

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject: REVIEW OF CAR PARKING CHARGES
Meeting: EXECUTIVE
Date: 13 JANUARY 2015
Author: DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report summarises and reviews the current parking charges in all of Falkirk Council's pay & display off-street car parks and includes a review of the multi purchase annual permit scheme, currently being trialed.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There are three tiers of charges applied in the Council's off-street, pay & display, car parks. The pricing structure is shown in table 2.2 below. The Council's pay and display parking locations are shown in Appendix 1.

2.2

		Duration					
		Up to 1hr	Up to 2hr	Up to 4hr	All Day	Weekl y	4 Weekly
Tariff	Tier 1 - Short stay only	-	£2.00	£3.80	-	-	-
	Tier 2 - Short stay/long stay	-	£1.50	£1.70	£2.50	£10.00	£35.00
	Tier 3 - Short stay/long stay	-	£1.00	£1.10	£1.50	£6.00	£20.00

- 2.3 Car park tariffs were last increased in April 2013. The current parking tariffs, with the exception of West Bridge Street car park, are considered still to be appropriate and competitive compared with other neighbouring local authorities pay and display parking.

3. MULTIPLE PURCHASE PERMITS

- 3.1 On 1 August 2011, Development Services commenced a trial scheme where individuals or businesses could purchase multiple annual parking permits at a discounted rate. The purpose of this scheme was to encourage increased use of underused car parks and support businesses in the area where a parking resource would be of value.

- 3.2 Annual parking permits have the equivalent cost of 13 x 4 weekly tickets and are only available for purchase for certain long stay car parks, namely, Meeks Road, Garrison Place (West) and Kemper Avenue car parks.
- 3.3 The discounting rates used for the trial were, 2 to 10 permits = 20% discount and more than 10 permits = 33% discount.
- 3.4 Between 1 August 2011 and the end of November 2014, 175 multi purchase permits were sold. Of these permits, 47 were sold at the 20% discount rate and 128 were sold at the 33% discount rate against the prevailing relevant 4 weekly rate at the time of issue.
- 3.5 Feedback from business purchasers have been positive and it is reasonable to assume that the income generated by the scheme is additional to that the Council would otherwise had made. There is also a clear demand for this facility.
- 3.6 To reduce the cost of the scheme but still incentivise multiple purchases and increased use of the long stay car parks, it is proposed to amend the discount rates from 20% and 33% to 10% and 20% respectively.

4. WEST BRIDGE STREET CAR PARK

- 4.1 Following Falkirk Council's decision of 12 February 2014, car park charges were introduced in the car parks in front of and to the side of the Municipal Buildings. These areas are now collectively known as West Bridge Street car park and charging commenced on 3 November 2014.
- 4.2 The level of charging applied to the town centre car parks is related to the demand for parking. The car parks closest to the town centre have the highest demand and are therefore short stay car parks with a higher pricing tier. Conversely, there is a lower demand for long stay car parking which is further from the town centre and the pricing tier is, therefore, lower.
- 4.3 West Bridge Street car park is currently a short stay car park with excess capacity. There is an expressed demand from some customers at this location for long stay parking. In relation to the town centre, the location of West Bridge Street is similar to Garrison Place (West) car park which has long stay availability and the ability to purchase 4 week and annual permits.
- 4.4 Amending the pricing structure to match Garrison Place (West) car park may help to optimise income by balancing the demand for parking. This would reduce the cost of short term parking and introduce the facility of long stay parking.
- 4.5 West Bridge Street car park now offers a higher level of customer experience due to the ability to obtain a space and ease of negotiating the car park as well as generating income for the Council. When it was a free car park it was a regular occurrence for indiscriminately parked vehicles to partially obstruct roadways etc.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Multiple purchase permits

- 5.1 The value of the 175 permits sold between 1 August 2011 and 30 November 2014 had these been sold without any discount would have been £44,045. The actual discounted sum received for these permits was £31,332. Some of the permits were for partial years to allow large single holder numbers to regularise termination dates. However, as previously stated, it is unlikely that these numbers would have been achieved without discount.

West Bridge Street Car Park

- 5.2 West Bridge Street car park has collected £2,668.54 from the commencement of parking charges to the end of November 2014, which is less than the expected income. Changing the car park tariff is expected to increase income in the long term.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Multiple purchase permits

- 6.1 None

West Bridge Street Car Park

- 6.2 In line with The Local Authorities' Variation of Charges at Off-street and Designated Parking Places (Notice Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 1997 and under Sections 35C and 46A of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 any amended tariffs would require to be advertised.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None

8. CONCLUSIONS

Multiple purchase permits

- 8.1 The multi purchase permit pilot has been a success in terms of promoting a better customer experience for those businesses and others, in the town centre, who wish to purchase multiple parking permits to live, shop or work in the town centre.
- 8.2 However, the Council could increase income if the discount rates were reduced. Reducing the discount rates to 10% for 2-10 permits and 20% for greater than 10 permits still allows a saving to a permit purchaser whilst increasing the income to the Council.

West Bridge Street Car Park

- 8.3 Short stay only parking does not suit the requirements expressed in feedback by some of the visitors to the Town Hall and Municipal Buildings.
- 8.4 Levels of use in the car park should increase by amending the applied pricing structure.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members agree to;

- 9.1 Formalise the multi purchase permit scheme as per paragraph 8.2 for the Council's long stay car parks.
- 9.2 Change the tariff structure at West Bridge Street car park to a tier 2 short stay/long stay car park.

.....
Director of Development Services
Date: 30 December 2014

Contact Officer: Greg Pender ext 4827

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- a. Development Services Fees & Charges 2014/15

APPENDIX 1

Car Park Location	Current Pricing Structure	Proposed Pricing Structure
Garrison Place (East)	Tier 2	Tier 2
Garrison Place (West)	Tier 2	Tier 2
Kemper Avenue	Tier 3	Tier 3
Meeks Road	Tier 3	Tier 3
Melville Street	Tier 1	Tier 1
Weir Street	Tier 1	Tier 1
West Bridge Street	Tier 1	Tier 2
Williamson Street	Tier 1	Tier 1