

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Car Parks Annual Report</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>Officer Management Team - Director of Services</b> <b>Prepared by - Head of Environment</b>

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to report on the operation of the Council's Pay & Display car parks.

## **2. Links to Council Policy Objectives**

- 2.1 The annual review of car parks contributes to the Council's medium term aim of planning for a thriving and sustainable South Bucks, with vibrant towns and villages.
- 2.2 This matter also contributes to the Council's aim to deliver value for money services that are driven by customer and community needs.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Council has ten pay and display car parks located in Beaconsfield, Burnham, Gerrards Cross and Farnham Common. They are regulated by the South Bucks Council Off Street Parking Places (Amendment No.2) Order 2013.
- 3.2 The ten car parks provide a total of 789 spaces for public use as well as a number of disabled bays. During 2014 all the Council's car parks have once again been awarded the safe and secure parking award.
- 3.3 Charges are payable between 0800 and 1800 Monday to Sunday. We currently have one full-time car park attendant (and one vacancy) who ensures that the car parks are fully operational and checks that cars are parked correctly and have valid tickets. In addition we have one attendant employed on a casual basis.
- 3.4 Members have previously considered and agreed overall aims for the Council car parks as follows:
- Provide parking for both short and long stay users.
  - Provide a balance between short and long stay users in some car parks using a structured payment system.
  - Provide a number of car parks for short stay only to ensure parking is available for shoppers / visitors.

- To dissuade commuter parking in order to accommodate users of our towns and villages.
- To offer a percentage discount for season ticket users to aid local businesses.
- Provide the appropriate number of disabled car parking spaces free of charge.
- To ensure the sustainability of certain local retail centres.

3.5 The table below indicates budget against income for the last 6 years together with other details:

Year	Budgeted Revenue**	Change vs previous year (%)	Actual	Outcome	P & D tickets issued
08/09	£777,460	£48,230 (6.6%)	£823,386	(£45,926)	754,456
09/10	£825,910	£48,450 (6.2%)	£874,199	(£48,289)	726,764
10/11	£875,170	£49,260 (6.0%)	£881,329	(£6,159)	720,835
11/12	£936,570	£61,400 (7.0%)	£844,479	£92,091	627,187
12/13	£953,300	£16,730 (1.8%)	£877,752	£75,548	604,869
13/14	£916,000	-£37,300 (-3.9%)	£895,781	£20,219	608,868
14/15	£934,320	£18,320 (2.0%)	£943,200*	(£8,880)*	625,000*

\* Current estimate of full year effect based upon 4 months income

\*\* includes excess charge notice receipts

3.6 The last changes to charges were introduced in April 2014:

- A general increase of 10p for each single ticket;
- An increase of approximately 5% for all season ticket rates.

3.7 The current and previous charges over the last eleven years are detailed in the table at Appendix A.

3.8 For comparison the car park charges for neighbouring local authorities are detailed in the table at Appendix B. Most of these charges have not changed in the last year.

3.9 The most recent average use data are shown in the table at Appendix C.

3.10 Following a recommendation from this PAG, the Cabinet on 15<sup>th</sup> July decided to allow free parking in all SBDC car parks for two Saturdays in December 2014, 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. The Cabinet further agreed to a delegation to the Head of Environment in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to have up to two free Saturdays each December.

3.11 In February 2014 a survey was carried out in Beaconsfield and Gerrards Cross to estimate car parking requirements in those towns for the next twenty years. The recommendation from the survey is that off street car

parking capacity should be increased and work is in progress to evaluate options for achieving that aim.

- 3.12 The shared service review for parking has been completed, and the new joint team will come into being on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2014, based in Amersham.

#### 4. Discussion

##### Financial Year 2013-14

- 4.1 In terms of ticket revenue (including Parkmobile) receipts were up 4% year-on-year. Season ticket receipts increased year-on-year by 2%. The decline in excess charge income continued, this year by 11%. The net result was that total revenue was up 2% year-on-year but was 2% (= £20k) below the budgeted figure. See appendix D.

##### Financial year 2014-15 First Four Months

- 4.2 Ticket revenue has been good in the first four months of this new financial year with year-on-year receipts increasing by 9%, and season ticket revenue up by 17%. However proceeds from excess charges are still declining, down by 9%. The result for the first four months of the year is an increase of 8% year-on-year in total net revenue. In budget terms, ticket receipts are 7% above plan, but we are overall 1% above budget because of season tickets and excess charge notice proceeds being still below the budgeted figures. See appendix E.

##### Beaconsfield

- 4.3 The previous decline in receipts has bottomed out and overall income for Beaconsfield is stable year-on-year. However so far in the current financial year ticket issuance has increased by 8%. Penncroft and Altons remain the Council's most used car parks.

##### Burnham

- 4.4 Despite a decline in season ticket issuance, revenue was up 11% in 2013-14. This trend is continuing and in the first four months of the present financial year there has been a further 11% increase year-on-year in ticket receipts.

##### Gerrards Cross

- 4.5 The previous trend has continued with ticket receipts at Station Road up 24% in 2013-14 and up 18% in the first part of the present year. There was also a continued move of business from Packhorse Road to Station Road (and vice versa for season tickets), although the decline at Packhorse Road appears now to have stopped. For 2013-14 the year-on-year increase in revenue in Gerrards Cross as a whole was 9%. Ticket receipts are up 14% in the first four months of this year.

##### Farnham Common

- 4.6 The slow decline at the Broadway car park continued, down 3% in 2013-14, but receipts are stable so far in 2014-15.

#### Pay by Phone

- 4.7 The pay by phone scheme is provided by Parkmobile. Customers tend to use this method for long term parking: the average charge for such customers in 2013-14 was £2.87. The number of transactions was 22,872 which is 3.8% of the total, and the total income was £65,719 which was 9% of total ticket receipts, up from 6% the previous year.

### **5. Review of charges and related matters**

- 5.1 Officers would suggest that the budget for 15/16 should be increased by 2% in line with the Council's general increase in charges. The budgeted revenue for 15/16 would therefore be £953,000 i.e. an increase of £18,680.
- 5.2 Based on the current trend, if charges are kept as they are at present, then it is likely there will be a natural increase in revenue to cover the increase in the budgeted figure. Officers believe therefore that there is no need for any alterations to car park charges.

### **6. Financial and other implications**

- 6.1 The predicted car park income for 14/15 is that it will exceed the budget figure of £934,320 by 1%. It is assumed that the income budget for 15/16 will show a 2% increase to £953,000.

### **7. Risks**

- 7.1 In exercising its off-street parking functions under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (which includes the setting of parking charges) the Council is required to "to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities, on and off the highway". The Council is entitled to cover the costs of providing off street parking through its parking charges.
- 7.2 The PAG will therefore need to be satisfied that any alteration in charges can be justified on traffic management grounds. In this regard it is relevant to note that parking charges do need to be set in comparison to other public and private sector providers otherwise there is displacement parking and traffic congestion as drivers try to find/use the cheapest alternative.

### **8. Recommendation**

- 8.1 Members of the PAG are therefore asked to note the contents of this report and to advise the Portfolio Holder on whether or not any alterations to car park charges for 15/16 should be consulted upon.

<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	<b>Councillor N Naylor</b>
<b>Officer Contact:</b>	<b>Chris Marchant 01895 837360</b> <b>Chris.marchant@southbucks.gov.uk</b> <b>Andrew Crow 01895 837259</b> <b>andrew.crow@southbucks.gov.uk</b>
<b>Background Papers:</b>	<b>none</b>