

 Executive Meeting 9th January 2013		Agenda Item No. 4
Title	Car parking charges in Warwick	
For further information about this report please contact	Ian Coker ext 6227 Ian.coker@warwickdc.gov.uk	
Wards of the District directly affected	All	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number		
Background Papers		

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	Yes
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	Yes 476
Equality & Sustainability Impact Assessment Undertaken	No
Move to linear charge has no impact on equality or sustainability as charges currently apply	

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Officer Approval	Date
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Jones	12 th December
Head of Service	Ian Coker	10 th December
CMT		
Section 151 Officer		
Monitoring Officer		
Finance	Mike Snow	12 th December
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Shilton	10 th December
Consultation & Community Engagement		
Two consultation meetings with Town Council and Chamber of Trade representatives were held to identify improvements to parking. These meetings resulted in the production of a report to Warwick Town Council who approved the move to linear charging. Changes to charges are a direct consequence of adopting that approach.		
Final Decision?	Yes	
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The report highlights the process followed to bring forward a proposal in support of the introduction of linear parking charges in Warwick.
- 1.2 Warwick Town Council supported the recommendation of a move to linear charges in off-street car parks in Warwick at meeting on 6th December.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 To support the move in Warwick to introduce linear charges and the associated changes to charges set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 To support the County Council introducing linear charges for on-street spaces based on the same charge per stay as is planned to be changed in off-street parks.

3. **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 Following discussions with Warwick Town Council in September 2012 a working group was set up to look at improvements to the parking offer including the possible introduction of linear charges in Warwick.
- 3.2 That group, which included Councillors Dhillon and Holland representing Warwick Town Council together with representatives from Warwick Chamber of Trade, met to consider the possible introduction of linear charges in Warwick.
- 3. On and off-street prices were brought into line in Leamington in July 2012. The working group supported the same move in Warwick.

4. **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- 4.1 **Policy Framework** – the move to linear charges is in line with District Council policy framework and is operating in Leamington.
- 4.2 **Fit for the Future** – the move to linear charges is in line with meeting customer demand and making sure the customer “gets what they have paid for”.

5. **BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

- 5.1 Officers believe the impact on parking income from the move to linear charges and restructure of operating hours in Warwick will be broadly neutral.
- 5.2 Currently as a result of the current charges operating in Warwick (20p for half an hour and 90p for 1 hour) a high level of overpayments is being generated. Whilst some charges are planned to increase; see appendix 1; the removal of overpayments, the introduction of a 20p start point for twelve minutes rather than 50p for half an hour and the reduction in hours of normal charging is expected to balance any increase in income from the higher charges for 1 and 2 hour stays. See Appendix 1.

6. **ALTERNATIVE OPTION CONSIDERED**

- 6.1 The alternative option considered was for charges to remain unchanged. This was rejected as the introduction of linear charges offers customers a far more flexible charging structure which removes the main concern users had with the current charging arrangement where customers often don't have the correct fee and that P&D machines do not provide the customer with change.

7. **BACKGROUND**

- 7.1 In September 2012 officers met with the Warwick Town Council as part of an on-going dialogue to discuss the way parking charges operated and how the service could be improved including a move to linear charges and closer harmonisation of the on-street hours of enforcement.
- 7.2 At that meeting the Town Council agreed to set up a working group to look at various options.
- 7.3 Two meetings of that working group took place to examine options aimed at making it easier for customers to understand charges and making it easier to pay for parking. Town Councillors and Chamber of Trade representative examined evidence of complaints that customers "did not have the right change" to pay for their parking and that as the P&D machines do not issue change customers ended up making overpayments.
- 7.4 The working group resolved that steps should be taken to overcome these issues and concluded that the introduction of "linear charging" would help resolve those issues.
- 7.5 Many on and off-street charges in Warwick are "odd" charges, i.e 90p / 70p £1.20 / £1.40. This has led to a level of "overpayments" as customers don't have the correct fee and the Pay and Display machines don't issue change.
- 7.6 Linear charges means that whilst there are key price points (50p for half an hour, £1 for 1 hour) any amount can be paid in 10p multiples starting at 20p and the customer will receive the period of stay they have paid for.
- 7.7 The introduction of linear charges will remove all overpayments as every customer will receive the period of time they have paid for. This has been positively received in Leamington where the move to linear charges in July 2012 has seen a small increase in off-street usage. Income has been maintained due to the removal of all overpayment income.
- 7.8 By operating the same set of on and off-street charges it makes it much easier for customers to understand what the charges in operation are as well as making it far easier for both the Council and the local businesses to promote and market those parking charges to customers.
- 7.9 The proposal is for Warwick to mirror the charges in Leamington. In simple terms this means that the minimum payment in Warwick will be 20p for 12 minutes and for every additional 10p paid the customer will receive the additional 6 minutes. See details set out in Appendix 1.

- 7.10 With regard to harmonisation of the hours of enforcement of on-street regulations work is on-going with a plan to bring those proposals forward to Warwickshire County Council in January 2013.
- 7.11 The recommendations set out in 2.1 and 2.2 were supported by Warwick Town Council at their meeting on 6th December.
- 7.12 If the recommendations in the report are approved we would expect the new charges to be operating by May 2013.