with a projected budget deficit of £4.1 million by 2026/27. To address the shortfall, the MTFs sets out the Council's strategy to developing its approach in terms of efficiency, income and savings.

- When setting fees and charges it is vital to ensure there is a balance between recovering the cost of running services and ensuring our charges are affordable.
- 1.2 Runnymede Borough Council manages 27 off-street car parks, ensuring accessibility with free motorcycle parking as well as designated disabled parking spaces at each location.
  - 1.3 Public car parks are an amenity provided by the Council for the convenience of the public. In shopping areas, they also encourage and maintain the viability of businesses but the income from the car parking charges is expected to, at least, cover the cost of providing and maintaining the car parks.
  - 1.4 This report predominantly focuses on the current fees and charges for parking services.
  - 1.5 The proposed measures includes:
    - modest fee increases of £0.05 (Out of Town) and £0.10 (Town),
    - introduction of recreational charging at open space car parks,
    - introduction of 30-minute free parking at Pooley Green and Egham Library to support SCC Cycling and Infrastructure projects,
    - flat evening (£2) and overnight (£3) parking fees,
    - New procedures for granting temporary waiver of parking charges to support community events subject to costs being contained within budgets.
    - an increase of £30 (OFT) & £60(T) for annual permits,
    - standardisation of parking orders in terms of return and waiting times,
    - a thorough review of permits to introduce more flexible options.

## **2. Report and, where applicable, options considered and recommended**

- 2.1 Annual operational costs for council-owned car parks are currently around £125,000, are rising. Whilst the Assets and Regeneration Team are now undertaking reactive repairs to the car parks and, following condition surveys, are working to provide a comprehensive planned preventative regime. Unfortunately, the car parks have deteriorated over the years due to insufficient investment and, along with inclement weather this has resulted in increased flooding with drainage issues on the majority of our public car parks and both potholes have worsened and lighting repairs are challenging due to the need to have specialist equipment to reach and resolve lamping and lumière issues. Resurfacing needs are increasing and failure to address these issues may result in accidents, injuries, and insurance claims which the Council can ill afford.
- 2.2 Prior to the Covid pandemic, parking income was relatively high at £636kpa and as such, the Council could afford to offer free parking in relation to its open space car parks. However, this income has steadily reduced over the past four years with a budget of £474k set for the 2024/25 financial year.
- 2.3 This reduction in parking fees is primarily attributed to shifts in working patterns, such as increased remote work and flexible schedules, which have reduced the demand for parking spaces.
- 2.4 During 2024/25, the Council invested heavily in upgrading and implementing new pay and display machines and Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) to improve customer experience and protect Council income. Fees were increased from 1 April 2024 for the first time in five years to ensure parking services remained self-financing.
- 2.5 It has become apparent that over 55% of our car parks are being subsidised by revenue from fee-paying car parks. The Council must address this financial

imbalance and therefore look to increase the current fee structure whilst further work is undertaken to address this.

- 2.6 Benchmarking with other Surrey Authorities shows that Runnymede costs are comparable across the county and a modest increase of 0.05 and 0.10 for Out of Town and Town Centre car parks would bring in additional revenue of approximately £90k pa whilst remaining affordable when compared to neighboring authorities. All fees are inclusive of VAT.
- 2.7 This modest increase is necessary to keep in line with inflation and annual business rate charges as well as increases in software licenses and staffing costs.

Period	Town Centre 24/25	Town Centre 25/26	Out of Town 24/25	Out of Town 25/26
Up to 1 hour	£1.50	£1.60	£0.70	£0.75
1-2 hours	£2.70	£2.80	£1.30	£1.35
2-3 hours	£3.70	£3.80	£2.10	£2.15
3-4 hours	£4.20	£4.30	£3.10	£3.15
4-5 hours	£4.70	£4.80	£3.60	£3.65
5-6 hours	£5.70	£5.80	£6.00	£6.05
All day	£7.50	£7.60	£6.00	£6.50

- 2.8 Several neighbouring authorities also charge for both evening and overnight stays at a fixed fee of between £2.00 and £7.00 depending on length of stay. This charge helps reduce the ongoing operational costs of lighting and maintenance and is particularly successful in barrier ANPR car parks where payment on exit is mandatory.
- 2.9 It is therefore recommended to introduce evening and overnight charges at the 12 fee paying car parks:
- £2.00 from 6.00pm to 10.00pm
  - £3.00 from 10pm to 8.00 am

There are currently 694 parking spaces in the chargeable locations, which could potentially generate an additional £4,800 per year based on 200 people paying for out-of-hours parking monthly. However, due to a lack of monitoring for late or overnight parking, this estimate is approximate and may not accurately reflect the actual revenue potential.

- 2.10 To ensure consistency, all seven open space car parks should be included in the Council's Off-Street Parking Orders, as two already are. To alleviate the financial strain on fee-paying car parks, a recreational charge is proposed. This would allow for three hours of free parking for leisure and recreational use, followed by a nominal fee (£2.80) to maintain these car parks without increasing the financial burden to the Council.
- 2.11 It is recommended that a new section is added to the Off-Street Parking Orders that allows for the temporary waiver of car parking charges to support specific annual community events. This waiver should be granted at the discretion of the Council and subject to the following conditions:
- Budget Constraints:
    - The cost of the waiver must be contained within the allocated budget for parking services

- Community Benefit:
  - The event must be deemed to provide a significant benefit to the local community.
- Prior Approval:
  - The event organizer must obtain prior approval from the Council for the waiver in sufficient time to allow the administrative actions to be undertaken.
- Specific Criteria:
  - The Council may establish specific criteria for determining eligibility for the waiver, such as the size of the event, the expected number of attendees, and the event's alignment with the Council's objectives

2.12 The Council currently waives parking charges annually for certain community events:

- Magna Carta Day in Egham,
- Black Cherry Farm in Chertsey,
- Virginia Water Trail.
- Christmas Lights at St Judes

This waiver results in a loss of approximately £3,950 per year. As part of the off-street parking orders review, we propose extending this support to include Remembrance Sunday services, suspending charges on the relevant Sunday morning each November. This change would add an estimated cost of £3,000 per year, representing a loss approximately 0.6% of the current parking services income budget (£474k). This demonstrates Runnymede Borough Council's ongoing commitment to supporting the armed forces.

2.13 As part of the Parking Services action plan, parking permits should be evaluated to enhance flexibility, affordability, and choice. To ensure consistency in permit charges, quarterly permits should be introduced in all car parks starting 1 April 2025, for those car parks that do not currently offer them.

2.14 The 2024/25 budget for parking permits is £54,600. There should be a modest increase of £60 per year on annual permits for 'Town' and £30 per year for 'Out of Town' car parks to offset inflation and other operating costs.

- 60 'Town' permits granted
- 218 'Town' permits in total
- 30 'Out of Town' permits granted
- 38 'Out of Town' in total

Car park	Permits allowed	Permit cost 24/25		Proposed Permit cost 25/26	
Hummer road	45	Resident Quarterly	£110.00	Resident Quarterly	£125.00
		Annual	£330.00	Annual	£390.00
		Non-Resident Quarterly	£275.00	Non-Resident Quarterly	£290.00
		Annual	£775.00	Annual	£835.00
Waspe farm	56	Resident Quarterly	£110.00	Resident Quarterly	£125.00
		Annual	£330.00	Annual	£390.00
		Non Resident Quarterly	£275.00	Non Resident Quarterly	£290.00
		Annual	£775.00	Annual	£835.00
Gogmore	18	Non Resident Annual	£575.00	Non Resident Annual	£635.00

Beomonds	13 RES/10 NON-RES	Resident Quarterly £110.00 Annual £330.00 Non Resident Quarterly £275.00 Annual £775.00	Resident Quarterly £125.00 Annual £390.00 Non Resident Quarterly £290.00 Annual £835.00
Chertsey library	11	Resident Quarterly £110.00 Annual £330.00 Non Resident Quarterly £275.00 Annual £775.00	Resident Quarterly £125.00 Annual £390.00 Non Resident Quarterly £290.00 Annual £835.00
Pooley green	7	Resident Quarterly £60.00 Annual £130.00	Resident Quarterly £67.50 Annual £160.00
St Judes	10	Resident Quarterly £60.00 Annual £130.00	Resident Quarterly £67.50 Annual £160.00
Victoria street	15	Resident Quarterly £60.00 Annual £130.00	Resident Quarterly £67.50 Annual £160.00
Woodlands car park	35	Quarterly £275.00 Annual £750.00	<b>Quarterly</b> £290.00 Annual £835.00
Memorial gardens	40	Quarterly £275.00 Annual £750.00	<b>Quarterly</b> £290.00 Annual £835.00
Aviator park	6	Annual £125.00	Annual £160.00

This could raise a further £4,500 on existing permits and could increase to £14,220 should all permits be taken up. As part of the Parking Services action plan, exploring different permit types for specific locations may also increase income and parking utilisation. However, further analysis is necessary to accurately estimate the potential revenue.

- 2.15 After the November 2023 review of parking fees and charges, the free 60- minute parking period was eliminated at Pooley Green car park from 1 April 2024. The aim was to increase revenue and ensure the car park's continued operation. Projected annual income was estimated at £7,400. However, from April 24 to September 24, this car park has generated less than £600, indicating widespread avoidance of parking fees. Without increased patrols, significant revenue growth seems unlikely and the current parking team are already at capacity so are unable to increase patrols at this location without reducing patrols elsewhere.
- 2.16 In addition, Surrey County Council (SCC) have asked the Council to introduce 30-minute free parking as part of the Egham Hythe Local Street Improvements (LSI) scheme. This scheme aims to create safer, more pedestrian-friendly streets. SCC plans to eliminate up to six on-street parking spaces and seeks Runnymede's support for 30-minute free parking to facilitate these changes.
- 2.17 Discussions with SCC have focused on how Runnymede can best support their local street improvement scheme while also addressing the administrative challenges of offering limited parking permits equivalent to the number of on-street spaces removed. Given limited enforcement resources, protecting revenue in a location with apparent widespread fee avoidance is crucial. The simplest and most cost-effective solution would be to implement the following charging structure

<b>Pooley Green &amp; Egham Library</b>	<b>Proposed charges</b>
Up to 30 minutes	£0.00
30 - 2 hours	£1.35
2- 3 hours	£2.15

3-4 hours	£3.15
4-5 hours	£3.65
All day	£6.50

Similar discussions have taken place with SCC regarding Egham Library car park and the Local Cycling, Walking Infrastructure Project (LCWIP). Currently, this car park offers two hours of free parking with an eight-hour return restriction. As part of LCWIP, SCC will be removing several on-street parking spaces and has requested that the Council maintain free parking at Egham Library. To ensure consistency with Pooley Green car park and encourage longer visits to the town centre, the Council could extend the operating hours at Egham Library. The additional revenue generated may offset the potential loss of income at Pooley Green, ensuring both car parks remain self-sufficient and supporting more sustainable transportation options

### **3 Policy framework implications**

- 3.1 The Corporate Plan's overarching strategies of Economic Development, Health & Wellbeing, and Climate Change necessitate modest increases in car park fees. This ensures that car parks remain self-funding without recourse to Council Taxpayers. By implementing the Parking Services action plan, we can make data-driven decisions about parking requirements, ensuring consistency, transparency, and a better customer experience.

### **4 Resource implications/Value for Money**

- 4.1 The total operating costs for Parking Services including service area recharges for the 2024/25 financial year are estimated at £601,249. With projected income of £474,200 from pay-and-display machines, £54,600 from parking permits, £70,000 from Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) and £11,800 recharge from Runnymede Pleasure Grounds, Parking Services is expected to generate a net income of £9,351 for 24/25 year.
- 4.2 While the Council has previously offered free parking in 55% of all of its car parks, predominantly supported by revenue from fee-paying car parks, this practice is no longer sustainable. Rising operational costs due to inflation, increased Business Rates, staffing expenses, and a history of very little regular maintenance, with only reactive maintenance undertaken, have strained our resources. To ensure the continued provision of public parking, modest adjustments are necessary. Increased fees, evening and weekend charges, a recreational fee structure, and a review of parking permits could potentially generate approximately £90,000 to maintain our public parking services (Appendix B).
- 4.3 By introducing fees across all car parks, there may potentially be further Business Rates incurred at some of these locations. Should fees be introduced, the Council would need to notify the Valuation Office Agency who would determine whether these car parks were brought into rating. Car parks are often valued on income received so it is difficult to estimate the additional costs at this stage.
- 4.4 To monitor car park use, the Council would need to instal a further 7 pay and display machines at the various locations as well as new signage which could cost in the region of £25k. This cost could be funded from the Parking Reserve fund as a one-off cost and would be subject to a separate business case and committee report.

### **5 Legal implications**

- 5.1 Section 35 of the Road Traffic Act 1984 allows Local Authorities to impose charges for parking, with Penalty Charge Notices (PCN's) to enforce by designating car parks under the Act. These charges are contained within the Off-Street Parking Places Order 2008 (as amended).
- 5.2 Increases or variations in charges and other terms introduced by the Order can be made by issuing a Notice. The notice of any new charges or terms that are varied must be given in a local newspaper and in the affected car parks at least 21 days before they are implemented.
- 5.3 If an authority makes a surplus on its off-street enforcement activities, it must use the surplus in accordance with the legislative restrictions in [section 55 \(as amended\) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984](#).

## **6 Equality implications**

- 6.1 While the proposed parking reforms, including modest fee increases, evening and weekend charges, a recreational fee structure, and more flexible permits, aim to ensure the sustainability of public parking services, we are committed to maintaining accessibility for disabled users. There will be no reduction in the number of designated parking bays for disabled individuals, and we have no intention of charging disabled users for parking. These reforms are designed to be equitable inclusive, ensuring that everyone can benefit from our public parking services.

## **7 Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications**

- 7.2 The Parking Services initiative program will focus on implementing data-driven decisions to improve parking management, including exploring the feasibility of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, introducing flexible parking permits, and implementing evening and overnight parking charges. These initiatives aim to enhance sustainability, reduce congestion, and provide more convenient parking options for residents and visitors alike.

## **8 Risk Implications**

- 8.2 **Reduced Parking Usage:** Increasing parking charges, especially at recreational venues, could lead to a decrease in usage as people seek alternative activities or locations.
- 8.3 **Reduced Permit Take-Up:** Higher permit costs might deter some residents from purchasing them, leading to a loss of income.
- 8.4 **Loss of Income:** If the overall impact of the fee increases is negative, it could result in a net loss of income for the Council.
- 8.5 These risks can be mitigated by clear communication as to the reasons for the increases and the potential benefits to the community, such as improved parking facilities and continual investment in parking services.
- 8.6 Continuously monitor the impact of fee increases and align with neighbouring authorities to demonstrate equity of fees across the county.
- 8.7 Increased fee structure will not be implemented until 1 April 2025, giving residents plenty of notice of fee increases.

## **9 Other implications**

- 9.1 Members should consider the long-term sustainability of the parking system and whether increased charges will generate sufficient revenue to maintain and improve parking facilities over time. By carefully considering these additional implications, councillors can make informed decisions about parking charge increases that balance the need for revenue with the broader goals of creating a sustainable, equitable, and vibrant community.

## **10 Timetable for Implementation**

- 10.2 1 April 2025.

## **11 Conclusions**

- 11.2 Parking charges in the Borough need to be maintained at a level that ensures the operational costs of running the car parks are met whilst also encouraging people to use local facilities and businesses

- 11.3 The proposed measures includes:

- modest fee increases of £0.05 (Out of Town) and £0.10 (Town),
- introduction of recreational charging at open space car parks,
- introduction of 30-minute free parking at Pooley Green and Egham Library to support SCC Cycling and Infrastructure projects,
- flat evening (£2) and overnight (£3) parking fees,
- New procedures for granting temporary waiver of parking charges to support community events subject to costs being contained within budgets.
- an increase of £30 (OFT) & £60(T) for annual permits,
- standardisation of parking orders in terms of return and waiting times,
- a thorough review of permits to introduce more flexible options.

- 11.4 These changes are necessary to address rising operational costs, maintain the self-funding nature of parking services, and invest in improvements to public car parks.

- 11.5 By implementing these measures, the Council can ensure that parking remains accessible and affordable for residents and visitors while also supporting the broader goals of economic development, health and wellbeing, and climate change mitigation.

## **12 Background papers**

- 12.2 None

## **13 Appendices**

Appendix A Surrey Benchmarking on Parking  
Appendix B Parking Stats for 25/26 Review