

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Appendix A – Draft Report to the Executive

Report to the Executive for Decision 07 November 2022

Portfolio:	Health & Public Protection
Subject:	Review of parking charges at coastal locations and options identified in September 2020 Review
Report of:	Director of Leisure and Community
Corporate Priorities:	Strong, Safe, Inclusive and Healthy Communities. Dynamic, Prudent and Progressive Council.

Purpose:

This report sets out the results of a review of charging at coastal car parks, introduced in August 2021, and reconsiders options for town centre parking identified as part of the September 2020 review.

Executive summary:

A review of parking services was considered by the Executive on 07 September 2020. As a result of the review, the Executive agreed to the introduction of charging in coastal car parks, which took effect from August 2021 (March 2022 in Portchester Castle).

A review of charging at coastal locations has now been undertaken, and suggests recommendations based on the effectiveness of the new arrangements following one full year of operation.

Options for town centre car parks, including a review of tariffs, evening charging, season tickets and blue badge charging, were identified as part of the September 2020 review but deferred until a later date. These options have been considered again as part of the current review.

The recommendations proposed within this report support the need to generate income to continue to provide maintenance and enforcement activity across all Council car parks, whilst supporting the Borough economy to recover from the significant impact of COVID-19.

Recommendation/Recommended Option:

It is recommended that the Executive agrees that:

- (a) a full review of town centre parking be undertaken in 2024;
- (b) the charge for a coastal season ticket be raised to £125 per year;
- (c) chargeable hours for coastal car parks be extended to 10:00-20:00, seven days a week;
- (d) the pay-and-display charge at coastal car parks be capped at £8 per day; and
- (e) height barriers at Portchester Precinct are not installed

Reason:

Changes to coastal parking charges will provide additional income for the Council, whilst ensuring that the town centre economy is not adversely impacted.

Cost of proposals:

There are no costs associated with these proposals.

Appendices: **A:** Detailed Parking Review Results

Background papers: **None**

Reference papers: **None**

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Briefing Paper

Date:	07 November 2022
Subject:	Review of parking charges at coastal locations and options identified in September 2020 Review
Briefing by:	Director of Leisure and Community
Portfolio:	Health and Public Protection

INTRODUCTION

1. This report sets out the results of a 12-month review of charging at coastal locations, introduced in August 2021, and reconsiders options for town centre car parks previously considered as part of the September 2020 parking review.

BACKGROUND

2. There are 43 off-street Council-controlled car parks, providing approximately 4,178 spaces, across the Borough. Parking charges apply in 14 town centre car parks and 9 coastal car parks.
3. A Parking Services Review was presented to the Executive on 07 September 2020 which approved, amongst other things, the introduction of charging in the Council's coastal car parks. A number of options relating to town centre car parking, such as evening charging, were considered, but a decision was deferred.
4. At the meeting, the Executive asked that an update on the outcome of the original review regarding coastal car park charges be undertaken after the first full year of operation to measure the effectiveness of the new arrangements. The majority of coastal car parks started charging in August 2021.
5. This second review took place between May and August 2022 and incorporated desk research, car park counts and analysis of comparator councils. The main findings from the review are presented below and in the detailed review document found at Appendix A.

TOWN CENTRE PARKING

6. *Parking income was in decline prior to COVID-19:* Annual income from town centre car park dropped by £0.7m from £2.5m in 2011/12 to £1.8m in 2019/20, the last full year pre-pandemic.

7. *Parking income has not recovered to pre-pandemic levels:* Revenue dropped to £0.643m in 2020/21 and rose slightly to £1.3m in 2021/22. Some further recovery in the first quarter of 2022/23 can be seen, but income remains below pre-pandemic levels.
8. *Town centre car parks are currently underutilised:* A parking survey in May 2022 found that Osborn Road MSCP was only 20% occupied, whilst Fareham Shoppers MSCP was 16% occupied. Market Quay, the Council's premium rate car park, is consistently the most popular, with 61% occupancy recorded.
9. Parking demand and provision in the town centre will be impacted by the work to develop Fareham Live and to replace Osborn Road MSCP with a surface level car park. This work is due to be completed in 2024.
10. *Pay-on-foot machines have reduced failure demand:* The new pay-on-foot payment machines and barriers installed in the Osborn Road, Market Quay and Fareham Shoppers car parks has significantly reduced instances of failure and improved the customer experience.
11. *Good value for hourly charging is still offered:* Inner and outer car park charges have not risen since 2010 and 2008 respectively and generally compare well with other Council's in Hampshire.
12. *A growing number of Councils charge in the evening:* A number of Hampshire Councils now charge for evening parking in their town or city centres. Analysis shows that around 200 cars use Market Quay after charging ceases at 6pm each evening, indicating the potential for income generation.
13. *Town Centre Season Tickets offer really good value:* The £520 cost of an annual season ticket is the second lowest in Hampshire and £584 below the average. The current season ticket offer provides flexible options to support part-time and hybrid working patterns.
14. *Blue Badge charging is becoming more common:* Some Hampshire Councils, such as Rushmoor Borough Council, have introduced charging for Blue Badge holders in their car parks. Fareham continues to offer free parking for all Blue Badge holders in its pay-and-display car parks, and free parking in the pay-on-foot car parks for residents who register with the Council.
15. *Town centre parking provision should be reviewed in 2023/24:* Whilst there is significant additional parking income generation potential, the town centre is still recovering from the impact of the pandemic and now would not be considered the right time to change or introduce new charges.
16. *The Town Centre Masterplan proposals will become clearer over the coming months and the town centre should continue to recover.* Therefore, it is proposed that a dedicated review of town centre parking provision takes place during 2023/24. This would enable any new approach to be in place for the opening of Fareham Live and the new Osborn Road car park in 2024.

COASTAL CAR PARKING

17. *Charging in nine coastal car parks was introduced in August 2021:* These offer 665 spaces across the nine car parks. Season tickets went on sale in advance to ensure

that they were in place for the charge start date. Portchester Castle charging did not come into force until March 2022. Fareham Borough Council was the last Council on the South Coast to introduce coastal charging.

18. *Season ticket sales have exceeded initial expectations:* Fareham has the lowest priced coastal season ticket on the south coast at £80 per year. This is most likely why the number of season tickets purchased has exceeded initial expectations – 1,217 were sold in the first year against the projected amount of 300.
19. *Our Coastal Season Ticket charge is well below many other Councils:* Based on evidence from comparator Council's across the south coast there is scope to increase our coastal season ticket charge.
20. *High season ticket sales likely reduced hourly charge income:* Total income from coastal car park charges in the first full year of charging was £438,040. This is just short of the £450,000 income budgeted. The level of season ticket sales will have impacted on income from hourly charging, alongside the delay in introducing charging at Portchester Castle.
21. *An increase in the Season Ticket charge would still offer good value:* Raising the annual season ticket to £125 per year, the equivalent of 21 full days parking at the current tariff would still be well below the average south coast season ticket cost of £228.88. With a projected additional income of £41,075 from this increase, the Council would meet its projected budget income.
22. *Solar powered pay-and-display machines have proven to be a success:* The new machines are easy to use, reliable and avoided nearly 3 tonnes of carbon emissions in the first year.
23. *Coastal pay-and-display tariffs are good value:* Our £1 per hour charge, up to a maximum of £6, is below the Hampshire average and offers visitors up to 2 hours free parking per day.
24. *Charges in the coastal car parks do not begin until 10am:* Following feedback during the initial consultation, the charging period for the coastal car parks was set at 10:00-18:00. This was to ensure that residents using the coast for exercise and dog walking purposes in the early mornings and evenings could do so freely.
25. *Many people use the coastal car parks after 6pm:* A high number of cars have been observed in some of the coastal car parks e.g. Meon Shore in the early evening, particularly during the summer.
26. *Most Hampshire Councils have extended chargeable hours in their coastal car parks:* Hayling Island charges are in place from 6.00-22.00 and Gosport charge 8.00-19.00. Fareham are the only Council who begin charging at 10.00, and in a minority of who stop charging at 18.00.
27. *Coastal Charging Hours should be extended:* Extending the chargeable hours by 2 hours a day to 10:00-20:00 with a maximum charge of £8 per day, would bring Fareham Borough Council in line with comparator Councils. Free access for residents using the coast for exercise and dog walking in the early mornings would remain. Visitors staying the whole day would still receive 2 hours free and the proposed season ticket charge of £125 would be equivalent to 16 full days parking.

28. The impact of extended evening charges will be seasonal, with higher use in the summer months. Based on 20% of the available coastal car parking spaces being occupied by residents and visitors using the pay and display machines for 100 evenings, this could generate £26,600 per year.
29. *Barriers at Portchester Precinct Car Park have been considered:* On 22 March 2022 the Health and Public Protection Scrutiny Panel discussed the installation of 3 height barriers at Portchester Precinct Car Park, following a motion raised at Council. It found that it would not be reasonable, proportionate, cost effective or affordable to install height restriction barriers and recommended that they are not installed.

FINANCES

30. The projected additional income will be £67,675 per year (£41,075 from season ticket increases and £26,600 from extended evening hours).

CONCLUSION

31. This report sets out the results of a review of charging at coastal locations after one full year of operation and puts forward recommendations based on the effectiveness of the new arrangements.
32. Options for town centre car parks identified as part of the September 2020 review have been reconsidered and recommendations made to ensure the Council supports the recovery of the town centre in the coming years.

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Kat Hillman. (Ext 4443)