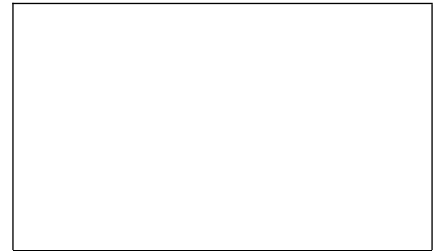


Calderdale MBC

Wards Affected

**Cabinet 7
August 2023**



TITLE Referral Back to Cabinet of Decision on Parking Charges

Report of

Senior Scrutiny Officer on behalf of Place Scrutiny Board

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Cabinet discussed a Review of Parking Charges when it met on 12 June 2023 and took decisions to change parking charges. The full decision is set out in Section four of this report.
- 1.2 That decision was called in by Councillor Caffrey, Councillor Blagbrough and Councillor Leigh.
- 1.3 Place Scrutiny Board met on 27 June 2023 to consider the call-in of that decision.
- 1.4 Place Scrutiny Board agreed “that the Senior Scrutiny Officer be requested to prepare a brief report identifying the concerns raised by the Board and that the decision be referred back to Cabinet”
- 1.5 This report presents a brief summary of the key issues raised by Members of Place Scrutiny Board that led to the decision to refer the issue back to Cabinet.

2. Need for a decision

- 2.1 Following the call-in by Place Scrutiny Board, Cabinet is required to reconsider the decision on Parking Charges taken on 12 June 2023.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 It is recommended that Cabinet review the decision take on 12 June 2023 in relation to Parking Charges in the light of the comments made by Place Scrutiny Board.

4. Background and/or details

4.1 It was resolved by Cabinet on 12 June 2023 that:

- a) the proposed tariff changes relating to existing car parking charges set out in Appendix 1 of the Director, Public Services written report be agreed and implemented;
- b) the proposed tariffs relating to the introduction of new on-street charges set out in Appendix 1 of the Director, Public Services report be agreed and implemented;
- c) the proposed tariffs relating to the introduction of new off-street charges set out in Appendix 1 of the Director, Public Services written report be agreed and implemented;
- d) the proposed increase to the resident permit charges set out in Appendix 1 be agreed and implemented, subject to the amendment to the recommendation outlined at 3.4 in the Director, Public Services written report being amended for the new charges for resident parking zone permits, where it was proposed to set new charges for residents permits as, first permit at £30, second permit at £40 and the third permit at £60.00;
- e) the revised charges and amendments which were previously approved by Cabinet in 2018 but which had not yet been implemented for various reasons, be now implemented as set out in Appendix 3 of the Director, Public Services written report.
- f) the proposed electric vehicle contract permit set out in Appendix 4 of the Director, Public Services written report be agreed and implemented.
- g) the anticipated additional income in years one and two be used to boost additional carriageway lining capacity, prioritising areas where refreshed lining was needed for safety reasons or to ensure effective traffic management, with an amount then added to the annual lining budget in each subsequent year;
- h) the anticipated additional income be also used to support the area parking reviews described in section 4 of the Director, Public Services written report, which would ensure that comprehensive and up to date information was available to inform the development of individual town parking strategies that reflected local need
- i) a review of the Council car park estate be undertaken to identify any land which may be surplus to requirements and therefore suitable for disposal or alternative use, in line with established procedures.

4.2 Members of Place Scrutiny Board raised a wide range of different issues during the discussion. This section provides a broad overview of those points.

4.2.1 This is an important subject and needs to be debated. There was no opportunity for a discussion at Cabinet.

- 4.2.2 Some of the proposed charges are as high as 100%, although there are also some reductions and some charges that do not change. These are unacceptable increases in these difficult times.
- 4.2.3 They will have a detrimental effect on footfall in our towns and will exacerbate the cost of living crisis.
- 4.2.4 The Parking Charges Review needs to examine where we can offer free parking to try and regenerate our town centres and get business flowing again.
- 4.2.5 For some people, running a car is essential, even if they are less well-off and to impose increases such as this shows a lack of compassion
- 4.2.6 It is possible that revenue will not increase, the law of diminishing returns will come into play, and we will end up with less income.
- 4.2.7 Have financial modelling exercises been undertaken on price sensitivity and the effects on total revenue.
- 4.2.8 Reducing town centre traffic and decreasing private car usage across the borough is a laudable aim, but during an unprecedented cost of living crisis it is unfair to impose more costs on the general public without diverting the funds raised into reducing public transport costs, or improving provisions for active travel. Cabinet should consider making provision for directly linking the additional funds raised from parking charges, and permits to spending on reducing public transport costs, and/or improving facilities for those wishing to engage in active travel.

Skircoat Ward

- 4.2.9 Skircoat councillors have specific concerns regarding significant changes in these proposals to the operation of the residents' parking zone. The Skircoat resident parking zone was introduced in 2012 following extensive and detailed public consultation, including with the businesses in the area. This area experiences particular pressure on on-street parking, with many properties being terraced housing, so without any drives. It lies on the edge of Halifax town centre, so seen as a convenient area for commuters, workers in businesses such as Lloyds Bank and others, and particularly Calderdale Royal Hospital.
- 4.2.10 The charge was set at £25 in 2012, which is £33.54 at today's prices, so an increase in charge for a permit would be perfectly reasonable. The problem is with the escalator element of it for second and third permits. The proposals are unfair in principle and have an unequal impact on households and individuals, depending on circumstances largely outside their control. It's unlikely to have much effect on an individual who wants to own one or more car themselves and they're quite likely to live in properties with driveways, but the cost of living crisis and means that there are increasing numbers of families living in

multigenerational households with a number of adults of working age who each need a car to get to work or education.

- 4.2.11 Car usage not car ownership that drives emissions, which is not affected by the cost of permits. It might be better to consider schemes that are in operation in other local authorities such as Lambeth where the charge for residence permits is linked to the DVLA band the vehicle is in.
- 4.2.12 The proposals introduce material changes to the terms and conditions of the original scheme on which residents consulted and originally agreed. Any additional funds raised could be used to improve enforcement of the restrictions and addressing considerate parking behaviour at the start and finish of the school day at any of the eight schools in Skircoat.
- 4.2.13 The original proposal was estimated to achieve £30000 income and the revised lower charges are estimated to achieve the same level of income which does not seem possible.
- 4.2.14 If the premise is to discourage multiple car ownership, then what are the success measures for this? Is multiple car ownership such a major issue in these 134 streets that it requires a separate policy?

Brighouse

- 4.2.15 A letter was sent to the Place Scrutiny Board by Brighouse BID who wanted to highlight the huge impact they consider that the increases to on street and off street parking charges would have on businesses who are already facing a fight to survive in the wake of increasing costs and decreasing consumer spending power.
- 4.2.16 They ask that the Council reconsider and reject the proposal set out in this review. There are a number of good reasons for this, beyond the clear and obvious impact it would have on the town centre itself. The Town Deal transformation will bring many positives in the long term, but in the medium term there will undoubtedly be disruption to the town centre.
- 4.2.17 Brighouse Bid commented: "For businesses that so often live on the edge, we simply can't afford anything that tips them over, and we fear these parking charges planned for the autumn would do that. In short, we do not believe these are the right changes at the right time and to reinforce our view, we surveyed the ID levy payers, which is the majority of businesses within town centre. The results were clear, 92% were opposed to the on-street parking changes every single response was against the increase in off-street parking charge changes."

5. Options considered

N/A

6. Financial implications

6.1 None directly. If changes are made by Cabinet to the original decision, there are likely to be financial implications.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 None directly

8. Human Resources and Organisation Development Implications

8.1 None

9. Consultation

9.1 Not applicable

10. Environment, Health and Economic Implications

10.1 None directly. Levels of parking charges may affect car usage and if Cabinet decides to change the original decision there may be an impact.

11. Equality and Diversity

None directly

12. Summary and Recommendations

12.1 This report provides a brief summary of the concerns that members of Place Scrutiny Board have about Cabinet's decision on Parking Charges taken on 12 June 2023 and so Place Scrutiny Board recommends that Cabinet review the decision taken on 12 June 2023 in relation to Parking Charges in the light of the comments made by Place Scrutiny Board.

For further information on this report, contact:

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The documents used in the preparation of this report are:

1. Minutes of Cabinet, 12 June 2023
2. Minutes of Place Scrutiny Board and transcript of that meeting, 27 June 2023
- 3.

The documents are available for inspection at: