



Highways Committee 25th January 2006

Report from the Director of Transportation

For Action

Wards Affected:
All

Review of Charges in Brent's Car Parks

Forward Plan Ref: E&C-05/06-049

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report informs Members on objections received at the statutory consultation stage to Brent Council's proposal to reduce the duration of stay in the Council operated and maintained off-street car parks from all day to a maximum of four hours, and to the proposed increase in parking charges.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Committee notes the objections received to the Traffic Management Order, reference TO/15/010/BFM.
- 2.2 That Committee agrees to retain the option of all day parking in Brent's off-street car parks, pending the review of the Council's Parking Strategy, and that the charge for all day parking be £3.00.
- 2.3 That Committee overrules the objections received to the proposed increase in parking charges in Brent's off-street car parks, and instructs Officers to implement the following charges:

DURATION	CHARGE
1 Hour (or part thereof)	50p
Up to 2 hours	£1.00
Up to 3 hours	£1.50
4 hours & all day	£3.00

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2.4 That the objectors be notified of this Committee's decision

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 A review of Brent's off-street charges was carried out in June/July 2005 and reported to the Executive under a report entitled "Review of Parking Charges in Brent's Car Parks". The review was undertaken in accordance with Brent's Parking Strategy (2002) as approved by the October 2001 Transportation Sub Committee. The Strategy adopted the (then) parking charging regime as a means of managing the conflicting demands for parking, both on-street and the borough's car parks.
- 3.2 On-street parking charges have been reviewed twice since the adoption of the Parking Strategy. Increases were approved initially by the January 2003 Highways (Special) Committee although the existing 'charging bands' were retained, whereby a different scale of charges applied in different parts of the borough. A further review of the charging regime was carried out in December 2004/January 2005 with a view to introduce a uniform charge structure boroughwide. This was approved by the Executive at its meeting of January 2005 and came into operation in July 2005.
- 3.3 Brent's off-street car parking charges have remained unchanged since November 1999 when the charges were reviewed and consolidated. A comparison of charges was made with on-street charges, which identified a substantial disparity, and an increase in off-street car parking charges was approved to bring these in line with on-street charges, by the July 2005 Executive, subject to satisfactory statutory consultation.
- 3.4 In addition, Executive approved Officers' recommendation to limit the maximum duration of stay in the car parks to 4 hours, thereby removing the all day parking facility. This was 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.
- 3.5 Executive delegated authority to the Director of Environment and Culture to undertake the necessary statutory processes for the making of the Traffic Management Orders in respect of the proposed charges and the restriction on the duration of stay, and to consider any objections received.
- 3.6 The Public Notice, as part of the Traffic Management Order, was advertised in the local Press, and in the car parks affected, in November/December 2005. A total of 29 objections were received, including a petition bearing approximately 30 signatures, to the proposed increase in charges and the proposal to remove all day parking. The objections are summarised at Appendix A and will be available for inspection at Committee.
- 3.7 The objections received are considered substantial and the recommendation of the Director of Environment and Culture is that the all-day parking option be retained, pending the outcome of the review of Brent's Parking Policy. Officers will bring a further report to a future meeting of this Committee on the options for all day parking, following the outcome of the review. It is also

recommended that as the off-street parking charges have not been increased since 1999, and in view of the disparity between the on-street and off-street charges, the objections received to the proposed tariff increase be overruled and the 'proposed charges' listed in the table below, be implemented.

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

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 which will be maintained if Members are minded to approve the recommendation to retain all day parking.
- 4.3 The estimated cost of £5k for changes to parking meters and to progress the Traffic Management Order in respect of the revised parking charges will be met from additional income from the tariff increase in the current financial year, and by retaining the all day parking option.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Any changes to the existing parking charges and duration of stay 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 and duration of stay 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 Any objections 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
Traffic Management Order ref: TO/15/010/BFM
Objections received

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

SUMMARY OF OBJECTIONS TO PROPOSED CHANGES TO BRENT'S OFF-STREET CAR PARKS (TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ORDER REF: TO-15-010-BFM)

OBJECTION
1. Local streets will become full of commuter parking (Preston Road Car Park).
2. This does not assist commuters, day trippers & local people. People use Preston Road Station for days out & these last longer than 4 hours.
3. Driving to the station from around the borough takes approx 20 minutes. It would take nearly 2 hours by public transport. No direct bus routes from W10 area. There are no direct bus routes from many destinations to Preston Road Station.
4. Where is the support for people wanting to use public transport? Proposals are illogical & not in the interests of the local people.
5. Where is the logic to increase charges for short stay?
6. Use Harrow Council's idea to allow the first 2 hours parking 'free of charge'.
7. Locals will be penalised for using local facilities. For example, Library car parks – first 20 minutes should be free to allow residents to return books. Make charges realistic.
8. The consultation has been carried out very badly. There is no information on the website.
9. People working in Brent need places to park. Not everyone can use public transport. Why is the Council working against us and not with us (referring to St Johns Car Park)
10. Charge increase will deter people from using car park and increase more congestion on residential roads. Motorists cannot simply go 'elsewhere' as there is nowhere else to go.
11. Please take into account people working shifts and needing somewhere 'safe and affordable' to park.
12. Long term car parks are invaluable with so many CPZs in the borough.
13. What is actually wrong with the current situation? – please clarify.
14. Why is parking for users of public transport being removed?