

PRESS RELEASE

Car Parking Charge increases under review

April 2019: Proposed increases in town centre parking charges are being reconsidered – thanks largely to Northampton town centre Business Improvement District (BID).

Following a BID meeting, at which a broad range of town centre businesses and organisations gathered to directly challenge councillors and their decision-making process, the BID pulled a small working group together.

This group met earlier this month and, working with council officers and the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), suggested alternative options and pushing for a simpler charging structure.

Rob Purdie, Executive Director of the BID, said: “We had a full and frank exchange of ideas and are delighted to say that alternatives we proposed are now being considered.

“While businesses were vocal in their request for parking charges NOT to be increased, the council has told us it would have to find more than £665,000 additional income if it did that. So, we worked closely with the council to propose alternatives that met their budget, while also meeting business needs. We were particularly determined for a simpler charging structure, with as much free car parking as possible to incentivise visitors to stay longer in the town centre.

“Businesses felt while having two hours free parking was a huge positive, it was misleading as anyone staying a minute longer, up to three hours, is currently charged £2.40. Businesses told us that customers regularly stop shopping to rush off and get the free parking and avoid the huge hike in price for anything over two hours.

“The new proposal is to charge £1 per hour, a far simpler structure, but to take away the two hours free parking. While we would retain an element of free parking, there is a consensus that if we have to charge then this is a simpler structure and does not encourage shoppers to cut their visit into the town centre short.”

The new proposal retains a higher day-rate charge for drivers who wish to park all day within the inner ring road, to encourage people working in the town centre to keep those spaces clear for shoppers. To help with this, car parks outside the inner ring road, such as St Michaels, would be charged at the reduced day-rate of £6

Here are the new proposals:

Surface car parks Monday-Saturday	Existing charges	Initial proposal	Revised proposal	
1 hour	£ 0.60	£ 2.00	£ 1.00	
2 hours	£ 1.20	£ 2.00	£ 2.00	
3 hours	£ 2.40	£ 4.00	£ 3.00	
4 hours	£ 3.20	£ 4.00	£ 4.00	
5 hours	£ 4.00	£ 4.00	£ 5.00	
All day	£ 8.00	£ 8.00	See below*	
Evening	£ 1.00	£ 3.00	£ 2.00	
Overnight	£ 2.50	£ 3.00	£ 2.00	
Sundays	£ 2.00	£ 2.00	Free	
Multi-storey car parks Monday- Friday	Existing charges	Initial proposal	Revised proposal	Revised proposal - Saturday only
1 hour	Free	Free	£ 1.00	Free
2 hours	Free	Free	£ 2.00	Free
3 hours	£ 2.40	£ 4.00	£ 3.00	£ 1.00
4 hours	£ 3.20	£ 4.00	£ 4.00	£ 2.00
5 hours	£ 4.00	£ 4.00	£ 5.00	£ 3.00
All day	£ 8.00	£ 8.00	See below*	See below*
Evening	£ 1.00	£ 3.00	£ 2.00	£ 2.00
Saturdays	£ 2.00	£ 2.00		
Sundays	£ 2.00	£ 2.00	Free	

* Car parks within the inner ring-road charged at £8 and those outside at £6

The council now wishes to seek the views and thoughts of businesses, residents, community groups and others on the new scheme devised as a result of the feedback, discussions and commentary so far.

The consultation will run until Friday 3rd May and responses can be provided through www.northampton.gov.uk/parkingconsultation2019.