

# On Street Parking Review - Hereford City Centre

**Decision maker: Cabinet Member Infrastructure and Transport**

**Decision date: 17 February 2023**

**Report by: Parking Services Manager**

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

Non-key

## **Wards affected**

Central; Hinton & Hunderton; Widemarsh;

## **Purpose**

To consider and approve the recommendation to consult on introducing On Street parking charges in areas on the periphery of the Historic City Core Centre.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**That:**

- a) residents and businesses are informally consulted on the proposals to introduce on street parking charges at the locations shown in Appendix A for the reasons set out in this report, and;
- b) the current on street paid parking scheme in Hereford City Centre is extended so that charges for parking apply on Sundays; and
- c) all operational decisions are delegated to the Interim Service Director, Highways and Transport, to progress these proposals including the formal consultation stage, noting a further Cabinet Member decision will be required to formally implement any changes.

## **Alternative options**

1. Not to progress these on street parking charging proposals on the periphery of Hereford City Centre – This is not recommended as the proposals are in line with the strategic transport objectives and policies set out in the Herefordshire Local Transport Plan 2016 - 2031. These

strategic objectives will be undeliverable without the implementation of these proposals amongst other improvements to active and sustainable transport infrastructure within the city.

## Key considerations

2. A review has been commissioned regarding the provision of on street parking in roads that surround the historic central core of Hereford, in line with policy set out in Herefordshire Council's Local Transport Plan 2016-2031 and the emerging Hereford City Masterplan.
3. The Local Transport Plan (LTP), approved in 2016, sets out the council's parking strategy over the period from 2016 – 2031 with how it aims to complement the wider strategic sustainable transport aims of the Council.
4. The LTP states several **strategic objectives** for parking within the city such as:
  - Managing short and long stay parking supply to reduce vehicle impacts in our market towns and city centres, retail areas and tourist attractions to encourage greater footfall and retail receipts and to improve the appearance of our streets.
  - Managing the supply and pricing of parking to encouraging the use of active modes (walking, cycling and public transport) particularly for shorter trips of less than 5km.
  - Support for our long-term growth proposals in Hereford through the delivery of longer-term parking provision, such as Park and Choose and to rationalise and reduce the supply of commuter parking in the centre of the city.
5. The LTP also goes on to recommend **parking policy activities** for Hereford such as;
  - Phased reduction and rationalisation over the period to 2031 of long-stay commuter parking supply within the city centre.
  - Charging for on-street parking in Hereford.
  - Developing more Park and Choose facilities to provide interchange between cars, buses, walking and cycling and reduce car trips into the centre and provide additional parking supply.
  - Pedestrian access routes connecting public off-street parking with urban centres will be examined for potential environmental improvements to ensure they are safe and pleasant to use.
6. In order to improve the sustainable transport initiatives in and around Hereford, the Hereford City Masterplan (currently at draft phase) seeks to improve sustainable transport within the city by promoting active travel and removing traffic from the most central parts of the city. All of these strategy documents therefore suggest that introducing on street charging to roads within Hereford's central core and its surrounding streets is a key factor in achieving some of the Council's strategic sustainable transport goals.
7. In 2016 parking charges were introduced to all of the streets within the central core, and in order to manage the cumulative displacement that has occurred, it is therefore appropriate to introduce on street parking charges to locations on the periphery of Hereford's central core to dissuade visitor parking and promote active travel in these locations. The charges will also encourage the use of strategic off street parking facilities rather than drivers passing by these in search of free street parking.

8. As a result, peripheral locations were selected where technical surveys were commissioned to assess parking availability and use. These surveys focused on locations where parking is currently free (time) limited or dual limited waiting & residents permit parking, all within walking distance to the central core. The abundance of this free parking around the core centre in Hereford is problematic as drivers seek out free parking and often travel across the city unnecessarily to locate a space contributing to vehicle movements.
9. The following roads were identified as possible locations where free parking availability could be replaced with on street charging, where feasibility and impact assessments have been carried out;
- Canal Road\*
  - Cantilupe Street\*
  - Commercial Road\*
  - Coningsby Street\*
  - Mill Street\*
  - St Martins Street\*
  - St Martins Avenue\*
  - Stonebow Road

*\*proposed “Zone 2 On Street Parking”*

10. Once the roads, and particular parking bays within the roads, had been identified; parking occupancy surveys were commissioned to understand the demand, occupancy, and usage of the bays in question, as well as to ascertain whether it would be feasible to introduce parking charges at these locations.
11. The data gathered clearly showed that the roads surveyed, and detailed in the above list, had relatively high daily vehicle occupancy rates, with the exception of Stonebow Road and St Martins Avenue. The survey information is available in Appendix B – Survey Data. Stonebow Road is subsequently not being progressed as part of this proposal, whereas St Martins Avenue is due to its proximity to other streets in this proposal.
12. The data is also fairly conclusive in proving that short stay trips, between half an hour and 3 hours, is by far the most regular occurrence within the parking bays. For example, the survey data collected on Wednesday 7 September 2022 shows that 799 of the 871 vehicles recorded as being parked within the surveyed roads stayed less than 3 hours, and 733 vehicles stayed for less than 2 hours - as shown in **Table 1** below.

Link	TOTAL LENGTH OF STAY (HOURS)							
	0.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	over 3	Grand Total
Canal Road	20	12	7	0	0	2	1	<b>42</b>
Cantilupe Street	71	46	22	4	1	3	5	<b>152</b>
Commercial Road	138	33	21	8	5	1	2	<b>208</b>
Coningsby Street	96	33	30	8	6	5	5	<b>183</b>
Mill Street	16	17	14	8	6	17	29	<b>107</b>
St Martins Avenue	9	2	0	0	1	2	0	<b>14</b>
St Martins Street	41	32	13	12	4	10	28	<b>140</b>
Stonebow Road	9	7	3	1	0	3	2	<b>25</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>871</b>

Table 1 - Recorded Parking Occupancy at City Streets

13. As the vehicle occupancy and duration of stay survey data suggests that there are a significant number of vehicles currently using the free limited waiting on street parking bays within these roads on the periphery of the city's central core; a case to introduce parking charges on these streets should be explored in order to achieve some of the policy objectives of the Herefordshire LTP.
14. The daily average total, for short stays of between 30 minutes to 1 hour, is 541. Assuming that 40% of these trips are displaced to off street car parks or to the use of Active Travel measures by the introduction of charges, 216 trips by private car could be removed from the city each day. This could potentially equate to an annual trip reduction of approximately 67,400 vehicle movements displaced to off street car parks, public transport, cycling or walking.
15. It should however be noted that the introduction of parking charges to better manage free parking areas does not mean that the city centre footfall will reduce as a result – this is a common negative perception. In fact, the opposite is true – better management of parking facilities leads to reduced congestion, improved air quality and road safety, promotes the local economy and ensures good accessibility.
16. Additionally, it is recommended that to improve accessibility to spaces on Sundays, charges should align with all council car parks and charge on every day of the week. Sunday is considered by many as a retail day in the core centre with many stores open as normal, therefore charges should no longer differentiate between days of the week. Whilst this is not subject to the consultation outlined in recommendation (a) this decision will take account of any views offered prior to implementation. The delegation in (c) will consider the most appropriate time to make the change to Sunday charges, though this may be at the same time as any other changes to the geographic footprint should that proceed.
17. The charges applied should align with that across the city to ensure a coherent and consistent approach is adopted, and to ensure that the objectives of the scheme is met. The proposed changes are set out in **Table 2** below, where the tariffs that drivers pay increase dependant on the proximity to the centre.

Parking Zone	Charge / change
Zone 1 – Current On Street Parking	£2.00 per hour Currently Mon - Sat to be amended to Mon – Sun
Zone 1 – Car Parks	£1.60 per hour (Mon – Sun) No change
Zone 2 – Proposed On Street Parking	Charge to be same as Zone 1 - Car Parks
Zone 2 – Car Parks	£1.40 per hour (Mon – Sun) No change

Zone 3 – Car Park	£1.00 per hour (Mon – Sun)
	No change

*Table 2 - Overview of Current and Proposed City Parking Charges for Short Stay Parking*

18. The impact on local residents and businesses in these streets, in most instances, will be limited as the parking spaces are currently either limited waiting or dual limited waiting / resident permit holder bays. Resident permits will continue to be valid in these zones. In fact, the introduction of parking charges is likely to improve the availability of spaces.
19. Some businesses, along Commercial Road in particular, may not support the proposals if they were to consider it could affect their passing trade. This however will be mitigated by improved space availability and less traffic circulating for spaces. Charges will also cease at 6pm and therefore parking will continue to be free after this time when demand for space is much lower.
20. It is recommended to progress the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) process in order to introduce the on street charges on the roads detailed within this report, and amend the current charging schedules to include Sundays. The proposals should initially be taken forward to an informal residents and businesses consultation on the streets directly affected, to understand any particular needs of local users and to highlight any potential concerns that may be able to be mitigated, before starting on the formal Statutory TRO process to implement the proposals.
21. Following the informal consultation the scheme will be reviewed noting any feedback, where the Service Director Highways and Transport will be delegated authority, in consultation with the Cabinet Member, to progress a formal consultation process by advertisement of the Notice of Proposal. Any feedback received from this formal process will be considered and presented to the Cabinet Member for consideration.

## **Community impact**

22. The recommendations outlined above are likely to have a positive impact on the local community. They are likely to lead to a reduction in car journeys within the roads in question and the city centre as a whole, which should lead to an improvement in air quality for all. It is also likely to improve parking availability for local road users / permit holders.
23. These proposals are aligned with the aspirations of the emerging City Masterplan where car dominance is to be tackled by a reduction in demand for parking, including free parking. A decision taken by Cabinet on 3 December 2020 (Hereford Transport Strategy Review) approved methods to reduce demand for car parking in the centre of Hereford (<https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7384> ).

## **Environmental Impact**

24. Herefordshire Council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the people of Herefordshire. Together with partner organisations in the private, public, and voluntary sectors we share a strong commitment to improving our environmental sustainability, achieving carbon neutrality and to protect and enhance Herefordshire's outstanding natural environment.
25. The development of this project has sought to minimise any adverse environmental impact and will actively seek opportunities to improve and enhance environmental performance.

26. The implementation of the proposals is likely to result in a significant amount of vehicles (currently driving into the city for free parking) seeking alternative parking arrangements at more strategic off street car park sites, encourage the use of Active Travel measures such as cycling & walking, or the use of Public Transport. This in turn will likely lead to an improvement of air quality and general setting within the city.
27. The locating of any new machines will be minimised and agreed with the councils Conservation Officer, so that any adverse impact on the general amenity of the road can be minimised, particularly in conservation areas. As the charging requirement will replace existing parking restrictions the current signage will be replaced in the same locations.

## **Equality duty**

28. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.
29. The recommendations set out in this report are considered to be low impact with regards to equality. The proposals aim to improve amenity and Hereford's strategic and sustainable transport aims, thus paying regard to the Council's duty according to the Equality Act 2010 as set out below.
30. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to;

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Any impact as a result of the scheme will be equal to all parties.

31. See Appendix D of this report for Equality Impacts and Needs Assessment (EINA).
32. This decision relates to the commencement of consultation regarding the expansion of paid parking areas. This process will be undertaken by sending letters to all properties in the affected streets, as per normal practice. Responses, by objection or support, will be required in writing by email or postal letter. A telephone number will be provided on the letter for those that may need additional support.

## **Resource implications**

33. A meeting of full council in February 2022 approved these measures into the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), and whilst not the intention of the scheme, revenue derived from the charges will be used to support other Transport and Highway related costs. A total of £41,500 annual revenue is forecasted in the MTFS as a result of this scheme.
34. The cost of introducing the on street charging which includes the parking surveys, consultation, associated Traffic Regulation Order / legal work, and the procurement / installation of the

physical signing, road markings and equipment (payment machines) is projected to be approximately £98k which is to be funded from existing capital for this project. All procurements required will be carried out in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules and relevant legislation.

35. A full cost and revenue projection will be provided upon any decision to implement charges.

## **Legal implications**

36. The introduction of a new TRO under Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 32, 35, 37, 45, 46, 47, 49, 51 and Part IV of Schedule 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and the Traffic Management Act 2004 will be required.
37. Part 2 of the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 ("the 1996 Regulations") lays out the procedure prior to making an order. Regulations 6 and 7 require the Council as Highway Authority to undertake a formal consultation on the TRO and publish the proposals. Regulation 8 allows for any person or persons to make objections and requires that the Council, as Highway Authority, consider any objections received after the formal statutory consultation process, (which includes advertising in a local newspaper). A subsequent report will include any such objections or comments, for consideration.
38. The Council has discretion to amend its original proposals if considered desirable, whether or not in the light of any objections or comments received, as a result of such statutory consultation. If any objections received are accepted, in part or whole, and/or a decision is made to modify the original proposals, if such a modification is considered to be substantial, then further consultation must be undertaken to those affected by the proposed modifications in those affected by the proposed modifications in accordance with Regulation 14 of the 1996 Regulations.
39. Once an Order is made by the Council it will need to be publicised in accordance with the requirements of Part 3 of the 1996 Regulations. The Order cannot come into force before the Order has been publicised in accordance with these requirements. The time period to bring about a high court challenge is three months from the date of the confirming the Order.

## **Risk management**

40. The Local Transport Plan (LTP) approved in 2016 sets out the councils Parking Strategy over the period from 2016 – 2031 and how it aims to complement the wider strategic sustainable Transport aims of the Council. Reducing the amount of commuter parking available and encouraging active modes of travel are set out as key objectives within the LTP. Furthermore, reducing the amount of free on street parking & introducing on street parking charges within the city centre are policies set out in the LTP.
41. It is important for safety, and their effectiveness that parking restrictions are imposed appropriately having regard to the type of factors considered in this report. Parking restrictions should only be considered where there is a more suitable place for the parked vehicles to migrate to or where alternative more sustainable travel measures are available. This is the case within the proposed area.
42. There is a very small risk that the proposals may not achieve routine compliance. However, given that the restrictions will be accompanied by high profile signage, new pay to park payment methods providing more convenient ways to pay for the motorist, as well as daily enforcement patrols of the area, the risk of non-compliance is likely to be low.

## **Consultees**

43. It is recommended that both affected residents and businesses are informally consulted with in the roads where on street charging are proposed within this report, this will include Ward Councillors and other Key Stakeholders. This should provide a good indication of any potential issues that may be able to be mitigated prior to the Statutory TRO process in order to implement the proposals.

## **Appendices**

Appendix A – TRO Plans

Appendix B – Survey Data

Appendix C – Use and Projection

Appendix D – Equality Impacts and Needs Assessment (EINA)

## **Background papers**

None identified



## Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

**Please note this section must be completed before the report can be published**

Governance	John Coleman	Date 30/01/2023
Finance	Louise Devlin	Date 24/01/2023
Legal	Ingrid Lekaj	Date 08/02/2023
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 24/01/2023
Equality Duty	Harriet Yellin	Date 02/02/2023
Procurement	Lee Robertson	Date 24/01/2023
Risk	Kevin Lloyd	Date 26/01/2023

**Approved by**                      **Ross Cook**                      **Date 08/02/2023**

**Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.**

LTP – Local Transport Plan  
TRO – Traffic Regulation Order