



Federation of Small Businesses

The UK's Leading Business Organisation

London Charter for Parking

Parking charges are a major factor in the dwindling numbers of customers in London's town centres, especially when out-of-town shopping centres have free parking.

Many small businesses are adversely affected by the availability and the cost of parking for themselves or for their customers – 64 per cent of small businesses in London say that the availability of parking has a negative impact on their business¹.

The lack of affordable parking is detrimental to local trade, and many of London's town centres are running the risk of driving shoppers away from the high street to out-of-town retail areas, where parking is often free of charge. The message to London's councils is therefore to consider carefully the impact of the availability and cost of parking on local trade. Parking should be seen as a vital service and not a quick and easy means of raising revenue.

The Department for Transport's Operational Guidance on *Parking Policy and Enforcement*² maintains that charges should not be used to raise revenue or as a local tax. We understand that councils are facing financial challenges but so are small businesses, which is why we are urging councils in London to adhere to the following eight principles.

1. Councils should not regard parking regulations and the income generated from parking fines as a means of raising revenue.

Instead, they must be able to demonstrate in an open and fair way that they are using parking tickets to control traffic as required by the Road Traffic Act 1991

2. Councils should be fully accountable as to demonstrate why they are raising parking revenues - with targeted decreases elsewhere to demonstrate a cost-neutral policy.

If councils deem congestion to be a reason for increasing prices then this should be fully argued after a public consultation and for the evidence of the increase to be conclusive.

3. Councils must standardise parking laws throughout London.

As a first step to achieving this, councils should ensure that they consult with neighbouring authorities about parking restrictions on boundary roads. It should be the aim of London Councils to try, where appropriate, to recommend to local

¹ <http://www.fsb.org.uk/policy/assets/fsb0723%20infrastructure%20planning%20web.pdf>

² <http://www2.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roads/tpm/tmaportal/tmafeatures/tmapart6/betterprkoperationalguid/>



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authorities to arrange for similar parking restriction on both sides of a road which straddles two or more local authorities. Equally, adjoining parking areas (eg outside a row of shops) should aim to have similar parking restrictions.

- 4. Councils should ensure all contractors are fully trained and conversant with the rules and regulations, and should exercise proper control over the actions of their parking contractors and parking attendants.**

They would do this by undertaking and monitoring quality control procedures to reduce the number of illegally or erroneously issued parking tickets. They should publish the results of such procedures.

- 5. All parking tickets should disclose greater information about the offence.**

This should include the precise location of the offence (eg by reference to street numbers etc); whether the vehicle was private or commercial; whether there were any signs of loading/unloading; whether there was any communication between the parking attendant and the driver. This information should be recorded on the PCN issued to the motorist.

- 6. Councils should require that the name of the parking attendant is disclosed both on parking tickets and during the appeal process and at any Adjudication hearings.**

It is not acceptable for only their badge number to be disclosed. In addition, the percentage of successfully appealed tickets issued by the warden in question should be made available to the appellants.

- 7. Councils should show more leniency on businesses that need to load and unload vehicles to carry out their business activities**

Businesses are often restricted as they have to load/unload vehicles or else be hit by a parking fine. Small businesses are often in a catch 22 situation whereby they have to ensure that a vehicle door is open to appease parking wardens, whilst at the same time forfeiting their insurance agreement if they leave a vehicle door open.

- 8. Councils should compensate each motorist who receives an incorrect parking ticket.**

The compensation shall be equal to the full amount of the parking ticket. If the motorist has to go to the parking adjudicator, or if the appeal ceases to be contested by the council prior to adjudication, the motorist shall receive an additional £150 in compensation if his or her appeal is successful. This cost could be borne equally by the Council and the contractor.