

LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST

Report Title	Pay to Park restrictions – Amendments to times/days
Meeting / Date	Cabinet, 10th September 2024
Cabinet portfolio	Councillor Clyde Loakes (Portfolio Lead Member for Climate and Air Quality) 
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Wards affected	All
Public access	Open
Appendices	Appendix 1 - Benchmarking with neighbouring boroughs Appendix 2 - Equality Impact Assessment

1. Summary

- 1.1 Approximately 70% of Pay to Park (P2P) bays in the Borough operate 10am-1pm and 2pm-4pm, and approximately 91% have a one-hour free parking period from 1pm-2pm. In addition, all P2P bays allow 15 minutes of free parking.
- 1.2 A review of the P2P restrictions was recently carried out which was tabled at the Portfolio Lead Member's Monthly Service Review Meeting (PLM). This concluded that this high level of free parking actively encourages vehicle usage does not align with the Council being an Active Travel Borough or the Council's declared climate emergency.
- 1.3 The current restriction hours, days, and free parking allowances do not align with our neighbouring boroughs (ref Appendix 1). The proposals set out in this report would encourage active travel, help improve air quality, aid traffic flow, improve parking compliance, support local businesses by making bays more easily and more consistently available and align restrictions within the Borough as well as more generally with neighbouring boroughs.
- 1.4 Approval is being sought from Cabinet for a public consultation on changing the pay to park hours to remove the 15 minutes of free parking, to remove the one-hour free period between 1pm and 2pm and to change

operating times at locations in the Borough to operate from 8:00am to 6:30pm - Monday to Sunday.

- 1.5 The proposal would not disadvantage disabled drivers as they are able to park in P2P bays for free. By deterring drivers using free parking bays for long periods, it will allow disabled drivers to find a parking bay more easily.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

2.1.1 Approve that a public consultation on changing the Pay to Park hours be carried out on the following proposals:

- Changing Pay to Park operating times in the Borough to operate from 8:00am to 6:30pm – Monday to Sunday.
- Removing the one-hour free period that operates between 1pm and 2pm and removing the 15 minutes of free parking currently in place.

2.1.2 Delegate decision making authority to the Strategic Director for Neighbourhood and Environment in consultation with the Deputy Leader for Climate and Air Quality to consider consultation responses and implement changes in Pay to Park locations.

3. Proposals

3.1 Waltham Forest is a leading Borough in active travel and climate change response. The proposals set out in this report are intended to assist in reducing vehicular travel therefore lessening congestion on the roads, improving air quality by further reducing emissions across the borough, and influencing a shift away from private motor vehicle use to more sustainable modes of transport.

3.2 There are currently eight various restriction periods, depending on location. Approximately 70% of these operate from 10am - 1pm and 2pm - 4pm. Approximately 91% of all restrictions allow a one-hour free period (1pm - 2pm).

3.3 A number of the neighbouring boroughs have extended their times of enforcement and Waltham Forest should look to bring itself more in line with these hours. If implemented, the proposals would encourage active travel, help improve air quality, aid traffic flow, improve parking compliance, support local businesses by making bays more easily and more consistently available and align restrictions within the Borough as well as with neighbouring boroughs.

3.4 During restricted hours, Waltham Forest allows 15 minutes of free parking for all drivers. Vehicles are not allowed to return within three hours.

3.5 All customers (paid or unpaid) receive 15 minutes of free parking which is written into our Traffic Management Orders (TMO). Drivers who have

paid to park receive the 15 minutes free parking in addition to any parking period they may have paid for.

- 3.6 A review of the P2P restrictions was recently carried out and the following was identified:
- 3.7 The majority of P2P restrictions conflict with general loading restriction times (8 to 9:30am and 4:00pm to 6:30pm) which may hinder traffic flow.
- 3.8 The majority of our current restriction times do not align with any of our neighbouring boroughs.
- 3.9 The current restriction hours and levels of free parking actually promote car usage and do not align with being an active travel borough.
- 3.10 The extensive free parking periods and allowances result in vehicles “hogging” bays for extended periods which does not benefit local businesses and hinders traffic flow as drivers circle looking for spaces. By freeing up spaces this will enable drivers looking for a space to be able to park and utilise the local businesses.
- 3.11 Neighbouring boroughs do not offer additional free time, or it is very limited.
- 3.12 Proposals and rationale:
 - 3.12.1 *Undertake a public consultation to amend and align P2P locations in the Borough to operate from 8:00am to 6:30pm and to operate from Monday to Sunday.*
 - 3.12.2 This will result in more unified parking hours across the Borough, reducing confusion for drivers as well as more efficient enforcement patrols and coverage. It will also more closely align us with the majority of our neighbouring boroughs.
 - 3.12.3 *Remove the one-hour free period that currently operates between 1pm and 2pm. According to surveys conducted, 23% of vehicles remain parked for the entire one-hour free period between 1pm and 2pm.*
 - 3.12.4 This change will ensure regular turnover of vehicles throughout the day and should benefit local businesses by providing potential customers with more options to park and shop during the day including peak hours.
 - 3.12.5 According to surveys conducted, on average, 29% of vehicles who park during the unrestricted periods from 8am-10am and 4pm-6:30pm, are static in the bay for the entire free period. The figure can be as high as 54% in some locations.

- 3.12.6 Approximately 12% of vehicles who park in P2P bays after 9pm are still in situ up to 10am the next morning.
- 3.12.7 5% of all P2P transactions are made the evening before which makes clear their intention to remain static in the bay beyond the start of the restriction time at 10am. Of these, 30% pay for 3 hours indicating they are making use of the bay through to at least 2pm the next day.
- 3.12.8 20% of all PCNs issued for non-payment are issued just after 10am which indicates a high level of non-compliance of the pre-10am non restricted period.
- 3.12.9 *Remove the current 15 minutes of free parking whilst retaining the existing 10-minute grace period for those that have paid for parking.*
- 3.12.10 It should be noted that 5% of P2P locations currently operate until 9:30pm and on Sundays. It is recommended that the majority of locations across the Borough should be aligned, however retaining the operational hours at these specific locations should be considered. Cabinet is asked to delegate authority to the Strategic Director for Neighbourhood and Environment in consultation with and the Deputy Leader for Climate and Air Quality to consider consultation responses and take a decision on whether to implement all or any of the proposed changes in the pay to park locations.

4. Options & Alternatives Considered

- 4.1 Consideration was given to extending restrictions until 8pm across all days.
- 4.2 Extending restrictions until 20:00 may displace vehicles into nearby CPZs which typically end at 18:30, which may adversely affect residents of these CPZs.
- 4.3 This report does therefore not recommend consulting on extending restricted hours to 8pm.

5. Council Strategic Priorities (and other National or Local Policies or Strategies)

- 5.1 These proposals will complement the Council's missions to lead the way for a net-zero Borough and create safe, green neighbourhoods where everybody can thrive.
- 5.2 These proposals will aid the Council's promotion of active and sustainable forms of travel as well as the declared climate emergency.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 A statutory public consultation is required and will be conducted in accordance with regulations and guidance.
- 6.2 Public site notices will be placed at all relevant locations as well as via statutory advertising mediums.
- 6.3 Members of public will be able to raise objections or voice any comments on the proposals.
- 6.4 All recommendations stated above are subject to the outcome of the consultation.

7. Implications

7.1 Finance, Value for money, and risk

- 7.1.1 The cost of implementing the above changes is approx. £150k.
- 7.1.2 Any proposed changes will be self-funding and any additional revenue will be used in accordance with guidance and legislation.
- 7.1.3 Any potential income from the changes will only be known following the consultations.

7.2 Legal

- 7.2.1 The Traffic Management Act 2004 imposes an explicit duty on local authorities to manage their network so as to reduce congestion and disruption and provides additional powers to do with parking. Local authorities are required to develop parking strategies (covering on- and off-street parking) that are linked to local objectives and circumstances. The Council exercises its powers pursuant to the Traffic Management Act 2004 and Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 when designating lengths of highway to be used for parking. A statutory public consultation is required where changes are proposed and must be conducted in accordance with regulations and guidance.

7.3 Equalities and Diversity

- 7.3.1 A full Equality Analysis was undertaken (Appendix 2).
- 7.3.2 Blue badge holders will continue to be afforded the concessions available to them via the blue badge scheme and in addition to those concessions they will be able to park in P2P bays for free for an unlimited amount of time.
- 7.3.3 The Council is obliged to have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which requires the Council to take equalities considerations into account when exercising

any of their functions and taking decisions. Following consultation, the Equality Analysis will be updated in the light of consultation responses and will inform any recommendations made to those taking any decision.

7.4 Sustainability (including climate change, health, crime, and disorder)

7.4.1 The proposals will support the Council's aims as an Active Travel Borough and our declared climate emergency.

7.4.2 This will in turn result in improved air quality and ultimately a healthier Borough and healthier residents.

7.5 Council Infrastructure

7.5.1 There is no impact on Council resources infrastructure. All of the changes outlined will be met within the existing resource structure.

7.5.2 Physical 'on-street' infrastructure will require changes and these costs are included in 7.1.1 above.

Background Information (as defined by Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985)

None included.