

Lead Member for Transport and Environment

Meeting of 27 January 2025 Appendix 1

**Proposals for changes to Rother District parking charges,
consultation analysis**

Executive Summary

1.1. Each of the four Controlled Parking Areas were set up some years apart and with varying types of parking provision to satisfy the particular needs of the local community. Although there are similarities between the four areas, there are different levels of charging in each area and the difference is particularly noticeable in the charges for permits. Parking charges are set at a level to ensure that at least the costs of managing, enforcing and administering parking controls are met, and no financial burden is passed on to council tax payers. As a principle, it also conforms to central government guidance that parking schemes should at least be self-financing.

1.2. The level of charging is a vital tool to manage the demand for parking. Whether this is by type of user (for example permit user or pay and display), by location (for example differential pricing between on-street parking and off-street car parks) or by type of vehicle (for example second residents' permits or lower emission vehicles).

1.3. The East Sussex LTP4 (LTP4) Policy D5: Parking, specifically highlights the vital role of parking as a demand management tool, through the availability, design, controlled provision and pricing of on- and off-street parking for vehicles in having the ability to influence travel behaviour and incentivising travel choices towards more sustainable travel modes.

1.4. The aims of the proposals include acting as a disincentive to multiple vehicle ownership and a move to encourage greater use of sustainable alternatives, whilst not limiting the availability of permits for those who need them. As such, it is important that charges are set at a level that has some meaningful effect on parking behaviour.

1.5. Charges for on-street parking have not been increased significantly since the Rother scheme was introduced in 2020. Since then, the Retail Prices Index (RPI) has increased by the order of 32.3 %.

1.6. The changes proposed, which were consulted on are;

- Standardising the price of residents permits across all four permit areas for the first time.
- Linking the cost of residents' permits to the CO2 emissions of pollution from the vehicle the permit covers, with owners of low emission vehicles paying less than those with higher emissions.
- That the cost of visitor and day permits should be higher to encourage people to make more sustainable travel choices.
- Increasing the cost of on-street P&D charges to encourage people to use alternative sustainable forms of transport, which will help reduce congestion and improve air quality in our towns. Blue Badge holders are not impacted by this proposal as they do not have to pay for on-street parking.

1.7. The consultation sought to understand the views of residents, businesses and stakeholders on the Council's proposed approach to the management of parking demand across the county through the increase in on-street charges parking and parking permit charges. The consultation also looked to better understand whether these proposed changes would encourage drivers to use sustainable forms of transport and/or to use vehicles that emit lower levels of pollutants.

1.8. Most of the feedback to the consultation was submitted via the Consultation Hub but responses were also received via the post. Copies of all the verbatim responses received as part of the consultation have been placed in the Members room. We received 878 responses through the consultation hub and four written.

1.9. When considering the environmental aspects of the consultation:

- 41.04% of respondents indicated they strongly agreed or agreed the Council should take measures to reduce congestion in our town centres.
- 38.21% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed the Council should take measures to improve local air quality and reduce vehicle emissions.
- 28.34% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed the Council should take measures to encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport and use vehicles that emit lower levels of pollution.

1.10. When considering parking habits and the cost of parking in our town centres opinion:

- 75.97% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the cost of parking charges influence where people park.
- 37.19% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that East Sussex County Council should restrict parking in town centres to only allow short stay, to encourage people to the use of off street car parks for long term parking.
- 58.96% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed the cost of off-street parking should be lower than that of on-street parking.
- 23.35% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that less polluting vehicles should pay less for the resident permit compared to 59.41% who disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- Only 10.43% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed permit charges should be aligned with those in Lewes District and Eastbourne and Hasting Boroughs compared to 56.12% who disagreed or strongly disagreed and 33.45% neither agree nor disagreed.

1.11. The consultation also proposed changes to day permits with 5.9% of respondents indicating they strongly agreed or agreed the cost should increase compared to 68.82% respondents indicating they disagree or strongly disagree.

1.12. The consultation sought to understand local opinion on proposed increase to on-street parking charges, 8.62% respondents indicated they strongly agreed or agreed with 81.98% of respondents indicating they disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposed increases.

1.13. The questionnaire responses also indicated 23.36% of the respondents were resident permit holders.

1.14. Following analysis of the questionnaire responses which included additional comments and alternative suggestions to help reduce congestion and air quality, it is evident that the main point of concern is the negative economic impact the proposed charges will have on the town centres. The top ten additional themed comments were identified as follows:

Rank	Comment theme
1	Concern affect charges has on the economics should be free or kept low
2	Responses not related to the consultation, no comments or alternative suggestions.
3	improvements to local transport needed
4	Revenue raising
5	Expand off and on street restrictions including EV and park and ride
6	People can't afford to change their vehicle
7	No problem with air pollution or pollution from parked vehicles
8	Shouldn't be taking away ability to pay cash
9	Highway improvements and better management of road works
10	More enforcement

1.15. Proposals relate to on-street parking places in Rother District, they do not extend to off-street car parks in Rother District. As the Highway Authority ESCC

encourages the use of off-street car parks to help minimise journeys, congestion and any environmental impacts within our town centres. The proposed increase in on-street parking charges will also help to encourage greater use of more sustainable transport options which include bus travel, walking and cycling. There is little published evidence which demonstrates a direct correlation between changes in parking charges and changes in town centre footfall. Other factors will have an influence on people's choice on where they shop or access services and, therefore, the level of footfall in a town centre. These include the amount and availability of paid and free parking; the cost and quality of off-street parking; the accessibility of the town centre by different transport modes (for example by train, bus etc); and most fundamentally the quality of the retail, leisure and services on offer.

1.16. The effective management of parking not only addresses local parking problems, but it also contributes to the delivery of some of the broader transport objectives and approaches set out in LTP4.

The LTP4 embraces a 'Planning for people and places approach', focusing on enabling greater integration of journeys, specifically inclusive and sustainable travel modes (walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport) within both East Sussex's urban and rural areas to support health and wellbeing. This is alongside facilitating the uptake of vehicles with cleaner fuels alongside the utilisation of emerging transport technologies to help to decarbonise transport, tackle climate change and support the local economy.

1.17. In Bexhill town centre and other areas of Rother ESCC utilises a mixture of two hour time-limited and pay for parking bays to create a turnover of spaces or 'churn' of visitors and shoppers, rather than spaces being occupied by a single user for a long period of time. It should also encourage drivers to:

- consider how they travel and whether it is alternative mode of travel - walk, cycle, bus or train
- park in off-street car parks,

1.18. In Bexhill there are 1292 resident and short-term time limited bays, 161 short-term time limited only bays and 430 short-term pay for parking bays, and 681 long-term pay for parking bays. As an alternative to on street parking there are 470 off-street parking bays in Bexhill. In Battle there are 47 resident permit and two hour time limited bays and 14 short-term pay for parking bays. Alternatively, there are 320 off-street parking bays. In Rye there are 37 resident permit bays and 144 short-term pay for parking bays. With 331 off-street parking bays. In Robertsbridge there are 13 short-term time limited bays, with 119 off-street parking bays.

1.19. The above analysis demonstrates that the majority of car parking capacity in Rother is in off-street car parks. So, the proposed increases to pay for parking charges should not have a detrimental impact on the economic viability of these towns. The

proposals are intended to encourage, wherever possible, visitors to use the off-street parking facilities, but also provide all day parking where there is limited off-street parking provision.

1.20. Offering a discount based on the vehicle emissions resident parking permits can help to encourage greater use of less polluting vehicles which will help to reduce harmful emissions and improve air quality in our town centres and across the county. The proposals for the on-street parking charges aim to encourage greater use of off-street car parks, reduce the number of vehicles driving on our town centre roads searching for parking spaces and aim to encourage greater use of alternative modes of transport which in turn will reduce harmful emissions and improve air quality. These outcomes will make these towns a more appealing place to work, live and visit and thereby boost the local economy.

1.21. Following analysis of consultation responses and comments, we do not consider that the new information has been presented that would lead us to withdraw our proposals.

2. Introduction

2.1. The public consultation on proposed changes to on street parking charges in Rother District was undertaken between 8 November and 29 November 2024. The reason for the proposed changes is to address a number of environmental aspects which include improving air quality in our town centres, reducing congestion in our town centres, encouraging the county's population to use more sustainable modes of transport and encouraging greater use of the town centre off-street car parks.

2.2. Charges for on-street parking have not been increased significantly since the Rother scheme was introduced in 2020. Since then, the Retail Prices Index (RPI) has increased by 32.3 %.

2.4. To contribute to the aims of East Sussex Local Transport Plan 4 2024 - 2050 (LTP4), a number of changes were proposed, including:

- Standardising the price of residents permits across all four CPE areas for the first time.
- Linking the cost of residents' permits to the CO2 emissions of pollution from the vehicle the permit covers, with owners of low emission vehicles paying less than those with higher emissions.
- That the cost of visitor and day permits should be higher to encourage people to make more sustainable travel choices.
- Increasing the cost of on-street paid for parking charges to encourage people to use alternative sustainable forms of transport, which will help reduce congestion and improve air quality in our towns.

2.5. This report provides a complete analysis of all the consultation questionnaires completed. It also includes the Council's response to the main issues raised in questionnaire responses and other forms of representations (for example email and letter).

2.7. A range of methods and media were used to publish and advertise the consultation, to try to ensure that as many people as possible were encouraged and able to give their views. The intention was to ensure participation from a wide range of interested members of the local population and representative groups.

2.8. The publicity included

- a press release
- an email sent to all permit holders via the NSL Apply system
- and promotion on the County Council's website and via social media.

2.9. Various stakeholders were emailed directly to notify them of the proposals and the consultation, encouraging them to respond via the survey or in writing. These included the County and District Councils and councillors, Town and Parish Councils, MPs, and public sector organisations.

2.10. The priorities and proposals were set out in the introduction to the consultation questionnaire, which is reproduced in full in Appendix 2 of this report. The questionnaire was available in different formats upon request.

3. The Consultation Process

3.1. The consultation sought to understand the views of residents, visitors, businesses and stakeholders on the Council's proposed approach to the management of parking demand across Rother District through the increase in on-street paid for parking and permit charges. The consultation also looked to better understand whether these proposed changes would encourage drivers to use sustainable forms of transport and or to use vehicles that emit lower levels of pollutants. Appendix 1 contains the consultation analysis for the proposals for East Sussex parking charges.

3.2. The overall responses to each of the questions asked are summarised below - questions 4 to 16 relating to the respondent's views regarding the proposals being put forward.

3.3. Further questions (17 to 25) provide demographic and other personal information to assist in analysis and interpretation of the results are included in section 6, 'About You - Classification of Respondents'

3.4. Most of the feedback to the consultation was submitted via the Consultation Hub but responses were also received via the dedicated consultation email address and by post. Copies of all the verbatim responses received as part of the consultation have been placed in the Members room. We received 878 responses through the consultation hub, and four written and received by post.

3.5. The consultation ran from 8 November to 29 November 2024, we received 878 responses through the consultation hub, and four written.

3.6. The questionnaire was split into two specific sections, the environmental aspect and the parking charges aspect.

3.7. The first part of the analysis considers the opinions of the respondents concerning environmental issues faced across the county and what support there is for the County Council to introduce measures to help combat air pollution whilst also encouraging a modal shift to alternative modes of transport.

3.8. The second part of the analysis considers the opinions of the respondents concerning the proposed increase in parking charges across the county, with the emphasis on increasing the charges to encourage changes to parking habits and a greater take up of less polluting vehicle.

4. Consultation Questions

4: To what extent do you agree that East Sussex County Council should take measures to help reduce traffic congestion?

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	107	12.13%
Agree	255	28.91%
Neither agree or disagree	209	23.70%
Disagree	131	14.85%
Strongly disagree	180	20.41%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Summary of responses:

41.04% of respondents strongly agree or agree that East Sussex County Council should take measures to help reduce traffic congestion in town centres.

23.70% neither agree nor disagree

35.26% strongly disagree or disagree.

5: To what extent do you agree that East Sussex County Council should take measures to improve local air quality and reduce vehicle emissions?

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	89	10.09%
Agree	248	28.12%
Neither agree or disagree	251	28.46%
Disagree	151	17.12%
Strongly disagree	143	16.21%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

38.21% of respondents strongly agree or agree that East Sussex County Council should take measures to improve local air quality and reduce vehicle emissions.

28.46% neither agree or disagree

33.33% strongly disagree or disagree

6: To what extent do you agree that East Sussex County Council should take measures to encourage people to use more sustainable forms of transport and or to use vehicles that emit lower levels of pollutants?

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	72	8.16%
Agree	178	20.18%
Neither agree or disagree	217	24.60%
Disagree	201	22.79%
Strongly disagree	214	24.26%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

28.34% of respondents either strongly agree or agree that East Sussex County Council should take measures to encourage people to use more sustainable forms of transport and or to use vehicles that emit lower levels of pollutants.

24.60% neither agree or disagree

47.05% strongly disagree or disagree

7: To what extent do you agree that the cost of the existing parking charges influences where people park?

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	422	47.85%
Agree	248	28.12%
Neither agree or disagree	79	8.96%
Disagree	74	8.39%
Strongly disagree	59	6.69%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

75.97% of respondents either strongly agree or agree that the cost of the existing parking charges influences where people park.

8.96% neither agree or disagree

15.08% strongly disagree or disagree

8: To what extent do you agree that East Sussex County Council should restrict parking in town centres to only allow short-stay, to encourage people to the use of off-street car parks for long-term parking?

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	79	8.96%
Agree	249	28.23%
Neither agree or disagree	124	14.06%
Disagree	201	22.79%
Strongly disagree	229	25.96%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

37.19% of respondents either strongly agree or agree that East Sussex County Council should restrict parking in town centres to only allow short-stay, to encourage people to the use of off street car parks for long-term parking.

14.06% neither agree or disagree

48.75% strongly disagree or disagree

9: To what extent do you agree that charges in off-street car parks should be lower than nearby on street parking charges, to encourage more people to park in off-street car parks where possible?

Option	Total	Percent
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Strongly agree	184	20.86%
Agree	336	38.10%
Neither agree or disagree	167	18.93%
Disagree	102	11.56%
Strongly disagree	93	10.54%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

58.96% of respondents either strongly agree or agree that charges in off-street car parks should be lower than nearby on street parking charges, to encourage more people to park in off-street car parks where possible.

18.93% neither agree or disagree

22.10% strongly disagree or disagree

10: To what extent do you agree that people who use less polluting vehicles should pay less for their resident permit?

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	78	8.84%
Agree	128	14.51%
Neither agree or disagree	152	17.23%
Disagree	172	19.50%
Strongly disagree	352	39.91%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

23.35% of respondents either strongly agree or agree that people who use less polluting vehicles should pay less for their resident permit.

17.23% neither agree or disagree

59.41% strongly disagree or disagree

11: To what extent do you agree with the proposals that people living in Rother District should pay the same for their resident permit as those who live in Lewes District, Eastbourne and Hastings boroughs?

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	31	3.51%
Agree	61	6.92%

Neither agree or disagree	295	33.45%
Disagree	202	22.90%
Strongly disagree	293	33.22%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

10.43% of respondents either strongly agree or agree that people living in Rother District should pay the same for their resident permit as those who live in Lewes District, Eastbourne and Hastings boroughs.

33.45% neither agree or disagree

56.12% strongly disagree or disagree.

12: To what extent do you agree with the proposed changes to the other permit charges?

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	12	1.36%
Agree	40	4.54%
Neither agree or disagree	223	25.28%
Disagree	224	25.40%
Strongly disagree	383	43.42%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

5.9% of respondents either strongly agree or agree with the proposed changes to the other permit charges.

25.28% neither agree or disagree

68.82% strongly disagree or disagree

13: To what extent do you agree with the proposed increases to on-street paid for parking charges?

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	27	3.06%
Agree	49	5.56%
Neither agree or disagree	83	9.41%
Disagree	215	24.38%
Strongly disagree	508	57.60%

Not Answered	0	0.00%
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8.62% of respondents either strongly agree or agree with the proposed increases to on-street paid for parking charges.

9.41% neither agree or disagree

81.98% strongly disagree or disagree

4.1. The responses to the questionnaire indicate there is a small majority of support for the reduction of traffic and traffic movements in our town centres, which contribute to congestion and high levels of air pollution, for which the introduction of measures to help reduce air pollution are supported. Although respondents do not agree East Sussex County Council should take measures to encourage alternative sustainable forms of transport and or to encourage use of vehicles that emit lower levels of pollutants.

4.2. The East Sussex LTP4 embraces a 'Planning for people and places approach', focusing on enabling greater integration of journeys, specifically inclusive and sustainable travel modes (walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport) within both East Sussex's urban and rural areas to support health and wellbeing. This is alongside facilitating the uptake of vehicles with cleaner fuels alongside the utilisation of emerging transport technologies to help to decarbonise transport, tackle climate change and support the local economy.

4.4. Taking measures to reduce congestion will contribute to improving the health of our residents and visitors and improving the local environment whilst also encouraging use of healthier transport options.

4.5. Parking charges can and do influence where parking occurs, which is indicated in the responses received during the consultation. Respondents generally agreed the charges in the off-street car parks should be lower than those for on-street parking. Although 48.75% generally did not agree that town centre parking should be restricted to short-stay and encourage the use of off-street car parks for long term. Increasing the on-street charges will encourage greater use of the off-street car parks. Off-street parking also offers greater flexibility in terms of length of stay and convenience.

4.6. When considering the 59.41% of respondents that indicated they did not agree with aligning resident permit charges across the County. It is worth noting that 206 of respondents said they have a current resident permit, this equates to 6% of the total number of resident permits valid in Rother District and 2% in the County. Price increases are never popular but aligning permit charges to those in the rest of the County which are based on vehicle emissions will mean incentives for owning less polluting vehicles will be available to all resident permit holders. Introducing such an

incentive will also contribute to the delivery of some of the broader transport objectives in the East Sussex LTP4.

4.7. There was a small amount of support received to the question relating to less polluting vehicles benefitting from reduced permit charges. With most respondents either strongly disagreeing or disagreeing with this benefit. By offering a reduction in the permit charge based on vehicle CO2 emissions the County Council can help to encourage greater use and ownership of less polluting vehicles across the County which in turn will help to reduce pollution.

4.8. There was little support for the proposed increase to day permit charges which include visitor, hotel, trade and care permits. The purpose of the proposed increase is to encourage greater use of sustainable modes of transport wherever possible, using alternative modes of transport will help to reduce vehicle congestion and pollution in the town centres. The level of the proposed day permits still represents good value for money, resident visitor permits increase to £1.30 for a day's parking, including a portion of the next morning. The proposed increase for hotel parking permits will still offer value for money and will be cheaper than the standard on street parking charge.

4.9. Although there was a small level of support for introducing measures to deal with environmental issues and reducing vehicle congestion, most respondents did not support the proposed increase to on street paid for parking charges. Comments received generally related to concerns about the negative economic effect increased parking charges would have on high streets. Increasing the cost of on-street parking charges will encourage people to use alternative sustainable forms of transport and encourage people to use off-street car parks first. Which in turn, will minimise the pressure on on-street parking, help reduce congestion and improve air quality in our towns. The increase in charges for on-street parking across Rother District would range from 25p to £2 per hour depending on the location. Blue badge holders are not impacted by this proposal as they do not have to pay for on-street parking.

14: Do you have a Rother resident parking permit?

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	206	23.36%
No	676	76.64%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

206 of respondents said they have a current resident permit, this equates to 6% of the total number of resident permits valid in Rother District and 2% in the County.

15: Do you have any of the following types of Rother parking permit?

Option	Total	Percent
business	7	0.79%
doctor	1	0.11%
healthcare and carer	5	0.57%
hotel	2	0.23%
trade	3	0.34%
visitor	98	11.11%
none	723	81.97%
other (please specify below)	50	5.67%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

The last question that required an answer asked if the respondent used any other specific types of permit.

81.97% of the respondents indicated they did not have or use any type of permit.

16: Do you have other comments on the consultation or alternative suggestions which would help reduce congestion and improve air quality?

5.1. Respondents were given the opportunity to make any additional comments on the consultation or alternative suggestions which would help reduce congestion and improve air quality in our town centres. Following analysis, these comments have been broken down and divided into separate themed subcategories. The comments have been analysed and the top ten themes in order of frequency are listed in the table below.

5.2. The comments generally suggest that improvements to the current public transport offer and road networks need improvement, this includes buses and train services across the county and more dedicated cycle lanes. The top issues submitted as part of the consultation are addressed below in the table below and in section 4 of this report.

Summary of key themes in relation to the proposal for Rother District parking charges

Rank	Comment theme	Total
1	Concern affect charges has on the economics, should be free or kept low	335

2	Responses not related to the consultation, no comments or alternative suggestions.	216
3	Improvements to local transport needed	181
4	Revenue raising	136
5	Expand off and on street restrictions including electric vehicle and park and ride	122
6	People cannot afford to change their vehicle	89
7	No problem with air pollution or pollution from parked vehicles	60
8	Should not be taking away ability to pay cash	44
9	Highway improvements and better management of road works	37
10	More enforcement	24

5.3. The consultation received 882 responses, with 666 people leaving 1,410 different comment themes.

5.4. There were also a number of other themes comprised of comments raised by between 1 and 23 people outside of the top ten.

5.5. The most common theme suggests the proposal to increase on street parking charges would have a negative economic effect on the area as a whole with many people believing parking charges are one of the main reasons why visitors are staying away from the high street and generally visiting the area. Many have suggested those that may consider visiting the town centres will change their habits and use out of town shopping centres where parking is free of charge.

5.6. No response or alternative suggestion relevant to the consultation being undertaken was the second most commented. Comments relating to improvements to public transport, increasing reliability to bus services, an increase to services and reduction to train fares. There was also suggestion that the Council was using the increase to raise revenue, others said we should increase restrictions, expand off street car parks and introduce park and ride schemes.

6. County Council's response to key comment themes

6.1. All of the responses, comments and feedback received as part of the consultation process have been read and considered to help inform the final recommendations put to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment in this report.

6.2. On completing the online questionnaire, respondents were asked to submit any additional comments relating to the proposals and any alternative suggestions to help reduce congestion and improve air quality in our town centres. The top ten most popular themes from the comments and alternative suggestions received are listed in descending order of frequency, the themes are as follows.

Rank	Comment theme
1	<p>Concern affect charges has on the economics, should be free or kept low.</p> <p>The proposed increase in on-street parking charges will also help to encourage greater use of more sustainable transport options which include bus travel, walking and cycling. There is little published evidence which demonstrates a direct correlation between changes in parking charges and changes in town centre footfall. Other factors will have an influence on people's choice on where they shop or access services and, therefore, the level of footfall in a town centre.</p> <p>The proposed increase to on-street charges still offer good value for money and is significantly lower than other areas in East Sussex. The parking offer across Rother District include 1522 free time limited bays.</p> <p>Charging at a sufficient level to impact driver behaviour, can bolster the local economy by encouraging a 'churn' of visitors and shoppers, rather than spaces being occupied by a single user for a long period of time. It should also encourage drivers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider how they travel and whether it is an alternative mode of travel - walk, cycle, bus or train • park in off-street car park <p>We have reviewed the number of on street parking spaces that would be affected by the proposals compared to the number of off-street parking spaces in the areas of Rother District.</p> <p>In Bexhill there are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,292 resident and short-term time limited bays • 161 short-term time limited only bays

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 430 short-term paid for parking bays • 681 long-term pay and display bays <p>As an alternative to on street parking there are 470 off-street parking bays in Bexhill.</p> <p>In Battle there are 47 resident permit and two hour time limited bays and 14 short-term paid for parking bays. Alternatively, there are 320 off-street parking bays.</p> <p>In Rye there are 37 resident permit bays and 144 short-term paid for parking bays. There are 331 off-street parking bays.</p> <p>In Robertsbridge there are 13 short-term time limited bays. There are 119 off-street parking bays.</p> <p>The above analysis demonstrates that the majority of car parking capacity in most of Rother District is in off-street car parks.</p> <p>Therefore, the proposed increases to paid for parking charges should not have a detrimental impact to the economic viability of these towns. In fact, by offering a discount based on the vehicle emissions, resident parking permits can help to encourage greater use of less polluting vehicles. This will help to reduce harmful emissions, and improve air quality in our town centres and across the county, and support the Government’s priority to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. The proposals for the on-street parking charges will encourage greater use of off-street car parks, reduce the number of vehicles driving on our town centre roads searching for parking spaces and will encourage greater use of alternative modes of transport which in turn will reduce harmful emissions and improve air quality. These outcomes will make these towns a more appealing place to work, live and visit and thereby boost the local economy.</p>
2	Responses not related to the consultation, no comments or alternative suggestions.
3	<p>Improvements to local transport needed</p> <p>The ambition of East Sussex as the local transport authority with its bus operators, is to ensure that residents and visitors enjoy the highest possible quality bus services that provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a frequent and comprehensive choice • reduce congestion

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make a positive contribution to better air quality and decarbonisation <p>The East Sussex Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) sets out the plans and supporting policies to improve bus services.</p> <p>One of the contributing factors to the late running of bus services is traffic congestion in and around town centres. By encouraging the use of more sustainable modes of transport, coupled with improvements at junctions to enable improved movement of buses, we aim to reduce the congestion and improve the reliability of the bus services across the county. Reducing congestion will also help to improve air quality and the health of our residents and visitors.</p> <p>Bus services can only operate within the confines of the existing road network, road works can also be a significant contributing factor to the reliability and frequency of services, wherever possible the Council will try to minimise disruption to services but in some instances delays are inevitable to achieve the longer term aim of improving our road networks.</p> <p>The council also looks to identify locations where increased congestion is likely and where necessary explore measures that could minimise the impact to bus services and congestion. By improving junction, constructing bus lanes and improving bus stops and footways. We are looking to improve the reliability of the service making it more attractive as an alternative transport choice whilst minimising increases in congestion.</p> <p>With the ongoing pressure on Council budgets, any future Parking Surplus, excluding existing commitments, could be used as a further contribution towards the County Council’s public transport costs. The investment in these activities is complimentary to the objectives of our LTP4 in the provision of sustainable transport which assists in reducing congestion and improving air quality in the County. However, improvements to buses and bus services alone will not achieve the change in behaviour that the proposals to parking tariffs is seeking to achieve.</p>
4	<p>Revenue raising</p> <p>The changes to parking charges have been proposed to influence driver behaviour and encourage people to use alternative sustainable forms of transport or to use off-street car parks if they continue to drive. This</p>

	<p>will help reduce congestion and improve air quality in our towns. The proposed changes to resident permits, with owners of low emission vehicles paying less than those with higher emissions, will give an incentive to encourage greater use and ownership of less polluting vehicles.</p> <p>Any surplus income generated, after operating costs, can only be used on transport and highway initiatives which are qualifying expenditure as governed by Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended from October 2004 by Section 95 of the Traffic Management Act 2004. With the ongoing pressure on Council budgets, any future parking surplus, excluding existing commitments, could be used as a contribution towards the County Council's public transport costs. The investment in these activities is complimentary to the objectives of our LTP4 in the provision of sustainable transport which assists in reducing congestion and improving air quality in the County.</p>
5	<p>Expand off and on street restrictions including electric vehicle and park and ride</p> <p>The County Council is responsible for on-street parking in Rother District and regular reviews of on-street parking restrictions are carried out. Anyone can request changes to the existing restrictions or for new restrictions, including requests for further permit areas and later restrictions.</p> <p>Off-street car parks are the responsibility of Rother District Council. Requests to change or extend the parking provision in car parks should be directed to them.</p> <p>Responders to the consultation have suggested that an alternative proposal could be to develop Park and Ride schemes in the County. Park and Ride generally works best where there is a 360 degree catchment area, albeit there are exceptions; limited town centre parking; and where car parking pricing discourages accessing town centres by car. As such any provision for Park and Ride would be dependent on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the capacity and use of parking in the town centre• the cost of parking in the town centre• site location - they need to be located on the outskirts and directly off main routes into the town so that they can intercept car journeys easily

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • site size, to be financially viable they need to be of sufficient size for at least 400 to 500 spaces • whether a Park and Ride would be self-sufficient in terms of bus operating costs - from a County Council perspective, there would be no available subsidisation - and whether an operator would be willing to run the services • ability to change travel behaviour; providing a service which supports the journey purposes, is of a high quality, is comfortable and accessible for all users and is economically priced, are essential factors. <p>In relation to the potential for park and ride in East Sussex:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is a good supply of parking both off street and on street in our main town centres • there are currently limited site locations on the outskirts and on the main routes into our main town that could be used to provide park and ride <p>Any proposals for a Park and Ride scheme would need to be fully costed and there would need to be convincing evidence that any investment by the Council would be paid back through the scheme, and that the scheme would continue to cover its operational costs moving forward.</p> <p>Therefore, there are no plans to consider Park and Ride services in the county as they are not thought to be viable.</p> <p>The Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure funding will help the County Council to scale up the delivery of on-street chargepoints, enabling more residents, especially those without off-street parking, to switch to electric vehicles. We are currently working with the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles and other agencies to support the procurement of an on-street chargepoint provider.</p>
6	<p>People cannot afford to change their vehicle</p> <p>The proposal is to link the cost of residents' permits to the CO2 emissions of pollution from the vehicle the permit covers. Owners of low emission vehicles will pay less than those with higher emissions. The cost of a first permit would be between £17 and £103 per year.</p> <p>The aims of the proposals include acting as a disincentive to multiple vehicle ownership and a move to encourage greater use of sustainable alternatives, whilst not limiting the availability of permits for those who</p>

	<p>need them. As such, it is important that charges are set at a level that has some meaningful effect on parking behaviour.</p> <p>There are 2,452 resident permits issued in Rother District, of these 11% are in the highest band, with 50% in discount level 2 and 3.</p>
7	<p>No problem with air pollution or pollution from parked vehicles</p> <p>In 2019, East Sussex County Council declared a climate emergency. This was in response to the need to address human-induced climate change and to achieve the goals of the 2015 Paris Agreement, a legally binding international treaty ratified by the United Kingdom in 2016. The overarching goal of this is to hold “the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels” and pursue efforts “to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.” This declaration is aligned with the United Kingdom’s legal requirement under the Climate Act to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050.</p> <p>Transport is the largest sector for emitting GHG emissions, producing 24% of the UK’s total emissions in 2020 (406 MtCO₂e), with increases in the intensity and frequency of severe weather events already being felt across the region. The serious nature of such changes means the transport network needs to be more resilient and for East Sussex to play its part to prevent additional GHG emissions being released to avoid the even more severe impacts of climate change forecast by scientific experts.</p> <p>The East Sussex Climate Emergency Road Map for 2022-25 sets out a county-wide target of reducing emissions by 13% each year. It also acknowledges the Council’s influence on transport emissions in its role as a local transport and highways authority</p>
8	<p>Should not be taking away ability to pay cash</p> <p>East Sussex County Council are currently not proposing to remove the ability to pay for parking using cash. There is possibly a cross over from Rother District Council off-street parking consultation, where pay for parking is being proposed using pay by phone.</p>
9	<p>Highway improvements and better management of road works</p> <p>The County Council tries, wherever possible, to minimise disruption caused by road works and to keep traffic flowing whilst completing the highway works whether this be East Sussex County Council or the various</p>

	<p>utilities. Road works are necessary to help maintain the condition of the road to enable it to be used safely and for utilities to maintain vital services.</p> <p>Maintaining and managing the assets that form transport networks - roads, public transport infrastructure, cycle routes, footpaths, street lighting, road signs and other infrastructure, is an essential part of keeping residents and visitors moving and is important to prosperity and growth. A well-maintained and managed network helps ensure that journeys around the area are safe, reliable, and efficient, at all times and in all weather conditions.</p> <p>The East Sussex Highway Asset Management Strategy and supporting policy aims to deliver a more efficient and effective approach to management of highway infrastructure assets through longer-term planning and ensuring that levels of service are defined and achievable. Through taking a life-cycle approach to assets and their management, and engaging with local stakeholders, the County Council aim to make best use of resources and target improvements to highway infrastructure assets. This is to support social wellbeing of local communities and drive sustainable economic growth. Alongside supporting the objectives of LTP4 including safety, accessibility and resilience.</p>
10	<p>More enforcement</p> <p>The levels of enforcement are continually monitored. The locations, times and frequency of civil enforcement officer visits is dependent on parking patterns and behaviours. When patterns and behaviours change our enforcement team adapt their deployment.</p> <p>Vehicles in contravention can also be reported directly to the enforcement team by telephone to 01323 335500 option 1.</p> <p>If it is identified that additional officers are needed, the team will grow to meet requirements if it is within our financial constraints.</p>

7. About You

7.1. These questions provide demographic and other personal information to assist in analysis and interpretation of the results, and in particular to inform the Equalities Impact Assessment for this and future proposals.

17: Are you responding as a resident or as part of an organisation?
 There were 880 responses to this question.

Option	Total	Percent
Resident	815	92.40%
Organisation	15	1.70%
Non-Resident	28	3.17%
Prefer not to say	22	2.49%
Not Answered	2	0.23%

92.40% of respondents indicated they were responding to the consultation as a resident of Rother District

18: What is your gender
 There were 858 responses to this question.

Option	Total	Percent
Male	373	42.29%
Female	403	45.69%
Non-binary	0	0.00%
Prefer not to say	73	8.28%
Prefer to self describe:	9	1.02%
Not Answered	24	2.72%

Of those that gave their gender, there was marginally more women (45.69%) than men (42.29%) who responded to this question, 8.28% chose not to say, 1.02% self-described and 2.72% chose not to answer the question.

19: What age are you?
 There were 871 responses to this question.

Option	Total	Percent
8 to 24	5	0.57%
25 to 34	25	2.83%
35 to 44	47	5.33%
45 to 54	93	10.54%
55 to 64	183	20.75%
65 or over	422	47.85%
Prefer not to say	96	10.88%
Not Answered	11	1.25%

The results show the largest proportion of respondents fall in the 55-64 and 65-74 age groups.

20: What is your postcode?

There were 818 responses to this question.

21: What is your ethnic group?

Option	Total	Percent
English/Welsh/Scottish /Northern Irish/British	711	80.61%
Irish	7	0.79%
Gypsy / Irish Traveller	3	0.34%
Roma	1	0.11%
Any other White background, please describe below	31	3.51%
White & Black Caribbean	6	0.68%
White & Black African	4	0.45%
White & Asian	8	0.91%
Any other Mixed or Multiple background, please describe below	18	2.04%
Indian	0	0.00%
Pakistani	0	0.00%
Bangladeshi	1	0.11%
Chinese	1	0.11%
Any other Asian background, please describe below	9	1.02%
Caribbean	0	0.00%
African background, write in	2	0.23%
Any other Black, Black British or Caribbean background, please describe below	5	0.57%
Arab	0	0.00%
Any other ethnic group, please describe below	14	1.59%

22: Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more? There were 146 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	146	16.55%
No	736	83.45%

23: If you answered yes to the previous question, do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?

Option	Total	Percent
Yes, a lot	62	7.03%
Yes, a little	128	14.51%
Not at all	22	2.49%
Prefer not to say	29	3.29%
Not Answered	641	72.68%

24: What is your religion or belief?

Option	Total	Percent
No religion	258	29.25%
Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)	305	34.58%
Buddhist	2	0.23%
Hindu	1	0.11%
Jewish	2	0.23%
Muslim	0	0.00%
Sikh	0	0.00%
Any other religion, please describe below	9	1.02%
Philosophical belief, please describe below	9	1.02%
Prefer not to say	208	23.58%
Not Answered	88	9.98%

25: Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?
There were 797 responses to this question.

Option	Total	Percent
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Bi/Bisexual	4	0.45%
Heterosexual / 'Straight'	499	56.58%
Gay / lesbian	15	1.70%
Prefer to self describe, please describe below	6	0.68%
Prefer not to say	273	30.95%
Not Answered	85	9.64%

10. Conclusions

10.1 The consultation on the proposed changes to parking charges in Rother District was open to all residents, visitors, businesses and stakeholders with an interest in the County Council's on street parking arrangements across the county.

10.2. Congestion- The responses to the consultation indicate there is a small majority of support for the reduction of traffic and traffic movements in our town centres. The purpose of the proposed increase is to encourage greater use of sustainable modes of transport wherever possible, using alternative modes of transport will help to reduce vehicle congestion and pollution in the town centres

10.3. Improve Air Quality- Concerns about the local air quality of our town centres were identified through the online questionnaire with over a third of respondents indicating they feel the Council should take measures to improve air quality across the county. Incentives such as a reduced resident parking permit for the least polluting vehicles aim to encourage a modal shift to lower polluting vehicles.

10.4. Encourage Sustainable Modes of Transport- Nearly half of respondents to the online questionnaire indicated measures should not be taken by East Sussex County Council to encourage more sustainable modes of transport across the county.

10.5. Parking Charges influence parking habits- The responses show three quarters of respondents feel parking charges do influence where people park.

10.6. Off-street parking charges should be lower than on-street parking charges- Most of the respondents felt off-street parking charges should be lower than those on street. As part of the intended changes, East Sussex County Council welcome greater use of the off-street parking facilities which will help to reduce demand for on-street parking and in turn reduce the number of vehicles driving around our town centres.

10.7. Cheaper resident permit charges for less polluting vehicles- Opinion regarding lower charges for permits for less polluting vehicles showed a majority against changes. Price increases are never popular but aligning permit charges to those in the rest of the County which are based on vehicle emissions will mean incentives for owning less polluting vehicles will be available to all resident permit holders.

Introducing such an incentive will also contribute to the delivery of some of the broader transport objectives in the LTP4

10.8. Changes to Visitor and Day Permit Charges- There was little support for the proposed increase to day permit charges which include visitor, hotel, trade and care permits. The purpose of the proposed increase is to encourage greater use of sustainable modes of transport wherever possible, using alternative modes of transport will help to reduce vehicle congestion and pollution in the town centres.

10.9. Changes to On-Street Parking Charges paid for parking- Most of respondents did not support the proposed increase to on-street paid for parking charges. Comments received generally related to concerns about the negative economic effect increased parking charges would have on high streets. Increasing the cost of on-street parking charges will encourage people to use alternative sustainable forms of transport and encourage people to use off-street car parks first, which will minimise the pressure on on-street parking, help reduce congestion and improve air quality in our towns. The increase in charges for on-street parking across Rother District would range from 25p to £2 per hour depending on the location. Blue badge holders are not impacted by this proposal as they do not have to pay for on-street parking.

10.10. Most of the comments submitted via the on-line questionnaire, letter or email indicated that respondents felt the proposed increases to parking charges would have a negative effect on the local economy. The Council do not agree that the proposals will have a negative effect on the local economy. Whilst there is often anecdotal evidence there is little published evidence which demonstrates a direct correlation between changes in parking charges and changes in town centre footfall. Charging at a sufficient level to impact driver behaviour, can bolster the local economy by encouraging a 'churn' of visitors and shoppers, rather than spaces being occupied by a single user for a long period of time. The proposals for the on-street parking charges will encourage greater use of off-street car parks, reduce the number of vehicles driving on our town centre roads searching for parking spaces and aim to encourage greater use of alternative modes of transport. This in turn will reduce harmful emissions and improve air quality. These outcomes will make these towns a more appealing place to work, live and visit and thereby boost the local economy.

10.11. The East Sussex LTP4 Strategy is underpinned by partnership work focussed on enabling greater integration of journeys, access and choice across all modes. Specifically supporting the delivery of inclusive infrastructure, services and the redesign of road space to balance the needs of different road users. This emphasises support for people walking, wheeling, cycling and using public transport, creating healthy places within both urban and rural areas. This is alongside facilitating the uptake of vehicles with lower emissions, or cleaner fuels through the delivery of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and embracing the utilisation of transport technologies as they emerge. This will support the decarbonisation of transport, tackle climate change and help local economies to prosper. The East Sussex LTP4 highlights

the important factor that the responsibility for the delivery of LTP4 rests not just with the County Council but with multiple organisations, especially strategic transport partners and district and borough Councils to ensure that residents, businesses and visitors can access what they want or need to get to in the county.

10.12. Following our analysis of consultation responses and comments, we do not consider that new information has been presented that would lead us to withdraw our proposals.