



Report of the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management

Cabinet – 19 November 2020

Review of City Centre Car Parking Charges to Support the City Centre during the Covid 19 Pandemic

Purpose:	The report looks at the financial impact of implementing reduced car parking charges within our City Centre Car Parks
Policy Framework:	Highways and Transportation – Car Parking Policy
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal, Customer Contact Centre.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: 1) The implementation of revised parking charges for the period 9 th November 2020 to the 9 th December 2020 as detailed in this report are endorsed. That Cabinet approves the extension of the revised parking charges from 9 th December 2020 to 31 st January 2021. 2) Cabinet delegates authority to the Cabinet Member - Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management, Chief Finance Officer and the Head of Highways and Transportation to review and implement any further changes to car parking and park and ride tariffs from the 31 st January 2021 to 31 st March 2021.
Report Author:	Gavin Newman
Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The COVID 19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown has had a profound effect on the City Centre by changing the public's behaviour in terms of business and recreation.

- 1.2 With more businesses following Welsh Government guidelines to work from home, offices are quieter and City Centre footfall has reduced. Traffic levels into the City Centre at peak times are lower than before the lockdown in March. With less traffic and visitors to the City Centre the demand for car parking has also reduced. This has resulted in less usage of our City Centre Car Parks and meant that car park income is down on previous years.
- 1.3 Park and Ride is a service that the Council has promoted as a cheaper and more sustainable travel method for visitors into the City Centre. Whilst aimed at shoppers and commuters the service seems more popular with City Centre workers who require all day parking. At £2.50 it is cheaper than the £7.00 all day car parking tariff.
- 1.4 Surveys carried out in 2019 as part of the City Centre Parking Strategy revealed that the average length of stays in City Centre Car Parks was between 2-3 hours costing between £2 - £3. This could be a reason why some shoppers chose to drive into the City Centre and pay for parking rather than use the Park and Ride.
- 1.5 With reduced City Centre Parking after Christmas 2019, due to the Swansea Central works, the Council reduced the price of the Park and Ride Service to £1 after 9:30am. This incentive made the Park and Ride more financially appealing to visitors. However, there was only a modest increase in Park and Ride usage, up until late March 2020 when the Covid 19 lockdown commenced, and the P&R sites were closed.
- 1.6 With social distancing rules currently in place and reduced capacity on buses, since reopening the Park and Ride sites, in October 2020, the level of usage has been very low with on average only 10 cars using each of the P&R sites per day.
- 1.7 With Wales currently under a nationwide circuit breaker lockdown, the City Centre will be placed under more pressure. There is a demand to support the city centre in recovering quickly following the lifting of restrictions, expected to be on the 9th November 2020, and a reduced parking tariff offer is one of a raft of measures currently under consideration.

2. City Centre Car Park offers

- 2.1 It is proposed that a simple offer across all City Centre Car parks, including the three multi storey car parks (Quadrant, St David's and High Street) be introduced from when the lockdown period ends on Monday 9th November 2020 through until the end of January (the end of the January sales period)
- 2.2 The proposed offer, for consideration, is £1 for 2 hours and £2 all day after 9:30am. Up until 9:30am normal charges would apply. This offer would ensure that ample customer parking is available.

2.3 In order to support City Centre workers the Park and Ride charges would be dropped from £2.50 to just £1. This would be available throughout the day so could also be taken up by visitors.

2.4 The current tariff structure in High Street multi storey car park is:

- 50p for 1 hour parking
- £1 for 2 hours

The current 50p for 1 hours parking has a very low uptake. This might be because we allow 40 minutes free parking for rail customers picking up or dropping off from the rail station. This free 40 minute period is to continue throughout the period of the offer. The proposed city wide parking offer would be more expensive for the first hour, at £1 for 2hours, it would match the 2 hour tariff band. However, shoppers would significantly benefit thereafter as current all day parking is £6 in this car park. Therefore, it is considered that the offer would still be popular with High Street multi storey car park users. It should also be noted that most customers in High Street stay for longer periods and many of them are season ticket holders.

2.5 St Davids MSCP current tariff reduction offer is £1 for 3 hours parking. However, to park for 4 hours would cost £4, a £5 hour stay would cost £5 and all day would cost £7. Again, the revised city wide offer is considered to be more beneficial to shoppers, than the previous offer, allowing visitors to spend all day in the city centre for a £2 car park charge.

2.6 By comparison in Quadrant MSCP the tariff is more expensive meaning this tariff reduction is even greater. A 1 hour stay currently costs £1.40, 2 hour £2.80, 3 hour £4.00 and 4 hour £5.50. Any additional after this are charged at £2.20 per hour meaning an all-day 7 hour stay would cost £12.10.

2.7 By keeping the pricing offer simple and consistent across the city centre, will support a marketing campaign, that is simple, easily understood and therefore attractive to prospective visitors to the city centre.

2.8 These offers have been consulted on with Swansea BID who have been approached by their members to ask the Council to provide a simple City wide parking offer that will not only encourage visitors to the City Centre on the approach to Christmas but also encourage longer stays.

2.9 These offers would apply only to the City Centre. A separate paper considering options for areas like Mumbles will be provided in due course.

3. Equality and Engagement Implications

3.1 The Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) and must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Our Equality Impact Assessment process ensures that we have paid due regard to the above.

- 3.2 In order to comply with equality regulations an Equality Impact Assessment screening form was completed with the agreed outcome that a full EIA report was not required.
- 3.3 In order to support business and encourage City Centre footfall through the Coronavirus lockdown the Council proposes to reduce City centre Car Parking and Park and Ride Charges. The proposed changes are more in line with the Councils current Transportation and Environmental Policies. A full EIA report is not required as this proposal will have no disproportionate impact on protected groups. By keeping the pricing offer simple and consistent across the city centre, will support a marketing campaign, that is simple, easily understood and therefore attractive to prospective visitors to the city centre. The proposed changes overall result in cheaper car park chares in the City Centre over the period outlined, this will be of benefit to all users.
- 3.4 The screening form can be found within Appendix A.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Implementing the proposed £1 for 2 hours and £2 all day parking charges across all City Centre Car Parks would have the following financial implications:-
- In September 2019 City Centre Car Park income totalled £99627.45 compared with £78000 in September 2020. This is a percentage reduction of 21%.
 - It is difficult to predict how the lockdown and pandemic will impact City Centre footfall. We are therefore basing our income estimates on 2019 income figures less 21%. This is the reduction from this year plus a further 51% reduction to account for the proposed offer.

Month	2019-20	2020-21 estimate - 21%	2020-21 estimate with deal - 51%	Financial loss
Nov	£118,116.45	£93,312	£47,582.12	£45,729.88
Dec	£144,096.70	£113,836.39	£55,780.39	£58,056.00
Jan	£96,810.23	£76,480.09	£37,475.24	£39,004.85
Feb	£82,783.00	£65,399.00	£40,564.00	£24,835.00
Mar	£39,568.00	£31,259.00	£19,389.00	£11,870.00
Total	£481,374.38	£380,286	£181,401.75	£179,495.73

Charges would return to normal levels in April 2021.

The overall loss of car park income due to the pandemic is far greater than 21%, however, we have factored in that there will be an increase in

demand during the run up to Christmas. It is extremely difficult to predict future usage in these unprecedented times.

4.2 Implementing the proposed £1 all day at Landore and Fabian Way Park and Ride is a 60% reduction and would have the following financial implications:-

- Usage at both sites since reopening has been very low with on average only 10 vehicles a day at each site using the service generating income of £50 a day so £300 a week or £1200 a month.
- Based on the same usage with the reduced tariff monthly income would reduce to £480.

Month	2019-20	2020-21 estimate	2020-21 estimate with deal - 60%	Financial loss
Nov	£21,279.00	£1,200.00	£480.00	£720.00
Dec	£25,449.00	£1,200.00	£480.00	£720.00
Jan	£9,550.00	£1,200.00	£480.00	£720.00
Feb	£13,017.00	£1,200.00	£480.00	£720.00
Mar	£4,231.00	£1,200.00	£480.00	£720.00
Total	£73,526.00	£6,000	£1,920.00	£3,600.00

4.3 In all cases it is explicitly assumed that any voluntary decision to forgo income or increase costs by reducing or waiving charges will mean there may be limited scope to claim such future “losses” from Welsh Government.

4.4 If Cabinet were minded to proceed the Section 151 Officer would recommend the cost be funded by release from contingency (given one off nature) and that Cabinet accepts the draw from other earmarked reserves in due course will likely go up as the available contingency sum shrinks by release and allocation to services. Any draw from contingency, if so approved, will be fully reflected in the third quarter monitoring report on the budget to Cabinet in February. Cabinet will also have to be mindful of any future cost obligations in recommending a budget for 2021-22 to full Council for March 2021.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 Notices publicising the proposed changes to Car Park Charges would need to be prepared and advertised.

6. Summary and recommendations

6.1 That Cabinet consider the proposals detailed within the report and the associated financial risks in implementing price reductions in Car Parks and Park and Rides.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix A - EIA Assessment Form

Appendix B - Financial Methodology

Equality Impact Assessment Screening Form – 2017/8

Please ensure that you refer to the Screening Form Guidance while completing this form. If you would like further guidance please contact the Access to Services team (see guidance for details).

Section 1

Which service area and directorate are you from?

Service Area: Parking Services

Directorate:Place

Q1(a) WHAT ARE YOU SCREENING FOR RELEVANCE?

Service/ Function	Policy/ Procedure	Project	Strategy	Plan	Proposal
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

(b) Please name and describe here:

Increase in Car Park Charges

It is proposed that a simple offer across all City Centre Car parks, including the three multi storey car parks (Quadrant, St David's and High Street) be introduced from when the lockdown period ends on Monday 9th November 2020 through until the end of January (the end of the January sales period)

The proposed offer, for consideration, is £1 for 2 hours and £2 all day after 9:30am. Up until 9:30am normal charges would apply. This offer would ensure that ample customer parking is available.

In order to support City Centre workers the Park and Ride charges would be dropped from £2.50 to just £1. This would be available throughout the day so could also be taken up by visitors.

The current tariff structure in High Street multi storey car park is:

- 50p for 1 hour parking
- £1 for 2 hours

The current 50p for 1 hours parking has a very low uptake. This might be because we allow 40 minutes free parking for rail customers picking up or dropping off from the rail station. The proposed city wide parking offer would be more expensive for the first hour, at £1 for 2hours, it would match the 2 hour tariff band. However, shoppers would significantly benefit thereafter as current all day parking is £8 in this car park. Therefore, it is considered that the offer would still be popular with High Street multi storey car park users. It should also be noted that most customers in High Street stay for longer periods and many of them are season ticket holders.

St Davids MSCP current tariff reduction offer is £1 for 3 hours parking. However, to park for 4 hours would cost £4, a £5 hour stay would cost £5 and all day would cost £7. Again, the revised city wide offer is considered to be more beneficial to shoppers, than the previous offer, allowing visitors to spend all day in the city centre for a £2 car park charge.

By comparison in Quadrant MSCP the tariff is more expensive meaning this tariff reduction is even greater. A 1 hour stay currently costs £1.40, 2 hour £2.80, 3 hour £4.00 and 4 hour £5.50. Any additional after this are charged at £2.20 per hour meaning an all-day 7 hour stay would cost £12.10.

Equality Impact Assessment Screening Form – 2017/8

By keeping the pricing offer simple and consistent across the city centre, will support a marketing campaign, that is simple, easily understood and therefore attractive to prospective visitors to the city centre.

These offers would apply only to the City Centre. A separate paper considering options for areas like Mumbles will be provided in due course.

Q2(a) WHAT DOES Q1a RELATE TO?

Direct front line service delivery <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (H)	Indirect front line service delivery <input type="checkbox"/> (M)	Indirect back room service delivery <input type="checkbox"/> (L)
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(b) DO YOUR CUSTOMERS/CLIENTS ACCESS THIS...?

Because they need to <input type="checkbox"/> (H)	Because they want to <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (M)	Because it is automatically provided to everyone in Swansea <input type="checkbox"/> (M)	On an internal basis i.e. Staff <input type="checkbox"/> (L)
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Q3 WHAT IS THE POTENTIAL IMPACT ON THE FOLLOWING...

	High Impact (H)	Medium Impact (M)	Low Impact (L)	Don't know (H)
Children/young people (0-18) →	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Older people (50+) →	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other age group →	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability →	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race (including refugees) →	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asylum seekers →	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gypsies & travellers →	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or (non-)belief →	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex →	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation →	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment →	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh Language →	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty/social exclusion →	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carers (inc. young carers) →	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community cohesion →	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership →	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity →	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Equality Impact Assessment Screening Form – 2017/8

Q4 WHAT ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION / CO-PRODUCTIVE APPROACHES WILL YOU UNDERTAKE?

Please provide details below – either of your planned activities or your reasons for not undertaking engagement

In order to support business and encourage city centre footfall through the Coronavirus lockdown the Council proposes to reduce City centre Car Parking and Park and Ride Charges. This offer has been consulted on with Swansea BID who have been approached by their members to ask the Council to provide a simple City wide parking offer that will not only encourage visitors to the City Centre on the approach to Christmas but also encourage longer stays. Surveys carried out by the Council in 2019 for the City Centre Parking Strategy revealed the average length of stay in City Centre Car Parks was between 2-3 hours.

Q5(a) HOW VISIBLE IS THIS INITIATIVE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC?

High visibility
 (H)

Medium visibility
 (M)

Low visibility
 (L)

(b) WHAT IS THE POTENTIAL RISK TO THE COUNCIL'S REPUTATION?

(Consider the following impacts – legal, financial, political, media, public perception etc...)

High risk
 (H)

Medium risk
 (M)

Low risk
 (L)

Q6 Will this initiative have an impact (however minor) on any other Council service?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide details below

Q7 HOW DID YOU SCORE?

Please tick the relevant box

MOSTLY H and/or M → HIGH PRIORITY → EIA to be completed
Please go to Section 2

MOSTLY L → LOW PRIORITY / NOT RELEVANT → Do not complete EIA
Please go to Q8 followed by Section 2

Equality Impact Assessment Screening Form – 2017/8

Q8 If you determine that this initiative is not relevant for an EIA report, you must provide a full explanation here. Please ensure that you cover all of the relevant protected groups.

In order to support business and encourage City Centre footfall through the Coronavirus lockdown the Council proposes to reduce City centre Car Parking and Park and Ride Charges.

The proposed changes are more in line with the Councils current Transportation and Environmental Policies. A full EIA report is not required as this proposal will have no disproportionate impact on protected groups. By keeping the pricing offer simple and consistent across the city centre, will support a marketing campaign, that is simple, easily understood and therefore attractive to prospective visitors to the city centre. The proposed changes overall result in cheaper car park chares in the City Centre over the period outlined, this will be of benefit to all users.

Section 2

NB: Please email this completed form to the Access to Services Team for agreement before obtaining approval from your Head of Service. Head of Service approval is only required via email – no electronic signatures or paper copies are needed.

Screening completed by:
Name: Gavin Newman
Job title: Parking Services Officer
Date: 5/11/20
Approval by Head of Service:
Name:
Position:
Date:

Please return the completed form to accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk

Appendix B – Financial Methodology

- During September 2020 the income from all City Centre Car Parks was £78,000. Only £7500 of this was taken before 9:30am.
- The City centre parking Strategy revealed that the most common length of stay in the City Centre was up to 3 hours.
- Based on a crude assessment that 60% of customers stay up to 3 hours, 20% up to 4 hours and the remaining 20% all day we can work out that:-
 - 2014 customers bought an all-day ticket
 - 3133 customers bought a 4 hour ticket
 - 12085 customers bought a 3 hour ticket

If 2014 customers paid £2 rather than £7 that would be loss of £10070.

If 3133 customers paid £2 rather than £4 that would be a loss of £7833.

If 12085 customers paid £2 rather than £3.50 that would be a loss of £18128.

Total loss based on September 2020 income £36031 a 51% loss.