



## **ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday, 3 December 2024**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED CAR PARKING CHARGES - UPDATE REPORT</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES</b>

### **REPORT SUMMARY**

In December 2023 the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee approved the Wirral Parking Strategy which is intended to provide a clear framework to manage on and off-street parking in Wirral within a wider context of sustainable economic growth and urban regeneration and contribute to addressing the environment and climate emergency.

The approved Wirral Parking Strategy sets out a number of short-term objectives and this report details the outcome from consultation on a number of Wirral Parking Policy short-term objectives including the application of standardised parking charges across the borough together with annual inflation increases. This includes the introduction of car parking charges at additional locations where charges do not currently apply and the implementing of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) covering additional areas within Wirral including coastal locations.

This report details the objections received following statutory consultation to the proposed Traffic Regulation Order for the introduction of various car parking charges including into those new locations.

The Consultation was undertaken in line with the Constitution, Leader and Deputy Briefing, Group Leader Briefings, Chair and Spokes Briefing, and all Ward Members were provided advance notice of the consultation.

Introducing parking charges in new locations has the potential to support the refreshed Wirral Plan 2021 to 2026 priorities of a Sustainable Borough and Inclusive Economy.

The report supports the Implementation of the Council Plan: Wirral Working Together 2023 - 27 and specifically the themes: Protecting our Environment, Safe, Resilient and Engaged Communities and Efficient, Effective and Accessible Council.

Any decision may also support Objective 2 of the Draft Local Plan 2020 to 2035 to 'Promote safe, efficient and sustainable travel, improve accessibility, connectivity, and ease of movement, which reduces the need to travel by private car and encourages healthy

lifestyles. Direct new development to locations which will provide easiest access to existing centres, high-frequency public transport corridors, pedestrian and cycle routes.'

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

This decision is a key decision since it has a significant impact on two or more wards.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee is recommended to:

- 1) note the comments and objections received, following public consultation as part of the necessary Traffic Regulation Order process, together with officer responses; and
- 2) approve the following:
  - a) introduction of charges as set out in Appendix 1 at off street Council owned car parks, that are listed in Appendix 1 to this report through the introduction of an amended traffic regulation order;
  - b) Introduction of a £1 overnight charge at off street Council owned car parks, that are listed in Appendix 1 to this report through the introduction of an amended traffic regulation order;
  - c) an increase of 20p per hour to the car parking charges as set out in Appendix 1 at existing Council car parks listed in Appendix 1 to this report that currently charge through the introduction of a variation to the existing traffic regulation order;
  - d) introduction of car parking charges in on street bays at New Brighton, Hoylake and Meols and West Kirby, as detailed in Appendix 1 through the introduction of a new traffic regulation order.
  - e) a £1 overnight charge in on street parking bays at New Brighton, Hoylake and Meols and West Kirby through the introduction of a new traffic regulation order.
  - f) an increase of 20p per hour to the car parking charges at on street bays where fees already apply in the Birkenhead controlled zone through the introduction of an amended traffic regulation order as set out in Appendix 1.
  - g) a £1 overnight charge in on street parking bays at the Birkenhead controlled zone through the introduction of an amended traffic regulation order.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### 1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 The Council has the discretion to set charges to reflect its parking policies. The proposals help to deliver on the short term outcomes of the approved Wirral Parking Strategy which are:
- Wirral Parking Policy 1 provides that in the short-term, the Council will review the usage of car parks, undertake further analysis and if appropriate consult on rationalising and adapting under-used car parks across the borough.
  - Wirral Parking Policy 2 provides that in the short-term, the Council will continue to apply standardised parking charges across the borough going forward, and in line with annual inflation increases.
  - Wirral Parking Policy 9 provides that in the short-term, where traffic management issues are required, the Council will enforce existing parking regulations and consult on opportunities for implementing Traffic Regulation Orders or Public Space Protection Orders. This should cover all areas within Wirral including coastal locations.
- 1.2 The parking strategy provides a clear framework to manage parking in Wirral, this helps support the management of traffic in Wirral's main centres and communities, helping the local economy and businesses, as well as contributing to addressing the environment and climate emergency.
- 1.3 The intention for the change to on-street parking charges is to achieve more effective traffic management through the introduction of payments and the subsequent turnover in spaces. The introduction of the proposed charges will seek to ensure that during peak periods of parking demand, spaces are available and there is a higher turnover of parking spaces. Parking charges will encourage some motorists to consider where and for how long they park and also their mode of transport when visiting an area.
- 1.4 The main areas for the introduction of the on-street charges are the coastal areas where parking bays are already in existence in West Kirby and New Brighton and as such the impact of the introduction of the charges on the movement of vehicles and traffic as well as the amenities of the area is minimal. The purpose behind the on-street car parking proposals in Hoylake and Meols is to align with the approved Parking Strategy which encourages fairness and equity across the Borough with consistent charging. The introduction of new parking bays at Hoylake and Meols will be sited on the opposite side of the road of the residential properties. North Parade is a one-way road, there is a sailing club, a lifeboat station and a park in the locality and most visits to the area are for leisure purposes. The new parking bays would assist in maintaining access to premises and the free movement of traffic as it would direct people to park in identified places rather than simply parking on the roadside as they currently do since there are no off-street parking places in the locality. This will assist the movement not only of passenger cars but also of pedestrians around the locality

and the public service vehicles. During the peak periods parking charges can assist in managing the demand for spaces, ensure a higher turnover of those spaces and encourage some motorists to consider where and for how long they park and their mode of transport when visiting an area.

- 1.5 The set-up costs for the provision of the service, as well as enforcement, have been forecast and considered when standardising the level of charges to ensure that the charges are set at an appropriate level. The proposed on-street parking charges support the policy objectives outlined in the Parking Strategy helping to maintain reasonable access to premises and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on the highway so that everyone who needs to, is more likely to have access to a parking space.
- 1.6 The proposed off-street parking charges align with the approved Parking Strategy which encourages fairness and equity across the Borough with standardised charging allowing the Council to continue to provide public car parks and access to areas into the future in a fair and sustainable manner. Charges are already in place in many Council provided car parks and the parking strategy parking policy 2 sets out the need to provide parity across the off street car parks across the Borough.
- 1.7 The parking strategy is designed to support a shift to active travel and public transport to better manage parking demand and congestion; The analysis of observed trip patterns by the parking consultants who supported the Council in delivering the parking strategy have demonstrated that parking charges have helped increase the use of public transport. The observed trends show a positive rise in the demand for public transport, helping the socially excluded and more vulnerable members of the local community by providing cost-effective alternatives to the rise in motoring costs.
- 1.8 The introduction of a £1 charge for parking overnight both on and off street will ensure that parking during events such as ‘the river of light display’, ‘the giant visit’, fairs at the dips in New Brighton is better managed and further encourages motorists to consider where they park and also their mode of transport.
- 1.9 The increase for the areas where on street and off street parking charging already takes place is important as there has not been a rise in parking charges since September 2021, costs have increased in terms of maintenance and provision of the service and an increase is necessary to ensure that the parking provided is of high quality and maintained properly, as well as the charges being in line with the other car parks within the Borough.
- 1.10 Parking is a discretionary service, there is a need to ensure it has a balanced budget and that charges made for the provision of the parking service cover costs, plan for unforeseen expenses, maintenance, shortfalls in some years as well as the regulation of demand. The charges proposed would allow the Council to set charges to reflect its parking strategy and provide consistent charging in a fair and reasonable manner while meeting the aims of the approved parking strategy.

## **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 Detailed options for alternative car parking charging proposals have been considered in previous reports and meetings. These included over and above inflationary increases, on-street charges in Town Centre locations and variable tariffs by location. At the time this committee considered none of these appropriate and requested a Parking Strategy be developed to support any future car parking options. As well as the short-term policies the approved Parking Strategy recommends other medium and long term policies which will be considered and developed once the short-term options have been implemented.
- 2.2 Parking is a discretionary service and the Council could choose not to provide this service at all or only in part. If the Council is to provide this service, then it is vital, particularly in light of the current financial climate, that the charges levied meet the costs of the provision of the parking service as a whole.
- 2.3 The standardisation of car parking charges across all existing on and off street locations is in line with the short term aims of the approved Wirral Parking Strategy so while one option is not to do this, it would run counter to the recently adopted Parking Strategy.
- 2.4 Resident permit charges have never been part of the formal Traffic Regulation Order consultation taking place on the 'Have Your Say' site, however, the Council has received a considerable number of comments from residents regarding the 'notice of variation' that was erected in residential areas in respect to the permit charge. Initially Resident Parking Permits were being considered as part of the proposed car parking charges, however given the feedback received to date in relation to the resident parking permits, a full consultation is going to be required to ensure residents have a chance to respond formally on a wider set of measures. This will be an opportunity to present a different type of consultation including seeking views on whether Resident Parking Permits should be self-financing, what costs need to be covered from these fees such as enforcement, whether areas should continue to be included in the Controlled Parking Zones if they were to be charged, and whether further areas should be considered. The consultation will also ensure the Traffic Orders are all brought into a single consolidated order and will allow future changes to be made more easily.
- 2.5 Officers intend to carry out this further consultation early next year and bring a further report back to this committee detailing the feedback on the consultation and making recommendations.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Following the report to Policy and Resources Committee on 7 October 2020 and subsequent Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee Members working group meetings in November 2020 and a Committee meeting of 3 December 2020, Members supported the upcoming transport strategy and recommended that a comprehensive review and survey is undertaken on the local impact of car parking charges. A specialist advisor was appointed by the council to produce a detailed evidence-led parking strategy for Birkenhead Town Centre and all local centres which is consistent with local and regional strategy and supports the development and regeneration of Birkenhead and the wider Borough. As part of this project, a review of existing parking provision and capacity was considered, including

residents parking schemes. The review was completed in the autumn of 2023 and the Parking Strategy was approved at the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee 5 December 2023. Findings and evidence published in the approved Parking Strategy have been used to support officers' responses included in Appendix 3 to this report.

- 3.2 In December 2021 officers carried out a traffic regulation order consultation exercise proposing several parking charge options including charges at car parks and on-street locations. Following receipt of a considerable number of representations the Council sought further legal advice. In summary that advice suggested, amongst other matters, that the Council should complete its parking review and publish its Parking Strategy before a fresh consultation is carried out in respect of parking charges.
- 3.3 Appendix 1 to this report set outs the existing parking tariffs and proposed parking tariffs at each of the specified locations.
- 3.4 Appendix 2 to this report is the 'Have Your Say' report which provides a comprehensive anonymised schedule of all the consultation responses and representations received in relation to the proposed TRO and introduction of parking charges to new locations.
- 3.5 Appendix 3 to this report provides information about the TRO Consultation process, the key findings and sets out officers' detailed responses to the objections received by themed grouping.
- 3.6 The main points from Appendix 3 are summarised below:

The questionnaire was responded to by 3070 people, with an additional 100 plus direct representations, these are summarised below and further

- Other Off-Street Car Parks - Around 93.9% of 2937 respondents said that they objected to the introduction of the scheme
- Increase to tariffs for existing on-street locations and introduction of an overnight parking fee - Around 74.9% of 2500 respondents said that they objected to the introduction of the scheme
- Kings Parade / Coastal Drive, New Brighton - Around 86.3% of 2744 respondents said that they objected to the introduction of the scheme
- North Parade / Meols Parade, Hoylake and Meols - Around 86.3% of 2696 respondents said that they objected to the introduction of the scheme
- South Parade, West Kirby – Around 85.9% of 2676 respondents said that they objected to the introduction of the scheme

80.6% of 2819 respondents said that they objected to all schemes.

Petitions received at the time of writing this report: A 3558 signature petition has been received from the Bromborough Village Community Association

- 3.7 Some of the most prevalent themes have been extracted and summarised below together with a summary of officers responses

### 3.7.1. Effect on businesses/local economy

- 'Generally any paid parking is going to have a detrimental effect on businesses.'
- response - There is considerable research and evidence which demonstrates that carefully co-ordinated pricing charges do not negatively impact businesses, and in many instances the effect can be positive in encouraging a higher turnover of spaces, and modal shift to public transport and active travel whose users have been shown to spend more.

### 3.7.2. Impact on health and wellbeing

- 'People need to be able to "get outside" and enjoy nature for the health and well-being. Adding these charges could prevent people from being able to do so.'
- response - Surveys following parking charges introduced in other areas demonstrates that there have not been any significant impacts to parks and recreational areas in Wirral.

### 3.7.3. Displaced Parking

- 'Cars will be displaced causing congestion and create parking problems elsewhere.'
- response - Displaced parking is already an issue in many areas, this can be managed by resident only parking schemes or additional parking restrictions such as yellow lines.

### 3.7.4. Impact on Cost of Living Crisis

- 'The cost of living is tough enough as it is. To impose parking charges will limit local use of our natural beauty and few areas that can be a "free day out".'
- response - The observed trends show a positive rise in the demand for public transport, helping the socially excluded and more vulnerable members of the local community by providing cost-effective alternatives to the rise in motoring costs.

### 3.7.5. The proposed parking charges will impact on charities and volunteers

- 'Local charity, Wirral 3Ls, operates in Bebington Civic Centre and serves over 800 Wirral residents PER WEEK, 'There also a risk that RNLI crew responding to emergency incidents', 'This is particularly outrageous in the case of the group of volunteers who save the council many thousands of pounds maintaining the gunsite.'
- response - The Council works with a large number of volunteer groups, emergency response agencies such as the RNLI and other organisations and it is our intention to continue to work with these groups in providing parking concessions where appropriate.

### 3.7.6. The proposed parking charges are Unlawful

- 'All public highways are owned by the public and tax payers... authority and consent is not given to any corporation for charges to land and highways.. additionally this is unlawful and detrimental for the area...', 'Using TROs for the primary purpose of generating revenue to address broader council deficits is unlawful.'
- response - The aims and objectives of the approved Wirral Parking Strategy is not to raise revenues but to manage the negative transport impacts and provide sustainable options for residents, businesses and visitors to Wirral.

### 3.7.7. Car parks near to rail stations

- It will potentially cause car users to undertake their entire journey using a car rather than curtailing and using the train to reach their destination which is likely to be Liverpool City Centre in both cases.  
response - Officers' views are that these car parks should be considered alongside all other car parks in a fair and equitable way. If the introduction of parking charges are approved by this committee, officers will liaise with these organisations, LCRCA / Merseyrail on options on how these car parks could be operated including consideration of leasing the car parks under a commercial arrangement.

#### 3.7.8. Pasture Road Car Park, Moreton

this car park is located adjacent to a health centre. If committee agree to consider a commercial arrangement for the car parks located adjacent to the rail stations, then consideration should also be given to entering a similar arrangement with the health centre at Pasture Road. If no commercial arrangement can be agreed then parking charges would be introduced as per the original committee resolution.

3.8 The full Officer responses to the consultation comments are provided at Appendix 3.

## **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Council is required to maintain separate parking accounts for on-street and off-street given the differing legal requirements for addressing any shortfall or surplus. The set-up costs for the provision of the service, as well as enforcement, the maintenance, operational costs, unforeseen expenditure and costs to pay back capital charges or debts have been forecast so far as is possible and considered when setting the level of charges to ensure that the charges are set at an appropriate level. The main purpose for on-street parking charges is not to generate a surplus but for more effective traffic management in those on-street locations. The purpose behind the off-street car parking proposals are to align with the approved parking strategy in charging for car parking across the whole Borough in a fair and equitable way.
- 4.2 The total revenue implications for the car parking charges recommendations to introduce new charges in new locations cannot be realised until the necessary infrastructure is in place. In the first year, income may not start to be realised until Summer 2025. The repayment of the capital investment identified in section 4.4 would be approximately £87,000 per annum for 10 years and will a) keep on street in a neutral position and b) will slightly reduce any surplus made from off street parking. The net income from off-street car parking charges, recommendations 2 a, b & c, for 2025/26 would therefore be estimated at £150,000 and £300,000 per year from 2026/27 onwards.
- 4.3 There are existing costs associated with the provision of the service. The proposals would create an additional expenditure associated with the new equipment for operating costs, enforcement, maintenance, this is over and above existing expenditure associated with rates/rents, maintenance, surfacing, lining, lighting, grass/shrub/tree cutting, gritting, the parking services team all of which has been forecast into the charges set out to enable the provision of the service.



- 4.4 If the recommendations of this report are approved a separate bid to the council's Capital Programme will be prepared for approximately £1million in order to finance these schemes. This would include approximately £750,000 for the supply and installation of Pay and Display equipment, £200,000 for the supply and installation of signs and £50,000 for road lining and any remedial maintenance works and other infrastructure necessary for the recommended car parking charging options. This capital bid would be on an invest to save business case basis.
- 4.5 Once in place the fees and charges will be reviewed annually against the legal tests set out in Section 122 of the RTRA listed in full in section 5.6 of this report.

## **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Section 32(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (the RTRA) provides that for the purpose of relieving or preventing congestion of traffic the Council may provide suitable parking places for vehicles, by way of on or off street parking.
- 5.2 Section 35 of the RTRA makes provision for the Council to raise charges to be paid in connection with the use of off-street parking provided by the Council under section 32 RTRA.
- 5.3 Section 45 of the RTRA makes provision for the designation of paying parking places on highways. Section 45(2)(b) states that the Council may issue permits for the use of designated parking places and that the Council may make such charge in connection with the issue or use of the permit, of such amount and payable in such manner, as the Council may by order prescribe."
- 5.4 Section 45(3) of the RTRA states that in determining what parking places are to be designated, the Council shall consider both the interests of traffic and those of the owners and occupiers of adjoining property, and in particular:  
(a) the need for maintaining the free movement of traffic;  
(b) the need for maintaining reasonable access to premises; and  
(c) the extent to which off-street parking accommodation is available in the neighbourhood or the provision of such parking accommodation is likely to be encouraged by the designation of parking places under this section."
- 5.5 Section 46 of the RTRA makes provision for charges for the use of designated on street parking places.
- 5.6 Section 122 of the RTRA states that:  
(1) It shall be the duty of every strategic highways company and local authority upon whom functions are conferred by or under this Act, so to exercise the functions conferred on them by this Act as (so far as practicable having regard to the matters specified in subsection (2) below) to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off [the highway ....  
(2) The matters referred to in subsection (1) above as being specified in this subsection are—  
(a) the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises;  
(b) the effect on the amenities of any locality affected and (without prejudice to the generality of this paragraph) the importance of regulating and restricting the use of

roads by heavy commercial vehicles, so as to preserve or improve the amenities of the areas through which the roads run;

(bb) the strategy prepared under section 80 of the Environment Act 1995 (national air quality strategy)

(c) the importance of facilitating the passage of public service vehicles and of securing the safety and convenience of persons using or desiring to use such vehicles; and

(d) any other matters appearing to the strategic highways company or the local authority to be relevant...

- 5.7 Section 55 of the RTRA sets out financial provisions relating to parking designation orders. In essence it states that there should be a ring-fenced account in respect of income and expenditure in respect of parking places. It also states that if at the end of the financial year there is a surplus, that surplus can be applied for the following purposes
- “(a) the making good to the general fund .... of any amount charged to that fund under .... in the 4 years immediately preceding the financial year in question.
- (b) meeting all or any part of the cost of the provision and maintenance of off street parking;
- (c) the making to other local authorities, or to other persons of contributions towards the cost of the provision and maintenance by them...of off-street parking accommodation, ...
- (d) if it appears to the Council that the provision of further off-street parking accommodation is unnecessary or undesirable, the following purposes
- (i) meeting costs incurred in the provision or operation of, or of facilities for, public transport,
- (ii) the purposes of a highway or road improvement project in the Council’s area,
- (iii) applies only to a London authority
- (iv) the purposes of environmental improvement in the Council’s area,
- (v) in the case of such local authorities as may be prescribed, any other purposes for which the authority may lawfully incur expenditure;
- 5.8 The High Court in R(Attfield) v London Borough of Barnet [2013] considered the lawfulness of the introduction of on-street parking charges which on the facts was held to be intended to generate additional income to meet projected expenditure for road maintenance and improvement, concessionary fares and other road transport costs, and was not required to cover increased running costs of the Council’s parking schemes:
- 5.9 The court confirmed that in accordance with section 122 of the RTRA, “..the authority has a discretion to set charges to reflect its parking policies. It is not restricted to levying a charge only to cover the base cost of running the schemes” However, the court held that: “section 122 was not intended to authorise a Council to raise a levy on parking permit holders, pursuant to section 45(2)(b), to fund any project which met the objects set out in section 122. The RTRA 1984 is not a revenue raising or taxing statute. The Council is therefore not entitled to exercise its powers under section 45 of the RTRA for the purposes of raising surplus revenue to defray other road expenditure and reduce the need to raise income from other sources, such as fines, charges and council tax.

- 5.10 Legal notices and maps of the areas affected by the TRO were prepared as part of the consultation process.
- 5.11 The details of the legal powers and procedures being used for each of these recommendations is listed in Appendix 3 to this report.
- 5.12 New Traffic Regulation Orders and amendments to existing Traffic Regulation Orders will be introduced in accordance with the decision taken at this Committee.

## **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

- 6.1 The car parking charges options to introduce new charges in new locations may require revenue growth and/or additional capital expenditure as indicated within the financial implications section of this report.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 7.1 There is a temporary or permanent risk to future car parking income associated with any loss of spaces or changes to car parking policy as a result of the regeneration plans for Birkenhead and other areas such as New Brighton and Liscard.
- 7.2 If the recommendations of this report are not approved an in-year budget pressure applying to the off-street parking income target will remain and then there is a risk the shortfall will be required to be achieved from elsewhere within the budgets under the portfolio of Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee with consequential impacts on other service provision.
- 7.3 Financial risks are being managed through the budget options review process within Neighbourhoods directorate in consultation with Resources directorate colleagues.
- 7.4 There are several regeneration plans currently being developed in Wirral including, The Birkenhead regeneration plan and the New Brighton and Liscard Masterplans, all of which have implications on car parking. Therefore, at this stage the council cannot take account of any future plans other than to note the risks they potentially have on future car parking options.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 In order to implement new car parking charges the council was required to undertake a consultation exercise as part of the required Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) process. Full details of the process followed are included at Appendix 3 to this report. The statutory consultation phase on Parking Charges is not a referendum or public vote but allows members of the public to object to the proposals.
- 8.2 The statutory advertising process for the TRO proposals required publication of notices at all sites affected by the proposals and in the press (Wirral Globe) with an appropriate objection period. All Party Spokespersons and Ward Councillors were informed as well as the emergency services, Freight Transport, Road Haulage Association and Sustrans.

8.3 The case of R v London Borough of Brent ex parte Gunning(1985) provides that a consultation is only legitimate when these four principles are met as follows:

1. proposals are still at a formative stage

A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined, by the decision makers;

2. there is sufficient information to give 'intelligent consideration'

The information provided must relate to the consultation and must be available, accessible, and easily interpretable for consultees to provide an informed response;

3. there is adequate time for consideration and response

There must be sufficient opportunity for consultees to participate in the consultation.

There is no set timeframe for consultation, the length of time given for consultee to respond can vary depending on the subject and extent of impact of the consultation

4. 'conscientious consideration' must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made

Decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account

8.4 These principles were reinforced in R v North and East Devon Health Authority ex parte Coughlan 2001, which confirmed that the principles of the Gunning case applied to all consultations by a public authority,

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

9.2 The increase of car parking charges and the introduction of new parking charges in coastal and tourist visitor areas has been subject to an equality impact assessment (EIA). The EIA has been reviewed and this report makes no changes to it. Copies the EIA Car Parking Charges Report 2024\_ Introduction of new car parking charges can be found at: - <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 The link between poor air quality, the climate emergency and emissions from vehicles is widely accepted. An effective car parking charging regime encouraging modal shift away from the private motor car towards cleaner, more sustainable modes of transport will have a positive environmental and climate change impact. Any car parking and transport strategy will support the council's Air Quality Strategy, Environment and Climate Emergency Declaration and Active Travel agendas.

10.2 The introduction of car parking charges may help promote more active travel and less use of the private car so will help provide equality of accessibility for local residents and businesses, help reduce local congestion and improve safety for vulnerable roads users as well health and air quality. The recommendations of this report positively support the reduction in energy consumption as it will support the Cool 2 target of 'a complete transition to fossil fuel free local travel by around 2030'.

## **11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 Through any future procurement exercises associated with the necessary parking charging infrastructure and enforcement activity, the council will seek to maximise social value activity in local communities wherever possible.
- 11.2 Sustainable travel is at the heart of the Birkenhead 2040 Framework and emerging Local Plan. Car parking charges and parking strategy is part of a wider regeneration programme to deliver a prosperous, inclusive economy to benefit local residents. Such programmes will have a positive impact on supporting active travel and encouraging modal shift away from the private motor car.

**REPORT AUTHOR: Steve Atkins**  
(Senior Network Operations Manager)  
telephone: 0151 606 2270  
email: [steveatkins@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:steveatkins@wirral.gov.uk)

## **APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1 - Existing and Proposed Parking Tariffs  
Appendix 2 – Have Your Say Report, published as a supplement  
Appendix 3 – Consultation Summary, Key Themes and Responses to Objections Received.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Parking Measures and Policies Research Review, TRL Limited, 2010  
Transport Research Laboratory (TRL)  
[Parking Measures and Policies Research Review, TRL Limited, 2010](#)

Research into Car Park Charging Strategies, Welsh Government, 2017  
[Research into Car Park Charging Strategies, Welsh Government, 2017](#)

How rising costs will affect UK drivers, Autocar.co.uk  
[How rising costs will affect UK drivers | Autocar](#)

Cool Wirral Strategy  
<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/files/cool2-strategy-2020.pdf/download?inline>

Developing a vision for Local Transport Plan 4 (LCRCA)  
<https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/LTP4- VISION090522.pdf>

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

This report is being considered by the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee in accordance with section (d) of its Terms of Reference:

(d) in relation to parking, including on and off-street parking and civil parking enforcement;

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee, Car Parking Charges Options Report	14 June 2021
Decision Review Committee – Called-In Business Car Parking Charging Options – first meeting	29 July 2021
Decision Review Committee – Called-In Business Car Parking Charging Options – second meeting	10 August 2021
Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee, Development of a Wirral Parking Strategy Report	19 June 2023
Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee, Wirral Parking Strategy Report	5 December 2023