Committee:	Scrutiny Committee	**Agenda Item**
Date:	4 December 2012	**9**
Title:	**Car parking charges**	
Author:	Roger Harborough Director of Public Services 01799510457	Item for decision

Summary

1. The Committee agreed at its meeting on 4 September that it would review whether the introduction of the new car parking charges in April 2012 had affected car park usage.

Recommendations

2. The Committee determines the advice that it should give to Cabinet in setting car parking charges for 2013/14 as part of the budget setting.

Financial Implications

3. Car parking charges were raised from April 2012 in accordance with the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Background Papers

4. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

   None

Impact

5.

Communication/Consultation	
Community Safety	
Equalities	
Health and Safety	
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	
Ward-specific impacts	

Workforce/Workplace	

Situation

6. Car parking charges had not been increased between 2008 and April this year. New charges were implemented at the beginning of the new financial year.

7. At its meeting on 4 September, the Committee agreed that it should:

   - look into whether there had been an increase in complaints;
   - understand the patterns of use;
   - establish if there have been any variations in usage.
   - determine if there has been a drop in income

8. When the Committee considered the proposals for charges in December 2011, the Portfolio holder for Environmental Services had agreed that the use of the Common Car Park in Saffron Walden should be reviewed in a year's time to establish whether the turnover of spaces in the car park had decreased under the new charging arrangements.

9. There have been no complaints from car park users about the current parking charges. There have been representations from Great Dunmow Town Council, Saffron Walden Town Council and the Saffron Walden Initiative about the need for free parking on selected dates as part of promotional initiatives in the Christmas shopping period. The Cabinet approved alternative proposals for free parking at its meeting on 20 November and pointed out that there were already some free off street parking opportunities available in Saffron Walden and Thaxted. Car parking charges have also been raised with the Economic Development Officer in the context of his dialogue with retailers, businesses and partnership organisations about the development of town centre management plans for each of the centres in the district. These action plans flow from the economic development strategy agreed by Cabinet at its meeting in October. It was also agreed that the council should join the Association of Town Centre Management as the most comprehensive and immediate repository of advice and expertise on managing town centres. The ATCM has itself been reviewing the relationship between car parking charges and the attraction of centres as indicated by footfall. Its advice is anticipated to be published shortly.

10. Increasing the charges on 16 April 2012 has achieved the anticipated increase in ticket sales income (up 18%) whilst the number of ticket sales has remained relatively stable compared to the equivalent period in 2011. The total number of tickets issued has dropped by 0.5%.

11. The forecast outturn for direct income, which includes charges and penalties less reimbursements in relation to three of the car parks and the free parking concession for selected car parks between 24 December and 1 January, is

£864,840. This is a variance of £2,480 on the current budget for the financial year, and represents additional income of £5,520 compared to the original budget set in February 2012.

12. Income for the period 16 April to 31 October 2012 has increased from all car parks however some car parks have seen a decrease in the number of tickets sold. There has been relatively limited take up of the 4 hour tariff option introduced for The Common car park.

13. In terms of income, all car parks have performed strongly for the three months from the increase in tariffs, 16 April to 16 July, compared to the same period in 2011. Income has weakened however for the next four months 17 July to 31 October. This pattern is though a repeat of performance profile in 2011, and income is up 17% on the same period in 2011 (17 July to 31 October).

14. In terms of number of tickets, the pattern of use for the three months following the increase in tariffs has shown some variation by car park. Principal car parks such as White Street, Fairycroft and Swan Meadow were used more compared to 2011, but there was a reduction in the use of The Common. The number of tickets 16 April to 16 July increased by 4% on 2011. Most car parks have seen a reduction in use over the period 17 July to 31 October compared to 2011. The number of tickets issued decreased by 4.5% on 2011.

15. On going monitoring is required to establish if the profile in terms of income, tickets or both for 1 November to 31 January diverges from that for the same period in 2011.

16. The portfolio holder for environmental services has indicated that she is exploring the implications of free or cheap parking tariff after 3:00pm as part of budget setting for FY2012/13. The estimated impact is a loss of income of up to £120,000 based on current levels of use. The intended objective of course is to increase parking after 3:00pm by persuading people to stay longer in town centres rather than shift their shopping from say early to late afternoon.

Risk Analysis

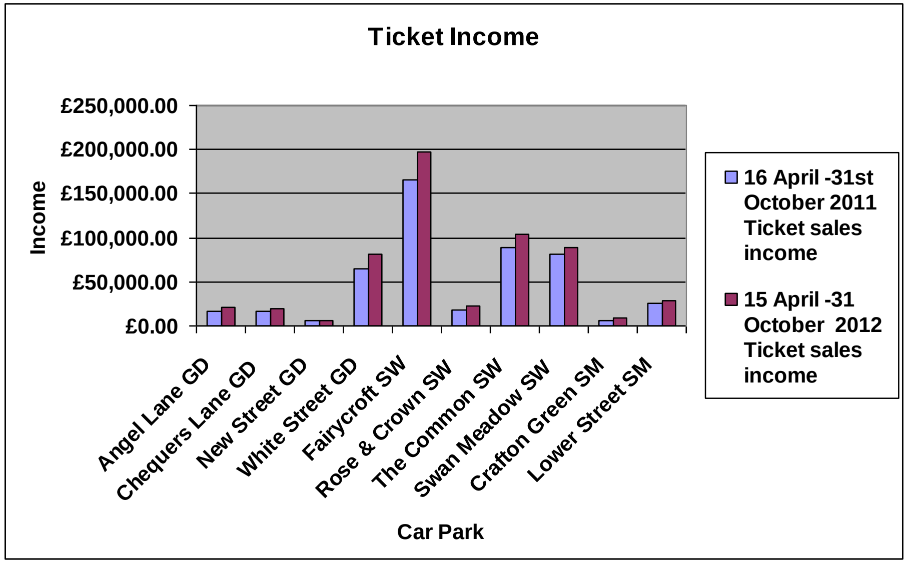
17.

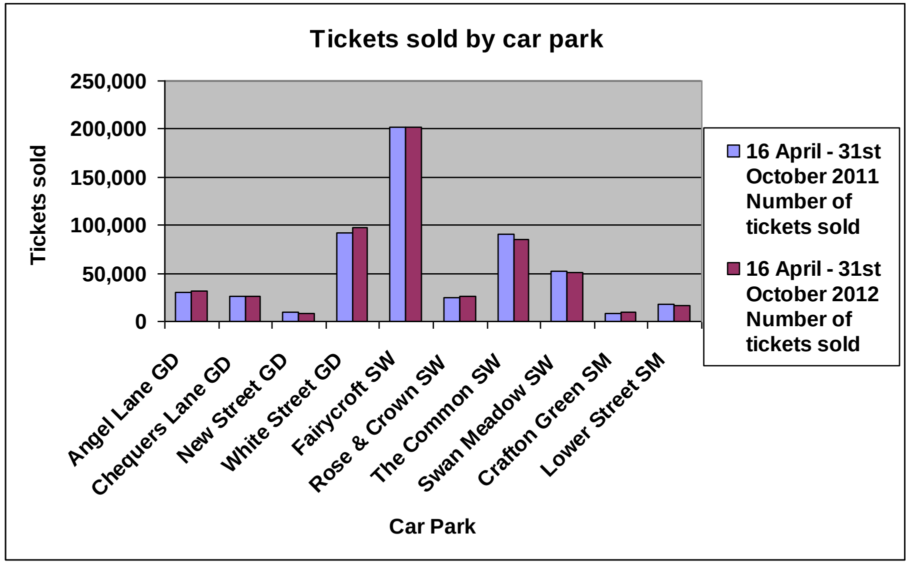
Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Data supplied by the Parking Partnership contains errors or is incomplete	2 There are some apparent anomalies in the relationship between income from ticket sales and numbers of tickets sold,	2 Forecast outturn could change	Further checks by the Parking Partnership. Ongoing monitoring

	although the income reported by the Parking Partnership is consistent with the profile of money deposited in the council's bank account.		

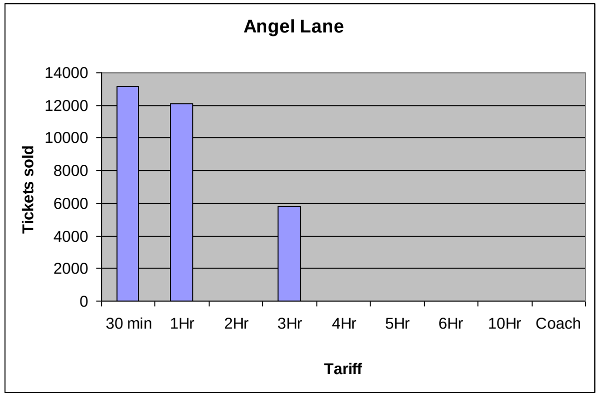
1 = Little or no risk or impact
2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.
3 = Significant risk or impact – action required
4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

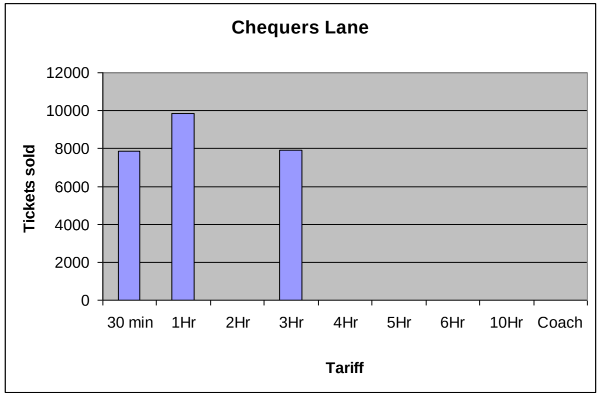
Ticket income and number of tickets sold by car park				
	16 April -31st October **2011**		16 April -31 October **2012**	
	Ticket sales income	Number of tickets sold	Ticket sales income	Number of tickets sold
Angel Lane GD	£16,557.45	30,557	£20,373.75	31,083
Chequers Lane GD	£16,617.00	26,298	£19,430.15	25,603
New Street GD	£6,146.15	10,044	£6,658.00	8,101
White Street GD	£64,777.50	92,648	£81,271.50	98,024
Fairycroft SW	£164,920.25	201,265	£196,613.75	201,362
Rose & Crown SW	£18,207.85	24,699	£22,567.25	25,500
The Common SW	£88,141.25	90,779	£103,776.50	85,146
Swan Meadow SW	£81,138.50	52,355	£89,360.65	51,347
Crafton Green SM	£6,704.55	8,482	£9,208.20	9,394
Lower Street SM	£25,711.95	17,680	£28,959.95	16,556
Total:	£488,922.45	554,807	£578,519.70	552,116

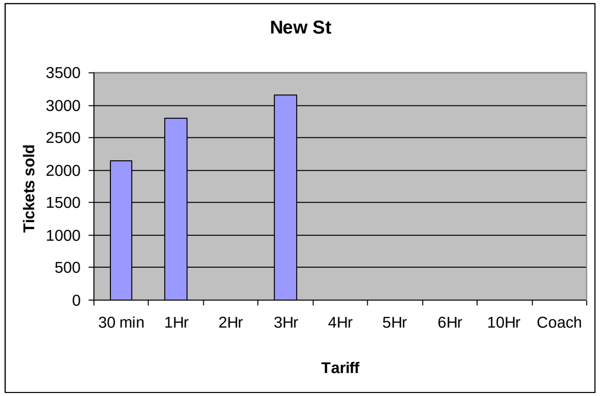

Ticket Income
£250,000.00
£200,000.00
£150,000.00
£100,000.00
£50,000.00
£0.00
Income
Angel Lane GD
Chequers Lane GD
New Street GD
White Street GD
Fairycroft SW
Rose & Crown SW
The Common SW
Swan Meadow SW
Crafton Green SM
Lower Street SM
Car Park
16 April -31st October 2011 Ticket sales income
15 April -31 October 2012 Ticket sales income

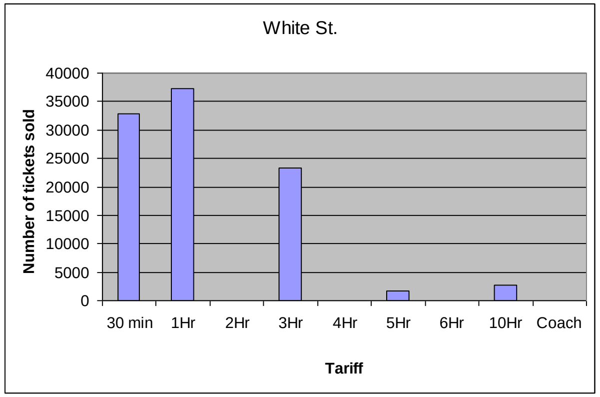

Tickets sold by car park
250,000
200,000
150,000
100,000
50,000
0
Tickets sold
Angel Lane GD
Chequers Lane GD
New Street GD
White Street GD
Fairycroft SW
Rose & Crown SW
The Common SW
Swan Meadow SW
Crafton Green SM
Lower Street SM
Car Park
16 April - 31st October 2011 Number of tickets sold
16 April - 31st October 2012 Number of tickets sold

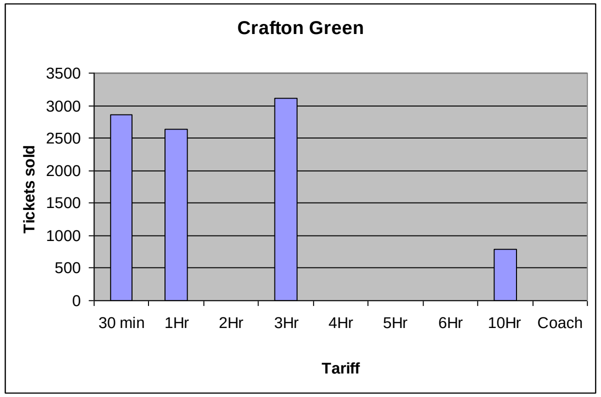
Tickets purchased by car park by tariff period 16 April to 31 October 2012									
	30 min	**1Hr**	**2Hr**	**3Hr**	**4Hr**	**5Hr**	**6Hr**	**10Hr**	**Coach**
Angel Lane	13180	12089		5813					
Chequers Lane	7855	9835		7910					
New St	2142	2798		3158					
White St.	32917	37258		23383		1703		2759	
Crafton Green	2862	2638		3109				785	
Lower St	1662	3584		5773			2620	2709	208
Rose & Crown	6003	9855	9637						
Swan Meadow		9635	16493		14691		4542	5982	
Common	10801	27284	42302	5194	43				

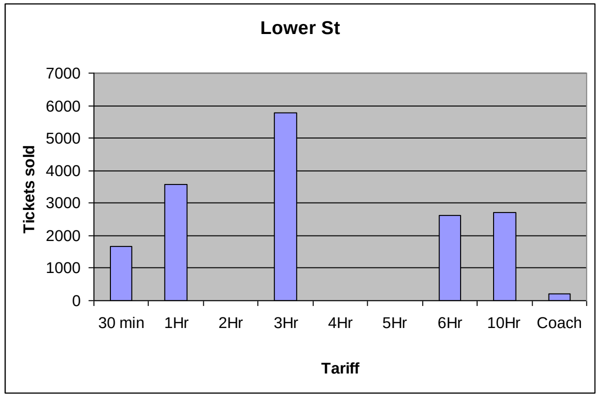

Angel Lane
Tickets sold
14000
12000
10000
8000
6000
4000
2000
0
30 min
1Hr
2Hr
3Hr
4Hr
5Hr
6Hr
10Hr
Coach
Tariff

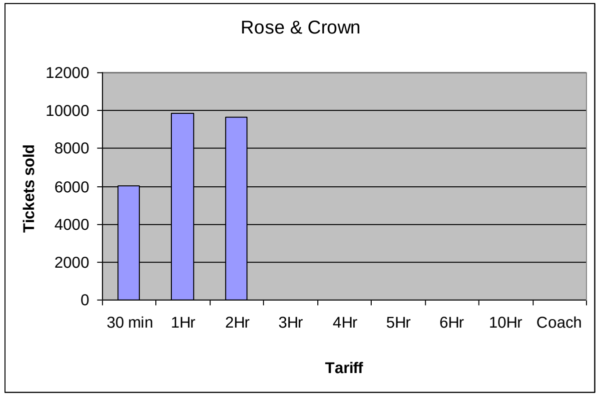

Chequers Lane
Tickets sold
12000
10000
8000
6000
4000
2000
0
30 min
1Hr
2Hr
3Hr
4Hr
5Hr
6Hr
10Hr
Coach
Tariff

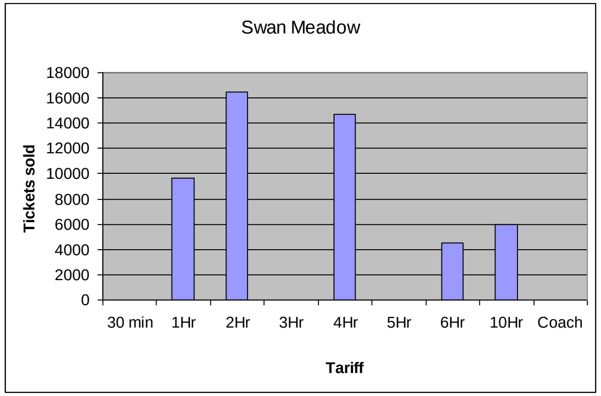

New St
Tickets sold
3500
3000
2500
2000
1500
1000
500
0
30 min
1Hr
2Hr
3Hr
4Hr
5Hr
6Hr
10Hr
Coach
Tariff

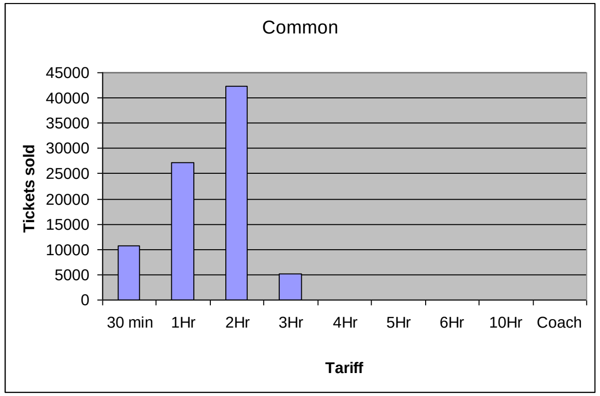

White St.
Number of tickets sold
40000
35000
30000
25000
20000
15000
10000
5000
0
30 min
1Hr
2Hr
3Hr
4Hr
5Hr
6Hr
10Hr
Coach
Tariff


Crafton Green
Tickets sold
3500
3000
2500
2000
1500
1000
500
0
30 min
1Hr
2Hr
3Hr
4Hr
5Hr
6Hr
10Hr
Coach
Tariff


Lower St
Tickets sold
7000
6000
5000
4000
3000
2000
1000
0
30 min
1Hr
2Hr
3Hr
4Hr
5Hr
6Hr
10Hr
Coach
Tariff


Rose & Crown
Tickets sold
12000
10000
8000
6000
4000
2000
0
30 min
1Hr
2Hr
3Hr
4Hr
5Hr
6Hr
10Hr
Coach
Tariff


Swan Meadow
Tickets sold
18000
16000
14000
12000
10000
8000
6000
4000
2000
0
30 min
1Hr
2Hr
3Hr
4Hr
5Hr
6Hr
10Hr
Coach
Tariff


Common
Tickets sold
45000
40000
35000
30000
25000
20000
15000
10000
5000
0
30 min
1Hr
2Hr
3Hr
4Hr
5Hr
6Hr
10Hr
Coach
Tariff