

CABINET
25 MARCH 2021

NEW TOWN CENTRE PARKING

1. SUMMARY

1.1 This report informs Members of the creation of new parking spaces in Dartford town centre and proposes charging regimes for Mansion House Gardens Car Park (off-street) and Overy Liberty, Market Street and Lowfield Street (on-street) parking.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the delivery of fifty three (53) new parking spaces in Dartford town centre be noted.

2.2 That, subject to completion of a Parking Places Order, the creation of the Mansion House Gardens pay and display car park, be noted and the charges, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be agreed.

2.3 That the parking charges for Overy Liberty, Market Street and Lowfield Street (on-street) parking, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be agreed.

2.4 That the resumption of the charging and enforcement regime for all on-street spaces on 1 April be agreed.

2.5 That the decision to reinstate charges in the Council's car parks be delegated to the Director of Housing and Public Protection, in consultation with the Chairman of Cabinet.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1 The thirty (30) parking spaces located on Market Street behind the Iceland store were removed during the first phase of the town centre regeneration scheme. However, it was always the intention that the scheme would provide replacement parking spaces. The works in Market Street are now largely complete and twenty (20) new on-street parking spaces have been provided on Overy Liberty, Market Street and on Lowfield Street (by the Priory Centre). The Traffic Regulation Order was completed in the Autumn of 2020 but a charging and enforcement regime was not introduced at the time as parking charges across all of the Council's on and off street parking places are currently suspended.

3.2 The Council is the only local authority in Kent to have provided free parking across all parking spaces during the 'lockdown'. Although the ability for residents to park free of charge in the Council's car parks has been helpful as pressure on kerb space in residential streets has increased due to Coronavirus restrictions and people remaining at home, a consequence has been that short stay spaces in the town centre have been taken for long stay parking, leading to complaints that customers are not able to park to use those businesses that are trading.

As restrictions ease and more activity returns to the town centre it is important that these short stay on-street spaces are once again available for shoppers and customers of town centre businesses and banks.

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- 3.3 It is therefore proposed that charging (and consequential enforcement for non-payment or over-stay) for all on-street pay and display parking spaces resume w.e.f. 1 April. This will ensure that a high degree of compliance can be achieved by 12 April when non-essential retail and hospitality is expected to re-open. This will include the newly provided on-street spaces on Overy Liberty, Market Street and Lowfield Street where payment for parking is either by phone using RingGo, or by RingGo Retail Point at the nearest PayPoint store (to be found in Market Street). The proposed parking charges for these new spaces are as set out at Appendix A to the report. This is the same tariff as applies to all other town centre on-street pay and display parking spaces.
- 3.4 Thirty three (33) parking spaces are additionally being provided through the town centre and Acacia regeneration schemes at the new interim Mansion House Garden car park. These off-street parking places will be subject to a Parking Places Order (PPO), rather than a Traffic Regulation Order. The PPO is in progress and will be completed following the usual statutory process.
- 3.5 It is proposed that the parking charges for the Mansion House Garden car park be the same as for the Acacia and Westgate car parks, as set out in Appendix A. Parking will be able to be paid in cash or by payment card at a pay and display machine, or by RingGo pay by phone or RingGo Retail Point. These spaces will shortly be available for use and will be free of charge until the PPO is completed, likely June 2021 when, subject to the position with Coronavirus restrictions, it is expected that charging will resume across all Council car parks.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

The subject of the report contributes to Corporate Plan Strategic Objective **ED 3.** - Improve the economic performance of the Town Centre.

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

Financial Implications	The Council is forgoing income as a result of not charging for parking during the public health emergency. Resumption of charging at the appropriate time will off-set some of these losses.
Legal Implications	None as a result of this report.
Staffing Implications	None
Admin Implications	As set out in the body of the report
Risk Assessment	No identified risks

6. Appendices - Appendix A – Parking Charges for new Town Centre parking spaces.

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<u>Documents consulted</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>File Ref</u>	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Section and Directorate</u>	<u>Exempt Information Category</u>
			Sheri Green Strategic Director (External Services)		N/A

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APPENDIX A

Parking Charges for new Town Centre parking spaces

	£
Mansion House Gardens Car Park	
Monday to Saturday inclusive 8.00am – 8.00pm	
Up to 2 hours	1.00
Up to 4 hours	2.00
Over 4 hours	5.00
Blue Badge holders (up to 3 hours)	Free
Solo Motorcycles (in designated bays)	Free
Release fee	50.00
Overy Liberty, Market Street, Lowfield Street (on-street)	
Monday to Saturday inclusive 8.00am – 8.00pm	
One hour only	0.50
Blue Badge holders (up to one hour)	Free