

**To: BRACKNELL TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION COMMITTEE
7 SEPTEMBER 2020**

TOWN CENTRE OFF STREET DAY RATE CAR PARK CHARGES – OCTOBER 2020

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The council reviews its fees and charges for its town centre car parks on an annual basis. The season ticket prices were reviewed as part of the council's annual budget and increases were made in line with inflation from 1st April 2020. This paper looks at options in respect of the off-street council run car parks in the town centre which are reviewed annually in September in line with the anniversary of the opening of the Lexicon.

2 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 That the Committee

- (i) **Approves the charging tariffs for The Avenue, High Street, Braccan Walk and Weather Way car parks from 1st October 2020 as detailed in Table 1b Option 2A set out in the report below.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 3.1 That a decision is taken on which of the following charging options is adopted for The Avenue, High Street, Braccan Walk and Weather Way car parks from 1st October 2020.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The Council could maintain the current charges for The Avenue, High Street, Braccan Walk and Weather Way car parks. This option is not recommended in the current budget circumstances as increasing current rates could generate additional income of at least £50,000 if the current estimates for car park usage are realised. Additionally, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the service is forecast to under recover on income against target by around £2,000,000 according to the current worst-case scenario estimate. The increases proposed would help bridge some of this gap.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The Council entered into a 40-year lease to manage the Avenue multi-storey car park and Weather Way surface car park in 2017. The Council also manages the High Street and Braccan Walk multi storey car parks, Albert Road and Wick Hill public car parks.
- 5.2 When car park fees are set, the Council needs to consider the fee structure from a commercial perspective. The inter-relationship with the vitality of the town centre and the local businesses require appropriate attention through detailed discussion and debate, hence, why the responsibility is devolved to this Committee.
- 5.3 The lease for The Avenue car park effectively sets the method of calculating the permissible fee increases for day rate parking in the main council run car parks in the town centre.

- 5.4 In order of popularity, The Avenue, Braccan Walk, High Street and Weather Way car Parks. These operate in competition with Princess Square and Bracknell Station (including The One) multi-storey car parks.
- 5.5 All car parks face competition from the three hours free parking in the Peel Centre and one and a half hours free parking at Waitrose. There are obligations on the relevant parties to ensure that through their own enforcement procedures, they are regulating this in order to try to deter abuse. Princess Square offers a more competitive charging regime and is currently free after 3pm.
- 5.6 The Avenue and Braccan Walk mainly provide for the needs of shoppers. High Street traditionally has been used for season ticket and BFC staff parking, both of which have been dramatically impacted by covid-19. Weather Way car park provides the only unrestricted height accessible public car park for town centre users.
- 5.7 As stipulated in the lease for the Avenue car park, there is a cap on the fee increases. We can choose to implement the same fee increase across all car parks, or treat the increases at BW and HS differently where there isn't a requirement to stay within a cap.
- 5.8 Option 2A is per the lease, providing for the maximum uplift possible and rounding it up to the nearest 10p, per the lease. (Note, due to the methodology for calculating the uplift based on 2017 prices, there is no permitted increase to the 1-2-hour band on this occasion). Option 2B is the same but increasing the 1-2hours by 10p, which is effectively not permitted by the lease. Option 2C is about increasing Braccan Walk and High Street by more than that at The Avenue; therefore, we will have a different charging mechanism across the car parks.
- 5.9 Option 1 scenarios are more simplified in that Option 1A allows a flat rate 10p uplift on all charge bands that allow an increase (note 1-2hours is the band that we cannot uplift per the lease). Option 1B is similar to 2A/B but shows an increase in the 1-2hours (again, effectively not permitted by the lease). Option 1C gives a flat rate 20p increase to all bands at High Street and Braccan Walk, again giving a different pricing mechanism across the car parks.
- 5.10 As detailed in Table 1a below– options with limited increases to long stay rates:
- 1A) Rates are increased by £0.10 in all four car parks for all charging bands that it is permitted for in The Avenue car park, according to the lease.
- 1B) Rates are increased by £0.10 in all four car parks for all charging bands.
- 1C) Rates are increased in The Avenue by £0.10 for all charging bands that it is permitted for, according to the lease. Rates are increased by £0.20 for all charging bands in Braccan Walk and High Street.
- 5.11 As detailed in Table 1b below– options with maximum permissible increases to long stay rates:
- 2A) Rates are increased in all four car parks by the amount that is permissible in The Avenue car park, according to the lease.

2B) Rates are increased in all four car parks by the amount that is permissible in The Avenue car park, according to the lease, or by 10p where the formula in the lease does not lead to an increase.

2C) Rates are increased in The Avenue car park by the amount that is permissible, according to the lease. This will be mirrored for the long stay rates in the High Street and Braccan Walk but all short stay rates will be increased by 20p.

5.12 The fees for The Avenue, High Street, Braccan Walk and Weather Way car parks are reviewed annually in line with the anniversary of the opening of The Lexicon. If one of the above charging options is agreed on, the proposed increases could generate the following amount of additional income:

Table 2 – Potential Additional Income to be Realised from Charging Options

Option	Approximate Additional Annual Income Under Pre-Covid Usage Levels	Approximate Additional Annual Income Under Current Estimated Usage Levels for Next 12 Months	Assumptions
1A and 2A	£80,000	£50,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Price increases won't deter people from using the car parks
1B And 2B	£130,000	£80,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Price increases won't deter people from using the car parks • The proportion of users staying in the car parks for the time frames with no price increase will remain the same
1C and 2C	£115,000	£70,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Price increases won't deter people from using the car parks • The proportion of users staying in The Avenue for the time frames with no price increase will remain the same • Higher rates in High Street and Braccan Walk won't displace users to The Avenue

*All Options 2s are likely to generate more income than is stated in the table but due to the limitations of the available data, a value can't be placed on this.

5.13 The potential additional income is restricted due to the impact of covid-19 and the numbers of people currently using the town centre car parks.

Table 1a – Options for changes to car park charges – limited increases to long stay rates

	Current Rate	Option 1A Proposed Rate	Option 1A Proposed Increase	Option 1B Proposed Rate	Option 1B Proposed Increase	Option 1C Proposed Rate: BW & HS	Option 1C Proposed Increase: BA & HS
0 – 1	£1.50	£1.60	£0.10	£1.60	£0.10	£1.70	£0.20
1 – 2	£2.70	£2.70	£0.00	£2.80	£0.10	£2.90	£0.20
2 – 3	£3.40	£3.50	£0.10	£3.50	£0.10	£3.60	£0.20
3 – 4	£4.00	£4.10	£0.10	£4.10	£0.10	£4.20	£0.20
4 – 5	£5.20	£5.30	£0.10	£5.30	£0.10	£5.40	£0.20
5 – 6	£5.90	£6.00	£0.10	£6.00	£0.10	£6.10	£0.20
6 – 7	£6.50	£6.60	£0.10	£6.60	£0.10	£6.70	£0.20
7 – 8	£7.30	£7.40	£0.10	£7.40	£0.10	£7.50	£0.20
8+	£8.50	£8.60	£0.10	£8.60	£0.10	£8.70	£0.20
Night Charge	£1.60	£1.70	£0.10	£1.70	£0.10	£1.80	£0.20

Table 1b – Options for changes to car park charges – maximum permissible increases to long stay rates

	Current Rate	Option 2A Proposed Rate	Option 2A Proposed Increase	Option 2B Proposed Rate	Option 2B Proposed Increase	Option 2C Proposed Rate: BW & HS	Option 2C Proposed Increase: BA & HS
0 – 1	£1.50	£1.60	£0.10	£1.60	£0.10	£1.80	£0.20
1 – 2	£2.70	£2.70	£0.00	£2.80	£0.10	£2.90	£0.20
2 – 3	£3.40	£3.50	£0.10	£3.50	£0.10	£3.70	£0.20
3 – 4	£4.00	£4.10	£0.10	£4.10	£0.10	£4.30	£0.20
4 – 5	£5.20	£5.40	£0.20	£5.40	£0.20	£5.40	£0.20
5 – 6	£5.90	£6.20	£0.30	£6.20	£0.30	£6.20	£0.30
6 – 7	£6.50	£6.80	£0.30	£6.80	£0.30	£6.80	£0.30
7 – 8	£7.30	£7.70	£0.40	£7.70	£0.40	£7.70	£0.40
8+	£8.50	£9.00	£0.50	£9.00	£0.50	£9.00	£0.50
Night Charge	£1.60	£1.70	£0.10	£1.70	£0.10	£1.70	£0.20

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

6.1 There are no legal implications arising at this time from this report.

Borough Treasurer

6.2 As set out in paragraphs 5.8-5.9

Equalities Impact Assessment

6.3 None

Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.4 The council owns the High Street and Braccan Walk car parks and leases the Avenue Car Park that it now manages. All car park income is subject to variations in demand. The proposals above set out the maximum level of fees that will be charged and will be applied to all off street town centre Council owned/managed car parks.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

7.1 N/a

Method of Consultation

7.2 Members of the Bracknell Town Centre Regeneration Committee meeting will receive this report and be consulted with at their meeting on 7th September 2020.

Representations Received

7.3 None.

Background Papers

None

Contact for further information

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