



**REPORT of
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

to
**STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
23 JANUARY 2025**

**FEES AND CHARGES ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: CAR PARK CHARGES –
BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 For Members to consider the further information at **APPENDICES 1 - 4** to inform a recommendation to the Council regarding the introduction of car park charges proposed by the Car Parking Task and Finish Working Group (CPTFWG) for the following Burnham-on-Crouch Car Parks; Riverside Park, Foundry Lane and Millfield's, thereby bringing charging arrangements in line with the Maldon Town Centre and Promenade Park car parks.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That Members consider the further information at **APPENDICES 1 - 4**, previously considered by the Car Parking Task and Finish Working Group and recommend to the Council one of the options set out at (ii) – (v) below;

To the Council:

- (ii) That the Car Park charges originally proposed on 21 November 2024, and set out at **APPENDIX 4** be approved;

OR

- (iii) That the Car Park charges originally proposed on 21 November 2024, and set out at **APPENDIX 4** be approved, but with a concession for up to six car parking spaces to made available for free use for up to two hours at Foundry Lane to support local residents to use the GP Surgery, and the introduction of paid for permits for GP Surgery staff;

OR

- (iv) That the Car Park charges originally proposed on 21 November 2024 for Riverside Park only during be approved for 2025 / 26 and to review car parking car charges for Millfield's and Foundry Lane Car Parks during 2025 / 26;

OR

- (v) That the Car Park charges originally proposed on 21 November 2024 not be agreed, and the Council continues to offer free car parking at all Burnham-on-Crouch car parks.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 On 21 May 2024 the Strategy and Resources Committee appointed six Members to the CPTFWG.
- 3.2 A refreshed Terms of Reference were agreed by the CPTFWHG (**APPENDIX 1**). The updated Terms of Reference included consideration of a new Car Parking Strategy in addition to the annual car park fees and charges.
- 3.3 The recommendations relating to car park fees and charges informed the fees and charges schedule presented to the Strategy and Resources Committee on 21 November 2024, with the Car Parking Strategy coming forward during Quarter Four 2024 / 25.
- 3.4 Members have agreed the more general increase of car parking charges within the Maldon Town centre Car Parks and Promenade Park for 2025 / 26 but have requested more information before a decision is made related to the Burnham-on-Crouch Car Parks.
- 3.5 **Background of Car Park Charging**
- 3.5.1 **Policy** - Whilst the Councils Fees and Charges policy permits charging for car park use across the whole District, historically charges have only been applied to car parks in the Maldon Town Centre and Promenade Park, with car parks in Burnham-on-Crouch remaining free to use. This approach creates a lack of consistency with the approach to charging for use within the Maldon Town Centre and Promenade Park.
- 3.5.2 **User pays, and cost recovery approach** - The Council owns a range of car parks, all of which require investment to maintain them, however the Council's overall approach to cost recovery and "user pays" is currently not applied to the Burnham-on-Crouch Car Parks, as the cost of providing and maintaining those car parks is funded by the Council Tax Payers of the district more generally, rather than the car park users.
- 3.6 **Financial Pressures**
- 3.6.1 The Council has over a number of years faced increasing financial pressures. Car parking income is the Council's second biggest source of revenue after Council Tax. Therefore, the Council has carefully balanced the need to continue to support residents and businesses through avoiding large increases to car park charges, whilst recognising the significant contribution car park income plays in being able to deliver a balanced budget and avoiding a reduction in services.
- 3.6.2 The increasing financial pressures faced by the Council have resulted in alternative options for meeting that budget gap, such as introducing car park charges where there is currently no charge, to reduce the risk of having to reduce service levels.
- 3.7 **Car Park Task and Finish Working Group Recommendations**
- 3.7.1 For all of these reasons the CPTFWG asked Officers to bring forward options, and a business case for them to consider related to introducing Car Park charges in Burnham-on-Crouch.
- 3.7.2 **APPENDIX 2** sets out details of the current car park provision within each of the three car parks at Burnham-on-Crouch.

- 3.7.3 **APPENDIX 3** sets out the proposed charges and estimated income for each of the car parks in Burnham-on-Crouch. It also sets out the estimated initial costs for introducing charges such as car parking machines.
- 3.7.4 The proposals would see a full recovery of the initial costs within year one, and an annual estimated income of £34,000 (without any concessions and based on a 30% usage), rising to £57,000 for a 50% usage.
- 3.7.5 The income received from the charges would provide a revenue source to fund future maintenance of the car parks.
- 3.7.6 The additional option to provide concessions as set out at paragraph 3.9 would include six free car parking spaces at Foundry Lane and permits for GP Surgery staff which would generate a revised annual estimated net income of £32,000 based on a 30% usage, increasing to £51,000 for a 50% usage.
- 3.7.7 The additional revenue generated at paragraphs 3.8.4 and 3.8.6 (details in **APPENDIX 3**) excludes any penalty charge notice income from non-payment.
- 3.7.8 The enforcement of the car parks would be incorporated into the Community Engagement Officers daily activities so would not be an additional cost.
- 3.7.9 The original proposals for car park were supported by both the CPTFWG, and the Finance Working Group, and **APPENDIX 4** confirms the proposed car park charges

3.8 **Proposed concessions**

- 3.8.1 Recognising the impact upon the patients that use Foundry Lane Car Park, it is proposed to consider concessions through the designation of six parking bays at the Foundry Lane car park, which will allow up to two hours free parking. This would ensure that the patients of Burnham-on-Crouch GP surgeries have access to free parking, which mirrors the current access to two free hours of Car Parking in the visitors car park at the Council Offices in Maldon.
- 3.8.2 In order to ensure that a consistent approach is taken for the staff of the GP Surgeries in both Maldon and Burnham-on-Crouch it is proposed that an annual chargeable permit is introduced for employees of the Foundry Lane car park from 2025 / 26.
- 3.8.3 As this would be a new permit charge, a 50% discount of the annual permit cost for the employees of the GP Surgery would apply for 2025 / 26 and a full charge from 2026 / 27. This approach would be consistent with the Maldon GP Surgeries.
- 3.8.4 The need to introduce and publish new Traffic Regulation Orders and install the new equipment would require a lead in time of at least three months. Consequently, should Members decide to implement the new charges these would not be operational until at least June 2025.
- 3.8.5 Should Members decide to proceed with the introduction of these new charges Officers will carefully monitor the impacts of the new charges and will work closely with Burnham-on-Crouch Town Council and the GP Surgery to ensure any feedback is shared with the South Essex Parking Partnership, to inform any additional parking measures that may be needed.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The implementation of car park charges for Riverside Park, Foundry Lane and Millfield's will ensure the Council's policies are applied consistently and fairly, both for residents, visitors, users of GP Surgeries, and GP Surgery Staff.
- 4.2 The rollout of any new charges would be undertaken sensitively, with good communication to all car park users.
- 4.3 After the first year of charging the car parks are projected to provide an annual net income of £34,000 which will support the maintenance of those car parks going forward, or an income of £32,000 if the concessions at Foundry Lane car park are offered, based upon a 30% use.
- 4.4 If usage of the car park increases to 50% the income could increase to up to £57,000 (or £51,000 if concessions were introduced in Foundry Lane car park).
- 4.5 The original proposals for charging for Foundry Lane, Riverside Park and Millfield's, Burnham-on-Crouch were supported by both the CPTFWG, and the Finance Working Group.

5. IMPACT ON PRIORITIES AS SET OUT IN THE CORPORATE PLAN 2025 - 2028

5.1 Supporting our communities

- 5.1.1 The proposals for introducing car park charges for Foundry Lane, Millfields and Riverside Park would ensure consistency of policy across the Council's two main towns, ensuring that users of the car parks contribute to the maintenance of car parks. It will also help the Council to achieve a balanced budget and reduce the risk of reductions to service standards.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – For the Districts' residents this will ensure a consistent approach is taken across all of the Council's Car Parks and would ensure that those using the car parks contribute to the cost of the provision and maintenance of the car parks. Short stay Permits would also be available for local residents to use Riverside Car Park to mirror the concessions offered at Promenade Park.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None. The proposals will continue to offer free car parking for Blue Badge holders at all car parks.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk (including Fraud implications)** – The income projections would ensure that an annual income would be generated from the Burnham-on-Crouch car parks after year one.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – The initial investment for each car park would be recovered after year one and would provide a regular source of income to support the maintenance of the car parks, help the Council to achieve a balanced budget, and avoid the need to consider reductions to services. The level of additional revenue is estimated to be between £32,000 and £51,000 based upon an average usage of between 30 to 50 percent, assuming concessions are applied.

- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – Minimal – project delivery and implementation – within existing resources.

Background Papers: None.

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