

Report to: **Executive**  
Date: **30 November 2023**  
Title: **Car Parking Charges – Update**  
Portfolio Area: **Community**  
Wards Affected: **Which Wards – all**  
Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Date next steps can be taken:

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

### **That the Executive:**

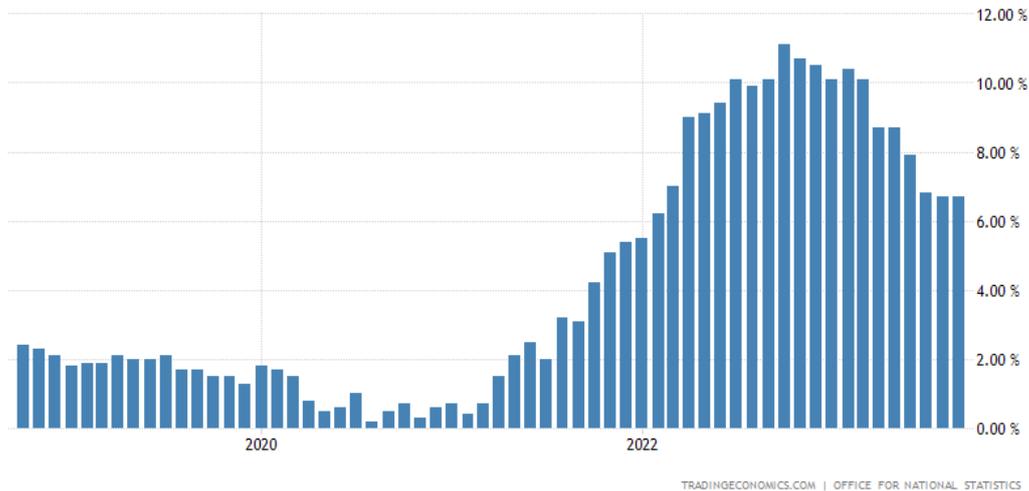
- 1. Continue to hold car parking charges at their current level, as set in 2021; and**
- 2. Agree to implement a change to car parking tariffs at such time as it can be done under a two tier pricing structure that reduces the burden of the change for local residents.**

## **1. Executive summary**

- 1.1. South Hams District Council has kept car parking charges frozen since March 2021. In that time, inflation has increased by 20% and subsequently the cost of running the service has also increased.
- 1.2. The Council is not intending to change the current parking fees until such time as it can implement a two tier parking strategy.
- 1.3. This approach will be used to reduce the uplift in parking fees for residents, where-as non-residents would have to bear the full cost of inflation.
- 1.4. This approach, designed to support our communities, can not be implemented until the 24/25 financial year due to the time needed to design the technical solution, which would be deployed through our cashless payment provider used by the Council.

## 2. Background

- 2.1. Inflation has been running at record levels and remains very high (reference chart below). This has a direct impact on the cost of running Council services, as wages, supplies and utilities all increase at a similar rate.



UK Inflation rate over the last 5 years.

- 2.2. The Council relies on income from parking revenue to cover the cost of the service but also the cost of providing place based services, such as street cleaning, toilets and maintenance.
- 2.3. To ensure it continues to balance its budget, the Council generally needs to uplift its fees to match the additional costs it incurs. However, the Council has not increased parking fees since March 2021.
- 2.4. The Council wishes to implement a future increase in parking charges in such a way as to minimise the impact it has on local residents and is considering a two tier parking solution, that would allow all residents to access a reduced tariff.
- 2.5. This solution would be accessed via the cashless payment parking app which needs to be updated to enable this functionality.
- 2.6. The design of this functionality cannot be undertaken by our cashless payment provider immediately due to other constraints, which means that the Council will target a change to parking tariffs in April 2025.
- 2.7. This freezes car parking charges for a further year, across the whole of the district.

## 3. Next Steps

- 3.1. The Council will work with its cashless payment provider, to deliver the functionality required to facilitate this proposal to the timescales set out in this report.

- 3.2. In the interim and only by exception, where a tariff increase is required for example to meet a particular service need or acute cost issue, any increase will be considered on a site by site basis.

#### 4. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	The Council has power to provide and to regulate off-street car parks under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 set out the procedures to be followed before and after making any order regulating the use of car parks.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	Y	The Council is not intending to change the current parking fees until such time as it can implement a two tier parking strategy.  This approach will be used to reduce the uplift in parking fees for residents, where-as non-residents would have to bear the full cost of inflation.
Risk		
Supporting Corporate Strategy		Council Communities Environment
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact	Y	There are no negative impacts.  There may be small positive impacts with customers considering alternative means of transport or care sharing.
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity		No implications.

Safeguarding		No implications.
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		No implications.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		No implications.
Other implications		None at this stage.

**Supporting Information**

**Appendices:**

None

**Background Papers:**

None