



## Parking Charges Consultation

Salisbury City Council (SCC) welcomes the opportunity to provide formal comments on the proposed changes to parking charges and operating hours currently under consultation.

While SCC recognises that Wiltshire Council faces increasing operational costs and has not raised parking charges since 2022, the specific proposals set out in this TRO raise serious concerns about their potential impact on Salisbury's economy, community, and transport network.

The current parking charges and proposed new parking charges regime appear to reflect a misunderstanding of the socio-economic makeup of the city of Salisbury.

### 1. Salisbury already has the highest parking charges in Wiltshire

As the county's primary retail, leisure, cultural and visitor destination, Salisbury's economic health is closely linked to parking policy. Salisbury already has the highest parking tariffs in the county, and any further increases risk:

- reducing city-centre footfall
- discouraging visitors in favour of lower-cost alternatives
- harming independent retailers and hospitality businesses still recovering from post-pandemic pressures
- Salisbury already suffers from high levels of nuisance parking in our parks and residential areas from people trying to avoid parking charges.

SCC believes an additional 20% increase in 2026 followed by 5% in 2028 is disproportionate for a city already at the top of the county's charging structure.

### 2. Extending charging hours to 7am – 7pm will have negative economic and social impacts

A 12-hour charging window would remove the only remaining low-cost periods available to:

- early-morning workers, many of whom earn below the Wiltshire median wage
- staff in hospitality and leisure sectors whose shifts end between 5pm and 7pm
- residents accessing essential services after work
- volunteers, carers and community members undertaking early or late activities

SCC is concerned that the proposed extended hours would disproportionately affect lower-income workers and suppress early-evening activity in the city centre.

### 3. Aligning Sunday parking charges with weekday tariffs is not justified

Sunday is a key trading day in Salisbury. Increasing Sunday tariffs to weekday levels, and reintroducing on-street Sunday charging, will:

- reduce weekend visits from families, tourists and day-trippers
- diminish the city centre's competitiveness compared with free-parking alternatives
- impact community groups and charities who rely on Sunday accessibility



- create particular difficulties for local churches and faith communities whose congregations, often older or less mobile, depend on car access

SCC believes that Salisbury's Sunday activity patterns differ substantially from weekday traffic and that alignment is unjustified and harmful.

#### **4. Public transport in Salisbury does not currently support a major modal shift**

While SCC supports the long-term aspirations of LTP4, Salisbury does not currently have:

- sufficient early-morning or evening bus provision
- a network that supports shift workers
- reliable alternatives for residents who live in rural and semi-rural areas around the city

Parking policy should not outpace the availability of realistic modal alternatives.

#### **5. SCC's requested amendments to the TRO**

Salisbury City Council respectfully requests that Wiltshire Council amend the proposals to:

##### **A. Remove the following changes:**

- Extension of charging hours to 7am–7pm
- Alignment of Sunday charges with weekday tariffs
- Reintroduction of on-street Sunday charging in Salisbury

These measures present the most significant economic and social risks.

##### **B. Moderate the scale of tariff increases**

Where inflationary adjustments are deemed necessary, SCC requests smaller, phased increases rather than a single large rise in 2026.

##### **C. Allow Salisbury City Council local flexibility**

If Wiltshire Council proceeds with the proposals unchanged, SCC requests the ability to set charges and operating hours for Lush House Car Park independently, with SCC retaining the right to freeze or amend charges through its annual budget-setting process.

##### **D. Salisbury City Council would want to see the harmonisation of parking charges with the rest of the county.**

#### **6. A constructive path forward**

Salisbury City Council is committed to working collaboratively with Wiltshire Council and the Salisbury business community to develop a parking and transport framework that:

- is financially responsible
- supports the high-street
- protects weekend and evening economy activity



- recognises Salisbury's unique role within the county
- provides a realistic pathway to sustainable transport choices

We propose a joint working session between Wiltshire Council, SCC, and the Salisbury Business Community to explore an alternative package that meets both councils' objectives.

### **Conclusion**

Salisbury City Council has significant concerns about the proposed parking changes, particularly:

- extended charging hours
- increased Sunday tariffs
- on-street Sunday charging
- the scale and timing of tariff increases

SCC believes these measures would damage Salisbury's economic vitality, reduce city-centre accessibility, and adversely affect local communities and faith organisations.

We therefore request that Wiltshire Council revisits and amends the proposed TRO in light of these concerns and welcomes further discussion to develop a more balanced solution.

**Submitted on behalf of Salisbury City Council**