

## Notice of KEY Executive Decision (Special Urgency)

<b>Subject Heading:</b>	Exit strategy for Parking following the outbreak of Covid-19 in March 2020
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Osman Dervish, Cabinet Member for Environment
<b>SLT Lead:</b>	Barry Francis Director of Neighbourhoods
<b>Report Author and contact details:</b>	Nicolina Cooper, Head of Highways Traffic and Parking <a href="mailto:nicolina.cooper@havering.gov.uk">nicolina.cooper@havering.gov.uk</a>
<b>Policy context:</b>	Parking Strategy and Parking Operational Plan
<b>Financial summary:</b>	Returning parking charges and enforcement out of Covid and back in line with the 2020/21 budget until the end of October 2020.
<b>Reason decision is Key</b>	Significant effect on two or more Wards
<b>Date notice given of intended decision:</b>	<i>This is a decision pursuant to para 11 of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, made under "special urgency" with the consent of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board.</i>
<b>Relevant OSC:</b>	Environment
<b>Is it an urgent decision?</b>	Yes
<b>Is this decision exempt from being called-in?</b>	<i>Yes, due to Special Urgency</i>

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

Communities making Havering	[ ]
Places making Havering	[ ]
Opportunities making Havering	[ ]
Connections making Havering	[x]

**DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION**

1. On 23d March 2020 a decision was made to re-prioritise our parking enforcement operation in support of the Covid-19 pandemic. This report reviews this decision <https://democracy.havering.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?id=5621&LLL=0>
2. As lockdown measures are eased, officers are proposing a plan to resume parking enforcement and fees and charges across the borough. This is required to fulfil our statutory duties to ensure that our road network operates safely and efficiently, in particular for emergency services and to ensure that permit holders receive the service for which they pay for.
3. The Council recognise the issues local businesses have faced and wish to support the businesses. The High Street has suffered greatly during Covid and therefore we are putting in measure to support the recovery of the High Street with funding through the hardship fund.
4. Furthermore, these measures will support residents in getting back to work and ensuring they have somewhere to park and congestion is managed to keep traffic moving.
5. The following measures will be implemented to support the recovery of the High Street and the residents and businesses of Havering.
6. Reintroduce permit fees and charges for parking in line with charging schedule agreed as part of the 2020/21 budget, from the 13th July along with the associated enforcement of resident and business bays only. Shared use bays will not be enforced as part of this.
7. Within the current budget there was a discount noted as being applied for residents only in car parks using the cashless parking system. However, in light of the situation of businesses in the current pandemic a 20% discount will be offered for anyone using a council car park only via the cashless service (pay and display machines will not offer the 20% discount) from 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2020.
8. Furthermore, the current 30 minutes free in car parks, namely St Nicholas Avenue East car park (Elm Park Library), Viking Way car park, Cherry Tree Lane car park, Rex Close car park, Front Lane car park and Balgores Square car park, will be retained as agreed in the 20/21 budget.
9. Following the announcement made during the 2020/21 budget an offer of free parking for 30 minutes was to be implemented from April. It is now proposed this is extended to 1 hour to help ensure people have time to visit local shops and businesses and assist in shortening the recovery period helping businesses recover from a lengthy closure. The Council will provide 1 hours free parking for all, on street only, via cashless and pay and display machines from the 3rd August 2020.
10. As part of the new 1 hour free tariff, 1,000 bays across the borough will have 1 hour free parking. The table below details these by town centre. A map of the locations can be seen at Appendix 1.

## Key Executive Decision

### Bays within Town Centres

Area	Approx. No. of bays
Romford Town	148
Hornchurch Town Centre	79
Elm Park	48
Harold Hill	209
Collier Row	51
Upminster and Cranham	92
Outside of Town Centres	426
<b>Total</b>	<b>1053</b>

### Bays outside of town centres

Area	Nearest Town Centre	No. of bays
Brooklands	Romford	93
Emerson Park	Hornchurch	13
Hacton	Harold Hill	112
Harold Wood	Harold Hill	28
Havering Pk	Collier Row	6
Hylands	Harold Hill	50
Pettits	Collier Row	20
Rainham and Wennington	Hornchurch	41
South Hornchurch	Hornchurch	10
Squirrels Heath	Romford	53
	<b>Total</b>	<b>426</b>

11. Officers as part of this will provide additional paid for parking bays where possible in Hornchurch Town Centre.
12. Full enforcement for all contraventions across the borough will be implemented from the 13th July for permit bays and from the 3rd August for paid for parking bays and car parks. The council is currently enforcing double yellow lines and single yellow lines that have all day restrictions. When full enforcement resumes on the 13<sup>th</sup> July enforcement of single yellow lines with one hour restrictions will also become enforceable.
13. All resident, business and other permits will be extended for 3 months based on the period they were not being used throughout the emergency period. Visitor's vouchers will not be extended as they have no expiry date.
14. Communication will be issued advising that the Council will be reinstating enforcement and fees and charges across the borough for 3 weeks from the date of this decision, ensuring communications on pay and display machines and car park tariff boards. These communications will advise of the new cashless contract, Ringo and the go live of the cashless 20% discount for anyone using Council car parks and one hour free parking for everyone on street. A communications plan has been prepared.
15. Due to the likelihood of the virus still being active, it is recommended that key workers parking remains free for the duration of the virus period or until a vaccine is in place which will be continually reviewed in accordance with PHE advice. This permit will be issued by process officers by post once the relevant checks have been made.
16. Once this evidence is approved we will then provide them free parking via a paper permit valid for three months so we can monitor this against the changes across the pandemic and relaxation of lockdown measures.
17. It is proposed that we could create our own 'key worker' permit which could be for;
  - NHS,
  - Emergency services
  - Domestic carers (people who look after relatives or other residents on a non-paid basis)
  - Social Care key workers (such as social workers, occupational therapists, home care workers and personal assistants)
  - People dropping off food and essentials via volunteer services – working for the council's community hub or for voluntary sector partners

## **Key Executive Decision**

18. This would be via a manual system of them registering with us and us providing them with a paper permit.
19. London Councils and other boroughs are considering resuming the statutory process for PCN recovery, this includes the independent appeals process resuming. It is recommended that Havering also do this.
20. From September 1st the Council will start communications advising the community that we will begin consultation of parking and traffic schemes again. This communication will last for 2 weeks via messaging online, via social media and communications to local business and residents.
21. From mid-September consultations will be going again.
22. These measures will be regularly reviewed to ensure the safe movement of traffic and pressures on kerbside parking.
23. These measures will be reviewed prior to October 2020 via Cabinet.
24. Should the Covid 19 numbers begin to spike again, officers propose that the Council move back to the agreement in the March 2020 ED which we are currently following.
25. Benchmarking shows that most boroughs in London and our neighbouring boroughs in Essex did not stop charging during Covid; although many did stop enforcement of non-payment, they may not have publically advertised this. Most Councils have resumed normal enforcement for parking, or would have by the end of June.

## **AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE**

### **3.3 Powers of Members of the Senior Leadership Team**

#### **General powers**

- (a) To take any steps necessary for proper management and administration of allocated portfolios.

#### **Financial responsibilities**

- (b) To oversee the delivery of programmes agreed by Council and Cabinet.

## **STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

Due to the recent pandemic outbreak of Covid-19 across the world, measures continue to be taken by the Government which are being actioned by the London Borough of Havering to protect the workforce and residents.

With the first phase of easing of the lockdown underway, the Council must review and consider the previous decision made.

Parking management is an important public service, which provides benefits to motorists and the wider community. Those benefits include reducing congestion, maintaining road safety, improving air quality, whilst helping to ensure access to goods and services. This is extremely important,

### **Key Executive Decision**

particularly for certain key workers, as London's local authorities aim to keep London moving and providing essential services at this challenging time.

### **OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

To not resume parking. This was not seen as an option as with business reopening and the easing of the lockdown there will be more vehicle driving and parking in the borough and we need to ensure that there is adequate parking for our residents and businesses as well as our statutory duty to keep traffic moving

The Council will also continue to engage and comply with any Government directives or advice received.

### **PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION**

A parking policy paper was presented to the responsible Portfolio Holder outlining a possible exit strategy.

### **NAME AND JOB TITLE OF STAFF MEMBER ADVISING THE DECISION-MAKER**

Name: Nicolina Cooper

Designation: Head of Highways, Traffic and Parking

Signature: Date: 10<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## **Part B - Assessment of implications and risks**

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

The Council has had to significantly change the way it undertakes business as usual as an urgent and evolving response to impact arising from Covid 19. All authorities throughout the country have had to rapidly adapt the way they manage services including having to prioritise some over others. The Council is mindful of those adjustments including those detailed by London Councils in their guidance dated 22nd March 2020. This paper dealt with how the reprioritisation was to impact the Council's parking arrangements including enforcement.

The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA 1984), places a duty on the Council to secure the expeditious, convenient, and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians), and to provide suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway. Parking controls and enforcement are covered under various legislation and guidance including Greater London (Powers) Act 1974, Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, London Local Authorities Acts 1996 and 2003. The Council intends to continue with activities where they are a necessity and manage its usual duties but in a more responsive way to deal with the crisis at this present time.

It is anticipated that as a consequence of reducing the enforcement activity there would be an impact on the collection of monies which are usually used to maintain the service provision including upkeep of the highways etc. Under s55 RTRA 1984 separate accounts are required to be maintained for each of parking, bus lane and moving traffic contraventions. Any surpluses generated can only be applied to specified purposes including further parking provision, highway improvement and maintenance and public transport support.

## **Key Executive Decision**

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

The financial risk to the Council is significant due to the reduction in enforcement, pay and display and permit activity and income across the borough.

There is already a significant impact on the revenue ordinarily achieved through the Parking account which will continue to be monitored and tracked going forward.

Based on the monthly income received from parking in 2019 / 20 the parking account is approximately £500k down per month based on the current Covid-19 parking regime. Should the current regime continue this would mean a c£9.0m deficit at year end.

Should parking fees and charges and enforcement regime return in July as proposed this deficit will reduce to c£5.0m

The estimated costs to provide a 20% discount in car parks until the end of October 2020 is £63k and to provide 1 hour free parking, instead of 30 minutes is £73k.

In order to fund this the council will use the Business Rates Reserve fund for the period these measures are in place.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS (AND ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS WHERE RELEVANT)**

Given the Coronavirus outbreak, the paramount consideration of the Council is the health and wellbeing of Members and officers. All employees directly affected by the proposals contained in this report will be managed in accordance with the Council's published COVID-19 Managers Guidance.

The parking enforcement service currently operates with a high level of agency workers and the Council's guidance on the contingent workforce and pay will be followed.

In addition, we need to be mindful of the need to make sure all staff follow government guidance on isolation and keep a watching brief on staff health and wellbeing and monitor all absences.

There has been no need to redeploy existing staff to other higher priority areas and the service has been able to carry out the majority of their operational duties, albeit with reduced hours of service.

A skills assessment of all staff has been completed so that where possible staff can be still be redeployed to key or statutory services when or if necessary. All staff that are redeployed will receive any necessary training and a risk assessment will be undertaken to ensure their health & safety is paramount.

### **EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:

### Key Executive Decision

- (i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

Failing to enforce some parking restrictions, especially disabled bays and junction protections may reduce social inclusion especially for persons with disabilities and key workers whom may be disadvantaged in their ability to be mobile or to park where needed.

An EQHIA has not been carried out as these changes will affect all members of the public including those with disabilities or those with additional needs but assurance is given that Disabled persons will not be disadvantaged.

### HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Traffic and marking management is a key element in response to Covid, ensuring key workers have access to parking to assist residents and businesses and ensuring emergency services can get through.

With the ease of the lockdown we need to ensure that business can operate and residents are able to park. More vehicles are now using the road network and our statutory duty to keep traffic moving must be adhered to now we see an increase in vehicle movement.

The Council will clean pay and display machine regularly, however the main way to prevent infection would be to wear gloves when using the machines or to use the cashless option via Ringo as an alternative.

### BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

## Part C – Record of decision

I have made this executive decision in accordance with authority delegated to me by the Leader of the Council and in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

### Decision

Proposal agreed

*Delete as applicable*

Proposal NOT agreed because

**Key Executive Decision**

**Details of decision maker**

Signed

Name: Barry Francis, Director of Neighbourhoods

Cabinet Portfolio held:

CMT Member title:

Head of Service title

Other manager title:

Date:

**Lodging this notice**

The signed decision notice must be delivered to the proper officer, Debra Marlow, Principal Committee Officer in Democratic Services, in the Town Hall.

**For use by Committee Administration**

This notice was lodged with me on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_