

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

CABINET

Date of meeting: 16th June 2009
Report of: Strategic Director Places
Title: Car Parking Control and Charging in the area of the former Borough of Congleton

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 In order to ensure a uniform approach to car park management and control throughout Cheshire East, the Cabinet is requested to give consideration to and approve the principle of progressing the introduction of car parking control and charging on a number of public car parks within the former Congleton Borough. This is to be in advance of securing civil enforcement powers under the Traffic Management Act 2004 for both on and off street parking, which is expected to receive Department for Transport (DfT) approval by the end of September 2009. A timetable for the actions involved in the process is included as a background document.

2.0 Decision Required

- 2.1 Subject to 2.5 below, to approve the list of car parks to be subject to control and charging.
- 2.2 To agree the scale of parking charges.
- 2.3 To authorise the Borough Solicitor for Cheshire East Council, or his nominated officer, to advertise the intention to make an off street car parking order in respect of car parks in the former Congleton Borough (as set out in the report) pursuant to the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Following advertisement the proposal will be subject to the statutory 21 day consultation period during which objections may be received. These must be considered by the Cabinet at a subsequent meeting.
- 2.4 In the event of there being no objections to the proposed order received within the consultation period, to authorise the Borough Solicitor for Cheshire East Council or any officer nominated by him to take all necessary actions to make the order.
- 2.5 To note the Legal Implications within Part II and consider the matter further as required.

3 Financial Implications: Transition Costs:

None

4 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond

- 4.1 A Capital provision of £160,000 is included in the 2009/10 budget to purchase and install the Pay & Display machines.
- 4.2 The estimated annual Income of £375,000 is based on assumptions of occupancy levels derived from the consultants' report and the charging levels detailed in this report.
- 4.3 Parking control will be operated from within the existing Parking Services Teams currently operating in Macclesfield, Crewe and Nantwich.
- 4.4 The operation of parking control will be self financing.

5.0 Legal Implications

The legal implications are addressed in Part II.

6.0 Risk Assessment

- 6.1 Objections to the proposed car park control order could be received which may prevent or delay the introduction of control and charging.
- 6.2 A delay in the implementation of car parking control would have a negative impact on budget income predictions for 2009/10

7.0 Background and Options

Existing situation

- 7.1 Car parking control is currently exercised in the former Boroughs of Macclesfield and Crewe and Nantwich, where civil enforcement powers have also been adopted under the Traffic Management Act 2004 which provides the ability to enforce parking regulations both on and off street.
- 7.2 Off street parking in Congleton is currently uncontrolled and free of charge. Car park operational and maintenance costs are therefore borne by the Council Tax payer as a whole rather than the user of the facility. On street enforcement in Congleton is currently the responsibility of the Police although this is not a high priority area of work for them and will remain an anomaly within Cheshire East until civil enforcement powers are adopted in that area.

Policy Matters

- 7.3 The proposal would bring parking control into line with the Council's Parking Strategy as approved by Cabinet on 21/4/09. The objective is as follows:

To be consistent with and contribute to the overall aims of the National and Regional transport strategies which seek to:

- *Achieve a greater reduction in overall traffic*
- *To achieve a greater use of the more sustainable and healthy forms of travel*
- *To achieve a more effective and efficient transport system*

Having regard to the need to consider:

- *The economic vitality of the town centres*
- *The positive contributions parking revenue makes to the delivery of council services*
- *The parking needs of people with disabilities*
- *The parking needs of local residents, shops and businesses*

An effective parking policy will help to further a wide range of urban policy objectives such as:

- *Economic (vitality of the town centre)*
- *Social (accessibility)*
- *Environmental (negative impact of traffic congestion)*
- *Pricing and availability of parking in the town centre is one of the few ways of managing or restraining car use*
- *Compared to major infrastructure changes, parking policies are relatively easy to introduce and cost effective methods of managing demand, which can be easily modified to reflect changing situations.*

Consultant's Report

7.4 A review of car parking in Congleton Borough was commissioned by the former Congleton Borough Council (CBC) and a report considered but not adopted in 2008.

7.5 The main findings of the study are detailed in Appendix One which details the rationale behind the introduction of controls through charging and a current updated position for each point.

7.6 The Consultant had recommended the following list of 14 car parks where the implementation of control and charging would be appropriate:

<i>CAR PARK</i>	<i>CAPACITY</i>	<i>RECOMMENDED STAY DURING HOURS</i>	<i>MAXIMUM CONTROL</i>
CONGLETON			
<i>Antrobus Street</i>	<i>84</i>	<i>10 hours</i>	
<i>Fairground</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>3 hours – No return within 2 hours</i>	
<i>Princess Street</i>	<i>90</i>	<i>3 hours – No return within 2 hours or 10 hours</i>	
<i>Chapel Street</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>10 hours</i>	
MIDDLEWICH			

<i>Seabank</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>10 hours</i>
<i>Civic Way</i>	<i>84</i>	<i>10 hours</i>
SANDBACH		
<i>Little Common</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>10 hours</i>
<i>Scotch Common</i>	<i>140</i>	<i>3 hours – No return within 2 hours</i>
<i>Hawk Street</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>10 hours</i>
<i>Well Bank</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>10 hours</i>
<i>Crown Bank</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>10 hours</i>
ALSAGER		
<i>Fairview</i>	<i>288</i>	<i>10 hours</i>
HOLMES CHAPEL		
<i>Parkway</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>10 hours</i>
<i>London Road</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>10 hours</i>

Further Considerations

7.7 Further consideration has been given to the proposals put forward by the Consultant and reviewed in the light of additional information and / or policy implications. The areas of the original proposals reconsidered are set out below:

7.7.1 **Sandbach:** Scotch Common has been the main off street facility serving amenities in Sandbach, providing 140 of the 204 parking spaces being considered for charging and therefore control is considered appropriate.

7.7.2 **Middlewich:** The main publicly owned car parks serving the amenities of Middlewich are Civic Way CP (84 spaces) and Seabank CP (23 spaces). These car parks do not operate at capacity although they may be affected by the arrival of Tesco which will utilise part of the Southway car park.

7.7.3 **Holmes Chapel:** The main publicly owned car parks serving the amenities of Holmes Chapel are Parkway CP (15 spaces) and London Road CP (32 spaces). These car parks are extensively used and are operating close to capacity. A significant element of this is long stay parking by commuters going elsewhere. These car parks are adjacent to other larger privately owned car parks serving local shopping precincts where a further 122 spaces are available.

7.7.4 **Congleton:** It is considered that the parking situation in Congleton town centre justifies the need for implementation of off street parking controls. As the majority of car parks are in public ownership, it would be possible to implement this proposed overall car park charging scheme, safeguarding the prime central spaces for use by shoppers and other short stay users so as to maintain the commercial viability of the town centre. Long stay parking would be assigned to peripheral car parks.

Current Proposals

7.8. The proposed schedule of car parks to be controlled and the suggested tariffs are as follows:

Car Park	Bays	Type (S/S Stay L/S Stay)	Short		Tariff
			Short	Long	
SANDBACH					
Little Common	28	S/S	0-1hr	£0.30	1-2hrs £0.50 2-3hrs (max) £1.00
Scotch Common	140	S/S	0-1hr	£0.30	1-2hrs £0.50 2-3hrs (max) £1.00
Hawk Street	11	L/S	0-2hrs	£0.50	2-4hrs £1.00 Over 4hrs £1.50
Well Bank	14	L/S	0-2hrs	£0.50	2-4hrs £1.00 Over 4hrs £1.50
Crown Bank	11	L/S	0-2hrs	£0.50	2-4hrs £1.00 Over 4hrs £1.50
CONGLETON					
Antrobus St	84	S/S	0-1hr	£0.30	1-2hrs £0.50 2-3hrs (max) £1.00
Chapel St	52	S/S	0-1hr	£0.30	1-2hrs £0.50 2-3hrs (max) £1.00
Princess St	90	S/S	0-1hr	£0.30	1-2hrs £0.50 2-3hrs (max) £1.00
Fairground	97	L/S	0-2hrs	£0.50	2-4hrs £1.00 Over 4hrs £1.50
Roe St	24	L/S	0-2hrs	£0.50	2-4hrs £1.00 Over 4hrs £1.50
Back Park St	98	L/S	0-2hrs	£0.50	2-4hrs £1.00 Over 4hrs £1.50
Ropewalk	29	L/S	0-2hrs	£0.50	2-4hrs £1.00 Over 4hrs £1.50
West St	216	L/S	0-2hrs	£0.50	

			2-4hrs Over 4hrs	£1.00 £1.50
ALSAGER				
Fairview	288	L/S	0-2hrs 2-4hrs Over 4hrs	£0.50 £1.00 £1.50
MIDDLEWICH				
Seabank	23	L/S	0-2hrs 2-4hrs Over 4hrs	£0.50 £1.00 £1.50
Civic Way	84	L/S	0-2hrs 2-4hrs Over 4hrs	£0.50 £1.00 £1.50
HOLMES CHAPEL				
Parkway	15	L/S	0-2hrs 2-4hrs Over 4hrs	£0.50 £1.00 £1.50
London Road	32	L/S	0-2hrs 2-4hrs Over 4hrs	£0.50 £1.00 £1.50

Season tickets – Long stay car parks (L/S) only, £80 per quarter or £300 p.a.

7.9 Tariff bands

The tariff is based on the lower tariff option suggested by the Consultant and represents a straight forward tariff structure with short stay control achieved by the introduction of a maximum length of stay.

On short stay car parks the 30p rate may address the perceived need for a half hour rate – which is less cost effective in patrol terms.

Members may wish to consider an alternative similar to that operated in Macclesfield where additional tariff bands have been introduced to overcome criticism that the banding suggested here is too wide, meaning for example, that a stay of just over two hours would cost the same as a stay of just under 4 hours.

Under this option, long stay parking is discouraged on short stay car parks, rather than prohibited, by the introduction of charges at a penal level. This would permit some long stay use by those who may consider it essential to do so but at a premium rate- for example over £2.50.

8.0 Overview of Day One, Year One and Term One Issues

None

For further information:

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Officer : Paul Burns

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Email:

Background Documents:

Timetable of Actions (below).

Congleton Borough Council – Car Parking Review. (RTA Consultants' report)
Feb 2008

Appendix One: Consultant's Findings and Update Position (see paragraph 7.5)

**Car Parking Control and Civil Enforcement in former Congleton Borough area
Timetable of Actions**

	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept
Apply to Dept for Transport (DfT) for On Street Enforcement Powers	April 5th					
Cabinet Consideration of Off Street Parking Charges			Jun-16			
Statutory Public Consultation on Off Street Charges (21 days)			Starts Jun 17	Ends Jul 7		
Objections under 21 day rule considered by Cabinet				Jul-14		
Earliest date that <i>Off-Street</i> Charges can go live					Jul-28	
Complete review of Traffic Regulation Orders by Highways Engineers					1st Aug	
Receive DfT approval and conferral of <i>On-Street</i> enforcement powers						Sep-30