PARKING POLICY REVIEW

Report by Director Infrastructure & Environment

Scottish Borders Council

25 June 2026

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 **This report proposes a clear, consistent approach to off-street parking across the Scottish Borders, including how parking income is managed and reinvested, so that the policy is easier to understand, fairer between communities and more effective in supporting town centres.**

1.2 In March 2025 the Council established a short-life Member/Officer Working Group to review public parking arrangements across the Scottish Borders. The review was commissioned to address long-standing inconsistencies between towns and villages, modernise the policy and ensure that parking arrangements support economic vitality, accessibility and fairness. A central aim is to enable parking-related income (where generated) to be managed transparently and consistently, so that benefits can be delivered across all communities. The report proposes a linked package of changes that will:

- standardise off-street parking charges, days and hours where charging already applies;
- extend pay and display (and enforcement) to further Council car parks on a phased basis, following the required statutory processes;
- modernise permits and strengthen compliance arrangements;
- apply clear legal and governance rules to how any parking surplus can be used, so funding decisions are transparent and consistent; and
- close the current Working Group now that it has completed this phase (off-street parking), with future updates reported through normal governance.

1.3 AECOM was appointed through a competitive procurement exercise to support the Working Group. The work included benchmarking against other local authorities, on-street and on-site surveys across 13 settlements, and financial analysis of the current approach to off-street parking.

1.4 The study found that current arrangements are difficult for the public to navigate and are not consistent between places. Key issues include different charging patterns, long-stay parking reducing turnover in town

centres, limited capacity in some locations, variable signage/marking standards, and comparatively low income and compliance outcomes when benchmarked against other councils. The recommendations in this report are intended to address these issues in a simple, standardised way.

1.5 If approved and implemented, the package will create a clearer and more consistent offer for residents, visitors and businesses. It is expected to improve space availability and turnover in key locations, support local economic activity, and generate additional income that can be managed transparently and reinvested (within the limits of the law) in parking provision, public transport and road improvement priorities. It also enables a more equitable approach, so that the benefits of parking income can be distributed more fairly across the Scottish Borders.

1.6 This report focuses on off-street parking (Council car parks). It does not contain proposals for changes to on-street parking, Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) or Mobile Home and Campervan facilities. These matters are subject to separate but related work and will be reported to Members at a later date.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 I recommend that Scottish Borders Council agrees the following package of changes to modernise off-street parking, make charges more consistent across the region, and ensure that any surplus is managed transparently and can benefit communities across the Scottish Borders:

(a) Approve a simple, standard hourly parking tariff for the 14 car parks where charges already apply (the "£1 per hour" tariff set out in the report).

(b) Standardise the charging days and hours across 13 charged off-street car parks to Monday to Saturday, 8.30am to 5.00pm. Retaining the current charging policy at Edinburgh Road, Peebles as Saturday only, 8.30am to 5.00pm, at the current time;

(c) Move to a single, consistent permit system that is administered digitally (with appropriate support for users who need help to access digital services).

(d) Modernise the model of permits so that: (i) each permit is valid only for one named car park, and (ii) the Council can limit the number of permits issued for any one car park to protect space for short stay parking and town centre turnover.

(e) Introduce a new annual charge for parking permits at £100 with future adjustments to be considered as part of the annual budget setting process.

(f) Undertake a review of existing charity and NHS parking permits, including whether they should continue and, if so, under what clear criteria and conditions.

(g) Increase the off-street Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) fee to £100 (reduced to £50 if paid within 14 days), in line with the Parking Prohibitions (Enforcement and Accounts) (Scotland) Regulations 2023.

(h) Review existing surplus income sharing and lease arrangements for the following sites, by October 2027, :

1. **Swimming Pool car park, Peebles**
2. **Cross Wynd, car park, Hawick**
3. **Teviot road Health Centre car park, Hawick**
4. **Abbey car park, Melrose**
5. **Lothian car park, Jedburgh**

(i) Confirm that any surplus income from off-street parking will be managed and spent only for the purposes allowed by law (Road

Traffic Regulation Act 1984, section 55), supporting the delivery of the Councils annual prioritised investment programme into roads and related assets.

(j) Agrees therefore to amend the Scheme of Delegation in accordance with paragraph 8.8 of this report.

(k) Deliver a public communications and engagement campaign ahead of implementation, explaining the reasons for change, how the new arrangements will work, what alternatives remain available (including free parking locations), and how any surplus will be managed and reinvested.

(l) Note that the Member/Officer Working Group has completed its remit for this phase of the parking policy review (off-street parking) and agree to conclude the Working Group.

(m) Delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure and Environment, in consultation with the Executive Member for Roads and Public Space Development, to initiate progress of future off-street and on-street parking policy matters arising from this review. This should include the preparation of further reports and updates where further Council decisions are required. This should include consideration of appropriate Member engagement arrangements, including the possible establishment of a Member Reference Group. This would cover any future expansion of off-street parking charges, the separate review of on-street parking, any motorhome and campervan provision, and the development of a business case for Decriminalised Parking Enforcement.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Executive previously considered the outcomes of an earlier review of parking in April 2019, and since that time has considered other papers related to parking including the considerations/impacts of COVID on the service, changes to parking tariffs and other charges and more recently the considerations required for an authority in regard to adopting Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE).

3.2 Councils are responsible for the management and regulation of both on-street and off-street parking in their local authority area. That responsibility does not extend to privately owned or maintained car parks or land. At present in the Scottish Borders, only Police Scotland has the authority to enforce on-street regulations. Off-street Council car parks are enforced by Scottish Borders Council using in-house parking attendants.

3.3 The Councils existing policy aims to encourage the turnover of vehicles, particularly in busy town centres, helping stimulate economic activity within our communities.

3.4 In March 2025 the Council agreed to review its parking policy, forming a Member Officer Working Group (MOWG) to undertake that review, reporting back to the Executive Committee within 12 months.

3.5 The agreed scope of the review includes the following: -

1. Current policy arrangements (On and Off-street Parking)
2. Benchmarking and best practices (including public survey responses)
3. Financial implications
4. Governance and funding
5. Mobile home and camper van provision
6. Digital innovation
7. Risk & mitigations
8. Integrated impact assessment (IIA)
9. Community engagement
10. Decriminalised parking enforcement (DPE)

3.6 In preparing for the current review it was recognised that the Council would need to engage third parties to help with the review process.

3.7 The Working Group developed a specification document for the procurement of an external *Expert* organisation to support the review.

3.8 AECOM were identified and appointed as the most appropriate supplier following a competitive procurement exercise undertaken by the MOWG.

3.9 AECOM have undertaken background and baseline research as well as on-site parking surveys at thirteen settlements across the Borders as agreed with the MOWG. The subsequent assessment and evaluation of off-street parking, followed by their presentation back to the MOWG has identified potential change options for consideration. The assessments, evaluation and change options are contained in the finalised study report appended to this report, referred to as the study.

3.10 The study has conducted benchmarking and a review of digital modernisation options and opportunities, identifying considerations for potential change to the existing policy. They have presented emerging findings from this work, within their baseline technical note, to the MOWG in a series of meetings.

4 REVIEW OF CURRENT POLICIES – THE STUDY

4.1 As has been outlined, the Council's current pay and display policy aims to encourage the turnover of vehicles, particularly in busy town centres, helping stimulate economic activity within our communities.

4.2 The policy includes charging for parking at 14 off-street car parks, in four settlements. There are a range of parking permit options currently available and operating in different forms across the charged car parks. We undertake off-street parking enforcement issuing penalty charge notices, using our own staff resources.

4.3 The current tariff structure was agreed at the Executive Committee on 18 May 2021, remaining unchanged since that time.

4.4 The current agreed Pay and Display tariff structure is detailed below at section 5.3.

4.5 The current Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) level for off-street car parks is £40, reduced to £20 if paid within 10 days.

4.6 Benchmarking informs us that SBC is underperforming in terms of revenue generated from off-street parking when compared with other Authorities. We are also at the lower end of income generated from tariff charges and penalty charge notices (PCNs) when compared with others.

4.7 AECOM have, through their study, identified eight problems with the current policy approach, as detailed below: -

P1: Limited capacity (over 80% occupied) at large car parks in some settlements (Coldingham, Duns and Selkirk)

P2: High proportion of long stay vehicles in car parks in Galashiels, Hawick, Peebles, Coldstream, Kelso, Lauder and Selkirk. This reduces turnover and can negatively impact the economic vitality of towns.

P3: Low-cost resident permits are available, which can be used in any council car park; holders are typically long stay and thus reduces available capacity in car parks. 199 residential permits were issued in 2024/25, which may account for around one third of P&D spaces (which total 577).

P4: Unclear signage at some car parks / on street

P5: Poorly marked bays in car parks

P6: Enforcement challenges and broadly low PCN income received.

P7: Low overall parking income and surplus compared to other local authorities.

P8: Inconsistencies in charged days across different car parks

4.8 The study also observed there to be five opportunities in reviewing the current parking policy, and these are as follows: -

O1: Opportunity to address inequality and harmonise standard approaches across the administrative region.

O2: Promote sustainable travel and help contribute towards net zero targets.

O3: Make sure the impact of potential changes in off street parking is minimised in relation to residential parking in surrounding streets.

O4: Opportunities associated with the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 related to enforcement of national parking prohibitions covering pavement parking, double parking and parking at dropped kerbs.

O5: Opportunity to raise additional income, to reinvest in local roads and transport priorities.

4.9 Using the identified problems and opportunities set out at 4.7 and 4.8 above. The study has developed seven *study objectives* (see below), against which options for change were developed and evaluated. The study objectives also consider the Council plan outcomes and the local parking context. A table detailing how the problems, opportunities, Council plan priorities and study objectives are related is set out at table 3-1/pages 8,9,10 of the study, located in the appendices to this report.

The seven study objectives are as follows: -

Objective 1: Maintain sufficient space availability to promote town and village centres across The Scottish Borders and support local business growth and economic investment.

Objective 2: Ensure that space turnover is appropriate to location within town and village centres.

Objective 3: Support parking measures which encourage travel by sustainable and active modes.

Objective 4: Minimise the potentially negative impacts of parking on residential communities.

Objective 5: Support parking that is inclusive and easy to understand for all users.

Objective 6: Increase compliance with parking regulations to support traffic management, improved road safety and the economic vitality of towns and villages.

Objective 7: Generate increased net income from parking to support road and environmental improvements in targeted settlements.

5 OFF STREET PARKING POLICY OPTION PROPOSALS

5.1 The study has developed options for change in relation to the off-street parking policy. These are set out as follows; -

- Option 1: Changes to the current tariff structure at car parks which currently charge for parking and standardisation of charged days to Monday to Saturday (14 car parks across four settlements).
- Option 2: Expand proposed tariff charges (as per Option 1) to additional car parks.

In addition to these options, discussion with the working group informed the development of two further options, which relate to the current regime:

- Option 3: Changes to parking permits.
- Option 4: Changes to Penalty Charge Notice fees.

Option One – Changes to parking charge tariffs

5.2 SBC currently operate 587 charged parking spaces across 14 sites within 4 settlements in the Borders, these 14 charged sites generated approximately £160,000 in revenue from tariffs in the financial year 2024/25 with around a third of the revenue from cashless transactions and the rest from cash.

5.3 The following pay parking tariffs are currently in place across the 14 sites:

Table one- existing tariff charge

Hours	Tariffs	Effective per Hour
0	£0.50	£0.50
1	£0.50	£0.25
2	£1.50	£0.50
3	£1.50	£0.38
4	£3.00	£0.60
5	£3.00	£0.50
6	£5.00	
Average Effective Per Hour Tariff:		£0.45

NB: *The first two hours is £0.50, the second and third hours at £1.50, the fourth and fifth at £3.00, with £5.00 charged for durations beyond 6 hours. Overall, the effective tariff per hour averages out at £0.45/hour*

5.4 A total of eleven potential tariff structures were presented, the details, and their impact assessment as well as deliverability have all been assessed as part of the study and are set out in 6.1.1 to 6.1.4 pages 32-37 of the

accompanying report. The table below details four of those options for consideration within this report:

Table two – Option one tariff changes

Hours	Existing	Option one Tar 1	Option one Tar 2	Option one Tar 3	Option one Tar 4
		AECOM Option 1.5	AECOM Option 1.6	AECOM Option 1.9	AECOM Option 1.10
0	£0.50	£1.00	£0.00	£1.00	£1.50
1	£0.50	£2.00	£1.00	£1.00	£1.50
2	£1.50	£3.00	£2.00	£2.00	£2.00
3	£1.50	£4.00	£3.00	£3.00	£3.00
4	£3.00	£5.00	£4.00	£4.00	£4.00
5	£3.00	£6.00	£5.00	£5.00	£5.00
6	£5.00	£7.00	£6.00	£6.00	£6.00
7+	£5.00	£7.00	£6.00	£7.00	£7.00

5.5 The table below summarises the estimated revenue impacts of the tariff options assessed by the study. As set out in the recommendations, this report proposes the "£1 per hour" tariff (Option 1 Tar 1) as the preferred option.

Table three – Estimated impacts of tariff changes

Tariff Option	Existing	Option1 Tar1	Option1 Tar2	Option1 Tar3	Option1 Tar4
Current Sites (Existing Income)	£160,000	£160,000	£160,000	£160,000	£160,000
Current Sites (Additional Income from Revised Tariffs)		£190,000	£65,000	£100,000	£135,000

5.6 Option1 Tar1 – Sets a tariff at one pound for each hour. This is the highest tariff rate of all options being presented, and analysis suggests that this has the potential to generate an additional income up to £190k per annum. This is the preferred option which addresses six of the seven study objectives positively/neutrally, is easily understood and would address the Councils current under performance as set out at 4.6.

5.7 A summary assessment of the options is contained within 6.1.2 and 6.1.3 (Pages 33-34) of the Study report.

Option Two – Expansion of the parking charge tariffs into 19 new off-street car parks.

5.8 The study has developed an approach to the identification of other car parks which could be considered appropriate to have tariff charging introduced.

5.9 Through site assessments and discussions with the MOWG the study had developed an original long list of 36 car parks which were potentially suited to charging. However, this list was eventually reduced to 19. The long and short listing was influenced by a three-factor evaluation related to;

- High occupancy
- High proportion of long stay vehicles
- Proximity to Town centre

5.10 The list of settlements and locations therein being proposed for tariff charging is below.

Table four – Settlement/car park location/parking spaces

Settlement	Car Park	Number of Car Park Spaces	Number of Spaces with Potential for Charging
Hawick	Garfield Street East	25	25
	Mart Street	65	59
Melrose	St Dunstan's Park	54	51
Peebles	Tweed Green	9	9
Coldingham	High Street	15	13
Coldstream	Court House Place	34	33
	Henderson Park	16	15
Duns	Easter Street	20	18
Eyemouth	High Street-Seafront	79	74
	Harbour Road	42	38
Innerleithen	Leithen Road	32	32
Jedburgh	Canongate	142	140
	Friars Burn	38	38
Kelso	Bowmont Street	34	34
	East Bowmont Street	45	43
	Jamiesons Entry	30	23
	Mill Wynd	25	25
	The Knowes	104	99
Selkirk	West Port	84	82

5.11 Details of the long and short listing as well as the three-factor evaluation are contained within the study and accompanying report at 4.1.2, page 15/18.

5.12 The range of expected financial income arising from the introduction of charging at the 19 additional off-street car parks is set out below where a range of impacts depending on user behaviour is set out. The study set out that the assumptions used to inform this information is derived from the current user behaviour at the existing off street parking sites;-

Low assumes up to 100 uses per space per year.
Medium assumes 300 uses per space per year.
High assumes 450 uses per space per year.

Table five– potential additional parking revenue generated from expansion of service

Tariff Option	Existing	Option2 Tar1	Option2 Tar2	Option2 Tar3	Option2 Tar4
Low	£70,000	£140,000	£100,000	£110,000	£130,000
Medium	£210,000	£430,000	£290,000	£330,000	£380,000
High	£320,000	£650,000	£430,000	£500,000	£570,000

Option Three – Parking Permits

5.13 A parking permit is an official authorisation in the form of a physical or digital record that allows a vehicle to park in a specific location under certain conditions.

5.14 Currently permits are available at a cost of £26 per year for a residential permit and £60 for residential permit specific to Galashiels High Street car park.

5.15 In 2024/25, 199 residential permits were issued by SBC that allowed the user to park in most of our Pay and Display car parks, the number issued each year has been broadly consistent for the past ten years.

5.16 The 199 permits equate to approximately a third of all chargeable parking spaces available to residents and visitors to the Borders and when used could be impacting on space available to others.

5.17 Additionally we also operate a charity permit scheme (Free) and a visitors permit scheme (£41.50 per year or £10.30 per month). Currently 29 charity, 2 annual visitor, 3 Gala High St and 5 Peebles swimming pool staff.

5.18 A benchmarking exercise established that permits for off-street parking are not available from Dumfries & Galloway or Midlothian Councils. East Lothian Council provide permits for coastal car parks at a price of £50 per

year and Moray council charges £40-£50 per month for zoned car park permits. Aberdeenshire Council only provides permits to residents in approved zones at an annual cost of £78.

5.19 What benchmarking informs us is that SBC provide a wide range of permits when compared to other Authorities and at a considerably lower cost.

5.20 The current charge for a resident's permit does not cover the administration, printing and postage costs associated with it being issued and makes no allowance for officer time in determining applications.

5.21 The study report has addressed the issue of permits at 4.1.3 and 5.3 and is outlining six options.

5.22 The table of permit options is below;-

Table six – Permit options appraisal

Option Ref.	Option Name	Option Description
Per 3.1	Increase the Cost of Permits	Increase the cost of the standard residents parking permit from £26 per year to the following amounts: a-£50 b-£100 c-£150 d-£200 e-£250
Per 3.2	Reduce the Number of Car Parks Permits can be used in	Exclude further P&D car parks permits can be used in. Melrose Abbey, Stirling Street and Stirling Place (Galashiels) car parks are already excluded, and a separate permit applies to High Street (Galashiels) car park. This differs from Option 3.4 which would make each permit valid for only one car park. Future work would be required to identify which car parks would be suitable for exclusion from the permit scheme.
Per 3.3	Allow Permit Holders to Park Only in Designated Spaces	In each car park where permit parking is allowed, have a designated number of spaces for permit holders, and require permit holders not parked in a designated space to pay the tariff charge.
Per 3.4	Restrict Each Permit to One Car Park	Each parking permit would be allocated to a specific car park, which the holder would be able to choose. There is already a permit specifically for use at High Street (Galashiels) car park. Unlike

		Option 3.5, there would not be a cap on the number of permits which could be issued for a single car park.
Per 3.5	Restrict the Number of Permits Issued for Each Car Park	This option builds on Option 3.4 and would cap the number of permits which can be issued for each car park. Future work would be required to identify how many permits would be available for each car park. Consultant experience from other studies would suggest a range of 5% to 15% of total spaces.
Per 3.6	Introduce a Surcharge for Second Permits in a Household	A surcharge would be applied to the second permit held by a single household.
Per 3.7	Restrict each Household to a Maximum of One Permit	A household would only be allowed to hold one permit.
Per 3.8	Removal of Resident Permits	All resident parking permits administered by SBC would be removed with users required to pay turnup tariffs. Existing permits would either be refunded pro-rata, or honoured until they expire.

5.23 The option Per 3.1 focusses on the level of charge for a permit. A further assessment of the impacts of an increase in level of charge has been undertaken with three levels of attrition; this attrition is as a result of a number of permit holders not renewing their permits. As with PCNs almost all options, even when the attrition is factored in, will potentially result in additional income being generated. The exception being option two, £50.00 per permit at the highest level of attrition.

5.24 The table of permit tariff options is below;-

Table seven- financial implications of changes to permit tariffs

Permit Charges (Option Per 3.1)	**No Attrition**	**Low Attrition**	**Medium Attrition**	**High Attrition**
Existing (£26)	£4,800			
Per 3.1 a - £50	£9,250	£7,900	£7,000	£4,650
Per 3.1 b - £100	£18,550	£15,850	£13,950	£9,300
Per 3.1 c - £150	£27,800	£23,750	£20,950	£13,950

Per 3.1 d - £200	£37,100	£31,650	£27,950	£18,650
Per 3.1 e - £250	£46,350	£39,600	£34,950	£23,300

5.25 Further details relating to financial evaluation of the impacts of the options at Per 3.1 are contained in the study report at section 5.3.

5.26 If the recommended permit changes are approved, each permit would be linked to one named car park. The Council would also be able to limit the number of permits issued for any one car park (for example as a percentage of spaces) to protect short-stay availability and town centre turnover.

Option Four - Penalty Charge Notice fees

5.27 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 Section 35 gives local authorities powers to issue Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) in respect of a contravention in its car parks.

5.28 The fee associated with a PCN can be a significant factor in encouraging parking compliance, as users realise that the cost of risking not paying for a parking act could result in a sizeable PCN fee. The PCN fee level can encourage compliance. Improved compliance should result in a reduced number of PCNs issued. Any changes to tariff levels therefore may become impacted by improved compliance and not generate the financial impacts forecast. However, PCN as a deterrent to parking infringements if effective should contribute to combined parking strategy increasing turnover and maintaining parking space availability for users.

5.29 The table below includes benchmarking information about PCN rates etc from four other Scottish Local authorities. It is clear that SBCs current rate is well below others giving rise to the potential for us to increase PCN tariffs in tandem with increased parking charge tariffs; -

Table eight – Permit Benchmarking

	Scottish Borders	**Midlothian**	**Dumfries & Galloway**	**Aberdeenshire**	**Moray**
Penalty Charges	£40 standard, £20 if paid within 10 days	£60 standard, £30 if paid within 14 days	None	£75 standard, £50 if paid within 14 days, £25 if paid within 24 hours	£80 standard, £60 if paid within 14 days

As per the table above, PCNs in comparison with neighbouring authorities are relatively low.

5.30 Regulation 2 of The Parking Prohibitions (Enforcement and Accounts) (Scotland) Regulations 2023 sets the amount of the charge and provides for discounts and increased charges in certain circumstances. The penalty charge payable for a contravention of the parking prohibitions is £100. If the penalty charge is paid within 14 days of receiving the initial PCN or an enforcement notice under regulation 5, the charge is reduced by 50%.

5.31 The study reviewed the Council's current performance on PCNs and assessed a range of increased PCN levels, including the statutory position under the 2023 Regulations.

5.32 There are four proposed options: -

Table nine – PCN fee assessment

Option four	PCN Fee	14-day payment discount fee
existing	£40.00	£20.00
PCN One	£60.00	£30.00
PCN Two	£80.00	£40.00
PCN Three	£100.00	£50.00

5.33 There are considerations of the impact in changing tariffs which relate to increased compliance which leads to a reduction in PCNs issued and paid. The aim being to improve compliance. The study addresses these issues in detail at 5.4 (Pages 28/29). Changes to the existing tariff are estimated to generate additional income. The only exception to this is option one, which when high compliance is factored in, would see a £3,000 reduction from the current existing income of £21,000.

6 GOVERNANCE

6.1 Scottish Local Authorities regulate, enforce and manage pay parking in off street car parks that fall under their remit with an aim to support traffic management, accessibility, safety, economic prosperity and compliance.

6.2 The governance is discharged through the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 which allows Councils to set and manage parking controls, issue PCNs, manage appeals, and maintain transparent accounts. This legislation also sets out the financial rules governing how local authorities must manage income and expenditure from designated off street parking spaces and critically how any surplus may be spent.

6.3 The act states that at the end of each financial year any deficits must be made good from the general fund and that surpluses may only be used for the statutory purposes listed in section 55(4) of the act.

6.4 Section 55(4) specifies that parking surpluses may only be used for the following purposes:

- Making good previous parking account deficits over the last 4 years.
- Provision and maintenance of off-street parking.
- Contributions to other authorities for off-street parking provision.
- Where further off-street parking is unnecessary, the surplus may instead fund:
    - Public passenger transport services
    - Road improvement projects

7 PHASING AND NEXT STEPS

7.1 The recommendations in Section 2 form a single, linked package of changes. Delivery will be phased and will require a mix of statutory processes, operational changes and procurement/installation activity.

7.2 Changes to existing tariffs, including PCNs– this could take up to six months to introduce from the time a decision is taken. Whilst a change is not required to a Traffic Regulation Order for tariff changes there is still a legal need for a statutory notice that must be advertised, this is not subject to consultation or objection. Changes to days of operation would require a new TRO, this may extend the timeline to complete this process. Operational changes including updating the digital app and notices, any lines and signs etc will be undertaken in conjunction with the notice and any TRO review required.

7.3 Permits – considerations include the transition to moving to digital only permit platform, and the single permit model. Permit changes can be implemented immediately.

7.4 Surplus sharing/lease arrangements/charitable permit reviews – these would run in tandem with the changes to existing tariffs as described at 7.2.

7.5 Expansion of the tariff charging to new car parks would take up to 18 months from the time a decision is reached with sites coming on line as each location has been subject to the creation of a TRO, the required consultation undertaken and the practical considerations enabling tariff charges to be introduced which includes installation of signs and payment machinery etc.

8 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Financial

There are a number of financial implications associated with the recommendations and potential decisions within this report;

(a) In order to implement changes to the parking policy the Council will be utilising surpluses arising from the provision of parking etc. Cost estimates have been included within the study and are in the attached report at 5.2.2. In summary none of the recommendations in the report are indicating that as a consequence of them being agreed, the service will be running at a deficit annually.

(b) Changes to existing tariff charges – marginal costs associated with back office, signs/lines and support service costs such as legal advice and notices adverts etc. these would be funded through surpluses generated in the financial year.

(c) Expansion of tariff charges - Estimates of £505k in capital and increased revenue expenditure at £137k annually. Assuming the preferred parking tariff Option1/Tar1 is applied, income generated through pay and display parking can be expected to increase by anything between £140,000 to £650,000 per annum, subject to user

behaviours. As there is no capital programme for off-street car parks, it is likely that an application to the SBC *change fund* will be made which would see the initial capital borrowing required for implementation to be repaid annually from the surpluses arising.

(d) The increase in cost of permits to £100 provides excellent value for money when compared with drive up charges. The increase in cost may see a reduction in permit applications however, this does free up space for paying visitors with alternative parking available. The increase of the administrative fee also better reflects the staff processing costs. Current income from permits is £4,800 p/a, the recommended option and associated controls are estimated to increase income to between £9,300 to £15,850 per annum.

(e) Increasing the off-street PCN from £40/£20 to £100/£50 is anticipated to improve compliance, which may reduce the number of PCNs issued. Overall PCN income is estimated to increase from the current £21,000 to between £31,000 and £53,000 per year, depending on the level of compliance.

(f) As per recommendation 2(j) and Section 6 of this report, parking surpluses must only be used for the statutory purposes set out in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (section 55). This will focus support the delivery of the Councils annual investment programme into roads and related assets as outlined in the budget, which will be prioritised accordingly and members engaged in that annual process.

(g) Making good previous parking account deficits over the last 4 years.

- Provision and maintenance of off-street parking.
- Contributions to other authorities for off-street parking provision.
- Where further off-street parking is unnecessary, the surplus may instead fund:
  - Public passenger transport services
  - Road improvement projects

8.2 **Risk and Mitigations**

a) There is a risk of a negative public response to an increase in the tariff charges for off street parking, increase to PCNs and changes to parking permits. The Council changed the model of operating in 2021 and no significant negative responses were observed at that time. Whilst on this occasion there is a concern that this could happen, it is regarded as low likelihood of occurring. The Council already operates pay and display at 14 off-street car parks where these changes will be implemented and there is acceptance already that in order to park the user must pay or run the risk of being fined. Users can also apply and pay for a parking permit, which offers significant value for money. There are alternative local parking options which will remain free to use, providing choice to those not wishing to pay to park. The current tariffs have been in place at the current level for five years, it is

reasonable given that the costs of providing the service during that time have all increased, that tariffs are increased.

b) There is a risk of negative public response to the introduction of parking charges at 19 new locations. The 19 car parks identified to have tariff charges etc introduced, are distributed across eleven settlements of which eight currently enjoy free off-street parking. For those settlements in particular the introduction of tariffs etc will be new. It has been observed by Members previously that a previous policy decision to introduce charging for off street parking in the early 2000s at some settlements led to a significant backlash within some communities, this ultimately resulted in the Council opting not to introduce charging policy at that time. The study has identified a number of problems and opportunities which have then been developed into seven study objectives. The introduction of tariffs etc at these locations will contribute in varying degrees to the delivery of those seven objectives, which are aligned to the Council plan. Prior to implementation a consultation will take place allowing communities to make representation on the introduction of the tariff charges etc. Where material concerns emerge, they will be considered in the context of this report and study. It is important to note that in all settlements there will remain an option for free off-street parking, allowing choice for all those wishing to avoid paying for parking etc. this free provision is the main mitigation.

c) There is a risk that as a consequence of introducing charging tariffs at a higher rate, and or expanded charging to 19 new locations, displacement occurs where drivers opt to park on-street, causing congestion and inconvenience to residents and traffic in proximity to the displaced vehicles. There is no evidence to support this risk likelihood however with on street parking restrictions and considerations already in place, as long as the on-street parking is legal then this risk is managed. Illegal or irresponsible parking remains a matter for enforcement with Police Scotland and is out with the control of SBC.

d) There is a risk of negative impact on the economic performance of our high streets arising. There is no evidence available other than anecdotal which supports this risk, parking enforcement utilises an element of discretion by default. This risk is recognised and tolerated.

e) There is a risk of drivers opting not to use park and ride opportunities as a consequence of increasing charges. There is no evidence available to support this, the risk will be monitored.

f) There is a risk of increased non-compliance as a consequence of increases to tariff rates for parking. The current enforcement approach is felt to be appropriate and may be expanded depending on the decisions taken by members. This risk will be monitored.

g) There is a risk that the estimated financial benefits as a result of the increase in tariffs and associated measures do not manifest. The study has caveated much of the assumptions however, given the

benchmarking performance and comparisons against other Authorities it is unlikely that the estimated financial impacts will not be realised. This risk will be monitored.

h) There is a risk locally where a community believes that the local Members have committed to a policy position, only for the Council to change that policy position. Local policy decisions are subject to review and may be changed as a consequence of a whole Council decision. This risk is noted and local members supported by officer to help respond to any local matters which may emerge This risk is monitored.

i) There is a risk that where the review has identified a car park for a change in policy, that the car park is a Common Good asset. Ownership and any surplus sharing arrangements which may have been previously established will be reviewed as part of the recommendations in this report where required appropriate consultation and engagement undertaken with the Common Good Committee to explain the changes and where required update the surplus sharing arrangements, to reflect the policy changes and governance arrangements required.

8.3 Integrated Impact Assessment

a) The review of the Council's current parking policy aims to evaluate its effectiveness and consistency. The principal objective of the review is to consider options related to changes to the off-street and on-street parking regime, informed by a financial appraisal for on-street parking. The review will also ensure that the parking policy is consistent across all localities, aligns with the latest best practice, meets the needs of the community, and supports the Council's broader strategic goals.

b) The impact assessments stage one has identified the potential for impacts on those impacted by material deprivation wishing to access goods and services within communities using a car as their means of access and parking in a Council car park which applies tariff charges. Mitigations exist within the emerging policy for residents to apply for permits and secure significant savings against the drive-up rates otherwise charged. There is an integrated transport network across the Scottish Borders which enables people choice when considering travel into our towns and villages, those who may be disabled can access support via the blue badge scheme enabling free parking across our communities to suit and there are alternative free car parks available to all within our towns and villages even where some car parks may be charged for, enabling choice.

    i. Area deprivation impacts have been identified where those living rurally are impacted when choosing to drive into our towns and villages. This is similarly mitigated as above with access to free parking remaining a choice in settlements.

ii. Carers have been identified as potentially impacted by any changes to the Councils Off Street Parking Policy. Mitigations are identified already as above.

iii. Addictions and substance abuse, impact identified when attending medical and other related appointments. Free options and alternative travel including public transport exist as well as telephone and other online support platforms.

iv. The revised parking policy and any agreed changes will be managed and reviewed by the Roads and Infrastructure service, where appropriate reports may be presented to the Executive to update on key next steps and lessons learnt, enabling any issues which do emerge either from the issues identified above or as yet unknown issues to be considered at a later date.

8.4 **Sustainable Development Goals**

If adopted the potential changes to parking policy will contribute towards the UN Sustainable development goals as follows-

- Promoting the use of public transport
- Mitigate the impacts of climate change, through more sustainable transport choices being made.
- Impacting on the tourist economy within the borders, leveraging income into the local economy derived from those visiting the area.
- Impacting positively on the use of personal vehicles promoting people to use alternative models of transport including active travel and public transport

8.5 **Climate Change**

The assessments of the potential changes and options presented in this and the accompanying report have been aligned to the Council plan objectives where issues of the Clean, Green Future and promotion of sustainable transport are key aspects. There is clear option for people who do not wish to pay for parking in our towns and villages to avoid being asked to pay by opting for more sustainable travel options.

8.6 **Rural Proofing**

The rural proofing assessment and checklist has been completed and no negative impacts have been identified. The implementation and onward progression of the policy will be kept under review as progress is made.

8.7 **Data Protection Impact Statement**

The proposals include moving to a digitally administered permit system, which will require the processing of personal data (for example, vehicle and contact details) for permit administration and enforcement purposes. Any processing will be carried out in line with the Council's data protection policies and will be subject to the appropriate assessments and controls.

8.8 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

It is proposed that the Scheme of Delegation be amended as follows. Under the section Neighbourhood Operations and Waste Services, Clause two, is amended by removing the words "(restricted to specific towns only), subject to the agreement of at least 50% of the Members in the relevant Ward(s)".

9 CONSULTATION

9.1 The Director (Finance & Procurement), the Director (Corporate Governance), the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments received have been considered within this report.

Approved by

Name	**Title**
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Background Papers: [insert list of background papers used in compiling report]
Previous Minute Reference: [insert last Minute reference (if any)]

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Jason Hedley can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

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