

OFFICER DECISION REPORT - TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER (TRO)

4

OUTCOME OF TRO PROCESS

PREPARED BY: Traffic Management Team, Highways and Traffic Group

TITLE OF REPORT:	Parking Charge review 2024/25
PROPOSAL:	Review of parking charges on street and in car parks across Bath & North East Somerset
SCHEME REF No:	24-015
REPORT AUTHOR:	Andrew Dunn, Team Manager - Parking

1. DELEGATION

The delegation to be exercised in this report is contained within **Section 4** of the Constitution under the **Delegation of Functions to Officers**, as follows:

Section A	The Chief Executive, Strategic Directors, Divisional Directors and Heads of Service have delegated power to take any decision falling within their area of responsibility...."
Section B	Without prejudice to the generality of this, Officers are authorised to: serve any notices and make, amend or revoke any orders falling within his/her area of responsibility.
Section D9	An Officer to whom a power, duty or function is delegated may nominate or authorise another Officer to exercise that power, duty or function, provided that Officer reports to or is responsible to the delegator.

For the purposes of this report, the Director of Place Management holds the delegated power to make, amend or revoke any Orders.

2. LEGAL AUTHORITY

This proposal is made in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, which under Section 1 provides, generally, for Orders to be made for the following reasons, and in the case of this report specifically for the reason(s) shown below:

(a)	for avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road or any other road or for preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising, or	X
(b)	for preventing damage to the road or to any building on or near the road, or	
(c)	for facilitating the passage on the road or any other road of any class of traffic (including pedestrians), or	X
(d)	for preventing the use of the road by vehicular traffic of a kind which, or its use by vehicular traffic in a manner which, is unsuitable having regard to the existing character of the road or adjoining property,	

(e)	(without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (d) above) for preserving the character of the road in a case where it is specially suitable for use by persons on horseback or on foot, or	
(f)	for preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs, or	
(g)	for any of the purposes specified in paragraphs (a) to (c) of subsection (1) of section 87 of the Environment Act 1995 (air quality)	

Proposals in this report that impact off-street locations are made in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, section 35 (Variation of charges at off-street parking places). An order under section 35(1)(a)(iii) of this Act makes provision as to the charges to be paid in connection with the use of off-street parking places, the authority making that order may vary those charges by notice given under this section.

3. **PROPOSALS**

3.1. An outline of the proposed charges detailed in this section are included within Appendix 1.

3.2. The baseline charge refers to the charge applied to the least polluting vehicles for paid for parking.

A- Extension of emission-based charges

3.3. Emission-based parking charges are proposed to be implemented at the following locations:

- a) Bath on street pay and display, all locations.
- b) Keynsham, all council car parks.
- c) South Road car park, Midsomer Norton.
- d) Church Street and Waterloo Road car parks, Radstock.
- e) The Shallows, Saltford.

3.4. The extension of emission-based charging to all council managed paid for parking locations replicates the structure and rationale for emission-based charges introduced across all resident parking schemes and paid for parking areas.

B- Review of Parking Charges - Bath

3.5. The baseline hourly charge for Bath car parks payable by the least polluting vehicles is proposed to increase by:

- a) £0.10 per hour in October 2024
- b) £0.10 per hour in October 2025.

3.6. The emission-based charges that apply for more polluting vehicles will be uplifted from this new baseline using the existing uplift mechanism, which is 2.5% uplift for

each more polluting band, or 5% for each capacity band.

3.7. The baseline evening charge for the least polluting vehicles available at Charlotte Street car park (6pm to 8pm only) is proposed to increase by:

- a) £1 in October 2024.
- b) £1.30 in October 2025. This aligns the evening charge to the equivalent 2-hour rate in Bath car parks. This continues to provide a favourable tariff within Charlotte Street as the minimum, maintaining a 2-hour evening only charge in this central location at the same charge as other car parks where 2 hours are available.

3.8. The baseline overnight charge at all Bath car parks (8pm to 8am) is proposed to increase by:

- a) £1 in October 2024.
- b) £1 in October 2025.

3.9. The baseline charge for on-street paid for parking in Bath city centre is proposed to increase by:

- a) £0.10 per hour in January 2025.
- b) £0.10 per hour in January 2026.

3.10. Parking charges are proposed to increase for customers parking at Bath's three P&R locations where they do not also use the P&R service, The charge for up to 3-hours and for 24-hours will increase by:

- a) £0.50 for both tariffs in October 2024,
- b) £0.50 for both tariffs in October 2025.

3.11. Parking purchased at the three P&R locations for 24-hours duration will expire after 24-hours have passed and not at 23.59 each day.

C- Review of Parking Charges – Bath Hotel Permits

3.12. Currently, paid for parking for hotel guests when purchased with a council hotel permit is linked to the cost of a 24-hour stay in a council car park. This charge will be linked to the vehicle's emissions from January 2025.

D- Review of Parking Charges - Keynsham, Midsomer Norton, Radstock and Saltford.

3.13. In addition to the introduction of emission-based charges (see proposal A), the baseline hourly charge for the least polluting vehicles in Keynsham car parks is proposed to be increased by:

- a) £0.10 per hour in October 2024

b) £0.10 per hour in October 2025.

3.14. Charges for season tickets in Keynsham will also be linked to a vehicle's emissions.

3.15. The 30 minutes free parking in dedicated bays will remain in Keynsham where bays are marked.

3.16. Emission-based parking charges are proposed to be introduced in council managed car parks in Midsomer Norton and Radstock to align to the same baseline charge as Keynsham.

a) Charges will apply from 8am to 6pm Monday to Saturday inclusive, matching Keynsham hours of operation.

b) The additional charge for diesel fuelled vehicles will be £0.30 for a short duration stay (up to 4-hours) and £0.50 for a long duration stay (over 4-hours per day).

c) The hours available to purchase in Midsomer Norton, which currently has unrestricted free parking, is proposed to match that for long stay parking in Keynsham.

d) The hours available to purchase and maximum stay times in Radstock car parks are proposed to be maintained to ensure frequent turnover of the limited spaces available to support local businesses.

3.17. Free parking is proposed for short durations of parking in Midsomer Norton and Radstock car parks in dedicated bays. This is proposed at 30minutes for illustrative purposes in this report, with views to be sought from the public on a range of durations when this free period should apply.

3.18. Season tickets will be available in Midsomer Norton car parks at all long stay locations and will also be linked to a vehicle's emissions.

3.19. Season tickets are not proposed to be available within Radstock car parks as these locations do not provide all day parking.

E- Review of Parking Charges - Motorbikes.

3.20. Motorbike users will require an emission-based resident parking permit to park in a permit holder space.

3.21. Motorbike users will no longer be able to park for free in paid for parking locations on-street and in council car parks.

a) The charge for paid for parking will be linked to a motorbikes CO2 emissions, based on data held by the DVLA.

b) Where no CO2 emission data is held by the DVLA, the charge will be linked to engine capacity using the following bands:

Motorbike engine capacity	Equivalent band used to charge two axle (and above) vehicles for comparative purposes
Under 151 cc	0-1550 cc
151 - 400 cc	1551-1950cc
401 - 600 cc	1951-2950cc
Over 600 cc	over 2951cc

4. **BACKGROUND**

4.1. The proposals set out in this report will affect everyone living within, or visiting, Bath and North East Somerset, and therefore its aims are aligned to The Corporate Strategy. Within this framework, the proposals strongly align to the following priorities:

- Healthy lives and places
- Clean, safe and vibrant neighbourhoods
- More travel choices
- Cultural life

4.2. These proposals have been developed aimed to improve air quality through a major shift to sustainable transport, walking and cycling and incentives to reduce the use of more polluting vehicles to secure the safer movement of pedestrian traffic on the highway by reducing the public health risks posed to them by air pollution.

4.3. The proposals were developed with due regard to the requirements under s122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act (1984). Their aim to facilitate the strategic outcomes of local transport policy by influencing behaviour change and reducing congestion and vehicle intrusion into neighbourhoods, and particularly residential neighbourhoods and align with the Council policy on Liveable Neighbourhoods and the Journey to net zero. By reducing congestion on our roads, the aim is to improve public transport journey times and improve air quality to secure the safer movement of pedestrian traffic, supporting increased take up of active travel.

4.4. Whilst not the primary objective, these proposals align with the vision and outcomes from the Bath & North East Somerset Journey to Net Zero Transport Strategy, by promoting sustainable transport and reducing CO2 emissions and the intrusion of vehicles, particularly more polluting vehicles, into the historic core and our urban centres.

- 4.5. The council is investing £160M on a range of interventions to help deliver more travel choices for resident, workers and visitors.
- 4.6. This report aligns to the Parking Strategy to ensure that parking charges in Bath and North East Somerset should be periodically reviewed and adjusted as required to ensure that they achieve the aims of the Council's strategies.
- 4.7. Air quality impacts on pedestrian safety; managing traffic flows; and availability of parking are all significant issues in our region. Whilst the proposals detailed in this report are a separate standalone scheme, they are complimentary to other projects aimed at addressing these issues, including but not limited to the following:
- Promoting a major shift to mass transport, walking and cycling, with incentives to reduce the use of more polluting vehicles, in accordance with the UK government National Air Quality Strategy
 - Improving the safety of cyclists and pedestrians through active travel schemes which rebalance priorities on our roads and build on social distancing needs.
 - A Clean Air Zone in central Bath, to encourage less polluting ways of travelling around the city, which has successfully reduced harmful Nitrogen Dioxide levels at monitoring locations across the city to below the limit of 40 µg/m³ for the second consecutive year, with ongoing reductions in the number of non-compliant vehicles entering the city.
 - Liveable Neighbourhoods policy and work concerning reducing the effect of motor vehicles on neighbourhoods, particularly residential neighbourhoods.

The Issue

- 4.8. A significant threat to clean safe air is now posed by traffic emissions. Vehicles with petrol and diesel based internal combustion engines emit a wide variety of pollutants, principally carbon monoxide (CO), oxides of nitrogen (NO_x), volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and particulate matter (PM₁₀), which have an increasing impact on urban air quality.
- 4.9. Pollutants from these sources may not only prove a problem in the immediate vicinity of these sources but can be transported long distances.
- 4.10. Air pollution can cause or contribute to a variety of health conditions, particularly amongst the young and elderly.
- 4.11. The health problems resulting from exposure to air pollution have a high cost to people who suffer from illness and premature death, to our health services and to business. In the UK, these costs add up to more than £20 billion every year (Source: Royal College of Physicians). Any reduction in emissions within the city centre will have a beneficial impact on those living and visiting the city centre.
- 4.12. Whilst national targets and legal limits exist for air pollution and air quality there is no safe limit. Any measures that aim to reduce the impact of vehicle

emissions will have a beneficial impact on human health and the environment.

Emission-based charges in Bath & North East Somerset.

- 4.13. The council implemented emission-based charges for on street resident parking permits across all resident parking zones in January 2022 following extensive engagement and consultation during 2021. In September 2023 emission-based car parking charges were implemented across all Council managed car parks in Bath across all payment channels, a national first.
- 4.14. Emission-based charges are linked to the CO2 emissions of the vehicle, or engine capacity where emission data is not available. Vehicles are classified in line with the DVLA Vehicle Excise Duty Bands (as of 1st April 2017). The higher the engine's emissions, the higher the charge for the permit or parking. Therefore, the higher charges aim to reduce the use of more polluting vehicles to secure the safer movement of pedestrian traffic on the highway by reducing the public health risks posed to pedestrians by air pollution.
- 4.15. Vehicles that emit between 0-130g/km of CO2 (including electric vehicles) pay a baseline charge. More polluting vehicles emitting more than 131g/km of CO2 will pay progressively more for their parking. The charges for diesel fuelled vehicles is further increased (compared to a similar sized and CO2 level emitting engines of other fuel types) due to the higher levels of other pollutants emitted from the tail pipe following the combustion of this fuel type.
- 4.16. Emission-based charges aims to improve the safety of vulnerable people within the community by improving air quality and reducing congestion so those with more polluting vehicles pay more and are encouraged to change behaviours to make other travel choices where alternatives exist. This is achieved by incentivising the use of less polluting vehicles where options exist or a switch to more sustainable journey types, and to encourage motorists to consider a vehicle's emissions when making future purchase or lease/hire decisions.
- 4.17. All customers can check their vehicle's emissions rating or engine capacity, free of charge, online at <https://www.gov.uk/get-vehicle-information-from-dvla>
- 4.18. The introduction of emission-based charging in Bath car parks in September 2023 has seen a change in the proportion of vehicles only charged the baseline charge (i.e. the less polluting vehicles) from 34% to 52%, indicating the driver for behaviour change with owners of more polluting vehicles choosing alternatives to council car parks.

Review of Parking Charges – Bath.

- 4.19. The modest price increase for parking at Baths three P&R locations supports the longer-term viability of the P&R service which may be impacted by users that park at these sites but who do not use the bus service.

Review of Parking Charges – Bath Hotel Permits.

- 4.20. In January 2022 the council linked the charges for its hotel permits to its 24-hour car park charges. Permits for hotels located in the central zone, zone 1 and zone 6 were valid only in long stay council car parks due to their proximity to the city centre. Permits for hotels in all other zones provided parking for guests in on street permit holder bays as they were located away from the city centre.
- 4.21. These charges were not linked to a vehicle's emission in September 2023 due to the mix of on-street and off-street parking for guests that the permits provided, and they therefore remained chargeable at the baseline charge.
- 4.22. Linking the charges to a vehicle's emission is necessary with the introduction of an emission-based charge at on-street locations to prevent a hotel permit being used to avoid the emissions-based charges for more polluting vehicles. This is aimed to discourage visitors to the city from bringing their more polluting vehicles into urban areas.

Review of Parking Charges - Keynsham, Midsomer Norton, Radstock and Salford

- 4.23. Based on the current customer data using car parks in Keynsham its calculated that 40% of customers use a least polluting vehicle and will pay no increase because of the introduction of an emission-based charge, notwithstanding the impact of changes to the underlying charges because of a separate price review (as set out in this report). No customer data is available for car parks in Midsomer Norton, Radstock, or Salford.
- 4.24. The Sustainable Transport Plan for Keynsham town centre includes the provision of improved public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure, with the aim to encourage people to use sustainable modes of transport to get to Keynsham town centre. This aims to lead to a reduction in the need for car parking spaces in the centre of the town, over the 20-year Plan period.
- 4.25. The council is delivering a High Street Regeneration Programme in Midsomer Norton totalling a combined investment of £3.6M which is designed to increase footfall to the local area and support local businesses. This includes a high-quality multi-use civic space; improvements to shopfronts; restoration of the Town Hall and transfer to community ownership; and market town brand for Midsomer Norton focusing on important aspects of local culture. Additional short stay parking is available in Midsomer Norton within private car parking (i.e. that not managed by the council) at Sainsbury's provided for customers.
- 4.26. The council was successful in obtaining funding from the West of England Combined Authority's (WECA) Housing and Regeneration Enabling Fund, to create regeneration plans and masterplans for four town centres in Bath and North East Somerset.

- 4.27. Working with key stakeholders, including Radstock Town Council, businesses and the community, a draft Regeneration Action Plan has been developed which identifies priority projects. The plan will also be used to support future funding bids and inform investment plans and future strategies for the town. The plan is available to view at <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Radstock%20regeneration%20Action%20Plan.pdf>
- 4.28. The introduction of charges at car parks in Midsomer Norton and Radstock helps to support the ongoing costs for operating these car parks, including energy costs, maintenance, and other improvements to the asset to support improvements delivered through the regeneration schemes, and additional officer resource to ensure that turnover of the available spaces is maintained.

Review of Parking Charges - Motorbikes

- 4.29. Whilst it's recognised that motorbikes may be less impactful on congestion, they continue to utilise road space and emit pollutants.
- 4.30. Motorbike users have historically benefited from free parking across on street locations and council car parks within Bath and North East Somerset.

5. SOURCE OF FINANCE

Implementation of these proposals are to be funded from Capital budgets.

6. INFORMAL CONSULTATION REQUIREMENT

Informal consultation was carried out with the Chief Constable, Parish / Town Council, Ward Members, and the Cabinet Member for Highways.

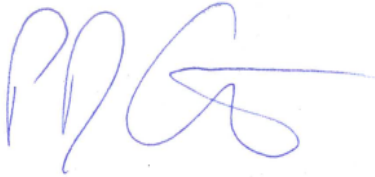
The responses to the informal consultation can be found in TRO report number 3.

7. OBJECTIONS / COMMENTS RECEIVED (following the public advertisement of the proposal(s))

The feedback and views received from 4322 respondents have been analysed and the results compiled within the attached report (Appendix 3) entitled "Parking Charge Proposals 2024/25 Traffic Regulation Order Consultation Outcome Report".

8. **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Traffic Regulation Order as advertised is sealed with the amendments to the proposals as recommended within Appendix 3, Parking Charge Proposals 2024/25 Traffic Regulation Order Consultation Outcome Report.



Paul Garrod
Traffic Management and Network Manager

Date: 8th October 2024

9. **DECISION**

As the Officer holding the above delegation, I have decided that the objections/comments be acceded to in part and the following adjustments, being of minor significance, be included on the order to be sealed:

a) Review of charges – Midsomer Norton and Radstock car parks

- i. 2-hours of free parking to be provided in any bay with a valid stay.
- ii. The hourly baseline rate (for the least polluting vehicles) is reduced by 10p per hour to 30p per hour in 2024, and 40p per hour in 2025, with charges for more polluting vehicles amended accordingly.

b) Review of charges – Motorbikes

- i. This proposal is withdrawn.

In taking this decision, I confirm that due regard has been given to the Council's public sector equality duty, which requires it to consider and think about how its policies or decisions may affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.

The Council's policy framework has been used as the basis to develop the scheme with full engagement with stakeholders across the area. It is further noted that there is some differences between the Councils policy framework and the responses to the consultation. This is to be expected at times. However, full consideration has been given to all the comments, objection or support, before the decision has been made.

I further note that the issue of deciding whether to implement any scheme is a matter of broad judgement, taking into account the wider transport and climate aims of the Council rather than a purely mathematical analysis on the numbers of positive

or negative responses.

The arguments both for and against the scheme were clearly identified and were considered fully as part of the decision-making process before I made the final decision as set out above.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Major', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chris Major
Director of Place Management

Date: 09/10/24