Report to:	Cabinet	**Date of Meeting:**	27th March 2014
Subject:	Parking Services Proposals & Tariffs 2014/15		
Report of:	Director of Built Environment	**Wards Affected:**	All
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes	**Is it included in the Forward Plan?**	Yes
Exempt/Confidential	No		

Purpose/Summary

To report the proposed improvements to the parking service offer and to set parking tariffs for 2014/15.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that:-

1. Members approve the proposed tariff increases as detailed in appendices 1 and 2 and summarised in paragraph 10.5
2. Officers proceed with the introduction of pay by phone technology and produce a further report for the Cabinet Member – Transportation for his approval
3. Members note the intention to progress with the replacement of the outdated pay and display machine stock as included in the capital programme.
4. Members note the intention to progress, through the normal channels, a Traffic Regulation order the effect of which will be to introduce a 4 hour maximum stay on the Tulketh Street car parks

How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Objectives?

Corporate Objective		Positive Impact	Neutral Impact	Negative Impact
1	Creating a Learning Community		√	
2	Jobs and Prosperity	√		
3	Environmental Sustainability	√		
4	Health and Well-Being	√		
5	Children and Young People	√		
6	Creating Safe Communities	√		
7	Creating Inclusive Communities	√		
8	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening Local Democracy		√	

Reasons for the Recommendation:

To set the tariffs for parking charges for 2014/15. The Council has the power to vary parking charges by notice under Sections 35C and 46A of the Road Traffic Regulation Act, 1984. Authorisation to set charges falls under the remit of the cabinet.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs – -The proposed increases in parking charges are estimated to result in additional annual income of £103,000 (comprising £53,000 for Off Street Car Parks and £50,000 for On Street parking). The income budget for the car parks referred to in this report is currently £2,436,250.

In addition to the effect that increasing charges is expected to have on income levels, the projection of additional income also recognises a possible reduction in car park usage immediately after the implementation of the new charges and the impact of recent downward trends in parking numbers (as evidence by figures referred to in the report).

Failure to achieve this forecast income, or the achievement of income in excess of this forecast, is dependent on levels of future car park usage which cannot be precisely identified. The figure of £103,000 is, however, considered to be a prudent and achievable target based on current usage levels.

Following the approval of the 2014/15 budget at the Council meeting on March 6th, the originally approved savings for the Strategic Parking Review for 2014/15 were reduced from £300,000 to £100,000. The proposals contained in this report will contribute towards the achievement of this saving requirement.

(B) Capital Costs – Nil

Implications: The following implications of this proposal have been considered and where there are specific implications, these are set out below:

Legal	None	
Human Resources	None	
Equality		
1. No Equality Implication		√
2. Equality Implications identified and mitigated		
3. Equality Implication identified and risk remains		

Impact on Service Delivery: None

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

The Head of Corporate Finance & ICT (FD2885) has been consulted and notes the potential for additional income generation as a result of increasing most of the existing car park charges and also the need to monitor income levels throughout 2014/15 to assess the extent to which increased income generation targets are being achieved.

Head of Corporate Legal Services (LD2190/14) has been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

Are there any other options available for consideration? None

Implementation Date for the Decision: Following the expiry of the "call-in" period for the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting

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Background Papers: None

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Members will recall that an increase in parking charges was considered as part of the budget setting process for 2013-2014. However, Members did not adopt the proposed changes to charges but instead, resolved that a strategic review of parking services be undertaken to consider all aspects of the service including charging policy.

1.2 Cabinet requested a review of the operation of parking services to consider how any such changes to charging could also instigate and/or align with other potential improvements to the parking services operation in delivering the parking product on the street. In addition it was also considered appropriate for proposed changes to be the subject of consultation to ensure the views of the public and traders were considered within the review.

1.3 Consequently, in January 2013 Cabinet made the decision to review parking services across the Borough in order to examine effectiveness and efficiency of the service and the current fees and charging regime, in order to inform decision making in relation to potential changes to charging and on and off street parking.

1.4 In addition to the operational services it was considered important to examine the role and impact of Parking in its widest context, particularly on future infrastructure and development across the Borough. The parking review is on-going but in order to move forward with improvements to the service and the introductions of new tariffs for 2014/15 this report is being brought to Members.

1.5 It is important to note that Members were particularly concerned to ensure that consultation with the retail / hospitality / wider private sector take place in order to hear and accommodate the views of such groups. This was to ensure that changes to parking tariffs did not undermine the local economy and to ensure the provision of a high quality and modern parking service that sought to increase footfall in key centres and maximise the potential for passing trade. As a result of feedback, the proposed increase in income initially proposed as £300,000 was reduced to £100,000.

2.0 Background

2.1 Sefton Council has always had responsibility for the management of its off-street car parks, this responsibility was extended to include the enforcement of the on-street pay and display spaces in 1995.

2.2 On the 1st February 2000 the Council took on the powers available to it under the Road Traffic Act 1991 to take over from the Police Traffic Warden Service in enforcing all on-street parking restrictions. The Legislation allowing Councils to enforce parking restrictions has subsequently been amended and the Council now operates Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) under the Traffic Management Act (TMA) 2004.

2.3 Since 2000 a number of reports have been made to various meetings and Committees of the Council regarding the operation of the service. The most recent of these was a review of parking which was reported to the then Cabinet Member – Technical Services and the Cabinet in November 2008. As a result members approved a five year plan as the framework for the delivery and development of the Councils Parking service through to 2013/14. Members also approved increases to parking charges to be introduced in April 2009 and April 2011. These increases have subsequently been introduced and the current charges for parking are detailed elsewhere in the report.

2.4 The report went on to identify all items of increased expenditure over the coming 5 years and what impact these would have on the net surplus. Included in these costs was the extension of the park and ride service to allow the Kew site to operate for 7 days per week, recognising that the service would operate at a loss and be subsidised by the rest of the parking budget. RPI price rises were also included for the various contracts and purchases made by parking services.

Most significant amongst these were the increase to the parking enforcement contract (valued at £1,087,500 at the time of the report) and the park and ride bus contract (valued at £547,500 at the time of the report). It was estimated that RPI increases to these contracts during the life of the plan would add a further £363,000 to the costs of the service and so increases in revenue were built in to meet these costs.

2.5 Also built into the plan were the following developments which were to be progressed over the five years of the plan:

- Increased level of enforcement to Residents Privileged Parking Schemes particularly during evenings, weekends etc.

- Enable more customer/trader focused management of town centre off-street car parks. This to permit pay on exit systems to be introduced removing the ‘threat’ of penalty charge notices being issued and hence providing a more relaxed shopping environment. Due to longstanding requests for such action, it was proposed that initial attention will be given to the Crosby Town Centre off-street car parks, with future year attention to Southport.

- A replacement programme for Pay and Display (P&D) machines to maintain the integrity of the service and offer opportunity to consider ‘smarter’ machines e.g. that offer payment by credit card etc.

- Improvements to safety, security and facilities at car parks.

- Promotion of the service and the opportunity to support wider transportation programmes.

- Creation and promotion of a positive image with stakeholders to benefit visitors and businesses.

- Resources to review existing restrictions and consider need and options to better manage capacity e.g. potential through dual use of spaces.

2.6 The decision on the plan was made shortly before the downturn in the economy and it soon became apparent that parking income was not rising as quickly as anticipated and not only could the developments mentioned in 3.5 above not be delivered but that savings would have to be made in the existing service to maintain the budget surplus.

2.7 As a result of the above a number of savings have been delivered the most significant of which are:

- Abandoning the operation of the Kew Park & Ride and retendering of the bus service - The service was cancelled in late 2010 and delivered a saving of in excess of £200,000. The service has since recommenced operating on Summer weekends and throughout the main school holidays and funded through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund

- Reduction in staffing numbers in the parking back office - Over the last three years staffing levels in the parking back office have reduced from 13.5 FTE to 10.5 FTE.

- Retendering of the Parking Enforcement Contract - The retendering of the Parking Enforcement Contract in April 2012 delivered a saving of £100,000 in the annual budget.

2.8 In addition to the above other minor changes have been made to the operation of the service to deliver savings and the parking expenditure budget is always managed in a way that controls spending to ensure that the budget surplus is met.

2.9 Members are reminded that under Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, any surplus in the parking account must be used for the purposes set out in section 55 [4] ie.meeting the cost of providing off street parking / public passenger transport services/highway improvements/ environmental improvements. This applies only to income generated from on-street charges and not from off-street charges. Income from off-street charges can be used as the Local Authority sees fit.

3.0 The Councils Enforcement Policy

3.1 Parking Services, together with its Enforcement Contractor (NSL), enforce on and off street parking restrictions under Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 and other enabling legislation. NSL manage the Civil Enforcement Officers (parking) who operate on-street and on Council car parks and issue Penalty Charge Notices to any vehicle found parked in contravention of any restriction that applies.

3.2 The Department for Transport issues guidance to Local Authorities on parking enforcement and the most recent guidance entitled “Operational Guidance to Local Authorities: Parking Policy and Enforcement” is used to inform the way that enforcement operations are carried out in the Borough.

3.3 Motorists are required to abide by the parking restrictions, which are shown by the signs and lines on and off street. Any vehicles parked in contravention of a waiting restriction may be issued with a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN).

The current charging rates are:

Higher - £70 (£35 if paid within 14 days)

Lower - £50 (£25 if paid within 14 days)

These charges were introduced on the 31st March 2008 when differential parking penalties were introduced as part of the implementation of Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004. Local Authorities outside London have a choice of adopting one of two scales of penalty charge. These are either Band 1 - high level £60, low level £40 or Band 2 - high level £70, low level £50. Sefton adopted the Band 2 charges which replaced the single penalty charge rate (then £60 and reduced to £30 if paid within 14 days)

Which charge applies depends on the seriousness of the contravention. In general a PCN issued to a vehicle in a place where parking is permitted but the motorist has failed to pay and display or has stayed beyond the permitted time will be issued with a penalty charge notice at the lower rate. Vehicles parked in a place where parking is prohibited – such as a double yellow line, on a loading ban or in a place intended for a particular user (taxi rank, bus stop, disabled bay, loading bay, etc) will be issued a PCN at the higher rate.

3.4 The Council's parking services staff and its enforcement contractor aim to enforce parking regulations fairly and equitably. The Council believes that effective parking enforcement benefits public transport users, pedestrians, cyclists and responsible drivers.

Illegal or dangerous parking can cause serious problems for all road users, including pedestrians, and by enforcing parking regulations the Council aims to:

- Promote the safe free flow of traffic.
- Promote pedestrian safety.
- Influence travel demand.
- Promote an increase in the use of public transport, cycling and walking.
- Improve access to town centres.

3.5 To achieve those aims the following methodology is adopted:

To promote the free flow of traffic and pedestrian safety, on-street parking is restricted by the use of prohibition of waiting orders and loading bans that either operate 24 hours per day or are time specific.

To influence travel demand, promote increased use of town centres and improve access, parking is controlled in both on and off street locations. A variety of methods are used including loading and unloading prohibitions, waiting restrictions, free parking with time limits, parking where charges apply and resident's parking schemes.

A charging strategy has been adopted that encourages short stay parking in town and local shopping centres with commuters and other long-stay users encouraged to use park and ride or public transport.

3.6 The Civil Enforcement Officers are the public face of the Council's Civil Parking Enforcement and the way they perform their duties is crucial to the success and public perception of our enforcement operation. The Officers are trained to be professional and efficient at all times, sometimes in difficult circumstances. It is the Council's aim for them to be regarded in this way by the public. As well as undertaking enforcement duties, our Civil Enforcement Officers should and do provide assistance, when asked, to motorists requiring information about the availability of parking spaces and the cost of parking.

3.7 A recipient of a Penalty Charge Notice will be able to make an initial informal challenge followed by a formal representation if he/she is not satisfied with the initial response. A final appeal to the independent Traffic Penalty Tribunal is the next course of action if the response is not satisfactory.

3.8 Appeals against the issue of a Penalty Charge Notice are not considered as part of the Councils Corporate Complaints Procedure.

4.0 Pay & Display (P&D) Machines

4.1 Sefton MBC Parking Services Department currently own and operate 187 P&D machines. 139 machines are located on-street, 48 machines are located in off-street car parks.

4.2 In addition to the above, SMBC Parking Services also provide enforcement at two other car parks, Central 12 and Formby Pool. The seven machines at C12 and two machines at Formby Pool are maintained by their owners although our enforcement contractor replenishes ticket rolls and deals with very minor faults. The Councils enforcement contractor is responsible for cash collection from all P&D machines.

4.3 There are two different types of machine in use and both have been sourced from the same manufactures (Parkeon, formerly known as Schlumberger). 133 (71% of the total) are Schlumberger DGS4's, these machines are no longer in production but spare parts (at the moment) are still available. Our stock of DGS4 is now almost 20 years old with the majority having been installed when P&D parking was introduced in Southport in the early 1990's. They are now well beyond their operational life span. However, it should be noted that the DGS4 is an extremely robust machine and having lasted well beyond their expected service life they have served the Council very well. Nevertheless, failures are becoming increasingly frequent and it is only a matter of time before some of these machines fail irreparably. This could have an impact on revenue generation

The remaining 54 machines (29% of the total) are Parkeon Strada Rapide's. Whilst these are newer machines with the youngest having been in place for some six years they are a far less robust machine than the older DGS4. Consequently, they too are reaching the end of their economic life.

Notwithstanding the above, failures of machines are becoming increasingly frequent and it is only a matter of time before some of these machines fail irreparably. This would have an impact on revenue generation

4.4 A long standing agreement exists for the repair and maintenance of P&D machines in house. However, this agreement only applies to the older DSG4's as the engineers concerns are not trained to maintain the newer Strada machines. One of the enforcement contractors maintenance officers has been trained to deal with faults on the Strada machines. However, if he is unable to deal with the problem then the manufacturer attends and effects the repair.

4.5 In terms of fault reporting it is fair to say that the majority of the pay and display machines in Sefton receive quite intensive use, this in turn contributes to the excessive wear and tear. In the last twelve months a total of 625 separate faults were logged. 391 faults were recorded against the DGS4’s and 234 faults against the Strada Rapides.

4.6 An analysis of faults reported shows a total of 80 machines which need immediate action to replace. These are 58 DSG4’s and 22 Stradas. However, all machines need to be replaced as a matter of urgency.

4.7 The cost of machine maintenance during the 2012/13 financial year amounted to £100,000 (this includes all staff time, parts and manufacturer call outs)

4.8 Members are also reminded that the current stock of P&D machines are not capable of taking the newly minted 5p and 10p coin. Whilst the machines could be converted to accept the new coins the cost to the Authority would be approx £46,000. In view of the age of the machines and the need for replacement this expenditure would not provide good value for money for the Council.

4.9 Later in this report the issue of introduction of pay by phone technology is considered. If such a system were to be introduced then it would reduce the number of transactions made through the P&D machines and if consideration is to be given to the replacement of the machines it would lead to an opportunity to consider not replacing some units. For example the number of machines on Lord Street could be significantly reduced if pay by phone parking were introduced.

4.10 The P&D machines currently in use are only able to take cash payments (and not all coinage can be accepted). The latest models of P&D machines on the market are capable of taking card payments and contactless (wave and pay) payments and also through GPRS modems can be linked to a central point. This allows instant fault reporting, downloading of audit data and simplifies the process for introducing tariff changes.

4.11 To replace all P&D machines with those that would accept coins only would be in the region of £600,000. The addition of options such as contactless payment, GPRS modems, etc would increase this to closer to £900,000. However, if pay be phone were introduced the number of machines could be reduced to lower this cost.

4.12 A proposal for funding for the replacement of machines has been accepted by Members and is now included in the capital programme for 2014/15 and 2015/16.

5.0 New Technologies – Pay by Phone

5.1 Pay by phone for parking is established in a number of Local Authority areas. There is now a choice of established providers for this service in the market place and competition for business is very keen. Most of the big companies provide a very similar service so costs are very competitive.

5.2 Most of the Pay by Phone companies provides a bespoke product tailored to the client’s specific needs. There are benefits to both the Council and the motorist. The Council benefits in the following ways.

- Reduction of cash collection demands
- Direct transfer of funds.
- Less reliance on pay and display machines.

- Reduced maintenance on machines.
- Opportunity to reduce the number of machines with the obvious benefit in savings.
- Opportunity to save money and make better machine investment decisions.

The motorist also benefits.

- Can make choices in payment method (machine, phone, text, email, iphone & internet).
- More convenient.
- Safer.
- Remote top up if required.

5.3 Clear and prominently displayed information/instruction signage is placed on existing machines and tariff boards to inform motorists of the system. A marketing campaign would be carried out by the provider through leaflets, local advertising, press releases, etc.

On first using the system a motorist makes an initial call to register their vehicle and card details on the system. On each subsequent visit parking could be paid for by contacting the provider and giving a zone or car park number, these would be clearly shown on signs and pay and display machines and would ensure that the correct parking charge is paid. Immediately the transaction is completed the vehicle details would be downloaded onto the system and be available to CEO's through their handheld terminals

5.4 There are two main options for customers to buy time these are:

- To buy a predetermined amount of time as you would if you were using a P&D machine.
- Start /Stop approach where customers call once to start parking and call again to stop it and only pay for the time they need – can be compared to a barrier system.

5.5 Most companies will set up a system at zero cost to the Council. Their income is then derived from the transaction fee (normally 20p per transaction) paid by the customer. The differences between the various operators will be in the detail of the product, the quality of the product and the deductions made to the Council in processing costs for handling credit and debit card transactions.

5.6 In view of the above it is suggested that officers proceed with the introduction of pay by phone with a report being made to Cabinet Member – Transportation recommending the preferred supplier and method of operation.

6.0 Existing Car Parks

6.1 Parking Services operates and maintains 25 car parks throughout the Borough. This equates to 5768 spaces + a 55 space Coach Park. Thirteen car parks are subject to

P&D regulations with two Park and Ride sites operating a pay on entry system via a static on-site attendant. Our third Park & Ride site at Foul Lane (Kew) operates as a pay and display park and ride car park. Vehicles displaying a valid disabled persons badge may park free of charge in any of our car parks with the exception of the park and ride sites. The coach park is based at the Esplanade Park and Ride site in Southport. Parking Services are also responsible for a small car park situated off Tulketh Street, Southport which is for permit holders only. Permit holders are either residents of Tulketh Street / Bridge Street or a limited number of SMBC staff who pay for parking. There are 9 further car parks that are free to use and uncontrolled

6.2 In addition to the 25 sites Parking Services is responsible for the enforcement only, of a further two locations, namely Central 12 in Southport on behalf of the landowner and Formby Pools Trust car park in Formby Village.

Car Parks Managed

Car Park	Location	Operation	Spaces
New Strand Multi	Bootle	Pay & Display	432
Bootle Leisure	Bootle	Pay & Display	174
Allengate	Crosby Village	Pay & Display	163
Cooks Land	Crosby Village	Pay & Display	60
The Green	Crosby Village	Pay & Display	126
Hougoumont Ave	Waterloo	Pay & Display	115
Crosby Civic Hall	Waterloo	Pay & Display	96
Tulketh St West	Southport	Pay & Display	106
Tulketh St East	Southport	Pay & Display	72
Marine Drive	Southport	Pay & Display	790
Floral Hall	Southport	Pay & Display	190
Dunes Leisure	Southport	Pay & Display	174
Splash World	Southport	Pay & Display	114
Burbo Bank	Blundellsand	Free	185
Seaforth Vale	Seaforth	Free	24
Netherton Town	Netherton	Free	50
Easedale Drive	Ainsdale	Free	12
Duke Street	Southport	Free	10
Birkdale Station	Southport	Free	120
Sumner Road	Formby	Free	90
Mariners Road	Blundellsands	Free	50
Tulketh St Permit	Southport	Permits Only	25
Esplanade P & R	Southport	Pay on Entry	1200
Fairway P & R	Southport	Pay on Entry	850
Kew P & R	Southport	Pay & Display	540
Central 12	Southport	Pay & Display	640
Formby Pool	Formby	Pay & Display	60

6.3 Parking Services are responsible for the operation of the above car parks sometimes directly and in other cases as part of management agreements. Agreements apply to the following car parks mentioned above:

- Bootle Leisure / Dunes Leisure / Splashworld / Floral Hall on behalf of Leisure / Tourism

- Central 12 on behalf of the landowner with an income split between the Council and the landowner
- Formby Pool on behalf of the Formby Pool Trust

6.4 Other Departments of the Council are responsible for the following car parks which operate with a charge:

- Ainsdale / Southport Beach
- Lifeboat Road, Formby
- Rear Stanley Road, Bootle (Contracts only)

6.5 Other Departments of the Council are responsible for the following car parks which operate without a charge:

- Crosby Lakeside Adventure Centre
- Blutcher Street, Waterloo
- Botanic Gardens / Verulam Road, Southport

6.6 There are a number of car parks, particularly in Bootle which are used for staff parking. Staff who use these car parks are charges an annual contract rate which is deducted from their salaries through salary sacrifice.

6.7 The Councils enforcement contractor (NSL Services Group Ltd) supplies three maintenance officers within the contract. Two officers are engaged on general car park maintenance and one exclusively on litter picking duties covering 32 hours per week. Whilst these officers will carry out general maintenance, specialist works such as resurfacing, signage and lighting and specialised pay and display machine maintenance are sourced through approved Council Contractors.

6.8 The majority of the car parks within the management of Parking Services require varying degrees of refurbishment. However, reduced resources and the need to limit expenditure to ensure a balanced parking budget makes it difficult if not impossible to do the type of work necessary to improve the sites. All sites are maintained in a safe and usable condition.

6.9 Current on-street and off-street parking charges are detailed in appendices 1 and 2.

7.0 Parking User Numbers / Income Trends

7.1 Audit information is available which shows the number of users at each tariff and the income generated by these users for the on-street parking zones and the off-street car parks in the Borough.

7.2 User Numbers

Between 2009/10 and 2011/12 the number of users in total on the car parks increased by 4.7% from 2.71m users to 2.84m users before falling back by 2.1% in 2012/13 to 2.78m users. However, there were variations between the different car parks in the Borough with usage on Tulketh Street and Central 12 increasing overall whilst usage at the Bootle Multi Storey car park fell significantly. There was an increase in the overall usage of the Crosby car parks over the three year period but if the free half hour period is discounted then less people paid to park.

The largest fall in usage has been in the Southport Park & Ride service where over the three year period user numbers have dropped by 30% from 196,200 to 137,100.

On-Street in Southport there was an initial increase in usage between 2009/10 and 2010/11 of 1% from 927,800 users to 936,400 users, but over the following two years there has been a decline in usage of 8% between 2010/11 and 2011/12 and 6.9% between 2011/12 and 2012/13 to 801,400 users.

On Street in Bootle the numbers parking are far lower than in Southport as the supply of on-street parking spaces is much lower. User number rose between 2009/10 and 2010/11 by 7.3% from 17,900 to 19,200. In the following two years as in Southport the usage fell by 13.8% between 2010/11 and 2011/12 and 5.1% between 2011/12 and 2012/13 to 15,700 users.

7.3 Parking Income

In line with the review which was reported to Cabinet in late 2008, increases in parking charges were introduced in April 2009 and April 2011. Despite these increases income has fallen from the areas / car parks indicated in 5.0 above by 3.93% from £2.67m to £2.57m per annum.

7.4 Penalty Charge Notice Numbers / Income.

The number of penalty charge notices issued has also declined over recent years with 33,896 being issued last year compared with 41,934 in 2009/10. However, PCN issue numbers this year are significantly higher than they were in 2012/13.

Nevertheless, the decline in issue numbers resulted in a decline in income from PCN's by 28% from £988,900 in 2009/10 to £711,500 in 2012/13.

8.0 The Purpose, Sustainability and Charging Regime of Parking Areas

8.1 **Southport**

8.1.1 As stated in 3.5 above the charging strategy adopted by the Council is aimed at encouraging short stay parking in town and local shopping centres with commuters and other long-stay users encouraged to use park and ride or public transport.

8.1.2 Consequently, in Southport the charge for parking in excess of 4 hours on-street and on the main Council controlled town centre car park (Tulketh Street) is £6, with the aim that people parking for longer periods will be encouraged to use the park and ride service at only £1.50 per car per day.

8.1.3 Similarly, also in Southport in the most popular on-street parking areas around Lord Street parking is limited to 2 hours, again to encourage a turnover of spaces, with longer term parking being available on surrounding streets and on the park and ride.

8.1.4 Analysis of usage numbers for on street parking in Southport shows that of the 801,000 users in 2012/13, 25% park for half an hour or less, 42% park for between half an hour and an hour, 28% park for between one and two hours, 4% park for between two hours and 4 hours and 1% park for more than 4 hours. The above indicates that the main demand is for parking of less than 2 hours with only 5% of users parking for longer. This supports the current restriction on parking in the central zone to 2 hours maximum and consequently, it is suggested that this restriction should not be changed.

8.1.5 The Tulketh Street Car Parks are the Councils main town centre car parks with a total of 178 spaces. The Council also manages the Central 12 car park (640 spaces) on behalf of the landowners and there is an income split agreement in place for this site which dates back to the time that it was developed in the early 2000's. However, it should be remembered that the Council only controls a minority of the total number of off-street car parking in the Town Centre with other principle suppliers being NCP – London Street, Eurocarparks – Tulketh Street, B&M's – Kingsway, Broadbents – West Street, Morrisons – Kingsway, Mecca Bingo – Kingsway.

On Tulketh Street 78% of users park for two hours or less and less than 1% park for in excess of 4 hours. This suggested that consideration could be given to restricting the maximum length of stay on this car park to 4 hours.

Central 12 is restricted to a maximum stay of three hours and any proposed changes to the restrictions and charges would have to be agreed with the landowners. Again the majority of users park for two hours or less but 7% do park for between 2 and 3 hours. Consequently it is suggested that the lengths of stay on this car park should remain as at present.

8.1.6 Usage on the Floral Hall Car Park has remained reasonably stable over the past few years with usage spread over the various tariff bands. It is hoped that usage on this car park will increase in future years as the development and occupancy of the area around the Floral Hall continues

8.1.7 The Marine Drive / Seawall car park has seen a steady decline in usage of some 30% over the last three years. Usage of this car park is heavily dependent on visitors to the seafront and also on the weather which for the past few summers has been relatively poor.

8.1.8 Of most concern is the decline in usage of the park and ride service from 212,000 in 2010/11 to 173,000 in 2011/12 and 137,000 in 2012/13 an overall fall of 35%. There is a concern that any increase in the charge on the park and ride will have a disproportionate impact on the usage levels

8.2 **Crosby / Waterloo**

8.2.1 Usage on the three car parks in Crosby (Allengate, Cooksland and The Green) which have a total capacity of 349 spaces increased to 2011/12 but then declined by 4% in 2012/13. The charging regime on this car park is unusual in that the first half hour is free and has been for a number of years.

8.2.2 The car parks at Crosby Civic Hall and Hougoumont Avenue only commenced operation in November 2011 and it is too early to identify any trends in usage. However, income is broadly in line with that forecast

8.3 **Bootle**

8.3.1 Bootle New Strand car park has seen a decline in parking numbers from 55,700 in 2009/10 to 51,100 (-8.2%) in 2010/11 and 39,800 (-22.1%) before an increase in 2012/13 to 44,700 (+12.3%). Usage for 2013/14 are currently matching 2012/13 numbers. This reduction in usage could be attributed to the reduction in employment in the office quarter in Bootle. However, suggestion have also been made that the steady increase in the charge for all day parking (currently £3.80 per day) has led to commuters parking on lower cost car parks in the area such as the surface level car park at the site of the former St Johns office building where the charge is £3.50 per day.

9.0 Impact of Increased Car Parking Charges on Town Centres

9.1 Attempts have been made to identify any evidence, statistical, empirical or anecdotal, which may assist in identifying the impact that parking charges have on the decision making process when visiting a shopping area.

9.2 The main limitation of the research is that it is extremely difficult to isolate with any level of confidence, the impact of car parking charges on footfall and retail figures in town centres. A number of factors come into play, including comparative charges in neighbouring areas, general economic conditions and the 'offer' available within the Town centre in terms of retail and service provision.

9.3 Evidence indicates that in other parts of the country, the question of whether increased parking charges or the economic downturn are responsible for reduced footfall, has not been answered satisfactorily with only subjective and anecdotal views available. Unfortunately, the issues raised and the impacts felt could be very localised issues and therefore, difficult to rely upon. Suffice to say that other large towns / cities have failed to establish a clear link between parking charges and footfall in Town centres.

9.4 Elsewhere in this reports parking trends in Sefton over time have been considered. In this part of the report Officers have attempted to set out how implementation of parking fees (or increases in fees) has impacted in previous years. An attempt has also been made to compare and contrast the Councils parking provision with other providers and also, a comparison of parking charges in adjacent and proximate Local Authority Districts has been undertaken in order to assess how competitive Sexton's charging policy is.

9.5 Detailed information is available for the number of users of parking services in Southport and for this section of the report we have concentrated on:

Southport on Street Parking
Park & Ride
Central12
Tulketh St (Both East and West)

Information is available on a weekly basis for 2010-11, 2011-12 and 2012-13. While there are variations, there is undoubtedly a trend for numbers to decline. For instance, during weeks 1 (April), 10 (June) and 25 (Sept), the trend is as follows;

Year	Week1	Week 10	Week 25
2010-11	44,246	45,976	43,321
2011-12	44,513	45,083	41,914
2012-13	39,912	44,326	40,106

While the trend is downwards, there is doubt as to whether car parking charges have influenced the figures or that they are attributable to economic circumstances or a decline in the quality and diversity of retail provision within Southport and how much is due to reduced Tourism as a result of the national economic situation.

Looking at Park and Ride specifically, we are able to identify trends which reflect the response when parking charges were increased.

Year	Users	Tariff
2001-2	228,868	£0.50
2002-3	217,300	£0.50
2003-4	218,472	£1.00 (50p Oct-Dec)
2004-5	210,102	£1.00
2005-6	209,060	£1.00
2006-7	218,807	£1.00
2007-8	219,590	£1.00
2008-9	219,449	£1.00
2009-10	224,608	£1.00
2010-11	212,301	£1.00
2011-12	176,996	£1.50
2012-13	137,080	£1.50

There is evidence here to suggest that usage declines immediately following increases in charges but that figures recover over time. Interestingly, there was nothing to indicate that the economic decline commencing during 2007-08 particularly affected numbers of users. However, during 2011-12, and 2012/13 numbers have declined significantly. It is unclear whether the decline in the Chapel Street retail offer caused by ongoing closures and particularly by Arcadia Group to close five stores, open two outlets in BHS and move three flagship stores to Central 12 were responsible for this decline.

Interestingly, figures for usage in Central 12 year by year are as follows;

Year	Usage
2007-8	910,259
2008-9	889,091
2009-10	889,282
2010-11	876,784
2011-12	927,248
2012-13	927,313

Central 12 is managed by the Council on behalf of the landowner and is relatively cheap. However, it is clear that since the decision of Arcadia Group to move to Central 12, users have increased significantly.

Footfall figures for the town centre and in particular Chapel Street and Lord Street can be compared using the data supplied to the Council by Springboard. Comparisons can be made on a daily, monthly or quarterly basis and allow comparisons to be made with previous years. The system went live in late 2010 so data for 2011 – 2013 has been compared. This shows that taking the first quarter of each year footfall fell 3.8% between 2011 and 2012 but then rose by 6% in 2013. Taking July as an isolated month footfall rose by 9.5% between 2010 and 2011 and by a further 10.7% between 2011 and 2012.

9.6 Comparative Parking Charges with Other Providers

Car Park	Up to 1 hour	Up to 2 hours	Up to 4 hours	Up to 12 hours
SMBC Tulketh Street	**70p**	**£1.20**	**£2.40**	**£6.00**
Mecca Bingo, Kingsway, Southport	£1.00	£2.00	£4.00	£5.00
B&M Bargains, Kingsway, Southport	50p	£1.00	£2.00	N/A
Ibbotsons, Promenade, Southport	£2.20	£2.20	£3.20	£4.50
Broadbents, West Street, Southport	£1.60	£2.40	£3.60	£7.50
NCP, London Street, Southport *	£4.50	£4.50	£5.90	£6.50
Eurocarparks, Tulketh Street, Southport *	£2.90	£2.90	£3.90	£5.50
SMBC Bootle Multi-Storey	**90p**	**£1.40**	**£2.50**	**£3.80**
Bootle New Strand Shoppers	£1.50	£1.50	£2.00	£7.50
Bootle St Johns House, Trinity Road	£3.50	£3.50	£3.50	£3.50

Both the NCP London Street and Eurocarparks, Tulketh Street offer an “early bird discount” of £2 per day for arrival before 10am.

It can be seen that the charges on the Councils main off-street car park in Southport are lower than all but one of the main commercial car parks in the town and that the charges on the Bootle multi storey car park are comparable with the commercial car parks in the town.

9.7 Comparative Parking Charges in other Local Authority Districts

The question as to whether parking charges influences decision as to where people shop has been considered above. However, one issue that has arisen recently relates to comparative parking charges. This follows decisions by Liverpool City Council to reduce parking charges and calls for Sefton to follow this example.

The following table identifies the comparative cost of adjacent Local Authorities who may be considered similar to Sefton or whose retail centres might be deemed to be in competition with Sefton.

Comparative Parking Charges (per hour unless stated)

Authority	On Street Pay and Display				Off Street Car Parks			
	Short Stay		Long Stay		Short Stay		Long Stay	
	1 hour	Max Stay	1 hour	Max stay	1 hour	Max Stay	1 hour	Max stay
Southport	£1.20	2 hrs	£1.20	4hrs+ (£6)	£0.70	4hrs (£6)	£0.70	4hrs (£6)
Crosby	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	£0.80	4hrs (£3.00)	£0.80	4hrs(£3.00)
Bootle	£0.70	30 mins	£0.70	2hrs (£2.80)	£0.90	4hrs (£3.80)	£0.90	4hrs (£3.80)
Liverpool	£2.20	2 hrs	£2.20	No limit @ £2.20 p/h	£1.80	No limit @ £1.80 p/h	£1.10	4hrs+ £5.00)
Wirral	£1.00	No limit	£1.00	3hrs+ (£3.60)	£1.05	3hrs (£7.60)	£1.05	1hr+ (£4.10)
Knowsley	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	£0.50	2hrs	£0.50	2hrs+ (£2.00)
St Helens	£0.80	2 hrs	£0.80	N/a	£0.80	5hrs (£6.50)	£0.80	5hrs+ (£5.00)
West Lancs	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	£0.70	2hrs	£0.70	3hrs+ (£3.00)
Preston	£1.20	1 hr	N/a	N/a	£2.50	4hrs (£9.00)	£1.30	4hrs+ (£4.00)

Based on the parking usage figures that are available and which have been discussed previously, it is reasonable to assume that the vast majority of users normally park for no more than 2 hours. Consequently, the following comparison for 2 hours parking charges has been made;

Authority	Cost for 2 hours Parking On Street	Cost for 2 hours Parking Off - Street
Southport	£2.40	£1.20
Crosby	N/A	£0.80
Bootle	£1.40	£1.40
Liverpool	£4.40	£3.60
Wirral	£2.00	£1.65
Knowsley	N/A	£1.00
St Helens	£1.60	£1.20
West Lancs	N/A	£1.10
Preston	£5.00	£2.00

On this basis, it can be seen that Sefton compares favourably with the majority of the surrounding districts.

10.0 Possibilities for Income Generation to meet Increased Costs – Parking Charges

10.1 The last occasion upon which parking charges in Sefton were increased was in April 2011. Since this time the costs incurred by the Council for providing the parking service have increased significantly. CPI will have increased significantly since 2011 and by the time any new tariffs are introduced in April 2014.

10.2 Members are reminded that under Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, any surplus in the parking account must be used for the purposes set out in section 55 [4] i.e. meeting the cost of providing off street parking / public passenger transport services/highway improvements/ environmental improvements. This applies only to income generated from on-street charges and not from off-street charges. Income from off-street charges can be used as the Local Authority sees fit.

10.3 In estimating the possible income that could be generated by these increases, officers have taken an approach based on past experience which indicates that where increases in charges have been made then usage levels will fall, this is normally for a short period of time before motorists return to their normal parking patterns. However, consideration has also been given to the on-going reduction in parking numbers when estimating possible income levels:

10.4 Officers have considered options for tariff changes and the proposals are detailed in appendices 1 and 2 and are summarised below

10.5 Summary of Income Possibilities

On-Street	£50,000
Off Street	£53,000
Total Option	**£103,000**

Appendix 1 – Current and Proposed Charges for Off-Street Car Parks

Off-Street. There are no proposals to change the days / hours of operation of any of the off-street car parks.

Southport

Tulketh Street	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Up to 1 hour	70p	80p
Up to 2 hours	£1.20	£1.40
Up to 4 hours	£2.40	£2.80
Over 4 hours	£6.00	N/A

Central 12	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Up to 30 Mins	30p	40p
Up to 1 hours	60p	70p
Up to 2 hours	£1.20	£1.40
Over 3 hours	£1.80	£2.00

NB These increases would be subject to agreement with the landowner. The Council manages the car park on the landowners behalf and benefits from a share of the income.

Floral Hall	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Up to 1 hour	70p	80p
Up to 2 hours	£1.20	£1.40
Up to 4 hours	£2.00	£2.50
Over 4 hours	£3.00	£4.00

Seawall / Marine Drive	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Up to 1 hour	80p	£1.00
Over 1 hour	£2.50	£4-00

Dunes Leisure / Splashworld	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Up to 1 hour	50p	60p
Up to 2 hours	£1.00	£1.20
Up to 4 hours	£2.50	£3.00
Over 4 hours	£3.50	£4.00

Park & Ride	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Per Visit	£1.50	£1.50

NB! As indicated in the main body of the report the decline of park and ride usage has far exceeded any of the other parking areas / car parks. Whilst there is no definitive information to explain this, it is felt that part of the reason concerns the relative cost of this form of parking to town centre charges and also the increased availability of town centre parking due to the fall in parking usage. If the cost of this facility increases, there could be a further significant fall in its usage. Consequently, it is proposed that the charge remain at £1.50.

Esplanade Cars Sundays	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Per Visit	£4.00	£5.00

Esplanade Coach Park	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Per Visit	£5.00	£10.00

Bootle

Multi-Storey	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Up to 30 mins	70	80p
Up to 1 hour	90p	£1.00
Up to 2 hours	£1.40	£1.600
Up to 4 hours	£2.50	£2.90
Over 4 hours	£3.80	£4.20

This car park is aimed primarily at long stay commuter parking at it therefore suggested that a season ticket be offered on this car park which gives a discount on the daily rate. In order to give a discount of approx 30% this could be set at:

	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Annual Contract	£595	£655

Bootle Leisure	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Up to 1 hour	40p	50p
Up to 2 hours	80p	£1.00
Up to 4 hours	£1.50	£1.80
Over 4 hours	£3.50	£4.00

Waterloo – Hougoumont Avenue / Civic Hall

	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Up to 30 mins	20p	20p
Up to 2 hours	80p	90p
Up to 4 hours	£1.50	£1.70
Over 4 hours	£3.00	£3.40

Crosby - Allengate, The Green & Cooksland

	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Up to 30 mins	Free	Free
Up to 2 hours	80p	90p
Up to 4 hours	£1.50	£1.70
Over 4 hours	£3.00	£3.40
Annual Contract	£475.00	£535.00

In estimating the possible income that could be generated by these increases officers have taken an approach based on past experience which indicates that where increases in charges have been made then usage levels will fall, this is normally for a short period of time before motorists return to their normal parking patterns. However, consideration has also been given to the on-going reduction in parking numbers when estimating possible income levels. Consequently it is estimated that the Options indicated above would generate £53,000 (net of VAT).

Appendix 2 – Current and Proposed Charges for On-Street Parking

Southport	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Up to 30 minutes	60p	70p
Up to 1 hour	£1-20	£1.40
Up to 2 hours	£2-40	£2.80
Up to 4 hours	£4-00	£4.50
Over 4 hours	£6-00	£6.00

There are four “zones” in the Southport Pay and Display area. The principal differences are:

Red (Central) Zone - Maximum stay is two hours Mon – Sat 8am – 6pm, Sun 11am – 6pm.

Blue (Leisure) Zone – No maximum stay. Mon – Sat 8am – 6pm, Sun 11am – 6pm

Yellow (Other) Zone A - No maximum stay. Mon – Sat 8am – 6pm, Sun Free

Yellow (Other) Zone B - No maximum stay. Mon – Sat 9am – 5pm, Sun Free

Bootle Stanley Road (outside Salvation Army Citadel) Mon – Sat 8am – 6pm

	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Up to 30 minutes	70p	80p

Bootle (Trinity Road/University Road/Pembroke Road) Mon – Sat 8am – 6pm

	Current Charge	Proposed Charge
Up to 1 hour	70p	80p
Up to 2 hours	£1.40	£1.60
Up to 4 hours	£2.80	£3.20

In estimating the possible income that could be generated by these increases officers have taken an approach based on past experience which indicates that where increases in charges have been made then usage levels will fall, this is normally for a short period of time before motorists return to their normal parking patterns. However, consideration has also been given to the on-going reduction in parking numbers when estimating possible income levels:

Consequently it is estimated that the Options indicated above would generate £50,000