

REPORT TO THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE 14 MARCH 2012

PORTFOLIOS: PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT

REPORT FROM HEAD OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION AND HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

SUBJECT: HOCKLEY WOODS CAR PARK – PROPOSED PARKING SCHEME

1 DECISION BEING RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 That the appended car parking tariff for Hockley Woods be agreed, and introduced following the completion of capital works.
- 1.2 That the completion of capital works to improve the surface and layout of the car park be authorised.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 In considering the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2012/13 - 2016/17, Members concluded that parking charges should be introduced for Hockley Woods car park (Minute 18/2012).
- 2.2 In addition, a capital budget of £30,000 was approved for the installation of charging machines, operational improvements to the parking area and compound, and improvements to the surface of the car park.
- 2.3 A key part of the decision to introduce charges for parking in Hockley Woods was the opportunity to make improvements to the condition of the car park. It is planned these improvement works should be completed prior to the new charges coming into operation. An update on the timing of the works will be provided at the meeting.

3 SALIENT INFORMATION

- 3.1 The proposed tariff of charges for Hockley Woods is appended to this report.
- 3.2 In considering options for Hockley Woods, it was considered that the tariff must be designed to control commuter/business parking, but at the same time ensure that regular visitors, particularly dog walkers, were not discouraged.
- 3.3 That being the case, the charges for the first three hours are modest and do not come into operation until 9am. Furthermore, the charging day will end at 6pm and there will be no charges at weekends or on Bank Holidays.
- 3.4 It is proposed to re-use old pay and display machines removed from the main car parks in 2011 and, whilst visitors will be able to pay by coin or mobile

phone, card payments will not be accepted (though the situation will be kept under review).

- 3.5 Season tickets will not be offered for specific use in the car park since the main use is for visitors to the woods and not for commuters or businesses. However, anyone with a season ticket purchased for one of the main district car parks will be able to use it to park in the woods.
- 3.6 The introduction of parking charges is, in part, linked to the need to make improvements to the surface of the car park. Given the sensitive nature of the site it will be necessary to use a sensitive, permeable surface finish and work is underway to design an appropriate solution. It is not proposed to introduce the new charges until the surfacing works are complete; an update on the implementation date will be provided at the meeting
- 3.7 It is concluded that two pay and display machines will be sufficient to service the car park. The machines will be illuminated, but the lighting will be designed to switch off during the periods when charges do not apply.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 In considering the options for tariffs, it would have been possible to apply the same structure used in the majority of the Council's car parks. However, there are important differences between the town centre car parks and Hockley Woods and it was concluded that the 'standard' tariff would not be appropriate for Hockley Woods.

5 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 To date parking at the Council's open space/leisure car parks has been free of charge. However, analysis of usage at Hockley Woods has identified that the car park is being used by commuter/business traffic during the week.
- 5.2 The proposed tariff has been designed to deter the commuter/business parking but to ensure leisure visitors, dog-walkers etc, are not discouraged. There is certainly a risk of indiscriminate parking on nearby residential streets if the tariff is not appropriate and this issue will be carefully monitored.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 As explained one of the main reasons for introducing charges is to provide resources to improve the surface of the car park. A suitable 'eco-friendly' scheme is being prepared to reflect the sensitive nature of the location.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 It is estimated that the cost of installing two pay and display machines, amendments to the off-street parking order, new signage etc will be £6,500 to be funded from the Capital Programme.

- 7.2 A capital budget of £30,000 has been allocated for improvements to the car park.
- 7.3 A revenue budget of £30,000 income from the introduction of charges has been included in the estimates for the 2012/13 budget. This was based on charges being introduced in the summer. Any delay to the introduction of charges because works are not completed on time will reduce the income. The income against budget will be monitored and reported to the Executive as part of the regular Financial Management reports.

8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Amendments to the off-street parking order will need to be advertised prior to being brought into operation.

9 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Disabled spaces are available in the car park; blue badge holders will be required to pay the appropriate fee unless exempt from paying the road fund licence.

I confirm that the above recommendation does not depart from Council policy and that appropriate consideration has been given to any budgetary and legal implications.

SMT Lead Officer Signature: _____

Head of Planning and Transportation

SMT Lead Officer Signature: _____

Head of Environmental Services

Background Papers:-

None.

For further information please contact Shaun Scrutton (Head of Planning and Transportation) or Richard Evans (Head of Environmental Services) on:-

Phone: 01702 318100

01701 318044

Email: shaun.scrutton@rochford.gov.uk

richard.evans@rochford.gov.uk

If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.

HOCKLEY WOODS – PROPOSED PARKING TARIFF

- Charges to operate from 9am to 6pm on Monday to Friday only.
- No charges will apply at any other times.
- No season tickets to be sold specifically for use in Hockley Woods car park.
- Residents with a season ticket purchased for use in one of the Council's main car parks will be able to use their ticket in Hockley Woods.
- Payment by mobile phone will apply.

| TIME | AMOUNT |
|-------------|---------------|
| 1 hour | £0.20 |
| 2 hours | £0.40 |
| 3 hours | £0.60 |
| 4 hours | £1.00 |
| All day | £3.00 |