

# Cabinet Report



Listening Learning Leading

Report of Head of Housing and Environment

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To: CABINET

Date: 4 February 2021

## Car park order 2021 – consultation results

### Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- (a) considers the comments received on the South Oxfordshire District Council proposed car parking order 2021 and make any amendments
- (b) authorises the head of Legal and Democratic services to make the new order and to determine the date it comes into effect.

### Purpose of Report

1. This report provides information for cabinet members to consider the feedback from the consultation on the draft 2021 car parking order and to make a decision on what changes it wishes to make to the new 2021 car parking order.

### Corporate Plan

2. The provision and pricing of car parking supports the South Oxfordshire District Council's strategic objective theme six: "Investment and innovation that rebuilds our financial viability".

## Background

3. Cabinet considered a report on car park fees and charges for 2020/21 at the meeting on 6 August 2020 (report attached in Appendix A). Cabinet agreed to amend the parking fees in line with the proposals in the report. The 20p increase in fees and changes in Edinburgh Drive, Didcot and Wheel Orchard car park, Goring were made by a Notice of Variation in the car parks and came into effect on 1 December 2020.
4. Scrutiny committee reviewed the consultation documents at its meeting on Monday 6 November. It asked if the report could come back to scrutiny after the consultation. It asked cabinet to consider the comments raised such as:
  - i. 'Some areas such as Henley would benefit from the changes and others might not so much e.g. Wallingford'
  - ii. A view of 'across the board increase by 50p per hour'
  - iii. 'Free hour is anti-public transport'
  - iv. 'One size fits all not ideal'
  - v. 'Chinnor residents will be pleased'.
5. From the meeting on 6 August 2020, Cabinet agreed to progress other proposed changes which required formal consultation with statutory consultees like Thames Valley Police (TVP) and Oxfordshire County Council as the Highways Authority (OCC). At the same time officers organised a public consultation on the proposed changes. A copy of the public consultation results on the proposed changes is attached as Appendix B. Both consultations ran from 29 October to 19 November 2020. Appendix C shows the new car park fees increased as of 1 December 2020.

## Results of the consultation

### Statutory consultation on the draft car park 2021

6. The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 grants the power to the council to make an order. The 1984 Act, together with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 (LATO), sets out the procedure we must follow. As required, South published a draft order (Notice of Proposal) in the Oxford Times on 29 October 2020 and sent a draft order to the county council highways (who must consent to the order) and other appropriate organisations including the Police. Cabinet is required to consider all representations received before making the order.
7. The statutory consultees in general support the draft order and did not raise any significant issues. The main comments received were from Thames Valley Police who raised concerns that Sunday charges may lead to more on-street illegal parking and that it should be well advertised. The one-hour parking in Greys Road and Kings Road car parks in Henley was seen as a positive approach, spaces for electric vehicles and the enforcement was also supported. OCC has given consent to the order.
8. Appendix A has a table of the comments received from statutory consultees.
9. Appendix C is the current fees and charges increased as of 1 December 2020.

## Public consultation on changes to the car parks

10. The council carried out a dedicated online survey to give the public a chance to have their say on the proposed changes to the car park arrangements. It was open for the duration of the formal consultation (29 October to 19 November 2020) and a link was available from the councils' website page. The survey was also promoted via Facebook (59 percent of replies) and Twitter. Appendix B has a copy of the survey.
11. The communications team updated the webpages to explain why we were doing the consultation and providing a link to the survey. They also helped to promote the survey via social media, sending to all district councillors and all town and parish councils.
12. The survey comprised of 16 questions and asked respondents to tell us how much they agreed or disagreed with each of the proposed changes which will form part of the new parking order. Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide comments on each of the proposals and general suggestions to improve the car park service with our contractor SABA.
13. There were 433 responses to the online survey. The majority of responses came from members of the public and there were also single replies from 13 businesses/organisations, 10 councillors, two officers and six 'other' (question 1).

## Public consultation results: Questions 2 to 6

14. Question 2 asked about the proposal to introduce one-hour free parking in Greys Road and Kings Road car parks, Henley. A large majority (63 percent) strongly agreed or agreed with this proposal. It was also supported by the Henley Town Council.
15. Question 3 asked for comments on the proposal to introduce free one-hour parking in Kings Road and Greys Road car parks, Henley. The most frequently mentioned comment (15 replies) was a preference to have two hours free (14 comments), followed by loss of revenue for the council (9).
16. Question 4 asked about the two-hour free parking in Goldsmiths Lane car park, Wallingford to change to one-hour free parking. Most respondents (66 percent) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposal.
17. Question 5 asked for comments on reducing the two free hours in Goldsmiths Lane car park to one hour. This received 168 responses and 277 individual comments mostly feeling there would be a negative impact on local trade (86 comments).
18. Question 6 was about aligning all car parks in the centre of towns to charge 9am to 5pm Monday to Saturday. There was a slight preference towards disagreement with 46 percent disagreeing or strongly disagreeing and 39 percent agreeing or strongly agreeing and 15 percent neither agreeing or disagreeing with the proposal.
19. Question 7 asked for comments on aligning all town centre car parks to charge 9am to 5pm Monday to Saturday. The highest number of comments disputed the usefulness or questioned the need to standardise parking fees and charges due to local differences (48 replies from 175).
20. Question 8 proposed charging on a Sunday and the large majority (77 percent) strongly disagreed.

21. Question 9 asked for comments on the proposal to charge on Sundays and the most frequent comment (99) were that it would have a negative effect for trading and leisure in the towns.
22. Question 10 asked about introducing a limited waiting for two hours in the High Streetcar park in Chinnor. Whilst most people neither agreed nor disagreed (39 percent) or replied, 'don't know' (25 percent), the number who agreed or strongly agreed (22 percent) was slightly more than those that disagreed or strongly disagreed (14 percent).
23. Question 11 asked for comments on the introduction of two hours parking at High Street car park, Chinnor. The most common comment was that two hours was sufficient (12) followed by 10 suggestions that standardisation is needed.
24. Question 12 asked about the authority to enforce bays reserved for electric vehicles (EVs) charging (by issuing Excess Charge Notices). This was generally supported with 69 percent agreeing or strongly agreeing. Also, the authority to enforce excess charges on EVs if using a charging bay but not charging was supported with 66 percent agreeing or strongly agreeing.
25. Question 13 asked for comments on the proposals regarding EVs and the joint most common reply (19 comments for both) was that it is not needed yet and that enforcement is needed (19 replies).
26. Question 14 proposed half price tickets for vehicles that produce zero CO2. The responses were slightly against this proposal as 42 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed, 32 percent agreed or strongly agreed and 23 percent neither agreed nor disagreed.
27. Question 15 asked for comments on the half price permits for electric vehicles and of the 232 individual comments, 55 comments thought favouring EVs was unfair and 37 said that EVs were too expensive to purchase. There were also questions asking how EVs were identified
28. Question 16 asked for any additional comments on the proposals to change off-street parking in the district and received 153 responses with 121 individual comments. About a third of comments (54) wanted the council to support the local economy by offering a period of free parking.
29. A summary report of the key findings including responses and comments to the public survey is in Appendix B which includes officer replies to the most frequently asked questions and proposals.
30. In addition, officers received comments directly by email from four residents, with views that are in line with the overall responses to the survey. Comments included 'I object to Sunday charging'. Also objecting to reducing free parking in Goldsmiths Lane car park claiming 'by reducing free parking in Wallingford will damage businesses', 'limiting free parking to 60 mins means people will go elsewhere' and 'this would simply wipe out one of the few incentives to shop in Wallingford and we should 'try to preserve the life of the town centre (Wallingford).
31. Officers also received a letter from the mayor of Wallingford. The town council unanimously objected to the current proposals, concerned that this would make Wallingford less attractive. The key concern was the reduction in free parking from two

hours to one hour at Goldsmiths Lane car park. They also did not support the proposal for half price permits for EVs or the new enforcement for non EVs parking in EV charging bays. Note that the cabinet member for Housing and Environment has replied to the letter from Wallingford Town Council.

32. Henley Town Council (HTC) also replied specifically to the consultation and *‘fully support all SODC’s proposals for changes to Off-Street parking, which bring Henley in line with other towns in the District. HTC particularly support the one-hour free parking throughout the day and also charging for Sunday parking, which has the support of all the retail shops in the town’.*

## Options

33. In light of the consultation feedback, cabinet could consider the amendments to the order as below:

- to maintain the current arrangement where Goldsmiths Lane car park has up to two hours free parking Monday to Saturday. That officers carry out usage surveys of the car parks in order to review this after one year
- to introduce charging on a Sunday from 10am to 5pm (rather than from 9am and including up to one hour no charge)
- to introduce half price parking permits for electric vehicles identified as those vehicles eligible for the Cleaner vehicle discount from the London Congestion Charge and as detailed on the Transport for London website page ‘Discounts and exemptions’ <https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/congestion-charge/discounts-and-exemptions> (due to change on 25 October 2021). Note this is also in line with proposals for the ZEZ (zero emission zone) for the centre of Oxford where only 100 percent emission vehicles would be able to use the zone free of charge starting in Summer 2021.

## Consultation results summary

34. Table 1 Summary of options agreed by cabinet in August 2020 and the results of the further consultations.

Option	Statutory consultation carried out?	Results of statutory consultation	Results of public consultation	Cabinet option	Financial implication
A. Align all charging car parks in the centre of market towns of Didcot, Henley, Wallingford and Thame, as well as Goring, to all have up to one hour of free parking between the charging hours. And to amend charging hours to	Yes	Agreed	Generally supported with disagreement for reducing two-hour free parking to one hour in Goldsmiths Lane car park, Wallingford.	Agree to align all town centre car parks to charge 9am to 5pm Monday to Saturday including up to one hour no charge (except Goldsmiths Lane car park, Wallingford with up to two hours no charge). Carry out annual usage surveys.	£130,000 reduction

## Agenda Item 5

Option	Statutory consultation carried out?	Results of statutory consultation	Results of public consultation	Cabinet option	Financial implication
9am to 5pm Monday to Saturday in all car parks where a charge is made.  (this includes introducing free parking for up to one hour in Kings Road and Greys Road car parks, Henley)			Supported	Agreed	
B: Increase all fees (for up to two hours and above) by 20p	N/A	N/A	N/A (implemented on 1 December 2020 by Notice of Variation on)	N/A	£61,000 increase
C: Change the current permitted parking period from Monday to Saturday to Monday to Sunday, 9am to 5pm in all car parks	Yes	Yes	Disagreed	Agree with amended charging period from 10am to 5pm on Sundays including one hour free (except Goldsmiths Lane car park*)	£120,000 increase (if charging agreed 10am to 5pm)
D: Increase the all-day parking fee at Edinburgh Drive car park, Didcot and Wheel Orchard car park, Goring	Not required	N/A	N/A (implemented on 1 December 2020 by Notice of Variation on)	N/A	£4,000 increase
E: Half priced permits for electric vehicles only	N/A	N/A	Slight disagreed	Agree in line with those vehicles eligible for a discount from the London Congestion Charge (except Goldsmiths Lane car park*)	negligible
F: Introduce limited waiting in Chinnor High Street car park	Yes	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	negligible
G: Review of permits	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
H: Enforcement at charging points for electric vehicles	Yes	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Negligible
TOTAL					£55,000 increase in income

\*Agreement with other land owners required to implement changes in Goldsmiths Lane car park Wallingford as not all the car park is under the ownership of the council.

## **Financial Implications**

35. Any council decision that has financial implications must be made with the knowledge of the council's overarching financial position. For South, the position reflected in the council's medium-term financial plan (MTFP) as reported to Full Council in February 2020 showed that the council was due to receive £2.2 million less in revenue funding than it planned to spend in 2020/21 (with the balance coming from reserves including unallocated New Homes Bonus). Following the revised budget agreed in October, this has increased to £3.2 million.
36. This funding gap was predicted to increase to over £6 million per annum by 2024/25. As there remains no certainty on future local government funding, following the announcement of a one-year spending review by government, and as the long-term financial consequences of the Coronavirus pandemic remain unknown, this gap could increase further. Every financial decision made needs to be cognisance of the need to eliminate this funding gap in future years.
37. Table 1 provides an estimation of the financial impact of each option.
38. If option A is confirmed, the loss of income mainly associated with introducing a free one hour in the town centre car parks in Henley, is estimated to be £130,000 creating a deficit going forward and additional changes to policy will be necessary.
39. The cabinet report of 6 August 2020 on car park fees and charges reported that Option C (Sunday charging) will contribute an estimated £138,000 additional income if implemented (based on Sunday usage being similar to an average weekday). This will be reduced to an estimated £120,000 if the charging hours are reduced to 10am to 5pm on Sundays (rather than 9am to 5pm).
40. Together with Options B and D, this will now contribute £185,000 to the parking account. Introduction of option A at the same time would bring this additional income down to £55,000. This would facilitate the parking account remaining essentially balanced for the medium term, eradicate the reliance on excess charge income and allow medium term improvements to facilities.
41. Any changes to the fees will involve a cost; to update the software in the car park machines, to amend the tariff boards and depending on which change is agreed, to advertise a "Notice of Making", amounting to up to a total of £5,000. These costs can be met from existing budgets.
42. The increase in income of £55,000 will be reflected in the 2021/22 budget if agreed.

## **Consultation and Communications**

43. The council had a dedicated online survey to give people a chance to have their say on the proposals for the new parking order. It was open for the duration of the formal consultation (29 October to 19 November 2020) and a link was available from the council's website page. The survey was also promoted via Facebook and Twitter. (A

report of the answers and comments is in appendix B). The majority of consultees heard about the consultation via Facebook (59 percent).

44. A draft of the new order (Notice of Proposal) was advertised in the Oxford Times on Thursday 29 October.

45. A full report on the survey will be published on the council website in the new year.

## **Legal Implications**

46. Under Regulation 14 of The Local Authorities' Traffic Order (Procedure)(England and Wales) Regulations 1996, the council may modify an order, whether in consideration of any objections or otherwise, before an order is made. In doing so the council must take appropriate steps to a) inform persons likely to be affected by the modifications; b) giving those persons an opportunity of making representations; and c) ensuring that any such representations are duly considered by the authority.

47. Paragraph 23(2) of Schedule 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 states that "modification" shall be construed as including additions, exceptions or other modifications of any description.

48. Where contact details have been supplied, officers have made all complainants aware that the objections and comments received as part of the consultation will be considered at the cabinet meeting on 4 February 2021, that the report will be published on the website and that anyone is able to attend the meeting and make representations.

49. The proposed changes require the making of a new parking order. The council published a proposed order in the car park and in the local press on 29 October 2020. A hard copy was also made for viewing at the council offices at Milton Park by prior appointment. The council also consulted with the county council (who have consented to the order) and other appropriate organisations including the Police. Cabinet must consider all representations received before making a decision on the order. N.B officers are in discussion with other land owners of Goldsmiths Lane car park and until agreed no changes can be implemented at this car park.

50. Once signed and sealed, the new approved order is advertised via a 'Notice of Making' in the local press and on the council website. A copy of the 'Notice of Making' is placed in each car park. The council must reply to any person who made an objection to the draft order to explain if the objection has been accepted or not and the reason for making the final decision. The consultation survey in Appendix B includes replies to questions raised.

51. Officers intend the new order to come into force on 1 March 2021.

## **Risks**

52. There is a legal duty to draft a new order and consult formally with statutory consultees like the Police and the Highways Authority. To capture as many other comments from the public, businesses and organisations including town and parish councils, and feed back to cabinet, we also carried out a wide-ranging consultation. This reduces the risk that there is a legal challenge later on which could make the new order invalid. It also allows the Cabinet to make an informed decision.

## **Conclusion**

53. Officers carried out a consultation on changes to the car parking order and the Cabinet is asked to consider the comments and make any amendments it so wishes.

## **Background papers**

Cabinet report 6 August 2020, car park fees and charges.

## Appendix A

### Consultation with statutory consultees on South Oxfordshire District Council draft car parking Order 2021

Organisation	Comment made
Thames Valley Police	Thank you for the consultation documents addressed to The Chief Constable. .
	I have no objection to these proposals..
	I would however raise one slight concern with the South Oxfordshire amendment relating to the introduction of charging on Sundays. . Might this lead to displacement back on to the public highway with a likelihood of increasing further illegal parking.
	I can confirm that based on the information provided at this time there will be no impact for OFRS and there are no concerns raised.
	a. one hour free parking in Greys Road and Kings Road car parks in Henley - This will be seen as positive approach and may help cut illegal street parking. Cutting illegal street parking will help avoid escalation in frustrations between pedestrians and the vehicle user. Parking issues are often incorrectly directed towards the Police by a complainant which results in an unnecessary demand and diversion of policing activity and ultimately frustration from that complainant by a perceived lack of immediate resolution. I imagine the provision of one hour free parking will benefit the local economy.
	b. charging on Sundays - This clearly is a fiscal decision for the Council. My guidance would be to ensure that such a change is extremely well advertised.
Oxford Fire and Rescue	c. limited waiting of two hours 9am to 5pm, Monday to Sunday in the High Street car park, Chinnor - This proposed action does not appear to present any issues of contention. It will also ensure that enforcement measures are available to deal with potential abandoned/non road worthy vehicles being left at the location beyond the 2 hours.
	d. spaces reserved for electric vehicles whilst charging - This is becoming more common and will be seen positively from an environmentally friendly perspective. Will the Council be able to undertake any enforcement if a non-electric vehicle blocks the ability for a genuine electric vehicle user from taking advantage of the charging facility?
OCC Highways	No objection to the consultation taking place. No issues to the making of the order.

## Appendix B

Consultation results on proposed changes to off-street parking in South Oxfordshire (Word version of the online survey with answers from officers).

## Appendix C

### SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

#### Car park charges from 1 December 2020

CAR PARK	TYPE OF PARKING	PERIOD	NEW CHARGES From 1 December 2020	
<b>Edinburgh Drive Didcot</b>	Pay and Display (Mon-Fri 9:00am to 5:00pm) (Sat 9:00 am to 2:00pm)	Up to 1 hr	No change	
		Up to 2 hrs	£1.20	
		Up to 3 hrs	£1.80	
		Up to 5 hrs	£2.20	
		Up to 8 hrs	£5.00	
<b>Wheel Orchard Goring</b>	Pay and Display (Mon-Fri 8:00am to 6:00pm) (Sat 8:00am to 2:00pm)	Up to 1 hr	No change	
		Up to 2 hrs	£1.00	
		Up to 5 hrs	£2.20	
		Up to 10 hrs	£5.00	
	Permits	Annual	£858.00	
		½ price *	£429.00	
		3 months	£250.00	
Market trader	Annual	£143.00		
	3 months	£42.00		
<b>Kings Road Henley</b>	Pay and Display (Mon-Fri 10:00am to 5:00pm) (Sat 8:00am to 3:00pm)	Up to 1 hr	No change	
		Up to 2 hrs	£1.20	
		Up to 3 hrs	£1.80	
<b>Greys Road Henley</b>	Pay and Display (Mon-Fri 10:00am to 5:00pm) (Sat 8:00am to 3:00pm)	Up to 1 hr	No change	
		Up to 2 hrs	£1.20	
		Up to 3 hrs	£1.80	
		Up to 4 hrs	£2.40	
		Up to 5 hrs	£3.00	
<b>Southfields Henley Off Goodall close</b>	Pay and Display (Mon-Fri 9:00am to 5:00pm) (Sat 9:00am to 2:00pm)	Up to 5 hours	£2.40	
		Up to 8 hrs	£3.40	
		Permits	Annual	£583.00
		½ price *	£292.00	
		3 months	£170.00	

CAR PARK	TYPE OF PARKING	PERIOD	NEW CHARGES
			From 1 December 2020
		½ price*	£85.00
		Market trader	
		Annual	£97.24
		3 months	£28.00
<b>Cattle Market Thame</b>	Pay and Display (Mon-Fri 9:00am to 5:00pm) (Sat 9:00am to 2:00pm)	Up to 1 hr	No change
		Up to 2 hrs	£1.20
		Up to 5 hrs	£2.20
		Up to 8hrs	£2.60
	Permits	Annual	£446.16
		½ price *	£223.00
		3 months	£130.00
		½ price*	£65.00
		Market trader	
		Annual	£74.36
		3 months	£22.00
<b>Southern Road Thame</b>	Pay and Display (Mon-Fri 9:00am to 5:00pm) (Sat 9:00am to 2:00pm)	Up to 1 hr	No change
		Up to 2 hrs	£1.20
		Up to 3 hrs	£1.80
<b>Thames Street Wallingford</b>	Pay and Display (Mon-Fri 9:00am to 5:00pm) (Sat 9:00am to 2:00pm)	Up to 1 hr	No change
		Up to 2 hrs	£1.20
		Up to 5 hrs	£2.20
		Up to 8 hrs	£2.60
	Permits	Annual	£446.16
		½ price *	£223.00
		3 months	£130.00
		½ price*	£65.00
		Market trader	
		Annual	£74.36
		3 months	£22.00
<b>Cattle Market Wallingford</b>	Pay and Display (Mon-Fri 9:00am to 5:00pm) (Sat 9:00am to 2:00pm)	Up to 1 hr	No change
		Up to 2 hrs	£1.20
		Up to 5 hrs	£2.20
		Up to 8 hrs	£2.60
	Permits	Annual	£446.16
		½ price *	£223.00
		3 months	£130.00
		½ price*	£65.00
		Market trader	
		Annual	£74.36
		3 months	£22.00
<b>Goldsmith Lane</b>	Pay and Display	Up to 2 hrs	No charge

CAR PARK	TYPE OF PARKING	PERIOD	NEW CHARGES
			From 1 December 2020
<b>Wallingford</b>	(Mon-Fri 9:00am to 5:00pm) (Sat 9:00am to 2pm)		
		Up to 3 hrs	£1.80
		Up to 8 hrs	£3.60
	Permits	Annual	£617.76
		½ price *	£309.00
		3 months	£180.00
		½ price*	£90.00
		Market trader	
		Annual	£102.96
		3 months	£30.00
<b>St Georges Wallingford</b>	Pay and Display (Mon-Fri 9:00am to 5:00pm) (Sat 9:00am to 2:00pm)	Up to 8 hrs	£1.90
	Permits	Annual	£326.04
		½ price *	£163.00
		3 months	£95.00
		½ price*	£47.00
		Market trader	
		Annual	£54.34
		3 months	£16.00
<b>Riverside Wallingford Low Season 1 March-30 June 1 Sept-31 Oct</b>	Pay and Display (Mon-Fri 9:00am to 6:00pm) (Sat 9:00am to 2:00pm)	Up to 1 hr	0.80
		Up to 10 hrs	£1.30
	Permits	Annual	£223.08
		½ price *	£112.00
		3 months	£65.00
		½ price*	£32.00
		Market trader	
		Annual	£37.18
		3 months	£11.00
<b>Riverside Wallingford High Season 1 July-31 August</b>	Pay and Display (Mon-Fri 9:00am to 6:00pm) (Sat 9:00am to 2:00pm)	Up to 1 hr	0.80
		Up to 3 hrs	£1.30
		Up to 10 hrs	£2.60
	Permits	Annual	£446.16
		½ price *	£223.00
		3 months	£130.00
		½ price*	£65.00
		Market trader	
		Annual	£74.36
		3 months	£22.00
<b>Castle Street Wallingford</b>	Pay and Display (Mon-Fri 9:00am to 5:00pm) (Sat 9:00am to 2:00pm)	Up to 8 hrs	£1.90

CAR PARK	TYPE OF PARKING	PERIOD	NEW CHARGES  From 1 December 2020
	Permits	Annual ½ price *	£326.04 £163.00
		3 months ½ price*	£95.00 £47.00
		Market trader Annual 3 months	£54.34 £16.00
<b>General</b>	Daily rate for Skips		No change
	Daily rate for gazebo, trailers and market stalls		No change
	Permit replacement		No change

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