

## **East Herts Council Report**

**Date:** 12 February 2025  
**Report by:** Head of Operations  
**Report title:** Car Parking Tariffs 2025/26  
**Ward(s) affected:** All

### **Summary**

This report presents to the Executive member for Environmental Sustainability proposed changes in parking tariffs for 2025-26.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE:**

- a) Approve the proposed changes to car parking tariffs as described in Appendix A from April 2025.

#### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 In Feb 2024, Council approved a £1.75m parking income target for financial years 25/26 – 27/28. Over the last twelve months work has been undertaken to set the strategic context and principles by which future changes may be approved to support the achievement of income and wider ambitions of the Council.
- 1.2 In accordance with the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), a number of changes and increases are proposed to be implemented for April 2025 whilst wider strategy discussions continue regarding future proposals.

## **2. Proposals**

- 2.1 An increase in parking charges at either 2.5% or in line with CPI alone will not achieve the level of income required built into the MTFP. Understanding the role council managed car parks in each of the towns, villages and their placement in relation to access to different services has informed the proposed tariff changes.
- 2.2 Car parks have been categorised into 4 types: destination car parks, long stay car parks, local car parks and explore car parks. A description of these car parks can be found below. Though the tariff in each car park does not always increase the overall pay and display income is anticipated to increase by increased usage.
- 2.3 Destination Car Parks
- a. These are car parks in areas with greater access to services and facilities including leisure, theatre, parks, shops, café/restaurants and public transport. Generally, there is a higher footfall in these areas by local people, businesses and visitors, as well as a greater number of commercial units. It is proposed that these car parks have standardised parking tariffs for consistency making it easier to understand. In these areas the 1hr rate increases to £1.20 and continues to increase in a linear manner by £1.20 per hour up to 5hrs. Car parks which are proposed to be categorised as destination car parks are listed below with a full listed of changes to April 2025 charges in Appendix A:
  - b. In Bishop's Stortford
    - i. Crown Terrace A
    - ii. Jackson Square
    - iii. Link Road
  - c. In Hertford
    - i. Gascoyne Way
    - ii. St Andrew Street
    - iii. Hartham Common
    - iv. Wallfields
    - v. Hartham Lane
    - vi. Port Vale

- d. In Ware
  - i. Kibes Lane North
  - ii. Library
  - iii. Baldock Street CP
  - iv. Priory Street CP

## 2.4 Long Stay Car Parks

These are usually long stay car parks which are set further away from services where long stay is preferred to free up short stay car parking spaces for shoppers/users of the town centres. The aim here is to encourage customer turnover, supporting local businesses and reducing idling. Standard long stay parking tariffs are applied in these car parks. These car parks include:

- Crown Terrace B (Bishop's Stortford)
- Kibes Lane South (Ware)
- Old London Road (Hertford)

## 2.5 Local Car Parks

These car parks are situated in areas with lower footfall than a destination car park. They are more likely to be used by local people than visitors. These include Bowling Green lane (Buntingford), Bell Street (Sawbridgeworth) and High Street (Stanstead Abbots). Given the recent introduction of charging at High Street car park in Stanstead Abbots and its use by local residents for overnight parking, the charging rates have been reviewed and will be reduced for April 25-March 26 to support residents and businesses through the changes and to increase overall usage. There will be an uplift in the more established chargeable local car parks at Bowling green lane and Bell street car parks. A further review of all charges and hours of operations for local car parks is proposed through the parking strategy.

## 2.6 Explore Car Parks

These are car parks where we know changes need to be made to either increase usage or displace usage. Car parks included in this category include:

- Northgate End (NGE)
- Grange Paddocks A

- Elm Road
- Basbow Lane
- Apton Road
- Amwell East CP
- Amwell West CP

2.7 Northgate End car park was a £24m investment to support the development of the town through the Old River Lane Project. The car park is heavily underutilised with almost 3 floors vacant. To encourage usage it is proposed that there is a freeze on pricing for 25/26. We know from Remembrance Sunday where the car park was free to use, that motorists did in fact use the car park which could suggest that the perception of the car park could be changing if pricing is pitched correctly. Additionally, to encourage displacement to Northgate End car park the all-day tariff for Apton Road and Basbow Lane are proposed to increase to £7.80 in line with the differential charging principle that was agreed at Council in December 2023. Elm Road all day tariff will increase to £5.00, this is a reduction from £7.80 presented at Overview and Scrutiny. It has also been identified that there is pressure on the car parks at Grange Paddocks leisure centre B&C, a price freeze at NGE should support use of the car park as well as a price freeze on Car Park A (Mon-Sat) at Grange Paddocks for 25/26 whilst explorative work takes place to review the car parking at Grange Paddocks.

### **3.0 Reason(s)**

3.1 The Council has approved an income target of £1.75m – car parking tariffs are required to change with effect from April 2025 to start to achieve this income.

### **4.0 Risks**

4.1 There are risks associated with price increases and changes in terms of parking behaviour and potential displacement to parking on-street. This will be monitored through patrolling and customer feedback.

## **5.0 Implications/Consultations**

5.1 The proposed price changes were presented at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (14 January 2025) combined with the draft parking strategy. There were a range of comments provided regarding tariffs which are recorded in Appendix B.

### **Community Safety**

No

### **Data Protection**

No

### **Equalities**

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out for the changes linked to Appendix C.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

As per Council report in December 2023, regarding Bishop's Stortford, the tariff structure is expected to move some long stay parking to Northgate End, which may lead to increased traffic movements in the mornings and evenings. Long stay parking tends to commence from 7.00 am and it is likely that journeys will be spread over a longer period than the 8.00 am to 9.00 am peak congestion period. Traffic should continue to flow as a result and the total reduction in vehicle movements over the day ought to reduce congestion and therefore improve air quality.

### **Financial**

Assumptions have been made on parking behaviour based on changes to pricing. Northgate End projections are based on a 10% increase in usage compared to 24/25 projections. Overall, it is anticipated that for 25/26 approximately 70% of the targeted income will be achieved with the remainder being achieved in future years.

Benchmarking data on tariffs can be found in Appendix D.

### **Health and Safety**

No

## **Human Resources**

No

## **Human Rights**

No

## **Legal**

Changes to the tariffs in this report may be implemented by the advertising of a Notice of Variation at least 21 days prior to the date of implementation pursuant to section 35C of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended) and regulation 25 of the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

## **Specific Wards**

All

## **7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material**

- Appendix A – Proposed pricing changes to April 2025
- Appendix B – Feedback from Overview and Scrutiny
- Appendix C – Equalities Impact Assessment
- Appendix D – Benchmarking data on tariffs
- Appendix E – Benchmarking data on tariffs

## **Contact Member**

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