

REPORT FOR DECISION



DECISION OF:	Cabinet
DATE:	2 September 2020
SUBJECT:	Recommencement of Car Parking Charges in Bury
REPORT FROM:	Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure
CONTACT OFFICER:	Donna Ball, Executive Director of Operations
TYPE OF DECISION:	Key decision
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS:	This paper is within the public domain.
SUMMARY:	<p>In March 2020 the Council suspended car parking charges as a result of the COVID lockdown.</p> <p>The suspension of car parking charges has had an impact on the income generated from car parking.</p> <p>This report provides members with the option to recommence parking charges in line with private operators and other GM Councils.</p>
OPTIONS & RECOMMENDED OPTION	<p>Option 1 To recommence car parking across all 12 Bury town centre car parks with effect from 14th September 2020</p> <p>Option 2 To continue with free car parking on Council owned car parks in Bury town centre accepting that there will be a continued loss of around £130,000 per month</p> <p>Option 1 above is recommended, given all private operators in the town centre have restarted charging and the losses currently being sustained. This is also in line with other GM Councils</p>
IMPLICATIONS:	
Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:	Do the proposals accord with the Policy Framework? Yes
Statement by the S151 Officer: Financial Implications and Risk Considerations:	The Council budgets for income from a range of services as part of its annual budgeting process. Any income shortfalls have to be

	met from the Council's budget elsewhere or from reserves. The Council is facing significant financial pressure as a result of Covid and a resumption in the charging will limit any further adverse impact. Although government funding has been provided to support Council's with the financial impact of Covid but this is not sufficient to cover the full financial impact.
Equality/Diversity implications:	none
Considered by Monitoring Office:	The Council has powers under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to impose charges by Order for parking in off-street car parks provided under that Act and to charge for parking at on-street parking places. Changes in parking charges introduced by Order can be made (as appropriate), by Notice. Regulations governing the Notice and Order making procedure are provided in the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.
Wards Affected:	All
Scrutiny Interest:	

TRACKING/PROCESS

DIRECTOR:

Joint Executive Team/CCMT	Cabinet Member/Chair Briefed	Ward Members (if necessary)	Partners
√	√		
Scrutiny Committee	Other Committee	Council	Comms

1.0 BACKGROUND

Since the beginning of the coronavirus lockdown towards the end of March 2020, the Council suspended car parking charges in Bury Town Centre in an effort to assist the public and especially those involved in the fight against Covid-19 such as NHS and care workers etc.

The decision was also taken to suspend car parking enforcement. This has since been re-established, however, with full on-street enforcement taking place from the beginning of August.

There are currently 12 public car parks within the town centre that operate under a pay and display regime as listed below.

Bury Town Centre – Council Operated Public Car Park Spaces					
Area	Regular Bays	Contract Bays	Electric Vehicle	Disabled Bays	Total Bays
George Street	55	0	0	1	56
The Castle	32	6	2	2	42
Bolton Street Station	94	0	0	4	98
Foundry Street	133	0	2	5	140
Trinity Street (new layout)	219	0	2	8	229
Castle Leisure Centre	212	0	0	7	229
Parsons Lane North	21	0	0	0	21
Parsons Lane (Wilko's)	125	0	2	16	143
Market	418	0	2	25	445
Irwell Street	35	0	0	1	36
Manchester Road	91	10	0	4	105
Moorgate	24	0	0	2	26
TOTALS	1459	16	10	75	1560

In addition, there are 66 on-street spaces where parking up to one hour in duration can take place, 310 on-street spaces where parking up to two hours in duration can take place and 43 on-street spaces where parking up to four hours in duration can take place.

This equates to an additional 419 spaces over and above the 1560 spaces located within the 12 town centre car parks.

2.0 ISSUES

The full suspension of car parking charges has had an impact on the income generated from the Council's car parking assets. These current losses are set out below;-

- Off-street parking - £98k per month
- On-street parking - £32k per month

Consequently, an average figure of around £130,000 has been lost per month since April 2020. This equates to £0.65 million of losses by the end of August with an end of financial year projection of around £1.5 million of losses if parking charges remain suspended.

A survey of the other 9 Districts in Greater Manchester has shown the following overall situation in Greater Manchester regarding car parking charges.

District	Charges in Effect?	District	Charges in Effect?
Bolton	Yes	Salford	Yes
Bury	No	Stockport	Yes
Manchester	Yes	Tameside	Yes
Oldham	Yes	Trafford	Yes
Rochdale	Yes	Wigan	Yes

Furthermore, the private car park operators in Bury town centre (Millgate, Rock and Q Parks) have already reintroduced charging in their car parks.

It is accepted that attempting to forecast how Covid-19 will impact on future car parking income is extremely difficult to do as it is far from clear when a recovery will arrive in earnest or when a national or local spike could reappear. Incidences of Covid-19 are not the same as public confidence - which is the real driver to people returning to pre-pandemic activities.

Furthermore, car parking usage is variable/seasonal and is not constant throughout the year due to school and religious holidays as well as the run up to the Christmas period.

Consequently, losses have been calculated based against income from the same period last year.

3.0 RISK

Given charging already existed with the town centre the identified risk associated with restarting this process is relatively low. Due to more businesses changing to remote working there could be less demand for parking that has been previously utilised by town centre workers. During the current climate we are unable to predict how long it will be before we see occupancy that matches pre Covid-19 figures for shoppers and visitors to the town centre as set out above.

All town centre car parks offer PayByPhone parking which allows parkers to pay for their parking session via the telephone or mobile app. This reduces the risk of customers having to come in contact with P&D equipment.

4.0 SUMMARY

Given all private operators in the town centre have restarted charging and the losses being currently sustained, it is recommended that car parking charges in Bury Town Centre be reintroduced.

The lead-in period to enable this will be 1-2 weeks.

Consequently, a 14 September start for charging is recommended as the start date to give sufficient time to prepare and sufficiently publicise the changes.

Warning notices will be issued from 7 September and temporary signs will be erected at the entrance of all car parks to warn motorists.

List of Background Papers:-

Contact Details:-

David Giblin
Head of Engineering Services
d.r.giblin@bury.gov.uk