

Birmingham City Council

Report to Cabinet

6 September 2022



Subject: Capital funding bid for the proposed introduction of car parking charging across selected BCC parks

Report of: Rob James, Strategic Director, City Operations

Relevant Cabinet Member: Councillor Majid Mahmood, Cabinet Member for Environment
Councillor Yvonne Mosquito, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

Relevant O &S Chair(s): Councillor Akhlaq Ahmed, Resources
Councillor Mohammed Idress, Housing & Neighbourhoods

Report author: Matt Hageney, Partnership Manager, Street Scene and Parks

Are specific wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No – All wards affected
If yes, name(s) of ward(s): Rubery & Rednal Sheldon Sutton Reddicap Bartley Green Sutton Trinity Sutton Vesey		
Is this a key decision?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, add Forward Plan Reference: 010280/2022		
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, provide exempt information paragraph number or reason if confidential:		

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 To seek approval of the Full Business Case for Capital funding for the proposed introduction of car parking charging across selected BCC parks (Lickey Hills Country Park, Rectory Park, Sheldon Country Park, Woodgate Valley Country Park and Sutton Park).
- 1.2 The introduction of car parking charges in each of the selected parks will be contingent on the outcome of informal and formal consultation and subsequent approval of the individual Full Business Cases for each scheme.
- 1.3 Cabinet approved the introduction of car parking charges at Cannon Hill Park, in June 2017.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet:
 - 2.1.1 Approves the Full Business Case for the capital funding required to facilitate the introduction of car parking charges across 5 selected BCC parks over a 2-year period (2022-2024)
 - 2.1.2 To seek approval of the service prudential borrowing of £1.907m to be paid back over a 10-year period
 - 2.1.3 Approves the commencement of consultations, the findings of which will inform each of the individual scheme Full Business Cases
 - 2.1.4 Notes that, capital expenditure will be incurred on a scheme-by-scheme basis and only following approval of the FBCs for each of those schemes
 - 2.1.5 Notes the approval of the individual scheme Full Business Cases will be in accordance with the Council's governance procedures
 - 2.1.6 Notes that the project team will consult with Natural England and Historic England and seek appropriate consents where applicable
 - 2.1.7 Delegates approval of individual business cases to the Cabinet Members for Environment and for Finance and Resources in consultation with the Director of Council Management and Strategic Director of City Operations.

3 Background

- 3.1 Cabinet approved the Cabinet Member Report and Full Business Case for the Introduction of Charges for Car Parking at Cannon Hill Park, in June 2017 (following call-in). The report demonstrated that the charging scheme at Cannon Hill Park would generate a sustainable income stream to support and invest in the park.
- 3.2 The proposed programme to introduce car parking charges across the selected parks is projected to have the following benefits for each park:
 - Improve the car park surfaces where necessary

- Improve accessibility to the park e.g. installation of formal disabled parking bays
- Manage the incidence of displacement parking for residents who live in close proximity to the park (site dependant)
- Investment opportunities to improve the park can be funded e.g. Memorial Woods, renewable energy projects
- Additional income will allow for greater reinvestment in parks infrastructure, such as new outdoor gym equipment, play areas etc and this is one of the Cabinet Member for Environment's priorities.
- On-site enforcement of the car parking charges may decrease the amount of anti-social behaviour
- Net income used to improve the park and overall visitor experience e.g. potholing, fence repairs.

3.3 The implementation and ongoing management of car parking charges at the parks within the programme will be completed by Birmingham City Council's Parks Service, in partnership with the Council's Parking Services, Highways and Enforcement Teams.

3.4 Traffic management surveys (of specific roads around each park) will be completed pre and post implementation, to determine the requirements for restrictions/impact that displacement has on the surrounding roads – we will link with Highways Engineers to determine which roads should be surveyed. This change of strategy has come about as a result of the discussions the project team has had with BCC Highways, as well as Worcestershire County Council Highways about the Lickey Hills Country Park car parking project and should result in more effective restrictions based on evidence.

3.5 The Council has a contract in place for civil parking enforcement across the city with NSL Services Ltd which is accessed by the Parks Service for Cannon Hill Park and is proposed to be used for the parks under this programme. The basis of the contract is to issue Penalty Charge Notices where parking regulations have been contravened. The income from Penalty Charge Notices is used to cover all operational expenditure (including the cost of the civil parking enforcement contract) and any surplus funds are governed by Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended by Section 95 of the Traffic Management Act 2004. This states that any surplus in parking revenue accounts, after running costs have been covered can be spent on:

- Providing additional parking facilities
- Public transport schemes
- Highway improvements
- Road maintenance
- Environmental improvements.

- 3.6 Subject to the approval of the individual scheme Full Business Cases, the implementation of charging at the selected parks and management of car parking charges will remain the responsibility of Birmingham City Council.
- 3.7 The approach of charging for car parking in parks is well embedded in a number of other local authorities – with authorities such as Derby City Council and Warwickshire County Council charging and generating income from their flagship parks. Birmingham City Council is one of the last local authorities in the country to seek to introduce car parking charges within its parks.

4 Options considered and Recommended Proposal

- 4.1 Alternatives to the introduction of pay & display machines have been considered i.e. barriered entry (pay on entry) and ANPR schemes, however each alternative comes with its own limitations and disadvantages. Barriered entry (pay on entry) assumes coin availability and may cause travel blockages at barriers, as well as coming with an increased risk of occasional or ongoing wilful/accidental damage to the barriers. As ANPR schemes can currently only be used for enforcement purposes by local authorities in certain circumstances i.e. bus lanes or near schools they are not legal for use in parks. However, it can be noted lobbying is currently taking place to allow local authorities to use ANPR for parking enforcement.
- 4.2 To do nothing is not a viable option as it misses the opportunity to generate additional income to support investments for the parks within programme. In addition, the car parks will remain in a state of disrepair and remain a health and safety risk, with visitors displacing to nearby streets (without restrictions in place) or reducing visitor numbers to parks.
- 4.3 The preferred option is to manage the introduction of car parking charges through the introduction of pay & display machines, in line with the Council's other public pay & display car parks citywide. The scheme is familiar and easy for customers to use, as well as manage. A combination of coin machines as well as Pay by Mobile will offer customers a choice of payment options.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 Individual Full Business Cases will be submitted for each park prior to the proposed implementation of charging. A full consultation process (informal and formal consultations) with stakeholders, local ward members, local businesses and residents will be completed, and the implementation of any of the charging schemes will be contingent on the outcome of these consultations.

6 Risk Management

- 6.1 There is a risk that the usage of the car parks may reduce as a result of the implementation of charging. However, this is mitigated through an effective enforcement scheme and suitable restrictions on surrounding roads for each of the projects as demonstrated by the Cannon Hill charging project. Experience from the Cannon Hill car parking project has shown no obvious decrease in visitor numbers as result of the implementation of charging.
- 6.2 There is a risk that the introduction of parking charges could have a negative impact on the local neighbourhood by displacing cars on to roads around the parks. This will be mitigated by carrying out pre and post traffic management surveys to determine the extent of displacement parking as a result of the introduction of parking charges. The information from the traffic management surveys as well as feedback from local residents and the experience of the Council's Highways Engineers will determine an evidence-based approach to the introduction of traffic restrictions after charges have been implemented.
- 6.3 There is a risk that the income levels anticipated within this business case will not be achieved, which will impact on the benefits realised. This will be mitigated through consultation with park visitors and stakeholders as well as market research to inform income projections as well as the final decision on pricing levels. In addition, a pricing review will take place 6 months after implementation of each of the charging projects, taking into account the proximity of each park to other parking resources in the area.

7 Compliance Issues:

7.1 How are the recommended decisions consistent with the City Council's priorities, plans and strategies?

- 7.1.1 The proposed programme to introduce car parking charges supports the Council's priorities, including:
 - 7.1.1.1. Birmingham is an aspirational city to live in: The scheme will protect Parks Services and generate resources to ensure children and young people are able to realise their potential, through having access to quality parks and opportunities for outdoor activities and training (accessed through the services provided by Park Rangers for example). Without funding these services are at risk
 - 7.1.1.2. Birmingham is a great city to live in: The scheme will promote alternative forms of travel to parks and may help reduce car use across the city e.g. new cycle stands will be installed and cycling to the parks will be actively promoted. The charging scheme is not a fee to use the parks but rather, to bring a vehicle to the park and as such the scheme supports the Council's clean air policy. Parking for blue badge holders will remain free in line with the Council's parking policy. The scheme will also improve

health and safety and accessibility at the parks within programme, through the improvements to car park surfaces and the introduction of formal disabled bays.

- 7.1.1.3. Birmingham Business Charter: The value of this contract is below the procurement threshold of £4.5m for works for the BBC4SR to apply. However, the requirement to pay the Real Living Wage is a requirement of the contract and the contractor for each scheme will be encouraged to carry out a project advertised on www.matchmyproject.org.

7.2 Legal Implications

- 7.3 Under Section 19 of the Local Government Act (Miscellaneous Provisions) 1976, the Council has the power to provide such recreational facilities. Under Section 111 Local Government Act 1972 the Council has power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of its functions.

7.4 Financial Implications

- 7.4.1 The report sets out the strategy for introducing car parking charges in selected parks with full business cases for each scheme to be approved by the S151 officer. Capital funding of £1.907m is sought to deliver the individual schemes across the selected parks, profiled £0.708m in 2023/24 and £1.199m in 2024/25. Capital will be funded through service prudential borrowing financed via income generated by the car parks. The level of income expected to be generated on a full year basis is sufficient to fund the operational revenue costs, capital borrowing repayments and deliver the £0.2m savings target as per the MTFP. The programme is proposed to be delivered in two phases with the first full year of operation in 2025/26 which is expected to deliver a £0.049m surplus after meeting the budgeted saving. A Full Business Case will be submitted for each individual scheme within the programme for approval as set out in recommendation 2.1.7.

7.5 Procurement Implications (if required)

- 7.5.1 The procurement route for the associated landscaping works will be detailed within the individual scheme Full Business Cases.

7.6 Human Resources Implications (if required)

- 7.6.1 The Council's Landscape Practice Group will act as project managers for the hardstanding works – including liaison with Parks Service, contract preparation and supervision of the construction operations.
- 7.6.2 The Commercialisation Team in Street Scene and Parks will project manage the consultations and prepare the Full Business Cases for each scheme. Subject to approval of the individual Full Business Cases the Commercialism Team will project manage the implementation of charging for each scheme – including co-ordination of hardstanding works, Traffic Regulation Orders co-ordination and implementation with the Council's Highways Team, procurement of pay & display machines and signage, budget and time management – as well as manage the car parking schemes once implemented, working in partnership with the Council's Parking Services and Enforcement Teams.

7.7 Public Sector Equality Duty

- 7.7.1 Initial equality assessments have been created for the Victoria Common (EQUA331), Lickey Hills (EQUA330), Rectory Park (EQUA914), Woodgate Valley Country Park (EQUA915), Sheldon Country Park (EQUA916) and the Sutton Park projects (EQUA332). Two protected characteristics have been identified (Age and Disability) although mitigations are in place for both protected characteristics.

8 Background Documents

- 8.1 Full Business Case for the Introduction of Charges for Car Parking in Cannon Hill Park

List of appendices accompanying this report:

- Full Business Case for Capital funding for the proposed introduction of car parking across selected BCC parks v1.25
- Appendix A – Capital Bid – project costs
- Appendix B – Capital Bid – financial modelling
- Appendix C – Capital Bid – operational costs