

# Committee Report - Linear Parking

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**PURPOSE:** Final Decision Report

**KEY OR NON-KEY DECISION:** Key decision over £500k

**COMMITTEE:** Transport and Connectivity Committee

**DATE:** 20 March 2025

**TITLE:** Linear Parking

**Ward(s):** Central, Clifton, Hotwells & Harbourside, Lawrence Hill, Ashley

**Officer presenting the report:** Shaun Taylor **Job title:** Head of Highways

**Committee Chair:** Cllr Ed Plowden

**Executive Director lead:** John Smith: Executive Director for Growth & Regeneration

**Proposal origin:** BCC Staff

**Purpose of Report:**

1. To seek approval for the revised proposal to implement linear parking charges in the Central Controlled Parking Zone and some off street car parks.
2. To note a number of associated items connected with the implementation of linear parking.
3. To seek approval to delegate authority to implement linear parking to the Executive Director, Growth & Regeneration.

**Evidence Base / Options to consider:**

1. Committee have recently considered a range of changes designed to promote sustainable transport through a review of parking policies and charges. Within the context of Bristol's Transport Policy there is a need to maximise the use of kerb space to accommodate increasing demands for car clubs, cycle hangars, scooter parking and electric vehicle charging.
2. Officers have reconsidered an earlier proposal previously deferred by Committee. Officers have revised the proposal to address Committee's apparent concerns, and these have subsequently been discussed with local businesses through Bristol Nights who met in January to discuss the proposal and then by the Parking and Kerbside Strategy Task and Finish Group. These discussions have formed the basis of the revised proposals presented in this report. Key feedback from the discussion with the Bristol Nights group included:
  - a. Availability, frequency, reliability and safety of public transport are a key issue as many bus services finish too early. There was a very strong suggestion that the m2 Long Ashton Park and Ride service should be extended until 11pm.
  - b. E-Scooter operating hours and midnight cut off for Clean Air Zone charges and some

- public transport tickets has a disproportionate impact on night economy workers.
  - c. Concern that prices increases from linear charging would negatively impact their staff.
  - d. General agreement that the tariff system should be easy to understand, and ideally the price per hour should be reduced in the evening.
  - e. Keen that parking considerations would not negatively impact dwell time for customers i.e. that a maximum stay period wouldn't be introduced in the evening and whether daytime maximum stay periods could be increased.
  - f. Concern about access to the city Centre for large vehicles and out of hours deliveries and to smaller vehicles for heavy equipment (e.g. musicians)
3. It should be noted that implementation of the proposal will be subject to consultation as part of the necessary changes to the Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs). The TRO changes will also require resource from teams that are already heavily committed to implementing previously approved changes and in delivering the City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) programme.
4. Linear charging refers to the concept of having a single hourly rate for parking charges (which may vary by location) but which is applied equally across all hours of operation. This is a distinct change from Bristol's existing tariffs which are generally divided into daytime rates between 8am and 6pm, evening rates between 6pm and midnight and overnight rates from 6pm to 9am the next day.
5. Feedback from customers is that the current regime is unduly complex and is considered to be unfair for customers who stray into the next tariff band by only a few minutes but see a big jump in the resulting charge. Officers receive multiple complaints about this issue every month, from dissatisfied customers who believe they have been unfairly or incorrectly charged and who are requesting refunds. The complaints are received directly or are made to RingGo, who pass them on to us. There is an officer and supplier overhead to processing the complaints and the ongoing nature over many years shows this is a persistent issue for customers despite changing our signage over the years to add additional explanation.
6. Examples of problematic charges are:
- a. Addition of a blanket evening charge on top of day time tariff if customers stay extends past 6pm.
  - b. Customers who stay for just five or six hours in our long stay car parks currently have to pay the over 4-hour all day charge.
  - c. Complex on street and short stay tariffs where the hourly rate is charged in 50p increments, leaving customers struggling to work out how much they need to pay for specific periods as 50p may only equate to 8- or 9-minutes parking. These on street tariffs are too large to display a full tariff board on the machine and it is left to the customer to insert coins and the machine screen will display the relevant expiry time with each additional 50p that is paid.
7. Officers would like to streamline the tariff to improve customer service and transparency. As per the original proposal from September 2024, the following charges are proposed from 8am to 10pm at all on street locations within the CPZ and all off street Car Parks as listed in Appendix A:
- a. £4.50 per hour in on street 1-hour zones

- b. £3.50 per hour in on street 2- and 4-hour zones
- c. £3.50 per hour in Queen Square and Brunswick Square car parks
- d. £2.70 per hour in all other off street car parks, **capped at £27.00 for 10 hours.**

8. In practice this means:

- a. Removal of incremental payments for on-street parking and parking in Brunswick Square and Queen Square. Instead, we will charge in whole hours, as we already do in all other locations including all the Resident Parking Scheme areas and all off street car parks.
- b. Removal of the evening and overnight tariffs which will be replaced by the relevant hourly charge between 8am and 10pm.
- c. Existing maximum stay periods will remain unchanged between 8am and 6pm. There will be no maximum stay periods between 6pm and 8am. Maximum stay periods are as follows:
  - i. On Street 1-hour maximum stay zone generally covers the area around the Old City.
  - ii. On Street 2-hour maximum stay zone covers the majority of the central controlled parking zone.
  - iii. On Street 4-hour maximum stay zone generally covers areas in Redcliffe and St Pauls.
  - iv. Brunswick Square and Queen Square maximum stay is 2 hours
  - v. College Street & Bristol First car parks maximum stay is 4 hours
  - vi. Maritime Heritage and Wapping Wharf car parks maximum stay is 5 hours
  - vii. All other car parks covered by this proposal are long stay and do not have a daytime maximum stay.

9. Benchmarking core cities and near neighbours shows that for on-street parking, Birmingham and Cardiff also charge for whole hours. Liverpool, Manchester and Bath and North East Somerset charge for periods of 30 minutes, Leeds for periods of 20 minutes and Glasgow for periods of 15 minutes. Bristol’s current methodology of charging in such small increments is out of alignment.

10. Officers have considered the benefit of an ‘up to 30 minutes’ tariff to encourage turnover of short stay parkers.

- a. £2.50 for up to 30 minutes in on street 1-hour zones
- b. £2.00 for up to 30 minutes in on street 2- and 4-hour zones
- c. £2.00 for up to 30 minutes in Queen Square and Brunswick Square car parks
- d. £1.50 for up to 30 minutes in all other off street car parks

However, this has been discounted as the data shows that most customers choose to pay for a minimum of 1 hour even though cheaper and shorter tariffs are currently available.

11. We know from RingGo data that most daytime customers who park on street, pay for whole hours of parking as shown in the table below:

Length of Stay	1 hour zone	2 hour zone	4 hour zone
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30 minutes	9%	8%	8%
<b>60 minutes</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>19%</b>
90 minutes	N/A	5%	6%
<b>120 minutes</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>14%</b>
150 minutes	N/A	N/A	<1%
<b>180 minutes</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>5%</b>
210 minutes	N/A	N/A	<1%
<b>240 minutes</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>11%</b>
Evening	26%	21%	16%
Other	13%	19%	20%

Under the linear parking proposal, parking will be sold in whole hours and the modest number of customers currently paying for part hours will need to pay for whole hours.

12. **Evening Rates.** The biggest impact of linear charging will be to customers who are currently paying the £4.50 flat rate evening tariff. In comparison, other operators offer a range of evening tariffs:

Other Operators	
Galleries*	£2.80 any period from 4pm
Cabot Circus	£3 any period after 5pm
NCP (some sites only)	£9.95 after 5pm

\*Galleries closes at 11pm.

The following table shows a comparison between current charges and those proposed by the original September proposal:

	1 Hour Zone		2 & 4 Hour Zone*		Off Street	
	Current **	Proposed	Current**	Proposed	Current**	Proposed
1 hour	£4.50	£4.50	£4.50	£3.50	£4.50	£2.70
2 hour	£4.50	£9.00	£4.50	£7.00	£4.50	£5.40
3 hour	£4.50	£13.50	£4.50	£10.50	£4.50	£8.10
4 hour	£4.50	£18.00	£4.50	£14.00	£4.50	£10.80

\*Including Brunswick Square and Queen Square.

\*\* £4.50 is the rate being implemented in March 2025 following an inflationary uplift to charges.

13. The proposed evening charges are modest in comparison to the cost of visiting the centre for performances at the Bristol Hippodrome, Bristol Beacon or O2 Academy; or a restaurant meal and also represent good value when compared with the cheaper ticketing/admission prices for smaller venues.
14. Higher parking charges will encourage car sharing to venues or events; for multiple passengers, a proposed 3-hour evening parking charge of £8.10 is comparatively good value for off street car parks (and arguably should be more expensive in order to encourage greater take up of sustainable transport).

15. The comparable on street charge varies by location up to £13.50 for 3 hours. On street parking is more expensive than off street parking in line with guidance, which says that lower off-street charges will encourage drivers to park off-street, thus minimising on-street congestion caused by vehicles searching for spaces.
16. In comparison, a return adult bus fare is currently £4.80, a First Day ticket is currently £6.50 and up to 5 people can travel for the prices of 2 adult day tickets (£13). A return Park & Ride ticket is £3.50.
17. Officers believe there are strong policy and customer service grounds for moving to a linear charging model. However, it is acknowledged that the impact on different customers will vary based on when customers park and their length of stay. Some customers will pay less under this proposed linear parking regime and some will pay more.
18. Having analysed the impact on different use cases it is clear that the greatest negative impact will be felt by customers who park for more than 2 hours after 6pm. This group includes people who work in the city centre in the evenings (who are often on low incomes) and business representatives have expressed their concern at this during the recent round table discussion with Bristol Nights. This also aligns with the Silver Motion currently being considered relating to 'Safe travel home for night economy workers'.
19. In response to that, officers have considered ways to mitigate the impact of the changes on night economy workers, but it is difficult to identify a practicable mitigation for this group in isolation:
  - a. Providing a concession scheme for night economy workers in the city centre. This has been excluded because it would be costly to implement, complex to operate and would be open to abuse because it would be difficult to control access to any concessionary rate.
  - b. Investing in more public transport to serve the night economy workers. This has been excluded because the funding available through the implementation of linear parking would be insufficient to improve night time public transport for all users and there would be no way to ensure any investment would benefit those most impacted by the proposal.
20. Officers have therefore looked at ways to mitigate the impact of the changes on all evening customers.
  - a. Ending charges earlier at 9pm. This has been excluded because it will limit turnover of spaces for a greater proportion of the evening and will mean a larger proportion of customers would not pay to park at all, which is not reasonable. It also fails to significantly mitigate the impact on night economy workers.
  - b. Charging a lower hourly rate after 6pm or after 7pm. This proposal would mitigate the impact on all those parking in the evening, so should be considered with caution as it may encourage travel by car during the evening period. However, it would mitigate the impact of linear charges on night economy workers and would also be cost effective to implement. Officers have therefore considered this mitigation in more detail.

21. Officers rely on data from Trenchard and West End Multi Storey car parks for indicative data on dwell times, as pay and display systems cannot identify when a customer leaves:

Evening hours (after 6pm)	Daytime hours (before 6pm)				
	0 Arrive after 6pm	1 Arrive after 5pm	2 Arrive after 4pm	3 Arrive after 3pm	4 Arrive after 2pm
<b>1 (Leave by 7pm)</b>	17%	17%	27%	<b>30%</b>	<b>37%</b>
<b>2 (Leave by 8pm)</b>	11%	16%	16%	23%	22%
<b>3 (Leave by 9pm)</b>	22%	15%	11%	13%	12%
<b>4 (Leave by 10pm)</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>29%</b>	18%	16%
<b>5 (Leave by 11pm)</b>	14%	22%	15%	12%	11%
<b>6 (Leave by 12am)</b>	1%	1%	2%	3%	3%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>% of total</b>	63%	19%	9%	5%	4%

This table shows that most evening parkers arrive after 6pm and the largest group stay for 4 hours.

22. Officers have compared the impact of a £1 reduction in the hourly rate after both 6pm and 7pm on a variety of use cases based on stays in an off street car park:

Use Cases	Current	Original Linear 8am to 10pm £2.70 per hour	Revised Linear 8am to 10pm £2.70 before 6pm £1.70 after 6pm	Revised Linear 8am to 10pm £2.70 before 7pm £1.70 after 7pm
3 hours day	£8.10	£8.10	£8.10	£8.10
3 hours from 5pm	£7.20	£8.10	£6.10	£7.10
3 hours from 6pm	£4.50	£8.10	£5.10	£6.10
3 hours from 7pm	£4.50	£8.10	£5.10	£5.10
4 hours day	£10.80	£10.80	£10.80	£10.80
4 hours from 5pm	£7.20	£10.80	£7.80	£8.80
4 hours from 6pm	£4.50	£10.80	£6.80	£7.80
4 hours from 7pm	£4.50	£8.10	£5.10	£5.10
5 hours day	£19.60	£13.50	£13.50	£13.50
5 hours from 5pm	£7.20	£13.50	£9.50	£10.50
5 hours from 6pm	£4.50	£10.80	£6.80	£9.50
5 hours from 7pm	£4.50	£8.10	£5.10	£5.10
6 hours day	£19.60	£16.20	£16.20	£16.20
6 hours from 5pm	£7.20	£16.20	£9.50	£10.50
6 hours from 6pm	£4.50	£10.80	£6.80	£9.50
6 hours from 7pm	£6.00	£8.10	£5.10	£5.10

23. Officers have also modelled the annual financial impact of the revised linear parking proposals:

<b>Revised Linear 8am to 10pm £1 discount after 6pm '000s</b>	<b>Revised Linear 8am to 10pm £1 discount after 7pm '000s</b>
£502	£693

These figures are aggregate totals for the impact of the proposals on and off street, however the majority of the projected revenue change is from on-street parking. This supports legislative guidance to encourage customers to park off street or transition to alternative active or sustainable travel whilst increasing turnover of on street parking to improve accessibility for Blue Badge holders and those who are more dependent on the use of a private vehicle.

### **Caveats and Assumptions:**

The figures should be treated as an indicative guide to the relative impacts of each proposal. Actual revenue impact may be higher or lower, as there are several risks to the proposal. The below needs to be considered as part of the proposal:

- a. Calculations exclude harbour car parks, whose accounts are ring fenced however linear charges would be applied to those car parks too.
- b. Calculations are based on data from West End and Trenchard Multi-Storey Car Parks in June and July 2024 (these locations are most reflective of year-to-date monthly averages), and have been extrapolated to give full year figures.
- c. The % variances for these sites have been applied to on and off street pay and display locations. It should be noted that the usage profile of multi-storey car park users may be different to those parking in other locations, but the advance payment nature of pay and display does not give us sufficient data on customer behaviour for more precise modelling.
- d. No allowance has been made for the projected loss of on-street parking bays due to the works being progressed as part of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement.
- e. Some attrition has been applied to allow for modal shift to sustainable transport but it has not been possible to model this in detail and assumptions may be over- or under-estimates.

24. Of the two mitigating options, officers believe the 6pm option is better because it retains the existing 6pm changeover time between tariff bands and would therefore be easier to communicate to customers.
25. It is clear that the impact to night economy workers can be substantially mitigated by charging a lower hourly rate between 6pm and 10pm. Night economy workers will also benefit from the withdrawal of the overnight tariff. It must be noted however, that night economy workers will represent a small proportion of the overall customer base.
26. Officers therefore recommend that Committee approve the implementation of linear charging from 8am to 10pm at the rates listed in Point 7, but with a £1 discount on the hourly rate after 6pm. That discount to be reduced by 20p per year over the next 5 years until parity is reached with the prevailing daytime rate. This will mitigate the sudden short-term impact of the proposals and is officers' **preferred Option 1**. The transport budget benefit of this proposal is expected to be c£500k.

## 27. Other options considered:

**Option 2** - As per Option 1, but without the gradual reduction of the discount.

**Option 3** - As per the Option 1, but with £1 discount from 7pm. Maximum stays will apply between 8am and 7pm where applicable. The transport budget benefit of this proposal is expected to be c£700k.

**Option 4** - As per Option 3, but without the gradual reduction of the discount.

**Option 5** - Implement linear charging as per the original September proposal with no evening discount. The transport budget benefit of this proposal is expected to be c£1m.

## 28. If any linear parking is approved, the following operational details should also be noted:

- a. The linear parking hourly rates will be increased by inflation on an annual basis as part of the corporate fees and charges process (subject to operational minimum uplifts).
- b. Linear parking tariffs will 'wrap' from one calendar day to the next to replace the old overnight tariff and for the benefit of overnight customers. This means that any time purchased over and above the chargeable hours each day will be made available the following calendar day.
- c. In either of the mitigating options, hours will be charged at the prevailing rate at the start of each hour bought.
- d. Pre-Paid parking tickets are currently made available to customers at West End and Trenchard Multi-Storey car parks. These are packs of 20 single use tickets that are generally sold to businesses and receive a 10% discount compared to the price of an over 4-hour ticket. These will continue to be made available, with no planned change to the discount, but the price will now be calculated based on 9 hours daytime parking.
- e. Long Stay Parking Permits are currently made available to customers at West End, Trenchard and Temple Gate Multi-Storey Car Parks and in Queen Square. These are annual permits for specific vehicles that are generally sold to businesses and receive a discount based on the cost of an over 4-hour ticket for 5 days a week for 52 weeks a year. Discounts vary from 20-50% based on location and number purchased. These will continue to be made available, with no planned change to the discount, but the price will now be calculated based on 9 hours daytime parking for 5 days a week for 52 weeks a year.
- f. Hours of operation at Maritime Heritage Car Park and Wapping Wharf are different to all other locations as daytime charges currently run from 9am to 7pm and evening charges run from 7pm onwards. This is in part due to the historic relationship with the SS Great Britain. Officers will consult the SSGB about the impact of these proposals with a view to aligning the hours of operation with all other car parks.



### Officer Recommendations:

That, subject to statutory consultation in relation to changes to the Traffic Regulation Orders, the Committee for Transport & Connectivity:

1. Approves the revised linear parking proposal on the basis of Option 1 as described in Point 26.
2. Notes the comments in Point 28.
3. Delegates authority to the Executive Director, Growth and Regeneration, in consultation with the Chair of the Transport & Connectivity Committee to implement the approved proposals.

### Corporate Strategy alignment:

1. Transport and Connectivity – Safe and Active Travel, Connectivity. Proposals will help to prioritise more road space for sustainable modes through infrastructure like cycle hangars as well as better reflecting the cost of parking.
2. Environment and Sustainability – Climate Resilience, Ecological Recovery, Carbon Neutral. Through encouraging sustainable transport use.

### City Benefits:

1. Improved transparency of parking tariffs
2. Increased desirability of sustainable transport modes.
3. Enhance ability to adapt to climate change through reallocation of road space.
4. Increased turnover of parking spaces.

### Consultation Details:

The proposal has been discussed with the Parking and Kerbside Strategy Task & Finish Group and with Bristol Nights who are a partnership project whose purpose is to support the city at night, and people who work from 6pm-6am. These revised proposals are based on the feedback from those discussions.

Proposal is subject to statutory consultation which will take place as part of the process to change the On and Off Street Traffic Regulation Orders.

### Background Documents:

1. [Bristol Transport Strategy](#)
2. [Joint Local Transport Plan - Combined Authority \(westofengland-ca.gov.uk\)](#)

<b>Revenue Cost</b>	c-£500k with c£50k costs to implement in year one.	<b>Source of Revenue Funding</b>	Parking Services revenue account - Implementation costs for each proposal will be offset by additional revenue from the proposal.
<b>Capital Cost</b>	£N/A	<b>Source of Capital Funding</b>	N/A
<b>One off cost</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Ongoing cost</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Saving Proposal</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>If yes - existing or new saving?</b> Choose an			

item.

**OR Income generation proposal**

### Professional Comments:

**1. Finance Advice:** This report requests approval to adjust parking charges to a simpler model, allowing for a transition period of five years, where between 8am and 10pm it will cost:

- i. £4.50 per hour in all on-street one hour zones.
- ii. £3.50 per hour in all on-street two and four hour zones
- iii. £3.50 per hour in Queen Square and Brunswick Square car parks.
- iv. £2.70 per hour in all other off-street car parks (capped at £27).

Initially, all charges will be £1 less per hour after 6pm increasing by 20 pence each year to reach the above charges. The change will be subject to a Traffic Regulation Order and it is not clear currently when the new charges will be introduced.

This option is expected to generate c. £500k in additional income based on existing numbers of hours purchased in these locations, assuming a 20% reduction as a result of the changes proposed in this report. Additional income of £500k per annum matches the figure included for this measure in the 2025/26 Budget. Not delivering the additional income in this way will mean the Transport and Connectivity Committee is obliged to identify an alternate method of delivering the budget.

For all income the council will need to follow the statutory responsibilities as laid out in Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act of 1984.

**Finance Business Partner:** Ben Hegarty, Finance Business Partner Growth and Regeneration, 28 February 2025.

**2. Legal Advice:** The proposal outlined in the report will be the subject of a consultation exercise. Any such consultation exercise must be carried out at a formative stage in the process, must give sufficient detail of the reasons for the proposal so as to enable intelligent consideration of what is being proposed and must allow sufficient time for any consultees to consider the proposal and respond to it. Any consultation responses received must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising the decision. There must also be clear evidence that the decision maker has actively considered all of the consultation responses received, or at least a summary of them, before the decision on the proposed changes is made.

**Legal Team Leader:** Joanne Mansfield Team Manager 11 February 2025.

**3. Implications on IT:** I can see no implications on IT regarding this activity.

**IT Team Leader:** Alex Simpson – Lead Enterprise Architect 16 December 2024

**4. HR Advice:** There are no HR implications evident

**HR Partner:** Celia Williams, HR Business Partner, 11 February 2025

## APPENDICES

<b>Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix C – Environmental Impact Assessment</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix D – Decision Risk Assessment</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix E – Exempt Information</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix F – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix G – Options appraisal matrix</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix H – Business case / financial analysis</b>	<b>NO</b>