

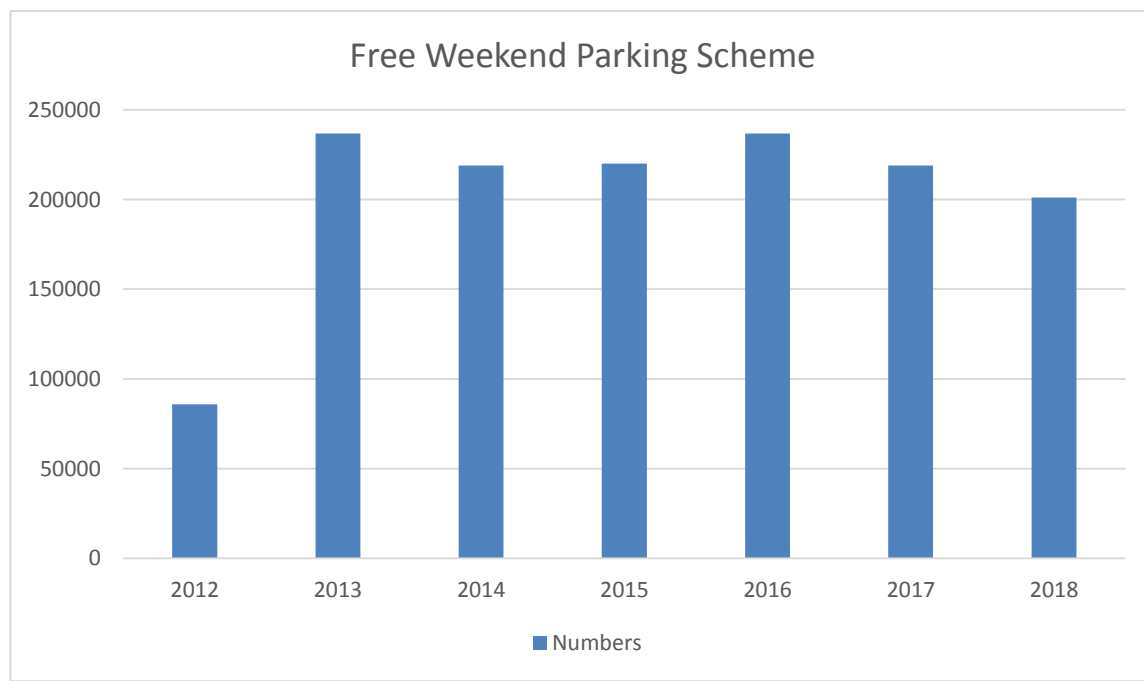
<b>Report to:</b>	Executive Cabinet Member Deputy Leader's Portfolio		
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> January 2020		
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Place	<b>Report number:</b>	ECMDL/723
<b>Contact officer:</b>	Jas Hundal- Interim Assistant Director of Economic Development & Regeneration	<b>Telephone number</b>	1017
<b>Report title:</b>	Revision to Free Parking in Bolton Town Centre		
<b>Not confidential</b>			
This report does not contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public.			
<b>PDG reports – Not for wider circulation</b>			
<b>Purpose:</b>	To seek approval to the revised free parking scheme in Bolton Town Centre.		
<b>Recommendations:</b>	The Executive Cabinet Member Deputy Leader's Portfolio is recommended to approve the revision to the free parking scheme to allow for up to 2 hours of discounted parking for a flat charge of £1 on weekends and bank-holidays in Bolton Town Centre until 31 August 2020, and to authorise the Director of Place to implement the changes.		
<b>Decision:</b>			
<b>Background documents:</b>	None		
<b>Signed:</b>			
	Leader/Executive Cabinet Member	Monitoring Officer	
<b>Date:</b>			

<b>Consultation with other officers</b>		
Finance	Yes	Insert name
Legal	No	Insert name
HR	No	Insert name
Equality Impact Assessment required?	No	
<b>(a) Pre-consultation reports</b> Is there a need to consult on the proposals?		No
<b>(b) Post consultation reports</b> Please confirm that the consultation response has been taken into consideration in making the recommendations.		No
<b>Vision outcomes</b>	1. Start Well	X
Please identify the appropriate Vision	2.Live Well	X
	3.Age Well	X

outcome(s) that this report relates or contributes to by putting a cross in the relevant box.	4.Prosporous	X
	5. Clean and Green	X
	6.Strong and Distinctive	

## **INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 In 2012 feedback from town centre businesses and visitors to the town centre was that parking charges were a deterrent and were discouraging visitors from visiting the town centre. Accordingly, approval was given to introduce a free parking pilot scheme in order to address the negative perception of Bolton town centre parking charges compared to other local destinations and to increase footfall to the town centre.
- 1.2 Due to the success of the pilot scheme approval was given to introduce free parking in NCP car parks over weekend & bank holidays in May 2013 for a period of 2 years. This approval also included free parking after 3pm Monday to Friday to support the festive period. This scheme has been extended on an annual basis and is due for renewal on 31 January 2020.
- 1.3 The free parking scheme has continued to increase the number of shoppers and visitors to the town centre.



- 1.4 The free parking scheme has been funded by the annual income generated by the Council's multi-storey car parks operated by NCP.

1.5 The present free parking scheme covers 3 multi-storey car parks operated by NCP in Bolton Town Centre. These are:

- Deane Road
- Octagon
- Topp Way

The normal pay on the day tariffs for parking at NCP car parks are as follows:

Car Park	1 Hour	1-2 Hours	2-3 Hours	3-4 hours	4-24 Hours
Deane Road	£1.60	£3.10	£3.10	£3.10	£4.60
Octagon	£1.80	£2.90	£3.40	£3.90	Note*
Topp Way	£1.10	£2.10	£3.10	£4.10	£4.10

Note\*: 4-5 hours £4.40, 5-6 hours £4.90, 6-7 hours £5.40, and 7 to 24 hours £6.10

1.6 *Attached* Appendix shows the overall provision of car parks across the Town Centre.

## 2 ISSUES

2.1 As the number of users taking advantage of the free parking scheme has increased the costs borne by the Council have similarly gone up significantly. It would appear from the patronage data there are also several commuters taking advantage of the free provision.

2.2 There are several other factors that have impacted on car parking income from NCP operated car parks in the town centre:

- Market Place continue to offer free parking from 5pm and 60 minutes free 7 days a week
- Unauthorised car parks operating across the town

2.3 The Council's share of NCP car parking income has significantly reduced due to increased cost of operations and lower income. This has resulted in the Council's equity share declining from over £300,000 per annum on average to around £25,000 in 2018/19.

2.4 In view of the above, it is considered necessary to revise the structure of the free parking scheme to ensure that whilst it continues to fulfil its original aim of attracting shoppers and visitors to support the businesses it does not benefit commuters.

### **3 MAIN BODY OF THE REPORT**

- 3.1 In view of the above factors, the present free parking scheme is not financially sustainable going forward.
- 3.2 However, it is recognised that maintaining footfall is critical in supporting businesses in the town in order to compete with out of town shopping centres with free parking. It is therefore proposed that the present scheme is revised whereby discounted parking is restricted to a maximum of 2 hours at a flat rate of £1 at weekends and on bank holidays. NCP will be reimbursed based on patronage and duration of parking, and the costs will be closely monitored during the year. It should be noted that parking in excess of 2 hours will be payable at normal NCP tariffs.
- 3.4 The cost of free parking as outlined above from the end of the present scheme up to 31 August 2020 is in the order of £50,000 based on the projected take-up. This can be met from anticipated income share of the Council from NCP and existing departmental budgets.
- 3.5.1 The scheme will be reviewed on an annual basis in future to ensure that it remains affordable for the Council.

### **4. OPTIONS**

The alternative option of maintain the status quo was considered but as it is not financially sustainable it has been discounted.

### **5 IMPACTS AND IMPLICATIONS:**

#### **5.1 Financial**

The financial implications are outlined in the body of the report.

#### **5.2 Legal**

None

#### **5.3 HR**

None

## 6. EIA

At this stage it is not anticipated that the proposals will have a disproportionate impact on any of Bolton's diversity groups.

## 7 OPTIONS

None

## 8 VISION 2030

Please identify the appropriate Vision outcome(s) that this report relates or contributes to by ticking the relevant box.	1. Start Well	X
	2.Live Well	X
	3.Age Well	X
	4.Prosporous	X
	5. Clean and Green	X
	6.Strong and Distinctive	

## 9 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Cabinet Member Deputy Leader's Portfolio is recommended to approve the revision to the free parking scheme to allow for up to 2 hours of discounted parking for a flat charge of £1 on weekends and bank-holidays in Bolton Town Centre until 31 August 2020, and to authorise the Director of Place to implement the changes.

## Appendix

