

**CABINET
15 SEPTEMBER 2020**

TOWN CENTRE CAR PARKING

**Responsible Cabinet Members –
Councillor Andy Keir, Local Services Portfolio
Councillor Alan Marshall, Economy Portfolio**

**Responsible Director – Ian Williams
Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides an update on Town Centre Car Parking charges and seeks approval for funding to continue a range of parking offers to the end of December 2020.

Summary

2. The Council approved a series of parking offers to support the town centre in June 2018 and in October 2019. Members agreed to continue the offers and introduce further offers and some other initiatives to be investigated. The report recommended that the initiatives be reviewed in May 2020 with regard to their impact, the emerging Town Centre Strategy and importantly to have regard for the Council's overall financial position.
3. The response to COVID-19 delayed consideration of these offers and at the start of the lockdown period in March 2020 a decision was taken to temporarily cease all parking charges to support the control of the virus. Financial provision has been made for this to continue until the end of September 2020.
4. This report considers the impact of the offers prior to COVID-19, the temporary suspension of parking charges introduced as a result of COVID-19 lockdown and considers the continuance of an offer beyond September 2020.
5. Many local authorities have already reintroduced parking charges or controls but Members in recognising the challenges ahead want to try and support business and the town centre. However, as the recovery continues demand for parking is growing and more and more spaces are being taken by commuters and long-term parkers. It is important that we have spaces for short stay visits and for shoppers and it is considered appropriate to now revisit the approach.

6. Following consultation with Members and acknowledging the need for further business recovery, they wish to introduce an amended offer on parking to support the town centre and on the approach to the Christmas period.
7. More detailed information on the offers is included at **Appendix 1**, but in summary:
 - (a) The principle of charging to park will be reinstated across the town, but there will be a two-hour free offer in most Council parking areas.
 - (i) Drivers will be expected to check details of the charges at machines.
 - (ii) In pay and display bays tickets will be issued for the free offer and must be displayed. Drivers will need to pay for time above the initial two hours where available.
 - (iii) In the MSCP there will be two hours free, but drivers will need to pay for time above the initial two hours.
 - (iv) The only exceptions or changes are:
 - a) Market Square - this area is presently limited to a 30-minute max stay. The free for two hours will be introduced to provide consistency across the town centre. The area will be free on Sunday, which applies to all areas.
 - b) Park Lane Car Park is a car park linked with rail journeys from the Station and as such no offers are proposed, other than free on Sunday, which applies to all areas.
 - (b) Parking in all Council parking areas will remain Free on Sunday.
 - (c) The long stay parking offer in East Street Car Park be retained permanently.
8. It is noted that the Tees Valley Combined Authority is to consider initiatives to support Town Centre recovery and such support includes provision for parking offers. The impact of COVID-19 on the Council's MTFP is still being assessed and whilst the above measures would cost an additional £392,883 until the end of December 2020, Members consider the development and vibrancy of the Town centre to be a top priority and a necessary initiative to aid recovery and to encourage people back to the High Street. This report seeks approval for the funding necessary to cover this extended parking offer.
9. In January 2021 parking charges would revert to pre-offer levels unless there is any further support received from Government or any other sources. The ongoing position of the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) would also be kept under review with reports back to Cabinet as required.
10. The report to Cabinet in October 2019 identified the potential to increase the number of on-street parking bays in the Imperial Quarter and Duke Street area. Whilst, still in the work programme that was not progressed as a result of COVID-19 and other priorities. This will remain in the Council's Local Transport Plan work programme. Abbots Yard car park has been refurbished to provide an improved quality car park with spaces and aisles that are more accessible and user friendly. The car park provides 61 parking bays, 22 accessible parking bays.

Recommendations

11. It is recommended that Cabinet approve:

The following parking offers and recommend to Council on 24 September 2020;

- (a) £392,883 additional funding to extend the parking offers outlined in Appendix 1 until the end of December 2020 to be funded from General Fund Reserves
- (b) The long stay parking offer in East Street car park be retained permanently

Reasons

12. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:

- (a) To approve the amendment to charges
- (b) To support the recovery of the town centre.

Ian Williams
Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Background Papers

Town Centre Car Parking Cabinet Report June 2018

Town Centre Car Parking Cabinet Report October 2019

Dave Winstanley: Extension 6618

S17 Crime and Disorder	Whilst anti-social behaviour and crime does on occasions take place in car parks, there is no impact on crime and disorder as a result of this report.
Health and Well Being	Users of car parking facilities will be encouraged to pay by contactless methods and follow public health hygiene guidance in terms of hand cleansing following use of any machines.
Carbon Impact	There may be an impact on carbon emissions as a result of encouraging more car journeys into the town centre.
Diversity	An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken on the offer introduced in June 2018 and this has been updated to consider the proposals in the report. Equality and diversity will be considered in the development of the parking proposals outlined in this report in the design stages.
Wards Affected	Car parks are located in Park East and Northgate, however residents from across the Borough and beyond will utilise them.
Groups Affected	No group is affected any differently to any other.
Budget and Policy Framework	The extension of the parking offers will have a financial impact on the MTFP
Key Decision	This a key decision as the proposals result in financial implications which are significant to the budget for the service.

Urgent Decision	This is an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The proposals contained in this report have an impact on the Perfectly Placed element of the strategy; encouraging more people to utilise the town centre for business, retail, social and leisure.
Efficiency	There is no impact on the Council's Efficiency agenda as a result of this report.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

13. In October 2019 Cabinet agreed a series of Town Centre Parking initiatives that included:
- (a) Free on Sunday, introduced from 1 November 2019 in all Council operated pay and display car parks, Feethams Multi-storey car park and on-street pay and display parking bays.
 - (b) The parking offer introduced in June 2018 be continued:
 - (i) two hours free car parking in specific car parks located outside of the ring road,
 - (ii) East Street Car Park having an offer of all day parking for £2.00.
 - (c) Plans to be developed that can be consulted on to increase the amount of parking spaces available in Duke Street and the Imperial Quarter areas.
 - (d) Abbots Yard Car Park Refurbishment
14. It was agreed that these measures would continue until 1 May 2020 and be reviewed ahead of that date to:
- (a) Determine their impact;
 - (b) Consider them in conjunction with the emerging Town Centre Strategy as it is developed.
 - (c) Have regard for the Council's overall financial position.
15. A COVID-19 related decision was taken in March 2020 to cease all parking charges and financial provision has been made to cover this decision until the end of September 2020.
16. When the initiatives were introduced it was clear that these would need to have regard for the Council's overall financial position. This has clearly changed dramatically as a result of COVID-19. This report provides an update on the initiatives introduced.

17. The impact of the offers has been assessed and more detail is included at **Appendix 2**. In summary:
- (a) The parking offers introduced have resulted in a slight increase in monthly tickets being issued of around 2000-3000 per month, which is positive for the town centre.
 - (b) A pattern of displacement has been identified, with on street parking decreasing in usage significantly and the locations with free offers increasing, which will have changed footfall patterns in these areas.
 - (c) The free offer in outer ring road has had an impact on long-stay car parking capacity and as such an impact on business operations for staff and business who rely on long stay parking and the ability to use their vehicles during the day.
 - (d) The Feethams MSCP has seen slight increases in usage until the free on Sunday offer was introduced.
 - (e) The East Street Long Stay offer has proved popular, possibly associated with the capacity issues associated with the free offer short stay offer in long stay car parks identified above.
18. The impact of COVID-19 will have an impact on the town centre and therefore a corresponding impact on assumptions on parking income with the MTFP. The temporary position of free parking in all areas during and post COVID Lockdown means it is difficult to understand the parking patterns over recent months as tickets are not issued and data has not been collected. Therefore, it is difficult to predict what levels parking demand will return as the recovery from COVID-19 continues.
19. There are multiple issues arising from COVID-19 that will impact on parking patterns and behaviour that will need to be reviewed and assessed as recovery continues.
- (a) Walking and cycling have been promoted and encouraged and people are being more active.
 - (b) Public transport usage has seen a significant decline and for periods of lockdown and recovery the use of public transport was actively discouraged except for absolute essential journeys. Capacity on buses is still at reduced levels and occupancy levels are much lower than pre-COVID-19, at the time of writing the report circa 30-35%.
 - (c) Driving was encouraged as lockdown started to be lifted as a means of travelling and social distancing from others. At the start of lockdown traffic levels reduced to around 70 to 80% of normal levels and at the time of writing this report had returned to around 10% below.
 - (d) Shopping patterns have changed with more on-line shopping and less frequent shopping patterns, with people limiting exposure to risk. It is early in the recovery phase to understand this in any detail with more town centre businesses opening and town centre activity commencing, which may see

some people to revert to patterns, but there will be a new normal that has yet to form.

- (e) Home working has been and remains a necessity given social distancing requirements. This will have reduced the demand on long stay parking and some town centre activity for those businesses that are town centre located.
- (f) Future lockdowns need to be considered in terms of any parking initiatives.
- (g) As the recovery phase continues the lack of parking control will have an impact as there are already anecdotal reports that prime parking spaces are being taken up by commuters and town centre workers occupying the spaces all day. This could have an increasingly negative impact on town centre visits as more workers return taking free spaces without time control. This could result in demand issues in terms of visitors being forced to park further from the town centre and choosing not to visit.

20. All these factors will have a contributory effect on predicted parking income that is built into the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP). As confidence returns and shops and business re-open, parking levels could return to pre-COVID-19 levels. However, this is uncertain and could be over a long and gradual period.

Continuation of Offers

21. Many local authorities have already reintroduced parking charges or controls, but Members recognise the challenges of the recovery and want to try and support business and the town centre. However, as the recovery continues demand is growing and more spaces are being taken by commuters and long terms parkers. This is contrary to supporting town centre activity and ensuring there are spaces for short stay visits to shops and businesses.
22. In consultation with Members they wish to see a continued offer to support the town centre business on the approach to Christmas. It is therefore proposed that controls are reintroduced across the town with a number of parking offers continued to help support the town centre. More detailed information on the offers is included at Appendix 1, but in summary:
- (a) The principle of charging to park will be reinstated across the town, but there will be a two hour free offer in most Council parking areas.
 - (i) Drivers will be expected to check details of the charges at machines.
 - (ii) In pay and display bays tickets will be issued for the free offer and must be displayed. Drivers will need to pay for time above the initial two hours where available.
 - (iii) In the MSCP there will be two hours free, but drivers will need to pay for time above the initial two hours.
 - (iv) The only exceptions or changes are:
 - a) Market Square - this area is presently limited to a 30-minute max stay. The free for two hours will be introduced to provide consistency

across the town centre. The area will be free on Sunday, which applies to all areas.

- b) Park Lane Car Park is a car park linked with rail journeys from the Station and as such no offers are proposed, other than free on Sunday, which applies to all areas.

(b) Parking in all Council parking areas will remain Free on Sunday.

(c) The long stay parking offer in East Street Car Park be retained permanently.

- 23. The Tees Valley Combined Authority are considering support initiatives for Town Centres later in the year that could include support for parking offers. The impact of COVID-19 on the Council's MTFP is still being assessed and whilst the above measures would cost an additional £392,883 until the end of December 2020, Members consider this necessary to support the town centre recovery and to encourage people back to the High Street. This report seeks approval for the funding necessary to cover this extended parking offer.

Imperial Quarter and Duke Street Areas

- 24. The report to Cabinet in October 2019 identified the potential to increase the number of on-street parking bays in this area. Whilst, still in the work programme that was has not progressed as a result of COVID-19 and other priorities. This will remain in the Council's Local Transport Plan work programme but is currently deferred.

Abbots Yard Car Park

- 25. Abbots Yard car park has been refurbished with improved drainage, a second pay and display machine and a new surface. The layout has been reviewed to ensure that the spaces and aisles are more accessible and user friendly. The car park provides 61 parking bays, 22 accessible parking bays (in two blocks) and five motorbike parking spaces.

Financial Implications

- 26. The Council receives income from car parking charges which is used to offset the running costs such as repair and maintenance, business rates and staffing. Although not included as a cost in the budget, there is an apportionment cost of holding the land for the purpose of car parking. This net income provides resources to fund other services provided by the Council and if income is not achieved, it is to the detriment of the Council's overall financial position.
- 27. The impact of the COVID-19 on the Councils MTFP is still being assessed and whilst the above measures would cost an additional £392,883 until the end of December 2020, Members consider this necessary to support the town centre recovery and to encourage people back to the High Street. The additional costs will be funded from General fund reserves.
- 28. The anticipated financial impact is based on reduced patronage for the October to December period of 70% of normal to reflect the impact of COVID-19.

29. The reviews of parking areas in the Imperial Quarter and Duke Street will have a cost implication to consider and implement and this would be considered as part of the development of a proposal and the Town Centre Strategy and Local Transport Plan Programme. However, if additional spaces are created there could potentially be additional parking revenue generated.

Legal Implications

30. The necessary legal notices are being progressed and arrangements being put in place for implementation of these measure subject to approval by Cabinet and Council. These arrangements enable the Council to implement the recommendations swiftly to support the town centre and business recovery.

Equalities Considerations

31. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) was carried out for the parking offer introduced in June 2018. The main impacts identified were as a result of the nine long stay car parks being located outside the inner ring road, which means a short/moderate walk into the town centre that some individuals may find more difficult. The particular groups of people with protected characteristics this affects are; Age, Disability, Pregnancy, and Carers. However, as a result of introducing the two hours free parking it is likely that the pressure on the short stay parking within the inner ring road will be reduced, freeing up more spaces for individuals who find the walk difficult to access parking. In addition, on-street car parking for Blue Badge Holders is not affected and there is also a car park exclusively for Blue Badge Holders at the Town Hall. This EIA has been reviewed.
32. The demand for car parking has increased as traffic levels and economic activity have increased, and this has an impact on the availability of parking spaces near to shops and businesses. Short stay parking spaces in the town centre are predominantly for people visiting for a short period of time, but without control these are effectively blocked by cars parking for longer period of time or even all day. This reduces the availability of spaces for some people who have difficulties walking a moderate or long distance, in particular those with the protected characteristics of age, disability, pregnancy and carers. Reintroducing controls will increase the turnover of spaces, helping to ensure that there is more availability of spaces in the town centre.
33. The numbers of blue badge parking bays in the town centre car parks will remain the same; on street car parking for Blue Badge Holders is not affected, but controls will be reintroduced to create more turnover of spaces and prevent blocking; and there is also a car park exclusively for Blue Badge Holders at the Town Hall.
34. As controls are introduced and tickets are required there will be greater enforcement within the car parks and on-street to ensure that the appropriate payments are made but also that drivers comply with the rules. As demand for parking has increased there has been an increase in drivers parking outside of parking bays and in blue badge parking bays, creating issues in particular for people with disabilities, but also creating obstructions for others such as carers and those who are pregnant/on maternity.
35. An EIA screening exercise was also been undertaken for the proposal to remove car parking charges on Sundays for a trial period. This concluded there is a very

low risk of the proposal leading to insufficient car parking spaces to meet demand – including for Blue Badge holders – and therefore people with disabilities and/or older people not being able to park in the town centre as easily, however the likelihood of this is considered to be minimal.

36. Equality and diversity will be considered in the development of the Imperial Quarter and Duke Street area as part of the feasibility and design stages.

Consultation

37. The proposals for the Imperial Quarter and Duke Street will be subject to consultation as part of the feasibility and design stages.

Proposed Charging Structure October to December 2020 (inclusive)

APPENDIX 1

Off Street Car Parks – Town Centre within Inner Ring road

Parking Location	Spaces	Charges Prior to Offers <i>(any offers introduced highlighted in italics)</i>		PROPOSED October to December inclusive	
		Mon-Sat 8am to 6pm including bank holidays	Sunday 8am – 6pm	Mon-Sat 8am to 6pm including bank holidays	Sunday 8am – 6pm
Abbotts Yard	80	1 hour £1 2 hours £2	£1 all day	First 2 hours FREE (NO CHARGE BUT MUST DISPLAY TICKET FROM MACHINE) £1 for each subsequent hour 3 hours £1 4 hours £2 5 hours £3 6 hours £4 7 hours £5 8 hours £6 No return for 1 hour on expiry of initial ticket.	No Charge
Commercial Street East	117	3 hours £3 4 hours £4 5 hours £5	FREE ON SUNDAY OFFER <i>introduced</i> October 2019		
Commercial Street West	156	6 hours £6 7 hours £7 8 hours £8 9 hours £9 10 hours £10			
Winston Street North	25				
Winston Street South	36				
Town Hall	8				
Feethams MSCP	650				
East Street MSCP has traditionally been under-utilised as a short stay car park. It has been converted to include a low cost long stay parking offer within the town centre.					
East Street	338	£1 per hour £4 per day <i>£2 per day introduced June 2018.</i>	£1 per day	First 2 hours FREE (NO CHARGE BUT MUST DISPLAY TICKET FROM MACHINE) £2 per day No return for 1 hour on expiry of initial ticket.	No Charge

Off Street Car Parks – Town Centre outside the inner ring road

Car Park	Spaces	Charges Prior to Offers <i>(any offers introduced highlighted in italics)</i>		PROPOSED October to December inclusive	
		Mon-Sat 8am to 6pm including bank holidays	Sunday 8am to 6pm	Mon-Sat 8am to 6pm including bank holidays	Sunday 8am to 6pm
Archer Street	62	£1 per hour -up to 3 hours	£1 per day	<i>Continue Offer introduced in June 2018</i>	<i>Continue Free on Sunday Offer introduced October 19</i>
Kendrew Street East	76	More than 3 hours - £4 per day			
Kendrew Street West	85	2 days - £8 3 days - £12			
Park Place East	95	Weekly ticket (up to 7 days) £16			
Park Place West	115	<i>First 2 hours Free Introduced June 2018</i>			
Garden Street	72	<i>3 hours £1 £4 per day</i>			
Hird Street	14				
St. Hilda's Tannery Yard Parkgate	15	<i>Daily and weekly tickets remained the same</i>			

On Street Parking Bays

Parking Location	Charges Prior to Offers <i>(any offers introduced highlighted in italics)</i>		PROPOSED October to December inclusive	
	Mon – Sat 8am – 6pm	Sunday	8am – 6pm	Sunday
Barnard Street Barnard East Back Street Beaumont Street Beaumont Street West Duke Street Gladstone Street Kendrew Street North Lodge Terrace South Arden Street Victoria Road Winston Street	Max Stay 2 hours 50p for each 30 mins or part thereof No return within 1 hour	Max Stay 2 hours 50p for each 30 mins or part thereof No return within 1 hour FREE ON SUNDAY OFFER Introduced October 2019	First 2 hours NO CHARGE (NO CHARGE BUT MUST DISPLAY TICKET FROM MACHINE) A max stay of 2 hours exists Free 2 hours and must display a ticket No return for 1 hour on expiry of initial ticket.	Continue Free on Sunday Offer introduced October 19
East Row Horsemarket	Max Stay 30 mins 50p for maximum 30 mins or part thereof No return within 1 hour	Max Stay 30 mins 50p for maximum 30 mins or part thereof No return within 1 hour FREE ON SUNDAY OFFER Introduced October 2019	First 2 hours NO CHARGE (NO CHARGE BUT MUST DISPLAY TICKET FROM MACHINE) A max stay of 2 hours exists Free 2 hours and must display a ticket No return for 1 hour on expiry of initial ticket. NOTE: this changes the maximum stay from 30 minutes in these bays to 2 hours No return for 1 hour on expiry of initial ticket.	Continue Free on Sunday Offer introduced October 19

<p>Grange Road, Town centre Northumberland Street (Imperial Quarter)</p>	<p>Max Stay 3 hours 50p for each 30 mins or part thereof No return within 1 hour</p>	<p>Max Stay 3 hours 50p for each 30 mins or part thereof No return within 1 hour FREE ON SUNDAY OFFER <i>Introduced October 2019</i></p>	<p>First 2 hours NO CHARGE (NO CHARGE BUT MUST DISPLAY TICKET FROM MACHINE) 2½ hours - 50p 3 hours - £1 A max stay of 3 hours exists 50p for each 30 mins above the or part thereof to a Max of 3 hours total No return for 1 hour on expiry of initial ticket.</p>	<p><i>Continue Free on Sunday Offer introduced October 19</i></p>
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	Charges Prior to Offers <i>(any offers introduced highlighted in italics)</i>		PROPOSED	
Parking Location	Mon – Sat 9am – 5pm	Sunday (Introduced – Oct 19)	Mon – Sat 9am – 5pm	Sunday
<p>East Raby Street Hargreave Terrace Larchfield Street Napier Street Park Place Powlett Street Primrose Street Raby Street Swan Street Victoria Embankment West Powlett Street</p>	<p>Max 2 hours 50p for each 30 mins or part thereof No return within 1 hour</p>	<p>Max 2 hours 50p for each 30 mins or part thereof No return within 1 hour FREE ON SUNDAY OFFER <i>Introduced October 2019</i></p>	<p>First 2 hours NO CHARGE (NO CHARGE BUT MUST DISPLAY TICKET FROM MACHINE) A max stay of 2 hours exists Free 2 hours and must display a ticket No return for 1 hour on expiry of initial ticket.</p>	<p><i>Continue Free on Sunday Offer introduced October 19</i></p>

CAR PARKS WITH SPECIFIC PURPOSE AND CHARGING STRUCTURE

Car Park	Spaces	Charges Prior to Offers		June 18 Offer		SEPT 2020	
		Mon-Sat 8am to 6pm including bank holidays	Sunday 8am to 6pm	Mon-Sat 8am to 6pm including bank holidays	Sunday 8am to 6pm	Mon-Sat 8am to 6pm including bank holidays	Sunday 8am to 6pm
Chesnut Street	109	£2 per day HGVs and coaches free Weekly ticket (cars only, up to 7 days) £8 per week HGVs and coaches 6pm-8am every night £4 per night	£1 per day, HGVs and coaches free	<u>First 2 hours NO CHARGE</u> <u>3 hours £1</u> £2 per day HGVs and coaches free Weekly ticket (cars only, up to 7 days) £8 per week HGVs and coaches 6pm-8am every night £4 per night	<u>First 2 hours NO CHARGE</u> £1 per day, HGVs and coaches free FREE ON SUNDAY OFFER Introduced October 2019	No change to June 2018 offer	<i>Continue Free on Sunday Offer introduced October 19</i>

Park Lane (Station)

Park Lane is predominantly linked to Rail Station usage and as such there are no planned changes associated with this car park.

Car Park	Spaces	Charges Prior to Offers <i>(any offers introduced highlighted in italics)</i>		Proposed Sept 2020	
		Mon-Sat 8am to 6pm including bank holidays	Sunday 9.30am to 5pm	Mon-Sat 8am to 6pm including bank holidays	Sunday 8am – 6pm
Park Lane	108	£5 all day	£1 all day FREE ON SUNDAY OFFER Introduced October 2019	£5 all day	<i>Continue Free on Sunday Offer introduced October 19</i>

Assessment of Initiatives**APPENDIX 2**

1. Some assessment has been undertaken on the impact of the initiatives.
2. Parking patterns have changed as a result of the initiatives introduced. Some analysis and anecdotal evidence has been undertaken:
 - a) Free 2 hours in car parks outside the ring road.

The offer was introduced in July 18 and a steady increase in uptake was observed up until Christmas 2018 and since then has remained relatively steady at around 14,000 free tickets issued per month.

The figures in the table below show the average number of tickets issued in these car parks has almost doubled.

	Average monthly Paid Ticket Numbers	Average Monthly Free Ticket Numbers	TOTAL Average monthly Tickets issued
Pre-Offer Aug 17 to May 18	10778	nil	10778
Offer period Aug 18 to Feb 20	6263	13318	19581

The plateau reached at Christmas 2018 of around 14,000 free tickets per month is likely due to the capacity of car parks being reached and ability to find space.

The offer did result in some issues for business and commuters, who use these car parks as long stay parking areas. If business users left a space for a visit it was unlikely that they could find a long stay space on their return. This was a negative impact of the offer especially when trying to encourage town centre business growth. The offer has resulted in a general pressure on long stay parking capacity for business and commuters.

There was also evidence of meter feeding to secure free parking for long periods, which is contrary to the intention of the parking offer to generate turnover of spaces and more visits to the town centre. This has added to the figures reported.

Impact across the Town

In analysing the impact of the offers across the town the table below shows average monthly ticket numbers over 3 periods:

1. Pre-Offer period
2. Offer Period 1 – where two hours free car parking in specific car parks located outside of the ring road & East Street Car Park having an offer of all day parking for £2.00 were introduced.
3. Offer Period 2 – As Offer 1 plus free on Sunday in all Council Parking areas

Average monthly tickets	Pre-Offer Aug 17 to May 18	Offer period 1 Aug 18 to Sep 19	Offer Period 2 Oct 19 to Feb 20*	Difference from current offer to pre-offers
On Street Parking	30340	25376	23950	-6390
All Car parks (incl MSCPs)	88483	95714	97643	9160
Total	118823	121090	121593	2770
Feethams MSCP	20685	21056	19071	-1614

*Free on Sundays introduced

The average number of monthly tickets has shown a slight increase in tickets issued per month (2000-3000), which is positive for the town centre and suggests the offers have assisted support the town centre.

Not surprisingly the tickets in car parks generally have increased, which is expected given the free two-hour offer in the outer ring road car parks. However, it is interesting that Feethams MSCP (with no offers) had a slight increase until the free on Sunday offer was introduced.

The major change has been On-Street parking locations with a significant drop. This change in parking habits and locations will have changed footfall through certain parts of the town and particularly footfall past businesses where on-street parking exists. However, this also suggests there may simply have been a displacement of parking patterns and not the impact of significantly increasing visits into the town centre.

b) East Street £2 all Day

East Street was a relatively under-used car park. The offer was designed to introduce low cost long stay parking in the town centre. Ticket numbers have increased and has provided useful additional long stay parking options and capacity with short stay parking displacing to the car parks with Free 2 hour offers.

Average monthly tickets	Pre-Offer Aug 17 to May 18	Offer period 1 Aug 18 to Sep 19	Offer Period 2 Oct 19 to Feb 20*	Difference fro current offer to pre-offers
East Street	4194	5599	6228	2034

c) Free Sunday – Evidence had not been gathered prior to lockdown in relation to the impact of not charging on Sundays. However, based on previous income levels this represents a potential loss of £80,000 at pre-Covid19 parking occupancy levels.

Ticket numbers in on-street locations showed a further drop of around 1426 tickets per month when the free on Sunday offer was introduced.

Anecdotal evidence suggested that on street spaces were used by longer term parkers either all day or cars remained occupied by town centre residents or people choosing to leave their vehicle overnight following an evening out. This potentially had the impact of reducing the amount of free short stay spaces.