

# **RECORD OF DECISION: PARKING PERMITS MARCH 2021**

## **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 supporting the immunisation programme and key city centre business workers.

1.2 In the autumn, an urgent decision 20/URGENCY/P&T/19 was taken by Exec Cllr to retain the provision of free parking permits for public and voluntary sector key workers to be reviewed in March.

1.3 From 8 March, people in England will see restrictions start to lift and the government's four-step roadmap offer a route back to a more normal life.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021/covid-19-response-spring-2021-summary>

1.4 Cambridge County Council anticipate that Stagecoach will re-start Park and Ride services, in line with the government's road map, probably re-starting on 12th April.

### **2. The Proposal**

2.1 The Executive Councillor has considered relevant changes or amendments to the parking arrangements, to help ensure that people can stay safe in Cambridge over the period of the government's four-step roadmap and particularly step 1 'that people should continue to work from home where they can and minimise the number of journeys they make where possible, avoiding travel at the busiest times and routes'.

2.2 It is considered that the proposals outlined and recommended provide support to:

- 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 until 21<sup>st</sup> June, when the government hopes to be in a position to remove all legal limits on social contact. The Public and Voluntary key sector free permits provide for public sector workers who support communities and businesses.

Examples include many of those who are 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. The Council also has requirements for seven day a week, and late-night attendance for Environmental Officers to support the police in the enforcement of evening restrictions to the hospitality sector.

- Balances the need to support businesses within this period with the need to retain demand management within the constraints of the available space across the pay-for-use multi-storey parking portfolio, and a level of income for investment in provision of vital services

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

Executive Councillor is recommended to approve this proposal, which includes:

1. Retention of the provision of free parking permits for public and voluntary sector key workers to be reviewed in line with COVID-19 Response - Spring 2021 'Roadmap out of lockdown' Step 4 – Not before 21st June
2. The re-provision of a City Centre Worker permit at a discounted rate for the same period, for city centre businesses returning to work until the 21st June 2021.

### **3.0 Rationale and Benefits**

3.1 The retention of a free parking permit for Public and Voluntary key sector workers until 21st June 2021

The free parking permit for Public and Voluntary key sector workers was committed to be until 31<sup>st</sup> March. Over the period Nov 2020 and Feb 2121 444 permits have been issued and 55 of those were issued to council employees.

This permit provides free 24/7 parking for public sector workers e.g. NHS, social care, police, CPS, Outreach Teams, Cambridge City Council and Educational sector staff etc across all multi-storey car parks except for the Grand Arcade

- The definition for eligibility is that the applicant must be employed by the state or 3<sup>rd</sup> sector, voluntary or community organisation
- When applied for by an organisation the eligibility is that the organisation must be a public or 3<sup>rd</sup> sector, voluntary or community organisation
- The application process remains the same, only the eligibility has changed
- New permits to those eligible under the new categorisation can be issued via email

## **2.2 The re-provision of the paid for City Centre Worker Permit until 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021**

The “City Centre Worker” permit provides paid for 24/7 parking across all multi-storey car parks except for the Grand Arcade. The permit provides a discounted permit aimed at less well-paid workers in the city centre to access their workplace whilst avoiding public transport. The permit will sit alongside the other season tickets available.

- Applications will need to be supported by headed email or application direct from employers
- Price point will reflect £10.50 per day for a 5-day working week over 4 weeks - Monthly price @ £210
- Parking for a full working day at Queen Anne Terrace car park is £17.50 if parked between 8am-10am Monday to Friday and £14 if parked outside of those hours.
- Current permit allowing this access is only available for a quarter @ £890

- The permit represents a saving of £86 per month vs the full price cost for a customer working five days a week, this saving reduces for part time working in line with the number of days worked
- Ticket will be 24/7 to allow for shift and weekend workers
- Ticket will be a monthly renewable to allow the lower paid to take advantage at a manageable cost monthly cost
- Tickets can be purchased by the employer

## **4.0 Implications of the Changes**

### **a) Financial Modelling**

#### **The opportunity cost of the proposed change**

In Feb 2020, these permits were used in total 1032 times (this includes the 123 passes issued to companies that will no longer be eligible for free parking permits).

Each free permit for Public and Voluntary key sector workers has an opportunity cost of £890 (3 months) per permit based on 24/7 to allow for shift and weekend workers.

If the level of allocation permits remains static at 304, the continuation of Public and Voluntary key sector workers free car passes will have an opportunity cost of £270k. It is however very likely that this number will increase considerably as the educational sector returns to full operational levels.

The assumed price point for modelling reflects the City Centre Worker permit and that the service will not experience an increase in demand for free parking permits and therefore the expected numbers will remain reasonably consistent over the next few months

The baseline for the City Centre Worker permits assumes that of those who currently have a barcode permit for free parking 123 will not be eligible for a Public Sector Key Worker permit and will apply for the new paid City Centre Worker permit.

Therefore, discounted permit may have an initial 123 applications and this level forms the forecast baseline. As more businesses return to work this is likely to increase from the start of Step 2 no earlier than 2<sup>nd</sup> April, will see the opening of non-essential retail, personal care premises such as hairdressers and nail salons and public buildings, including libraries and community centres and indoor leisure facilities such as gyms. With further increases from the start of step 3, no earlier than 17<sup>th</sup> May as most businesses in all but the highest risk sectors will be able to reopen.

Employment in the city centre is generally, although not exclusively, retail and service sectors and the university therefore the effect of HMG's roadmap has been modelled on the reopening timescales for those workplaces.

### **Assumptions on demand increase**

- A large percentage of those who service the city's retail and service sectors live outside of the city and have historically driven when they commute in.
- There will be an increase in demand from customers as lockdown restrictions ease and the use of public transport is discouraged, this is likely to persist across the period defined and possibly for longer. The approach aims to manage demand within the constraints of the available space across the pay-for-use parking portfolio, protecting an important income stream whilst also facilitating a safe return to work.

### **Forecasted demand increase**

It is very difficult to forecast the level of take up particularly as the actual saving to the customer is unclear, particularly for P/T workers when comparing to normal 'pay for use' tariffs.

- April 123 applications @ £210 per permit
- Uplift in May to 372
- Uplift in Jun to 410

It is likely that customers paying daily tariff rate will increase helping to recoup some of the opportunity loss caused by providing free and reduced priced permits e.g. yield per space/car will fall but usage will increase

<b>Type</b>	<b>Number and Price</b>	<b>Total</b>
Public and Voluntary Sector	Current allocation 304 permits @ £890	£270k
City Centre Worker	April 119 @ £210 per month	£10k
	May uplift to 372 @ £210 per month	£32k
	June uplift to 410 @ £210 per month	£35k
Total Income foregone		£350k

### **a) Staffing Implications**

None for this report

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

None for this report.

### **c) Environmental Implications**

The retention of free parking permits for public and voluntary sector key workers and the provision of a City Centre Worker permit at a discounted rate is likely to contribute to an increase in congestion and emissions.

It is likely that the level of congestion and the negative effect on air quality will grow as the City returns to 'normal'

### **Procurement Implications**

None for this report

## d) 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'.

**Table 1 – Current Free Permits Issued**

<b>Public and Voluntary key sector workers – will remain eligible for free parking permits</b>	<b>QR Codes</b>
Addenbrookes - Laura Senior	9
Addenbrookes Hospital-Eye Care	19
CCC	56
Camb Crown Court-Witness Care	1
Cambridge Magistrates Court	18A
Citizen Advice	7
Police	70
East Anglia Diabetic Eye Screening Programme	1
Jimmy's	4
Regent St Dental Practice	4

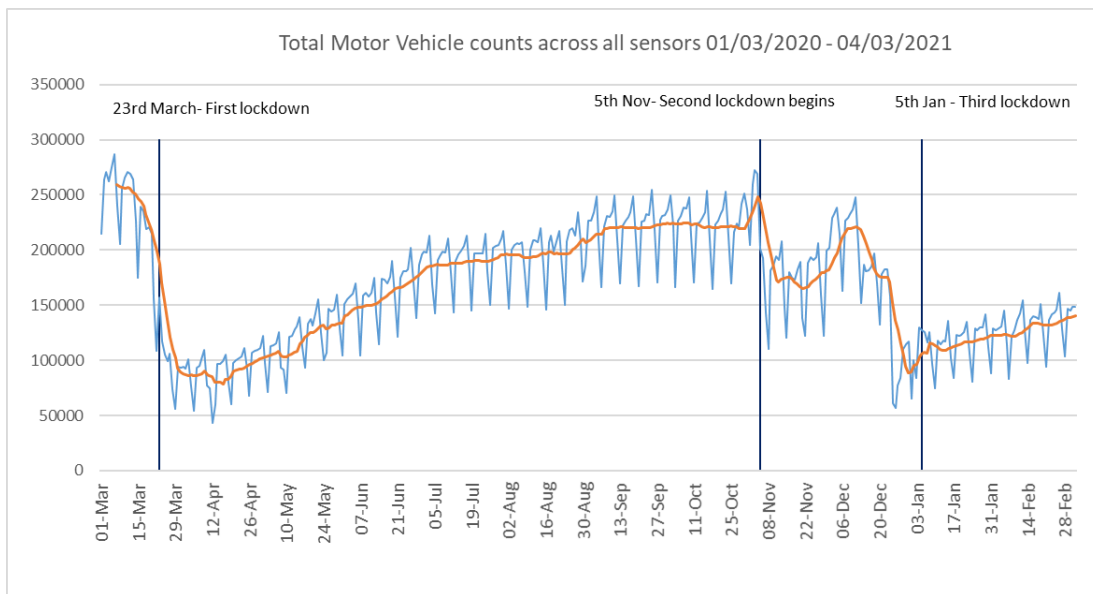
ARU	95
Park Street Primary	5
Red Balloon	12
Visit Cambridge and Beyond	2
Lifecraft	5
TOTAL	304

<b>Critical Workers – Would no longer be eligible for free parking</b>	<b>QR Codes</b>
Regent St Dental Practice	4
Boots-Petty curry	25
Superdrug	5
HSBC	7
Savers	1
Availl	4
Dr Elizabeth Robinson	4
Marks & Spencers	18
Metro Bank PLC	7
Nationwide	7
Post Office	11



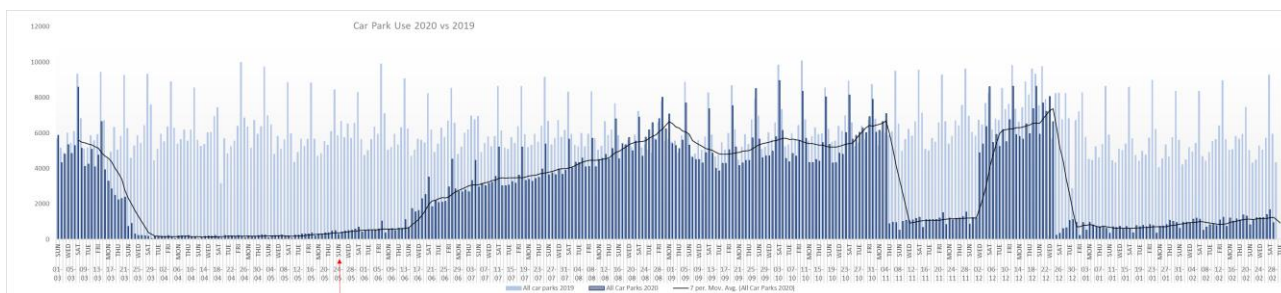
Virgin Money	2
Sainsburys	6
Santandar UK PLC	10
TSB Bank	3
Halifax	8
I. Nicholls	1
TOTAL	123

**Graph 1 – Motor Vehicle Traffic- Cambridge City**



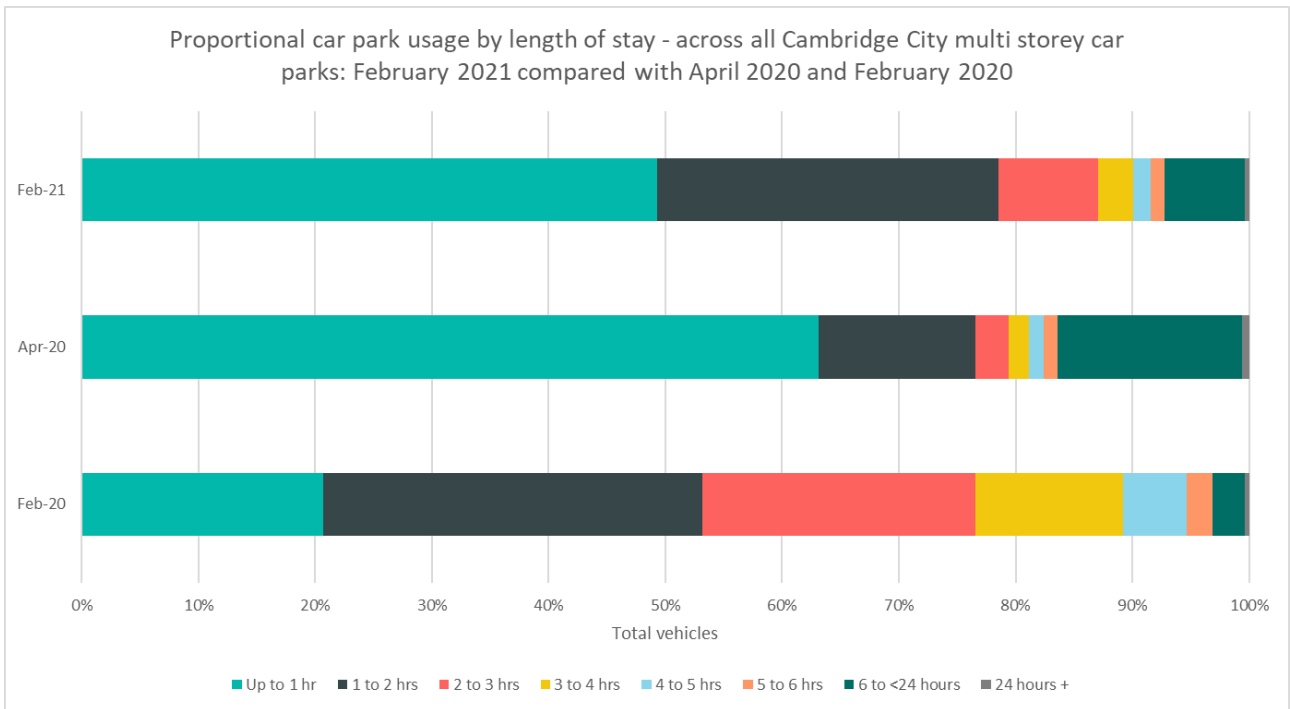
- Motor vehicle traffic in Cambridge showed a 5% increase when comparing total counts in the latest week (26/02/21-04/03/21) to the week before (19/02/21-25/02/21). When comparing the latest week to the last week before the second lockdown in November (23/10/20-29/10/20) traffic counts were -36% lower.
- There were 35% less motor vehicles on average in the latest week (26/02/21-21/02/21) when compared to the same point last year

## Graph 2 – Car Park Usage



- Overall parking counts have started to show gradual increases through February when compared to January, this is in line with increases seen in retail footfall in town centre locations. In the latest week (22/02/21-28/02/21), multi-storey parking saw an increase of 10% while overall parking saw an increase of 9%, when compared to the week prior (15/02/21-21/02/21).
- When comparing usage in February overall, against January overall, multi-storey parking saw an increase of 54% while overall parking saw an increase of 51%
- However, Multi-storey parking remains -79% lower than the same point last year, with overall parking down by -78%.

## Graph 3 – Length of stay in the car parks



- Proportional car park usage in April 2020 showed over 60% of users only parking for up to 1 hour.
- February 2021 showed similar usage patterns to the first national lockdown in April 2020, although slightly more users were staying up to 2 hours, 78% of all car park users left within 2 hours. This is 25% more than in February 2020 where much higher proportions of users were staying up to 3 and 4 hours.