



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Cabinet

24th September 2024

Report of Councillor Richard Cleaver,
Cabinet Member for Property and
Public Engagement

Proposals for Car Parking Charges – Grantham and Stamford

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

This report presents to Cabinet a set of updated proposals in relation to off-street parking in the district.

Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to:

- 1. Reconsider its draft parking charging tariff proposals for Grantham and Stamford in response to the informal and initial feedback from the public, community groups and other stakeholders and approve the revised proposals set out in Appendix B for formal consultation.**
- 2. Withdraw the proposal to introduce evening charging at Grantham and Stamford Pay and Display car parks.**
- 3. Withdraw the proposal to introduce Sunday and Bank Holiday charging at Grantham and Stamford Pay and Display car parks.**
- 4. Approve the introduction of 2 hours free parking in short stay and 3 hours free parking in long stay on Mondays to Wednesdays between 2nd and 24th December 2024 in both Grantham & Stamford.**

5. **Note the recommendations of the Capacity Study which were supported unanimously by Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20th February 2024 and accordingly agrees to:**
 - **commission a further car parking study six months after the implementation of the new car parking tariffs to assess their impact**
 - **request officers undertake further work in relation to the future car parking arrangements in Bourne and the Deepings, the parking arrangements for Blue Badge holders, and the future capacity requirements for Grantham and Stamford**
6. **Request Officers to consider proposals in order to enable enforcement of unauthorised parking in designated play parks and green spaces.**
7. **Request Officers to prepare a Policy on the provision of free parking permits and discounted season tickets to nominated persons or organisations.**
8. **Approve the drafting of the South Kesteven District Council (Off-Street Parking Places) (Civil Enforcement Order) 2023, with or without amendments, for consultation in accordance with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.**

	Decision Information
Is this a Key Decision?	Key Decision
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Connecting communities Sustainable South Kesteven Enabling economic opportunities Housing Effective council
Which wards are impacted?	All (All Wards);

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance

- 1.1 The revenue budgets for the financial year 2024/25 do not include any variation to the car parking tariff structure as set out in the fees and charges approved by Council on 29th

February 2024. Based on the proposed new parking tariffs, It is expected that Grantham car parking income will reduce following the proposed introduction of free parking. However, the modelling suggests that the income reduction will be offset by an increase in car parking income in Stamford.

There is a projected reduction in the current year's car parking income of £19,000 if the free parking leading up to Christmas is introduced. This will have the effect of creating an adverse income variance for the financial year that cannot be recouped. Cabinet is asked to be mindful of this when considering the proposal.

The 2025/26 income budgets will be updated only when the consultation period has lapsed and the final tariff structure has been approved.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 Any changes to the car parking arrangements will require the Council to follow the legislation as set out in Section 35C Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA 1984) and Section 25 of the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 (1996 Regs). This legislation prescribes the procedure the Council must adhere to before any changes can be made to the current car parking arrangements. The legislation also prescribes the consultees, the notice period of any changes and the consideration of any objections.

Completed by: Mandy Braithwaite, Legal Executive

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 At its meeting on 18th January 2024, Cabinet considered a revised car parking tariff structure for both Grantham and Stamford having considered the recommendations from the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Cabinet agreed the following:

Stamford:

- new tariff structure Monday to Saturday 8am-6pm
- £3 charge for evenings (long stay car parks only)
- £3 maximum charge for Sundays and Bank Holidays (Wharf Road Stamford exempt from Sunday charges)

Grantham:

- New tariff structure Monday to Saturday 7am-7pm
- 1 hour free parking at all car parks (except Wharf Road car park)
- 2 hours free parking at Wharf Road car park
- £2 charge for evenings
- £3 charge for Sundays and Bank Holidays

- The reclassification of Conduit Lane car park to a short stay car park

Long Stay Car Park Season tickets:

- Monday to Friday weekly charge of £18, monthly charge of £65, and a quarterly charge of £170.
- Monday to Sunday weekly charge of £25, monthly charge of £90, and a quarterly charge of £200.
- Consultation on offering a 15% discount for employers who purchase 4 or more quarterly season tickets.

Cabinet was also notified of the legal consultation process that would need to be adhered to before a new Parking Order can be introduced. This process would ensure that both statutory consultees and other stakeholders have the opportunity to engage in the review and raise any objections or concerns prior to the formal adoption of the new charges.

The original proposals were influenced by a number of factors which still hold true, namely:

- The recommendations of the capacity study
- The under-utilisation of car parks in Grantham
- The need to stimulate footfall into Grantham town centre to support its economic growth
- The need for additional parking spaces to be created in Stamford to support its economic growth and the funding needed to create them
- The need to generate turnover of spaces in the short stay car parks

However following the published decision of the meeting, there has been a significant amount of local interest to the proposals with both the local media, social media together with stakeholder groups raising concerns or providing constructive feedback on the proposals.

This feedback has been received in a variety of ways including member direct communications, on-line petitions and direct contact with the Council. This has all been received before any formal consultation has been launched and whilst the initial feedback does not require a statutory consideration, the feedback has provided a useful insight into the concerns and observations of the various interested parties.

In summary the key areas of concern related specifically to the proposals to introduce evening and Sunday charging.

Proposal to introduce evening charges in some car parks

Arts venue users – concerns have been raised regarding customers who wish to use the Council operated arts venues in evening that evening charging in the closest car parks could be perceived as a barrier to usage. However, investigations have confirmed that there is no practical solution that can be introduced whereby it would be possible to identify those motorists that are using the centres in Grantham and Stamford.

Discussion has been held as to the allowance of free parking for arts centre users when attending an event. However, the monitoring and enforcement of this has been discussed and this would not be possible without significant investment and alteration of the current

booking arrangements for the patrons, leading to complex process and procedures for little relative gain.

In light of this, and also the problems of “double jeopardy” charging when a motorist parks for a period straddling the day and evening charging periods, it is recommended that Cabinet does not proceed with the introduction of evening and nighttime charges.

Proposal to introduce Sunday Charges

Concerns have been raised by the Churches Together in Stamford in respect of the introduction of Sunday charges where it is considered it would have a detrimental impact on the attendance of Sunday services.

There have not been any other objections raised at this time, although it must be stressed that no formal consultation has yet commenced and so objections could be received once formal notifications and notices have been published.

One possible solution is to defer Sunday charging to 12 noon to allow free use for the morning period. However, this would only allow for a limited charging period so it is questionable the value a limited parking period would bring.

In light of this it is recommended that Cabinet does not proceed with the introduction of Sunday and Bank Holiday parking charges.

Suspension of Parking Charges

The Parking Order allows for the suspension of parking charges on an occasional basis at the discretion of the Council. This would for example allow consideration of free parking at specific times and locations should the Council wish to encourage participation or stimulate demand. The only requirement is to ensure adequate signage is displayed at the affected locations, so users are fully aware of the temporary operational changes.

Examples of suspension could include free parking on specific days in some car parks during the period leading up to Christmas.

Pre-Christmas suspension of charges

Given that car parks operate with spare capacity on Mondays to Wednesdays, SKDC's commitment to stimulate footfall in the town centres, and the practice of discounting in nearby towns outside the district, it is proposed to offer 2 hrs free parking in short stay and 3hrs free parking in long stay Mon-Weds from the 2nd to and including the 24th December 2024 in both Grantham & Stamford.

Summary

Following the Cabinet's decision to consult on new pay and display charges as set out in section 2.1, there have been a number of comments made relating to specific elements of the proposals. This is before the formal consultation has been carried out but provides a demonstration of the strength of feeling on particular aspects. This report provides details of the feedback that has been received and proposes a new tariff structure that endeavours to incorporate the findings.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 The proposals for introducing updated parking charges has been considered for a period of time and this demonstrates the need to ensure that any changes meets the needs of the

users, the objectives that have been identified by the Capacity Study whilst ensuring each town's economic activity continues to thrive.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1 Cabinet considered other options at their meeting on 18th January 2024 and this report updates the proposals that have been considered since that time.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

5.1 The reasons for the recommendations are set out in the report.

6. Consultation

6.1 Any new Car Parking Order needs to be done by way of a modification to the current Order – this has the effect of amending the current Order.

The legislative procedure for this is as follows:

- Draft Order
- Commence Statutory Consultation in accordance with Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.
- Consult with Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) for formal approval of the Order
- Allow 3-4 weeks for consultees to respond for consultation

Assuming there are no objections from the above;

- Engross Order
- Publish Notice of proposals in local press
- Send Notice to all consultees
- Erect site Notices
- Serve Notices on premises occupied by persons affected by provisions
- Place details on website
- Place documents on deposit at Council Customer Service Centres for public inspection (for 28 days)
- Allow 28 days for objections (minimum of 21 days)

Assuming no unresolved or valid objections – Make the Order

- Publish Notice of making in local press that order will take effect on (as soon as ready following confirmation of Order)
- Notify any objectors that the order has been made and the reasons why
- Erect Notices on site
- Place details on website

- Place copy of “Notice of Making” on deposit in Council locations (leave in place for 6 weeks)

If any objections are made during the statutory periods as set out above, the authority will need to give consideration to any objections received and provide appropriate responses. It is anticipated that if any objections are received, a report would be reviewed by the December meeting of Cabinet prior to final proposals being presented to the Budget meeting of Full Council for approval and implementation.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 [Agenda for Cabinet on Thursday, 18th January, 2024, 2.00 pm | South Kesteven District Council](#)

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A – Parking charges considered by Cabinet on 18 January 2024
Appendix B – Updated proposed parking charges