

TITLE OF REPORT - Introduction of minimum period for pay and display parking

Key Decision No - NH S040

**CABINET MEETING DATE
(2021/22)**

13 December 2021

CLASSIFICATION:

Open

If exempt, the reason will be listed in the main body of this report.

WARD(S) AFFECTED

All wards

CABINET MEMBER

Cllr Mete Coban

KEY DECISION

Yes

REASON

Affects two or more wards

GROUP DIRECTOR

Ajman Ali, Group Director, Neighbourhoods & Housing

1. CABINET MEMBER'S INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. I am pleased to recommend to Cabinet the implementation of a minimum time period for short stay parking in Hackney.
- 1.2. As we come out of the pandemic, we remain committed to our journey to Rebuild a Greener Hackney, to avoid a car-led recovery that would have such a detrimental impact on the lives and health of those who live and work in the borough.
- 1.3. Introducing a minimum time period for short stay parking sessions will complement the measures we have taken over the last 18 months, by ensuring that - for the first time - it will no longer be cheaper for people to drive and park for short trips, than it will be to take the same journey by public transport.
- 1.4. This will have a demonstrable impact on drivers - the vast majority of whose journeys originate from outside the borough - by making them think much more carefully about whether driving represents the best value for money choice when travelling into Hackney compared to using public transport.
- 1.5. I would like to make it clear that the Council does not use parking as a means for generating revenue, as this is strictly prohibited by law. How parking income is used is tightly controlled under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended) and cannot be used to subsidise general expenditure. The Council uses any surplus from its Parking account to contribute towards the London-wide Freedom Pass scheme, highways maintenance costs and schools transport.

2. GROUP DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. I am pleased to introduce the proposals to set a minimum time period for short stay parking, which will support the council's wider objectives to encourage the use of sustainable forms of transportation wherever possible.
- 2.2. These proposals will help to reduce avoidable car use, and contribute towards making Hackney's streets more livable for our residents.
- 2.3. I recommend this report to Cabinet.

3. RECOMMENDATION(S)

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 3.1 Approve the introduction of a minimum short stay parking session of 1 hour.**
- 3.2 Delegate the powers to the Head of Parking, Markets and Street Trading to authorise the variation of this minimum period to address local challenges or needs, going forward.**

4. REASONS FOR DECISION

- 4.1. Each year over 200,000 customers purchase over 1 million short stay parking sessions in Hackney, with 98% of them using the RingGo cashless parking service.
- 4.2. Recent analysis of postcode data for these customers has found that:
 - 89.6% of RingGo users in 2020/21 did not live in Hackney
 - 90.5% of RingGo users in 2019/20 did not live in Hackney
- 4.3. At present, customers can purchase sessions for as little as 20p for 10 minutes, via a pay and display machine, or as little as 19p for 2 minutes using RingGo. 24% of sessions bought are for less than 1 hour.
- 4.4. As part of Hackney's long-standing commitment to discourage unnecessary journeys by car, it is proposed to introduce a minimum time that pay-and-display parking sessions can be bought for, either by pay-and-display machines, and the RingGo cashless parking sessions.
- 4.5. Our cashless parking provider (RingGo) have informed officers that 7 other boroughs using their system already have a minimum time in place:
 - LB Tower Hamlets (30min)
 - LB Hammersmith & Fulham (30min)
 - LB Croydon (30min)
 - LB Bexley (30min)
 - LB Merton (20min)
 - LB Camden (15mins)
 - LB Haringey (15min).
- 4.6. The remainder of RingGo's London Boroughs offer lower time periods, with bookings by the minute available in Islington, Wandsworth, Richmond, Kingston, and 3 minute multiples in Brent.

- 4.7. This paper proposes a standardised minimum period of one hour, as this would ensure that across the vast majority of the borough the cost of paying to park (£2-£6 depending on location) would be more than the cost of the equivalent journey taken by public transport, which would discourage the use of cars for short journeys and incentivise more people to walk, cycle or use public transport.
- 4.8. It should also be noted that only the 1 hour option would set the minimum price (£2) at a level that would exceed the fee for a one-way bus journey (£1.55) across the borough.
- 4.9. Officers anticipate that this change will decrease use of short stay parking, through a combination of:
- A reduction in short journeys made by car; and
 - An increase in the number of drivers who may choose to park without a valid session, to avoid paying the increased fee.
- 4.10. We will mitigate payment avoidance through local changes to our Civil Enforcement Officer deployment where necessary, with increased patrols in areas where drivers choose to risk not paying for a parking session.
- 4.11. However, if enhanced enforcement does not prove to be successful, or there are particular local factors that warrant a different approach to be taken, it may be necessary to amend this standard time on a case by case basis. As such, this report seeks approval from Cabinet to authorise the Head of Parking, Markets and Street Trading to amend the minimum time for individual locations to address local circumstances.

5. DETAILS OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

5.1 Shorter standardised time periods (15 minutes, 20 minutes, and 30 minutes) were considered, but under all three options, the lowest price that could be paid was deemed to be insufficient to appropriately incentivise drivers to consider alternative forms of transport, when compared with a return bus journey costing £3.10 using Oyster pay as you go.

5.2 It was instead felt that the best balance was to introduce a standardised 1 hour minimum time period, while giving the Head of Parking, Markets and Street Trading the authority to vary this based on local needs, as outlined in section 4 of this report.

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|---------|---|
| | Min price charged to motorists (varies by location) |
| 15 mins | 45p - £1.45 |
| 20 mins | 60p - £1.93 |
| 30 mins | 90p - £2.90 |

6. BACKGROUND

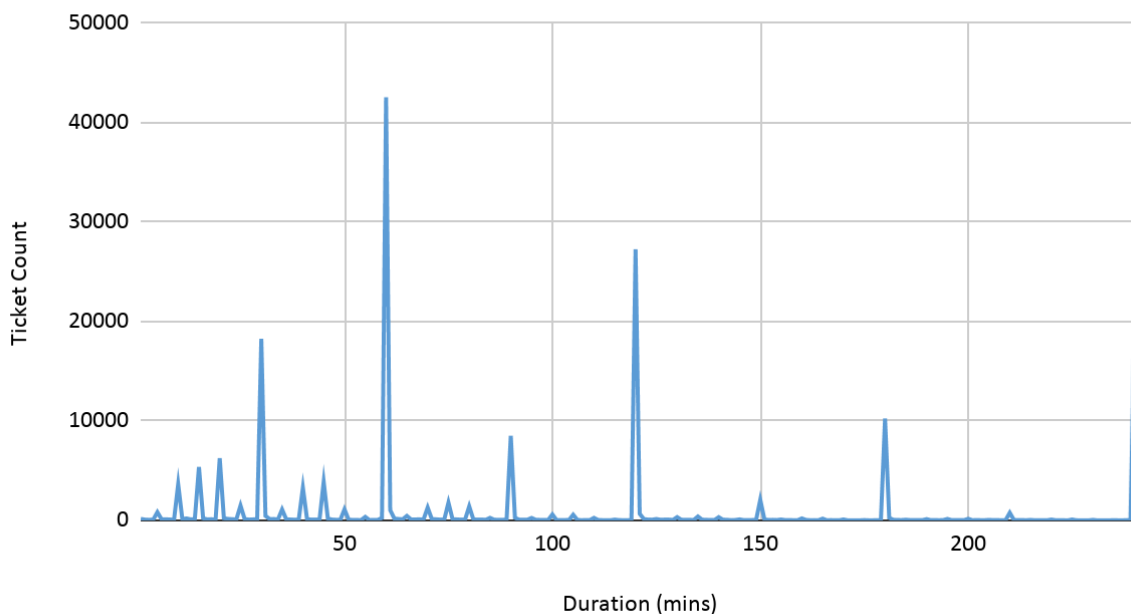
6.1. Policy Context

Each year over 200,000 customers purchase over 1 million short stay parking sessions in Hackney, with 98% of them done through the RingGo cashless parking service.

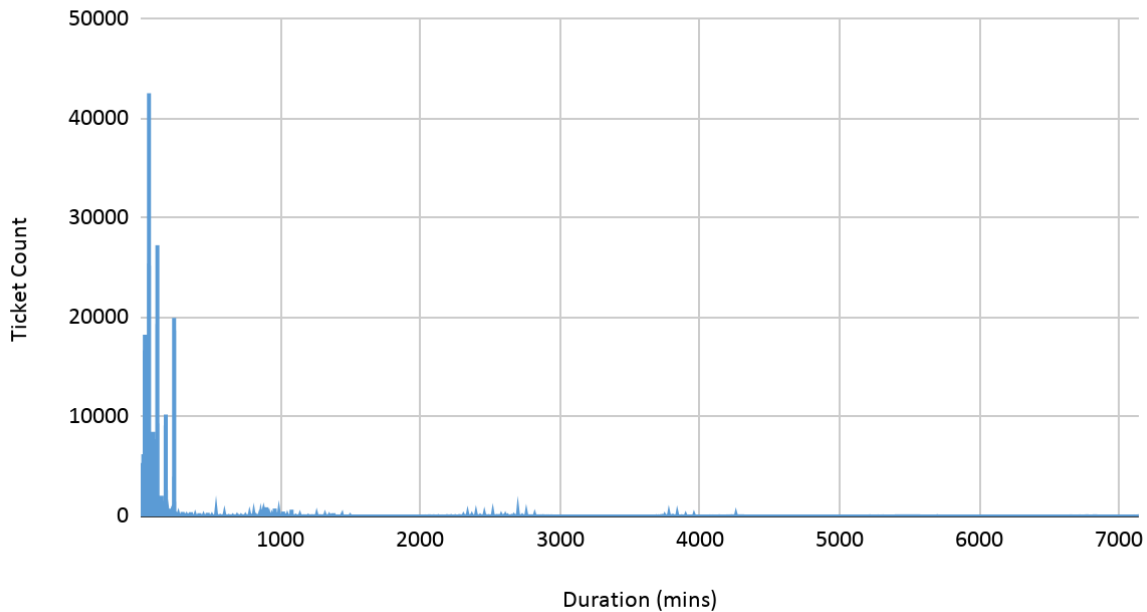
The most popular parking duration bought using the RingGo service is 1 hour, followed by 2 hours, and 4 hours, but 24% of sessions bought are for less than 1 hour.

Drivers are currently able to purchase parking sessions for as short a duration as 2 minutes using RingGo, and 10 minutes if using a pay and display machine. This actually makes it cheaper for drivers to drive short distances than it is to travel by public transport.

RingGo sessions - Ticket Count vs Duration (1 min to 4 hrs)



Ticket Count vs Duration - all RingGo sessions



6.2. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

An EIA looking at the impact of this proposal has been undertaken, and can be viewed [here](#).

It has identified that the proposals may make it easier for the elderly and blue badge holders, who are more reliant on their cars, to find available parking, due to the likely reduction in short stay parking.

Local businesses may also be impacted, though available evidence suggests that there is no causal link between the price of parking in retail areas and their success.

It is proposed that monitoring, together with giving the Head of Parking, Markets and Street Trading the delegated authority to amend local minimum times, will provide the flexibility necessary to respond to local needs where appropriate.

6.3. Sustainability

The proposals are aimed at discouraging the use of cars for short journeys, so it is anticipated that their introduction will reduce short-duration car journeys by as much as 30%, which will contribute towards a reduction in congestion and reduction in local particulate matter arising from tailpipe emissions.

6.4. Consultations

Fees and charges for short stay parking are set as part of the annual fees and charges review process, which is approved by Cabinet each February.

The recommendation to introduce a minimum time for short stay parking sessions is an operational decision which does not require Consultation, but which is nonetheless being brought before Cabinet due to it applying across all wards.

6.5. Risk Assessment

The implementation of a minimum time is being proposed primarily to discourage the use of vehicles for short journeys, and as such it is expected that the number of such journeys will decrease. Precisely how large this impact will be will only become clear after the changes are implemented, and the impact of these proposals represent officers with the best estimate of their impact, which is anticipated to be a 30% reduction in the number of sessions of under 1 hour sessions bought each year (approximately 60,000 sessions).

Officers anticipate that this will be a combination of:

- A reduction in short journeys made by car; and
- An increase in the number of drivers who may choose to park without a valid session, to avoid paying the increased fee.

We will mitigate this through local changes to our Civil Enforcement Officer deployment where necessary.

In some areas, if these changes do not prove to be successful, or there are other local factors that mean that a 1 hour minimum is not appropriate, this report seeks approval from Cabinet to authorise the Head of Parking, Markets and Street Trading to amend the minimum time for individual locations, to address local circumstances.

7. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE RESOURCES

- 7.1 The recommendations set out in this paper proposes a standardised minimum period of one hour short stay parking session and also seeks approval from Cabinet to authorise the Head of Parking, Markets and Street Trading to amend the minimum time for individual locations to address local circumstances. In some areas, if these changes do not prove to be successful, or there are other local factors that mean that a 1 hour minimum is not appropriate.

- 7.2 Introducing a minimum time period for short stay parking sessions would ensure that across the vast majority of the borough the cost of paying to park (£2-£6 depending on location) would be more than the cost of the equivalent journey taken by public transport, which would discourage the use of cars for short journeys and incentivise more people to walk, cycle or use public transport.
- 7.3 The implementation of a minimum time is being proposed primarily to discourage the use of vehicles for short journeys, and as such it is expected that the number of such journeys will decrease. The impact of this decrease is uncertain and will not be clear until the implementation of the proposed changes. Officers are aware of the potential risk of reduction in number of sessions as well as unpaid sessions and mitigation plans will be deployed where necessary.
- 7.4 It is estimated that the introduction of minimum short stay parking sessions of 1 hour will generate additional income of £174K to the Parking Account. This additional income has been included as part of the savings proposals for the Council's 2022/23 budget.

8. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR, LEGAL & GOVERNANCE SERVICES

- 8.1 The recommendations set out in this report are for Cabinet to approve the introduction of a minimum short stay parking session of 1 hour and delegate the powers to the Head of Parking, Markets and Street Trading to authorise the variation of this minimum period to address local challenges or needs, going forward.
- 8.2 This is a decision which affects two or more wards and is classed within the Councils constitution as a Key Decision. Cabinet has the authority to approve the recommendation in 3.1.
- 8.3 In order for the Head of Parking, Markets and Street Trading to authorise the variation of the minimum time period for short stay parking to address local challenges or needs, going forward, the recommendation in 3.2 needs to be approved.

APPENDICES

[Equalities Impact Assessment](#)

EXEMPT

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

In accordance with The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) England Regulations 2012 publication of Background Papers used in the preparation of reports is required

Description of document (or None)

None

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