

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

Meeting of Cabinet Committee

Date: Thursday, 30th May, 2024

Place: Council Chamber - Civic Suite

Present: Councillor D Cowan (Chair)
Councillors L Hyde and M Sadza*
(*Substitute in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 30.)

In Attendance: Councillors Sam Allen, S Aylen, K Buck, T Cox, J McMahon,
R McMullan, J Moyies, S Nadeem, M Terry, S Wakefield and
R Woodley
T Row and N Hoskins and N Hunwicks

Start/End Time: 6.30 pm - 9.00 pm

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dent (substitute: Councillor Sadza).

2 Declarations of Interest

The following interests were declared at the meeting:

(i) Councillor McMahon - Minute No. 3 (2024 – 2025 Fees and Charges, On-Street and Off-Street (Full Council Budget Amendment)) – Lives in an area where there is a residents' permit scheme; and

(ii) Councillor Terry – Minute No. 3 (2024 – 2025 Fees and Charges, On-Street and Off-Street (Full Council Budget Amendment)) – Lives in Eastern Esplanade but not in the area affected by the proposals.

3 2024 - 2025 Parking Fees and Charges, On-street and Off-Street (Full Council Budget Amendment)

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director (Environment & Place) that presented the responses received during the statutory consultation regarding parking charges as per the budget amendment approved at the meeting of the Council held on 22nd February 2024. The report also sought the Committee's approval of the recommendations of the Traffic Regulations Working Party to implement the Traffic Regulation Orders in respect of the 2024/2025 Parking Fees and Charges both On-street (PTO1084) and Off-street (PTO1085).

It was noted that the statutory consultation period for both the on- and off- Street Traffic Regulation Orders had been advertised from 14th March 2024, until 11th April 2024. Usually, the consultation is for a period of 21 days; however, an additional 7 days was given, due to the Easter weekend. Extending the consultation period ensured adequate time for responses to be submitted.

The Committee was informed that two further representations had been received which had not been included in the report. Copies of these were circulated at the meeting.

Having considered the views of the Traffic Regulations Working Party it was:

Resolved:-

1. That the comments received during the statutory consultation period, set out in paragraph 11 of the submitted report and Appendix A be noted.
2. That the Traffic Regulation Orders formalising all the amendments as agreed within the Budget Amendment submitted and subsequently approved at the meeting of Council held on 22nd February 2024 be confirmed and an implemented as advertised.
3. That the operational changes as required be implemented by 1st June 2024 with an effective date of 1st July 2024 or as soon as is appropriate thereafter.

Reasons for Decisions

The primary reason for charging for parking is to effectively manage kerb-side space and demand, in both central on-street locations and car parks as well as residential and business areas. Effective parking management will aim to support wider transport policy objectives, ensuring that on- and off-street space is used more effectively.

Effective management of parking provision is recognised as making a significant contribution to reducing congestion, whilst supporting access to residents, visitors and businesses. In turn this supports the council's network management duty under the Traffic Management Act 2004.

Zone 1A increased operational and charging hours until 9pm: the extension of the chargeable hours in Zone 1A, aims to help manage high demand in this central area of the City, including the nighttime economy.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Permits charging: the introduction of a charge for changes to Electric Vehicle (EV) Permits will cover administration costs. Due to the increase in EV permits, this is becoming a more frequent request to manage and process. It is proposed to introduce EV bays into Civic Centre Underground Car Park giving additional provision to charge points off-street in line with net zero objectives.

Education Permit Introduction: the introduction of provisions of an Educational Permit, to include on- and off-street identified locations will clearly set out who is eligible for these permit types and the terms and conditions for their use on the network. The introduction of staff permit holders to park in specified car parks means that Council staff on official business are eligible to park close to site for safety and efficiency and that other staff are parked in car parks that experience less parking demand from the public and do not hinder local residents, businesses and visitors from accessing local facilities and will not lead to displacement or oversubscribed capacity in premium areas of high demand.

Changes to Tradespersons Permits: will allow eligible vehicles to utilise on and off- street parking areas throughout the City and surrounding areas to access their work areas safely between working hours of Monday to Saturday 8am – 6pm.

Seafront Permit removal: the use of Seafront Permits in Zone 1B for off-street car parks, Voluntary Sector Permits and Cliffs Pavilion Permits have now been discontinued from circulation as no permits have been issued. This will therefore be removed from the Traffic Regulation Order to reflect the change.

Parks and open spaces removal of charging: parks and open spaces car parks will no longer be subject to charging and will be removed from the Traffic Regulation Order. This is due to low demand and lack of cost-effective management of the parking operation, such as patrols, cash collection and machine maintenance.

Other Options

The Full Council decision to bring in these amendments was subject to consultation, where required. Prior to any implementation (of those changes which are subject to statutory consultation) the responses to consultation must be considered, which is evidenced and presented within the content of this report.

An alternative of not introducing the charges is an option, which the TRWP and Cabinet Committee must consider. If the TRWP and Cabinet Committee, choose not to implement some or all of the proposals, (based on the responses to the consultation), then alternative savings must be identified so as to ensure the overall Council's budget remains in balance.

An alternative option is to abandon the proposals and not implement the changes. This would be contradictory to the decisions approved by Full Council at the meeting on 22nd February 2024, whereby the implementation of these proposals form part of the Council's balanced budget. It would also require the revoking of the changes to the charges which were implemented on 22nd April 2024 which were carried out in accordance with the Notice of Variation.

Note: This is an Executive function

Not eligible for call-in as the matter has already been subject to pre-Cabinet scrutiny by the Traffic Regulations Working Party.

Cabinet Member: Councillor Cowan

Chair: _____