

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure
DATE	<b>22 January 2013</b>
DIRECTOR	<b>Gordon McIntosh</b>
TITLE OF REPORT	<b>Proposed revisions to on street parking charges for Forresterhill and Garthdee</b>
REPORT NUMBER	<b>EPI / 12 / 280</b>

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the proposed pricing structure for the Forresterhill and Garthdee on street parking zones.
- 1.2 Also to provide the committee with an update on:
- The consultation carried out with the businesses within the Foresterhill Zone
  - The review of the NHS Grampian's new parking scheme recently implemented within the Forresterhill campus.

**2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the committee:
1. note the content of this report and the impact of review of the recently implemented changes at the NHS Grampian's Forresterhill campus.
  2. instruct officers to increase the charges in accordance with Option 1 (see 5.4.1 of the report) and advertise the changes by street notice.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The revised charges would have implications with respect to a reduction in the level of on street parking and the purchase of tickets/vouchers but has been estimated to still generate additional income levels which will support delivery of the Priority Based Budget option EPI\_AMO05 – Increase Parking Charges.

These recommendations have no implications for the capital budget.

### **4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

None

### **5. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES**

#### **5.1 Background**

- 5.1.1 Reference is made to the minute of the Committee of the 15<sup>th</sup> March 2011 wherein the committee requested that a report on the price of parking in the Forresterhill and Garthdee on street zones be presented to a future committee and to include information on the existing prices, financial implications, comparable charges and possible new payments technologies. The Committee report advised that the current parking fee structure did not support the aims of the Transportation Strategy and the sustainable transport initiatives of the Council.

- 5.1.2 This further report was submitted to the Enterprise Planning and Infrastructure committee of 31 January 2012 at which time it was agreed to refer, for discussion, the proposed revised charges for the Forresterhill and Garthdee on street parking zones to the next meeting of the Controlled Parking Areas – Working Party on 3 February 2012.

- 5.1.3 The Working Party on 3/2/2012 resolved to request officers to:
- investigate the level of parking on streets in the vicinity of Forresterhill during the day.
  - Provide further details on the availability of the existing voucher system utilized in the Forresterhill and Garthdee zones and to investigate ways to increase awareness and availability of the vouchers, as well as information on other alternative systems which could be implemented in particular pay by phone.
  - Continue discussions with both NHS Grampian and RGU regarding the proposed new increased pricing structure for on-street parking.

- 5.1.4 The Working Party met once again on 5/4/2012 where it had before it a further report from officers. The Working Party resolved to refer the minute to the E P & I Committee on 31 May 2012.

## 5.2 Previous Decision – E P & I Committee - 31 May 2012

5.2.1 The committee had before it the minute of the Controlled Parking Area Working Party meeting of 5 April 2012, where the recommendations from officers were as follows:

- Note the content of the report and the options that officers had considered.
- Instruct officers to increase charges in a phased manner. Option 1 to be implemented as soon as possible and a further review carried out to raise charges in line with Public Transport costs. This would allow the proposed changes at the Forresterhill campus to be implemented first and the results taken into consideration as part of the review.
- Instruct officers to amend any Traffic Regulation orders were required.

5.2.2 The Working Party had considered the proposals extensively during which officers advised that they had not yet had the opportunity to consult with local businesses on the proposal, however they would now undertake this and report back to a future committee.

5.2.3 The working party resolved: to agree to postpone the increase of on-street parking charges in both Forresterhill and Garthdee Zones until a review of NHS Grampian's new parking scheme has been undertaken and to request officers to report back to committee at this time.

5.2.4 The Enterprise Planning and Infrastructure committee on 31 May 2012 then approved the minute from the Working Party of 5 April 2012.

## 5.3 Current Parking Zones / Charges

5.3.1 The parking zones at Forresterhill and Garthdee were introduced in partnership with the National Health Service (NHS) Grampian/University of Aberdeen and the Robert Gordon University (RGU) respectively. The parking zones were seen to actively support the Green Transport Plans (GTP) implemented by our partners and to protect the residential environment and amenity of the local residential areas.

5.3.2 Through the support of on street parking regimes the GTP for the Forresterhill complex gained a national transport award. The GTP for RGU was recognised nationally as a good practice model particularly in relation to planning objectives for new development.

5.3.3 When introduced in 2002, the cost of on street parking within both zones was balanced against the cost of travel to the hospital and university complexes and in particular travel by public transport. Since the introduction of the parking zones the cost of travel by bus has risen

significantly whilst the on street parking charges have remained static making travel by private car more attractive.

5.3.4 It will be noted that the Transportation Assessments (TA) that were carried out in support of the planning applications and developments at both the Forresterhill and Garthdee sites identified the need for the controlled parking zones to mitigate the impact of the developments. The findings of the TA's supported the subsequent financial commitment by the NHS and RGU to implement the zones.

5.3.5 The current cost of parking within the zones is £1 for up to 2 hours and £2 from 2 hours to 6 hours with the operational hours being 10am to 4pm Monday to Friday. When considering the current cost of travel by public transport and the on street pricing structure across the city, the cost of parking at Forresterhill and Garthdee is considered to be low and does not support its original objectives to reduce car travel by commuters and to discourage long stay parking. Observations by officers indicate that the demand for on street parking by commuters within both zones has increased significantly over time and is confirmed by the number of tickets purchased on a yearly basis. Since the introduction of the zones the number of vouchers sold for Garthdee has increased by a factor of 3.5 with the combined income from voucher and meters for Forresterhill rising by a factor of 2.2.

#### 5.4 Updated Evaluation and Consultation Responses

5.4.1 For clarification Option 1, which was approved, stated that the cost of on street parking within the Forresterhill and Garthdee zones be raised by £0.50 to £1.50 for two hours and £4.50 for all day parking (10.00 – 16.00) This was seen to better reflect the cost of travel by public transport to the sites and would act as a potential disincentive to travel by the private car.

#### 5.5 *On – Street Car Parking Survey (Forresterhill)*

5.5.1 On-Street car parking surveys had been carried out previously in both the am and pm periods around the periphery of the Forresterhill Campus. These surveys identified, as expected, the streets in the immediate vicinity that have high density parking. These locations were also used to identify the locations for the additional pay & display machines and will be used to roll out the additional signage required for the Pay by Phone scheme

5.5.2 With the NHS Grampian's parking scheme implemented, additional on-street car parking surveys were carried out around the periphery of the campus to gauge the effect that the new parking measures have had within the residential streets and to compare with the previous surveys. (see enclosed plans)

- 5.5.3 The surveys confirm the discussions with representatives from NHS Grampian where they have improved short term parking for patients but only by restricting parking for staff and visitors.

The pm surveys clearly show an increase in parking within the neighbouring residential areas from those taken previously. This ties in with the displacement of visitors in the afternoon period, Monday to Friday during the afternoon visiting time from 2.00pm to 4.00pm.

- 5.5.4 The plans indicate the areas where the parking patterns impacted on the surrounding streets both in the am and pm periods.
- 5.5.5 The surveys also indicate where new problematic parking areas are now occurring on the streets just outside the existing zone, generally to the North of the existing zone.

#### 5.6 *Consultation with Businesses (Forresterhill Zone)*

- 5.6.1 In accordance with the instruction from the Controlled Parking Working Group, officers carried out an informal consultation exercise by means of a letter drop to all businesses affected by the proposals within the Forresterhill zone.
- 5.6.2 The consultation letter detailed the proposals to increase the charges along with the options being considered.
- 5.6.3 A response rate of 10% was achieved from the informal consultation. Of the 21 businesses that were consulted only two responded and both were hairdressing businesses. A summary of these responses are as follows:

- One was happy to continue to stock parking vouchers for the benefit of their customers. However the main concern was the effect the proposed increase in charges would have on their staff.
- The other also stocks parking vouchers but has strong objections to the proposed increases and the effect it would have on their businesses.

For the majority of customers travelling by car this may add £4.50 onto their costs given the time required within the salon. Option 2 – the flat rate of £1 per hour would have been their preferred option for any increase.

Concerns were also raised about the effect on staff parking where most staff would be unable to afford the new charges, be forced to walk further raising safety concerns, particularly at night.

## 5.7 *Consultation with NHS Grampian*

5.7.1 Officers consulted further with representatives of NHS Grampian to gauge their views on the impact of the new parking control arrangements that were implemented in July 2012.

5.7.2 The primary issue being addressed by the revised controls related to short term parking for patients attending out patient appointments. Since the implementation they have seen the expected improvements in availability of spaces for patients, but this has only been possible by restricting parking for staff and visitors.

The revised permit arrangements have allowed them to direct permits to staff with the greatest need, taking account of their home to work distance, access to public transport, business travel needs and any special / personal circumstances.

5.7.3 In addition they have also introduced inter-site shuttle bus service and an internal Foresterhill site shuttle service. These services have been popular, but clearly only deal with staff that has regular site travel needs rather than those who do not need to move around during the business day. They have also continued to engage with the bus operators and have had some successes with improved frequencies / timetables, etc.

This work continues and NHS Grampian remains supportive of continuing to develop sustainable travel alternatives.

5.7.4 NHS representatives have indicated that the key challenge with the proposed charging increases relates to their lower paid staff, for whom public transport is not a viable option and where those staff do not meet the criteria to access a parking permit. A permit does not of course guarantee a space at any time.

NHS Grampian remain concerned over the new charging proposals that such an uplift will have a detrimental impact on recruitment and retention of their lower paid staff

## 5.8 *Consultation with RGU.*

5.8.1 Officers consulted further with representatives from RGU to gauge their current views since our previous meeting in March 2012.

5.8.2 The Garthdee campus currently has stringent controls in place to reduce the number of vehicles going to the site. They currently have a car parking permit ratio of 1.4 to every car parking space. Other initiatives being taken forward include staggered start times for lectures and integrating student accommodation within the campus.

- 5.8.3 Previously they had not been averse to option 1, however they considered the alternative option for even higher charges (option 2) would have a detrimental effect on both students and staff. Currently the complaints from both are that buses can't keep to the timetable due to the problems on the bus corridor. Bus fares and parking charges are too high to the point that they may have difficulty in attracting both students and staff, particularly from overseas.
- 5.8.4 RGU would wish to see further improvements to the public transport network and additional bus lanes provided to encourage more bus use before increasing charges.
- 5.8.5 Although they still have concerns about raising the CPZ charges in line with option 2, they would support a phased increase.

## 5.9 **Summary**

- 5.9.1 The review of the new parking control arrangements that have been implemented around the Forresterhill campus, clearly show that improvements have been made to the availability of spaces for patients but this has only been possible by restricting access for staff and visitors.

The revised permit arrangements have allowed them to direct permits to staff with the greatest need. Other measures have been introduced, such as the introduction of an inter-site shuttle bus service and an internal Forresterhill site shuttle service that has proved popular with staff.

- 5.9.2 This in turn has increased the on-street parking outwith the site, particularly in the afternoon period, which coincides with the hospital's afternoon visiting times. Officers have also identified new problematic parking areas that are developing just outside the existing boundaries of the zone.
- 5.9.3 When introduced in 2002, the cost of on street parking within both zones was balanced against the cost of travel to the hospital and university complexes and in particular travel by public transport. Since the introduction of the parking zones the cost of travel by bus has risen significantly whilst the on street parking charges have remained static making travel by private car more attractive.
- 5.9.4 When considering the current cost of travel by public transport and the on street pricing structure across the city, the cost of parking at Forresterhill and Garthdee is considered to be low and does not support its original objectives to reduce car travel by commuters and to discourage long stay parking.

## **6. IMPACT**

- 6.1 The proposed price structure would meet the aspirations of the Transport Strategy and be seen to support sustainable transport and reduce traffic emissions.
- 6.2 The content of the report meets with the local Community Plan objectives to continually improve road safety and maximize accessibility for pedestrians and all modes of transport.

## **7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Report to E P & I Committee of 18 January 2011 – Car parking charges  
Report to Controlled Parking Working Group of 24 February 2011  
Minutes of the EP&I committee of the 15 March 2011.  
Report to EP&I Committee of 31 January 2012.  
Minute of the Controlled Parking Working Group of 3 February 2012.  
Report to the Controlled Parking Area Working Party of 5 April 2012  
Minute of the Controlled Parking Area Working Party of 5 April 2012  
Minute of the E P & I committee of the 31 May 2012

## **8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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## Consultees comments

Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee

**Convener: Councillor Barney Crockett** - email sent 20/12/2013

**Vice Convener: Councillor Ramsay Milne** - email sent 20/12/2013

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### Local Members

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<b>Councillor Fraser Forsyth</b>	email sent 20/12/2013
<b>Councillor Bill Cormie</b>	email sent 20/12/2013
<b>Councillor Jennifer Laing</b>	email sent 20/12/2013
<b>Councillor George Adam</b>	email sent 20/12/2013
<b>Councillor Kirsty Blackman</b>	email sent 20/12/2013
<b>Councillor Lesley Dunbar</b>	email sent 20/12/2013
<b>Councillor Angela Taylor</b>	email sent 20/12/2013
<b>Councillor Gordon Townson</b>	email sent 20/12/2013
<b>Councillor Ian Yuill</b>	email sent 20/12/2013

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### Council Officers

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Barry Jenkins, Head of Finance, – ***has been consulted and requested further information on the income generated.***

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Jane MacEachran, City Solicitor, Continuous Improvement has been consulted

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Ciaran Monaghan, Head of Service, Office of Chief Executive has been consulted

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Gordon McIntosh, Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure has been consulted

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Hugh Murdoch, Head of Service, Shelter and Environment – has been consulted

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Margaret Bochel, Head of Planning & Infrastructure, Strategic Leadership – ***has been consulted and agrees with the recommendations***

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Mike Cheyne, Roads Manager has been consulted

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Neil Carnegie, Community Safety Manager has been consulted

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Dave Young, Account Manager, Service, Design and Development has been consulted

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Laura Watson, Service Co-ordinator

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Mark Masson, Committee Services

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