

**GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL AND  
SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**



**GUILDFORD  
BOROUGH**

**GUILDFORD JOINT COMMITTEE**

**DATE: WEDNESDAY 16 MARCH 2022**

**LEAD OFFICER: ANDREW HARKIN, PARKING LEAD**

**SUBJECT: ON-STREET PARKING BUSINESS PLAN 2022-2023**

**DIVISION: ALL**

**SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

This report presents the Parking Annual Report 2020-21 for Guildford and makes a number of recommendations to the Joint Committee in respect of on-street parking and the use of the surplus generated from this service. This report also expands upon the Parking team's work in support residents and the national effort during the Covid-19 pandemic.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Joint Committee (Guildford) is asked to:**

- (i) note the contents of Annexe 1, the Parking Annual Report for 2020-21 and the current and planned work associated with on street parking,
- (ii) agree to increase the tariff in the 2-hour max. stay pay and display and pay and display dual-use spaces from 80 pence per half hour to 90 pence per half hour, to be introduced on 1 July 2022.
- (iii) agree to increase the tariff in the 3-hour maximum stay pay and display dual-use spaces from 60 pence per half hour to 80 pence per half hour, to be introduced on 1 July 2022.
- (iv) note that the existing tariff in the 30-minute maximum stay pay and display and pay and display dual-use spaces of £1 for the half hour will remain unchanged, although as part of the current parking review, the intention is to extend the maximum period of stay within these spaces to 1 hour, to meet the changing needs of the high street retailers and their customers.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Town centre parking:

- is an enabler to around £150-200m of retail activity within the local economy, as well as supporting a wide variety of other business needs, and the needs of residents (*Systra Parking Study 2020*),

- pricing is the primary mechanism with which to modify user behaviour, and in line with the 2016 Sustainable Parking Strategy, encourage more sustainable transportation modes, such as the Park and Ride, public transport, cycling and walking,
- (normally) generates a significant surplus with which to invest in highway and transportation initiatives, such as Park and Ride.

Although pricing is the primary mechanism to modify behaviour, convenience is also a key factor in determining visitors' choice of transportation mode and parking location. Therefore, although price increases may be perceived as being harmful for the local economy, particularly at a time when it is recovering from the pandemic, the provision of convenient, easy to use and good quality parking facilities are more important influencing factors.

This is supported by the fact that, in recent years, despite the incremental increases in the tariffs within the Guildford Borough Council's (GBC's) off-street public car parks, utilisation has not been greatly impacted. This is despite challenging conditions being experienced by the retail sector, even prior to the COVID pandemic.

However, by comparison, on-street parking has performed less well. This is despite the charges in the majority of paid-for spaces remaining static since 2014. There are a number of possible reasons for this. These include:

- The reduction in the number of spaces
- Changes in the nature of the businesses / vacant premises closest to the on-street spaces
- Limited payment options
- Restrictions on the flexibility of use (in relation to the 30min max stay bays)

In support of the “**drive to and not through**” philosophy, reinforced within the 2016 Sustainable Parking Strategy, the on-street parking charges have always been set at a premium rate above those in the off-street car parks, to reflect the greater convenience associated with the use of these spaces and to encourage turnover.

If the on-street spaces were cheaper than the off-street parking, then it may encourage motorists to circulate within the town centre, searching to find less-expensive on-street parking. This would be counter to both SCC and GBC's objectives in respect to the climate change emergency, air quality and congestion.

At its 25 January 2022 Executive meeting, GBC agreed to increase the parking charges within the car parks in 2022-23. The recommendations within this report are intended to encourage visitors to consider more sustainable transportation choices, maintain the differential between the on- and off-street charges in support of the “**drive to and not through**” philosophy, and improve the financial position of the Guildford on-street account, to assist in its support of the Park and Ride, and other local highway and transportation initiatives.

It is recommended that the introduction of the price increases comes into effect on 1 July 2022, in order support the local economy in the immediate aftermath of the pandemic and the lifting of restrictions.

Even with the recommended price increase, the on-street charges will remain consistent with those levied in nearby towns and cities (see Annexe 2).

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

### 1.1 On-street Short-stay Pay and Display Tariffs Update

In recent years, the only increase in on-street parking tariffs occurred in September 2019 when the very short-stay 30-minute maximum stay on-street tariff was increased from 80 pence per half-hour to £1 per half-hour. This change helped maintain the pricing differential between on-street parking and the car parks, and helped maintain the pricing in line with the similarly-convenient North Street off-street car park.

The charges within the remainder of the 2-hour and 3-hour maximum stay on-street pay and display bays within the town centre have remained static since 2014. Over the same period, there has been a steady increase in the off-street parking charges. This has led to a reduction in the tariff differential between on- and off-street parking locations.

The modest increase of 10p per half hour in the 2-hour maximum stay bays from 80p per half hour to 90p per half hour, and the 20p per half hour in the 3 hour bays from 60p per half hour to 80p per half hour, the first changes in tariff since 2014, equate to a 1.48% and 3.65% year-on-year increase in tariff over the 8-year period, respectively.

On-street tariffs recommended encourage turnover, improves the availability of these premium spaces and usage in the most convenient town centre on-street parking spaces. This supports the **“drive to and not through”** philosophy.

It also ensures that the charges for the majority of the on-street parking spaces do not become cheaper than the off-street public car parks. Cheaper on-street charges could lead to motorists circulating within the town centre searching to find less-expensive on-street parking, which would be counter to the climate change emergency, air quality and congestion objectives.

Therefore, in order to continue the good practice of maintaining the pricing differential between on- and off-street parking and encourage use of the most appropriate parking provision, it is recommended that the charges within the 2-hour maximum stay on-street pay and display and pay and display dual-use spaces are increased from 80p per half-hour to 90p per half-hour. It is recommended that the charges within the 3-hour maximum stay on-street pay and display dual-use spaces are increased from and from 60p per half-hour to 80p per half-hour.

It is recommended that the introduction of the price increases comes into effect on 1 July 2022, in order support the local economy in the immediate aftermath of the pandemic and the lifting of restrictions. The rescheduling of the March meeting of the Guildford Joint Committee effectively meant that it would not be possible to introduce the charges on 1 April 2022, as would be the norm. The park and ride bus services should also be operating more normally by July.

### 1.2 Park & Ride Update

Following the ceasing of the full-time, contracted guarding provision at three Park & Ride (P&R) sites (Artington, Merrow and Onslow) in September 2019, the duties of opening and closing the sites at the beginning and end of the day, and maintaining and cleaning the reception buildings and toilets, are

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now being undertaken by the Borough Council's Street Cleansing team. The service provided by the Street Cleansing team has derived a saving of around £85,000 in 2020-21, over the previous guarded provision.

The Parking team has received no negative feedback in relation to the removal of the permanent guarding arrangements, the cleanliness of the sites and their facilities, nor security. It is also the case that instances of the sites not being opened on time, due to staff illnesses occurring at short notice, have also reduced, with only one recorded incident in the last two and a half years. This is primarily as a result of the improved resilience associated with using GBC's Street Cleansing team to perform the duties.

At the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Park and Ride bus services were suspended. Nevertheless, the Park and Ride facilities have played a key role in assisting the Covid effort.

In the early days of the first lockdown, the Spectrum Park and Ride site formed part of the Covid Hub that was set up at the leisure centre.

The Onslow Park and Ride site was handed over to the DHSC for use as COVID Test site during summer 2020. This arrangement is expected to continue during 2022. The costs associated with the site are being covered by the DHSC during this period and have resulted in a £11,867 (in 2020-21) reduction in the running costs of the car park, in addition to the £100,000+ reduction in the annual running costs achieved across all the sites by the efficiencies the Parking team have instituted.

With the exception of the Onslow site, the Park and Ride bus services at the remainder of the sites slowly returned. Nevertheless, some of these facilities are still playing a key role in the pandemic response.

From August 2021, a section of the Artington Park and Ride site was handed over to the NHS for use as a Vaccination site, following their successful operation which utilised the Borough Council's GLive car park. This arrangement is expected to continue into early 2022. Cost associated with the section of the site being used by the NHS are being covered by them and have resulted in a £49,470 (in 2021-22) reduction in the running costs for the facility. The NHS operation at the Artington site has not led to any capacity issues, and those wishing to use the Park and Ride have always been able to find a space.

In recent months, Stagecoach, the bus operator that provides the Park and Ride services, has experienced driver issues. This has led to the temporary suspension of services at Spectrum and a reduction in frequency at the other two sites presently operating, Artington and Merrow. However, we are working with them and our SCC Passenger Transport colleagues to minimise disruption. Stagecoach have indicated that their current recruitment and training drives should allow a resumption of normal services by May 2022.

As some semblance of normality returns post-pandemic, use of the Park and Ride sites will continue to be encouraged, to increase patronage. Usage levels at the operational sites remain at around 45-55% of their pre-pandemic levels, perhaps reflecting the ongoing changes in working patterns since the beginning of the pandemic. Some adjustment, such as the drive towards

more flexible working patterns, may be permanent, albeit that this has the potential to reduce the overall volume of car journeys.

### 1.3 **Parking Review Update**

#### **Parking Review 2018-2020**

In **October 2020**, the following changes were implemented within the town centre CPZ:

- The limit on permits in Area D of the Controlled Parking Zone was increased by **10%**, from 273 to 316 permits.
- The annual household limit on visitor scratch cards was doubled, from 30 to 60 across all areas of the CPZ.
- Introduced two formalised disabled bays for specific residents.

In **February 2021**, new and amended controls were implemented in 14 locations across the borough, primarily to resolve safety, access and traffic flow issues.

The following changes, which were deferred due to the pandemic, were implemented on **1 November 2021**

- Parking controls within Areas A, B, and D of the town centre CPZ to be extended to operate 8.30am to 9pm, 7 days a week

Additionally, and in line with last year's Business Plan, an on-street pay by phone service was introduced to coincide with the extension of the controlled hours.

Early indications in the first couple of months of operation suggest that the expanded range of payment options have made the on-street parking locations more attractive to those motorists that wish to make short-stay visits to the town centre and to park in the most conveniently situated on-street spaces. Indeed, over 50% of on-street users are now using pay by phone to pay for their parking session. Early indications suggest that this and the extended operational hours are likely to improve on-street revenues by around 15-20% above their pre-pandemic levels, thereby boosting the health of the Guildford on-street account and its ability to fund initiative such as the Park and Ride.

#### **Parking Review 2020-2022**

The 'quick win' element of the current parking review cycle become effective in **November 2021**. Locations include:

- Boxgrove Park area, Guildford
- Bowers Lane, Burpham
- Mountside, Guildford (vehicle crossover)
- Chester Close, Ash
- South Hill, Guildford
- Manor Road, Stoughton (Disabled Bay)

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- Winchester Road, Ash
- Convert the 30min max stay P&D to 1hr max stay P&D in the town centre (this will now be advertised along with the 'main body' of the review)

The proposals associated with the main body of the review will be advertised in Spring 2022.

#### 1.4 Residents' Permit Scheme

In line with its 2020 strategy, during the course of FY2022-23, Surrey County Council (SCC) intend to increase residents' permit costs across the county, including the permit schemes within Guildford. They propose to increase the cost of the first permit from £50 to £80 per annum, and the cost of the second permit from £80 to £100 per annum. Carer permits, which currently cost £5 per annum, will become free.

Like the on-street parking charges, the permit fees have remained the same for almost a decade.

#### 1.5 Electric Vehicle Charging Bays

The Parking team continues to work with SCC to deliver several EV only charging bays across the borough as part of Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the on-street roll out. The Phase 1 element was advertised alongside the 'quick win' element of the Guildford 2020–22 parking review and is in the process of being rolled out by SCC.

SCC intend to advertise and implement Phase 2 locations during FY2022-23.

#### 1.6 On-street Pay and Display equipment

The vast majority of the on-street pay and display machines are now more than 20 years old and they only accept coins. Whilst the recent introduction of the on-street pay by phone service in November 2021 has reduced reliance on these machines, there is still a need to refresh / rationalise the equipment to provide motorists with a greater range of payment options. In turn, improved ease of use is likely to encourage more short-stay visitors to park on-street in the most convenient locations.

Discussions with SCC about possible mechanisms to fund the new P&D equipment are ongoing. However, SCC has offered to donate a number of card-only P&D machines that became surplus when SCC decided to discontinue charging in its countryside car parks. These machines will be used to replace existing coin only P&D machines, providing card only facilities in those locations that have more than one machine. We have recently engaged the machine manufacturer and plan to introduce the equipment in the coming months.

#### 1.6 Park & Ride Planning Permissions / Leases

The Parking team continue to consider possible changes to planning permissions and leases to allow services to be expanded, to encourage increased usage, and to meet the wider needs of the community. This also has the potential to improve the financial position associated with operating these sites. However, the ongoing use of the Onslow P&R site as the DHSC's

Test site, and the Artington P&R site as the NHS's Vaccination site currently limit opportunities at these locations.

## 1.7 **Parking Services Update**

### **Covid-19 Pandemic**

Following the publication of Government guidance, and in support of the covid-19 pandemic response, on- and off-street enforcement was drastically curtailed on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020. This also involved the suspension of parking charges. This allowed residents working from home and those isolating more flexibility to park on-street and in the Borough Council's off-street car parks. The issuing of residents' parking permits and visitor permits was also temporarily suspended over the period.

On-street enforcement and charging resumed on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020 with a 2-week warning period to make motorists aware of the changed circumstances. The permits scheme also resumed with customers being able to acquire permits on-line or via Borough Council's Customer Services Centre. Permits were dispatched via post with a 7-day turnaround time, as Borough Council's Millmead offices remained closed to visitors.

During the first lockdown, residents with parking permits did not benefit from them as everyone was required to stay at home and more cars were parked on-street. To recognise this, upon renewal of their permits in September 2020, residents were given 12-month permits but only charged for 10 months. The discount broadly covered the period during the first lockdown when permit-holding residents could not take advantage of their permits / prioritisation.

The Parking team also supported in other ways such as free parking at certain times during the "eat out to help out" campaign. This was advertised via the Borough Council's website, Experience Guildford, the retailers and the local media. Although the lack of ticket data made gauging the success of these initiatives more difficult, the sensor data within the car parks suggested that there was a moderate uplift in utilisation compared to the months before and afterwards. Free parking in the Borough Council's car parks was also offered to permit-holders from Areas A, B and D to provide more facility for residents at a time when many more of them were working from home.

In addition to the national NHS permit scheme, free parking was provided to the Police and Mt Alvernia Hospital staff. This continued, on a discounted basis until summer 2021. Rents were stopped for Market traders and for contract and season ticket holders within the car parks. PCN challenges and appeals stopped, a new Covid-19 cancellation policy was created and payment plans were offered more widely to assist those struggling to pay their parking fines.

The Parking team also assisted the NHS and various pharmacies in the setting up and the operation of their vaccination programmes, through special permitting arrangements and modified enforcement.

The Parking team responded rapidly and adapted quickly to changes in support of residents, business, the town and the national effort. The enforcement team has worked in a Covid-secure environment throughout the pandemic, with measures put in place to minimise the risk of infection. Whilst

this has meant that the enforcement operations have sometimes been impacted, strenuous efforts have been made to try to minimise its effect. Those staff that could work from home did and others were redeployed to support the wider Covid efforts.

### **Future Guildford Transformation Programme**

During the 2020-21, Guildford Borough Council reviewed and implemented Phase B of its transformation programme. As a result, the Parking team moved from the Borough Council's Waste, Cleansing, Recycling and Parking service into its newly formed Customer, Case and Parking service.

The aim of the transformation is to create a more agile, resilient and cost-effective service. As a result, now all permit issues and general parking enquiries are, in the first instance, dealt with by the Customer Services team. More in depth parking administration functions are performed by the Caseworker team. A scaled-back Parking team continue to oversee day-to-day operations, and the implementation of strategies, projects and reviews.

The number of enforcement officers were also reduced as part of this process, although these reductions were restricted to the off-street element of our operation, and on-street enforcement operations have broadly been unaffected by these changes.

It is hoped that these changes will derive savings for both the on-street and off-street parking operations.

Notwithstanding, to fill vacant posts, and to cover the expanded enforcement requirements associated with the extended operational hours of the town centre parking controls, we are currently recruiting additional enforcement officer posts.

### **Government's Breathing Space Initiative**

In May 2021 the government introduced its Breathing Space initiative. This aims to assist those with debt issues, by centralising the management of their debt and reducing the impact on their finances that trying to independently manage multiple debts can have. The Parking team have adapted its notice processing and debt recovery processes accordingly.

#### **1.8 On-Street Pay & Display Performance**

Within the town centre, there are 463 Pay and Display (P&D) parking spaces, which in 2020-21 accommodated 142,899 parking sessions during the controlled hours. Patronage and utilisation were drastically reduced in comparison with previous years, primarily due to the impact of the pandemic.

To assist the needs of key workers, during the first lockdown, parking charges were suspended from 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, with charging resuming on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

Additionally, when lockdown measures were eased, much of the parking in the upper section of the High Street was suspended to provide widened footways for social-distancing purposes. The loss of these 30-minute maximum stay spaces is the primarily reason why the average income per ticket has actually increased by 50p from £1.51 to £2.01, the vast majority of



the remaining spaces in the town centre being available for up to 2 hours (£3.20 for a maximum stay).

<b>GFD On-street parking Performance</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Tickets sold</b>	<b>Income £</b>	<b>Avg £ per Ticket</b>
2009-10	<b>535,094</b>	<b>698,102</b>	<b>1.30</b>
2010-11	<b>521,967</b>	<b>692,869</b>	<b>1.33</b>
2011-12	<b>532,978</b>	<b>700,605</b>	<b>1.31</b>
2012-13	<b>525,299</b>	<b>687,639</b>	<b>1.31</b>
2013-14	<b>520,089</b>	<b>698,838</b>	<b>1.34</b>
2014-15	<b>503,659</b>	<b>753,934</b>	<b>1.50</b>
2015-16	<b>477,142</b>	<b>715,455</b>	<b>1.50</b>
2016-17	<b>457,577</b>	<b>697,244</b>	<b>1.52</b>
2017-18	<b>433,996</b>	<b>665,425</b>	<b>1.53</b>
2018-19	<b>388,939</b>	<b>610,124</b>	<b>1.57</b>
2019-20	<b>335,770</b>	<b>507,105</b>	<b>1.51</b>
2020-21	<b>142,899</b>	<b>288,501</b>	<b>2.01</b>

Although convenience is known to be the key influencer on parking location, and despite the on-street spaces being located in some of the most convenient locations, there has been a steady reduction in on-street ticket sales and revenue. The possible reasons for this include:

- The reduction in the number of spaces
- Changes in the nature of the businesses / vacant premises closest to the on-street spaces
- Limited payment options
- Restrictions on the flexibility of use (in relation to the 30min max stay bays)

The introduction of pay by phone, the forthcoming upgrade of some of the P&D machines to card only, and extending the maximum stay within 30-minute bays to 1-hour, will greatly improve flexibility for customers and encourage greater use of the on-street spaces, particularly for those not carrying sufficient change.

The extended operational hours within Areas A, B and D, from Monday to Saturday 8.30am to 6pm to Monday to Sunday 8.30am to 9pm represents a 50% extension in the operational hours of the controls within these areas. In Area D, the charging period within the on-street pay and display and dual-use spaces has been similarly extended, as is already the case in the area around GLive. This helps prioritise space in the dual-use spaces situated in residential streets for permit-holders. However, as early indications suggest, there has also been an increase ticket sales and additional income.

In those roads that are primarily non-residential, the evenings charge is a flat-rate per visit tariff, to allow greater flexibility of use in those particular spaces. This is specifically designed to assist with the evening economy, and in particular, food and drinking establishments, where visitors would otherwise be restricted by the 30-minute time limit, which applies to the bays during the day.

## 1.9 Enforcement

During the first lockdown, enforcement activity was broadly suspended, other than to ensure main routes were kept free of parked vehicles. Enforcement staff were also redeployed to perform other Covid-related tasks, such as food parcel deliveries to the vulnerable within the community, during both the first and subsequent full and partial lockdowns. The need for the enforcement team to work in a Covid-secure environment, with separate 'bubbles', also impacted the ability to perform enforcement tasks normally.

These factors, along with suppressed parking activity in both on- and off-street parking locations resulted in reduced levels of non-compliance and lower numbers of penalty charge notices being issued during 2020-21 (see below)

PCNs Issued (Guildford)	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Diff. to prev. year %
On-street	23,885	15,572	19,219	9,094	-52.7%
Off-street	10,368	11,199	11,363	5,093	-55.2%
<b>Total Issued</b>	<b>34,253</b>	<b>26,771</b>	<b>30,582</b>	<b>14,187</b>	<b>-53.6%</b>

Although there are fluctuation from year-to-year, setting aside the impact of the pandemic in 2020-21, the PCN issue rate per enforcement officer has broadly remained constant. The reduction in on-street parking activity in Guildford town centre has been countered by the introduction and enforcement of additional controls across the remainder of the borough.

We have also begun enforcing a wider range of contraventions. Shortly before the first national lockdown, in January 2020, we began issuing "Regulation 10" postal PCNs for those offences where the enforcement officer was prevented from issuing the ticket on the car. This is assisted by the team having the capability to evidence drive-aways using bodycams.

During 2020-21, 267 Reg.10 PCNs were issued by post. This would have been higher, were it not for the pandemic, and the impact it has had on parking activity, non-compliance and enforcement.

In preparation for the extended operational hours, in mid-2021 we began advertising for additional enforcement officers to cover these periods. Due to the nature of the job, recruiting enforcement officers is difficult at the best of times. However, the current job market has made things even more challenging. Notwithstanding, we have recruited 2 additional staff, and we hope to recruit several more in the coming months. This will help ensure appropriate levels of enforcement resource to cover both the 'core' and 'extended' enforcement periods.

Annexe 3 highlights a list of locations where requests for greater enforcement have been received. This reinforces the need for there to be an appropriate level of resource to perform enforcement duties, albeit that additional staff do increase the baseline cost of the operation. However, this can often be offset by the additional PCN revenue and income protection provided.

Notwithstanding, with the extension of the operational hours within the central core of the town centre CPZ (Areas A, B and D), and the forthcoming

introduction of Bus Lane camera enforcement in the coming months, PCN numbers are expected to recover in 2022-23.

#### 1.10 On-street Parking Account / Park & Ride Funding

Historically, the operation of the P&R sites has been funded by the on-street parking account, which ordinarily generates a surplus. However, there have been reductions in on-street parking revenue in recent years and balancing the budget has become more challenging. In 2019, measures were put in place to try to reduce costs by removing the permanent guards. This has resulted in a saving of around £85,000 per annum and is the primary reason for the cost of running the car parks reducing from £434,107 in 2018-19 to £326,561 in 2020-21

The impact of the pandemic on on-street parking utilisation and enforcement has been such that in 2020-21, the on-street income vs costs did not generate a surplus. However, the Government's Covid-related compensation scheme for lost revenue, provided £490,517 in funding. As a result, the account was £268,307 in surplus. 80% of this (£214,646) is retained by the GJC (60%) and GBC (20%), and is primarily used to fund the P&R.

However, the suspension of the P&R bus service for periods during the pandemic, and the subsidies offered by central government to the bus operators mean that no subsidy was required for the majority of bus services during 2020-21. The central government funding for bus operators was extended into 2021-22, and continued until the end of 2021.

As a result, the cost of operating the sites and bus services reduced from £631,597 in 2019-20, to £386,013 in 2020-21. The vast majority of these costs relate to cost of providing the parking facility (rent, rates, electricity, etc.).

<b>Funding 2019-20</b>	<b>£</b>
Bus contract price (net of fare income)	59,452
Car park running costs (rent, site maintenance, general rates and other costs)	326,561
<b>Total cost</b>	<b>386,013</b>
Guildford On-street parking surplus (including £490.579 government grant) (80% of total)	214,646
Paid from Guildford On-street parking reserve	0
Income received from DHSC to cover rent re: Onslow P&R site	11,867
<b>Total funding</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Shortfall of funding</b>	<b>159,500</b>

The introduction of a minimum £3 charge within the town centre 'shopper' car parks in December 2020 now often makes it cheaper to use the P&R service than the alternative town centre car parks for all but the shortest visits. This may encourage greater patronage of the P&R service, thereby reducing the need to subsidise the bus service and improving the financial position.

The slow return to normality, combined with changes in the operational hours of the on-street controls within the central areas of the CPZ, may generate additional income from the changes and enforcement activity, and this too may assist the financial position.

The soon-to-be-introduced Bus Lane Enforcement Camera schemes in Onslow Street, Woking Road and Woodbridge Road also has the potential to generate additional revenue, and any surplus controlled by GBC and SCC could possibly be ring-fenced, in order to contribute towards funding the P&R operation.

Other measures the Parking team are considering, in order to reduce costs and increase revenue include:

- Increased usage of the P&R sites by those visiting the town would reduce the subsidies currently paid to the bus operator, to provide the link to the town centre from the Onslow and Spectrum sites. In this regard, relaxing the planning permissions, as outlined in section 1.6, would enable the bus operator to operate the service over an extended period, and in turn, this may help improve patronage,
- the relaxation of the planning permissions at existing P&R sites may provide other opportunities to make savings / generate income and in turn, improve the financial position such as,
  - potentially relocating of a bus depot to the Artington P&R site, utilising underused space,
  - potential to utilise underused space at Onslow P&R for local business needing parking,
- consider the existing P&R sites and if there are more suitable sites to service the public's needs, such as the Northern / North-eastern corridor, where subsidies may not be required.

If the decline in the on-street surplus is not arrested and / or savings / increase revenue generated by the P&R sites themselves, the ability of the on-street account to fully fund the P&R service, without requiring subsidy from other funding sources, is uncertain.

1.11 **Car Club Update** now has 12 car club spaces in the town centre; and include electric charging points to support the 5 electric vehicles the club is using. SCC is currently working with the car club operator and electric charging point provider to ensure that the electric charging points work consistently. We will continue to support the scheme through our ongoing enforcement and any further expansion.

#### 1.12 **School Watch Initiative**

Like other elements of our on-street enforcement operation, the pandemic greatly affected our School Watch patrols. Apart from the autumn 2020 term, schools were closed for much of the remainder of the period. This, combined with the introduction of COVID-secure working patterns within the enforcement team, resulted in the School Watch Initiative being suspended for virtually all of the 2020-21 school year.

Since lockdown restrictions were removed in mid-July 2021, we have recommenced School Watch, and this has continued into the autumn 2021 term.

### 1.13 Refreshing Back Office Permit / PCN Software, Handheld Terminals and Virtual Permits

The use of virtual permits could reduce, or even remove entirely the need to issue paper permits. This has the potential to reduce costs and make it easier for residents to apply and be issued with permits on-line, and more quickly. However, the current back-office software presently used does not support such permits. The capabilities of the existing handheld equipment employed the enforcement officers to undertake their duties is also a limiting factor.

Unfortunately, the COVID pandemic and the Transformation Programme, which involved a general moratorium of the procurement of IT systems, to ensure integration with the systems being introduced as part of the transformation, has prevented this from being progressed. Therefore, during the course of 2022-23, we intend to refresh these systems, so that virtual permits can be introduced.

## 2. ANALYSIS:

### 2.1 Increasing the on-street parking charges, as outlined in recommendations (ii) and (iii) will:

- Maintain the price differential between on- and off-street parking charges and help reinforce the “drive to not through” strategy,
- encourage greater turnover and the availability of on-street space for visitors to the town centre and residents,
- when combined with the extended operational hours of the controls / charges, being introduced in November 2021, they will assist in generating additional revenue with which to fund the Park and Ride service,

### 2.2 As motor vehicles are a major source of pollution in our Borough, it is important that we encourage sustainable travel options and reduce vehicle emissions. We are doing this by:

- promoting local travel by “car club”. Making bays available for car club use including electric charging
- traffic management and enforcement by moving drivers on and changing behaviours when stopping unnecessarily and idling
- promoting use of public transport, especially the Park & Ride, to encourage drivers to park away from town to avoid congestion and increased pollution
- introducing Bus lane camera enforcement which will remove a large proportion of non-authorized traffic from bus lanes, keeping lanes free flowing for public transport
- providing EV charging points so that they become more accessible for the public
- encouraging greater access / use of online services, such as residents’ and visitor permit acquisition and renewals, to reduce the number of trips being made to the council offices and removing potential congestion and emissions in the town centre.

### **3. OPTIONS:**

- 3.1 Recommendation (ii) and (iii) support the “drive to not through” strategy by maintaining the differential between on- and off-street parking charges. These changes can be introduced using a variation notice, rather than full consultation.
- 3.2 The Committee could choose not to introduce the recommended tariff changes but this would effectively reduce the differential between on- and off-street, if charges in the latter were to be increased, which is likely.
- 3.3 Alternatively, the Committee could also choose to increase the tariff within the 30-minute pay and display and pay and display dual-use on-street spaces, but this would then make these charges greater than the 30-minute maximum stay North Street pay and display (on-street) car park, thereby creating a potential tariff ‘anomaly’.

### **4. CONSULTATIONS:**

- 4.1 If the recommended tariff changes are approved, we will need to publish and place appropriate notices advising customers of the variation in charges. However, it will only involve the publication of variation notices, rather than a full consultation, because only the tariffs are being changed, and not the period over which the charges will apply / user-groups impacted.

### **5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:**

- 5.1 Recommendation (ii) and (iii) would use existing officer resource to develop and advertise the variation notice, and the notice would itself cost somewhere in the region of around £500 to advertise.

Increasing the on-street tariffs, coupled with the soon to be extended operational hours, on-street pay by phone, and the introduction of a number of card only pay and display machines is likely to encourage greater use of the on-street spaces and increase revenue.

### **6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:**

- 6.1 Blue badge holders are exempt from paying the on-street parking charges within Guildford. Enforcement of the on-street disabled parking spaces will occur more regularly, over a longer period, due to the extended control hours being introduced in November 2021. Furthermore, for those that have restricted mobility, but may be not blue badge holders, the introduction of pay by phone parking will enable them to pay for their parking without having to go to and from the pay and display machine.

### **7. LOCALISM:**

- 7.1 The higher on-street tariffs recommended encourage greater turnover, improves the availability of these premium spaces and usage in the most convenient town centre on-street parking spaces. This supports the “**drive to**

[www.surreycc.gov.uk/guildford](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/guildford)

**and not through**” strategy.

- 7.2 Increasing the tariffs in the pay and display dual-use space, in particular, may also increase their availability to be used by Area D permit-holding residents and also residents’ visitors.

## **8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	Set out below
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report
Public Health	No significant implications arising from this report

### **8.1 Sustainability implications**

Parking sits alongside Climate Change and Air Quality within the strategies that feed into the Surrey Transport plan. Therefore, in many respects, these strategies and sustainability are inter-dependant.

Preventing parking in locations where it would otherwise cause safety and access issues, and in particular, impede traffic, helps reduce congestion, the resultant journey times and pollution. This can be particularly important on bus routes, where large vehicles utilise relatively narrow roads.

## **9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 9.1 The Guildford Joint Committee is asked to agree:

(ii) agree to increase the tariff in the 2-hour max. stay pay and display and pay and display dual-use spaces from 80 pence per half hour to 90 pence per half hour, to be introduced on 1 July 2022.

(iii) agree to increase the tariff in the 3-hour maximum stay pay and display dual-use spaces from 60 pence per half hour to 80 pence per half hour, to be introduced on 1 July 2022.

## **10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

- 10.1 If agreed, the variation notice will be advertised, and implementation take place on 1 July 2022.

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**Consulted:**

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**Annexes:**

Annexe 1 – Guildford Parking Annual Report 2020-21

Annexe 2 - Comparison with parking charges in similar towns / cities within the region

Annexe 3 – Requests relating to the frequency of enforcement

**Background papers:**

None

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