

Rother District Council

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 19 October 2020

Title: Off-Street Car Parks Task and Finish Group

Report of: Joe Powell

Ward(s): All

Purpose of Report: To remind Members of the recommendation made by the Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) Task and Finish Group in 2018, that the Group be reformed six months after the introduction of CPE to inform the ESCC-led annual review of CPE. To recommend that, in addition, a new and separate Off-Street Car Parks Task and Finish Group be formed to monitor the impact of charges across all Council owned off-street car parks now that CPE is in place. This will help assess whether the scale of parking charges is appropriate and also inform the work of the reformed CPE Task and Finish Group.

Officer

Recommendation(s): It be **RESOLVED:** That

- 1) an Off-Street Car Parks Task and Finish Group be established to monitor the impact of charging across all Council owned off-street car parks now that Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) is in place;
- 2) the Terms of Reference at Appendix A be approved;
- 3) if considered appropriate, a revised scale of parking charges be recommended to Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
- 4) the Civil Parking Enforcement Task and Finish Group reconvene after April 2021 to consider the impact of the Civil Parking Enforcement Scheme in preparation for the first annual review of CPE, led by ESCC.

Background

1. In September 2020, ESCC introduced Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE). CPE introduces charging to certain **on-street parking locations** throughout Bexhill, Rye and Battle. On-street charging will not apply to other areas of the district; however, other restrictions may apply, such as double yellow line enforcement or resident permit schemes, for example.
2. As some Members may recall, a Civil Parking Enforcement Task and Finish Group was formed previously to consider the viability of implementing CPE in the district. In 2018, the Group recommended that a review be carried out six months after the introduction of CPE (Minute OSC17/51 refers). As CPE was

introduced at the end of September 2020, it is therefore proposed to re-establish the Group in April 2021 and their work will help inform the twelve month ESCC led review.

3. The Council operates its designated car parks under the District of Rother (Off Street) Parking Places Order 2020 (PPO). The PPO provides a framework under which the Council can manage its car parks effectively and better meet the cost of maintenance and enforcement through parking charges.
4. In September 2020, Cabinet agreed to amend the PPO to introduce charges to certain free car parks that fall directly within those CPE areas where on-street charges have been introduced (Minute CB20/45 refers). It was also agreed that those free car parks that are in close proximity to areas where on-street charges apply should also have charges introduced. Alongside the need to monitor the impact of CPE on all its off-street car parks, it is important for the Council to monitor the impact of the recent decision to introduce charges to car parks that were free to use prior to the introduction of CPE.
5. It is therefore recommended that a new separate Task and Finish Group be formed to monitor the impact of charging across all Council owned off-street car parks and suggest recommendations for adjustments to the PPO accordingly.

Terms of Reference

6. The draft Terms of Reference for the Off-Street Car Parks Task and Finish Group can be found at Appendix A.

Conclusion

7. The introduction of CPE is likely to have an impact on the use of the Council's off-street car parks. The Council's off-street car parks are an important infrastructure asset and any change in their usage will affect the social, economic and environmental value these assets provide to the community. The formation of a Task and Finish group will help to assess the impact of charging across all Council owned off-street car parks now that CPE is in place and ensure best use of our assets.
8. Furthermore, the Council finds itself in a challenging financial position and it must ensure that the cost of administering and maintaining assets is met by relevant charges. The present scale of parking charges is inconsistent between different car park types and car park locations throughout the district. The work suggested in this report will assist the Council in assessing whether revisions are needed to the current scale of parking charges so that the Council's costs are covered, but also so that the needs of local residents, local businesses and visitors are considered.
9. It is recommended that:
 - (a) an Off-Street Car Parks Task and Finish Group be established to monitor the impact of charging across all Council owned off-street car parks now that Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) is in place;
 - (b) to approve the Terms of Reference for the Group at Appendix A;
 - (c) if considered appropriate, a revised scale of parking charges be recommended to Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and

- (d) the Civil Parking Enforcement Task and Finish Group reconvene after April 2021 to consider the impact of the Civil Parking Enforcement Scheme in preparation for the first annual review of CPE, led by ESCC.

Financial Implications

The Off-Street Car Parks Task and Finish Group will consider any financial implications associated with the introduction of CPE.

Legal Implications

10. Specific minor variations to the PPO can be varied and advertised within relevant car park locations. Any significant changes to the PPO would have to follow the designated consultation route with full advertisement and consultation obligations under the Regulations.

Human Resources Implications

11. The Task and Finish Group will be resourced from within the Neighbourhood Services Team.

Equalities and Diversity

12. Car parking charges can affect the accessibility of certain areas of the district relative to others if there is an inconsistency of charges between equivalent areas.

Other Implications	Applies?	Other Implications	Applies?
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	Yes
Crime and Disorder	No	Consultation	No
Environmental	No	Access to Information	No
Sustainability	No	Exempt from publication	No
Risk Management	No		

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Appendices:	A - Off-Street Car Park Charges TASK AND FINISH GROUP: Draft Terms of Reference
Relevant previous Minutes:	CB20/45 OSC17/51
Background Papers:	None
Reference Documents:	None

Rother District Council

Off-Street Car Park Charges TASK AND FINISH GROUP



Draft Terms of Reference

Aims and Origin

- To monitor the impact of charges across all Council owned off-street car parks now that CPE is in place. If considered appropriate, a revised schedule of charges for Council-owned car parks be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) and establish whether the proposed charges enable the Council to meet its costs, as well as ease congestion, improve the local environment and promote accessibility to residents, local businesses and visitors.

In September 2020 ESCC introduced Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE). CPE introduced charging to certain on-street parking locations throughout Bexhill, Rye and Battle. On-street charging will not apply to other areas of the district, but other restrictions may apply.

The Council operates its designated car parks under the District of Rother (Off Street) Parking Places Order 2020 (PPO). The PPO provides a framework under which the Council can manage its car parks effectively and better meet the cost of maintenance and enforcement through parking charges.

The introduction of CPE is likely to increase the use off-street car parks under the Council's ownership. The increased usage will have an impact on the accessibility of car parks for local businesses and residents as well as increase the maintenance and enforcement costs to the Council.

There has historically been an inconsistency of charges across the district with certain car park locations having higher charges than other areas with some benefitting from free parking. The Council might consider a scale of parking charges that is more consistent between equivalent areas of the district.

In September 2020 Cabinet agreed to amend the PPO 2020 to introduce charges to certain parks that fall directly within those CPE areas where on-street charges have been introduced. It was also agreed that those car parks that are in close proximity to areas where on-street charges apply should also have charges introduced; the impact of these new charges

also needs to be monitored.

Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Review data illustrating levels of car park usage before and after the introduction of CPE.b) Review the income data from each car park location before and after the introduction of CPE.c) Consider the needs of those amenity and community groups which are attached to certain car park locations.d) Consider the viability of lower charges for residents at certain car park locations where high visitor numbers occur.e) Consider the eligibility criteria for nominated and dedicated annual permits (residents' permits).f) Propose revisions to the scale of parking charges for the PPO 2020 to provide a consistency of charges between equivalent areas of the district.
Desired Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An evidence-based schedule of charges for the Council's off-street car parks be made available to the Council.• Analysis of the proposed charging structure for off-street car parks and whether these will support the cost of their management and maintenance.• Local residents, businesses, sports clubs, community groups and visitors experience a consistent approach to parking charges between equivalent areas within the district that support the local economy and local accessibility requirements.• Local congestion is eased and the local environment improved.
Timescale	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Evidence gathering and review – October 2020 to March 2021- Form recommendations – March 2021- Report back to OSC – April 2021
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Minimum of 6 Members - TBC
Officer Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Joe Powell
Quorum	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Two

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