

Council

22 February 2024



Title	<i>Parking Order revision (Tariff and charges update) 2024</i>
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report Author	<i>Bruno Barbosa – Parking Services Operational Manager</i>
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards
Exempt	No
Exemption Reason	<i>Not applicable</i>
Corporate Priority	Recovery Environment Service Delivery
Recommendations	Council is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Authorise the Group Head Neighbourhood Services to proceed with the proposals made in this report and to implement the Spelthorne Borough Council Off-Street Parking Places (Amendment) Order 2024.• Authorise the Group Head Corporate Governance to publish all notices required to implement the Spelthorne Borough Council Off-Street Parking Places (Amendment) Order 2024.• Authorise the Group Head Neighbourhood Services in consultation with the Group Head Corporate Governance to consider and address any objections and to amend the proposals if necessary, following the public consultation.
Reason for Recommendation	In the context of inflation and increased costs, the Council needs to consider an increase of tariffs and charges in the Parking Order, in a proportionate manner to ensure the sustainability of the Service.

1. Summary of the report

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
<p>The current Parking Order has the same fees and charges as they were set in April 2018 (with the exception of Elmsleigh Surface+MSCP where the charges were lowered in the 2020 Order). Customer levels are dropping since Covid-19 with insufficient yearly gains since, so it's no longer feasible to expect an increase in customer numbers that would enable the budgetary expectation being met.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car Parks and their management must be cost effective and generate sufficient revenue and surplus for its management, maintenance, upkeep and furthering of growth in towns. Benchmarking shows that we can increase charges and still be within the market average.
This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps
<p>Adjust the fees and charges appropriately and in line with benchmarked values, as well as be responsible when adding new locations so they too are sustainable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain Full Council approval for the preferred options; • Launch the statutory public consultation; • Implement the Amendment of the Parking Order shortly after the start of the new financial year.

1.1 This report seeks to receive Council approval to make an Amendment to the Spelthorne Borough Council Off-Street Parking Places Order 2020, for the changes proposed in this report. Options are provided to enable members to make fully informed decisions.

2. Key issues

2.1 Spelthorne Borough Council car park income budgetary expectations cannot be met with the current tariffs and structures, given the reduction in customer numbers experienced after the national pandemic. As customer numbers remain low despite a number of measures to encourage usage of car parks and town centres, budget expectations require an increase in parking tariffs which is the approach being taken by most local authorities, including other Districts in our County.

2.2 All Recreation Grounds car parks with a tariff that includes a nil charge first hour have a significant operational deficit associated to that tariff and customer habits. It is recommended that those car parks are aligned to the tariffs practiced in our other Recreation Grounds car parks where the nil charge first hour is not offered which will remove the operational deficit. To adapt to increased costs and higher Business Rates, the tariffs must also be slightly increased on other duration points to ensure their budgetary sustainability until the next Parking Order revision.

2.3 Staines Park car park in Commercial Road has been subject to multiple complaints of overstay and overcrowding by vehicles belonging to business users from a nearby commercial property. Although the car park is part of the

Parking Order, it only restricts stays longer than 24 hours. There have been multiple complaints from residents and users of Staines Park, asking for consideration to be given to the introduction of a parking tariff to deter long term parking.

- 2.4 On some of our car parks, users have expressed their interest in being able to purchase parking sessions before the charging period starts. Since this is not a facility prescribed in the Parking Order, and such a facility could technically condone stays longer than permitted in the car park terms, consideration should be given to the increase of the charging period coverage and associated full day tariff cost.
- 2.5 Bridge Street car park has suffered a significant decrease of season ticket demand due to the introduction of home working and the current tariff is no longer appropriate and should defer back to the Staines-upon-Thames Long Stay tariff.
- 2.6 Currently there are some season ticket terms and conditions that are not explicit in the Parking Order and instead are published as a separate document. We should aim to have core terms and conditions included in the Parking Order and not reliant on customers having to consult multiple published documents to establish the terms of the product they purchase. In addition to this, the wording for Season Tickets assumes that a physical document would be displayed, whereas we may seek in the near future to enable more environmentally friendly approaches such as virtual permits.
- 2.7 There is an area of Laleham Park car park that is owned by Spelthorne Borough Council but is not contained within the Parking Order map for the car park. The area in question is currently being used for long term free parking and storage of vehicles and materials and needs to be included within this parking order amendment.
- 2.8 Tothill Multi Storey Car Park (MSCP) and Ashford MSCP are no longer open to the public so they should be removed from the Parking Order. In relation to the removal of Tothill MSCP, the area underneath the ramps was previously included within Tothill MSCP, hence it should now be added to Elmsleigh Road car park as it's still accessible by the public and subject to restrictions.

3. Options analysis and proposal

- 3.1 Members are asked to approve one of the following 3 options:
 - (A) Approve all proposals contained within Appendix 1;
 - (B) Approve only specific proposals contained within Appendix 1;
 - (C) Reject all proposals contained within Appendix 1.

4. Financial management comments

- 4.1 As a preamble, Spelthorne Borough Council has not effectively increased its tariff fees since April 2018, as well as technically decreasing the tariff charges in April 2020. In comparison inflation as measured by the Consumer Prices Index has risen by twenty five percent over this period. In the current context of increasing costs and focus on sustainability, Members are asked to carefully consider increases in fees for services provided by Spelthorne, in balance of other budget constraints.
- 4.2 Each of the above Options has distinctive financial implications, as below:

- (A) This Option has the potential to generate additional £338k in income for 2024/25, compared to the current achieved income in 2023/24.
- (B) This Option has multiple financial impact scenarios, depending on the specific proposals approved, but in general terms they can be grouped as follows:
 - i) Updated tariffs in Staines-upon-Thames can potentially generate an additional £218.5k in income, if approved;
 - ii) Updated tariffs in Recreation Grounds can potentially generate an additional £120k in income, to balance the current overall operational deficit of £78k that they generate;
- (C) This Option is associated with a potential substantial parking income budget deficit for 2024/25, likely to increase further in subsequent financial years with increases in costs and Business Rates, as well as the need to balance the £78k in operational deficit that Recreation Grounds car parks currently contribute to budgets.

5. Risk management comments

- 5.1 The foreseeable tangible risks associated with each Option Members are asked to consider are:
 - (A) This Option carries the risk of a small decrease in customer levels where the new charges are perceived to be too high for their predicted parking duration, but where similar increases were implemented in other Districts they found that the reduction in customer numbers was minimal and the achieved income was still near their original projections.
 - (B) This Option carries the risk of some proposals not being implemented, thus creating a possible imbalance in the overall Parking Order structure. Since this Option has multiple scenarios, it is impossible to assess the risks associated in advance, but they would have to be monitored after implementation and mitigated where appropriate.
 - (C) This Option carries the risk of significant budgetary pressures for the following yearly budgets, which would require the Council to seek alternative income streams to address the budgetary shortfalls.

6. Procurement comments

- 6.1 There is no procurement action associated with this report and recommendations.

7. Legal comments

- 7.1 Legal officers will be consulted in the implementation of any approved options from this report, following the same process and timeline achieved for the 2022 revision.

8. Equality and Diversity

- 8.1 All Options contained within this Report do not remove or change existing facilities in a way that is likely to impact or be relevant to rights and obligations arising from Equality and Diversity legislation. Some Options also have the potential to introduce improved accessibility and independence to customers with protected characteristics, such as virtual season tickets.

9. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications

9.1 The Options proposed to members in this report have been carefully considered to enable a more sustainable approach to the operation and management of the car parks. Some options reduce the reliance on the use of printed documents, as well as encouraging the use of cashless payment options where suitable and relevant.

10. Timetable for implementation

10.1 Report to Council for decision to make the Order (22/02/2024)
Publish notice in the press and on social media (01/03/2024)
Order takes effect 15th April 2024 (subject to the receipt of objections)

11. Contact

11.1 Bruno Barbosa – b.barbosa@spelthorne.gov.uk

Background papers: Spelthorne Parking Order

<https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/19592/Parking-Order-2020>

<https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/19593/Parking-Order-2020-List-of-Schedules>

Appendices:

<https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/17370/Car-park-season-ticket-terms-and-conditions>

Appendix 1 – Proposals

Appendix 2 – Parking Order 2020 and associated Schedules (including proposed changes highlighted)

SCHEDULE 1 - Pay and Display Parking Places

SCHEDULE 2 - Pay on Foot Parking Places, Staines-upon-Thames

SCHEDULE 3 - Free Parking Places

SCHEDULE 4 - Parking Tariffs - Short Stay Car Parks, Staines-upon-Thames

SCHEDULE 5 - Parking Tariffs - Long Stay Car Parks, Staines-upon-Thames, Ashford

SCHEDULE 6 - Parking Tariffs – Recreation Grounds

SCHEDULE 7 - Season Tickets, Contract Parking

SCHEDULE 8 - Disabled Persons' Badge Holders' Season Tickets

SCHEDULE 9 - Penalty Charge Notices

SCHEDULE 10 - Miscellaneous Charges

SCHEDULE 11 - List of all Car Parks

SCHEDULE 12 - Site plans of all Car Parks

Appendix 3 – Map amendments