

Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



Nottingham
City Council

Reference Number:

5069

Author:

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Department:

Growth and City Development

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Subject:

Off-street Car Park Tariff Changes

Total Value:

£164,248 (Type: Revenue)

Decision Being Taken:

1. To approve the proposed package of off-street parking tariff changes (outlined in the exempt appendix) from 1st April 2024. The changes affect the following car parks: Trinity Square, Lace Market, Broad Marsh, Nottingham Castle, Curzon Street, and Sneinton Market Square. 2. To authorise the Corporate Director for Growth and City Development to implement the proposals.

Reasons for the Decision(s)

Nottingham City Council's off-street parking facilities in the city centre provide convenient parking for medium-stay, retail, and leisure customers, support the local economy and help manage the flow of traffic within Nottingham. The City Council reviews its parking tariffs regularly to ensure that they continue to manage the highway needs with flexible, high quality customer products, which meet the on-going market demands for parking within the City. Key to these reviews is the need to be flexible in use of parking provision through duration and price and maintain parking prices that deliver best value from the parking assets. The proposed tariff changes take account of inflation and ensure parking price changes are in line with other transport options. The demand and requirements of off-street parking has continued to evolve following the cost of living crisis and COVID-19, affecting ways of working and changes to lifestyle. Whilst the economic vibrancy of the City returns following the Pandemic, it is leading to increased congestion as our car parks regularly reach full capacity resulting in growing queues for spaces outside the car parks. Nottingham City Council operate just over 2,500 of the 9,330 off-street parking spaces in the city centre. It is therefore important that the Council prioritises medium-stay retail and leisure customers into the Council's off-street car parks to maximise the value of the relatively small number of spaces compared to the 35.6 million visitors to Nottingham and Nottinghamshire each year. The alterations to tariff prices aim to encourage medium stays of 4-6 hours within car parks and ensure that parking does not undercut active, shared or public transport for longer visits into the city centre. The changes are in keeping with the Council's Local Transport Plan and Carbon Neutral Nottingham 2028 as well as delivering best value of Council assets, benefiting local traders and the wider economy. As required by The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and Traffic Management Act 2004, surplus parking income is reinvested into maintaining parking assets, the highway and supporting the City's high quality comprehensive public transport system, that is recognised as one of the best outside of London with over 80 million annual users. The 2021 Census found that 38% of Nottingham's residents do not own or have access to a vehicle. Parking Services, working with colleagues across the Planning and Transport Division, need to ensure that the Nottingham's transport system continues to operate in a manner which maximises benefit for all citizens and visitors, reflects the market demand, controls traffic flows, and reduces pollution levels. The Council has a responsibility to ensure traffic flows easily through the City and address poor air quality. Considerable investment has been made in developing and maintaining one of the most comprehensive and accessible public transport systems in the country to support this requirement. It is therefore essential that the operation of the Councils parking assets within the city centre continues to promote smooth traffic flow, improve air quality and influence travel behaviour.

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Other Options Considered:

Option 1 Do Nothing:Whilst freezing prices would be beneficial to those customers who arrive at the car park early enough to find a space; it would not resolve the issue of car parks becoming full, causing congestion on the highway and reducing the turnover of customers per parking bay. Best Value would not be delivered by Nottingham City Council's car parks if spaces were to be filled by long-stay individuals who are predominantly commuters. With just 2,500 off-street parking spaces, a population around 331,000 people and millions of visitors each year, it is important that turnover of spaces is encouraged to ensure the continued economic vibrancy of Nottingham city centre. Making no changes to the tariff charges or lowering the tariff charges would both result in detrimental effects to the running and maintenance of these car parks. The increasing cost of maintenance due to inflation paired with a decrease or stagnation in revenue would mean that the level of maintenance funding availability would not continue to run at its current level. This would severely impact the Council's ability to provide high quality and safe parking within the city centre. Making no changes to the tariff charges would result in detrimental effects to the running and maintenance of these car parks. The increasing cost of maintenance due to inflation paired with stagnation in revenue would mean that the level of maintenance funding availability would reduce or the Council would face further financial pressure. This would severely impact the Council's ability to provide high quality and safe parking within the city centre.

Option 2 Lower prices:Whilst lowering prices would be beneficial to those customers who arrive at the car park early enough to find a space; it would exacerbate the issue of car parks becoming full, causing congestion on the highway and reducing the turnover of customers per parking bay. Lowering the tariffs would also result in detrimental effects to the running and maintenance of these car parks. The increasing cost of maintenance due to inflation paired with a decrease in revenue would mean that the level of maintenance funding availability would reduce or the Council would face further financial pressure. This would severely impact the Council's ability to provide high quality and safe parking within the city centre.

Background Papers:

Published Works:

Affected Wards:

Castle, Hyson Green and Arboretum, Sherwood

Colleague / Councillor Interests:

Any Information Exempt from publication:

Yes

Exempt Information:

Description of what is exempt:

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An appendix (or appendices) to this decision is exempt from publication under the following paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because it contains information relating to occupancy levels, types of customers, transactions, income, and expenditure.

4 - Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.

The public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because it contains information relating to occupancy levels, types of customers, transactions, income, and expenditure.

Documents exempt from publication:

231116-v2.0-Off-Street Exempt appendix-JK.MR.JAG-8.P223.docx

Consultations:

Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.

Crime and Disorder Implications:

All car parks have been awarded the Safer Parking certification, awarded to parking facilities that have met the requirements of putting in place measures that deter criminal activity and anti-social behaviour.

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Equality:

Please login to the system to view the EIA document: 231221-V2.0-Parking Services Tariff Changes 24-25 EIA-JK.IB.RD-8.P227.docx

Decision Type:

Portfolio Holder

Subject to Call In:

Yes

Call In Expiry date:

15/01/2024

Advice Sought:

Legal, Finance, Equality and Diversity

Legal Advice:

The Council may provide off street parking places for vehicles by order under section 32 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 ("the Act") where such provision appears to be necessary for the purpose of relieving or preventing congestion in traffic.

Under section 35 of the Act the Council may specify in the order the vehicles or classes of vehicles entitled to use the parking provision, and the charges which are to be paid for it. Charges imposed for use of the parking provision can be varied by notice given under section 35C of the Act and Regulations made under the Act set out the procedure which must be followed when a local authority gives such a notice.

Case law has confirmed that the Act cannot be used to raise revenue, but that charges can be set to reflect the costs of administering the schemes and the Council's parking policies.

The decision appears to fall within the remit of the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Transport and Planning.

Advice provided by Tamazin Wilson (Solicitor) on 21/12/2023.

Finance Advice:

The value of this decision has been based on anticipated customer levels once prices have increased. This should not be considered as an income target and must not be included as an income generation budget target either. The purpose of increasing tariffs is to ensure the most efficient and effective way to utilise the parking assets and to act as a deterrent to customers so congestion does not build on the roads. Ideally if customer numbers were to reduce as a result of the fee increase, this decision to enable free moving traffic will have been achieved and the income should fall. This income forms part of a ring fenced special parking account and whilst local authorities must not budget for a surplus, it is often inevitable that a surplus is achieved. This should be placed at the year end into a ring fenced reserve to be drawn down in future years to be spent as the legislation depicts and must not be used for other general funded services outside of these rules Advice provided by Michelle Pullen (Commercial Business Partner) on 06/12/2023.

Equality and Diversity Advice:

The EIA related to DDM was reviewed, some minor comments were raised but these have since been addressed. The EIA has now been signed off/ approved by the EDI team. Advice provided by Nasreen Miah (Equality & employability consultant) on 22/12/2023.

Signatures

Angela Kandola (PH for Highways, Transport, Planning)
SIGNED and Dated: 08/01/2024
Sajeeda Rose (Corporate Director of Growth & City Development)
SIGNED and Dated: 08/01/2024