

# **URGENT DECISION ON KEY PUBLIC AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR WORKERS FREE PARKING PERMITS OCTOBER 2020**

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 The City Council has made several key changes to its arrangements for parking since March 2020 and the restrictions arising in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic. These changes have supported the continuation of service provision during lockdown, through the provision of free permits for public and voluntary sector workers, alongside council staff, as well as underpinning the re-opening of the retail in the city post lockdown through using reduced pricing to encourage customers to return to the city within public health guidelines.

1.2 In the summer, an urgent decision 20/URGENCY/P&T/12 was taken by Exec Cllr to support a temporary three-month cut-price parking deal. The £1 per hour deal was brought in to support the early stages of recovery of city centre shops, the market, and reopening food and drink businesses from 1st August. The record of decision stated that the price deal would conclude at the end of October 2020. The same record of decision extended the free permit provision for public and voluntary sector workers.

1.3 The temporary £1 per hour fee has been successful in drawing customers into the city, helping businesses to recover post-lockdown. August saw an increase of more than 56,000 visitors to the car parks than the previous month, which equates to more than 250,000 extra shopping hours and a week on week footfall increase across City<sup>1</sup>.

1.4 The re-opening of the city centre continues with most retail able to trade albeit within the current measures to reduce the transmission of COVID 19. While the £1 charge has encouraged more people to return to the city centre, many of whom may not have otherwise done so, it has also had the effect of contributing to an increase in congestion. The Council remains fully committed to reducing the Council's carbon emissions which are circa 1% of the city's overarching emissions. During the reduced pricing period, there was a reduction in the use of park and ride alternatives, and it is important that we do encourage use of these where cars are being used to reach the city boundaries as alternate full public transport modes are not appropriate.

1.5 In line with the proposed timescales within that Urgent Decision notice, from 1<sup>st</sup> November, parking charges at the council's multi-storey and surface

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<sup>1</sup> Avg stay is 142 mins figure assumes that each car has on avg two occupants

car parks will revert automatically to the 2019/20 tariff which was frozen in March 2020. This will support the Council's wider congestion and climate change objectives.

1.6 The Public and Voluntary key sector free permits provide for public sector workers who support communities and businesses. There are, for example, seven day a week, and late night requirement for Environmental Officers to support the police in the enforcement of evening restrictions to the hospitality sector. Additionally, many of those accessing the free permit will be supporting community health programmes, supporting the operation of a comprehensive track and trace, providing home visits to the lonely and vulnerable in our communities and, possibly, in the near future, providing critical resources for a vaccination programme.

## **2. The Proposal**

2.1 The Executive Councillor have considered relevant changes or amendments to the parking arrangements, to help ensure that people can stay safe in Cambridge over the next period.

2.2 It is considered that the proposals outlined and recommended continue to provide a relevant balance between:

- Supporting the current Government advice that travellers may consider public transport if safe, but that other forms of transport are still preferred.
- Continues to provide key public and voluntary sector workers with a free alternative option to public transport to maintain social distancing to and from their workplace and helps them to meet workplace needs during the critical period.

### **2.3 The proposal is to:**

Retain the free parking permit for Public and Voluntary key sector workers until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

## **3.0 Rationale and Benefits**

### **3.1 The retention of a free parking permit for Public and Voluntary key sector workers until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021**

The free parking permit for Public and Voluntary key sector workers was committed to be until the end of October. Over the period since the initial lockdown and the issuing of permits 1300 such permits have been issued and 99 of those were issued to council employees. This free permit has been reviewed.

## **4.0 Implications of the Changes**

### **a) Financial Modelling**

#### **The likely effect of the proposed change**

Each free permit has an opportunity cost of £25.60 per permit and on avg 16 permits are used daily.

The continuation of Public and Voluntary key sector workers free car passes will have an avg daily opportunity cost of £409, an avg monthly opportunity cost of £12,270 and for the full 5<sup>th</sup> month period 1<sup>st</sup> Nov to 31<sup>st</sup> March an opportunity cost in the region £61,350.

### **a) Staffing Implications**

None for this report

### **b) Equality and Poverty Implications**

None for this report.

### **c) Environmental Implications**

There will be an increase in the positive effect on air quality in comparison to figures for August/September 2020 as the overall usage of the car parks is expected to reduce and therefore result in reduced volume of vehicular traffic entering the city centre.

### **d) Procurement Implications**

None for this report

### **e) Community Safety Implications**

Socially distanced car parking is considered effectively unenforceable in car parks, bollards would simply be moved. More substantial and enforceable measures would be costly, time consuming and likely to be superseded as the guidance morphs. It is advised that the current model of supermarket car parking should be replicated; there are no restrictions and the public actively self-police, but the Council would also put in place the measures shown below.

Socially distanced parking enforcement would likely require the removal of 50% of the available 3000 parking spaces, this would have a detrimental effect on the City's ability to return to 'normal'.

### **Graph 1: Car Park Usage**

Usage saw a considerable rise post the introduction of the £1 charge. Since September this increase in usage has declined, this is in common with usage in previous years as schools open and the weather begins to change. Overall parking remains around 13% less than the same point last year with multi-story parking down by 14%.

### **Graph 2 – Motor Vehicles- Cambridge City**

There were 30% less motor vehicles on average in the latest week (02/10/20-08/10/20) when compared to the same point last year

### **Graph 3 – Cycling and Pedestrian Counts**

Cycling and Pedestrian Counts saw a reduction over August, a month when there would be an expected increase in those modes of travel.

### **Graph 4 – Park & Ride Patronage**

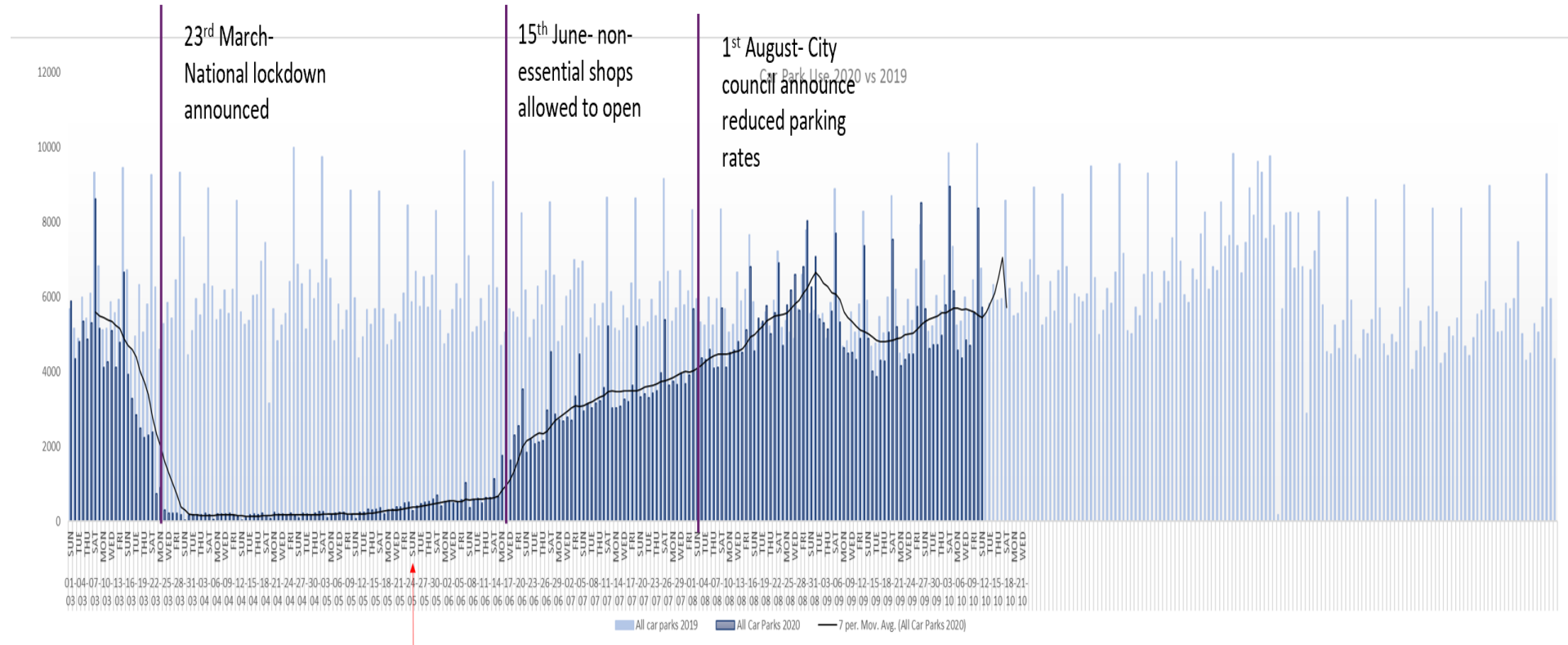
Evidence the introduction of the £1 charge negatively affected P&R usage over the month of August

### **Table 1: Footfall – Cambridge Weekly Results Wk41 2020**

Footfall continues to see a week on week (WOW) increase although there is some way to go before footfall returns to last year's numbers

## Graph 1 – Car Park Usage

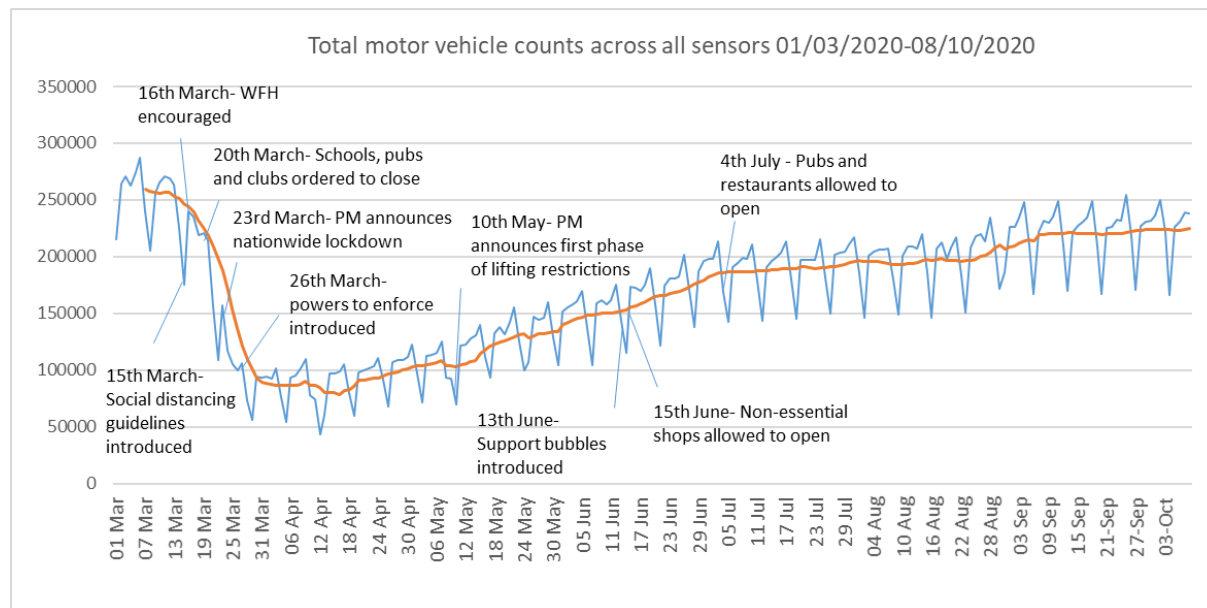
### Cambridge City total car park usage 2020 compared to 2019



There were reductions in multi-storey parking (-5%) and overall parking (-5%) in Cambridge City in the latest week (05/10-11/10) when compared to the week before.

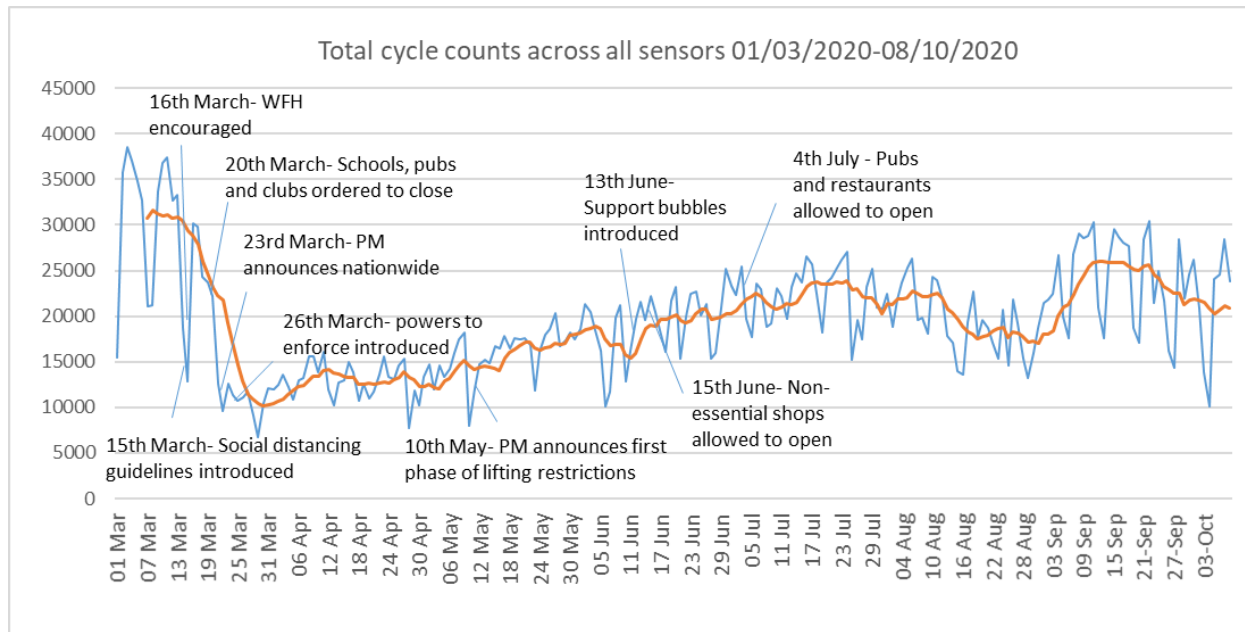
Overall parking remains around 13% less than the same point last year with multi-storey parking down by 14%.

## Graph 2 – Motor Vehicles- Cambridge City



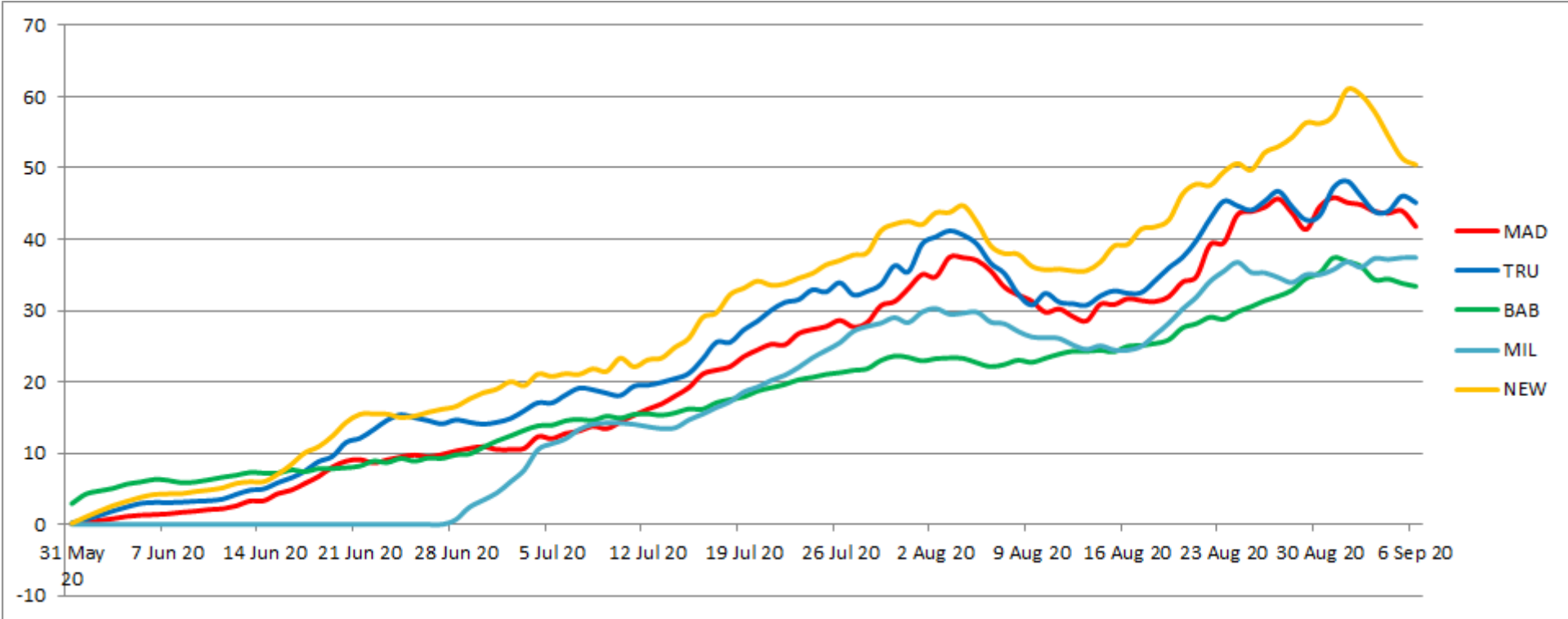
- Motor vehicle traffic in Cambridge showed no change when comparing total counts in the latest week (02/10/20-08/10/20) to the week before (25/09/20 - 01/10/20)
- There were 30% less motor vehicles on average in the latest week (02/10/20-08/10/20) when compared to the same point last year

### Graph 3 – Cycling and Pedestrian Counts



- Cycling and Pedestrian Counts saw a reduction over August, a month when there would be an expected increase in those modes of travel.

Graph 4 – Park & Ride Patronage





**Table 1: Footfall – Cambridge Weekly Results Wk41 2020**

<b>Location Name</b>	<b>WoW</b>	<b>YoY</b>
<b>Cambridge Total</b>	<b>8.1%</b>	<b>-33.95%</b>
Bridge Street	7.3%	-41.66%
Fitzroy Street at Waitrose	1.99%	-23.97%
Kings Parade	9.72%	-33.52%
Market Hill	15.69%	-30.9%
Regent Street	10.64%	-52.17%
Rose Crescent	12.96%	-36.71%
Sidney Street	4.65%	-31.34%