

Report to: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 30 July 2025

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Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Winter Parking Offer Review - 2025

Report summary:

A report reviewing the East Devon £2.00 Winter Parking Offer which was first introduced in 2016 and a proposal to simplify the relationship between the winter and summer parking charges.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

That Cabinet approve the recommended changes to the winter parking tariffs and the subsequent end to the £2.00 promotional offer which has been available since 2016.

Reason for recommendation:

Considering inflation, the £2.00 winter parking offer introduced in 2016 is effectively the £1.33 winter offer in 2025. Unlike the cost of maintaining our car parks and providing other services, the winter offer has not increased for 9 years. Initially introduced to encourage seasonal exploration and shopping, the winter offer has become a permanent overlay to the standard parking tariffs, with most sites now offering this promotion as the standard rate for winter parking.

The proposal to replace the winter offer is a blanket promotion of -50% of summer charges across all sites during the winter. This will better reflect the demand and use of each site, and the maximum stay restrictions that are present during the summer, will remain in the winter. The -50% winter tariff will provide cohesion between the summer and winter charges and simplify future tariff changes.

It should be noted that most authorities are moving to a single tariff model, with no variance between summer and winter charges, so this will continue to be an enticing promotion for East Devon and meet the objectives of the original offer.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☐ Assets and Economy
- ☐ Communications and Democracy
- ☐ Council, Corporate and External Engagement
- ☐ Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
- ☐ Environment - Nature and Climate
- ☐ Environment - Operational
- ☒ Finance

- ☐ Place, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning
- ☐ Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact Low Impact: The equality benefits of the current winter offer will still be applicable if the recommended proposal is agreed. This includes lower parking charges whilst fuel and other household expenses are generally at their highest. The proposal would also continue to encourage exploration and shopping trips for those with limited mobility or who may be socially isolated. Should this change result in increased revenue for EDDC, this will be used to fund public services and facilities.

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk;

Links to background information

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☐ A supported and engaged community
- ☐ Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
- ☒ Resilient economy that supports local business
- ☒ Financially secure and improving quality of services

Report in full

1. Background

- 1.1 The £2.00 winter offer was initially introduced in 2016 to encourage seasonal exploration and shopping trips to EDDC towns during the traditionally quieter winter period.
- 1.2 The winter offer is in effect from November – March inclusive.
- 1.3 At the time of introduction there was no restriction of use for the offer, meaning that motorists could park all-day across all East Devon car parks for a flat fee of £2.00.
- 1.4 Following concerns of increased all-day use at the most popular car parks a change was made in 2024 with the introduction of the “short stay winter offer” which offered £2.00 for 4 hours parking in selected car parks. This change prevented those who arrived the earliest taking up the best spaces all day and increased the turnover of vehicles in the car parks closest to the town centres.
- 1.5 When taking into consideration inflation, the effective cost of the winter parking offer has decreased each year, with the £2.00 charged in 2016 now equivalent to £1.33 in 2025. If the winter offer had increased in-line with inflation since 2016, it would now be the £3.00 winter offer in 2025.
- 1.6 Since the inception of the winter offer, the cost of maintaining car parking sites, processing transactions and providing other services have continued to increase each year.
- 1.7 There is a growing disparity between the summer and winter parking tariffs, for example during the winter at Manor Road Sidmouth for £2.00 a motorist can purchase a 24 hour ticket, however the same £2.00 would only allow 54 minutes of parking time during the summer months (April – October).
- 1.8 Rather than being a promotion as envisaged at inception, the winter offer has evolved to become the standard winter tariff for most sites which restricts our ability to monitor its use or effectiveness. With motorists not having to “opt in” or be aware of its existence prior to choosing to visit East Devon, its effectiveness as a “promotion” has diluted over time.

- 1.9 This year East Devon is destined to generate 80% of car parking revenue during the 7 summer months, with only 20% generated between November – March. Although the costs of providing summer services are higher due to the level of tourism, there is becoming an increasing dependence and reliance on the summer income to subsidise winter service provision. A new simplified tariff that is consistent across all sites will help address this disparity.
- 1.10 In the 2024/2025 Financial year there were 960,048 car parking transactions between April and October, generating revenue of £3,311,967 including VAT, with an average transaction value of £3.44. Between November and March there were 525,870 transactions generating £944,974 (including VAT) with an average transaction value of £1.79.
- 1.11 Following discussions at the winter parking workshop held with members in 2024 it was agreed that a review of the winter parking offer would be carried out this year.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 The East Devon District Council Parking Strategy 2024 – 2031 commits to; “Set parking charges that are cohesive and reflective of the location and use of our car parks”
- 2.2 The summer car parking charges are well established and have been designed to reflect the primary use and demand for those sites.
- 2.3 By securing the relationship between the winter and summer charges, this will better meet the objective of the parking strategy, by offering bespoke tariffs at each site, throughout the year, dependent upon location, demand and use.
- 2.4 The proposal to simplify the car parking tariffs whilst still aspiring to meet the objectives of the original winter offer is as follows.

Set winter parking tariffs in each car park at 50% of the current and ongoing summer parking rates, whilst maintaining all restrictions on maximum stays throughout the year.

- 2.5 The above change will mark the end of the existing £2.00 winter offer, and each car park will have site specific tariffs. The proposed tariffs for this change are set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.6 These new tariffs will continue to represent excellent value for money when compared with neighbouring authorities, particularly as most are now opting for a standard single rate tariff applicable throughout the year.
- 2.7 Raising revenue should not be an objective of civil parking enforcement and the proposed changes to the tariffs are broadly reflective and representative of the number of visitors during the winter period when compared with the busier summer season.
- 2.8 In the winter of 2024 one of the car parks managed by EDDC reduced its tariffs from a flat all-year rate to a tariff of -50% for the winter period and received almost 20% more transactions than the previous year, this is despite disruptive sea wall refurbishments and the closure of a key business at the location.
- 2.9 The changes to the tariff will increase the maximum charge payable at the busiest car parks throughout the district. In the short stay car parks 4 hours of parking will increase from £2.00 to £3.30, and in most long stay locations, 24 hours will increase from £2.00 to either £3.30 or £4.40.

3. Risks

- 3.1 Due to the length of time the winter offer has been running, some customers may assume that the offer is still in place from the 1st November this year. This can be mitigated through comms, CEO (Civil Enforcement Officer) engagement and even notes on vehicles if required. The winter offer RingGo codes can be deactivated with the new charges advertised across

all tariff boards. Some motorists may still habitually buy a £2 ticket from the pay and display machine if they are not made aware of the changes.

- 3.2 Towns may presume that the end of the winter offer will have a negative impact on businesses during the festive shopping period, however this can be mitigated through comms and the advertisement of the changes as “the new winter offer”, citing the simplification of tariffs and the continuation of the maximum stay restrictions in our busiest car parks as a benefit for visitors who will find it more convenient to find a space.
- 3.3 The removal of the winter offer may lead to an increase in the sale and issuance of annual and monthly car park permits which currently already offer excellent value for money, this may increase the pressure on long stay car parks close to towns, prompting a review of the permit terms and pricing to regulate this added demand.

4. Alternative options

- 4.1 The rationale for removing the current winter offer and introducing a new -50% pricing model is included within (2.) Proposal, however, there are alternative options for members to consider as follows.

- (a) Maintain the familiar winter offer at the current rate.
- (b) Set winter charges at a different percentage of current summer tariffs
- (c) Remove variable pricing and operate a single rate tariff throughout the year. This is the model preferred by most nearby authorities.

- 4.2 There are a handful of coastal locations in Torbay, South Hams, Teignbridge and North Devon that offer low-season pricing at limited selected sites, generally from 1st November to the 20th March, examples as below;

Car Park	Town	Authority	Low Season		High season		Additional information
			Winter rate hourly	Winter rate all day/maximum stay	Standard rate hourly	Standard rate all day/Maximum stay	
Mayors Avenue	Dartmouth	South Hams	£1.50	£9.00 (all day)	£2.50	£8.00 (4 hours)	
Shadycombe	Salcombe	South Hams	£2.50	£10.00 (all day)	£2.50	£6.00 (3 hours)	
Breakwater	Brixham	Torbay	£1.10	£3.50	£1.90	£11.00	
Broadsands	Paignton	Torbay	£1.10	£3.50	£1.90	£11.00	
Westward Ho! Long Stay	Westward Ho!	North Devon	£1.20	£5.80	£1.80	£13.00	
Dawlish Warren (Seaward)	Dawlish Warren	Teignbridge	£2.70	£6.80	£2.70	£6.80	£2.00 all day parking on Sundays.

- 4.3 Generally, Town Centre parking across Devon is charged at a standard rate throughout the year, with no variation between summer and winter charges.
- 4.4 EDDC offers free Sunday parking in the inland towns of Axminster, Honiton and Ottery St Mary throughout the year.
- 4.5 A consideration is that LGR (Local Government Reorganisation) could plausibly see the standardisation of parking tariffs and charging structures across the newly created Council areas. Hypothetically, if standard tariffs were to be applied across all car parks as part of LGR, currently EDDC towns would be disproportionately affected, which may negatively impact perception of the new Council structure.
- 4.6 Should a move to standardised tariffs be the preferred option then this should be carried out in conjunction with a review of the EDDC annual and monthly permit pricing, as at approximately 36p per day, these may become over-subscribed. In 2024/25 21,804 permits were sold, generating income of £879,309.

5. Costs

- 5.1 The cost of making the proposed change to the tariffs this winter will be approximately £17,000. This will include machine updates, signage and the legal costs associated with

advertisement and consultation of the amendment to the EDDC Civil Enforcement Off-Street Parking Places Order.

- 5.2 The cost of updating future tariffs will be limited to one change per financial year each time the tariff is to increase in-line with inflation. The next anticipated increase will be in April 2027, at which point both the summer and winter charges will increase by the subsequent inflationary increase between April 2025 and April 2027.

Proposed winter parking tariffs, set at 50% of current summer charges.

Free car parks and those managed, but not owned by East Devon District Council are not included in the above table. *No change due to locally agreed charging structure.

Appendix 2

Indicative tariffs if alternative % discount applied to summer tariffs.

A visual representation of alternative tariffs based on a % of the current summer tariffs. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest denomination of 10 pence.								
Current Summer Tariff	30 minutes	Up to 1 Hour	Up to 2 Hours	Up to 3 Hours	Up to 4 Hours	Up to 5 Hours	Up to 6 Hours	All day/ 24 hours
Example Long Stay	£1.10	£2.20	£3.30	£4.40	£5.50	£6.60	£8.80	£8.80
Example Long Stay 2	£0.60	£1.10	£2.20	£3.30	£4.40	£5.50	£6.60	£6.60
Example short stay	£1.10	£2.20	£4.40		£6.60			
Example short stay 2	£0.80	£1.60	£3.20		£4.80			
20% of current summer tariff	30 minutes	Up to 1 Hour	Up to 2 Hours	Up to 3 Hours	Up to 4 Hours	Up to 5 Hours	Up to 6 Hours	All day/ 24 hours
Example Long Stay	£0.20	£0.40	£0.70	£0.90	£1.10	£1.30	£1.80	£1.80
Example Long Stay 2	£0.10	£0.20	£0.40	£0.70	£0.90	£1.10	£1.30	£1.30
Example short stay	£0.20	£0.40	£0.90		£1.30			
Example short stay 2	£0.20	£0.30	£0.60		£1.00			
40% of current summer tariff	30 minutes	Up to 1 Hour	Up to 2 Hours	Up to 3 Hours	Up to 4 Hours	Up to 5 Hours	Up to 6 Hours	All day/ 24 hours
Example Long Stay	£0.40	£0.90	£1.30	£1.80	£2.20	£2.60	£3.50	£3.50
Example Long Stay 2	£0.20	£0.40	£0.90	£1.30	£1.80	£2.20	£2.60	£2.60
Example short stay	£0.40	£0.90	£1.80		£2.60			
Example short stay 2	£0.30	£0.60	£1.30		£1.90			
60% of current summer tariff	30 minutes	Up to 1 Hour	Up to 2 Hours	Up to 3 Hours	Up to 4 Hours	Up to 5 Hours	Up to 6 Hours	All day/ 24 hours
Example Long Stay	£0.70	£1.30	£2.00	£2.60	£3.30	£4.00	£5.30	£5.30
Example Long Stay 2	£0.40	£0.70	£1.30	£2.00	£2.60	£3.30	£4.00	£4.00
Example short stay	£0.70	£1.30	£2.60		£4.00			
Example short stay 2	£0.50	£1.00	£1.90		£2.90			
80% of current summer tariff	30 minutes	Up to 1 Hour	Up to 2 Hours	Up to 3 Hours	Up to 4 Hours	Up to 5 Hours	Up to 6 Hours	All day/ 24 hours
Example Long Stay	£0.90	£1.80	£2.60	£3.50	£4.40	£5.30	£7.00	£7.00
Example Long Stay 2	£0.50	£0.90	£1.80	£2.60	£3.50	£4.40	£5.30	£5.30
Example short stay	£0.90	£1.80	£3.50		£5.30			
Example short stay 2	£0.60	£1.30	£2.60		£3.80			

Financial implications:

This will generate additional income, but the main driver for change is the review of the existing arrangements in line with the Council's Parking Strategy.

Legal implications:

As is indicated in the report, the proposed changes will require a variation of the EDDC Civil Enforcement Off-Street Parking Places Order.