

Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment 00979 (Version 1)

SECTION ONE: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Service & Division:	Place Services Environment & Operations	Lead Officer Name:	Gary McGregor
		Team:	Engineering Design
		Tel:	07763378910
		Email:	gary.mcgregor@falkirk.gov.uk
Proposal:	Parking Charge Uplifts 2025/26 (including on-street, off-street & parks)	Reference No:	

What is the Proposal?	Budget & Other Financial Decision	Policy (New or Change)	HR Policy & Practice	Change to Service Delivery / Service Design
	Yes	No	No	No
Who does the Proposal affect?	Service Users	Members of the Public	Employees	Job Applicants
	No	Yes	No	No
Other, please specify:				

Identify the main aims and projected outcome of this proposal (please add date of each update):	
05/02/2025	The proposal is to increase the cost of both on & off-street parking charges by approximately 10% to raise additional income for the Council as part of the need to bridge the budget gap. This also includes an uplift of residents parking permits of 20% due to a lower uplift of 5% in financial year 2023/2024.
05/02/2025	A range of parking uplifts are also proposed at the Helix park to assist the Council is bridging it's budget gap. These uplifts range from 2% to 50% depending on the type of vehicle, time of day and seasonal periods. The proposed changes reflect what officers believe is competitive with other similar visitor attractions whilst still providing some financial benefit to the Council.
05/02/2025	At Muiravonside Country Park, a new £4 charge for stays over 90 minutes is proposed. with the existing £2 charge for short-stay remaining unchanged.

SECTION TWO: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For budget changes ONLY please include information below:			Benchmark, e.g. Scottish Average
Current spend on this service (£'0000s)	Total:		
Reduction to this service budget (£'0000s)	Per Annum:		
Increase to this service budget (£'000s)	Per Annum:		
If this is a change to a charge or concession please complete.	Current Annual Income Total:	£1,200,000	FC are approximately the 9th most expensive of the 23 authorities who charge for the use of off-street car parks, when considering rates for a 2hr stay.
	Expected Annual Income Total:	£1,300,000	Assuming other providers do not increase their fees at all in 2025/26 (unlikely), FC will become approximately the 7th most expensive.
If this is a budget decision, when will the saving be achieved?	Start Date:	01/04/2025	
	End Date (if any):		

SECTION THREE: EVIDENCE Please include any evidence or relevant information that has influenced the decisions contained in this EPIA. (This could include demographic profiles; audits; research; health needs assessments; national guidance or legislative requirements and how this relates to the protected characteristic groups.)

A - Quantitative Evidence This is evidence which is numerical and should include the number people who use the service and the number of people from the protected characteristic groups who might be affected by changes to the service.

Current monitoring of car park usage has been utilised to estimate savings targets going forward.

In the Scotland 2022 census, 13.4% of Falkirk residents would describe themselves as having a disability. Additionally, 52.9% of people who work or study in Falkirk in 2022 travelled by car or van and 47% of Falkirk households had access to at least one vehicle.

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 2020 provides insights into levels of deprivation across Scotland, including the Falkirk Council area. The SIMD measures multiple aspects of deprivation, including income, employment, health, education, access to services, crime, and housing. In 2020, approximately 15% of Falkirk residents lived in the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland.

B - Qualitative Evidence This is data which describes the effect or impact of a change on a group of people, e.g. some information provided as part of performance reporting.

Social - case studies; personal / group feedback / other

Benchmarking with other local authorities used to inform pricing. The proposed uplifts are consistent with the approach approved by the Council agreed the Financial Strategy in October 2024, which set out that services must explore all opportunities to generate additional revenue for the Council to assist in bridging the challenging budget gap.

Best Judgement:	
Has best judgement been used in place of data/research/evidence?	Yes
Who provided the best judgement and what was this based on?	Service Managers and Officers
What gaps in data / information were identified?	Unable to identify the protected characteristics of car park users.
Is further research necessary?	No
If NO, please state why.	Benchmarking used to inform pricing. The fee uplifts are necessary to support the Council in bridging it's budget gap and better aligning fees with those of neighbouring providers.

SECTION FOUR: ENGAGEMENT

Engagement with individuals or organisations affected by the policy or proposal must take place

Has the proposal / policy / project been subject to engagement or consultation with service users taking into account their protected characteristics and socio-economic status?	No	
If YES, please state who was engagement with.		
If NO engagement has been conducted, please state why.	Fees are reviewed annually in line with the budget setting process.	
How was the engagement carried out?	What were the results from the engagement? Please list...	
Focus Group	No	
Survey	No	
Display / Exhibitions	No	
User Panels	No	
Public Event	No	
Other: please specify		
Has the proposal / policy/ project been reviewed / changed as a result of the engagement?	No	
Have the results of the engagement been fed back to the consultees?	No	
Is further engagement recommended?	No	

SECTION FIVE: ASSESSING THE IMPACT

Equality Protected Characteristics: What will the impact of implementing this proposal be on people who share characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 or are likely to be affected by the proposal / policy / project? This section allows you to consider other impacts, e.g. poverty, health inequalities, community justice, carers etc.

Protected Characteristic	Neutral Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Please provide evidence of the impact on this protected characteristic.
Age			✓	It is recognised that elderly drivers are more likely to need to park closer to the centre of town, where charges are typically higher, and are likely to have less income.
Disability	✓			No negative impacts identified. Free parking provision will remain available for blue badge holders.
Sex	✓			No negative impacts identified
Ethnicity	✓			No negative impacts identified
Religion / Belief / non-Belief	✓			No negative impacts identified
Sexual Orientation	✓			No negative impacts identified
Transgender	✓			No negative impacts identified
Pregnancy / Maternity			✓	Pregnant women and new parents may be more likely to use a car than public transport, where possible.
Marriage / Civil Partnership	✓			No negative impacts identified
Poverty			✓	May impact on low income households who utilise Council car parks or paid on-street parking provision.
Care Experienced	✓			No negative impacts identified
Other, health, community justice, carers etc.	✓			No negative impacts identified
Risk (Identify other risks associated with this change)				

Public Sector Equality Duty: Scottish Public Authorities must have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance quality of opportunity and foster good relations. Scottish specific duties include:

	Evidence of Due Regard
Eliminate Unlawful Discrimination (harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct):	The proposal does not offer scope to eliminate unlawful discrimination. Universal access to parking provision will remain unchanged.
Advance Equality of Opportunity:	Free parking provision will remain available for blue badge holders.
Foster Good Relations (promoting understanding and reducing prejudice):	The proposal does not offer scope to improve relations between different protected characteristic groups.

SECTION SIX: PARTNERS / OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Which sectors are likely to have an interest in or be affected by the proposal / policy / project?		Describe the interest / affect.
Business	Yes	Some businesses hold business parking permits which will increase
Councils	No	
Education Sector	No	
Fire	No	
NHS	No	
Integration Joint Board	No	
Police	No	
Third Sector	No	
Other(s): please list and describe the nature of the relationship / impact.		

SECTION SEVEN: ACTION PLANNING

Mitigating Actions: If you have identified impacts on protected characteristic groups in Section 5 please summarise these in the table below detailing the actions you are taking to mitigate or support this impact. If you are not taking any action to support or mitigate the impact you should complete the No Mitigating Actions section below instead.

Identified Impact	To Who	Action(s)	Lead Officer	Evaluation and Review Date	Strategic Reference to Corporate Plan / Service Plan / Quality Outcomes
Equal access	Car users with disabilities	Free parking provision will remain available for blue badge holders	Gary McGregor	05/02/2025	Supporting stronger & healthier communities Financial Sustainability

No Mitigating Actions

Please explain why you do not need to take any action to mitigate or support the impact of your proposals.

Are actions being reported to Members?	Yes
If yes when and how ?	Budget meeting, March 2025

SECTION EIGHT: ASSESSMENT OUTCOME

Only one of following statements best matches your assessment of this proposal / policy / project. Please select one and provide your reasons.

No major change required	No	
The proposal has to be adjusted to reduce impact on protected characteristic groups	No	
Continue with the proposal but it is not possible to remove all the risk to protected characteristic groups	Yes	Whilst the proposed uplifts are likely to affect people from low income households more, the cost of car parking forms part of the wider car ownership cost. The service represents one of the limited areas where Councils can increase revenue to generate income. Negative impacts on older and pregnant individuals is recognised.
Stop the proposal as it is potentially in breach of equality legislation	No	

SECTION NINE: LEAD OFFICER SIGN OFF

Lead Officer:

Signature: *Gary McGregor*

Date: 05/02/2025

SECTION TEN: EPIA TASK GROUP ONLY

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF EPIA:	Has the EPIA demonstrated the use of data, appropriate engagement, identified mitigating actions as well as ownership and appropriate review of actions to confidently demonstrate compliance with the general and public sector equality duties?	Yes
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ASSESSMENT FINDINGS	The EPIA is based on available data and some mitigating actions are identified.	
If YES, use this box to highlight evidence in support of the assessment of the EPIA		
If NO, use this box to highlight actions needed to improve the EPIA		

Where adverse impact on diverse communities has been identified and it is intended to continue with the proposal / policy / project, has justification for continuing <u>without making changes been made</u>?	Yes	If YES, please describe: The proposed uplifts are consistent with the approach approved by the Council in the Financial Strategy in October 2024, which set out that services must explore all opportunities to generate additional revenue for the Council to assist in bridging the challenging budget gap. Free parking provision will remain available for blue badge holders.
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LEVEL OF IMPACT: The EPIA Task Group has agreed the following level of impact on the protected characteristic groups highlighted within the EPIA

LEVEL		COMMENTS
HIGH	Yes / No	
MEDIUM	Yes	
LOW	Yes / No	

SECTION ELEVEN: CHIEF OFFICER SIGN OFF

Director / Head of Service:			
Signature:	<i>Malcolm Bennie</i>	Date:	07/02/2025