

	Environment Committee 11 September 2019
Title	Charity Discount for Business Permits
Report of	Chairman of the Environment Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	None
Officer Contact Details	<p> Jamie Cooke, Assistant Director Transportation and Highways Environment Directorate 020 8359 2275 Jamie.cooke@barnet.gov.uk </p> <p> Phillip Hoare, Head of Parking and Infrastructure Parking Client Team 020 8359 2308 phillip.hoare@barnet.gov.uk </p>

Summary

This report is to propose a discount for charitable institution on the cost of business permits.

Officers Recommendations

1. That the Environment Committee approves the offer of a 50% discount on the cost of business parking permits for those organisations who can evidence receipt of charitable business rates relief as outlined in paragraph 1.2

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1. The London Borough of Barnet (LBB) already has introduced new business permit charges which include an emissions based element. It is noted that the impact on charities may cause some to struggle as their ability to change vehicles, or encourage volunteers and employees to adopt lower emitting vehicles, is more limited and any associated cost may come from charitable funds.
- 1.2. It is recommended that a 50% discount on the cost of a business parking permit is offered to those organisations which can evidence that they are in receipt of charitable business rates relief (sometimes referred to as 'discretionary relief'). This will be applied at the point of application (on provision of the required evidences) and would not require a change to the TMO, although it could be added to future revisions for completeness.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. To ensure that charities operating in the Borough are not over-burdened by the cost of permits whilst not removing the link to emissions with permit charges.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 To make no change – this was considered likely to see complaints and challenge from charities and divert their funding from core purposes. To make no change – this was considered. However to not take reasonable account of the charitable contribution to Barnet residents and the Barnet economy would not be appropriate. Equally to not charge for parking would be to disregard well agreed and accepted policies on parking and reduction and mitigation of the environmental issues of vehicles for residents particularly in regard to air quality. The possible alternative percentage discounts were not chosen for the same reasoning.
- 3.2 To not apply emissions charges and parking permits– this was considered to be against the existing policies of the council to drive improved vehicle emissions in the Borough and wider agenda on reducing pollution and improving the environment.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1. The discounting of permits will be applied when the new business permit charging structure and fee changes are implemented, likely in late September. There will be no retrospective refunds or discounts applied however permit holders may cancel their permits on the prevailing terms for the permit they purchased and obtain another one at the discount price.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1. Corporate Priorities and Performance

This scheme, if approved, will contribute to the Councils corporate plan by:

- 5.1.1. Promoting the principles of fairness to those who operate charities within existing CPZs.
- 5.1.2. Maintain the link with emissions so as to drive improvements in air quality in the Borough.
- 5.1.3. Reflecting an engagement with communities and help to build stronger relationships by demonstrating that concerns are being considered and acted upon in a timely way, and that the Council's policy and decision making in regard to traffic management is lawful and consistent.
- 5.1.4. Whilst it is not anticipated that the proposals will have an obvious impact on any of the protected characteristics groups as identified in the Equalities Act 2010, any impact is likely to be a positive one.

5.2. Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 5.2.1. The changes proposed are likely to have minimal impact on the parking services budget in the context of wider changes to pricing.
- 5.2.2. There will be a small increase in cost to process these requests, which will be in line with the service budget.

5.3. Social Value

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2013 requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. This scheme, if implemented would meet several objectives including the Corporate priorities and Public-Sector Equalities Objective as outlined in section 5.1.

5.4. Legal and Constitutional References

The Council as the Highway and Traffic Authority has the necessary legal powers to introduce or amend Traffic Management Orders through the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

5.5. Risk Management

- 5.5.1. No risks are identified in delivery of this proposal.

5.6. Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1. Section 149 of the 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equality Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not;
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not;

5.6.2. Having due regards means the need to (a) remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it, (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

5.6.3. The relevant protected characteristics are age, race, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The duty also covers marriage and civil partnership, but to a limited extent.

5.6.4. Barnet Council is committed to improving the quality of life and wider participation for all the religious/faith, cultural, social and community life of the borough. As outlined at paragraph 5.1.4, the implementation of a clear process for the review of parking control requests will ensure that resulting traffic schemes are unambiguous and therefore contribute to the general wellbeing of citizens.

5.6.5. It is considered that whilst these proposals do not directly impact upon any persons of relevant protected characteristics to a greater degree than any persons who do not share these.

5.6.6. There may be a benefit to persons of relevant protected characteristics in the way charities may operate to support their needs.

5.7. Corporate Parenting

5.7.1. In line with Children and Social Work Act 2017, the Council has a duty to consider Corporate Parenting Principles in decision-making across the council. There are no Corporate Parenting implications in these proposals.

5.8. Consultation and Engagement

5.8.1. Subject to this proposal being accepted, no further consultation will take place.

5.9. **Insight**

5.9.1. No specific insight has been undertaken in order to inform the decision.

6. **Background Papers**

6.1 None.
