



EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT COVER SHEET

Title of Report:	Parking Review	To be marked with an 'X' by Democratic Services after report has been presented
Meeting of:	Corporate Management Team: November 15 th 2023	X
	Pre Cabinet: November 28 th 2023	X
	Leader's / Leader of the Opposition's Advisory Group: November 30 th and December 6 th 2023	X
	Cabinet: December 18 th 2023	
	Audit Committee/ Scrutiny Regeneration, Development and Market Hall Committee/ Scrutiny Health and Well Being Committee/ Scrutiny Climate Change and Environment Committee / Scrutiny Value for Money Council Committee.	



Is this an Executive Decision:	YES	Is this a Key Decision:	YES
Is this in the Forward Plan:	YES	Is the Report Confidential: If so, please state relevant paragraph from Schedule 12A LGA 1972:	NO []

Essential Signatories:

ALL REPORTS MUST BE IN THE NAME OF A HEAD OF SERVICE

Monitoring Officer: **John Teasdale**

Date Signature

Interim Chief Finance Officer: **Stephen Fitzgerald**

Date Signature

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Cabinet

Date: December 18th 2023

REPORT TITLE: Parking Review
PORTFOLIO: Cllr D Fletcher
HEAD OF SERVICE: Mark Rizk
CONTACT OFFICER: Michael Hovers Ext. No. x1776
WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. East Staffordshire Borough Council (ESBC) operate a number of pay and display car parks across the entirety of the borough. This review seeks to examine the operation of these car parks and the tariff regime that is in place. The report draws on data from the pre-COVID era to illustrate the impact of the pandemic. Operational aspects include machine maintenance and associated infrastructure, conversion rates to app based payments (provided by Pay by Phone- PBP), ticket sales/app purchases and the consequences for the provision of parking, the impact of “free after 3” (FA3) and the structure of the Community & Civil Enforcement team.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. This 2023 review is multi-faceted. Firstly, through examining ticket and app sales, the report examines car park usage. Examination of the subsequent data highlights that sales volumes have declined by 50% since 2017/18. Set against this backdrop is a crowded “market place” with many private sector providers setting favourable tariffs to entice drivers. Information presented in the main body of the report demonstrates not only these charges but also the abundance of private spaces. As a result, it is proposed that car parks (or sections of them) are converted into urban public parks.

- 2.2. Innumerable options exist for the provision of car parking and the charges applied, neither time nor space allows for coverage of every possibility. However, ESBC has to be cognisant of operating costs and the report progresses to make recommendations around a future pricing structure and the operation of parking machines. Research highlights that ESBC are towards the lower end of the tariff scale for a 2 hour stay, when contrasted with Staffordshire, CIPFA similar group and neighbouring authorities. Consequently, a recommendation has been put forward for the 2 hour ticket/app purchase to match the median average (£1.90) of those local authorities covered in the study. Although contrary to the Fees and Charges policy, a below inflation increase will assist residents during the costs of living crisis whilst providing income to cover operational costs. In addition, an increase underlines the Council's ambitions around climate change and active travel. A two year freeze on permit prices is also proposed, with three and six month options to be phased out due to low customer take up.
- 2.3. Parking machines and their operation represent both the highest financial outlay and time consuming element of running a car park. Consequently, it is recommended that parking machines are phased out by 2025 as existing contracts for machine maintenance and cash collection come to an end.
- 2.4. Another element that has impacted income is the FA3 scheme. When launched, initial estimates expected a reduced income from FA3 of £184,000. Given the decline in footfall the estimated loss is now around £83,500. Based on this analysis a proposal to cease FA3 from March 31st 2024 is included.
- 2.5. Finally, the report advocates for a review of the Community & Civil Enforcement service following the evolution of the team and an ever increasing need to address community orientated issues such as fly-tipping. Included as a "foot note" is a short commentary on ANPR.

3. Background

- 3.1. Car parks in East Staffordshire, until 2018, consisted of the traditional pay and display system, with users only being offered coin payment options. In 2018, ESBC introduced contactless payment machines on the three primary car parks (Coopers Square-Burton, Burton Place-Burton, and The Maltings-Uttoxeter). Another technological milestone was reached in 2020 when app-based payments were introduced across all car parks.
- 3.2. Prior to the introduction of contactless machines and app-based payments, the Council launched the "free after 3" scheme, which when reviewed in 2017 appeared to have helped boost the late afternoon/evening economy, but had made little impact on levels of footfall with it merely shifting to later in the day. Footfall data from partners since 2017 is incomplete and COVID pandemic has made interpretation more complex. The 2017 review examined the marketing that had taken place around FA3, the financial impact of the scheme, incorporated stakeholder views, assessed changes to ticket purchasing patterns and contrasted FA3 with other potential free parking options.

3.3. With significant regeneration projects on the horizon for both Uttoxeter and Burton town centres, any review of parking will need to be cognisant of the council's broader strategic intentions for these important locations, and both operational delivery and tariff structures must be sufficiently aligned to meet these aspirations.

4. Contribution to Corporate Priorities

4.1. EEC-23 Review of Car Parking Services

5. Parking Services Review

5.1 Introduction

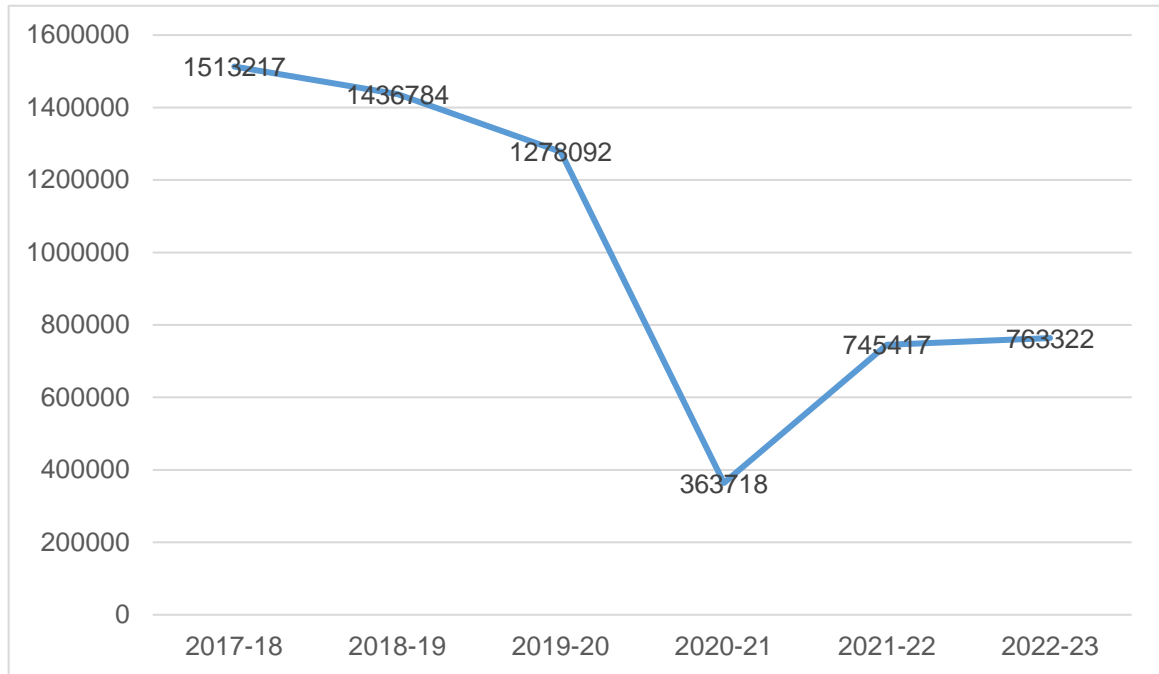
5.1.1 The following report covers various aspects of car parking operations. Firstly, the main body of the report opens with an examination of ticket sales across the past five years. This is set against competitor car park provision within East Staffordshire and a comparison of tariff charges. ESBC charges for a two hour stay are then contrasted with those of Staffordshire authorities, CIPFA similar group and a selection of geographical neighbours. Also contained within this section is commentary on consumer conversion rates to app-based payments and the impact on income associated with the ongoing provision of FA3.

5.1.2 Following the analysis of ticket sales, tariffs and income is an overview of the infrastructure required to successfully run a car park. This includes the present position with parking machines, operational costs and team structures.

5.2 Sales, tariffs and income

5.2.1 Across the past five years since the last parking review town centres and businesses have been hit by a "perfect storm" of tumultuous events (COVID, increasing energy prices and consumer habits further shifting towards internet purchases rather than high street retail to name but three) which have impacted upon footfall, trade and income levels. Long established high street names such as Wilkinson's have not been immune to these powerful forces; as their recent closure has highlighted. These contextual elements place the Council's provision of car parking and the subsequent tariff regime in something of a challenging position. Like businesses of all sizes, car parking has felt the full force of these recent events as the graph below ably demonstrates.

Figure 1 Sales volume (tickets and app-based*) 2017-18 to 2022-23



* app-based payments introduced June 2020

5.2.2 Total sales have shown a marked decline since 2017-18. Clearly the COVID pandemic and subsequent lockdowns exacerbated that reduction in 2020-21, but a downward trend was already in evidence prior to the outbreak- although 22/23 witnessed a small uplift. Total purchases have therefore reduced by 50%. Analysis of the data indicates that the span of reduction is as high as 89% (Bond Street). Whereas, conversely, the Market Place and Meadowside have seen an increase of 2% and 23% respectively. The “big 3” (Coopers Square- 50%, Burton Place- 65% and the Maltings- 69%) are particularly affected by this downturn and have historically made up three quarters of all sales. Although this information does not provide a complete picture, it is indicative of the need to regenerate the town centres by addressing the shift in retail habits towards internet shopping.

5.2.3 The decline in usage presents an interesting conundrum. One option is to do nothing and allow the regeneration of Burton and Uttoxeter town centres to take hold and see numbers swell again. Secondly, the Council could lower tariffs and effectively enter into a price war with our competitor car parks to attract more paying customers. Alternatively, the land could be sold off for development. Whilst this would yield a capital receipt there would be no opportunity to reverse this should visitor numbers increase. Another solution is to convert the land into temporary urban greenspace. Converting these grey landscapes would link into the administrations objectives around climate

change and creating a new green deal for East Staffordshire and have the added benefit of being reversible if required.

5.2.4 Conversion rates to app-based payments have risen to 31% in 2022/23 but average 22% across the three years that this payment method has been in place. This is in line with a predicted 20% conversion rate when the scheme was approved in 2018. However, there are clear variances in the data with Meadowside Leisure Centre, Uttoxeter Leisure Centre and Fleet Street car park showing above the average. Whilst the first two can be attributed to Everyone Active promoting the use of app-based payments, the latter is more difficult to understand. Given the close proximity to Burton & South Derbyshire College, there is a working hypothesis that the car park is utilised by a younger and more consistent user who is familiar and comfortable with technology of this nature. The provider does not capture data demographics making the corroboration of this theory difficult.

5.3 Car parking provision- a borough wide view

5.3.1 ESBC are not the sole operator of car parks within Burton and Uttoxeter and both town centres have a number of competitor car parks providing a significant number of spaces and alternative pricing structures. Subsequently, the report will now examine those competitor car parks and contrasts them with those provided by ESBC. Smaller village car parks such as Duke Street in Tutbury are not included in this review. Although, it should be noted that these out of town locations provide free parking.

Figure 2 ESBC tariff structure v competitor car parks in Burton and Uttoxeter

ESBC	Competitors
<p>Bespoke Free- Fairfield Uttoxeter 80p short stay (up to 30mins) Market Hall</p> <p>Universal £1:40 up to 2 hours £2:40 up to 3 hours £5:00 over 3 hours</p>	<p>Burton Middleway- Free up to 4 hours Sainsbury's- £1 for 2 hours Tesco- Free for 2 hours Octagon - £1 for 2 hours Lidl- Free for 2 hours Halfords- Free for 2 hours St Peters Bridge- All day £3 Green Street- 2 hours £1.00</p> <p>Uttoxeter Tesco – free – no time limit Dovefields- Free – no time limit Waitrose- free for 2 hours, no return in 2 hours Lidl- Free for 1 1/2 hours Asda/Carter's Square- £1 for 2 hours, 2 hour max stay</p>

5.3.2 As can be seen above, the “market place” for attracting parking customers is an extremely competitive arena. Stand-out examples are the provision of four hours free parking at Middleway in Burton and similar arrangements at the Dovefields site and the Tesco supermarket in Uttoxeter. In isolation, an examination of parking tariffs does not provide a full picture of the scale of competition. Car park capacity numbers help to illustrate the breadth of customer choice.

Figure 3- Car park spaces provision. ESBC v Competitors

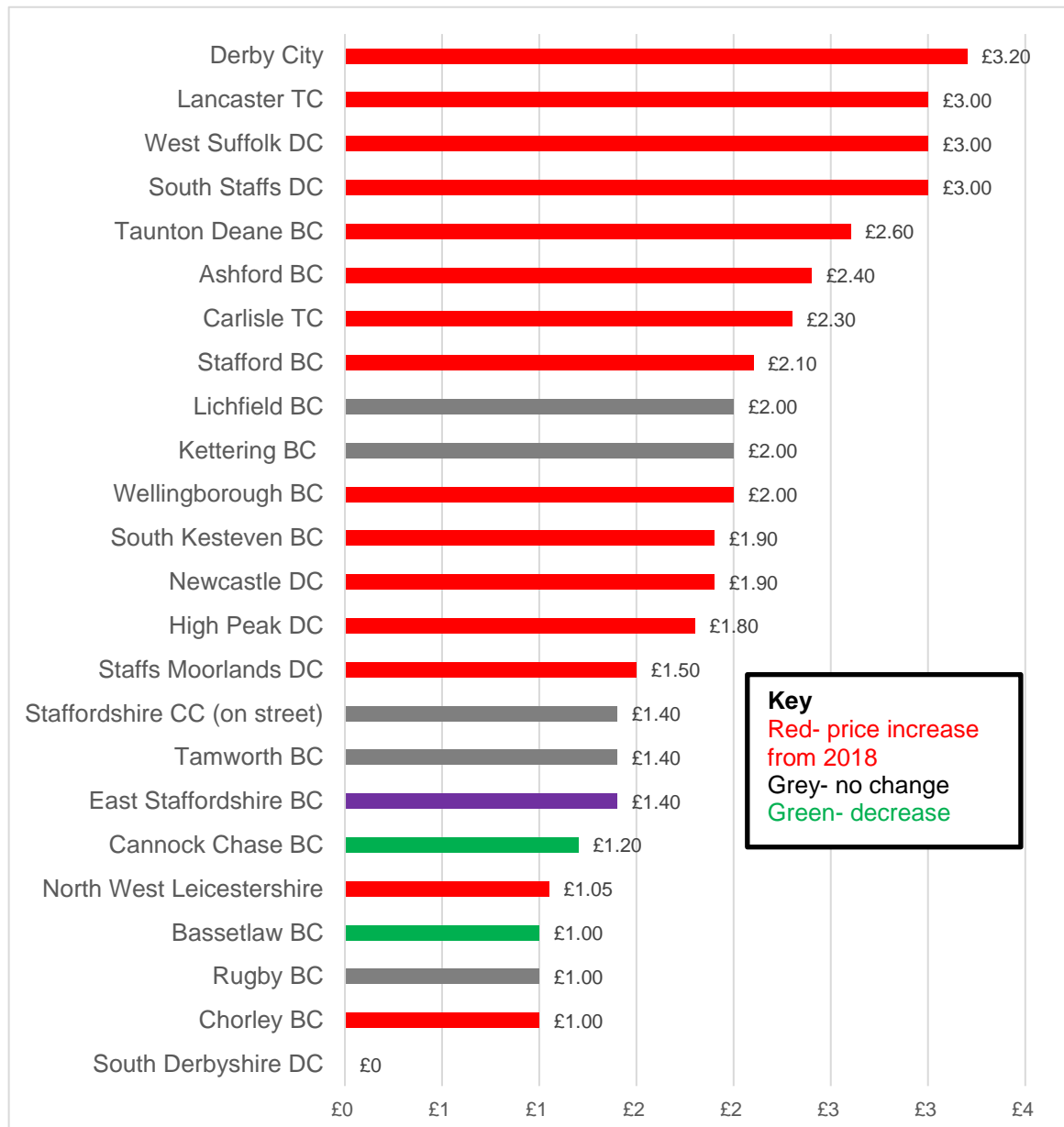
ESBC	Competitors
Burton Bond Street- 103 Burton Library- 79 Burton Place- 351 Coopers Square- 559 Fleet Street- 132 Market Place- 9 Meadowside LC- 179 Total 1412 Uttoxeter Uttoxeter LC- 78 The Maltings- 257 Trinity Road- 113 Total 448	Burton Middleway- 790 Sainsbury's- 370 Tesco- 280 Lidl- 150 Halfords- 194 St Peters Bridge- 300 Green Street- 300 Total 3084 Uttoxeter Tesco- 372 Dovefield- 400 Lidl – 100 Asda/Carter's Square- 250 Waitrose- 80 Total 1202
Total 1,860	Total 4,286

5.3.3 Across both Burton and Uttoxeter the ratio of ESBC spaces to competitor provision is 1:2.64 and 1:2.30 respectively. Therefore, given the large number of competitor spaces and the aforementioned decline in sales there is scope to revisit both the tariff structure and the use of land associated with car parking. However, any tariff structure will also have to ensure that the Council's operating costs are covered. Subsequently, the reports attention turns to comparing the ESBC two hour tariff with that of our fellow Staffordshire authorities, CIPFA most similar group and some nearest geographical neighbours.

5.4 ESBC price structure v Staffordshire, CIPFA and nearest geographical neighbours

5.4.1 The table below illustrates the variety of charges applied by differing councils. Where authorities implement a varied tariff for car parks of different sizes and locations, the price comparison has been drawn with larger sized car parks.

Figure 4: Price comparisons for up to 2 hours of parking by local authorities



5.4.2 Comparable data from the 2019 parking review suggests that only 8 local authorities have not increased parking charges. Locally available information has highlighted that Lichfield DC are considering an increase to £3.50 for 2 hours. Notwithstanding this, the cohort of authorities offering universal free parking has shrunk. Despite the 2019 increase from £1.00 to £1.40 for two hours, ESBC continue to offer good value for money when considered alongside others. Operationally, to achieve maximum benefit from parking provision two elements need to be taken into consideration. Firstly, that customers are provided with sufficient dwell time in order to encourage

them to visit more businesses. Secondly, that a consistent and regular “churn” or turnover of spaces takes place. Innumerable options exist for potential tariff structures and striking this balance along with covering costs, supporting the needs of local businesses and being competitive can be a complex undertaking. This is intensified by the present operational context that has seen a 50% reduction in ticket sales. Consequently, four options are presented:

- Do nothing
- Reduce the tariff regime back to the pre-2019 position e.g. £1.00 for 2 hours etc.
- Increase the 2 hour tariff to the median price average derived from Figure 4 (e.g. £1.90) with other higher tariffs following in line
- Increase all tariffs by inflation across the five year time span since the last parking review and to cover the next cycle.

5.5 Options Appraisal

5.5.1 Set out below are a series of potential options for the ESBC parking tariff structure. Of these options, only option four is compliant with the Council’s Fee & Charges Policy. This section also concludes with commentary on permits.

Option 1- Do nothing

5.5.2 Previous commentary has highlighted the reduction in ticket/app sale volumes since 2017/18. The figures presented over the forthcoming paragraphs are calculated using 22/23 figures as a base. Consequently, should Cabinet decide to leave the existing tariff in place (set out below in Figure 5) an income performance of £908,615 can be expected

Figure 5- Current tariff structure (excluding Burton Market Hall and Fairfield, Uttoxeter)

Length of stay	Tariff
Up to 2 hours	£1.40
Up to 3 hours	£2.40
Over 3 hours	£5.00

Option 2- Reduce the tariff to the pre-2019 level

5.5.3 This report has analysed sales data across the past five years in which there has been a steady decline in income. Many factors could be attributed to this decline but it is clear that ESBC operate parking services in an incredibly competitive local environment. Therefore, one option may be to lower those tariff rates back to 2017/18 levels (see Figure 6 below) to rejuvenate footfall on ESBC car parks. However, such a move could see annual income drop by £178,629. In reality this figure may be lower if the price reduction encourages drivers to make ESBC car parks their first choice.

Figure 6- Reduce the tariff regime back to the pre-2019 figures

Length of stay	Tariff
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Up to 2 hours	£1.00
Up to 3 hours	£2.00
Over 3 hours	£5.00

Option 3- Increase the parking tariff to the median average price derived from Figure 4

5.5.4 When contrasted against other local authority tariff charges ESBC have been shown to be very competitive. Adding complexity to this equation is the fact that local private providers offer a high number of spaces at economical prices. Figure 4 clearly demonstrates that local authorities are not averse to increasing car parking charges. There are many social, economic, political and environmental reasons that will have influenced the decisions made by these Councils. Therefore, given the reasonably low tariff when compared with this cohort- and the trend towards increased parking charges- an option exists to raise the 2 hour charge to the median (£1.90) of this group. Introducing such a tariff would also be below the predicted rate of inflation which would benefit residents struggling with the cost of living crisis whilst also helping to cover the operational running costs of the service. Furthermore, the increase underlines the Council’s commitment to climate change and active travel. Such a move would be contrary to the Fees & Charges Policy and would subsequently generate an estimated additional income of £267,245.

Figure 7- Increase the 2 hour tariff to the median price average derived from Figure 4 (e.g. £1.90)

Length of stay	Tariff
Up to 2 hours	£1.90
Up to 3 hours	£2.90
Over 3 hours	£6.00

Option 4- Increase the tariff structure in line with the ESBC Fees & Charges Policy

5.5.5 Unprecedented levels of inflation has seen the costs of services and materials rise exponentially. Car parking- like all Council services- is not immune to these economic pressures. Therefore, the final option recommends increasing the minimum two hour price to £2.00. This new figure would address inflation costs across the previous five years and provide a degree of “future proofing” against any further inflationary increases in the next five yearly cycle. Income is calculated to grow by £363,990 if this pricing structure was adopted. This option is in line with the Fees & Charging Policy.

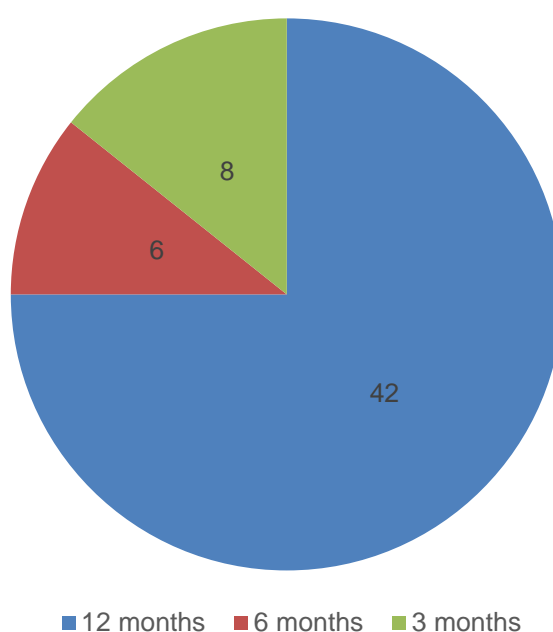
Figure 8- Increase all tariffs by inflation across the five year time span since the last parking review and to cover cycle

Length of stay	Tariff
Up to 2 hours	£2.00
Up to 3 hours	£3.40
Over 3 hours	£7.00

Permits

5.5.6 ESBC provide a facility for regular car park users to purchase permits. These permits can be brought in three, six or twelve monthly time lengths. A standard price is applied across all car parks with a three month permit at £200, a six month sat at £350 and an annual one just £575. Considering that parking all year round could cost £1,825 (365x £5), then these offer incredible value for money. However, the take up rate is low with only 56 permits sold (28 paid in full/28 via standing order). Total annual income from permits is £27,850. When examining the types of permits purchased there is a clear favourite amongst members of the public.

Figure 9- Permit sales by time period



Consequently, based on the limited sales of three and six monthly permits it is recommended that these are phased out from April 1st 2024. Although this may reduce annual income by £3,700, it is anticipated that these users will revert to purchasing tickets each day or convert to a 12 monthly permit. However, as an alternative, and as a two year pilot scheme, a monthly permit at £100 is proposed. Introducing the pilot would enable the Council to monitor take up and decide if the scheme should become permanent. Furthermore, as permit sales remain low it is recommended that these prices are frozen for 24 months.

5.6 Free After 3- impact

5.6.1 Free after 3 (FA3) came into existence at the end of 2015 with the stated objective of supporting the public, shops and restaurants in Burton and Uttoxeter. Underpinning the objective were five principles:

- Affordability for the Council
- Increase footfall
- Provide a stronger economic performance
- Provide a boost to retailers
- Bridge the gap between the day time and evening economy

5.6.2 Initial estimates at that time placed the annual loss to the Council at £184,000. A subsequent review in 2017 had that figure at nearer £167,000. Although the Council had experienced significant income losses, consultation with local businesses and the public highlighted greater use of car parks since FA3 had been launched. With the passage of time it is difficult to provide an accurate estimate as to the ongoing income losses created by FA3. However, by applying a 50% reduction (as per ticket/app-based sales) the present annual income loss is around £83,500.

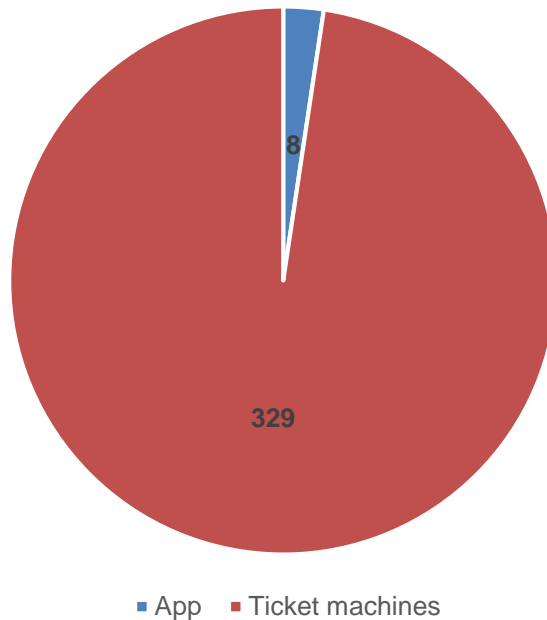
5.6.3 Due to the unique economic and trading circumstances for town centres, finding measurable information that support the benefits of FA3 is problematic. Indeed, the 2017 review was largely inconclusive on the achievements of the five principles with many different contextual factors influencing footfall, economic performance, retail performance and bridging the gap between day-time and evening economies.

5.7 Operations

Parking Machines

5.7.1 Central to car parking operations are the running and upkeep of 31 parking machines. Historically, car parking machines only took cash payments. With the advancement of technology these machines now accept card and contactless payments. As previously highlighted, this equipment has also been augmented by the introduction of app-based payments. Payments via app have the added advantage of having a smaller supporting infrastructure, are less costly to run and have indirect benefits towards climate change. Conversely, many residents are still uncomfortable with using digital technology. Although it should be pointed out that PBP offer a choice of payment methods- such as via a phone call. Since the inception of app-based payments the number of faults and outages has been in sharp contrast.

Figure 10 App-based outages and faults v ticket machines



- 5.7.2 Faults or outages have the potential to negatively impact upon customer service levels with customers becoming disgruntled that a machine is out of order. Fortunately, with the presence of app-based payments, a viable alternative is available should the mechanical machine be out of order. Furthermore, these events lead to a consumption of officer time with the fault having to be investigated and an engineer called. App-based outages can be tackled remotely by the provider.
- 5.7.3 The abundance of machine faults can be partially attributed to the age of the parking machines. Presently, of 31 machines, 14 are obsolete Aura or Accent versions to which spares are no longer produced. To keep these machines running the parking team have been using parts from the 16 old machines removed in 2018 from Coopers Square, Burton Place and the Maltings. Clearly, this supply line is finite. When the sixteen Metric Elite machines were installed in 2018 a capital outlay of £87,040 was required. Given recent inflation levels, a significantly higher figure can be expected should Cabinet decide to upgrade the remaining machines. However, such decision would need to be set against a back drop of 50% reduction in car park usage.
- 5.7.4 Servicing and repairs to these machines takes place via a maintenance agreement with the manufacturer Metric. The present contract runs until March 31st 2025 and has a core cost of £550 per machine and covers parts and labour associated with “fair” wear and tear. However, spend analysis over the past five years illustrates that ESBC have spent an average of £29,875 per annum on machine repairs. There are also other associated

costs with running the machines. Cash collection is also required, spend on collecting cash averages £43,187 over the same time span. However, it should be noted that COVID has skewed this figure with significantly less collections taking place in 20/21. Discounting 20/21 sees the average figure leap to £46,775. The current cash collection contract is set to expire in June 2025, with an option of a two year extension. Further costs are experienced with the production of tickets with average costs sitting at £4,783. Consequently, costs associated with operating parking machines are at a minimum of £96,981 per annum as other elements such as card processing payments and electricity costs will see this figure rise even further. PBP operating costs in 22/23 totalled £6,487.36 and relate to processing card payments. A figure that could be reduced if ESBC decided to pass these charges onto the customer- a not uncommon practice for local authority parking services.

- 5.7.5 Based on the information presented above it is clear that operating parking machines is an expensive undertaking. Adding to this are less measurable climate change factors such a pollution and/or congestion from cash collection vehicles, electricity usage and the consumption of paper for tickets. Anecdotal evidence from other local authorities suggests that there is a push to move customers away from cash and toward digital app-based payments. Such a move presents certain difficulties to residents/visitors that are less au fait or comfortable with using digital technology. Equally, digital transactions are becoming more and more prevalent with residents becoming increasingly familiar with the use of smart phones etc.

Other operational elements

- 5.7.6 Open Spaces are responsible for the hard and soft landscaping that is present on car parks. Surface repairs, line marking, hedge/tree maintenance, height barriers are all aspects that are addressed by the team. Consequently, the team conduct quarterly inspections of car parks with any urgent issues identified by the parking team. Longer-term repairs or maintenance items are highlighted as part of the building/car park surveys schedule undertaken by the Facilities Team.

5.8 Conclusion

- 5.8.1 Previous sections have illustrated the complexities related to the delivery of car park operations and how these marry with the Council's wider strategic objectives. Subsequently, these concluding paragraphs seeks to draw out a series of recommendations

Decline in ticket sales and use of Council land

- 5.8.2 ESBC car parks have experienced a steady decline in the number of transactions that take place, suggesting a reduced footfall and/or an uncompetitive tariff structure. Of these, the former could be indicative of a consumer shift as town centre retail gradually becomes overtaken by online purchases. Whereas the latter poses the question as to whether the Council needs (or wants) to be competitive- particularly as "active travel" is becoming more prominent across towns and cities in the UK. Figures 2 and 3

demonstrate the breadth of private parking provision and tariff structures. Conversely, figure 4 illustrates how ESBC compares well to other local authorities. Adding further complexities to this equation are the Council's stated tourism ambitions. Should these projects realise their potential, then footfall is likely to increase and sufficient parking spaces will be required. Therefore, it is proposed that sections of car parks are converted into temporary urban green space to add greenery to the predominantly grey landscape. Such a move will see the Council retain ownership of the land and give scope for conversion back to car parking should visitor/footfall numbers evidence a returning need. Furthermore, "greening" these unused spaces contributes towards the Council's climate change objectives. This would be done on a case by case basis with the proposed Maltings EV charging point installation being used as test pilot. Calculating costs and designing these proposed features would become a corporate target for the Open Spaces team in 24/25.

Tariff structure and permits

- 5.8.3 The report has presented four diverse options for the future charging structure on ESBC car parks. As already outlined, only Option 4 truly adheres to the Fees & Charges Policy. However, Option 3 is presented for consideration. Furthermore, the report has demonstrated a relatively low take up on parking permits. Sales have been particularly poor for three and six month versions. Therefore, the recommendation is that the three and six month options cease from April 1st 2024. In addition, that 12 month permit prices are frozen at their present value of £575 for the next twenty four months and reviewed again 2025. A promotional campaign is suggested to publicise the availability of this option.

Free After 3

- 5.8.4 Evidence for the success of FA3 is largely inconclusive due to its non-existence and has seen the Council miss out on income. Consequently, it is recommended that FA3 ends from March 31st 2024.

Parking machines

- 5.8.5 Operating traditional car parking machines has been shown to be something of an expensive and time-consuming exercise. However, many residents/visitors still feel comfortable using them. Further complexities occur with the age of some machines and the need to source replacements and that contracts are linked to servicing and cash collection. However, consumer familiarity with digital technology is increasing and contactless payment now common. Therefore, against this back-drop it is proposed that, subject to a consultation following the Gunning principles, ESBC phase out parking machines through to the expiry date of the current cash collection contract (June 2025). A gradual phased removal of machines will allow consumers to adjust to the change and enable ESBC to conduct a focused marketing campaign to inform resident/visitors. Phasing out machines will also free up officer time to focus on other duties. Costs linked to card processing payments would also be passed on to the customer from this date. In addition, given the removal of this financial overhead it is recommended that the tariff charge is reviewed again in 2025 post-machine phasing out.

5.9 Staffing considerations & ANPR

5.9.1 Day-to-day car park operations are overseen by the Community & Civil Enforcement team. The team consists of an office-based Team Leader, two part-time supervisors (34 hours per week), 4 full-time officers and two part-time officers and came into existence when ESBC had responsibility for on-street parking. This service is unique in that it blends both community and civil enforcement. Combining these elements came about to maximise synergies between the then Neighbourhood Warden, Park Ranger and Civil Enforcement service. Synergies that have since evaporated with Staffs CC taking back on street parking. That uniqueness has become something of a double edged sword with the team dealing with a number of high profile and important issues. Consequently as well as parking, the teams work encompasses fly-tipping, littering, dog-fouling, abandoned vehicles, bins on street, and the enforcement of public space protection orders. Given the circumstances expressed above there is potential scope to consider the separation of community and civil enforcement duties. However, such a move would require a more detailed review which is beyond the scope of this report. Therefore, it is proposed that a review of Community & Civil Enforcement staffing structures is taken forward as a corporate target in 24/25

5.9.2 ANPR (automatic number plate recognition) has been presented as a method of managing income and enforcement on car parks. Recent legislation (the Civil Enforcement of Road Traffic Contraventions (approved Devices, Charging Guidelines and General Provisions) (England) Regulations 2022 confirmed that ANPR can be used as enforcement tool on the proviso that a device is both authorised and approved. Whereas the income and enforcement aspects are true, there are various other considerations to take into account. ANPR requires and considerable amount of mechanical infrastructure to be operable. As can be seen with both parking machines and CCTV this infrastructure comes with a limited life, maintenance contracts and operating costs. Conversely, ANPR reduces (but does not eliminate) the need for human intervention. Having that human aspect in the shape of a “traditional” parking service rather than ANPR also creates jobs for local people who are then not supplanted by machinery or technology. Finally, as none of ESBC car parks have been designed with ANPR in mind, there may be a requirement to undertake civil works. Should Cabinet wish to examine ANPR further, it is proposed that a full study is commissioned in 24/25 on the feasibility of ANPR in ESBC car parks alongside the future role of CCEOs.

6. Financial Considerations

6.1 The 2023/24 car park budget is summarised below:

Revenue		2023/24
		£ Budget
Premises-Related Expenditure		304,051
Supplies & Services		149,762
Income		(975,966)

Revenue			2023/24
Off Street Parking Total			(522,153)

6.2 As can be seen from the table above, the 2023/2024 budgeted car park income is £975,966. This budget was a reduction compared to the 2022/23 budget. Actual car parking income in 2022/23 was significantly lower than the 2022/23 budget and this was identified in Outturn forecasts around the time that the 2023/24 budget was set.

Tariff Options

6.3 The report sets out in detail the tariff options at the Council's car parks for the 24/25 financial year. As such, the tariff option will impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2024/25 and future years. For clarity, the tariff options proposed in this report are also summarised below:

- Option 1: Current tariff (£1.40 for 1 hour, £2.40 for 1 to 3 hours, £5.00 for over 3 hours)
- Option 2: Reduction in tariffs (£1.00, £2.00, £5.00)
- Option 3: Increase tariffs based on comparator information (£1.90, £2.90, £6.00)
- Option 4: Increase tariffs in accordance with ESBC fees & charges policy (£2.00, £3.40, £7.00)

6.4 The impact of the tariff options will be considered in the context of the 2023/24 car park income budget. Parts of this income budget are not impacted by the tariff options: the Market Place car park is not considered within this report; season ticket income and fares will also not be impacted by the tariff choice.

6.5 The impact of the tariff options have been modelled using equivalent 2022/23 actual income. The actual 2022/23 equivalent income is slightly higher than the 2023/24 budget (which is based on the forecasted 22/23 outturn rather than the actual outturn due to the timing of the budget process). An analysis reconciling between relevant portions of the 2023/24 budget and equivalent actual 2022/23 income is shown below:

Revenue			£
2023/24 Car Park Income budget			(975,966)
Less season tickets & other fares			82,304
Less Market Place ticket income			19,122
2023/24 budget: other ticket income			(874,540)
Additional equivalent 2022/23 income			(34,075)
2022/23 actual equivalent ticket income			(908,615)

6.6 The key issue in modelling the impact of the tariff options is demand, which is uncertain. To match against the 2022/23 equivalent ticket income, the alternative options have scope for the following demand changes:

- Option 2 (which reduces tariffs), would equal option 1 (no tariff change) if there is a 24.5% demand increase.
- Option 3 (which increases tariffs) would equal option 1 income, if demand fell off by 22.7%.
- Option 4 (which further increases tariffs) would still match option 1 income, if demand fell off by 28.6%.

6.7 The modelling assumes that the mix of ticket types stays the same. The modelling also shows overall income in the scenario that the demand levels for all the options is the same as for 2022/23.

Revenue		
		£
2022/23 actual equivalent ticket income		(908,615)
Option 1: Reduction/(Increase) Income		0
Option 2 : Reduction/(Increase) Income		178,629
Option 3: Reduction/(Increase) Income		(267,245)
Option 4: Reduction/(Increase) Increase		(363,990)

6.8 Overall, the impact on overall income will depend on the interaction between demand levels and tariffs options. The working assumption based on the judgement of officers has been that there will be no demand impact if option 3 is chosen. However in introducing the tariff changes there will be an additional £10,000 one-off set-up cost in 2024/25. The overall impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is summarised in the table below:

Revenue	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	£	£	£
Option 3 Tariff	(267,245)	(267,245)	(267,245)
On-off set up costs	10,000	0	0
Total	(257,245)	(267,245)	(267,245)

Machine phase out

6.9 The proposal to replace car parking machines with a payment app and telephone service assumes that customers will transition without significant impacts on demand levels.

6.10 Incorporating these assumptions, there will be a saving in the Medium Term Financial Strategy from 2026/27 onwards. The phase out would be

implemented part way through the 2026/27 year, so the impact in this year will be £50,150 and the full year effect of £60,204 will arise in 2027/28. These savings would take effect within the supplies and services elements of the car parking budget. They are summarised in the table below:

Recommendation 13.5	2024-25-2025-2026	2026/2027	2027/2028
	£	£	£
Machine Maintenance	0	(22,500)	(27,000)
Paper tickets	0	(3,333)	(4,000)
Cash collection	0	(41,667)	(50,000)
Additional costs for App	0	17,330	20,796
Total	0	(50,170)	(60,204)

6.11 The estimated impact on the MTFs from ending the FA3 scheme will be £83,500 from 2024/25 onwards, summarised below:

Revenue	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	£	£	£
End of FA3 scheme	(83,500)	(83,500)	(83,500)

Conclusion

6.12 Overall, if tariff option 3 is chosen (recommendation 13.2), the parking machines (13.4) and FA3 phased out (13.5), the impacts on the MTFs can be summarised as below:

Revenue	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£	£		£
Option 3 Tariff	(257,245)	(267,245)	(267,245)	(267,245)
Car Parking machine phase out			(50,170)	(60,204)
End of FA3 scheme	(83,500)	(83,500)	(83,500)	(83,500)
Total	(340,745)	(350,745)	(400,915)	(410,949)

- 6.13 The changes to the MTFs summarised above will change depending on the results of any proposed pilot.

7. Risk Assessment and Management

- 7.1. The main risks to this Report and the Council achieving its objectives are as follows:

7.2. **Positive** (Opportunities/Benefits):

7.2.1. Proposals for the conversion of car parks to green spaces supports the Council's climate change agenda whilst retaining ownership and providing scope for changing back to car parking.

7.2.2. Phasing out parking machines will also contribute to the Council's climate change objectives.

7.2.3. Tariff structure revision to cover Council operating costs.

7.2.3 Reduction in cost base as a result of phasing out parking machines

7.2.4 Ceasing FA3 is likely to raise income levels

7.2.5 ESBC charging structure is competitive when compared with neighbouring and similar authorities.

7.2.6 With the phasing out of parking machines, there is a time saving for staff that can be invested in other duties.

7.3. **Negative** (Threats):

7.3.1. Phasing out of parking machines may present difficulties for users who are more comfortable with traditional machines.

7.3.2. The downturn in car parking spaces may only be a temporary post-COVID slump.

- 7.4. The risks do not need to be entered in the Risk Register. Any financial implications to mitigate against these risks are considered above.

8. Legal Considerations

*This section has been approved by the following member of the Legal Team:
[John Teasdale]*

- 8.1. The main legal issues arising from this Report are as follows:

- 8.2. Under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, any changes to car parking charges will require an amendment to the relevant Traffic Regulation Order and this amendment will need to be advertised 21 days before the variation

comes into force. Any objections and observations will need to be formally considered and reported.

- 8.3. If any of changes to the relevant Traffic Regulation Order go beyond tariffs, then a new regulation order may need to be created.
- 8.4. Before making any new Order the Council will need to consult the public and statutory consultees, give public notice of any changes, and seek Member approval.
- 8.5. Similarly, a new Order will be required to install any ANPR cameras, and any such cameras will need to be approved devices, and authorised.
- 8.6. The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 specifies the procedure to be followed in each instance.

9. Equalities and Health

- 9.1. **Equality impacts:** The subject of this Report is not a policy, strategy, function or service that is new or being revised. An equality and health impact assessment is not required.
- 9.2. **Health impacts:** The outcome of the health screening question does not require a full Health Impact Assessment to be completed. An equality and health impact assessment is not required.

10. Data Protection Implications – Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)

- 10.1. A DPIA must be completed where there are plans to:
 - use systematic and extensive profiling with significant effects;
 - process special category or criminal offence data on a large scale; or
 - systematically monitor publicly accessible places on a large scale
 - use new technologies;
 - use profiling or special category data to decide on access to services;
 - profile individuals on a large scale;
 - process biometric data;
 - process genetic data;
 - match data or combine datasets from different sources;
 - collect personal data from a source other than the individual without providing them with a privacy notice ('invisible processing');
 - track individuals' location or behaviour;
 - profile children or target marketing or online services at them; or
 - process data that might endanger the individual's physical health or safety in the event of a security breach
- 10.2 Following consideration of the above, there are no Data Protection implications arising from this report which would require a DPIA.

11. **Human Rights**

11.1. There are no Human Rights issues arising from this Report

12. **Sustainability** (including climate change and change adaptation measures)

12.1. Does the proposal result in an overall positive effect in terms of sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures) Yes/No or N/A

12.2. Please detail any positive/negative aspects:

Positive (Opportunities/Benefits)

- Phasing out parking machines would reduce electricity usage, eradicate paper tickets, and reduce emissions as cash collection vehicles would not be required and/or make a contribution to easing congestion for the same reason.
- Greening specific areas of our car parks will have a positive impact of air quality by reducing the number of vehicles and the impact of carbon capture.

Negative

- Encouraging/increasing the levels of car parking within our town centres will have a negative impact on air quality (from internal combustion engine vehicles)

13. **Recommendation(s)**

13.1. On a case by case basis, under used parking spaces are converted into temporary urban parks. In addition, the proposed EV charging point installation at the Maltings, Uttoxeter is used as a test pilot example.

13.2. Option 3 is implemented for the parking tariff from April 1st 2024 because it offers a below inflation price rise which should support residents in parking in ESBC car parks.

13.3 Three and six month options cease from April 1st 2024 and that 12 month permit prices are frozen at their present value of £575 for the next twenty four months and reviewed again in 2025. In addition, a two year pilot (reviewed after 12 months) of a one month permit is introduced.

13.4 FA3 to cease from March 31st 2024 as there is limited evidence to understand its worth.

13.5 To consult with residents on the potential phasing out of parking machines and cash payments in Council car parks, with an appropriate 'lead in' time should this option be selected.

13.6 The Community and Civil Enforcement structure and ANPR be the subject of a detailed review in 2024/25, subject to consultation with staff.