

<b>Report for:</b>	<b>Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</b> <b>DATE 23 July 2012</b>	<b>Item number</b>	<b>12</b>
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<b>Title:</b>	Post implementation review of the increase to pay and display charges
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<b>Report authorised by :</b>	Lyn Garner, Director of Places and Sustainability
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<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Ann Cunningham
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<b>Ward(s) affected:</b> All	<b>Report for Key/Non Key Decision:</b>
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**1. Describe the issue under consideration**

1.1 The Cabinet agreed on 22nd March 2011 to increase the following Pay and Display charges:

	<b>Low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
Old Charge	£1.00	£1.40	£2.40
New Charge (Post April 2011)	£1.20	£1.90	£3.00

It also agreed following an Economic Impact Assessment, undertaken by the parking service, to move the charge banding in Muswell Hill, Crouch End & Green Lanes from Medium to High.

1.2 This assessment highlighted that the availability of parking spaces was one of motorist's biggest concerns. With limited kerb space and competing demands there was little capacity to increase parking spaces. The aim was to use charging as a traffic management tool to ease parking pressures in those town centres and increase turnover of spaces. This resulted in the charges in these Town Centres increasing from £1.40 to £3.00.





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1.3 The Cabinet agreed to review the impact this had (on achieving those objectives) after 12 months of implementing those new charges.

1.5 This review has now been finalised and this report informs members of Overview and Scrutiny of the findings.

### **2. Cabinet Member Introduction**

2.1 Parking charges were increased in Green Lanes, Crouch End and Muswell Hill to ease parking pressures and improve the turnover of parking spaces in those Town Centres.

2.2 The Council agreed to review the impact this had after 12 months of implementation, and while there was no formal commitment to undertake a further Economic Impact Assessment, Businesses and motorists were encouraged to tell us how they felt about local traffic management issues in regards to sustaining vitality of our town centres. This report sets out the results of the research undertaken.

### **3. Recommendations**

3.1 That members of overview and scrutiny note the results of the post implementation review of the parking charge increase.

### **4. Other options considered**

4.1 It was originally expected that due to resource limitations a desk top review would be relied on. However it was felt that it would be appropriate to extend the scope and offer businesses and pay & display users the opportunity to contribute in a planned manner.

### **5. Background information**

5.1 The review followed a very similar process to that adopted in 2011 when undertaking the Economic Impact Assessment. This involved a total of 750 questionnaires being distributed to businesses in Muswell Hill, Crouch End and Green Lanes. The Green Lanes Traders asked for an additional 300 questionnaires which they distributed within the Green Lanes area. A further 750 were placed on vehicles parked in pay & display bays in those town centres over a period of three weeks ensuring that our target audience was reached.

5.2 The analysis of feedback to questionnaires is available in **Appendix 1**. This includes where possible comparisons with information previously gathered in 2011. The feedback received directly from Businesses is also available in this document.

5.2 The detailed feedback to those questionnaires, with information broken down by Town Centre is also available in **Appendix 2**.

5.3 The key summary issues for consideration are detailed below, which includes the feedback from Businesses and the evidence gathered through the market survey.

### **6.0 Business views**



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The Businesses in each of those town centres feel that parking charges are too high and are damaging the local economy.

- **Green Lanes**

The Green Lanes Traders Association and the Ladder Community Safety Partnership are particularly concerned about the impact that charges are having on the day time economy in their town centre. They report that shops are closing down or relocating, while restaurants are constantly expanding as evening parking is free.

They feel that their town centre is unique in that it is completely surrounded by CPZs, and that they are competing with nearby town centres that have either lower cost off-street parking, or still have uncontrolled free parking available in adjacent streets.

- **Crouch End**

Businesses in Crouch End state that their customers frequently tell them that that they do not come to Crouch End so often anymore the parking charges are too high, particularly when contrasted to the free parking offered by many supermarkets. They also raise concerns about the confusing and ambiguous signage which results in many of them to getting parking tickets because they have inadvertently parked illegally when they thought they were safely parked.

- **Muswell Hill**

Businesses in Muswell Hill report that they have seen a marked decrease in shoppers coming to the area as a direct result of the parking charges. They also feel that the two hour stop and shop scheme does not encourage the kind of shopping Muswell Hill is trying to promote. They feel that Muswell Hill shops not only serve their local community, who they urge to walk to their local shops through initiatives such as our 'Green Is Good' event, but also shoppers from Crouch End, Highgate, and Hampstead and beyond. They feel that those shoppers must either use public transport which is poorly served from the west or drive their cars.

### **6.1 Key issues arising in relation to the response to questionnaires**

6.2 The analysis of responses to questionnaires gives a snap shot of views. This would suggest that that there is still a marked difference in views on how town centres are accessed (when compared to independent research), and would suggest that Businesses overestimate the proportion of visits by private cars and underestimate the number of shoppers walking or cycling to the town centres.

6.3 Likewise while Businesses report under occupancy of parking bays, visitors still rate the availability of parking spaces as one of their biggest concerns. In particular visitors to Crouch End and Muswell Hill are more concerned about the availability of parking spaces than they are about parking charges.



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6.4 The occupancy surveys conducted also suggest that the increase in charge has not resulted in a significant overall reduction in uptake or use of pay & display facilities, but reduced usage to a level where supply can now meet demand.

6.5 The other key summary points from the questionnaires are as follows;

- In general motorists feel that current parking charges in those town centres are too high.
- Many acknowledge the need for parking charges; others feel that short term parking should be free.
- One of motorist's highest priorities is still the availability of parking spaces. In Crouch End and Muswell Hill this outweighed concerns about the level of parking charges.
- A high percentage of motorists still find it too difficult to find a parking space, this averaged at 60% across the three town centres, however the % was higher at 74% in Crouch End
- There is a % increase in those visiting on a daily basis. This may suggest that Traders and businesses are benefiting more from passing trade, and this may represent those on their way to or from work as more parking spaces are freed up.
- There is a decrease in the length of time that drivers are parking for.
- The majority of people visiting our town centres (by car) are local to that area and visit on a regular basis.
- Car use is still seen to be more convenient and as such the charge increase has not deterred motorists from using their cars to visit our town centres.
- While businesses still take the view that increased charges is driving customers away to other shopping centres, the reality of feedback from visitors is that while they do visit other shopping areas, they still visit their local town centre on a regular basis.
- It is clear that ease and distance of travel are significant factors when making choices of shopping destination.
- There is evidence that a significant number of businesses and their employee's drive to work and park on-street, reducing capacity for shoppers. This is likely to influence views on the availability of parking spaces and parking charges.
- There are some suggestions of a 'loyalty scheme' or priority parking for local residents emerging from this recent survey.

**7.0 Pay and display occupancy levels**

The table below indicates average occupancy levels in each of those town centres before and after the charge increase.

Town Centre	average usage (prior to charge increase)	average peak time usage (prior to charge increase)	average Usage ( post charge increase)	average peak time Usage ( post charge increase)
Crouch End	80%	87%	65%	79%
Muswell Hill	90%	90%	72%	79%



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Green Lanes	68%	93%	60%	70%
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*\*The average usage reflects changing occupancy levels at different times of day. The average peak time usage reflects changing occupancy during peak times.*

7.1 Parking occupancy of over 80% indicates high levels of parking pressure or stress, with actual supply either struggling or not meeting the high demand. Occupancy less than 70% is generally felt that supply is likely to be meeting demand. Occupancy of 45% or lower would suggest under usage of those facilities.

7.2 On this basis using the survey data provided, it would suggest that occupancy levels are appropriate in Crouch End, Muswell Hill, and Green Lanes.

7.3 Pay & display charges in neighbouring boroughs

Borough	Lowest charge	Highest charge
Hackney	£1.00	£4.00
Camden	£1.60	£4.90
Islington	£1.20	£4.80

*\*Those boroughs are used for comparisons as they have similar traffic management and parking issue to Haringey.*

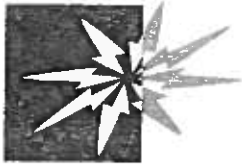
**8.0 Comments of the Chief Financial Officer and Financial Implications**

8.1 The forecasted income from pay & display for 2011/12 was £2,661,000. The table below shows budget estimates for pay & display income in those particular town centres. Whilst Pay and Display income was below budget by £407k, this was offset by additional income in other areas which has enabled a balanced budget position to be achieved in 11/12.

Town Centre	Budget estimate	Actual outturn	Variance
Green Lanes	£455,977	£454,086	-0.41%
Crouch End	£340,408	£343,870	1.02%
Muswell Hill	£419,373	£400,070	-4.60%
Others	£1445,242	£10558,81	-27%
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,661,000</b>	<b>£2,253,907</b>	<b>-15.30%</b>

8.2 However, this is not sustainable longer-term as the shortfall was largely made up by increased income from Penalty Charge Notices due to the decision by London Councils to increase the fixed charge in early 2011 and the Parking income target increases by £430k in the 2012-13 budget due to this change. This will mean a shortfall in P&D income can no longer be offset elsewhere and thus any decision to reduce charges would need a corresponding reduction in the income budget.

**9 Head of Legal Services and Legal Implications**



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- 9.1 The Council has power under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to set and review charges for parking in its area. In doing so it has to have regard to the objectives of the Act "to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway". The Council can vary the charges at designated parking places pursuant to s46A of the 1984 Act. The procedure for amending the charges under that section is set out in the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.
- 9.2 There is no statutory obligation to consult on such changes; however there is a requirement to publish notification of any variation made.
- 9.3 It is also noted that Members must have regard to the Council's obligations under equalities legislation and that an Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out and attached to the Cabinet report of 22 March 2011 to assist in this regard. Members must have regard to these obligations and the EQIA in taking a decision on this proposal. If Members consider that the proposals could have an adverse impact on equality, they should consider whether the adverse impact could be reduced by taking particular measures.

## **10. Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments**

- 10.1 Policy and Equalities Team confirm and make no addition to the comments of the Head of Legal Services in paragraph 9.3 of this report.

## **11. Head of Procurement Comments**

N/A

## **12. Policy Implications**

- 12.1 Current policy is that parking charges should be used to help demand management and charges set at a level that encourages the turnover of parking spaces.

## **13. Use of Appendices**

- Appendix 1 - summary analysis of feedback to Market Survey**
- Appendix 2 - detailed feedback to Market Survey**
- Appendix 3 - Business questionnaire**
- Appendix 4 - Visitors questionnaire**

## **14. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

- Report to Cabinet 9 March 2011.
- Equalities and Economic Impact Assessment 2011

