

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**EXECUTIVE - 11 JULY 2005****Report from the Director of Environment and Culture**

For action

Wards affected:

All

Report Title: Review of Charges in Brent's Car Parks

Forward Plan Ref: ES-04/05-324

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report informs Executive on the review of parking charges in Brent's car parks, and requests Executive to approve in principle the revised charge structure as detailed in the report, and to delegate authority to the Director of Environment and Culture to implement the revised charges following consideration of the responses to statutory consultation.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Executive agrees subject to statutory consultation, to the revised off-street parking charges for Brent's car parks as detailed in Item 3.9 of this report.
- 2.2 That Executive agrees to limit the maximum duration of stay in the car parks to 4 hours, reduced to 2 hours in the car parks listed at Item 3.15 on major event days at Wembley Stadium.
- 2.3 That the hours of operation of the car parks listed at Item 3.15 be from 8.00 am to 10 pm on major event days at Wembley Stadium.
- 2.4 That Executive authorises the Director of Environment and Culture to undertake the necessary statutory processes for the making of the Traffic Management Orders and to consider any objections received and subject to no substantive objections being received to implement the revised charges for Brent's car parks as detailed at Item 3.9 of this

report and the restrictions on the durations of stay detailed at Items 3.10 and 3.15.

- 2.5 That Executive notes that there are currently two free car parks at Disraeli Road and High Road, Willesden (adjacent to Cobbold Road) and agrees that officers investigate the introduction of fees to these car parks and bring recommendations to a future meeting of the Executive.

3.0 Detail

Background

- 3.1 The Council's policy on the review of parking charges is incorporated in its parking strategy as approved by the October 2001 Transportation Sub Committee and formally adopted as 'Brent's Parking Strategy' in 2002. The strategy recognises that an effective but balanced charging regime is necessary to manage the conflicting demands for parking, both on-street and in the car parks.
- 3.2 The Strategy recommended that the existing parking charging regime be maintained but that it should be reviewed on a regular basis to meet changing demands whilst maintaining the interests of Brent's residents and business community.

On – Street Parking

- 3.3 Following the adoption of Brent's Parking Strategy the on-street 'pay & display' parking charges were reviewed in January 2003 and increases approved by the January 2003 Highways (Special) Committee. The principle of 'charging bands' was retained with three different charge structures or bands across the borough to reflect parking demand and capacity; essentially, where the demand was high, such as in Kilburn and Wembley, a higher tariff was levied than, for example in Kenton, where the lower tariff reflected the comparatively low demand.
- 3.4 Members will recall that a further review of on-street parking charges was reported to the January 2005 meeting of the Executive in conjunction with the Voucher Parking Report. Executive approved in principle a uniform boroughwide charge structure, instead of the previously approved charging bands. The statutory consultation in respect of implementing Executive's decision was underway at the time of writing this report. Subject to there being no material objections to the consultation it is anticipated that the revised charges will be operational on 18 July 2005

Off – Street Parking (Car Parks)

- 3.5 Parking in Brent's car parks is managed through a system of 'pay & display' parking for periods of stay between 20 minutes and 'all day'. The charges have deliberately been maintained at a lower rate than on-street charges in order to encourage the use of car parks and hence

reduce the demand for on-street parking. Brent's off-street car parking charges have remained unchanged since November 1999 when the charges were reviewed and consolidated. The existing tariffs for Brent's car parks are shown at Appendix A. The table below is a comparison of the on-street charges approved by the January 2005 Executive and the existing off-street charges:

Comparison of on-street and off-street (car park) charges:

Duration of stay	On-street	Car Parks
1 Hour	£1.20	30p
2 Hours	£2.60	50p
3 Hours	n/a	90p
4 Hours	£4.00	£1.00
6 Hours	n/a	£2.20
Over 6 Hours	n/a	£3.50

- 3.6 Long stay parking, i.e. in excess of 6 hours, is permitted in 6 of the 11 car parks with the majority of these being in Wembley. The current charge for parking all day is £3.50 and this has remained unchanged since November 1999. Whilst the rate may have reflected 'market value' at that time, and may have been sufficiently high to deter all day parking, it is now out of kilter with the market, especially when compared with neighbouring boroughs as shown in appendix B.
- 3.7 The comparison of charges at 3.5 above indicates clearly that the difference is grossly disproportionate, particularly as the on-street charges have been increased once since the adoption of the borough's Parking Strategy, and the proposal to introduce uniform charges will see a further increase in some areas.
- 3.8 It is therefore recommended that Members of the Executive consider a review of the car park charges with a view to approve an increase in order to bring these in line with the on-street charges. If approved, the increase is likely to result in a degree of temporary displacement of parking from the car parks to adjacent streets. However this is likely to be minimal as the car parks listed at Appendix A are surrounded by CPZs. The exception to this is the Preston Road Station Car Park where the surrounding residential streets do not have any CPZ type controls, other than morning peak hour waiting restrictions which deter commuter parking around the tube station. However, there is already a high level of on-street parking in these streets and consequently the capacity for additional parking is low.

Proposals

- 3.9 The following charges are proposed which represent a substantial increase but are nevertheless in line with the principle of Brent's parking policy objectives, and compare favourably with car park charges in Brent's neighbouring boroughs of Ealing and Harrow, as summarised at Appendix B:

DURATION	EXISTING CHARGE	PROPOSED CHARGE
1 Hour	30p	50p
2 Hours	50p	£1.00
3 Hours	90p	£1.50
4 Hours	£1.00	£3.00

- 3.10 It is also recommended that the maximum duration of stay in the car parks is restricted to 4 hours to deter long stay parking and rotate the use of parking spaces. This is again in line with the Council's parking policy as well as the wider local and national transport policies to encourage greater use of public transport and other sustainable modes of transport.
- 3.11 If the above increases are approved and implemented, it is possible there may be a decrease in usage, but officers are confident that this will be temporary and that the increased charges still represent good value for money, especially when compared with charges levied by Brent's neighbouring boroughs, and will not therefore adversely impact on the usage of the car parks.
- 3.12 The total income from Brent's car parks in 2004/05 was £201,444. The proposed tariff increase should ultimately generate additional income although it is unlikely that this will occur in the current financial year. There is a general tendency that the initial phase of consumer dissatisfaction results in a decline in the usage of parking facilities for 2 – 3 months following any increases in parking charges, and recovery from this can take between 4 - 6 months. If Executive approves the increase in charges the statutory consultation process in respect of implementing the new charge structure will take up to 3 months to complete. If no objections are received the revised charges can come into operation in October 2005 at the earliest. There may be a marginal increase in income in the current financial year but the full benefits are only likely to become evident early in 2006/07.
- 3.13 There will be initial costs associated with changes to the parking meter software to accept the revised tariffs, signs and the advertising of the Traffic Management Orders as part of the statutory consultation process. The estimated costs of these are £5k. This should be covered by the possible increase in income from meter charges late in the current financial year.
- 3.14 The restriction on the maximum duration of stay of 4 hours in the car parks, if approved, will deter commuter or other long stay parking. The hours of operation of the car parks are typically 8 am to 6.30 pm, Monday to Saturday, after which parking is free. Whilst the current demand for parking outside these periods is low, the opening of the National Stadium in Wembley will require the extension of the operational times on event days, as with the existing on-street controls, to deter trips into the Wembley area, and prevent the long term usage of the car parks by visitors to the Stadium. Event days will be publicised at the boundary signs to the Wembley Stadium 'Protective Parking Scheme' area, and within individual car parks.

- 3.15 The extension of the times of operation will not in itself be sufficient to deter event day parking as the option of 4-hour parking will easily span an event at the Stadium. It is therefore suggested that on the day of a major event the maximum period of stay be reduced to 2 hours and the operational times be extended to 10 pm in the car parks listed below, as these car parks are in the Protective Parking area, and their proximity to rail and tube stations provide direct links to the three stations serving the Stadium, namely Wembley Park, Wembley Central and Wembley Stadium Stations:

Barham Park	Cecil Avenue	Elm Road
Kingsbury Road	Lonsdale Avenue	Neasden Town Centre
Preston Road	St. John's Road	

- 3.16 Executive is requested to delegate authority to the Director of Environment and Culture to undertake the necessary statutory processes for the making of the Traffic Management Orders and to consider any objections received and subject to no substantive objections being received to implement the revised charges for Brent's car parks as detailed at Item 3.9, and the restrictions on the durations of stay detailed at Items 3.10 and 3.15. Subject to Executive's approval the statutory process will commence in August 2005 and if no objections are received the revised charges will come into operation in October 2005.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The proposed increase in parking charges will have a positive effect on the Council's income to the Parking Account. The anticipated increase in income will improve the ability of the Council to maintain the car parks and carry out further transportation schemes. It will also improve the Council's ability to attract other funds from external organisations, particularly with regard to match funding schemes.
- 4.2 The majority of users (73%) park for periods of up to 2 hours and the corresponding income accounts for almost half the total income from Brent's car parks. Whilst the long stay usage is proportionally low (6% of the total users) the corresponding income accounts for 24% of the total income. If Executive agrees to restrict the maximum duration of stay to 4 hours this income will be lost, but it is anticipated that the increase in income from the short stay users will compensate for this loss.
- 4.3 It is difficult to evaluate the impact of restricting parking to 2 hours during major event days at Wembley Stadium at this stage. However, as the greater part of the income is from parking between one and two hours the restriction is not likely to have a major impact, and the tariff increases generally should more than compensate for the 'loss' on event days.

- 4.4 There will be no additional cost of enforcement up to midnight on event days as this will be covered by the mobile patrol under the new Parking contract.
- 4.5 There will be an initial cost of approximately £5k for changes to parking meters and to progress the Traffic Management Order in respect of the revised parking charges if approved by the Executive. It is anticipated that this will be covered by the additional income from the tariff increase in the current financial year.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Any changes to the existing parking charges will require alteration to the current traffic orders under sections 45, 46 and 46A of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The statutory processes are set out by the Secretary of State.
- 5.2 The changes in parking fees will require a period of statutory consultation, which means the authority must properly consider any comments and objections to the scheme. If it fails to do this the implementation of the scheme would be unlawful and it would be impossible to enforce. If the process is not carried out properly the decision could be challenged by way of judicial review with the same result.
- 5.3 If the Executive approves the changes to charges in principle a statutory consultation process will then follow. Any objections to the scheme received as a result of statutory consultations will be given full consideration by the Director of Environment and Culture who will then decide whether to adopt the increases under his delegated authority as recommended by this report.
- 5.4 If objections or comments are not properly considered the Council could face a challenge from an objector either by way of Judicial Review because proper procedures were not followed or possibly a complaint to the ombudsman. In either event the likely outcome would be that the consultation procedure and making of the order would have to be repeated

6.0 Diversity Implications

- 6.1 The proposals in this report have been subject to screening and officers believe there are no diversity implications arising from it.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

- 7.1 Any changes to the parking charges will require the alteration of the current Traffic Management Orders and other associated work, using existing staffing resources from both Transportation and Streetcare Service Units.

8.0 Environmental Implications

- 8.1 The implementation of Controlled Parking schemes and the proposed increase in the parking charges, accords with both national and local policies aimed to restrain car usage and journeys.

Background Papers

Brent's Parking Strategy 2002
Executive – 17 January 2005

Contact Officers

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Satnam Sahota, Transportation Service Unit, Brent House, 2nd Floor East, 349 High Road, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 6BZ, tel. 020 8937 5140.

Richard Saunders
Director of Environment and Culture

APPENDIX A

BRENT'S CAR PARKS & CHARGES

Barham Park 8am – 4pm Monday to Saturday 10p for 20 mins
20p for 40 mins
60p for 1 hour
£1.20p for 2 hours
£2.40p for 4 hours

Cecil Avenue – 8am – 6.30pm Mon to Sat 50p for 2 hours
90p for 3 hrs
£1 for 4 hrs
£2.20 for 6 hrs
£3.50 for over 6 hrs

Elm Road – 8am to 6.30pm Mon to Sat 50p for 2 hrs
90p for 3 hrs
£1 for 4 hrs
£2.20 for 6 hrs
£3.50 for over 6 hrs

Kingsbury Road – 8am to 6.30pm Mon to Sat 30p for 1 hr
50p for 2 hrs
£1 for 4 hrs

Lonsdale Avenue – 8am to 6.30pm Mon to Sat 50p for 2 hrs
90p for 3 hrs
£1 for 4 hrs
£2.20 for 6 hrs
£3.50 for over 6 hrs

Neasden Town Centre – 8am to 6.30pm
Mon – Sat 10p for 20 mins
20p for 40 mins
60p for 1 hr
£1.20 for 2 hrs
£2.40 for 4 hrs

Preston Road – 8am to 6.30pm Mon to Sat Level 1
30p for 1 hr
50p for 2 hrs
£1 for 4 hrs

Levels 2 & 3
30p for 1 hr
50p for 2 hrs
£1 for 4 hrs
£1.50 for 4 hrs

APPENDIX A (CONT.)

BRENT'S CAR PARKS & CHARGES

Salisbury Road – 8am to 6.30pm Mon to Sat 30p for 1 hr
50p for 2 hrs
£2 for 4 hrs
£5 for over 4 hrs

St. Johns Road – 8am to 6.30pm Mon to Sat 50p for 2 hrs
90p for 3 hrs
£1 for 4 hrs
£2.20 for 6 hrs
£3.50 for over 6 hrs

Wendover Road – 8am to 6.30pm Mon to Sat 30p for 1 hr
40p for 2 hrs
70p for 4 hrs
£2 for over 4 hrs

APPENDIX B

COMPARISON OF CAR PARK CHARGES

(Note: Figures quoted are for town centre car parks)

BOROUGH	CHARGE FOR DURATION OF STAY				
	1 HOUR	2 HOURS	3 HOURS	4 HOURS	ALL DAY
BRENT (Proposed charges)	50p	£1.00	£1.50	£3.00	Not permitted
EALING	60p	£1.20	£1.80	£1.20 for each hour over 3 hours	
HARROW	60p	£1.20	£1.80	£2.40	£10.00