

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

4 JUNE 2008

CAR PARK EXCESS CHARGE RATE

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Cllr June Griffiths
Responsible Head of Service	Mike Bell
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The original notice of motion specified that residents who overstay on Bromsgrove District Council's car parks have the opportunity of a reduced fine of ten pounds if it is paid within one working day. Then the thirty and sixty pound fine kicks in.
- 1.2 This report looks at the likely costs and effects of introducing the scheme.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That consideration of the notice of motion is incorporated into the debate about the Civil Parking Enforcement and other parking reports being presented to Cabinet in July

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council had for some years applied an excess charge rate of £30 which was reduced to £10 if the customer paid within seven days. On 1st May 2006 this amount was increased to £60 reduced to £30 if paid within 14 days. From 1st April 2008 the excess charge was further increased to £70 reduced to £35 if paid within 14 days.
- 3.2 The reason that officers introduced the higher rate was because the £10 rate was no longer a deterrent effect. A number of drivers had commented that they did not consider the £10 to put them off. There were cases of drivers parking all day in a short stay car park without payment because they were confident that if they were caught that £10 was a reasonable amount to pay.
- 3.3 The number of excess charges issued since the higher rate of excess charge has currently fallen to approximately 50% of the rate issued in 2004 / 2005. Therefore the increased charge has had the necessary deterrent effect and increased compliance on the car parks. A reintroduction of the £10 rate will almost certainly increase the number of fines issued and further increase the level of confrontation between Council staff and customers.

- 3.4 The Council currently deals with perceptions of overzealousness by applying periods of observation. Officers will generally observe a vehicle with no ticket for 5 minutes, whilst they will normally observe an expired ticket for at least an additional 10 minutes following the expiry of the ticket. Therefore a ticket which runs out at 13:40 would not receive an excess charge notice until at least 13:50. Officers believe that this common sense approach should address most of the common problems felt by drivers. When the excess charge rate was £10, no observation period was used for expired tickets.
- 3.5 The Council does not currently have dedicated software to deal with the issuing of parking fines and officers would struggle to cope with the increase in the number of fines issued.
- 3.6 Stationery, signage, and the parking Order would all require changing prior to the adoption of the new rate.
- 3.7 Should the Council decide to adopt Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE), the £10 rate would have to be withdrawn as it is not covered by the Traffic Management Act 2004.
- 3.8 Given the amount of work involved in going back to the £10 fine including the following:
- It would have to be withdrawn upon the adoption of CPE,
 - Officers would struggle to cope with the increased number of fines.
 - The number of fines issued would almost certainly increase dramatically
 - There would be a decrease in revenue.
 - There would be a one-off cost of introducing the scheme,

Officers believe that it would be sensible to consider these issues as part of the Civil Parking Enforcement and other parking reports due to be presented to Cabinet in July.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The likely costs of the introduction of the scheme are detailed below.

Reordering stationery:	-£	1,000
Reordering signage:	-£	3,000
Reordering machine inserts	-£	500
Changing the Order:	-£	3,000
Loss of pay and display revenue:	-£	39,000
Loss of excess charge revenue:	-£	25,000
Estimated total cost of scheme:	-£	71,500

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The making and amendment of car parks orders is regulated the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 and the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

6.1 The item does not link to any of the Council's objectives or priorities..

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 No issues.

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The number of drivers risking a parking fine will increase and therefore the number who receive a fine will also increase. This will lead to an increased number of drivers feeling aggrieved and unhappy with the Council.

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None.

10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None.

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Procurement Issues None
Personnel Implications Increased confrontation between Council officers and customers would lead to increased turnover of staff.
Governance/Performance Management None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998 The measure would lead to an increase in the number of fines and therefore an increase in the level of confrontation and therefore an increase in the possibility of violence taking place.
Policy None.
Environmental

None.

12. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	No
Chief Executive	No
Executive Director - Partnerships and Projects	No
Executive Director - Services	No
Assistant Chief Executive	No
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Financial Services	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	No
Head of Organisational Development & HR	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

13. WARDS AFFECTED

All wards.

14. APPENDICES

None.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name: Steve Martin
E Mail: steve.martin@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 881457