

Committee(s)	Dated: 16/11/2020
Committee name Committee name	Epping Forest and Commons Committee
Subject: Proposed car park tariffs –Burnham Beeches, Riddlesdown and Farthing Downs	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	9, 11,12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	£0
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Director of Open Spaces	For Decision
Report author: Superintendent of The Commons	

Summary

Members were updated of progress concerning the introduction of new car park payment infrastructure at Burnham Beeches, Farthing Downs and Riddlesdown in a report to this committee of January 2020. The installation of new infrastructure is nearing completion and the parking tariffs for users of these car parks now need to be approved.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

1. Agree Option 1 for each car park as set out in paragraph 8 of this report.

Main Report

Background

2. The January 2020 report to this committee outlined the project to install new car park payment infrastructure in the existing car parks at Burnham Beeches, Riddlesdown and Farthing Downs. In that report, I estimated that the project would be complete and activated in September 2020.

Current Position

3. The Covid-19 Pandemic has delayed the original timetable by approximately 3 months. It is now anticipated that the installation of infrastructure i.e. Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras (ANPR), cashless pay stations, signage etc., will be completed by mid-November 2020 with an activation date ranging between that date and 1st January 2021 dependant on final testing of the new hardware and payment software at each location. Attention can now turn to the tariff charged to users of these car parks.

- Officers have assessed the detailed traffic flow data at these car parks and carried out benchmarking against car park tariffs at other local open spaces.

Proposals

- The three tariff options shown in paragraph 8 have been presented to the Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common, and West Wickham Commons and Spring Park Consultative Groups.
- It is proposed that the same tariff is applied across the Division to ensure consistency.
- The options cover a range of 'reasonable charges' set against local benchmarks (Appendix 1), for the use of each site's car park. Each car park will be a vital source of income to Local Risk budgets and help support the environmental and recreational services at a time of increasing financial pressure and uncertainty.

Options

- Of the options shown in both tables below **Option 1** is the recommended tariff for all sites.

Riddlesdown and Farthing Downs

FD/RD Option 1		Charge	Vehicles/annum	Income net VAT	Transaction costs
Weekends and B/H	All day charge	£3.00	18,236	£45,590	
Weekday	<2 hrs 2/3	£1.50	18,237	£22,796	
	Over 2 hrs 1/3	£3.00	9,118	£22,795	
			sub total	£91,181	-£6,474
			Total net income	£84,707	
FD/RD Option 2		Charge	Vehicles/annum	Income net VAT	Transaction costs
Weekends and B/H	All daycharge	£3.00	18,236	£45,590	
Weekday	<2 hrs 2/3	£1.25	18,237	£18,997	
	Over 2 hrs 1/3	£3.00	9,118	£22,795	
			sub total	£87,382	-£6,474
			Total net income	£80,908	
FD/RD Option 3		Charge	Vehicles/annum	Income net VAT	Transaction costs
Weekends and B/H	All day	£3.00	18,236	£45,590	
Weekday	<2 hrs 2/3	£1.00	18,237	£15,197	
	Over 2 hrs 1/3	£3.00	9,118	£22,795	
			sub total	£83,582	-£6,474
			Total net income	£77,108	

Burnham Beeches

BB Option 1		Charge	Vehicles/annum	Income net VAT	Transaction costs
Weekends and B/H	Day charge	£3.00	23,000	£57,500	
Weekday	Up to 2 hrs (2/3)	£1.50	33,333	£41,666	
	Over 2 hrs (1/3)	£3.00	16,667	£41,668	
			Sub total	£140,834	-£10,366
			Total net income	£130,468	
BB Option 2		Charge	Vehicles/annum	Income net VAT	Transaction costs
Weekends and B/H	Day charge	£3.00	23,000	£57,500	
Weekday	Up to 2 hrs (2/3)	£1.25	33,333	£34,722	
	Over 2 hrs (1/3)	£3.00	16,667	£41,668	
			Sub total	£133,890	-£10,366
			Total net income	£123,524	
BB Option 3		Charge	Vehicles/annum	Income net VAT	Transaction costs
Weekends and B/H	Day charge	£3.00	23,000	£57,500	
Weekday	Up to 2 hrs (2/3)	£1.00	33,333	£27,778	
	Over 2 hrs (1/3)	£3.00	16,667	£41,668	
			sub total	£126,946	-£10,366
			Total net income	£116,580	

9. A reduction in car park usage of 10% has been factored into the above figures to accommodate potential changes following the introduction of tariffs.
10. Blue badge holders will not be required to pay the car park tariff when their badge is properly displayed.
11. White lists will be created to exempt certain vehicles from the tariffs. For example included on the white list would be vehicles belonging to:
 - a. City of London
 - b. Volunteers
 - c. Contractors
 - d. Café staff
12. A late payment window is also being considered for any visitors to pay their tariff shortly after their visit.
13. A season ticket will be available at a cost of £180/annum or period thereof.
14. **Strategic implications.** This recommendation aligns with and supports the delivery of the City's Corporate plan under the following aim and associated outcomes:
 - a. *Shape Outstanding Environments*
 9. *We are digitally and physically well connected and responsive* – the hardware and software provides internal and external improvements to existing systems.

11. *We have clean air, water and land and a thriving natural environment* – the income generated will support projects designed specifically to enhance the local and wider environment.
12. *Our spaces are secure, resilient and well maintained* – the use of ANPR will help to reduce crime and unwanted incursion to the open spaces.
15. **Financial implications.** It is estimated that the recommended option will provide approximately £215,000 to the local risk budgets. Members should note that Burnham Beeches already raises around £85,000 from car park charges so in reality Option 1 will raise an estimated £130k of additional income for local risk budgets. Any additional income will help to offset the 12% budget cut forecast for 2021/22 that is currently estimated at £235,000.
16. **Resource implications.** Ranger teams will enforce car park tariffs across The Commons with support from external agencies as required and currently operated at Burnham Beeches. Income will be used to maintain services across the Division.
17. **Legal implications.** Section 9 of the City of London (Various Powers) Act 1977 allows the City Corporation to provide parking places at Burnham Beeches and the Coulsdon Commons in order to improve opportunities for the enjoyment of the open space by the public. The City Corporation is also empowered to make reasonable charges for the use of those parking places.
18. **Risk implications.** The introduction of car park charges at Farthing Downs and Riddlesdown is a new initiative and there may be reputational risk associated with negative public feedback. The expansion of car park charges to cover the Monday – Friday period at Burnham Beeches may result in similar feedback. Each site is producing a FAQ sheet for visitors, site signage informing of the pending introduction of charges and a media statement in partnership with the Corporate media team. The relevant Consultative Groups have also commented on the proposals.
19. Parking on the local highways to avoid the tariff may become an issue. At Burnham Beeches roadside parking occurred during the height of the summer season as the site coped with a 400% increase in visitors. Here the Superintendent is working closely with Buckinghamshire Council and others to explore options to introduce parking restrictions on those highways. A similar issue could occur at Farthing Downs however, the London Borough of Croydon has recently agreed to introduce parking restrictions along the length of Ditches lane that bisects that site. Riddlesdown, given the nature of vehicular access and highways to that site, is less likely to suffer from this problem but will be closely monitored.
20. The Parking Enforcement Protocol used successfully at Burnham Beeches will be mirrored at Riddlesdown and Farthing Downs to ensure a fair and consistent approach to car park charge enforcement across the Division. Staff will be appropriately trained.
21. **Equalities implications** – See Appendix 2.
22. **Climate implications.** ANPR will facilitate the future introduction of charges that favour the use of less polluting vehicles when visiting the open spaces

23. **Security implications.** The use of ANPR should help to further reduce instances of car related crime and unwanted intrusion to the Open Spaces concerned.

Conclusion

24. The installation of car park payment infrastructure at three sites across the Commons is nearing completion with an 'activation' date of mid - November 2020 - January 1st 2021 dependent on location, software and hardware tests.
25. Three tariff options have been benchmarked locally.
26. Feedback from the Burnham Beeches Consultative Group supported the introduction of Option 1 at that site. Opinion was split equally between Options 1 and 3 at the West Wickham Commons Consultative Group.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Tariff benchmarking data

Appendix 2. Equalities Impact Assessment

Background reports.

Infrastructure – car park charges at Farthing Downs, Riddlesdown and Burnham Beeches. EFCC and Digital Sub. January 2020

Report author. Andy Barnard

Position. Superintendent – The Commons

Department. Open Spaces

E:andy.barnard@cityoflondon.gov.uk

T: 07850 764592