

Statement of Reasons: Mid Sussex District Council (Off Street Parking Places) Order 2006 (Amendment No 1) Order 2024

Statement of Reasons

The District Council in exercise of their powers under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 intends to make a permanent Order for the purpose of regulating the use of car parks in the District of Mid Sussex.

Background

The council commissioned an external consultancy company, Parking Matters Ltd to support the development of a Parking Strategy for the district in 2019/20.

The Parking Strategy was developed in consultation with a cross-party Councillor Working Group and was adopted by the Council on 9 December 2020. The Strategy, and the associated 10-Year Action Plan can be found on the Mid Sussex District Council website, at <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/parking-travel/parking-strategy/>.

The adopted Parking Strategy is a vital part of modernising our approach to how our car parks support the economic and social activity within our towns and villages.

It is much broader than a review of the Council's approach to tariffs and car park management. It also sets out a high-level set of evidence-based recommendations for future investment in the car park estate.

Proposed changes

Tariffs are an important tool for councils to provide and manage turnover of spaces to ensure that parking is available to motorists when required. There is a cost to the council associated with the provision of car parks, and tariffs are used to cover these as well as other costs that the council incurs. Benchmarking against other car park tariffs has taken place to compare the Council's parking offer with that offered by other comparable local authorities.

During the preparation of the Parking Strategy the Council asked the consultants to consider all aspects of parking and the following recommendations were made:

Extending the daily parking chargeable period in all town centre Car Parks to 8pm (currently 6pm)

It is proposed to extend the existing charging period for all town centre car parks to 8pm.

Parking is currently free on all car parks after 6 p.m. each evening, however the vast majority of private car park operators charge for parking 24 hours a day.

It is right that the cost of maintaining and managing the Council's car parks is equitably met by all users, and not just those that park during the daytime.

A flat rate charge for Sundays and Bank Holidays

It is proposed that a day tariff on Sundays and Bank Holidays is introduced. The proposed tariff is £1.50 in East Grinstead and Haywards Heath, and £1.00 in Burgess Hill Car Parks.

Since Sunday Trading laws were introduced in 1994, activity in town centres on Sundays has increased significantly to an extent that there is now little difference from other days of the week. Town centre activity on Bank Holidays has also changed with most retailers now trading. As a result, most private car park operators and many Councils now charge for the use of town centre car parks on Sundays and bank holidays.

Additional Information

Additional information and background reports can be found on the Mid Sussex District Council website at <https://engage.midsussex.gov.uk/parking-consultation>