Council to consult on residents' parking charges in Oxford

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Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet has decided to consult the people of Oxford on whether there should be charges for residents' parking in the city.

The proposed charges are based on recovering the costs of running residents' parking schemes. In Oxford these schemes run at a considerable loss.

Elsewhere in the county residents are charged for their permits to cover the costs of the schemes. Charges for parking permits are widely made in towns across the country for all the reasons they are being proposed in Oxford.

Only when the results of the consultation have been analysed and presented to Cabinet will a final decision be taken on whether to go ahead.

The proposed annual charges for a permit are £40 for each of the first two permits per household, £80 for a third (where permitted) and £120 for a fourth and more (where permitted). For match day only residents parking schemes around the Kassam Stadium the proposed charge is £10 per permit.

There are around 9,000 permits at the moment in Oxford. If the process results in a decision to bring in parking charges these will be introduced as each zone comes up for annual renewal of the permits and would take most of 2006-07 to introduce.

The council's policy on residents' parking schemes includes the possibility of district councils meeting or contributing to the cost. Oxford City Council was asked if it was willing to make any contribution to the cost of operating residents' parking in Oxford but declined to do so.

If charges for permits are brought in they will apply to all the existing residents parking schemes. The charges will also apply to

those residents parking schemes that are currently being developed and any future zones as they are introduced.

Councillor David Robertson, Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Transport, said: "This proposal would only be put Oxford in line with most other places in the country as regards charges. We now await the results of the consultation."