



OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE (WOKING)

ON-STREET 'PAY AND DISPLAY' PARKING CHARGES IN WOKING BOROUGH - REVIEW OF CHARGES

28 MARCH 2011

KEY ISSUE

To approve new on street parking charges in Woking Borough following public advertisement of the proposals.

SUMMARY

In October 2010 the Local Committee gave the go ahead for a statutory consultation about increased on street parking charges in Woking. The proposed increase, the first for five years, changes the cost of parking on street from £1/hour to £1.40/hour. It is also proposed to introduce charges on Sundays in the Town Centre (Zone 1).

There has been one objection to the proposals that were advertised in January and February 2011. This report recommends that the new charges are implemented in April 2011 in Town Centre Zone 1 only.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee (Woking) is asked to:

- (i) approve an increase in the hourly on street parking charge for Woking Town Centre Zone 1 from £1 to £1.40.
- (ii) approve new on street parking charges of £1.40 per hour on Sundays and Bank Holidays in Town Centre Zone 1 between 08.30 to 18.30.
- (iii) approve that the new charges are introduced from 01 April 2011.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Surrey County Council is the Highway Authority in Surrey and responsible for managing the highway network including on-street parking. Woking Borough Council act as agent for Surrey and carry out enforcement of the on street parking restrictions and resident parking schemes in Woking as well as managing their own off street car parks.
- 1.2 In November 2008 Woking's Executive agreed to raise off street parking charges in car parks and to introduce Sunday charges. These changes were introduced in April 2010 and made the off street charges higher than the on street. The current on street charges have not been changed since April 2006.
- 1.3 It is usual in most towns and cities for the cost of on street parking to be higher than the off street car parks. This encourages drivers to use off street car parks as a first choice for longer stay parking. The more expensive on street spaces tend to encourage short stay parking which in turn can increase turnover or 'churn'. This has the potential to increase footfall in nearby retail areas
- 1.4 In October 2010 the Local Committee approved a statutory consultation on new parking charges. This was carried out in January and February 2011.
- 1.5 The changes that were advertised were:
 - Increase the cost of parking per hour on street in the centre of Woking (Zone 1) from £1 per hour to £1.40 and to also include Sunday and bank holiday charging.
 - Increase the cost of parking in Zones 2 to 5 from 80p to £1.00 per hour and also include Sundays and bank holiday charging.

2 CONSULTATIONS

- 2.1 The new on street parking charges were advertised on the 6th January 2011 in the Woking News and Mail. Street notices were also placed around the town. The deadline for objections was the 27th February.
- 2.2 The proposals in this report have been discussed and approved by the Woking Executive and at officer level between the two authorities.
- 2.3 One objection was received to the new charges and is shown in Annex 1. The objection has 2 parts.
- 2.4 The first is that although parking charges are proposed on a Sunday in Zone 1, the operational times are not being changed to include Sundays. This means vehicles can park on a single yellow line for an

unlimited time on Sunday but would have to pay to park in a parking bay and the stay would be limited to 1 hour. Effectively this means there would still be some free parking on a Sunday and motorists would drive around the town to search these areas out. Consequently one of the objectives of the proposals, to reduce congestion would not be achieved.

- 2.5 Although it would technically be possible to park on a single yellow line on a Sunday and not receive a penalty charge notice, other offences such as obstruction may be caused, and this means that in practice drivers do not/would not park on the full extent of single yellow line available in Zone 1.
- 2.6 Consequently, the proposals as they stand will not reduce congestion on Sundays as effectively as a full change in the Zone 1 operational times to include Sunday and Bank Holidays. They will however, by reducing the amount of free parking available on a Sunday in Zone 1 encourage greater use of the off street car parks and partially achieve this objective.
- 2.7 At the moment it is possible to park all day in the town centre on street bays. The introduction of a 1 hour limit into the parking bays on a Sunday means these will turnover more quickly and improve access to parking spaces. This makes it more convenient to park on street on a Sunday in the town centre and helps improve access to local shops and businesses in Zone 1. Securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises is one of the duties of a local authority exercising functions under S122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act.
- 2.8 The second part of the objection is that the statutory notice for the increased charges in Zones 2 to 5 did not adequately state the cost of parking for longer than 1 hour. The proposal to increase charges and include Sunday charging in Zones 2 to 5 is consequently not recommended to proceed for the reasons stated below.
- 2.9 Since these proposals were agreed for public consultation by the Committee last October there have been changes to the charge for residents parking permits in Woking. These changes should be allowed to settle down before any further changes are made in Zones 2 to 5.
- 2.10 Payment for parking in Zones 2 to 5 is by voucher. This system has proved difficult to operate and there could potentially be a shortage of outlets available on a Sunday, making it difficult to purchase one and consequently park legally.
- 2.11 In light of this and changes to other on street charges it is felt that further consideration should be given to the operational times and boundaries in Zones 2 to 5 before making any changes.

- 2.12 There were no objections to the proposal to increase the hourly charge for parking on street in Zone 1 from £1 to £1.40 per hour.

3 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Currently, Surrey County Council runs an annual deficit of approximately £400,000 across the County in the management and enforcement of on street parking restrictions. In Woking on street pay and display parking generated an income of approximately £320,000 during 2009/10. Overall however, the cost of enforcing parking restrictions during this period in Woking Borough resulted in a deficit of £141,425.
- 3.2 The new charges described above are likely to increase income from on street parking in Woking from approximately £320,000 in 2009/10 and 2010/11 to £460,000 in 2011/12. This is an estimate and is subject to other wider economic factors, however it should help counter the deficit mentioned above.
- 3.3 If the charges were to generate a surplus by law it must be used in accordance with S55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. This limits the use of the expenditure to highway maintenance and improvement and certain environmental works.
- 3.4 The cost of advertising and implementing these proposals is in the region of £15,000. This would be met from the Woking CPZ account and should be recovered relatively quickly.

4 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are none identified.

5 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are none identified.

6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 There has been one objection to the proposed increase in parking charges however it is recommended to go ahead with the proposals in Zone 1 on the grounds that the changes will improve access to parking space and convenience for visitors in the town centre. There will also be a benefit in reducing congestion, albeit reduced on Sundays.

7 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The increase in the cost of on street parking in Woking is needed to maintain the differential between on and off street parking charges. Higher on street charges encourage drivers to go straight to car parks and helps increase turnover of on street spaces, improving access.
- 7.2 Reinstating the differential between on street and off street is also in line with good practice nationally and Surrey's new parking policy

8 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 8.1 If approved, the new charges will be introduced in April 2011.

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