

Meeting:	Traffic Regulation Orders Working Party & Cabinet Committee
Date:	26 th September 2024
Classification:	Part 1 Public Agenda Item
Key Decision:	No
Title of Report:	Petition – Stop the Rip Off Seaside Parking Charges
Executive Director:	Alan Richards - Executive Director for Environment and Place
Report Author:	Rachel Murphy – Traffic Regulation Order Co-Ordinator
Executive Councillor:	Councillor Daniel Cowan - Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Corporate Strategy and Leader of the Council

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Traffic Regulation Working Party and Cabinet Committee of the ePetition received seeking to stop the increased operational charging hours of 6-9pm on the Seafront (Zone 1A).
- 1.2. Following consideration of this report, the Traffic Regulations Working Party and Cabinet Committee must decide whether to support the e-Petition and to amend the Zone 1A operational charging hours.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Traffic Regulations Working Party and Cabinet Committee:

- 2.1. **Agrees to note the ePetition and to take no further action. The amendments to operational hours were approved at the Full Council Budget setting meeting held on 22nd February 2024 and subsequently agreed by Traffic Regulations Working Party and Cabinet Committee on 30th May 2024.**

3. Background

- 3.1. An ePetition has been received by the Council, with the objective of stopping changes to parking charges and operational hours on the Seafront (Zone 1A). **The ePetition ran from the 18th March 2024 until 3rd June 2024. The ePetition received a total of 584 signatures.** The specific detail as to who the signatories were are not known but details of the ePetition can be found using the weblink provided below:

<https://southendintranet.moderngov.co.uk/mgEPetitionSignatureList.aspx?Type=0&id=89&RPID=31754496>

- 3.2. At the Full Council meeting on 22nd February 2024, as part of the council's annual budget setting process, a budget amendment was tabled and approved. One of the items was: "to extend the operational and chargeable period for Zone 1A, to include Monday – Sunday 8am – 9pm, except for Shorefield Road Car Park and Cliffs Pavilion Car Park, which will remain as Monday – Sunday, 8am – 6pm".
- 3.3. The statutory consultation period for both the On- and Off- Street Traffic Regulation Orders, which included the increase of operational and chargeable hours, took place from the 14th March 2024 until the 11th April 2024. Following the consultation, the responses received were compiled and reviewed. A report was then presented to the Traffic Regulations Working Party and Cabinet Committee on 30th May 2024 for review and consideration of the objections received. At this meeting, the committee made the decision to implement the proposed changes, which included the increase of the operational charging hours within Zone 1A.
- 3.4. Separate to this, a Notice of Variation was advertised on 14th March 2024 until 11th April 2024 to amend the charges across all Zones, including the increase of charges in Zone 1A and reduction of charges in Zone 1B, 2 and 3 (the remaining Zones). No comments were received during the consultation period, and the changes were implemented on 22nd April 2024.

4. Reasons for Decisions

- 4.1. The ePetition was not submitted as a formal objection during the statutory public consultation period due to not closing until 3rd June 2024. Therefore, it was not reviewed alongside other responses at the Traffic Regulations Working Party and Cabinet Committee meeting on 30th May 2024.

5. Other Options

- 5.1 The alternative option would be to amend the Zone 1A operational and charging hours from 8am-9pm and revert back to 8am-6pm, however, this would go against the decision approved by Full Council at the February meeting, whereby the implementation of these proposals form part of the Council's statutory duty to agree a balanced budget.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The increased charges and increased operational hours in Zone 1A were agreed within the 2024/2025 budget, which balances the Council budget for the financial year as is legally required. Any changes to this would have an impact on the assumed parking income set at the February budget meeting and any shortfall would need to be balanced from other service areas or met from reserves.

7. Legal Implications

7.1. The legal process to implement Traffic Regulation Orders has been and will continue to be followed in accordance with primary legislation, under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and regulation under the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

8. Policy Context

8.1 None

9. Carbon Impact

9.1. None

10. Equalities

10.1. Southend-on-Sea City Council has a duty to give 'due regard to' the three aims of the public sector equality duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) during the development of the policy. This was included within the public deposit document and available on the Councils website and at the Civic Centre throughout the statutory public consultation period.

11. Consultation

11.1. The statutory/public consultation, in accordance with primary legislation, took place between 14th March 2024 until 11 April 2024. The responses that were received during the consultation period were reviewed at the Traffic Regulations Working Party and Cabinet Committee Meeting on 30th May 2024. The ePetition was not submitted as a formal objection due to its end date of 3rd June falling outside the statutory consultation period and therefore was not reviewed as an objection at this meeting.

11.2. A Notice of Variation was published and effective on 22nd April 2024 as part of the Budget Amendments also agreed at Full Council. This Notice of Variation published the amendments to charges across all Zones, including the increase of charges in Zone 1A and reduction of charges in Zone 1B, 2 and 3 (the remaining Zones). A Notice of Variation does not require or enable responses as there is no consultation process.

12. Appendices

12.1. None

13. Report Authorisation

This report has been approved for publication by:		
	Name:	Date:

Executive Director(s)	Alan Richards Richard Lumley deputising for Alan Richards approved 22.08.2024	22.08.2024
S151 Officer	Joe Chesterton Pete Bates deputising for Joe Chesterton approved 22.08.2024	22.08.2024
Monitoring Officer	Susan Zeiss	12.09.2024
Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Daniel Cowan	21.08.2024