



# HIGHWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

20 March 2012

# REPORT

**Subject Heading:**

**PROPOSAL TO INTRODUCE PARKING  
CHARGES IN TO PARK CAR PARKS -  
comments to advertised proposals**

**Report Author and contact details:**

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**The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives**

Clean, safe and green borough	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Excellence in education and learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities for all through economic, social and cultural activity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Value and enhance the life of every individual	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
High customer satisfaction and a stable council tax	<input type="checkbox"/>

**SUMMARY**

This report outlines the responses received to the public advertisement of the proposals to introduce parking charges in the parks car parks at Cottons Park, Lodge Farm Park (in both Carlton Road and Main Road car parks) and at Upminster Park (in both the New and Old Windmill Hall car parks).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee having considered the information set out in this report and the representations made recommends to the Cabinet Member for Culture, Towns and Communities that the proposal to introduce parking charges in Parks car parks, as set out in Appendix 2, be implemented as advertised and the effects be monitored.

## REPORT DETAIL

### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 At its meeting on 13 July 2011 Cabinet approved a number of proposals as part of the councils Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), one of which was to introduce parking charges in a number of parks car parks.
- 1.2 At its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2011, the Highways Advisory Committee agreed in principle to advertise proposals to introduce parking charges in some Parks car parks, as outlined in item 9 of the agenda of the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2011, Minor Traffic and Parking Scheme Applications Schedule, item TPC 155, to introduce parking charges in Parks car parks at Cottons Park, Lodge Farm Park (in both Carlton Road and Main Road car parks) and at Upminster Park (in both the New and Old Windmill Hall car parks).
- 1.3 The proposals were subsequently publicly advertised and this report outlines the response received to the public advertisement of the proposals, which are summarised in Appendix A to this report and recommends possible further courses of action. The Notice dated 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2012 that was displayed in the relevant car parks, which was available for viewing by parks users including local residents, is attached as appendix B.

### **2. Proposed Scheme**

- 2.1 Introduction of Parking Charges to Cottons Park, Lodge Farm Park (in both Carlton Road and Main Road car parks) and at Upminster Park (in both the New and Old Windmill Hall car parks), as set out in the Notice attached as Appendix 2.

### **3.0 Staff comments**

- 3.1 The Head of Culture and leisure Services and the Parks and Open Spaces Manager have considered all of the comments that have been received (as set out in Appendix 1) and have taken note of the various objections that have been made.
- 3.2 Having considered all of the comments received, it is the view of Council officers that the original proposals put forward remain the most cost effective and appropriate way of dealing with the car parking problems at the three parks which are included in the proposed scheme. Officers believe that the introduction of car parking charges will free up space for “genuine” park users and that the relatively low cost of parking will not put off such users from parking and subsequently visiting the park. Should users not wish to pay the parking charges they can visit the park on a Sunday when the charges do not apply.
- 3.2 Officers will continue to discuss the specific issues raised by the various organisations who have responded, to consider whether the impact on those groups can be mitigated in any way.

### **4.0 Recommended Action**

The proposals to implement car parking charges, as set out in the notice included at Appendix 2, are implemented as advertised and the effects of implementation are monitored.

## **IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

### **Legal implications and risks:**

The introduction of parking restrictions in some of the Council parks car parks required consultation and the advertisement of proposals before a decision could be taken on their introduction. The consultation has taken place and the comments of people responding to the consultation have been fully considered, prior to the recommendation being included in this report.

### **Financial implications and risks:**

The MTFs 2012-2015 includes a savings item of £20,000 for 2012/13 in relation to setting fair parking charges in some parks to stop commuters from outside the borough. This increases to £40,000 from 2013/14 onwards.

The estimated cost of introducing the parking charges as set out in this report is £20,000.

It is envisaged that £40,000 of income will be generated from 2012/13 onwards but the set up cost of £20,000 will be netted off in year one leading to achievement of the £20,000 savings target.

**Human Resources implications and risks:**

The proposals contained in this report will result in existing Streetcare staff taking on some additional responsibilities in terms of collecting cash from the parks car parks. This will therefore be contained within existing resources, although Culture and Leisure will be required to cover StreetCare costs in relation to this matter.

**Equalities implications and risks:**

The proposed introduction of parking restrictions in unrestricted car parks are designed to prevent long term parking by residents, commuters or shoppers and which could be to the detriment of parks users.

Parking restrictions have the potential to displace parking to adjacent areas, which may be detrimental to others.

Disabled 'Blue' Badge holders are able to park without paying a charge for the first three hours a vehicle being must be displaying an 'exempt' tax disc. To be considered as an exempt tax disc the disc needs to note a 'DISABLED' tax class and a 'NIL' fee paid. In addition to the exempt tax disc a valid Blue Badge and time clock, set to the time of arrival, must be clearly displayed. Any time after the initial three hours must be paid for at the normal tariff for the car park being used.

If a stay in excess of three hours is thought to be needed then a Blue Badge must be displayed and time clock set at the time of arrival, this will provide three hours of free parking. The additional time required must be covered with a valid pay and display ticket. i.e. a 4 hour stay – first 3 hours covered by the Blue Badge/clock and a pay and display ticket purchased to cover 1 hour also displayed. The aforementioned must be purchased on first arrival at the car park and must correspond with the time set on the Blue Badge time clock.

Vehicles displaying a valid Blue Badge but which are not exempt from road tax must pay for any duration of parking at the appropriate rate but may where necessary occupy a disabled parking space.

Disabled customers are not restricted to using disabled bays only and may use any car parking bay in a car park, excluding of course, motorcycle bays if not used for the purpose of parking such a vehicle, or bays set aside for permit holders only.

Please note that a Penalty Charge Notice may be issued if a valid Blue Badge and time clock are not clearly displayed or set correctly, if appropriate, or a valid pay and display ticket is not clearly displayed or if the maximum stay permitted in a particular car park is

exceeded. The latter needs to be carefully assessed prior to purchasing additional time in a car park via the purchasing of a pay and display ticket so as to avoid the possibility of receiving a Penalty Charge Notice for exceeding the maximum permitted stay at the car park.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

**Table of responses**

**Cottons Park**

<b>Respondant</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p>The Chair of Campion Rugby Club</p>	<p>Strongly object to the proposals as it is felt that it is punitive and unfair to introduce charges as a money making measure, with no regard for park users like the Ruby Club who have worked with friends of the park to improve it.</p> <p>It has been explained that the service is required to undertake efficiencies in the managing of the service, which apparently justifies the introduction of parking charges. However, it cannot be seen how such proposals can improve the services.</p> <p>Charging is proposed to be introduced mid-way through the lease, which effectively imposes a premium to the use of the park and a cost to supporters and visiting teams.</p> <p>The proposals are targeted at park users make the most of the free facilities in a positive way, at these hard financial time, which makes using the park so appealing.</p> <p>Staff refer to commuter parking in the week therefore why not limit restrictions to week days and if there is a problem at weekends provide dedicated parking bays or passes and queries whether the parking is connected with their lease.</p> <p>Staff suggests opening the gates later will increase cost.</p> <p>The respondent requests minutes of the relevant councils debates and meetings regarding these proposals. Reportedly a member of staff indicated Upminster parks car parks are predominantly used by park users and hence this is the basis for charging within them. The Rugby Club are specific users of Cottons Park and can see no logic in having to pay and others reportedly aren't.</p>
<p>Respondent/Park User from Rainham</p>	<p>Objecting to the proposal stating that previously in other areas proposals to introduce parking charges have led to petitions and public objections and have been ignored, and it is believed it will happen in this case</p> <p>The occasional park user alleges the site notices appeared on site a week or so before the closing date of the consultation.</p> <p>Initial charges seem to be low, but is feared that they be ramped up within a short period.</p>

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	<p>To stop long-term parking the first two hours should be free.</p> <p>Feels that his response will be ignored.</p> <p>The main objective is raise revenue.</p> <p>Refers to shop keepers losing trade and will refer the matter to his MP.</p>
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**Lodge Farm Park**

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Comments</b>
The Committee of the Romford Bowls Club	<p>The Bowls Club Committee have met and discussed the proposals in depth and appealing to the Council not accept the proposals at the Carlton Road end of the park for the reasons outlined below:</p> <p>When moved from the town centre the bowls club understood that the car park implemented in Lodge Farm Park at its Carlton Road end was primarily for the benefit of the club. It is understood that this fact was minuted at various council meetings and a sign installed to enable the public to understand the arrangements for opening in the afternoon by the club members during the summer months.</p> <p>The club considers that it has 'implied' rights to be the car parks primary user.</p> <p>During the summer months, the car park is constantly used by the bowls club and its visitors and there have been no specific problems as it is opened at times that do not fit the needs of commuters, although there may be some sporadic use by shoppers.</p> <p>The club do not want to get into debate regarding the principal of pay &amp; display in public parks. They are concerned for the future facility which is voluntary run and self sustaining and provides opportunity for all ages.</p> <p>The club are in the process of applying for registration as a community amateur sports club that promotes all sports in the community. They are also doing other community activities with an increasing membership.</p> <p>While the club are grateful for the discussion with staff on the situation the club takes a view that the proposals would have an</p>

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	<p>inconvenience to members and potential negative effect for the future which would seriously threaten the clubs survival.</p> <p>While the club will do all it can to work with any agreed changes the club would implore the council to not take any decision lightly with this particular car park.</p> <p>It is felt that the club needs the support of the local authority to survive in this tough financial climate.</p>
Member of Romford Bowls Club	<p>Especially concerned about the Carlton Road car park and advises that the bowls club contributed towards the cost of installation of the car park following the clubs re-siting from the Market Place.</p> <p>The club also provided all costs associated with the installation with the lighting in the park.</p> <p>As quid pro quo, the car park during May to September has been allowed to remain closed until 2:30pm this has been so club members can secure parking spaces.</p> <p>The car park is vital to the clubs existence.</p> <p>During the summer period the club host matches and competitions with bowlers arriving from all parts of the country.</p> <p>The club has a great reputation in the bowling world and without the events we would soon go into demise. This would not be satisfactory as the Government are keen to promote sport.</p> <p>Should charges be introduced it is felt that these would encourage shoppers to pay cheap rates rather than park in the market.</p> <p>Current arrangement should be allowed to remain.</p>
1. Borough resident and member of the Bowls Club	<p>The respondent has been a member of the bowls club for a few years and feels that paying for parking would add burden for bowlers on top of paying the green fees.</p>
2. Borough resident and member of the Bowls Club	<p>Respondent and her husband are worried that visitors will soon have to pay for parking in the grounds of Lodge Farm Park.</p> <p>It has always been recognised that the car park was established with the bowlers in mind and that they be given priority over its use.</p> <p>The proposals will disadvantage players and spectators and may</p>



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	<p>even deprive some members of the only social activity.</p> <p>It is considered impossible to complete a bowls fixture in less than 3-4 hours which will be expensive for senior citizen members.</p> <p>It is feared that if the car park is full it would create problems for bowlers as there are no other parking facilities in the area. There has never been a problem during bowls season (May – September) as the gates are not open until 2:30pm.</p>
3. Resident of the Borough	<p>Parking charges in recreational spaces go against the people taking more fresh air and exercise to maintain fitness and keep healthy.</p> <p>Rather than installing costly to maintain parking meters it is suggested that free parking for up to 3 hours with no return within 4 hours would be a better option and could be monitored on a random basis.</p> <p>It is understood why the council may want to restrict commuters and shoppers especially in Lodge Farm Park but the restriction as outlined above should do this.</p> <p>Further comments on the 20p tariff rising in the future</p>
4. Resident of the Borough	<p>Respondent wishes to object to the introduction of pay &amp; display as they frequently take their elderly parents to the park at they are unable to get out alone.</p> <p>The resident uses her car and objects to having to pay for the privilege of using the park.</p> <p>The resident also is about to become a parent and intends on using the park more with the baby.</p> <p>It is understood why the council is seeking alternative ways of obtaining revenue but believes the cost of enforcing maintaining and keeping vandals from destroying the machines would exceed income generated.</p>

**General Comments**

Borough Resident	<p>Wishes to object to the proposals as if the council want to stop commuters it is suggested that local residents would prefer if a time barrier was limit was implemented that would prevent misuse.</p> <p>It is felt that it would be unfair to charge parents with children and the older generation who use the parks as they are probably</p>
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	<p>already under financial strain, and would have to watch the clock and not be able to relax without the fear of receiving a parking fine.</p>
Director of Essex Playing Fields Association	<p>An affiliated charity with Fields in Trust whose main objective is to promote and protect sports facilities throughout the country.</p> <p>It is felt that the proposed tariffs would stop people using the parks making the unable to relax as they will be continually clock watching.</p> <p>The majority of people that use parks have small children and are they expected to rush back to their cars while the children are having fun to prevent receiving a parking fine.</p> <p>The Government are always trying to get more people to do exercise but it would seem it is being made increasingly difficult to do so.</p> <p>The prices the councils charge for hire of sports equipment is an absolute disgrace and it is felt that further parks will also be included in the scheme.</p> <p>Parks are for everyone and should remain free from parking charges and entry fees</p>
Hornchurch Resident	<p>Thinks that the charging in all of the parks car parks is nothing more than a money making scheme.</p> <p>Upminster car park already has a barrier in place that prevents commuters parking.</p> <p>At a time when money is tight especially for young families, it is like the Government is trying to put a tax on leisure.</p> <p>Spending time in parks is one of few things that children that are free and is physically and mentally essentially to them.</p> <p>As families lead such busy lives, trips to the parks are often made en-route to other places and may not be within walking distance.</p> <p>People are already struggling in these tough times and it is felt that they are being bleed dry.</p> <p>It is felt that the council should contribute to people's misery by not looking for easy options to make financial shortfalls.</p>
Upminster Resident	<p>Wishes to express her objection to the proposal as we are supposed to encourage our youngsters to use the open spaces to get more exercise as this will result in better health, less obesity, which I believe is a recognised problem in some youngsters.</p>

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	<p>While the 20p tariff is not a lot of money, it's extra hassle to get a ticket to and go back the car which will discourage from using the parks car parks.</p> <p>People will only park in adjoining roads which could cause further problems to residents who already complain about parks related parking.</p> <p>Outlines the costs of setting up the parking meters, staffing and enforcement costs and chaos in surrounding areas.</p> <p>Comments on parking problems in Avon Road caused by football on Hall Mead playing field.</p> <p>Children wouldn't walk long distances to use play equipment</p>
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**Upminster Park**

Upminster Cricket Club	<p>Writes to object to the proposals in respect to introducing pay &amp; display parking facilities during Monday to Saturday inclusive within the New Windmill car park.</p> <p>While there are specific comments to be made in relation to arrangement to Monday and Friday the proposals on Saturdays will cause the cricket club considerable problems.</p> <p>The New Windmill Hall car park has long been used by players and visiting players of Upminster Club on Saturdays. Players could arrive from 12noon with a likelihood of them staying 8.5 hours which will involve a parking charge of £8.</p> <p>The levels of charges would be prohibitive to young cricketers as the parking charges will exceed the level of match fees paid by most members to their clubs on match days.</p> <p>If parking charges were introduced visitors would be forced to park residential streets to the detriment of residents.</p> <p>Cricketers' would also have to carry heavy equipment considerable distances to the ground.</p> <p>The only possible alternative would be to allow visitors permits to the rear of the pavilion with the consent of the council. However, this would not want to be encouraged which could lead to indiscriminate parking that the club would want to avoid.</p> <p>It is requested that if parking charges are introduced within the New Windmill car park that Saturdays be excluded from charging as this would considerably help the cricket players.</p>
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<p>Friends of Upminster Park</p>	<p>They are very much against pay &amp; display in our park car park, and point out that the barriers are opened 9:30am and close at dusk.</p> <p>The car park is used by park users and our group for the sole use of visitors and exhibitors to our community which are held once a year. What will happen on these occasions?</p> <p>Pay &amp; display will deter residents from further afield using the park which will have a significant on our fun day and other community events.</p> <p>Parking charges will displace people to adjacent roads causing parking problems.</p> <p>Commuters are likely to use the car parks as the charging is line with the station car park.</p> <p>Is it the Councils aim to encourage long-term parking to bring in more revenue?</p> <p>It is felt a limit on the hours of stay would be a better option and will give enough time to park visitors or local shoppers to share the facilities</p>
<p>Resident on behalf of Upminster Tennis Club</p>	<p>The Club have been using the facilities at the park for the 7 years and it is felt that it would be unfair and unaffordable for players and parents of Upminster Tennis Club.</p>
<p>Upminster and District Horticultural Society</p>	<p>Whole understanding the need to do so the committee are disappointed to learn that the council are proposing to install parking charges in the small car park at the New Windmill Hall. The concerns are for the genuine groups that meet in the hall, some may discontinue the membership as a result.</p> <p>The particular interest is for the members of the horticultural society who meet from 7pm to 10pm on certain nights. Will the charges be operational at these times or will the barrier be left open our use.</p>
<p>Resident of Upminster</p>	<p>Wishes to object extremely strongly to these proposals for the Windmill Hall car park.</p> <p>The charges are proposed to stop commuter parking but there is barrier to prevent this.</p> <p>Comments on the council passing off social halls to voluntary groups are now wishing to impose parking charges which will prevent people functions at this hall. The same also applies to</p>

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	<p>Front Lane Hall.</p> <p>It is felt that the Council are not being honest and admitting to stopping social events in the area.</p> <p>What happens when these voluntary organisation are not able to stage sufficient events to pay the running costs will the council demolish them.</p>
Resident of Upminster	<p>A representative of the new Windmill Community association which is in the process of taking over responsibility of the new hall.</p> <p>The car park does not open until 9:30, therefore is not blocked by commuters and the car park is available for attendees of the hall.</p> <p>Once the car park opens at 7:30 it will become a commuter car park and the facility will cease and will be detrimental to the hall.</p> <p>The car park closes after the last evening session, often at 11pm throughout the week. A closure at 8:30pm is not acceptable this will cause evening activities to cease.</p> <p>If parking charges are introduced it will hit those people who are running the activities as well as those taking part and the cost per year will be considerable.</p> <p>Dedicated spaces for organisers may be an option, but is recognised that this would be hard to enforce.</p> <p>It is felt that the hall must not be treated as just another car park within the borough as it has a specific relationship to the hall. There also needs to be some concession for the hall organisers to enable them to carry on providing a community service.</p>
Resident of Brookdale Avenue	<p>The resident objects to the proposals as they feel that there are many users of the Windmill car park during the day as the barrier is not opened until 9.30.</p> <p>Commuters use the unrestricted street on the fringe of the zone.</p> <p>The hall car park is used on week day by visitors to the two local schools and young families during the better months of the year.</p> <p>The car park is used for parking related to sports events taking place on the field and as a meeting place prior to away matches.</p> <p>It is hoped that the council will reconsider the proposals.</p>
Resident of Front	<p>Objects to the proposals to introduce parking charges in</p>

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Lane	<p>Havering's parks, as such proposals do not provide good service to the majority of residents.</p> <p>It is felt that the barrier in the car park prevents commuter parking and that a limited stay parking would be better.</p>
Resident of Cranbourne Gardens	<p>Has been a resident for 37 years and is concerned that if controls are implemented in the car park the parents will be displaced into Cranbourne Gardens and other roads adjacent roads.</p> <p>Is also worried about displaced parking and weekends</p> <p>Displaced parking would mean that more children would be crossing the busy A124, which could increase the risk of fatal accidents and although there is a crossing it is pointed that pedestrians could use, it is considered that children usually take the most direct route across the road.</p> <p>The car park has a barrier that prevents commuter parking until 9.30, after which commuters could park closer to Upminster Station without charge</p> <p>All the council will achieve by charging is displacing parking into local roads and generate a small amount of income, at the cost of children's health or lives and this cannot be justified.</p>

**LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING**

**THE HAVERING (OFF-STREET PARKING PLACES) (C.E.A.) (AMENDMENT NO. \*\*) ORDER 201\***

1. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Council of the London Borough of Havering, hereinafter called the Council, propose to make the above-mentioned Order under sections 35 and 124 of and Part IV of Schedule 9 to the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended.
2. The general effect of the Order would be to:-
  - (a) introduce parking charges to the car parks specified in column 1 of the table in the Schedule to this Notice on Mondays to Saturdays inclusive during the seasonal opening hours, where vehicles may wait for a period of up to 12 hours and where return to that same parking place would be prohibited for 4 hours;
  - (b) the proposed tariffs for the car parks are shown in column 2 of the table in the Schedule to this Notice.
3. Copies of the proposed Order, of the Order being amended, together with the Council's statement of reasons for proposing to make the Order and plans showing the locations and effects of the Order can be inspected until the end of six weeks from the date on which the Order is made or as the case may be, the Council decides not to make the Order, during normal office hours on Mondays to Fridays inclusive, at Traffic & Parking Control, StreetCare, Mercury House, Mercury Gardens, Romford, Essex RM1 3SL.
4. Any person desiring to object to the proposals or make other representation should send a statement in writing of either their objection or representations and the grounds thereof to the David Pritchard, Traffic & Parking Control Group Manager, StreetCare, Mercury House, Mercury Gardens, Romford, Essex RM1 3SL, quoting reference LBH/645 to arrive by 24 February 2012.

Dated 3 February 2012

**IAN BURNS**  
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Town Hall  
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3BD

**SCHEDULE**

<i>(1) Car Park</i>	<i>(2) Tariff</i>	
<b>Lodge Farm Park (Main Road)</b>	0 – 2 hours	£0.20
<b>Lodge Farm Park (Carlton Road)</b>	2 – 3 hours	£0.50
<b>Cottons Park Car Park (Cottons Approach)</b>	3 – 4 hours	£2.00
<b>New Windmill Hall Car Park (St. Mary's Lane)</b>	4 – 5 hours	£4.00
<b>Old Windmill Hall Car Park (St. Mary's Lane)</b>	5 – 6 hours	£5.00
	6 - 7 hours	£6.00
	7 – 8 hours	£7.00
	8 – 12 hours (max stay)	£8.00
	Solo Motorcycles	No Charge