



Cabinet 11 February 2009

Annual Review of Car Parking Charges: 2009/2010

1. Summary and Reasons for Recommendation

- 1.1 This report will consider the outcome of the consultation on parking charges for 2009/2010 and the recommendations of the Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill Area Working Parties.
- 1.2 The majority view of the stakeholders and public consultees was that of the options presented they preferred an increase in the long stay charges (over 3 hours) levied Monday to Saturday.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Subject to the budget setting process, to implement Option 1: increase long stay charges: all charges over 3 hours be increased by 10p with all other charges remaining the same, be applied to all off-street car parks in Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill for 2009/2010

3. Corporate Objectives

- 3.1 The recommendation meet the following, as contained within the Corporate Plan:-
- (a) Corporate Priority : *'to raise standards and corporate efficiency';*
 - (b) Cabinet Commitments : *'to improve efficiency and value for money';*
 - (c) Vision 2025: St Edmundsbury
will be a place which : *'with an integrated transport system that allows everyone quick and easy access to their chosen destination';*

Contact Details

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4.	Key Issues
4.1	Charges are reviewed on an annual basis in order to maintain a good quality service, keep pace with rising costs and ensure car parks operate effectively in accordance with the Council's policy on the provision of off street car parks. In carrying out this review regard was given to the financial needs of the Council, including the pledge to seek no increase in the Council Tax, and recognising the current difficult economic conditions.
5.	Other Options considered
5.1	Five options to vary the charges were developed and consulted upon as follows:- Option 1 – Increase long stay charges All charges over 3 hours increase by 10p, all other charges stay the same. Option 2 – Increase short stay charges All charges up to 2 hours increase by 5p, those up to 4 hours by 10p and all other charges stay the same. Option 3 – Increase all Monday to Saturday charges All charges up to 4 hours increase by 5p and over 4 hours by 10p. Option 4 – Increase all charges All Monday to Saturday charges increase by 5p. Option 5 – change Sunday charges to bring more into line with Monday to Saturday charges and increase all day parking in St Andrews car park by 40p To encourage short stay use only, all other charges remain unchanged.
5.2	The current car park charges and possible changes set out above are shown at Appendix A.
5.3	The price for season tickets will vary with the long stay charge in the relevant car park and no change in the 30% discount is suggested.

6.	Community impact
6.1	<u>General</u>
6.1.1	In setting any revision to car parking charges regard needs to be given to the current economic climate and likely impact on town centre users. Increasing long stay charges mainly impacts on workers. Increasing short stay charges could potentially deter shoppers and others using the town centre facilities. Alterations to the Sunday charges could have an impact on patterns of car park use, but it is not felt that any of the options which affect Sunday charges would impact on the total patronage of the town centre.
6.1.2	The off street car parks represent a significant public investment and the Council has always recognised the need to make a return on this investment with the principle that the user pays, rather than the car parks being funded by the Council Tax payer, many of whom are not car users. In view of this principle it is appropriate that a suitable return continues to be made on this use of public funds.
6.2	<u>Diversity</u>
6.2.1	The main group for whom parking is important are those with a disability. In recognition that for many of this group the car is their main source of mobility no charges are levied

on blue badge holders in the off street car parks whether or not these vehicles are parked in a designated disabled bay.

7. Consultation

7.1 In both Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill consultation was undertaken with local stakeholders such as the Town Council's, Chambers of Commerce and Town Centre Managers on the options outlined in section 5 above. In addition, the views of the car park users was sought in each of the car parks at various times and days of the week. However, Option 5 exclusively impacted on Bury St Edmunds it was not felt appropriate to consult in Haverhill upon this option.

7.2 Perhaps not surprisingly the stakeholders were reluctant to see any increase in charges, the responses received are shown at Appendix B. As a Town Centre Management Group has yet to be established in Haverhill the Town Centre Manager sought the views of those businesses who regularly attend the Town Centre Business Group meetings. Of the 31 businesses contacted 6 responses were received. Whilst businesses were reluctant to see any increase four preferred Option 1 and one chose Option 2. The other respondent did not wish to see any increase and expressed no preference for any of the options suggested.

7.3 Where a view on the options was expressed by the other stakeholders Option 1, an increase in long stay charges, was the most favoured. Most of the car park users accepted that prices would increase and only a few objected to any increase, this included those who thought parking should be free. Consistently by day of the week and car park Option 1 was the most favoured choice for any alteration in charges.

7.4 In Bury St Edmunds the views of 351 car park users were obtained. It was mostly accepted that the charges would be increased and 24 respondents did not express a preference for any of the options, 19 of these felt that charges should not increase and 5 that parking should be free.

The option preferences were as follows:-

Option 1	32%
Option 2	27%
Option 3	18%
Option 4	12%
Option 5	11%

7.5 In Haverhill the views of 132 car park users were obtained. It was mostly accepted that the charges would be increased and only four respondents did not express a preference for any of the options, two of these felt that charges should not increase and two that parking should be free.

The option preferences were as follows:-

Option 1	42%
Option 2	22%
Option 3	19%
Option 4	17%

The majority preference for Option 1 was consistent by car park, time of day and day of the week, there was some variation for the other options.

7.6 Perhaps not surprisingly the users tended to opt for the option which had least impact on their own pattern of car park use, however only the weekend users showed any enthusiasm for Option 5 which would only affect users on Sundays and leave the other

Monday to Saturday charges unchanged.

Other views expressed worthy of note were:-

A number of users were opposed to the use of 5p increments and wanted to see only 10p increases. These views were expressed without prompting

In general those who said prices were high were local residents; those who felt prices were low were from further away.

The idea of a 'pop in' facility in the Ehringshausen Way car park in Haverhill was expressed by more than one user

7.7 The options on parking charges for 2009/2010 and consultation responses have already been considered by the Haverhill and Bury St Edmunds Area Working Parties.

(a) The Haverhill Area Working Party recommended that:-

'subject to the budget setting process, Option 1: increase long stay charges: all charges over 3 hours be increased by 10p with all other charges remaining the same, as detailed in Section 3.1 of Report Z467, be applied to all off-street car parks in Haverhill for 2009/2010.'

This Working Party also RESOLVED:-

'That further investigation and consultation be undertaken in respect of:-

- (1) implementing a 'pop-in' facility in the car park located in Ehringshausen Way, Haverhill on Mondays to Saturdays from 4.00 pm onwards; and
- (2) allowing market traders free long stay parking in the car park located at Lower Downs Slade, Haverhill.'

(b) The Bury St Edmunds Area Working Party recommended that:-

'subject to the budget setting process , Option1: increase long stay charges: all charges over 3 hours be increased by 10p with all other charges remaining the same, as detailed in Section 3.1 of Report Z500, be applied to all off-street car parks in Bury St Edmunds for 2009/2010.'

8. Resource implications

8.1 Increasing the revenue received from the off street car parks recognises the need to make a suitable return on investment in these facilities. In setting charges regard has to be given to the wider economic implications. The recommendation to adopt Option 1 maintains a suitable level of return, mainly impacts on those best able to afford any increase and does not adversely affect the economic viability of the town centre as a whole.

9. Risk Assessment *(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)*

9.1 Included as Item 19 in January 2009 Corporate Risk register.

Risk area	Inherent level of Risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual Risk (after controls)
Income streams, in particular, Car Parks, Industrial land/Property land charges and waste management, under pressure due to external factors including market forces and current economic downturn.	High	Reviewing charges at this stage, keeping increases to a minimum, implementing changes to affect long term users only and monitoring income and usage closely.	Medium

10. Legal or policy implications

10.1 Any variation to the car parking charges requires public notification before they can be introduced and enforced.

Wards affected	All	Portfolio Holder	Transport and Planning
Background Papers		Subject Area	Property Management

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Bury St Edmunds

Cattle Market/arc	Current	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Mon-Sat						
Up to 1 hour	1.30	1.30	1.35	1.35	1.35	1.30
Up to 2 hours	1.80	1.80	1.85	1.85	1.85	1.80
Up to 3 hours	2.30	2.30	2.40	2.35	2.35	2.30
Up to 4 hours	2.80	2.80	2.90	2.85	2.85	2.80
Sunday						
Up to 1 hour	.30	.30	.30	.30	.40	.60
Up to 2 hours	.60	.60	.60	.60	.70	.90
Up to 3 hours	.90	.90	.90	.90	1.00	1.20
Up to 4 hours	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.30	1.50
Up to 5 hours	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.60	n/a
Up to 6 hours	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.90	n/a

St Andrews	Current	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Mon-Sat						
Up to 1 hour	.80	.80	.85	.85	.85	.80
Up to 2 hours	1.10	1.10	1.15	1.15	1.15	1.10
Up to 3 hours	1.40	1.40	1.50	1.45	1.45	1.40
Up to 4 hours	1.70	1.80	1.80	1.75	1.75	1.70
Over 4 hours	2.60	2.70	2.60	2.70	2.65	3.00
Sunday						
Up to 1 hour	.30	.30	.30	.30	.40	.60
Up to 2 hours	.60	.60	.60	.60	.70	.90
Up to 3 hours	.90	.90	.90	.90	1.00	1.20
Up to 4 hours	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.30	1.50
Up to 5 hours	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.60	2.00
Up to 6 hours	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.90	2.00

Manor House	Current	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Mon-Sat						
Up to 3 hours	1.30	1.30	1.40	1.35	1.35	1.30
Over 3 hours	3.80	3.90	3.80	3.90	3.85	3.80
Sunday						
Up to 1 hour	.30	.30	.30	.30	.40	1.00
Up to 2 hours	.60	.60	.60	.60	.70	1.00
Up to 3 hours	.90	.90	.90	.90	1.00	1.00
Up to 4 hours	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.30	2.00
Up to 5 hours	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.60	2.00
Up to 6 hours	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.90	2.00

APPENDIX A (cont.)

Parkway Surface/Multi Storey/Ram Meadow	Current	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Mon-Sat						
Up to 4 hours	1.30	1.40	1.40	1.35	1.35	1.30
Over 4 hours	1.80	1.90	1.80	1.90	1.85	1.80
Sunday						
Up to 1 hour	.30	.30	.30	.30	.40	1.00
Up to 2 hours	.60	.60	.60	.60	.70	1.00
Up to 3 hours	.90	.90	.90	.90	1.00	1.00
Up to 4 hours	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.30	1.00
Up to 5 hours	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.60	1.50
Up to 6 hours	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.90	1.50

Note: Sunday charges do not apply to Multi Storey, flat rate charged by cinema operators

Lower Baxter	Current	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Saturday						
Up to 1 hours	1.30	1.30	1.35	1.35	1.35	1.30
Up to 2 hours	1.80	1.80	1.85	1.85	1.85	1.80
Sunday						
Up to 1 hour	.30	.30	.30	.30	.40	1.00
Up to 2 hours	.60	.60	.60	.60	.70	1.00
Up to 3 hours	.90	.90	.90	.90	1.00	1.00
Up to 4 hours	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.30	2.00
Up to 5 hours	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.60	2.00
Up to 6 hours	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.90	2.00

Robert Boby	Current	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Mon-Sat						
Up to 1 hours	.20	.20	.20	.20	.20	.20
Up to 2 hours	1.80	1.80	1.85	1.85	1.85	1.80
Up to 3 hours	2.30	2.30	2.40	2.35	2.35	2.30
Up to 4 hours	2.80	2.90	2.80	2.85	2.85	2.80

Note: Sunday Charges do not apply at Robert Boby Way – management agreement with owners

Haverhill

Ehringhausen Way	Current	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Up to 4 hours	.70	.80	.80	.75	.75
Over 4 hours	1.50	1.60	1.50	1.60	1.55

Leisure Centre/ Meadows	Current	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Up to 4 hours	.70	.80	.80	.75	.75
Over 4 hours	1.50	1.60	1.50	1.60	1.55

Town Hall	Current	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Up to 1 hour	.20	.20	.25	.25	.25
Over 1 hour	1.00	1.10	1.00	1.10	1.05

Lower Downs Slade	Current	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Up to 1 hour	.20	.20	.25	.25	.25
Up to 3 hours	.70	.70	.80	.75	.75

Response from Bury St Edmunds Town Centre Management

Dear Cameron,

Further to Patsy's letter and your subsequent phone call today regarding the car parking reviews.

The board of Town Centre Management advocate very strongly that given the current economic climate and St Edmundsbury Borough Councils pledge to help business in particular retail in the town centre, there should be **no** increase in any car parking charges for the forthcoming year and we as an organisation would certainly not support any increase. We are all very aware that the recession has hit the town centre hard as in all town centres nationally, with no understanding of when the current economic situation improves. There is serious concern and worry by many businesses within the town centre and obviously we believe and strive to do everything that is feasibly possible to help protect the vibrancy of business within the town centre. Furthermore as we are all aware, negative publicity is bound to result from increasing charges which will also add to these concerns and fuel further dismay.

Of the options given in the parking consultation. Whilst as said previously, we advocate and strongly urge no increases at all - we feel that any increases to short term parking will present the worst, therefore option 1 of a 10p increase to long stay only would present the least damage in our opinion, but this would still cause further damage to an already disillusioned business element.

Yours sincerely

Steve Peters

Steve Peters
Town Centre Manager
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Response from Bury St Edmunds Town Council

From: Saunders, John
Sent: 29 January 2009 15:10
To: Findlay, Cameron
Subject: Car parking charges

Dear Cameron

My apologies for the delay in responding to you on this matter. I circulated to Members of Bury St Edmunds Town Council the letter regarding proposals for increased car parking charges. On their behalf, the response is that they are disappointed to learn that it would be necessary for any increase to be made but that options 3 or 4 would be the order in which they would select any intended increase. In making this response on behalf of the Council, the interests of those Town Councillors who are also Borough Councillors should be noted.

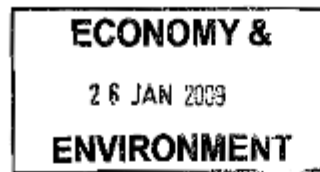
With kind regards



John Saunders
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Response from Bury St Edmunds Chamber of Commerce



BURY ST EDMUNDS

**Chamber of
COMMERCE & INDUSTRY**

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St Edmundsbury Borough Council
Environment Directorate
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Bury St Edmunds
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Date: 23rd January 2009

Dear Ms Dell

Car Parking Charges 2009/10

Many thanks for your letter received on 19th January 2009 regarding the increase to car parking charges for 2009/10.

The Chamber Executive Board discussed the proposed increases in depth – as set out by you - at our meeting held Tuesday 13th January 2009. The unanimous vote was against any increase in the parking charges at all.

Although the proposed increases are small, we feel that with the disruption in the town plus the forthcoming increase in competition from the arc development and the new Asda being built, the town needs support. St Edmundsbury Borough Council could show a degree of support to local businesses by not increasing the car parking charges, thus increasing the likelihood of visitors and shoppers continuing to come into Bury St Edmunds and not taking their money elsewhere.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Wildridge".

Rick Wildridge

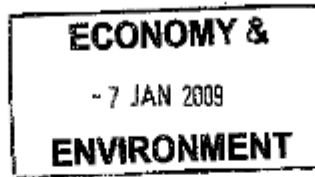
Chairman
Chamber of Commerce
Executive Committee

The Bury St. Edmunds Chamber
a Limited company registered in England and Wales
Reg. No. 5983221 Registered office as above

●●●● *The voice of local business*

Response from Haverhill Town Council

05 January 2009



HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL

Patsy Dell
Head of Planning & Engineering Services
St Edmundsbury Borough Council
PO Box 122
Western Way
Bury St Edmunds
IP33 3YS

Dear Patsy

Car Parking Charges 2009/2010

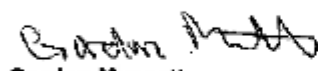
I refer to your letter received on 17th December 2008.

Haverhill Town Councillors are of the opinion that, given that the charges increased by more of the rate of inflation at the beginning of the current financial year, there should be **NO** increase for 2009/2010.

In addition, the Haverhill Area Working Party accepted the fact that, if the Darzi clinic were to be built on the existing long-stay car park off Withersfield Road, part of Lower Down Slade car park should either be given over to (chargeable) long-stay parking, or the charges amended to permit long-stay parking at that car park.

Haverhill's retail offer, like other market towns, is under economic threat of closure, and at this particular time the car park charges should be kept low (free ?) to encourage use of the town centre.

Yours sincerely


Gordon Mussett
Town Clerk

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