

**OFFICER DECISION REPORT – TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER (TRO)**

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**INFORMAL CONSULTATION (Cabinet Member for Highways)**

PREPARED BY: Traffic Management Team, Highways and Traffic Group

<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>Parking Charge review 2024/25</b>
<b>PROPOSAL:</b>	Review of parking charges on street and in car parks across Bath & North East Somerset
<b>SCHEME REF No:</b>	24-015
<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>Andrew Dunn, Team Manager - Parking</b>

**1. DELEGATION**

The delegation to be exercised in this report is contained within **Part 3, Section 4** of the Constitution under the **Delegation of Functions to Officers**, as follows:

<b>Section A</b>	The Chief Executive, Strategic Directors, Divisional Directors and Heads of Service have delegated power to take any decision falling within their area of responsibility....”
<b>Section B</b>	Without prejudice to the generality of this, Officers are authorised to: serve any notices and make, amend or revoke any orders falling within his/her area of responsibility.
<b>Section D9</b>	An Officer to whom a power, duty or function is delegated may nominate or authorise another Officer to exercise that power, duty or function, provided that Officer reports to or is responsible to the delegator.

*For the purposes of this report, the Director of Place Management holds the delegated power to make, amend or revoke any Orders.*

**2. LEGAL AUTHORITY**

This proposal is made in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, which under Section 1 provides, generally, for Orders to be made for the following reasons, and in the case of this report specifically for the reason(s) shown below:

(a)	for avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road or any other road or for preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising, or	X
(b)	for preventing damage to the road or to any building on or near the road, or	
(c)	for facilitating the passage on the road or any other road of any class of traffic (including pedestrians), or	X
(d)	for preventing the use of the road by vehicular traffic of a kind which, or its use by vehicular traffic in a manner which, is unsuitable having regard to the existing character of the road or adjoining property,	

(e)	(without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (d) above) for preserving the character of the road in a case where it is specially suitable for use by persons on horseback or on foot, or	
(f)	for preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs, or	
(g)	for any of the purposes specified in paragraphs (a) to (c) of subsection (1) of section 87 of the Environment Act 1995 (air quality)	

Proposals in this report that impact off-street locations are made in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, section 35 (Variation of charges at off-street parking places). An order under section 35(1)(a)(iii) of this Act makes provision as to the charges to be paid in connection with the use of off-street parking places, the authority making that order may vary those charges by notice given under this section.

### **3. PROPOSAL**

3.1. An outline of the proposed charges detailed in this section are included within Appendix 1.

3.2. The baseline charge refers to the charge applied to the least polluting vehicles for paid for parking.

#### **A- Extension of emission-based charges**

3.3. Emission-based parking charges are proposed to be implemented at the following locations:

- a) Bath on street pay and display, all locations.
- b) Keynsham, all council car parks.
- c) South Road car park, Midsomer Norton.
- d) Church Street and Waterloo Road car parks, Radstock.
- e) The Shallows, Saltford

3.4. The extension of emission-based charging to all council managed paid for parking locations replicates the structure and rationale for emission-based charges introduced across all resident parking schemes and paid for parking areas.

#### **B- Review of Parking Charges - Bath**

3.5. The baseline hourly charge for Bath car parks payable by the least polluting vehicles is proposed to increase by:

- a) £0.10 per hour in October 2024
- b) £0.10 per hour in October 2025.

3.6. The emission-based charges that apply for more polluting vehicles will be uplifted from this new baseline using the existing uplift mechanism, which is 2.5% uplift for

each more polluting band, or 5% for each capacity band.

3.7. The baseline evening charge for the least polluting vehicles available at Charlotte Street car park (6pm to 8pm only) is proposed to increase by:

- a) £1 in October 2024.
- b) £1.30 in October 2025. This aligns the evening charge to the equivalent 2-hour rate in Bath car parks. This continues to provide a favourable tariff within Charlotte Street as the minimum, maintaining a 2-hour evening only charge in this central location at the same charge as other car parks where 2 hours are available.

3.8. The baseline overnight charge at all Bath car parks (8pm to 8am) is proposed to increase by:

- a) £1 in October 2024.
- b) £1 in October 2025.

3.9. The baseline charge for on-street paid for parking in Bath city centre is proposed to increase by:

- a) £0.10 per hour in January 2025.
- b) £0.10 per hour in January 2026.

3.10. Parking charges are proposed to increase for customers parking at Bath's three P&R locations where they do not also use the P&R service, The charge for up to 3-hours and for 24-hours will increase by:

- a) £0.50 for both tariffs in October 2024,
- b) £0.50 for both tariffs in October 2025.

3.11. Parking purchased at the three P&R locations for 24-hours duration will expire after 24-hours have passed and not at 23.59 each day.

### **C- Review of Parking Charges – Bath Hotel Permits**

3.12. Currently, paid for parking for hotel guests when purchased with a council hotel permit is linked to the cost of a 24-hour stay in a council car park. This charge will be linked to the vehicle's emissions from January 2025.

### **D- Review of Parking Charges - Keynsham, Midsomer Norton, Radstock and Saltford.**

3.13. In addition to the introduction of emission-based charges (see proposal A), the baseline hourly charge for the least polluting vehicles in Keynsham car parks is proposed to be increased by:

- a) £0.10 per hour in October 2024

b) £0.10 per hour in October 2025.

3.14. Charges for season tickets in Keynsham will also be linked to a vehicle's emissions.

3.15. The 30 minutes free parking in dedicated bays will remain in Keynsham where bays are marked.

3.16. Emission-based parking charges are proposed to be introduced in council managed car parks in Midsomer Norton and Radstock to align to the same baseline charge as Keynsham.

a) Charges will apply from 8am to 6pm Monday to Saturday inclusive, matching Keynsham hours of operation.

b) The additional charge for diesel fuelled vehicles will be £0.30 for a short duration stay (up to 4-hours) and £0.50 for a long duration stay (over 4-hours per day).

c) The hours available to purchase in Midsomer Norton, which currently has unrestricted free parking, is proposed to match that for long stay parking in Keynsham.

d) The hours available to purchase and maximum stay times in Radstock car parks are proposed to be maintained to ensure frequent turnover of the limited spaces available to support local businesses.

3.17. Free parking is proposed for short durations of parking in Midsomer Norton and Radstock car parks in dedicated bays. This is proposed at 30minutes for illustrative purposes in this report, with views to be sought from the public on a range of durations when this free period should apply.

3.18. Season tickets will be available in Midsomer Norton car parks at all long stay locations and will also be linked to a vehicle's emissions.

3.19. Season tickets are not proposed to be available within Radstock car parks as these locations do not provide all day parking.

### **E- Review of Parking Charges - Motorbikes.**

3.20. Motorbike users will require an emission-based resident parking permit to park in a permit holder space.

3.21. Motorbike users will no longer be able to park for free in paid for parking locations on-street and in council car parks.

a) The charge for paid for parking will be linked to a motorbikes CO2 emissions, based on data held by the DVLA.

b) Where no CO2 emission data is held by the DVLA, the charge will be linked to engine capacity using the following bands:

Motorbike engine capacity	Equivalent band used to charge two axle (and above) vehicles for comparative purposes
Under 151 cc	0-1550 cc
151 - 400 cc	1551-1950cc
401 - 600 cc	1951-2950cc
Over 600 cc	over 2951cc

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

4.1. The proposals set out in this report will affect everyone living within, or visiting, Bath and North East Somerset, and therefore its aims are aligned to The Corporate Strategy. Within this framework, the proposals strongly align to the following priorities:

- Healthy lives and places
- Clean, safe and vibrant neighbourhoods
- More travel choices
- Cultural life

4.2. These proposals have been developed aimed to improve air quality through a major shift to sustainable transport, walking and cycling and incentives to reduce the use of more polluting vehicles to secure the safer movement of pedestrian traffic on the highway by reducing the public health risks posed to them by air pollution. These proposals are also aimed to facilitate the achievement of strategic outcomes of local transport policy by influencing behaviour change and reducing congestion and vehicle intrusion into neighbourhoods, and particularly residential neighbourhoods and align with the Council policy on Liveable Neighbourhoods and the climate and nature and emergency.

4.3. Whilst not the primary objective, these proposals align with the vision and outcomes from the Bath & North East Somerset Journey to Net Zero Transport Strategy, by promoting sustainable transport and reducing CO2 emissions and the intrusion of vehicles, particularly more polluting vehicles, into the historic core and our urban centres.

4.4. The council is investing £160M on a range of interventions to help deliver more travel choices for resident, workers and visitors.

4.5. This report aligns to the Parking Strategy to ensure that parking charges in Bath and North East Somerset should be periodically reviewed and adjusted as required

to ensure that they achieve the aims of the Council's strategies.

4.6. Air quality impacts on pedestrian safety; managing traffic flows; and availability of parking are all significant issues in our region. Whilst the proposals detailed in this report are a separate standalone scheme, they are complimentary to other projects aimed at addressing these issues, including but not limited to the following:

- Promoting a major shift to mass transport, walking and cycling, with incentives to reduce the use of more polluting vehicles, in accordance with the UK government National Air Quality Strategy
- Improving the safety of cyclists and pedestrians through active travel schemes which rebalance priorities on our roads and build on social distancing needs.
- A Clean Air Zone in central Bath, to encourage less polluting ways of travelling around the city, which has successfully reduced harmful Nitrogen Dioxide levels at monitoring locations across the city to below the limit of 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> for the second consecutive year, with ongoing reductions in the number of non-compliant vehicles entering the city.
- Liveable Neighbourhoods policy and work concerning reducing the effect of motor vehicles on neighbourhoods, particularly residential neighbourhoods.

### **The Issue**

4.7. A significant threat to clean safe air is now posed by traffic emissions. Vehicles with petrol and diesel based internal combustion engines emit a wide variety of pollutants, principally carbon monoxide (CO), oxides of nitrogen (NOx), volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and particulate matter (PM10), which have an increasing impact on urban air quality.

4.8. Pollutants from these sources may not only prove a problem in the immediate vicinity of these sources but can be transported long distances.

4.9. Air pollution can cause or contribute to a variety of health conditions, particularly amongst the young and elderly.

4.10. The health problems resulting from exposure to air pollution have a high cost to people who suffer from illness and premature death, to our health services and to business. In the UK, these costs add up to more than £20 billion every year (Source: Royal College of Physicians). Any reduction in emissions within the city centre will have a beneficial impact on those living and visiting the city centre.

4.11. Whilst national targets and legal limits exist for air pollution and air quality there is no safe limit. Any measures that aim to reduce the impact of vehicle emissions will have a beneficial impact on human health and the environment.

### **Emission-based charges in Bath & North East Somerset.**

- 4.12. The council implemented emission-based charges for on street resident parking permits across all resident parking zones in January 2022 following extensive engagement and consultation during 2021. In September 2023 emission-based car parking charges were implemented across all Council managed car parks in Bath across all payment channels, a national first.
- 4.13. Emission-based charges are linked to the CO2 emissions of the vehicle, or engine capacity where emission data is not available. Vehicles are classified in line with the DVLA Vehicle Excise Duty Bands (as of 1st April 2017). The higher the engine's emissions, the higher the charge for the permit or parking. Therefore, the higher charges aim to reduce the use of more polluting vehicles to secure the safer movement of pedestrian traffic on the highway by reducing the public health risks posed to pedestrians by air pollution.
- 4.14. Vehicles that emit between 0-130g/km of CO2 (including electric vehicles) pay a baseline charge. More polluting vehicles emitting more than 131g/km of CO2 will pay progressively more for their parking. The charges for diesel fuelled vehicles is further increased (compared to a similar sized and CO2 level emitting engines of other fuel types) due to the higher levels of other pollutants emitted from the tail pipe following the combustion of this fuel type.
- 4.15. Emission-based charges aims to improve the safety of vulnerable people within the community by improving air quality and reducing congestion so those with more polluting vehicles pay more and are encouraged to change behaviours to make other travel choices where alternatives exist. This is achieved by incentivising the use of less polluting vehicles where options exist or a switch to more sustainable journey types, and to encourage motorists to consider a vehicle's emissions when making future purchase or lease/hire decisions.
- 4.16. All customers can check their vehicle's emissions rating or engine capacity, free of charge, online at <https://www.gov.uk/get-vehicle-information-from-dvla>
- 4.17. The introduction of emission-based charging in Bath car parks in September 2023 has seen a change in the proportion of vehicles only charged the baseline charge (i.e. the less polluting vehicles) from 34% to 52%, indicating the driver for behaviour change with owners of more polluting vehicles choosing alternatives to council car parks.

#### **Review of Parking Charges – Bath.**

- 4.18. The modest price increase for parking at Baths three P&R locations supports the longer-term viability of the P&R service which may be impacted by users that park at these sites but who do not use the bus service.

#### **Review of Parking Charges – Bath Hotel Permits.**

- 4.19. In January 2022 the council linked the charges for its hotel permits to its 24-hour car park charges. Permits for hotels located in the central zone, zone 1

and zone 6 were valid only in long stay council car parks due to their proximity to the city centre. Permits for hotels in all other zones provided parking for guests in on street permit holder bays as they were located away from the city centre.

4.20. These charges were not linked to a vehicle's emission in September 2023 due to the mix of on-street and off-street parking for guests that the permits provided, and they therefore remained chargeable at the baseline charge.

4.21. Linking the charges to a vehicle's emission is necessary with the introduction of an emission-based charge at on-street locations to prevent a hotel permit being used to avoid the emissions-based charges for more polluting vehicles. This is aimed to discourage visitors to the city from bringing their more polluting vehicles into urban areas.

### **Review of Parking Charges - Keynsham, Midsomer Norton, Radstock and Saltford**

4.22. Based on the current customer data using car parks in Keynsham its calculated that 40% of customers use a least polluting vehicle and will pay no increase because of the introduction of an emission-based charge, notwithstanding the impact of changes to the underlying charges because of a separate price review (as set out in this report). No customer data is available for car parks in Midsomer Norton, Radstock, or Saltford.

4.23. The Sustainable Transport Plan for Keynsham town centre includes the provision of improved public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure, with the aim to encourage people to use sustainable modes of transport to get to Keynsham town centre. This aims to lead to a reduction in the need for car parking spaces in the centre of the town, over the 20-year Plan period.

4.24. The council is delivering a High Street Regeneration Programme in Midsomer Norton totalling a combined investment of £3.6M which is designed to increase footfall to the local area and support local businesses. This includes a high-quality multi-use civic space; improvements to shopfronts; restoration of the Town Hall and transfer to community ownership; and market town brand for Midsomer Norton focusing on important aspects of local culture. Additional short stay parking is available in Midsomer Norton within private car parking (i.e. that not managed by the council) at Sainsbury's provided for customers.

4.25. The council was successful in obtaining funding from the West of England Combined Authority's (WECA) Housing and Regeneration Enabling Fund, to create regeneration plans and masterplans for four town centres in Bath and North East Somerset.

4.26. Working with key stakeholders, including Radstock Town Council, businesses and the community, a draft Regeneration Action Plan has been developed which identifies priority projects. The plan will also be used to support



future funding bids and inform investment plans and future strategies for the town. The plan is available to view at <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Radstock%20regeneration%20Action%20Plan.pdf>

- 4.27. The introduction of charges at car parks in Midsomer Norton and Radstock helps to support the ongoing costs for operating these car parks, including energy costs, maintenance, and other improvements to the asset to support improvements delivered through the regeneration schemes, and additional officer resource to ensure that turnover of the available spaces is maintained.

#### **Review of Parking Charges - Motorbikes**

- 4.28. Whilst it's recognised that motorbikes may be less impactful on congestion, they continue to utilise road space and emit pollutants.
- 4.29. Motorbike users have historically benefited from free parking across on street locations and council car parks within Bath and North East Somerset.

#### **5. SOURCE OF FINANCE**

Implementation of these proposals are to be funded from Capital budgets.

#### **6. CONSULTATION REQUIREMENT**

The proposal requires informal consultation with the Chief Constable, Ward Members, Parish / Town Council, and the Cabinet Member for Highways.

#### **7. COMMENTS RECEIVED TO DATE**

##### **Chief Constable**

No comment.

##### **Parking Services**

Please see comments below in answer to Ward Members questions.

##### **Ward Members**

###### **Bathavon North:**

Cllr Kevin Guy – No comment.

Cllr Sarah Warren – No comment.

###### **Bathavon South:**

Cllr Fiona Gourley – Just to clarify, as you know, this administration did not cut funds for public transport – last year it increased it to £1m. But the bus authority, WECA, decided not to pay for the increased costs of supporting rural buses (as it was planning) and chose instead to put money into Westlink, which has been a failure. Despite repeated requests from all the Leaders of the Local Authorities to put money into rural buses, WECA put funds towards Westlocal. This involves volunteers having to compete for a limited sum over a limited period and to take on the financial and legal responsibility for managing a bus service. This cannot offer the same network of bus service to our rural residents that B&NES has been trying to persuade WECA to support for the past 18 months.

*Response: No response necessary.*

Cllr Matt McCabe – No comment.

**Bathwick:**

Cllr Manda Rigby – No comment.

Cllr Toby Simon – No comment.

**Chew Valley:**

Cllr Anna Box – No comment.

Cllr Dave Harding – No comment.

**Clutton & Farmborough:**

Cllr Sam Ross – Appendix 2 states in response to Key Question 1.2 that ‘...by implementing these changes it should help in addressing the climate and ecological emergency by encouraging the use of sustainable transport, active travel, and reducing the use of more polluting vehicles.’

While I agree that such an aim has been possible for the car parks of Bath where alternative transport and active travel methods are in abundance, the same cannot be said for Midsomer Norton and Radstock.

Is there any baseline evidence on the current levels of pollution in Midsomer Norton and Radstock? If not, how will implementing car parking charges be considered a success?

Compared to their city-dwelling counterparts, I am concerned that residents in rural areas are already paying disproportionately for car parking charges just to access vital services that they have no other way of accessing because of this administration’s funding cuts to public transport and the impossibility of active travel over large geographical areas and challenging topography.

While I am supportive of the move to encourage people to live their lives more sustainably, which helps to address climate issues, you do need to bring people with you on the journey. Unfortunately, emission-based charges in these market towns will simply make life more difficult and expensive for the most financially vulnerable at this time, as they have no other option but to rely on car use while public transport is in disarray, and they do not have the means to purchase a more fuel-efficient/EV car.

Response - Deputy Leader with responsibility for Climate and Sustainable Travel: there have been no funding cuts to public transport by B&NES.

While some members may wish to split hairs and point fingers over who is and should be funding what, the following point still stands: defunding public transport whether through underfunding or keeping funding static is tantamount to a funding cut and has led to a situation where buses simply don't exist (at worst) or are patchy (at best) for residents trying to access services in the Somer Valley.

The point that appears to have been lost is that when trying to get people to change their habits, it is usually preferable to have a reasonable alternative in place to allow the change to happen organically. We all seem to agree that there is limited transport and travel provision here, which backs up the argument against penalising residents in these areas further and calls into question the logic of these charges at this time.

*Response: The aim in introducing parking charges in Midsomer Norton and Radstock is to improve air quality, reduce congestion and encourage other ways to travel. Introducing charging in Midsomer Norton and Radstock would make it easier for shoppers to find parking by encouraging turnover of spaces, and the additional revenue would support regeneration schemes designed to increase footfall and support local trade. It should be noted that whilst national targets and legal limits exist for air pollution and air quality there is no safe limit. Any measures that aim to reduce the impact of vehicle emissions will have a beneficial impact on human health and the environment.*

*The range of charges proposed within these Emission-based variable charges is based on an escalator applied to the charge for the lowest polluting vehicles (the baseline charge). The baseline charge is proposed at a lower level than Bath city centre within our market town car parks, and this means a smaller range between the lowest charge (for least polluting vehicles) and the highest charge (for the most polluting vehicles), for example, in Midsomer Norton the proposed range for 4-hours of parking in October 2024 is £1.60 to £2.30, a difference of less than £0.20 per hour.*

*The proposals include the introduction of a period of free parking in Midsomer Norton and Radstock to help support local businesses and shoppers. The consultation will ask for respondent's views on how long a stay the free parking should provide.*

**Combe Down:**

Cllr Onkar Saini – No comment.

Cllr Bharat Ramji Nathoo Pankhania – No comment.

**High Littleton:**

Cllr Ann Morgan – No comment.

**Keynsham East:**

Cllr Hal Macfie – My main comment is to object to para 4.23: “The Sustainable Transport Plan for Keynsham town centre includes the provision of improved public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure, with the aim to encourage people to use sustainable modes of transport to get to Keynsham town centre. This aims to lead to a reduction in the need for car parking spaces in the centre of the town, over the 20-year Plan period. “

It is clear to all that Keynsham will continue to grow over the next 20 years. It is also clear that the proportion of +65 year olds will increase proportionately. This group will continue to use (electric) cars to visit the High street.

So development plans that attempt to reduce the number of parking spaces will be challenged.

Would it be possible to let me have the link that will take me to the Sustainable Transport Plan for Keynsham. Thanks very much in advance.

*Response: This report relates to proposed parking charges and does not include proposals to reduce the number of parking spaces, as included within the Sustainable Transport Plan for Keynsham, which is not part of this consultation.*

*The Journey to Net Zero Transport Plan is available online at [https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Journey%20to%20Net%20Zero%20Transport%20Plans\\_0.pdf](https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Journey%20to%20Net%20Zero%20Transport%20Plans_0.pdf)*

Cllr Andy Wait – No comment.

**Keynsham North:**

Cllr Alex Beaumont – No comment.

Cllr George Leach – Thank you for the below; a few comments/questions from me that relate to Keynsham (but could probably be applied across the board) as feedback:

1. I take it from Appendix 2 that Blue Badge parking will remain free in Keynsham, regardless of duration.
2. I would assume we wish to encourage people to use vehicles with emissions in the 'green' range (0-130g/km) yet it does not seem to especially encourage this; even zero emissions incur a charge at 2 hours! I really do not see the incentivisation here.
3. In terms of percentage increase, the charges are pretty outrageous. In theory a 'least polluting' car in Keynsham could incur a 40% increase if parked for 2 hours.
4. As prices have gone up across the board, regardless of emissions, this looks to the casual observer like a money-grab under the guise of achieving environmental objectives. There is very little indication in the proposals that would change public behaviour which is effectively the only way you will meet the objectives listed.

*Response: Parking for Blue Badge holders in designated bays, where a valid Blue Badge is displayed, is proposed to remain free of charge in Keynsham, Midsomer Norton and Radstock.*

*All vehicles parking in Keynsham car parks are required to pay the applicable charge and these proposals do not seek to review this provision. Feedback from previous consultations regarding emission-based variable charges indicates that a lower charge, or free parking, for zero emission vehicles is viewed as unfairly penalising those that cannot afford to purchase an electric vehicle. It should also be noted that there is of course a value to parking both in the convenience it provides to motorists and the impact of its provision on the management of the wider road network and reduction of traffic congestion, but also costs incurred through the management and maintenance of the parking assets themselves.*

*Percentage increases are of course directly related to the data being compared, noting that a 40% rise in the example stated represents an increase in cash terms of £0.20 for the 2-hours of parking, or £0.10 per hour.*

*The £0.10 increase in the per hour charge aligns to objectives adopted in the Parking Strategy in 2018 which state that "Parking charges in Bath and North East Somerset should be periodically reviewed and adjusted as required to ensure that they achieve the aims of the Council's strategies and are comparative with privately operated car parks in the same location".*

*The proposed charges reflect the lowest inflationary increase that can be implemented within the tariff framework, which is based on a flat per hour charge, noting that cash transactions must be rounded to 10p for cash handling purposes. Whilst a standalone scheme, as outlined in this report (paragraph 4.6) these proposals are complimentary to other projects aimed at addressing air quality impacts on pedestrian safety; managing traffic flows; and availability of parking.*

### **Keynsham South:**

Cllr Alan Hale – Keynsham had parking charges before action was taken to reduce the level of noxious air quality became an issue and later by collecting

measurements of air quality a case was able to be made for changing the traffic flows. Clearly this does not seem to be the case in the Somer Valley.

This appears to be a continuation of the efforts to grind down those who are seen as the devil incarnate because they chose to drive a car. Keynsham is close to two cities and served by a (not very good) bus service and we have a train station as well.

The Somer Valley is rural and does not enjoy the bus network that the City of Bath enjoys. Both Radstock and MSN have less traffic than Keynsham and the High Street in Keynsham is canyon like hence the previous build-up of the poor air quality, now resolved. I would suggest that in the Somer Valley the noxious fumes are able to more readily dissipate and not be a problem.

Until air quality measurements are collected over an extensive period of time the assumption should be that there is not a problem and that the proposal to impose measures is merely a continuation of the anti-car stance.

*Response: The aim in introducing emission-based variable parking charges in Midsomer Norton and Radstock is to improve air quality, reduce congestion and encourage other ways to travel. Introducing charging in Midsomer Norton and Radstock would make it easier for shoppers to find parking by encouraging turnover of spaces, and the additional revenue would support regeneration schemes designed to increase footfall and support local trade.*

*It should be noted that whilst national targets and legal limits exist for air pollution and air quality there is no safe limit. Any measures that aim to reduce the impact of vehicle emissions will have a beneficial impact on human health and the environment.*

Cllr David Biddleston – No comment.

**Kingsmead:**

Cllr Paul Roper – No comment.

Cllr George Tomlin – No comment.

**Lambridge:**

Cllr Saskia Heijltjes – No comment.

Cllr Joanna Wright – No comment.

**Lansdown:**

Cllr Mark Elliott – No comment.

Cllr Lucy Hodge – No comment.

**Mendip:**

Cllr David Wood – No comment.

**Midsomer Norton North:**

Cllr Michael Auton – Following the Informal Consultation Report for the latest proposals for the Parking Charge Review 24-015, I wanted to raise some issues of concern before this goes to public consultation.

I would prefer we don't have parking charges, but if they have to be introduced, I want to explore if we can find a compromise solution which minimises the impact this change will mean for visitors and residents in Midsomer Norton.

**Lack of local consultation about these changes**

Little public consultation has taken place in Midsomer Norton to understand the real impact that the of introduction of parking charges would have on the town. There was proper consultation in Keynsham before charges brought in there, but not in Midsomer Norton.

**Introduction of emission-based charges**

The Review of emission-based parking charges in North East Somerset is based on current data collected from car use in Keynsham. This identified that 40% of car owners drive a less polluting vehicle and will see no increase in charges on top of new car park charges. This means that 60%, or 6 out of 10 car users **will be** affected. If these figures are true for Midsomer Norton, many people parking in South Road can expect additional emission charges which is not fair.

Midsomer Norton does not have the level of congestion and air pollution as Bath and drivers feel they are being penalised unfairly.

**Reducing car use and congestion in our residential roads**

One of the prime reasons for bringing in charges was to change behaviour and reduce congestion, and vehicle **intrusion into neighbourhoods, particularly residential neighbourhoods**. By introducing charges, will we not encourage car users to look for free parking in residential areas leading to an increase in intrusion for people living there.

**Impact on High Street businesses**

BANES Council is delivering a High Street Regeneration in Midsomer Norton totalling some £3.6M which is designed to increase footfall to the town. There is additional short stay parking in Sainsbury's and outside Dragonfly Leisure Centre. What impact will car park charges have on these parking spaces and off-road residential parking as drivers search for an alternative free option for their vehicles? Work has now started on the Island development in Midsomer Norton. Part of South Road Car Park has been set aside for construction vehicles and machinery, reducing capacity by 15%. This is expected to remain well into 2025. Introducing car parking charges while this work is going on could drive visitors away which will impact on the local businesses who have started to see shoppers slowly return to the High Street.

Many business owners are concerned about how parking charges will impact on their livelihoods. Feelings remain strong and posters have already appeared in shop



windows saying no to parking charges. **We urgently need to support our local businesses and I am asking Cabinet to seriously consider additional support specifically for business. This could be a permit open to high street businesses.**

#### **Introducing parking charges for motorcycles**

Why are we bringing in charges for motorcycles which do not create the same level of pollution as cars. Transport options for shopping in Midsomer Norton and commuting to bigger centres such as Bath are limited, and motorcycles offer a cheaper, more convenient form of travel. Asking them to start paying for emission-based charges will penalise users of motorcycles at a time when we are all facing cost of living challenges.

#### **Cost for maintaining the car park.**

With the introduction of car park charges, we can expect there to be increased cost to manage our car parks. Can we guarantee income from car park charges will be invested in maintenance and improvement of space in and around the car park. Can we make the car park safer for people travelling on their own, especially women.

#### **Supporting my two-hour free parking campaign**

Over 80% of South Road car park users I engaged with park for less than 2 hours for shopping or leisure. For this reason, I have campaigned strongly for two-hour free parking before any charges are introduced. The vast majority wanted free parking to remain, but felt if charges had to be introduced, this was a reasonable compromise. These people would continue to visit Midsomer Norton, use our amenities and support local businesses. **I strongly urge the Cabinet to consider introducing two hours free parking and not the 30 minutes on offer in Keynsham.**

**We need to hear the views about what people think and I will be encouraging as many people as possible to contribute to the public consultation when it is launched. The more views we have, the better we can understand the real impact of parking charges for residents and businesses.**

*Response: These proposals were initially consulted on between 15 December and 15 January as part of the Council's budget setting process for the 2024/25 financial year. This can be found online at <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/budget-consultation-2024-2025>.*

*A more detailed report on these proposals was presented to the Council's Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel on 21 March and this can be found online at <https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=636&MId=6480&Ver=4>*

*The public consultation is expected to be launched June and this will allow opportunities for people to view the published material and provide their views to the proposals for further consideration.*

*The aim in introducing emission-based variable parking charges in Midsomer Norton is to improve air quality, reduce congestion and encourage other ways to travel. Introducing charging in Midsomer Norton would make it easier for shoppers*



*to find parking by encouraging turnover of spaces, and the additional revenue would support regeneration schemes designed to increase footfall and support local trade. It should be noted that whilst national targets and legal limits exist for air pollution and air quality there is no safe limit. Any measures that aim to reduce the impact of vehicle emissions will have a beneficial impact on human health and the environment.*

*The impact of the temporary reduction on overall capacity in Midsomer Norton by the High Street regeneration works will be reduced by the increased turnover of spaces that the parking charges will encourage, ensuring that more visitors are able to locate a parking space.*

*The proposals include the introduction of a period of free parking in Midsomer Norton to help support local businesses and shoppers. The consultation will ask for respondent's views on how long a stay the free parking should provide.*

*All vehicles that use our roads, including motorbikes, contribute to air pollution in our local communities through either the burning of fossil fuels or through wear from brakes and tyres. This impacts air quality and is detrimental to the safety of pedestrians and other road users. The Introduction of paid for parking and permits for motorcycles supports the council's approach to encourage behaviour change and the use of more sustainable forms of transport to improve air quality and pedestrian safety.*

*It's acknowledged that the introduction of parking charges will add further nominal costs associated with additional signage and equipment to ensure that charges and other terms and conditions are clearly communicated and that payment options remain accessible to all car park users, and this is to be funded as part of existing upgrades to council pay and display equipment which commenced in 2023/24. The council will review facilities across all locations where charges are to be introduced and appropriate improvements will be considered. The consultation provides a further opportunity for respondents to provide feedback.*

*Surplus income generated from car park parking charges is used to support the council's priorities as set out within the Cabinet Manifesto, the Corporate Strategy and the Councils budget.*

*Cllr Shaun Hughes— I agree completely with the reply you have received from Dawn Drury at Keynsham Town Council, this is a very important and for Midsomer Norton and Radstock controversial proposal, the response time provided should reflect this. Please request an extension to allow all parties to provide a considered response.*

*Response: Thanks for your email, which has been passed to me as the report author.*

*The reports you and other recipients of this email received yesterday are circulated to elected members and town/parish councils, as well as the Police, ahead of the statutory TRO process to provide advance notice of the proposals, in line with*

*previous reports you will have received from the Traffic Management Team.*

*This allows any informal comments to be provided for consideration by the Cabinet Member for Transport and Director of Place Management prior to public consultation, whilst also extending the engagement period in line with the commitments made within the Parish Charter.*

*Should you wish to provide a response to the proposals at this stage you can of course do so, noting that you will still of course be able to provide a formal response on an organisational and individual basis during the public consultation.*

*These proposals were initially consulted on between 15 December and 15 January as part of the Council's budget setting process for the 2024/25 financial year. This can be found online at <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/budget-consultation-2024-2025>. A more detailed report on these proposals was presented to the Council's Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel on 21 March and this can be found online at <https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=636&MIId=6480&Ver=4>*

*We anticipate the launch of the public consultation taking place in late May/early June and I can confirm that recipients within this email will be provided with advance notice of the launch and a link to the online material which will be live once the launch has taken place.*

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposal to bring in parking charges in South Road Midsomer Norton, clearly BANES Council are not aware of the dynamics of our town, I thought I should highlight just a few issues that would be created by this proposal.

To be able to refer in detail to each section of the report would require more time than you are permitting, this is most disappointing as this TRO has the probability to have a severe negative effect on our Town economy. This therefore seems to be purely a box ticking exercise rather than a genuine attempt to assess impact.

#### Displacement

There will be significant displacement and disruption caused by a number of factors, South Road car park is adjacent to the Sports Centre which has limited parking and therefore their patrons use South Road car park as a much needed overflow, with parking charges in South Road Car Park residents are likely to use the sports centre car park to avoid payment thus creating huge issues for the sports centre as sports centre users will not be able to park and the overflow option will require payment.

This will have a knock-on effect to other businesses with limited parking such as Lidl who will in turn impose tighter parking restrictions it will also have a negative effect on Sainsbury's who currently permit 2 hours free parking however this will force them to bring in further restrictions.

Our High Street parking is already under pressure, this will further disperse and add pressure to residential streets around the high street.

We also have a lot of residents living in the high street in flats above shops and other purpose-built housing this will remove their ability to park near their homes and again add pressure to surrounding Streets. Due to being a mining town many of the surrounding streets were built before car ownership was the common and have very limited parking and this is already a significant problem and is a regular cause of disputes.

#### Local Businesses

Our smaller businesses benefit from small purchases for example a visit to the Post Office or Bank can include use of a coffee shop, a visit to the butcher or simply purchase of a birthday card, with 30 minute or no free parking this micro economy will cease as that would not be viable with charges and will result in business simply moving to Tesco with free parking.

#### Figures

I would also question the budget figure of £195k as this does not include the installation and enforcement costs, this leads us to the conclusion that no studies have been undertaken and this council will simply continue to increase fees regardless of the economic impact.

The claim that our high street is comparable with Keynsham and therefore should have parking charges is frankly ridiculous, in Keynsham during the past 10 years BANES have spent £28 million on a civic Centre, millions more converting council buildings to 96 apartments and of course high street road improvements, by comparison Midsomer Norton High Street has been neglected.

#### Emissions

The proposal is to introduce emission-based charges using the climate emergency to justify additional financial burden to the poorest in our society those who rely on a car but cannot afford a newer fuel efficient or electric vehicle.

A high number of our residents are on low income but need a car for work and to access services therefore cars are a necessity not a luxury in our area and residents need access to our high street for essential services such as banks, pharmacies, libraries, council services, professional services and support local shops.

The claim by Cllr Rigby that she is doing this to protect us from emissions has no data to support it, Midsomer Norton does not have an issue with high levels of emissions and no data has been gathered to demonstrate otherwise.

#### Motorcycles and Scooters

It is ridiculous to charge motorcycles and scooters when they are acknowledged in every part of the world as part of the solution to congestion, pollution and parking issues, to put them in the same category as much higher pollution cars is

completely absurd.

#### Data

To date there has not been a comprehensive parking survey, or impact assessment and so the consequences of these actions are not known and there is no consideration of the risk to our high street.

The Cabinet comment that the charges could be reversed if these charges result in damage to the local economy and closures of businesses demonstrates a complete lack of understanding of how high street economies work, once damaged they rarely recover.

#### Market square

I should also point out that a large section of South Road car park will shortly be closed to the public until 2025 due to it being used for the storage of materials and machinery for the market square development.

#### High Street staff

Our High Street provides local employment, the majority are low paid jobs however in a rural community it is necessary for some staff to drive to work, adding parking charges to residents already on low incomes will make working unviable. The reality is that we are in an area of high car dependency this is not through choice but necessary, particularly with severe cuts to public transport.

#### Summary

The complete lack of parking surveys, impact assessments or consultation with businesses clearly demonstrates that this is purely for a short-term financial gain at the expense of our high street economy, quite frankly staff and business owners are in fear of losing their livelihoods many of which are on low incomes. The claim that this is based on air quality has no data and no studies have been undertaken. This action will cause severe displacement to our Town Centre and irreversibly damage our high street. This TPO is not acceptable at any level.

#### *Response:*

*The aim in introducing emission-based variable parking charges in Midsomer Norton and Radstock is to improve air quality, reduce congestion and encourage other ways to travel. Introducing charging in Midsomer Norton and Radstock would make it easier for shoppers to find parking by encouraging turnover of spaces, and the additional revenue would support regeneration schemes designed to increase footfall and support local trade. It should be noted that whilst national targets and legal limits exist for air pollution and air quality there is no safe limit. Any measures that aim to reduce the impact of vehicle emissions will have a beneficial impact on human health and the environment.*

*As noted in the National Air Quality Strategy, measures designed to address air quality issues will often have a positive effect on climate change. Whilst this report does not attempt to justify the proposals on climate change grounds, it is anticipated that the measures, which are designed to (1) improve air quality in order to secure*

*the safer movement of pedestrian traffic on the highway, and (2) meet traffic management purposes, will also reduce the level of emissions that drive climate change, as a result, for example, of encouraging a switch to low emission vehicles or more sustainable modes of transport.*

*The proposals include the introduction of a period of free parking in Midsomer Norton and Radstock to help support local businesses and shoppers. The consultation will ask for respondent's views on how long a stay the free parking should provide.*

*There is no evidence available to suggest that the introduction of parking charges and time limits at council car parks in Midsomer Norton will result in private car park operators in the town making further changes to their own provision. It should be noted that operators of private parking facilities, such as those at Sainsbury's and Lidl, robustly enforce their terms and conditions under contract law, including with the use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras to ensure compliance.*

*The provision of public car parks helps support local businesses and other amenities within a local community by providing an accessible location where visitors may leave their vehicle for extended periods without impeding the free movement of vehicles on the highway network. Car parks are not provided at public expense to facilitate the long-term storage of private vehicles when people are at their place of residence.*

*It's acknowledged that the introduction of parking charges will add further nominal costs associated with additional signage and equipment to ensure that charges and other terms and conditions are clearly communicated and that payment options remain accessible to all car park users, and this is to be funded as part of existing upgrades to council pay and display equipment which commenced in 2023/24. The council will review facilities across all locations where charges are to be introduced and appropriate improvements will be considered. The consultation provides a further opportunity for respondents to provide feedback.*

*All vehicles that use our roads, including motorbikes, contribute to air pollution in our local communities through either the burning of fossil fuels or through wear from brakes and tyres. This impacts air quality and is detrimental to the safety of pedestrians and other road users. The introduction of paid for parking and permits for motorcycles supports the council's approach to encourage behaviour change and the use of more sustainable forms of transport to improve air quality and pedestrian safety. Furthermore, it's not accurate to state that the proposals place motorbikes within the same category as much higher polluting cars; rather they are proposed to be charged based on their emissions as per data held with DVLA.*

*The public consultation is expected to be launched June and this will allow opportunities for people to view the published material and provide their views to the proposals for further consideration.*

*The impact of the temporary reduction on overall capacity in Midsomer Norton by the High Street regeneration works will be reduced by the increased turnover of spaces that the parking charges will encourage, ensuring that more visitors are able to locate a parking space.*

*Surplus income generated from car park parking charges is used to support the council's priorities as set out within the Cabinet Manifesto, the Corporate Strategy and the Councils budget.*

### **Midsomer Norton Redfield:**

Cllr Tim Warren – Midsomer Norton is a busy market town that people travel to from the local vicinity and without a regular local bus service residents living outside walking distance have no option but to use their cars.

So for the town to maintain a viable High Street customers will travel by car - and park. A significant number of these customers will come from rural areas where there is a necessity for larger four wheel drive vehicles. For many people the substantial financial investment required to buy a new car is simply not possible, so they will unfairly be charged extra for supporting their local High Street.

Air pollution levels in Midsomer Norton are not high, so this extra charge is unnecessary. The other alternatives will be either to use the out of town supermarket (free parking) or park elsewhere, clogging up side roads etc, neither of which is ideal for the town and its residents.

Unlike other towns in the authority, Midsomer Norton has not received such large investments and has gone through challenging times.

Now, however, the High Street is starting to thrive and absolutely the last thing it needs is a parking charge to make customers think twice about visiting.

I think after the cost of installing parking meters, automated number plate recognition etc is considered, there will be very little if any profit left.

When the above costs are taken into account, how long will the 2 hours free parking last?

I imagine not long.

The damage will far outweigh the benefits and I think it will be a grave mistake moving forward with the proposed parking charges in Midsomer Norton, and that the sensible option is to shelve the project now.

Am I correct in thinking that the 2 hours free in the proposed parking charges in South Road car park has been abandoned already?

*Response: The aim in introducing emission-based variable parking charges in Midsomer Norton and Radstock is to improve air quality, reduce congestion and encourage other ways to travel. Introducing charging in Midsomer Norton and Radstock would make it easier for shoppers to find parking by encouraging turnover of spaces, and the additional revenue would support regeneration schemes designed to increase footfall and support local trade. It should be noted that whilst national targets and legal limits exist for air pollution and air quality there is no safe limit. Any measures that aim to reduce the impact of vehicle emissions will have a beneficial impact on human health and the environment.*



*The proposals include the introduction of a period of free parking in Midsomer Norton and Radstock to help support local businesses and shoppers. The consultation will ask for respondent's views on how long a stay the free parking should provide.*

*All tariffs and associated charges (including those that prescribe free parking) must be included within the appropriate Traffic Regulation Orders. Changes to these tariffs can only be made by undertaking statutory public consultation.*

*It's acknowledged that the introduction of parking charges will add further nominal costs associated with additional signage and equipment to ensure that charges and other terms and conditions are clearly communicated and that payment options remain accessible to all car park users, and this is to be funded as part of existing upgrades to council pay and display equipment which commenced in 2023/24. The council will review facilities across all locations where charges are to be introduced and appropriate improvements will be considered. The consultation provides a further opportunity for respondents to provide feedback.*

Cllr Sarah Evans – No comment.

**Moorlands:**

Cllr Jess David – No comment.

**Newbridge:**

Cllr Michelle O'Doherty – No comment.

Cllr Samantha Kelly – No comment.

**Odd Down:**

Cllr Steve Hedges – No comment.

Cllr Joel Hirst – No comment.

**Oldfield Park:**

Cllr Ian Halsall – No comment.

**Paulton:**

Cllr Liz Hardman – No comment.

Cllr Grant Johnson – No comment.

**Peasedown St John:**

Cllr Gavin Heathcote – No comment.

Cllr Karen Walker – No comment.

**Publow with Whitchurch:**

Cllr Paul May – No comment.

**Radstock:**

Cllr Chris Dando – No comment.

Cllr Lesley Mansell – No comment.

**Saltford:**

Cllr Duncan Hounsell – No comment.

Cllr Alison Streatfeild-James – No comment.

**Southdown:**

Cllr Paul Crossley – No comment.

Cllr Dine Romero – No comment.

**Timsbury:**

Cllr Shaun Stephenson-McGall – No comment.

**Twerton:**

Cllr Tim Ball – No comment.

Cllr Sarah Moore – No comment.

**Walcot:**

Cllr Oil Henman – No comment.

Cllr John Leach – My primary concern at the moment relates to the proposal to charge motorbikes for parking, specifically the table in para 3.21 that aligns four bands of motorbike engine size with four bands of car engine size.

I agree with the proposal to charge motorbikes for parking rather than have them continue to be free. And I agree with “The Polluter Pays” principle. I understand the need to have a charge based on engine size as many, if not most, bikes do not have an emissions rate stated in their DVLA record. However, if The Polluter Pays



principle is to be applied to bikes, then the motorbike engine size bands should be charged according to their expected average pollution rather than be aligned with car engine size bands that have very different levels of pollution. There is no way that a Ducati 803cc motorbike getting 65mpg pollutes as much as a 3000cc Range Rover that won't get even 25mpg unless driven with extreme care. The motorbike will emit far less CO2, far less PM2.5, put far less wear on the road surface and cause far less congestion.

Please rewrite the table in para 3.21 and set the charges for each motorbike engine size band at a level that reflects fairly the expected pollution motorbikes of that engine size produce or state that The Polluter Pays principle is not being applied to motorbikes.

*Response: All vehicles that use our roads, including motorbikes, contribute to air pollution in our local communities through either the burning of fossil fuels or through wear from brakes and tyres. This impacts air quality and is detrimental to the safety of pedestrians and other road users. The introduction of paid for parking and permits for motorcycles supports the council's approach to encourage behaviour change and the use of more sustainable forms of transport to improve air quality and pedestrian safety.*

*Comments on the variability of DVLA data on CO2 emissions from motorbikes are noted. The public consultation is expected to be launched June and this will allow opportunities for people to view the published material and provide their views to the proposals for further consideration.*

#### **Westfield:**

Cllr Dr Eleanor Jackson – That is my view, too, but I will send you a more detailed response with reference to the Somer Valley issues this evening. We should be very mindful not just of where residents travel from, but where they want to travel too, and what the alternatives are. Waiting for two hours for a bus to the top end of Clandown and Camerton is no joke when you have just missed a bus, and have shopping, swarking children or a disability.

I am afraid I still don't understand why, now that the cabinet meeting has been put back by a month to 6 June, when presumably there will be a report, there were only five days for a response from ward councillors.

I spent so much time trailing up and down to the RUH yesterday (the bus service is truly appalling, with waits for the return journey often 45 minutes, or longer than the time in clinic waiting to be called, which is mainly due to delays in the circuit round Weston through narrow roads) that I was too exhausted to get a separate response off. Anyway, all I can say is 1)that for the struggling low wage/low benefit economy of Radstock and Midsomer Norton, on hilly terrain which does not lend itself to walking or cycling, parking charges are unacceptable. My residents cannot afford electric cars – and to add insult to injury, the notices in Radstock Library car park announce charges for people wanting to re-charge their electric cars. We have so few public charging points in the area, but now people will have to pay for the

privilege of charging their cars.

2) Residents will do their weekly shop elsewhere. So this will undermine the whole 'levelling up' process. You may think this is not rational, but this is how people think. When RADCO charged people for car parking, they lost a third of their trade, which they never regained. When the new store is built, I do not think customers will be charged.

3) Small businesses like the Susan Hill School of Dance will be disproportionately hit.

4) What will happen to the alleged £184,000 collected per year in charges? You could subsidise the BANES end of the 414 bus service for that. But we have heard nothing about improving community public services, only that the Island bus stop is being moved, which will further deter 'the grey pound'.

*Response:*

*The reports circulated to elected members and town/parish councils, as well as the Police, ahead of the statutory TRO process provide advance notice of the proposals, in line with previous reports that recipient will have received from the Traffic Management Team. This allows any informal comments to be provided for consideration by the Cabinet Member for Transport and Director of Place Management prior to public consultation, whilst also extending the engagement period in line with the commitments made within the Parish Charter.*

*These parking charge proposals were initially consulted on between 15 December and 15 January as part of the Council's budget setting process for the 2024/25 financial year. This can be found online at <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/budget-consultation-2024-2025>. A more detailed report on these proposals was presented to the Council's Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel on 21 March and this can be found online at <https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=636&MIId=6480&Ver=4>*

*The aim in introducing emission-based variable parking charges in Midsomer Norton and Radstock is to improve air quality, reduce congestion and encourage other ways to travel. Introducing charging in Midsomer Norton and Radstock would make it easier for shoppers to find parking by encouraging turnover of spaces, and the additional revenue would support regeneration schemes designed to increase footfall and support local trade. It should be noted that whilst national targets and legal limits exist for air pollution and air quality there is no safe limit. Any measures that aim to reduce the impact of vehicle emissions will have a beneficial impact on human health and the environment.*

*The proposals include the introduction of a period of free parking in Midsomer Norton and Radstock to help support local businesses and shoppers. The consultation will ask for respondent's views on how long a stay the free parking should provide.*

*The proposals set out a baseline charge for the least polluting vehicles, rather than just for electric vehicles, which includes vehicles emitting between 0 to 130 g/km of CO2.*

*The public consultation is expected to be launched June and this will allow opportunities for people to view the published material and provide their views to the proposals for further consideration.*

*Surplus income generated from car park parking charges is used to support the council's priorities as set out within the Cabinet Manifesto, the Corporate Strategy and the Councils budget.*

Cllr Robin Moss – No comment.

#### **Westmorelands:**

Cllr June Player – No comment.

Cllr Colin Blackburn – No comment.

#### **Weston:**

Cllr Malcolm Treby – I would like to urge a rethink on the evening charge at Charlotte Street – it simply doesn't work and this increase will exacerbate this situation. This should be the natural place for me to park in the evening – however, if I come in with the family for a meal at say 7pm and stay until 9pm, this will cost £7.20. That's no contest when I can drive an extra mile and park at Southgate for £2.50.

I do have an alternative suggestion though – extend the evening period at Charlotte Street from 6 until 10pm at the same price. This would mean (131-150 diesel figures used as an example):

- Cost from 6pm – 10pm: £3.60
- Cost from 6pm – 8am: £7.20
- Cost from 8pm – 8am: £3.60 (i.e those turning up between 8pm and 10pm just get charged the overnight fee – not the evening fee too).

This is still more than Southgate, but at least they're in the same ballpark now, and this should encourage better usage of Charlotte Street and, as it will generally mean shorter journeys for those come from the North or West, it should be better for the environment too.

#### *Response:*

*The evening charge was introduced at Charlotte Street car park to recognise that people arriving for the evening economy, either for work or for pleasure, between*

*6am and 8pm where required to purchase the minimum duration of 4-hours when parking at Charlotte Street, which is a long stay car park.*

*The current charge for a least polluting vehicle at Charlotte Street between 7pm and 10pm (allowing parking until 8am the following morning) is £3.00. The equivalent cost of parking covering the same period at SouthGate is £2.50. However, the Charlotte Street tariff will allow the vehicle to remain parked until 8am the following day, whilst a charge for the same period at Southgate would cost £15.00.*

*These proposals review the charges for existing tariffs in Bath car parks only, with no plans proposed to amend existing tariff structures.*

Cllr Ruth Malloy – No comment.

**Widcombe & Lyncombe:**

Cllr Deborah Collins – No comment.

Cllr Alison Born – No comment.

**Parish / Town Council**

Keynsham Town Council - Thank you for your email and attachment which I have forwarded to our Councillors.

I am concerned however that this hardly collaborative working between Councils under the Parish Charter. To be sent such a document on a Friday, requesting a response within five days with a weekend between. This gives our Council no time to consider the information as a full Council. The responses that you receive will be individual Councillor views and not an approved Council response.

*Response: Thanks for your email, which has been passed to me as the report author.*

*The reports you and other recipients of this email received yesterday are circulated to elected members and town/parish councils, as well as the Police, ahead of the statutory TRO process to provide advance notice of the proposals, in line with previous reports you will have received from the Traffic Management Team.*

*This allows any informal comments to be provided for consideration by the Cabinet Member for Transport and Director of Place Management prior to public consultation, whilst also extending the engagement period in line with the commitments made within the Parish Charter.*

*Should you wish to provide a response to the proposals at this stage you can of course do so, noting that you will still of course be able to provide a formal response on an organisational and individual basis during the public consultation.*

*These proposals were initially consulted on between 15 December and 15 January as part of the Council's budget setting process for the 2024/25 financial year. This can be found online at <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/budget-consultation-2024-2025>. A more detailed report on these proposals was presented to the Council's Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel on 21 March and this can be found online at <https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=636&MIId=6480&Ver=4>*

*We anticipate the launch of the public consultation taking place in late May/early June and I can confirm that recipients within this email will be provided with advance notice of the launch and a link to the online material which will be live once the launch has taken place.*

Camerton Parish Council - Please find below the response from Camerton Parish Council

Residents have very little if any choice of mode of travel to all of the areas the car parks cover as there is no bus service covering the main part of the parish. Therefore would B&NES consider a discount scheme that would cover areas not served by public transport.

*Response: There are no plans to include a discount scheme for residents, noting that the Resident Parking Saver scheme, a 10% discount for residents when paying for parking in Bath through MiPermit, was discontinued in November 2022 as it incentivised travel into Bath city centre by private vehicle rather than the use of the more sustainable alternatives such as the Park and Ride service.*

*The proposals for Midsomer Norton and Radstock car parks include the introduction of a period of free parking to help support local businesses and shoppers. The consultation will ask for respondents' views on how long a stay the free parking should provide.*

Saltford Parish Council - Please find below the resolved response to the informal consultation from Saltford Parish Council (in bold), as agreed at [SPC's January meeting under item 26](#), :

#### **B&NES COUNCIL BUDGET CONSULTATION 2024-2025: EMISSION BASED CHARGING**

The Council agreed to respond to B&NES Council's Budget Consultation 2024-2025 specifically relating to proposals to introduce 'inflationary price rises, alongside the introduction of emission-based parking charges for all vehicles to all locations in Bath (on and off street), Keynsham, Saltford' etc.

SPC resolved to submit the following response by the 15 January consultation end date:

Based on information received from B&NES Council on request regarding the B&NES Council Budget Consultation 2024/25, Saltford Parish Council understands

that the consultation on emissions-based charges refers to B&NES Council's The Shallows car park only, as the sole location in Salford where public parking charges apply. Should this not be the case (as parking locations for Salford were not specified in the consultation), Salford Parish Council wishes to make B&NES Council aware that it is strongly of the opinion that no parking charges should be introduced at any other B&NES Council car parks and/or marked parking bays in Salford.

Salford Parish Council acknowledges that cleaner (lower emission) vehicles are required. However, it recognises that The Shallows car park in Salford, unlike many other B&NES Council car parks, is primarily for recreational use by those seeking to enjoy Salford's natural environment and historic conservation area. As such, charges should not discriminate against low-income residents and visitors who are less likely to drive newer vehicles with cleaner exhausts.

Salford Parish Council views that by making users of vehicles with dirtier exhausts pay more to park at The Shallows car park (albeit a smaller incremental amount due to the comparatively low charge compared to other B&NES Car Parks) this could increase visitor parking on the nearby narrow highway where permitted, which is already heavily in demand by residents (many of whom do not have access to off-street parking). This could also raise concerns about the impact on local air quality.

Salford Parish Council views that it is for the Government to create the economic conditions and incentives for people to transition to cleaner vehicles, not local car parking policies at recreational **locations**.

*Response: No formal response is provided to these comments which were submitted by SPC in response to the Council's Budget consultation, dated 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and not in response to this report. However, wider points raised have been included within the response below.*

Salford Parish Council- Thank you for your email below to all Parish and Town Councils following Keynsham TC's request.

Salford PC did note proposals for emissions based charging in the B&NES Budget consultation, so was able respond to the informal consultation with a resolved Council view on this matter ([item 26](#), as submitted today to Sadie).

However, Salford PC discussed at its January meeting that emissions-based charging had been easy to miss in the B&NES Budget consultation.

The concerns raised by Dawn Drury at Keynsham Town Council reflect Salford PC's concerns at the time that it was easy for Parish and Town Councils to miss the inclusion of emissions-based charging in the B&NES Budget consultation.

B&NES Parking may wish to consider this in light of Keynsham TC's request for a time extension.



Further, B&NES Parking should also be aware that there were other issues with the B&NES Budget consultation, both in terms of vague content, the time period it was open and means of submission. These concerns were raised by Saltford Parish Council to the attention of B&NES ALCA shortly after the consultation closed, and B&NES ALCA approached B&NES Council about these issues.

Specifically, other issues with the B&NES Budget consultation which may have prevented or hindered Parish and Town Councils responding include:

- Emissions based charging - an important topic and likely to be of interest to many parishes - was mentioned far down the B&NES media release sent out on Friday 15 Dec (as copied and highlighted below), the first time Parishes were made aware of this proposal. SPC only identified the relevance of this information as it drilled down into the information. We are aware that Ward Cllrs missed it initially too. It is not surprising that other Parish and Town Councils may have missed emissions-based charging being included in the Budget consultation, so could not resolve a response ahead of this current informal consultation. In addition, emissions-based charging was not mentioned in subsequent press releases (e.g. see B&NES newsletter dated 22 Feb) if it had been perhaps more Parish and Town Councils would have been aware.
- The Budget consultation launched Friday 15 Dec 23 and ended Monday 15 Jan 24. With Christmas and New Year in the middle (at a time when many staff are on leave), plus as many Parishes do not meet in January, the chance to get this on Town and Parish Council agendas (with the required three clear days) to resolve a formal response to submit to B&NES by Monday 15 Jan was limited.
- Unless a Parish Council resolved at its meeting responses to the entire online Budget consultation (no 'no comment' options available and answers had to be given to all to be able to submit) it had to respond by post in time for the Monday 15 Jan end date, adding further time pressures for a Council to resolve a response. (B&NES also stated the entire consultation had to be printed out and posted even if just one section was being responded to e.g. like SPC's response on emissions-based charging, which also created a time and cost implication for Town and Parish Councils).
- Consultation information was vague and incomplete, as flagged in SPC's formal response. Specifically to Saltford, the press release omitted naming Saltford as a location, then it took some exploring of the B&NES website to locate the limited detail available. 'Saltford' was only mentioned once in the Highways table under 'emission-based charging' in the 'description' column and thereafter omitted from 'impacts to service delivery' though other locations were mentioned. SPC could only resolve a response to the B&NES Budget consultation as it contacted B&NES Parking for more information ahead of SPC's January meeting, otherwise we would have been unclear about what we were responding on.

So though it seems that although formal process has been followed by B&NES as in your email below, in light of Saltford PC's experience in January and the concerns that have been subsequently raised about the Budget consultation via B&NES ALCA

about the Budget consultation, B&NES Parking may wish to review the request for a time extension by Keynsham TC.

Further, if matters relating to parking charge increases could be more prominently featured in future B&NES Budget consultations along with more detail at the time for Parish and Town Councils to aid their consideration of such matters, that would be appreciated.

We welcome the information shared today about the public consultation due in late May / early June, and that Parishes will be made aware of this in advance.

*Response:*

*Whilst the comments made about previous council consultations, that included reference to these proposals, are noted it's not possible to comment on previous consultations and this response is therefore limited to matters raised about the detailed proposals contained within this report.*

*This report circulated to elected members and town/parish councils, as well as the Police, ahead of the statutory TRO process provided advance notice of the proposals. This allowed for any informal comments to be provided for consideration by the Cabinet Member for Transport and Director of Place Management prior to a public consultation, whilst also extending the engagement period in line with the commitments made within the Parish Charter.*

*In addition to the inclusion of these proposals within the Council's budget setting process for the 2024/25 financial year, a more detailed report on these proposals was presented to the Council's Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel on 21 March and this can be found online at <https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=636&MId=6480&Ver=4>*

*Parking charges were introduced to The Shallows car park in Saltford at the request of councillors and the Parish Council to help address the antisocial parking that took place during good weather. The proposals do not seek to introduce parking charges to other council managed car parks in Saltford.*

*It should also be noted that the proposals seek to encourage the use of less polluting vehicles and sustainable forms of transport, rather than newer vehicles. The use of CO2 emissions data links more closely to engine size and the volume of fuel combusted and therefore CO2 emitted along with other pollutants than other recognised standards, such as the EURO classifications that the council does not have direct access to on a per vehicle basis. Newer EURO standards will only typically apply to newer vehicles.*

*It should be noted that whilst national targets and legal limits exist for air pollution and air quality there is no safe limit. Any measures that aim to reduce the impact of vehicle emissions will have a beneficial impact on human health and the*



*environment.*

Further to the Radstock Town Council's Planning and Local Development Committee Meeting on 23/4/24 it is asked the following points to be noted:

- A Parking review should be completed prior to any formal consideration, public consultation, or any implementations. The Radstock Regeneration Action Plan, along with resident feedback states the need for a parking review to be completed due to public concern over parking provision in Radstock. A review was due to be completed after the initial changes several years ago, this has never been completed.
- The proposed parking time limit of 30 minutes free parking is not adequate for visitors to Radstock needing to use key services (Doctors, Dentists etc.) and local shops. The Council ask if 90 minutes free parking could be considered.
- Review of the parking provision should include Tom Huyton car park. There are currently no restrictions in place. This will likely attract non park users to park all day to the detriment of visitors to the greenway and park.
- There is currently missing 30-minute wait time limit signage on The Street, it was removed some time ago during maintenance and never replaced.
- Blanket use of data from Keynsham is unfair and does not consider the requirements of Radstock and Midsomer Norton. The needs and use for all three towns are very different.

*Response: The aim of the proposals to introduce parking charges in Radstock is to improve air quality, reduce congestion and encourage other ways to travel. These proposals do not aim to impact existing parking capacity; however, the introduction of charging in Radstock would make it easier for shoppers to find parking by encouraging turnover of spaces, and the additional revenue would support regeneration schemes designed to increase footfall and support local trade. It should be noted that whilst national targets and legal limits exist for air pollution and air quality there is no safe limit. Any measures that aim to reduce the impact of vehicle emissions will have a beneficial impact on human health and the environment.*

*The proposals for Radstock car parks include the introduction of a period of free parking to help support local businesses and shoppers. The consultation will ask for respondent's views on how long a stay the free parking should provide.*

*The parking area adjacent to the Tom Huyton play area does not form part of the council's car park estate and this location is not included within these proposals.*

*Keynsham is used as a model for the baseline parking charge only, with charges for the least polluting vehicles proposed to be set at the equivalent of £0.40 per hour from October 2024. Proposed durations of paid for parking that will be available across car parks in Radstock reflect those already in place within the town, but which are currently free of charge, to ensure turnover of the limited spaces available in order to support local businesses and shoppers.*

Temple Cloud with Cameley Parish Council - Due to the short notice to respond, a resolved response of the council cannot be provided from Temple Cloud with Parish Council in such short notice. The following responses are provided from feedback from individual members of the council and are not to be taken as representing the resolved response of the Parish Council until the council is offered sufficient notice to respond to a consultation request:

Several members of the council have highlighted and agree with the issues raised by Cllr Shaun Hughes, Councillor for Midsomer Norton North, and would like to express agreement with the following points raised by Cllr Hughes:

To be able to refer in detail to each section of the report would require more time than you are permitting, this is most disappointing as this TPO has the probability to have a severe negative effect on our Town economy. This therefore seems to be purely a box ticking exercise rather than a genuine attempt to assess impact.

### Displacement

There will be significant displacement and disruption caused by a number of factors, South Road car park is adjacent to the Sports Centre which has limited parking and therefore their patrons use South Road car park as a much needed overflow, with parking charges in South Road Car Park residents are likely to use the sports centre car park to avoid payment thus creating huge issues for the sports centre as sports centre users will not be able to park and the overflow option will require payment.

This will have a knock-on effect to other businesses with limited parking such as Lidl who will in turn impose tighter parking restrictions it will also have a negative effect on Sainsbury's who currently permit 2 hours free parking however this will force them to bring in further restrictions.

Our High Street parking is already under pressure, this will further disperse and add pressure to residential streets around the high street.

We also have a lot of residents living in the high street in flats above shops and other purpose-built housing this will remove their ability to park near their homes and again add pressure to surrounding Streets. Due to being a mining town many of the surrounding streets were built before car ownership was the common and have very limited parking and this is already a significant problem and is a regular cause of disputes.

### Local Businesses

Our smaller businesses benefit from small purchases for example a visit to the Post Office or Bank can include use of a coffee shop, a visit to the butcher or simply purchase of a birthday card, with 30 minute or no free parking this micro economy will cease as that would not be viable with charges and will result in business simply moving to Tesco with free parking.

## Figures

I would also question the budget figure of £195k as this does not include the installation and enforcement costs, this leads us to the conclusion that no studies have been undertaken and this council will simply continue to increase fees regardless of the economic impact.

The claim that our high street is comparable with Keynsham and therefore should have parking charges is frankly ridiculous, in Keynsham during the past 10 years BANES have spent £28 million on a civic Centre, millions more converting council buildings to 96 apartments and of course high street road improvements, by comparison Midsomer Norton High Street has been neglected.

## Emissions

The proposal is to introduce emission-based charges using the climate emergency to justify additional financial burden to the poorest in our society those who rely on a car but cannot afford a newer fuel efficient or electric vehicle.

A high number of our resident are on low income but need a car for work and to access services therefore cars are a necessity not a luxury in our area and residents need access to our high street for essential services such as banks, pharmacies, libraries, council services, professional services and support local shops.

The claim by Cllr Rigby that she is doing this to protect us from emissions has no data to support it, Midsomer Norton does not have an issue with high levels of emissions and no data has been gathered to demonstrate otherwise.

## Motorcycles and Scooters

It is ridiculous to charge motorcycles and scooters when they are acknowledged in every part of the world as part of the solution to congestion, pollution and parking issues, to put them in the same category as much higher pollution cars is completely absurd.

## Data

To date there has not been a comprehensive parking survey, or impact assessment and so the consequences of these actions are not known and there is no consideration of the risk to our high street.

The Cabinet comment that the charges could be reversed if these charges result in damage to the local economy and closures of businesses demonstrates a complete lack of understanding of how high street economies work, once damaged they rarely recover.

## Market square

I should also point out that a large section of South Road car park will shortly be closed to the public until 2025 due to it being used for the storage of materials and machinery for the market square development.

### High Street staff

Our High Street provides local employment, the majority are low paid jobs however in a rural community it is necessary for some staff to drive to work, adding parking charges to residents already on low incomes will make working unviable. The reality is that we are in an area of high car dependency this is not through choice but necessary, particularly with severe cuts to public transport.

### Summary

The complete lack of parking surveys, impact assessments or consultation with businesses clearly demonstrates that this is purely for a short term financial gain at the expense of our high street economy, quite frankly staff and business owners are in fear of losing their livelihoods many of which are on low incomes. The claim that this is based on air quality has no data and no studies have been undertaken. This action will cause severe displacement to our Town Centre and irreversibly damage our high street. This TPO is not acceptable at any level.

### *Response:*

*The aim in introducing emission-based variable parking charges in Midsomer Norton and Radstock is to improve air quality, reduce congestion and encourage other ways to travel. Introducing charging in Midsomer Norton and Radstock would make it easier for shoppers to find parking by encouraging turnover of spaces, and the additional revenue would support regeneration schemes designed to increase footfall and support local trade. It should be noted that whilst national targets and legal limits exist for air pollution and air quality there is no safe limit. Any measures that aim to reduce the impact of vehicle emissions will have a beneficial impact on human health and the environment.*

*As noted in the National Air Quality Strategy, measures designed to address air quality issues will often have a positive effect on climate change. Whilst this report does not attempt to justify the proposals on climate change grounds, it is anticipated that the measures, which are designed to (1) improve air quality in order to secure the safer movement of pedestrian traffic on the highway, and (2) meet traffic management purposes, will also reduce the level of emissions that drive climate change, as a result, for example, of encouraging a switch to low emission vehicles or more sustainable modes of transport.*

*The proposals include the introduction of a period of free parking in Midsomer Norton and Radstock to help support local businesses and shoppers. The consultation will ask for respondent's views on how long a stay the free parking should provide.*

*There is no evidence available to suggest that the introduction of parking charges and time limits at council car parks in Midsomer Norton will result in private car park operators in the town making further changes to their own provision. It should be noted that operators of private parking facilities, such as those at Sainsbury's and Lidl, robustly enforce their terms and conditions under contract law, including with the use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras to ensure compliance.*

*The provision of car parks also helps support local businesses and other amenities within a local community by providing an accessible location where visitors may leave their vehicle for extended periods without impeding the free movement of vehicles on the highway network. Car parks are not provided at public expense to facilitate the long-term storage of private vehicles when people are at their place of residence.*

*It's acknowledged that the introduction of parking charges will add further nominal costs associated with additional signage and equipment to ensure that charges and other terms and conditions are clearly communicated and that payment options remain accessible to all car park users, and this is to be funded as part of existing upgrades to council pay and display equipment which commenced in 2023/24. The council will review facilities across all locations where charges are to be introduced and appropriate improvements will be considered. The consultation provides a further opportunity for respondents to provide feedback.*

*All vehicles that use our roads, including motorbikes, contribute to air pollution in our local communities through either the burning of fossil fuels or through wear from brakes and tyres. This impacts air quality and is detrimental to the safety of pedestrians and other road users. The introduction of paid for parking and permits for motorcycles supports the council's approach to encourage behaviour change and the use of more sustainable forms of transport to improve air quality and pedestrian safety. Furthermore, it's not accurate to state that the proposals place motorbikes within the same category as much higher polluting cars; rather they are proposed to be charged based on their emissions as per data held with DVLA.*

*The public consultation is expected to be launched June and this will allow opportunities for people to view the published material and provide their views to the proposals for further consideration.*

*The impact of the temporary reduction on overall capacity in Midsomer Norton by the High Street regeneration works will be reduced by the increased turnover of spaces that the parking charges will encourage, ensuring that more visitors are able to locate a parking space.*

**REPORT APPROVED FOR CIRCULATION TO CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS**



Paul Garrod  
Traffic Management and Network Manager

Date: 10<sup>th</sup> May 2024