

Summary of comments to statutory consultation (25 July – 15 August 2013) – Proposed on-street charging Newbury

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GENERAL NEGATIVE COMMENTS		
7	The proposals will increase the number of shoppers that use the out of town retail park or other local towns where parking is free, will make the town less welcoming and local traders will suffer as a result.	<p>Shoppers currently visit off-street car parks in significant numbers and expect to have to pay. On-street charging is a common feature of town centre parking across the country and there is no reason to consider that a new parking regime will significantly change visitor habits for shoppers.</p> <p>It is accepted that traders are in serious competition from many sources, including online retail, but the proposed parking charges should not deter most shoppers from visiting the town and should not be seen as the only reason for businesses to experience trading difficulties. The proposed charging levels, which include free parking for short periods in the main shopping areas, are set at a very modest rate and should not seriously impact on a shoppers overall spend.</p> <p>We do not therefore consider that the proposals will significantly change the current parking behaviour of shoppers or visitors to the town. There may be initial resistance from some, but town centre retailers can provide items not found in out of town retail parks and will still attract a significant number of visitors to the town on a daily basis.</p>
5	The High Court judgement raises doubts over the legality of the current proposals with regard use of parking revenue for purposes other than traffic management.	This is covered in detail in Section 2 to the main report.
5	Motorists will be displaced into residential roads to avoid the charges and this will create significant problems for residents who may be unable to park close to their homes. This scheme creates problems that do not currently exist, for little benefit.	If displacement is considered likely, or was to occur as a result of the proposals being implemented, the area can be investigated and measures recommended to address problems as they occur. Proposing measures in residential roads in anticipation of potential displacement is not always supported by residents as

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		<p>they may not have experienced any parking problems at that time and may consider any proposal to be an unnecessary imposition by the Council. .</p> <p>It should however be noted that it is our remit to make 'best use' of the public highway and in some locations it may be appropriate for non-residents to park in a residential road during the day if the majority of residents have commuted away from the area.</p>
5	The restrictions have been proposed with the intention of raising income and this is illegal.	The informal consultation undertaken between January and March incorrectly indicated that any surplus revenue may be directed at supporting general frontline services. The current statutory consultation made no such statement, however any surplus funds may legally be used to help maintain Road Safety related measures. Section 2 of the main report refers.
4	There is no evidence that the proposed on-street charging will have any road safety benefits over the current method of parking on-street, as increasing turnover will increase the number of traffic movements and therefore increase risk. The scheme should be abandoned.	The road safety benefits may be very marginal and it is agreed that there could be an increase in traffic movements from parking places, but it does not necessarily increase risk. Additional measures are being proposed for the town centre area including an extension to the 20 mph speed limit due for public consultation later this financial year and in conjunction with existing traffic calming measures these will ensure that road safety risks are low. Also the income generated by these proposals will mean that road safety schemes can continue to be funded across a wider area.
3	<p>The charges are contrary to evolving Government policy and respected institutional research. The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Eric Pickles MP) is advocating free parking on double yellow lines in order to encourage in-town shopping.</p> <p>This information provided by Ministers suggests that a delay may be appropriate while clarity of central government proposals are established.</p>	The comment from Eric Pickles has received widespread negative comment, including from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport at the time of the comment, Norman Baker MP, who described the idea as 'unworkable'. Other measures may yet be proposed by central government but we do not consider the proposed on-street charging to be contrary to Government policy.

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3	<p>The 'Pay by Phone Only' option should not be deployed at any location. Customers parking in these areas would be inconvenienced if they do not have a personal mobile phone or are unable to make credit payments with their phone. This will discriminate against those road users who may be elderly or disadvantaged, with perhaps low rental tariff with high call charges.</p> <p>Customers of parking facilities should be provided with a choice and this includes the methods of payment such a credit/debit card as well as by cash..</p>	<p>'Pay by Phone' or 'Pay by Text' is becoming an increasingly common method of on-street charging in Local Authority areas across the country and addresses the potential for vandalism of payment machines in isolated locations. It is considered highly likely that the overwhelming majority of drivers parking in the areas chosen for 'Pay by Phone' would be commuters who would be mobile phone owners able to use this type of facility. Drivers who are unable to use this system would be able to park in alternative areas where a more convenient method of payment for them would be available. Information on the nearest alternative location for parking using pay machines would be provided at these 'Pay by Phone' only sites.</p>
2	<p>Introducing waiting charges could mean that visitors stay for longer and reduce the turnover and availability of parking.</p>	<p>It is anticipated that the majority of users of town centre streets would continue to be short-term visitors taking advantage of the free parking period and therefore there should be no significant reduction in turnover or parking availability. The maximum stay is however proposed at 1 hour and so turnover will still take place.</p>
2	<p>There has been no clear justification, other than anecdotal evidence, to suggest that there is any problem or that additional parking charges are needed.</p>	<p>Observations by officers have highlighted the areas where long term parking by commuters may be taking place. Whilst this may not always result in specific parking problems, there are occasions when the long term parking is preventing use of the area by residents or their visitors, or use by shoppers.</p>
2	<p>The installation of 24 parking machines and additional signs in the town's street is environmentally unacceptable</p>	<p>7 of the machines are already in place on Station Road. The ticket machines will not significantly add to general street furniture but they are considered a requirement for the areas chosen as part of this scheme.</p>
1	<p>Parking space is easy to find in Cheap Street, Bartholomew Street, Catherine Road and Pound Lane due to the regular turn-over of parking and this helps local traders. Introducing waiting charges could mean that visitors stay for longer and reduce the turnover and availability of parking.</p>	<p>It is anticipated that the majority of users of the Cheap Street and Bartholomew Street would continue to be short-term visitors taking advantage of the free parking period and therefore there should be no significant reduction in turnover or parking availability. The maximum stay is proposed at 1 hour and so turnover</p>

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		<p>will still take place.</p> <p>The Catherine Road proposal includes a charge which would allow all-day parking. This restriction is only proposed on the length currently used by rail commuters and there is generally no daytime turn-over on this area. The current Limited Waiting restriction will be retained and this will ensure there is turnover.</p> <p>It is assumed that the objector was referring to Pound Street rather than Pound Lane. This is not included within the on-street charging proposals and any current turnover reported by the objector should therefore be retained.</p>
1	It is insidious that the consultation took place during a period when the majority of road users would be on holiday.	The public consultation was in effect for a 21 day period and even if some road users were on holiday this length of time is sufficient to note and comment on a proposed scheme.
1	On-street charging should not be considered until all forms of parking provision are thoroughly investigated across the town.	Parking restrictions are routinely reviewed as part of ongoing works to ensure restrictions are effective and appropriate to the location. Changes to parking restriction can be made as part of future reviews, but delaying implementation of the on-street charging scheme now that it has completed the legal consultation process would potentially raise financial pressures which this scheme could help to resolve.
1	The deficit in Revenue should be made up by more efficient staffing and cutting back on expenditure such as tourist information	Significant proposals have already been submitted for consultation as part of the Council's measures to meet a £11 million saving. Areas across the Council will be affected. The proposed on-street charging will potentially raise funding and help offset the proposed loss to road safety budgets.
1	Motorists on low wages are being directly targeted as an alternative to raising Council Tax to generate revenue and this is unfair and counter-productive.	The proposed daily charge is considered to be set at a very modest level and should not overly impact on local workers. Local businesses could encourage car-sharing or adopt other green travel initiatives under their travel plans for their employees, which may assist workers in these circumstances. There will

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		<p>however still be areas of road space within walking distance of many of the roads proposed under this scheme which may be available for unrestricted parking, but it is accepted that these may not necessarily be in the immediate vicinity of the worker's place of employment.</p> <p>Additional parking restrictions could be considered as part of a future parking review in the area if necessary.</p>
1	<p>The proposals will be difficult to remove once implemented if they fail to meet their revenue target and are going to increase hardship for road users. The proposed charges are modest to begin with but the pricing structure is bound to increase annually. This is the thin edge of the wedge and will see on-street charging introduced in other areas of the town.</p>	<p>On-street charging already takes place in Hungerford and on Station Road in Newbury. If the proposals are taken forward and implemented on-street it is possible that charges could increase in the future, as they do with our off-street charging. There are no proposals to extend the on-street charging areas to other towns in the district but the reality is that if the Council continues to seek cost savings or generate revenue then on-street charging will remain a potential area for investigation across the district as long as they are legally justified.</p>
1	<p>There should be no parking charges that apply on Sundays or Bank Holidays, especially in the roads that are only used by commuters.</p>	<p>In our area we consider that charging for Sundays and Bank Holidays is appropriate and would provide some additional revenue to ensure the viability of the on-street charging scheme, as some of the roads included are also used by commuters at weekends.</p>
1	<p>There should be no requirement for anyone to physically obtain a ticket for any free parking period as this will just create chaos and confusion.</p>	<p>By displaying a parking ticket on their vehicle it allows motorists to show precisely when their parking period commenced from and would accurately show when a free period had expired. This limits the potential for contested PCNs being issued and ensures that Enforcement Officers can quickly patrol the restrictions. If motorists did not have to display a ticket the parking restrictions could quickly be subject to abuse.</p>
1	<p>The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was insufficient and did not take detailed account of the different user groups. The EIA did not mention the actual impact of the proposals but essentially just told the elderly to walk further.</p>	<p>We do not agree that the EIA is simplistic. The lengthy consultation period indicates that this is part of a carefully considered process. Exemptions are included within the proposal for Blue Badge Holders and the restrictions will not</p>

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		be forcing the elderly too walk further. That would be a choice they make by not parking in an available and potentially more convenient parking space.
1	There is no justification for the hours of charging on Sundays to be the same as for Monday to Saturday as shops are only open for an maximum of 8 hours under Sunday Trading Act regulations.	The proposed charge for Sunday would be a standard daily charge of £1. The 30 free period would be retained in all locations where it applies Mon-Sat as would the 50p charge for up to 2 hours parking where this applies. There would be no material benefit for introducing different operational times.
1	The statement used to justify Bank Holiday charging is that many towns throughout the country have similar schemes. This is incorrect, as many Councils do not charge for on-street parking on public holidays, or publicly state that they will not enforce on these dates.	It is the case that many local authorities are now charging for parking on bank holidays and this can be easily established by reference to their web sites on the internet. We have only investigated local authorities in our part of the country but have established that Reading Borough Council, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Cherwell District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, Southampton City Council, Portsmouth City Council, Eastleigh Borough Council, Swindon Borough Council, Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Slough Borough Council and Windsor & Maidenhead Borough Council all charge on bank holidays.
1	Annual Reports on parking for 2010/11 and 2011/12 have not been published as available documents on the Council website.	This is incorrect. The bi-annual report was published in December 2012 and this is available on our Parking Enforcement webpage.
1	There are inconsistencies with the Council's Parking Policy document produced in July 2008 and the document published on the website dated March 2011. The discrepancies are small but significant and it is unclear which version of the parking policies document would be regarded as definitive by a Court.	The current Parking Policy document would be the version that the Council would stand by. However the differences between this version and the version produced in July 2008 are only cosmetic with the removal of such items as "draft". The substantive content has not been changed.
GENERAL SUGGESTIONS		
2	The free parking period should be for two hours rather than the 30 minutes	We consider 30 minutes is adequate for most types of shopping involving

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	proposed as this will allow time for visits to independent retailers in the north and south of the town centre. 30 minutes is inadequate for most types of shopping or office visits on a busy day.	passing trade, but if visitors are wishing to extend their stay they would be able to purchase a ticket for a modest £1 charge to allow longer stay in the central locations or could choose to park in areas that will allow a longer stay which is able to meet their needs.
1	In the locations with ticket machines there should also be a facility for Pay by Phone.	This facility is already in place on Station Road and will be replicated on the new restrictions.
1	If implemented the increased number of machines must be better maintained than at present.	The new machines will initially be covered by guarantee but will be covered by on-going maintenance contract once this expires. To date the record of repair has been relatively good.
BARTHOLOMEW STREET COMMENTS		
1	30 minutes is an ideal length of time for parking and meets the needs of local traders. Increasing this to one hour will be detrimental to business.	It is anticipated that the majority of users of Bartholomew Street would continue to be short-term visitors taking advantage of the free parking period and therefore there should be no significant change to turnover or parking availability. The maximum stay is however proposed at 1 hour and so turnover will still take place.
CATHERINE ROAD COMMENTS		
1	The proposal will cause difficulties for patients of Eastfield House Surgery. The problems caused by long stay parking would be resolved by introducing Limited Waiting for the whole road.	It is unfortunate that the surgery do not make their car park more available to their patients already. The informal consultation raised concerns regarding parking provision for surgery visitors and this resulted in amendments to the scheme. The existing 2 hour Limited Waiting will provide on-street parking

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		spaces for patients and there should not be significant change to current parking behaviour as a result.
CHEAP STREET COMMENTS		
2	The current restrictions are ideal and meet the needs of local traders. The proposed changes will result in less turnover which will be detrimental to business.	It is anticipated that the majority of users of Cheap Street would continue to be short-term visitors taking advantage of the free parking period and as the current maximum stay is 1 hour and the maximum stay under the proposed scheme is also 1 hour there should be no significant change to turnover or parking availability.
FARADAY ROAD INDUSTRIAL AREA COMMENTS		
1	The proposal will prevent the mobile catering business from operating. The business has had a Street Trading license for 11 years and would like to be exempt from the charges.	Requests from individual businesses can be considered on a case by case basis if the proposals are implemented and officer discretion can recommend exemption if appropriate.
1	These roads in a busy industrial estate are already congested by vehicles belonging to local workers and many of the businesses have been established without off-street parking so employees are obliged to park on-street. Charges are inappropriate for local workers.	It is not the council's responsibility to provide on-street parking for businesses. If they are unable to provide parking for their staff they could encourage car sharing or provide a contribution to their employees as part of a travel scheme to assist them to pay for the proposed on-street charging fees.
1	From looking at the proposed charging rates on the consultation, the daily charge for parking Faraday Road will be £10.70 for 8 hours and that is unaffordable for all.	This is incorrect. The maximum daily charge for Faraday Road (over 4 hour parking) would be £1.50 which is considered a relatively manageable figure for most local workers.
1	Potential car buyers will be attracted to use the out of town garage showrooms	It is considered that potential car buyers would not be deterred from a purchase

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	where parking is free.	or visiting a showroom just because of the potential small parking charge. Buyers are more likely to be wanting to visit specific manufacturers, however the showrooms could extend their parking areas for visitors within their site if there was a serious concern that this could impact on trade.
KINGS ROAD WEST COMMENTS		
1	Object to the parking proposal as we have difficulty trying to get in and out of our business at 11A Kings Road West due to vehicles parking in front of the entrance where the turning is very tight.	The new proposals do not effect this length of Kings Road West. The area opposite the entrance to 11A Kings Road West is subject to a No Waiting Mon-Sat 6am-6pm and during the evenings it may be more difficult, but it is not impossible, to exit this property. Any changes would reduce the available on-street parking for local residents and businesses operating during the evening and will not be considered as part of this scheme.
LINK ROAD COMMENTS		
1	The proposals impose unfair additional costs on rail commuters who are already financially penalised through rail fare increases. The stated aim of the proposal is to encourage a turn-over of parking spaces to assist local traders, however there are no traders in Link Road that could benefit. Link Road should be excluded from the scheme.	<p>The stated aims provide a general comment on the intention of the scheme and are not absolute or definitive. There are private dental practices, medical surgeries and also the Junior school located on Link Road, Catherine Road and St Johns Road, all of which would benefit from turn-over or more availability of parking space.</p> <p>Link Road has been considered as within the central part of Newbury and is a desirable parking location for commuters (rail or local businesses). It is however sufficiently removed from businesses attracting passing trade and the pricing structure for charges reflects this, by allowing all day parking if necessary and a lower scale of hourly charge.</p>

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1	<p>There is no evidence that the proposed on-street charging will have any road safety benefits over the current method of parking on-street, as increasing turnover will increase the number of traffic movements and therefore increase risk.</p>	<p>The road safety benefits may be very marginal and it is agreed that there could be an increase in traffic movements from parking places, but it does not necessarily increase risk. Additional measures are being proposed for the town centre area including an extension to the 20 mph speed limit due for public consultation later this year and in conjunction with existing traffic calming measures these will ensure that road safety risks are low. Also the income generated by these proposals will mean that road safety schemes can continue to be funded across a wider area.</p>
NEWTOWN ROAD COMMENTS		
2	<p>There is no road safety reason to introduce charging on this road and local residents will not benefit from its introduction. Introducing restrictions with no concessions for local residents will cause inconvenience and expense for residents and their visitors. Space is already limited due to shared footpath and cycleway, bus stops and traffic calming. A resident permit parking option should be available for this residential road.</p> <p>The resident of one property, No 61, objected on the grounds that they have no off-street parking and cannot afford a new dropped kerb facility. The resident is also elderly and infirm.</p>	<p>This length of Newtown Road is currently primarily used by commuters and is a suitable and appropriate location for on-street charging to be considered. The proposals do not include an evening charge for parking after 6pm and so would be available for evening and overnight parking by residents or their visitors.</p> <p>For consistency of approach the on-street charging regime is proposed to apply Mon-Sat 8am-6pm in all areas, as if certain roads operate under different timings or days of operation it could lead to confusion for the motorist.</p> <p>The overwhelming majority of local properties on this length of Newtown Road all appear to have off-street parking available and so do not park on-street and would not qualify for a permit under the current permit parking policy.</p> <p>A disabled parking bay could be considered on Newtown Road in the vicinity of No 61 to substitute one of the proposed charging bay bays, however parking restrictions are not always able to meet individual needs of specific properties and at this stage it is recommended that no changes are made to the proposals.</p>
OLD BATH ROAD COMMENTS		

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3	<p>The proposals will have a negative effect on house prices in the residential roads adjacent to Old Bath Road due to the problems non-resident parking causes. Introducing 'Resident Permit Holder' restrictions for all properties in Goldwell Drive, Jesmond Dene and Leys Gardens would address and prevent displacement into these roads as a result of restrictions in Old Bath Road.</p>	<p>If remedial measures are introduced to address the long term concerns by residents associated with obstruction and access for refuse and delivery vehicles it could be argued to have a positive effect on house prices. Many residential roads located in close proximity to town centres experience parking problems and it has always been considered by some to have an unavoidable impact on general house prices. The roads in question will be investigated as part of the next parking review in the area and additional measures considered to address potential displacement, however a review of the current policy on Resident Permit Parking may result in significant changes to the current parking restrictions in this area due to the off-street parking facilities which the majority, if not all, properties benefit from.</p>