

**To: City Executive Board**

**Date: 8th December 2010**

**Item No: 4**

**Report of: Head of Direct Services**

**Title of Report: CITY CENTRE AND SUBURBAN CAR PARKS –  
PROPOSED CHANGES TO TARIFFS**

### **Summary and Recommendations**

**Purpose of report:** To recommend variations to the tariffs for off street car parking in Central Oxford and in suburban car parks.

**Key decision?** No

**Executive lead member:** Councillor Colin Cook

**Recommendation(s):**

The City Executive Board is recommended to:-

- (a) Approve the proposed variations to the Central Area car parks tariffs as set out in paragraphs 7-10
- (b) Approve the proposed variations to the suburban car parks tariffs as set out in paragraphs 11-15
- (c) Amend the Executive scheme of delegation so as to withdraw the delegation from the City Executive Board to Area Committees for the purpose of setting parking charges in suburban car parks

**Appendices : -**

Appendix A – Risk Register

### **Background**

1. The Council manages and operates 12 off street car parks, one coach and lorry park and the bus station at Gloucester Green. When looking at car park income from all sources for the current financial year to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2010 actual income was £3.215m compared to a budget of

£3.517m, a shortfall of £302K. The September management accounts forecast a mid-point adverse variance of £450K as at year end.

2. Two additional income pressures have been identified; the VAT increase from January 2011 gives an additional pressure of £163K; and the closure of St Clements Car Park if it is developed gives an additional pressure of £220K. Consequently, the 2011/12 consultation budget makes provision for a £700K reduction in car park income.
3. The Parking Manager has been asked to look closely at the tariffs charged in both the suburban and city centre car parks for the purpose of optimising and restoring previous income levels whilst the policy objective of dissuading travel by car to the city centre and wherever possible passing on the VAT increase to car park users.
4. The Westgate car park budgeted income is 49% of the total income budget for car parks and is currently the worst performing car park in terms of meeting its budget. Improving its performance is key to resolving the budget pressure. Worcester Street car park is performing better than budget. The tariff at Worcester Street is currently lower than at the nearby Gloucester Green underground car park. The charges at this car park have always been higher than others because of the convenience of location and because it is under cover. Currently the tariff on a Saturday in the Central area is 25% higher than the rest of the week. Suburban car parks are performing significantly better than City centre car parks.

### **Detailed Changes**

5. It is proposed that the tariffs are charged between the hours of 8am to 8pm Monday to Sunday with a fixed charge being applied for times outside of these hours. This is the current position at Westgate, Worcester Street, Abbey Place, Oxpens car park, Gloucester Green, St Clements and Union Street. A change will therefore need to be made at Ferry Pool and Summertown car parks which currently charge 8am to 6.30pm Monday to Saturday and Headington and St. Leonards which currently charge 8am to 8pm, Monday to Saturday.
6. It is further proposed that the Worcester Street tariff to be increased and brought in line with the tariff at Gloucester Green underground car park. This will discourage displacement from Gloucester Green and may encourage greater use at Westgate which has ample space most of the time. Worcester Street car park is a busy car park, and users often find it difficult to park at peak periods. This measure may also assist in easing congestion around this area. The proposed changes to the tariff at Worcester Street are as follows:-

HOURS	SUNDAY TO FRIDAY		SATURDAY ONLY	
	CURRENT	PROPOSED	CURRENT	PROPOSED
FIXED CHARGE	2.40	<b>3.10</b>	2.50	<b>3.90</b>
0-1	2.40	<b>3.10</b>	3.00	<b>3.90</b>
1-2	4.00	<b>5.20</b>	5.00	<b>6.50</b>
2-3	6.00	<b>7.20.</b>	7.50	<b>9.00</b>
3-4	7.60	<b>8.70</b>	9.50	<b>10.90</b>
4-6	11.50	<b>13.30</b>	14.40	<b>16.70</b>
6-8	17.30	<b>20.20</b>	21.70	<b>25.30</b>
8-24	21.90	<b>24.20</b>	27.40	<b>30.30</b>

7. It is recommended that Short stay or “shopper” bands ( ie those tariffs for people staying between 1 and 4 hours)at Westgate be reduced on a Saturday This will promote the use of the car park on Saturdays which will be of benefit to the retailers of Oxford. No increases in tariffs at the Westgate are proposed as there is currently ample space for most of the time. This will in effect also be the VAT increase for shoppers and visitors to the city centre. The proposed changes to the tariff at Westgate car park are as follows:-

HOURS	SUNDAY TO FRIDAY		SATURDAY ONLY	
	CURRENT	PROPOSED	CURRENT	PROPOSED
FIXED CHARGE	2.40	2.40	2.50	2.50
0-1	2.40	2.40	3.00	3.00
1-2	4.00	4.00	5.00	<b>4.00</b>
2-3	6.00	6.00	7.50	<b>6.00</b>
3-4	7.60	7.60	9.50	<b>7.60</b>
4-6	11.50	11.50	14.40	14.40
6-8	17.30	17.30	21.70	21.70
8-24	21.90	21.90	27.40	27.40

8. No change in tariffs are proposed at Gloucester Green, Abbey Place and Oxpens car park, this again absorbs the VAT increase.
9. The tariff for coaches staying all day at Oxpens coach park is recommended to increase from £7.50 to £10. All other tariffs to remain the same.
10. It is also proposed that minor changes be made to the tariff at St Clements car park prior to it being redeveloped. The proposed changes are :-

HOURS	MONDAY TO SUNDAY	
	CURRENT	PROPOSED
FIXED CHARGE	1.00	1.00
0-1	1.10	<b>1.20</b>
1-2	1.90	<b>2.00</b>
2-3	3.00	<b>3.00</b>
3-4	6.40	<b>6.50</b>
4-6	9.20	<b>9.50</b>
6-8	13.80	<b>14.00</b>
8-24	17.30	<b>17.50</b>

11. It is proposed that significant changes be made to the tariff at Headington and St Leonard's Road car parks in order to bring them more in line with other suburban car park tariffs. Currently charges operate Monday to Saturday with a fixed charge on a Sunday. It is proposed that there will be no fixed charge on Sunday. The proposed charges Monday to Sunday are :-

HOURS	MONDAY TO SUNDAY	
	CURRENT	PROPOSED
FIXED CHARGE	0.60	<b>1.00</b>
0-1	0.60	<b>1.00</b>
1-2	0.80	<b>1.50</b>
2-3	1.50	<b>3.00</b>
3-4	4.50	<b>5.00</b>
4-24	11.50	<b>12.50</b>

12. It is proposed that the tariffs at Ferry Pool and Summertown be changed so that charges apply Monday to Sunday 8am to 8pm. ( Current charges applicable apply Monday to Saturday 8am to 6.30pm)

HOURS	MONDAY TO SUNDAY	
	CURRENT	PROPOSED
FIXED CHARGE	1.00	<b>1.00</b>
0-1	0.80	<b>1.00</b>
1-2	1.30	<b>1.50</b>
2-3	2.50	<b>3.00</b>
3-4	4.00	<b>5.00</b>
4-24	12.00	<b>12.50</b>

12. It is proposed that the tariff at Union Street be increased as follows:-

HOURS	MONDAY TO SUNDAY	
	CURRENT	PROPOSED
FIXED CHARGE	0.80	<b>1.00</b>
0-1	0.80	<b>1.00</b>
1-2	1.10	<b>1.50</b>
2-3	2.30	<b>3.00</b>
3-4	2.90	<b>4.00</b>
4-6	4.60	<b>4.50</b>
6-8	6.90	<b>12.50</b>
8-24	11.50	<b>12.50</b>

13. It is proposed that the tariff at Barns Road be significantly increased. There has not been a change to the tariff for over 20 years. There are 2 other privately run car parks in the vicinity of Barns Road and it is recommended that the level of charges be increased to the same rate as these other car parks. The charges to apply 7 days a week.

CURRENT		PROPOSED	
HOURS		HOURS	
0-1.5	0.30	0-2	<b>0.70</b>
1.5 -3	0.50	2-3	<b>1.00</b>
3+	£1	3-4	<b>1.20</b>
		4+	<b>2.50</b>

### Legal Process, procedure and Implementation

14. The Off Street Parking Order will need to be amended to reflect the change from charging Monday to Saturday to that of charging Monday to Sunday. This will require publication and advertising of the suggested change, and give the opportunity for formal objections. It will also require the consent of the traffic authority, Oxfordshire County Council. The Parking Manager has delegated powers to determine any objections to the proposals. This applies to the Ferry Pool and Summertown car parks.
15. Changes to existing tariffs is made by giving legal notice of the proposed changes by advertising them for 21 days, after which time the new tariffs can be implemented. This is a notice of intent, not one that invites comments. So, apart from Ferry Pool and Summertown we can vary tariffs as proposed in this report in a relatively short period of time from reaching a decision to vary them.
16. It would be desirable to implement changes in January 2010. The cost of advertising such changes and implementing the tariff change is minimal and can be met from existing budgets.

17. In terms of procedure, in the previous two years the Board decided itself to set suburban car park charges to better coordinate parking charges between the city centre and suburban areas. However, the Board did permit Area Committees to alter the Board's decision if Area Committees felt that to be necessary in the light of local needs and objectives, provided they did so within a set timescale and that the forecast additional income was achieved. To facilitate this, last year the Parking Manager attended each committee. However, in practice no changes were possible and the Board's decisions were implemented. In view of the detailed examination of the tariffs carried out and the limited options to achieve the objectives set. It is therefore recommended that the Board agree all the charge variations without reference to the Area Committees and that the Executive scheme of delegation be amended accordingly.

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**List of background papers: None**

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