

REPORT TO:	SCRUTINY & OVERVIEW COMMITTEE 21 December 2020
SUBJECT:	RESPONSE TO CALL-IN: PARKING CHARGES REVIEW JANUARY 2021
LEAD OFFICER:	Shifa Mustafa, Executive Director, Place
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Muhammad Ali, Cabinet Member for Sustainable Croydon
WARDS:	All
CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT/AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON:	
<p>The parking charges contribute towards the aims of the Corporate Plan for a cleaner and more sustainable environment, and happy, healthy and independent lives.</p> <p>There are two drivers that relate to the need for parking charges:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The local driver for the parking charges is Croydon's Air Quality Action Plan 2017-22, which aims to reduce exposure to air pollution and raising awareness for those who live and work in Croydon, and the Parking Policy incorporating elements of the National Clean Air Strategy 2019, which aims to clean up the UK's air and reduce the damaging impact air pollution has on public health, including the harmful emissions from vehicles amongst other sources, and the Mayor's Transport Strategy 2018, which prioritises public health and aims to reduce car dependency and promote sustainable modes. 2 On a national level the ambition to reduce car dependency, especially of internal combustion engine (ICE) type vehicles, links to the Govt's published statutory commitment to achieve "net zero" carbon emissions by 2050 and their commitment to the cessation of the sale of ICE vehicles from 2030. 	
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	
<p>Implementing the decision subject to this Scrutiny Call-in will commit the Council to £150k capital expenditure and (£748k) income in-year. The full-year income effect in 2021/22 is forecast to be (£2,640k).</p>	
KEY DECISION REFERENCE: 5120ETR	
RECOMMENDATIONS:	
<p>The Scrutiny and Overview Committee is recommended to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Note this report in response to the scrutiny call-in. 	

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 This report details the officer response to the grounds for call-in.

2.2 The parking charges structure, as detailed in the reports to TMAC on 14 October 2020 and in the related report on an emission-based tariff structure to Executive Director of Place on 12 November 2020, addresses over-arching national, regional and local drivers with an aim of reducing emissions and non-essential car use in Croydon.

- 2.3** The call-in has not suggested the decision on parking charges should be reversed, but has instead asked for reassurances that they are appropriate and not in conflict with the council's commitment to local businesses and are considered in context with wider changes to parking policy and that the collective impact of all these has been considered by members as a whole.
- 2.4** The officer response describes how the parking charges are not used as a fiscal measure. It further describes how the parking charges do not compromise the council's commitment to local businesses. Lastly, the response describes the relevant aspects of the wider policy context, which has been subject to consideration by members.

3 DETAILS

3.1 POLICY BACKGROUND

- 3.1.1** The policy on parking charges addresses over-arching national, regional and local requirements with an aim of reducing emissions. The full list of these initiatives can be found in the Cabinet report of 25 March 2019¹ for the introduction of a Parking Policy.
- The national Clean Air Strategy 2019, with aims to clean up the UK's air and reduce the damaging impact air pollution has on public health, including the harmful emissions from vehicles amongst other sources. The strategy devolves certain responsibilities to a local level, notably the need to promote and deliver sustainable alternatives, such as public transport, cycling and walking.
 - The national Road to Zero Strategy aims for 50-70% new car sales to be Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) by 2030 and the recent announcement that ICE cars will not be sold in the UK after 2030 and hybrids after 2035.
 - The London Mayor's Transport Strategy 2018, which prioritises public health and aims to reduce car use throughout London. The strategy outcome 3c prescribes that the number of cars and vans registered in the borough should be reduced to 141,200 by end 2021.
 - Croydon's Air Quality Action Plan 2017-22, which aims to reduce exposure to air pollution and raising awareness for those who live and work in Croydon.
 - The 2017 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health identifies that Croydon currently has the highest rate of hospital admissions for childhood (0-9 years) asthma and the third highest number of asthma deaths in London. An estimated 205 deaths a year in Croydon are attributable to air pollution (source: Greater London Authority , Air Quality in Croydon a guide for public health professional, London, September 2013).
 - The Council has a duty under the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 to exercise its power to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicles and other traffic (including pedestrians) and having regard to the amenity, the national air quality strategy and any other relevant traffic management matters.

- 3.1.2 Furthermore on 8 July 2019, the Cabinet resolved to recommend that Council declare a 'Climate Emergency' and note the need for urgent action at an international, national and local level.
- 3.1.3 As the borough continues to grow in population and density the policy on parking charges aims to improve the environment by delivering actions that will encourage and enable a lesser reliance on cars, a change to lower emitting vehicles and better management of the demand on the kerbside.

3.2 ENGAGEMENTS

- 3.2.1 A survey for the Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) in July 2017 found 76% of 356 respondents rating their views on air pollution as 'very important' and a further 14% rating their views as 'important'. 88% agreed that the AQAP healthy streets initiatives are important.
- 3.2.2 A survey on the future of transport for the then draft Third Local Implementation Plan (LIP3) in September 2018 found that 74% of 994 respondents are concerned about air quality in Croydon and 72% agreed that traffic levels should be lowered.
- 3.2.3 The draft Parking Policy 2019-2022² was engaged on in May 2019, prior to the Policy's final approval in July 2019. This engagement survey described the objectives and timeline for introducing emission-based parking charges. The survey attracted 183 responses:
- When residents were asked open ended questions on the views and impacts from parking charges, and specifically highlighting emission-based charges:
 - 25% expressed concerns.
 - 16% expressed support.
 - 60% were neutral, neither concerned nor supporting.
 - 11% of respondents expressed a concern that the policy on emission-based charges would impact disproportionately on low income residents, who cannot afford to replace their car with a lower emission model.
 - 10% of respondents said they represented a business. Of these:
 - 30% expressed concerns.
 - 30% expressed support.
 - 40% were neutral, neither concerned nor supporting.
 - 3% were concerned that emission-based charges would have a negative impact on Croydon and the High Street economy, including pushing affluent shoppers in big cars out of town.
 - There was some elevated level of concern from the protected groups of Disability that parking charges would be introduced for Blue Badge holders. There were also some concerns from Disability and Age groups over pre-existing insufficiency in access to the over-subscribed parking bays across the borough.

4 RESPONSE TO REASONS FOR REFERRAL of the Parking Charges Review January 2021

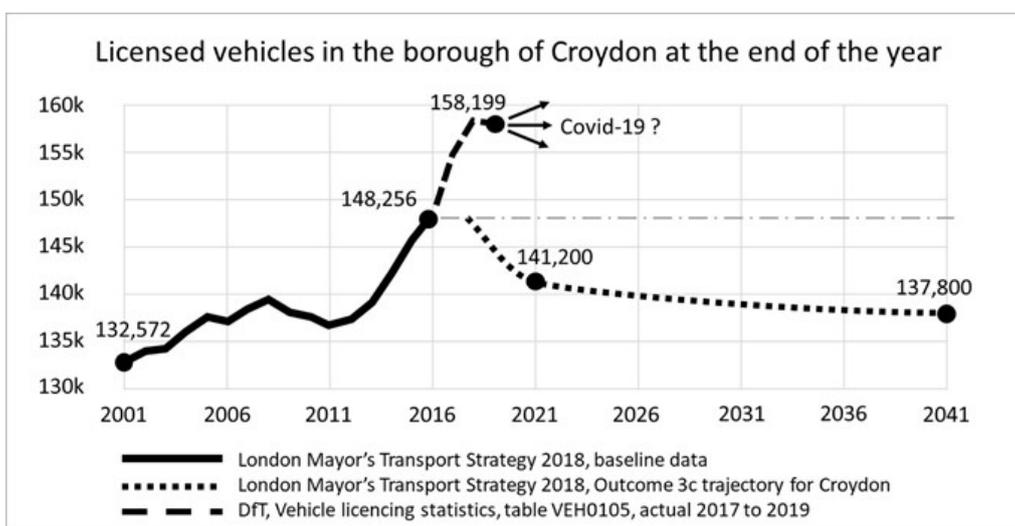
- 4.1 The given reasons for referring the decision to amend parking charges to Scrutiny are that ***the decision is outside of the Policy Framework*** and ***the decision is inconsistent with another Council Policy***. The outcomes desired are:
1. To gain reassurance that charges are not being used as a fiscal measure.

2. To gain reassurance that this policy does not compromise the council's commitment to local businesses.
3. To secure reassurance that this policy has been considered in context with wider changes to parking policy and that the collective impact of all these has been considered by members as a whole.

The decision is outside of the Policy Framework

- 4.2** The call-in states that Croydon Council is not allowed to use car parking charges as a fiscal measure.
- It has appeared in two documents about managing emergency funds for the council.
 - Evidence suggests that car usage is falling in Croydon. So that can't be a justification for introducing the policy now
 - While the money will be ring-fenced, it seems as if Croydon is now trying to fund a higher proportion of the road maintenance budget from parking charges. This effectively frees up money from elsewhere, or prevents cuts elsewhere. Either way it is using car parking charges as a fiscal measure.
- 4.3** The parking charges are a regular topic of discussion amongst officers, whenever the issues is raised from the community or there are changes to the statutory guidance directing the Council with regards to traffic management. Amending the charges is an involved and somewhat disruptive process. It therefore tends to be recommended only when deemed clearly necessary. At the present rate, with the 2 most recent prior revisions being in 2016 and in 2018, the charges are amended roughly every other year.
- 4.4** The car use reduction objectives prescribed by the London Mayor's Transport Strategy 2018, transposed into the Third Local Implementation Plan³ (LIP3), made it foreseeable that a review of parking charges would be necessary by October 2020. The objectives of the Croydon's Air Quality Action Plan 2017-22 and requirements under the national Clean Air Strategy 2019 have also influenced the need for review. A review of parking charges invariably has an effect on the budget. It was anticipated in the January 2020 budget plan that such an effect would likely occur in late 2020. This process for reviewing the parking charges has pre-dated the documents describing emergency funds and the Section 114 Notice. It is wrong to suggest that the review of parking charges is related to the current situation around emergency funds. When changes to parking charges are anticipated, then they will naturally figure in the evolving budgets for the relevant service.
- 4.5** The Covid-19 lockdown did have a temporary car use reduction effect. The Covid-19 situation exposed a significant parking pressure problem, when more drivers stayed at home and many roads became overwhelmed. It became necessary to suspend parking enforcement, except for the most obstructive and dangerous parking. The situation presented a disservice to many residents who found it difficult to access their homes. Many residents had to park their cars several roads away from their homes and outside the CPZs, where they inadvertently impeded residents in these other areas. Car usage has since largely recovered and it is wrong to suggest there is evidence to indicate any significant underlying fall in car use. The lockdown period has however evidenced that there are too many cars on the road, for the finite amount of available space. This evidence supports the Mayor's objective, which is transposed into the agreed LIP3, for the reduction of car ownership.
- 4.6** The TMAC report of 14 October 2020⁴, section 3, details the traffic management purpose of the parking charges. Section 3.1.8 of this report for example describes

that “the number of vehicles registered in Croydon grew from 132,572 in 2001 to 148,256 in 2016 (the MTS/LIP3 baseline) and to 159,199 at the end of 2019 (DfT data). The ongoing rate of growth appears to have stalled, with 162 fewer vehicles registered in 2019 compared to 2018. The post-Covid situation is largely unpredictable. On one hand, the early signs indicate an increase in car use, as travellers avoid public transport. On the other hand, future trends in home working and the potential for a post-Covid economic effect (as shown for the 2008 downturn) would likely contribute to a reduction in car use. Notwithstanding this uncertainty, the gap to the prescribed MTS/LIP3 trajectory is currently substantial”.



MTS data:

https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Appendix_A_Croydon_LIP3_Evidence_Base.pdf , page 19, Figure A10

DfT data: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/all-vehicles-veh01> , veh0105

- 4.7** The economic downturn in 2008 resulted in just 2% reduction in cars on the road. This evidence suggests that the post-Covid scenario cannot be assumed to result in a car use reduction that is sufficient to meet the prescribed requirement of reaching 141,200 cars and vans being registered in Croydon by end of 2021.
- 4.8** The TMAC report of 14 October 2020⁴, section 3.3.5, describes “The table below shows the estimated changes in parking events in the individual time bands, which would result from a 30p per 30min increase. The net result adds up to a net 12% reduction in parking events, which would mainly occur in the longer stays such as commuter parking. Considering that parking charges were last revised in September 2018 and that revisions have historically tended to happen every other year, the 12% parking reduction is in line with the Mayor’s Transport Strategy, as adopted into Croydon’s LIP3”.

Time band	Existing avg. charge*	New avg. charge	% of events	Est. events change	Net income effect
30min	£0.50	£0.80	24%	+4%	+32% =£2.64m p.a.
1hr	£1.20	£1.80	19%	+2%	
2hr	£2.05	£3.25	10%	-3%	
4hr	£4.70	£7.10	8%	-20%	
8hr+	£9.40	£14.20	39%	-30%	

** Note, the average charge combines charges across different time limited bays. For example, 1 hour parking is £2.60 in a max 2-hr zone, while it is £0.60 in a max 8-hr zone. The average depends on the distribution in bay usage between the different zone types.*

- 4.9** Increasing the parking charges by a lower amount, say 10p/30min, would have little and insufficient influence on car use – but it would increase income. Increasing parking charges by too low an amount could therefore be considered to primarily have a fiscal effect, which could be construed as being inconsistent with the traffic management purpose. The 30p/30min increase in charges are reasonable and proportionate to the very substantial traffic reduction requirement. It would arguably be wrong to set the increase any lower.
- 4.10** The parking charges are not set for the purpose of raising surplus revenue for other transport purposes funded by the General Fund. The income achieved for Pay and Display is sufficient to cover the cost of running the service. The surplus, mainly as a consequence of PCN income, should be considered as an incidental result of a required and proportionate traffic management measure. The Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, Section 55, makes provision for such a surplus and prescribes that it is ring-fenced to certain expenditures (in summary):
- Provision of public passenger transport services
 - Highway improvement and maintenance
 - Environmental improvements
 - Facilitating the implementation of the London transport strategy.

The parking surplus is not used to fund the highways maintenance service in the Borough. In Croydon, the 2019/20 income from parking charges was £6.5M. The total parking services surplus, including from enforcement, was £11.3M. This surplus entered the ring-fenced Traffic Management Account (TMA). The TMA has contributed towards the public transport fare concession schemes, including the over-60s Freedom Pass. The Council's expenditure on public transport fare concessions was in the order of £20M in 2019/20. The use of the ring-fenced parking surplus is therefore consistent with the RTRA1984.

- 4.11** The Parking Policy 2019-2022², which is subsidiary to and supportive of the LIP3, has in its aims *“To operate the charges defined in local Traffic Management Orders for on- and off-street parking places. In accordance with the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, the level of charges will have regard to securing the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicles and other traffic (including pedestrians) having regard to the amenity, the national air quality strategy and any other relevant traffic management matters”*. The Parking Policy is consistent with the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 (RTRA1984) and the 30p/30min increase consistent with the policy.

The decision is inconsistent with another Council Policy

- 4.12** The call-in states that the charges will be bad for local businesses, especially when combined with the corresponding decision to remove free parking bays. This will especially hit areas that border Bromley (Shirley / Addiscombe / Selsdon / Crystal Palace) as charges are cheaper there. Also, businesses that are near Caterham (Coulsdon), where parking is generally free. It infers this conflicts with corporate priorities to support and encourage local businesses. It states that in recent years, the council has made parking cheaper on the basis that this is what local businesses need to thrive and asks what evidence is there that this situation has changed?

- 4.13** The Parking Policy 2019-2022², including its aims and objectives for parking charges, is primarily designed to support the following corporate strategies and policies:
- Our Corporate Plan for Croydon 2018-2022
 - Air Quality Action Plan 2017-2022
 - Croydon Local Plan
 - Health and Wellbeing Strategy
 - Local Implementation Plan (LIP3)
 - Croydon Cycling Strategy 2018-23

The Policy was subject to a prior engagement, which has not identified any conflict with the corporate priorities to support local businesses.

- 4.14** The parking reduction impact from increasing the parking charges will mostly incur in the longer stay bays, where the charge increase is multiplied by a higher number of 30min units and is therefore more perceptible. As shown in the table in section 4.7 above, the 30p/30min increase will have a lesser effect in short stay bays, which are often near to shops and amenities and which depend on a high turnover of parking events. It is in fact assumed that freeing up bays from longer-stay parking will offer opportunity for more short stay events and hence effect a small increase in short-stay events which in turn increases footfall.

- 4.15** As stated in the call-in, the ceasing of free parking in the district centres is part of a separate Key Decision (ref 0220SM). The Cabinet on 25 March 2019 had delegated the authority for implementing the emission based charges to the Executive Director of Place. The Cabinet did not at the time agree to an increase in charges, which therefore must be a separate decision (ref 5120ETR). The present call-in relates to the latter decision. The TMAC report of 14 October 2020, section 3.1.18, expressly recommends “*not to apply any charges increase*” to the 1-hour free bays, should the outcome of the emissions consultation result in a newly converted tariff structure. Although the 2 decisions are related, a reversal of the decision on the 30p/30min increase would hence not have any effect on this particular statement in the call-in.

- 4.16** With regards to the call-in stating that the council has previously made parking cheaper on the basis that this is what local businesses need to thrive and what evidence is there that this situation has changed. As described in the previous section, the statement is unrelated to the 30p/30min increase in the decision called in to scrutiny. Nonetheless, the related decision report⁶ on emission-based parking charges describes that the drawback of free parking in the relevant locations is now four-fold:

1. The free bays are by definition not emission-based and do not support the present-day objective for encouraging lower emission vehicles, while discouraging higher emission vehicles.
2. There has been a continual growth in the number of cars on the road and in the habit of using the car for distances that in the past would have been considered easily walkable. The free parking arrangements attract drivers to over-subscribed parking bays that are frequently inaccessible. Drivers end-up circulating for space, adding further to congestion and air pollution, or drivers end up in spaces that are further away from their intended destination. Shoppers who could easily walk or cycle to the local shops thereby unnecessarily impede access for car-

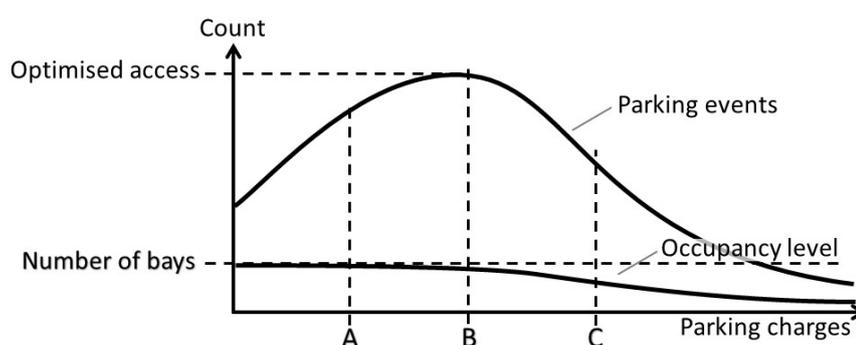
borne shoppers who cannot easily walk. Difficulties in finding vacant parking spaces is unattractive to those who must drive and can give reason not to use the local shops.

3. The free parking encourages bad parking practices, which detracts from access and safety (as described in background document 5). Car-borne access to the district centre shops and businesses depends on the turnover in the parking events. Footfall further depends on an attractive and safe public realm.
4. The 1-hour maximum stay does not support customers and businesses that depend on longer stays, such as hairdressers, lunchtime restaurants, physiotherapist, dentist and others that often require more than 1-hour appointments. Introducing a charge for the first 1 hour, in 30min steps, generates a higher turnover in events, which allows for the maximum stay be increased to 2 hours and provides better support for these currently under-served businesses. The business need for 2-hour parking is requested from elements within the business community.

- 4.17** Congestion is highly inefficient to the local economy. The cost of congestion is reported to be £1,680 per road user per year across London [<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/assembly/statement-on-the-cost-of-congestion>]. Parking charges serve a useful purpose in contributing to congestion reduction. By helping to manage traffic levels and congestion, parking charges effectively protect households and businesses from incurring even bigger costs. Maintaining free or low cost parking at destinations that contribute to congestion would make households and businesses financially worse off.
- 4.18** Motoring research calculates the average annual cost of owning a car to be £4,660. Some consumer websites in fact estimates this to be up to 50% higher in London [<https://www.motoringresearch.com/car-news/average-car-costs-a-month/>]. Car repayments, insurance and fuel makes up the main elements of this cost. Across the 158,199 cars and vans registered in Croydon the total cost of ownership and congestion is in the region of £1BN each year. Some of this significant amount could be converted into disposable income, by discouraging non-essential car ownership and use.
- 4.19** Drivers arriving from outside the borough, in cases where commuters merely park in Croydon to travel onwards by tram or train, to destinations outside the borough, detracts from movements by local residents and access to local businesses. As per the table in section 4.7 above, the new parking charges will have the biggest influencing effect in longer stay parking places, such as around stations and bus/tram stops. Freeing up some of this parking capacity supports access for shorter stays, such as car-borne shoppers that could park further out from their shopping destinations – in places where they are currently being crowded out from accessing the public transport hubs and reaching their local district centres.
- 4.20** The possible loss of economic activity from addressing the Mayor's car reduction strategy is difficult to estimate, in particularly when considering that it simultaneously helps by freeing up more disposable income. The Mayor's objective, transposed into LIP3, which is supported by the public engagements and is committed to by the Council, sets out to reduce the number of cars registered in Croydon to 141,200 by

end 2021. Realising this objective would save Croydon £80M in direct car ownership costs and possibly an equal amount from congestion reduction. This translates into a 25%+ increase in the Borough's disposable income, which is currently valued at £325M [<https://www.finder.com/uk/disposable-income-around-the-uk>]. A portion of this would be spent within the local economy.

- 4.21** It is wrong to assume that the local economy is primarily generated by car-borne trade. It is further wrong to assume that those customers who avoid parking charges by walking, cycling or taking the bus instead would no longer shop locally. The fact that they do not add to road and parking pressure makes a positive contribution in reducing the costs of congestion and it increases disposable incomes – which can benefit the local businesses and communities.
- 4.22** Incidentally, surplus from parking charges is ring-fenced and contributes significantly to sustaining public transport fare concessions such as the Freedom Pass scheme for the elderly. The parking charges therefore indirectly support the economic participation of a portion of the elder population that do not have a car or who choose to use public transport. This participation indirectly supports local businesses.
- 4.23** Other towns, just like Croydon, have a duty to manage a reduction in congestion and car use. Other London Boroughs are subject to the very same regional strategy objectives that Croydon is. It is therefore wrong to assume that these other borough would seek to attract car-borne visitors from Croydon.
- 4.24** Parking charges should be set to secure that parking bays become more easily accessible for essential drivers, including disabled Blue Badge holders who in the prior engagement have expressed concerns over insufficient access. Parking charges should also be set to help reduce circulation traffic and create a calmer, more attractive public realm in the local shopping districts. It may sound counterintuitive to some, but parking charges can in fact help increase access and footfall. Instead of free parking, the real footfall potential in the shopping/business centres lays in encouraging more walking, cycling and bus-borne shoppers, which would simultaneously reduce congestion and improve access for those who must drive.
- 4.25** The background report on Emissions-based destination parking charges from 1 January 2021⁵, section 3.1.8, on the separate decision to proceed to consultation on emission-based parking charges, illustrates how parking charges can be optimised for maximum access. The report⁵ describes in more detail.



- 4.26** On balance, there is nothing to evidence that the parking charges would harm the local economy or businesses. It could on the other hand free up disposable income and make the Borough a more accessible and pleasant place to visit. On the other hand, a free-for-all in a scenario where there are excess cars on the road will gridlock access to local businesses and divert disposable income into car ownership related costs.

5 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Implementing the decision subject to this Scrutiny Call-in commits the Council to £150k capital expenditure and (£748k) income in-year. The full-year income effect in 2021/22 is forecast to be (£2,640k).

The details of revenue and capital consequences are described in the report to TMAC on 14 October 2020 and are approved on behalf of the Director of Finance, Investment and Risk and S151 Officer.

6 LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1** The Head of Litigation and Corporate Law comments on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance that Sections 6, 35C, 45, 46, 46A, 47, 49, 124 and Part IV of Schedule 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA) provides the Council with the power to implement the changes proposed in this report. This legislation gives a local authority the power to make Traffic Management Orders (TMO) to control parking by designating on-street and off-street parking places, charging for their use and imposing waiting and loading restrictions on vehicles of all or certain classes at all times or otherwise. In this case the charges are being made under **section 46A – Variation of charges at designated parking places.**
- 6.2** By virtue of section 122 of the RTRA, the Council must exercise its powers under the RTRA Act so as 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. These powers must be exercised so far as practicable having regard to the following matters:-
- the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises.
 - the effect on the amenities of any locality affected including the regulation and restriction of heavy commercial traffic so as to preserve or improve amenity.
 - the national air quality strategy.
 - the importance of facilitating the passage of public service vehicles and of securing the safety and convenience of persons using or desiring to use such vehicles.
 - any other matters appearing to the Council to be relevant.
- 6.3** The High Court has confirmed that the Council must have proper regard to the matters set out at s 122(1) and (2) and specifically document its analysis of all relevant section 122 considerations when reaching any decision.
- 6.4** Finally it should be noted that the Courts have been clear that the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 is not a fiscal measure and does not authorise a local authority to use its powers to charge local residents for parking in order to raise surplus revenue for other transport purposes.

- 6.5** This Recommendation is a Key Decision and has received a 'Call-In', see Constitution Part 4E Article 11. Therefore the matter should be considered at a meeting of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee. At the meeting the Committee shall decide how the item will be dealt with, including whether or not to review the decision. The Committee may refer the decision back to the Cabinet, who shall then reconsider the decision, amending the decision or not, before making a final decision. The Committee may refer the decision to the Council if it thinks it is outside the Budget and Policy Framework of the Council.

Approved by, Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of the interim Director of Law and Governance & Deputy Monitoring Officer.

7 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 7.1** The recommendations in this report do not have any human resources implications. The implementation project calls for a temporary 6-week internal secondment, which will be met from existing budgets and can present a personal development opportunity for a member of staff. Any additional HR issues which arise other than in the planned budget and establishment will be managed under the Council's policies and procedures.

Approved by: Jennifer Sankar, Head of HR Place & GSE on behalf of Sue Moorman, Director of HR

8 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.1** The Equality Act 2010 introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty. This requires all public bodies, including local authorities, to have due regard to the need to:
- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 8.2** The Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) is attached in the background documents. It incorporates the results from engagement on the Parking Policy 2019-2022 in April 2019, which includes sections of parking charges. The outcome of the September 2020 consultation on the combination emission-based parking charges is also considered.
- 8.3** The prior engagement and consultation results in 2019 and 2020 have found that no individual protected sub-group stands out as having responded negatively to the principles behind parking charges and emission-based banding – in terms of impact on their protected characteristics. There has been some elevated concern about insufficiency in the parking bays accessible for the disabled and that disabled drivers, with an essential car use need, may have to start paying for parking. These concerns are recognised and mitigated in the Parking Policy actions plan and are supported by the currently proposed revision of parking charges. It is not recommended to introduce parking charges for disabled Blue Badge holders.

- 8.4** Influencing the overall number of cars parked on the roads in the borough, and in parking congested P&D zones in particular, can help improve access for all protected groups with essential car needs, hence improving their ability to travel and participate where participation is currently disproportionately low.
- 8.5** Active discouragement of car use and the associated emissions reduction, benefits all individuals, families and neighbourhoods. Air pollution disproportionately impacts on the most vulnerable in the population, in particular the sick, young and elderly. Those at higher risk include those with existing respiratory problems and chronic illnesses such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.
- 8.6** There is currently no evident information to suggest that increasing and banding parking charges will have a disproportionate impact on people with protected characteristics (as covered by the Equality Act).
- 8.7** The recommendations in this report do not conflict with the Public Sector Equality Duty. In terms of groups with protected characteristics, it is considered that the reasons for introducing a 30p per 30min increase in parking charges, combined with emissions-based banding, outweighs any reasons for not implementing them.

Approved by: Yvonne Okiyo, Equalities Officer

9 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 9.1** The increase in parking charges has been set at a point where reduced use and reliance on the car will be achieved, resulting in a reduction in associated pollution.

10 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 10.1** There are no foreseeable impacts on this.

11 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

- 11.1** P&D bay parking charges are currently too low for effectively influencing car use. As a consequence, the Council sub-optimally meets its traffic management duties.

12 OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 12.1** The alternative option to do nothing would be a lost opportunity for improving access to homes, businesses and amenities and to making a contribution to the Air Quality Action Plan. This would fall short of obligations under nationally and regionally devolved responsibilities for improving the Borough's air quality and public health, including the Mayor's Transport Strategy objective to reduce car dependency.

CONTACT OFFICER:

- Steve Iles, Director of Public Realm

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. <https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=183&MId=1553&Ver=4>
(item 28/19)
2. <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/transportandstreets/policies/parking-policy-2019-to-2022>
3. <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/transportandstreets/policies/third-local-implementation-plan>
4. <https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=173&MId=2266&Ver=4>
5. <https://getinvolved.croydon.gov.uk/uploadedfiles/ED%20Place%20report%20on%20consulation%20Sep%202020.pdf>
6. <https://getinvolved.croydon.gov.uk/uploadedfiles/Outcome%20of%20consultation%20report%20December%202020.pdf>