

Date:
O&S (P&G) - 1st July 2026
Cabinet - 14 July 2026

Report by:
Head of Economy, Regeneration & Housing
Delivery
Operations Manager, Parking & Markets Services

Lead Cllr:
Cllr J Kerr - Executive Councillor for Parks and
Countryside, Waste & Street Scene

Mayoral Car Parking Offer

Supplement: Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority - Letter 24th June 2026.

O&S (P&G): 1st July 2026

Cabinet: 14th July 2026

INTRODUCTION

A letter was received by Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) from the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) on the 24th June 2026. regarding "Free Parking in Huntingdonshire".

Please see document attached.

This follows the offer made by the Mayor of the CPCA to introduce an element of free car parking in Council Car Parks from 4pm in Huntingdon, St Ives and St Neots by providing HDC with a grant to cover the loss of income.

Alongside the offer to HDC, the Mayor of the CPCA has also provided a grant to Peterborough City Council enabling them to operate a free parking scheme which begins at 3pm.

Since publication of the report, and the original proposal, The Mayor of the CPCA has asked the Council to consider whether there is any scope for the Council to contribute additional funding towards the scheme so that free parking could commence in Huntingdonshire from 3pm and align with Peterborough. (hereafter known as the Additional Mayoral Request)

The majority of the background, context and relevant analysis within the main report remain relevant to the consideration of this additional request, and other options.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The CPCA Grant Contribution for a parking scheme is set out in *table 1* which operates:

- Free after 4pm
- Monday to Friday

Table 1: Mayoral Offer (Scheme of ‘Free After 4pm’ Monday to Friday)

	Monday to Friday	Saturday
Free After 3pm		
Free After 4pm	£370,000	

The assessment of the Free After 4pm scheme has been set out and considered in detail in the main report.

The tables below set out:

- The CPCA Grant Contribution (£370,000)
- The **additional funding (bold emphasis)** requirement above the CPCA Grant Contribution for both the Additional Mayoral Request, but also other options.

The Additional Mayoral Request is that the Council extend the scheme offering as set out in *table 2* which would operate.

- Free after 3pm (additional 1 hour daily)
- Monday to Friday

Table 2: Additional Mayoral Request (Extend scheme to ‘Free After 3pm’ Monday to Friday)

	Monday to Friday	Saturday
Free After 3pm	£137,000	
Free After 4pm	£370,000	

Whilst the Mayoral Offer and the Additional Mayoral Request are detailed in the main report and the above tables, the following tables set out the financial implications of extending the scheme to:

- Table 3: Free after 4pm Monday to Saturday (additional operating day)
- Table 4: Free after 3pm Monday to Saturday (additional operating hour and day)

Table 3: Alternate Option (Free after 4pm Monday to Saturday)

	Monday to Friday	Saturday
Free After 3pm		
Free After 4pm	£370,000	£75,000

Table 4: Alternate Option (Free after 3pm Monday to Saturday)

	Monday to Friday	Saturday
Free After 3pm	£273,000	
Free After 4pm	£370,000	

The above shows that there would be a requirement for additional sums (ranging from £75,000 to £273,000) to enable the Council to extend the scheme beyond the current proposal.

In the Mayor of the CPCA latest letter, there is an expectation that the Council would cover these additional financial costs, with no additional sums being provided by the CPCA.

In short summary, none of the aforementioned options are affordable within the Grant Contribution being offered by the Mayor; they would result in a loss of projected income for the Council, and would create a financial pressure that the Council has not currently budgeted for.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The suggestion of aligning HDC's free parking with Peterborough would have financial implications for Huntingdonshire District Council and would need to be considered within the Councils governance framework.

In accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council must ensure the proper administration of its financial affairs, and any changes impacting income or expenditure must be appropriately assessed and managed. In addition, the duties set out in the Local Government Act 2003 require the Council to have regard to the robustness and affordability of its financial plans.

If Members are minded to extend the free parking offer being made by the Mayor of the CPCA, this would constitute a departure from the agreed budget position and would be outside of the approved budget framework.

Should this be the case, the proposal would be expected to be referred through the relevant governance process, including consideration by Full Council. It should be noted that this would have practical implications for delivery, and could elongate the delivery timescale.

It would be possible to budget for the year 2 of the scheme within the 27/28 budget setting process; but year 1 would need to be met via Reserves or Underspends in year.

As with the analysis in section 8.2.3 of the main report, the assessments cannot take account of behavioural change.

CONCLUSION

The provision of an amended period could have extended, or alternative benefits or impacts in respect of the core matters set out in the main report.

Whilst alignment with the Mayor's offer to Peterborough could have some benefits in respect of alignment and ease of understanding for car park users (particularly those who are used to using both HDC and PCC car parks or those who have general

awareness of both schemes); it is clear that the Additional Mayoral Request is not affordable within the grant contribution proposed.

It would require additional funding from HDC, and that of itself would be outside of the approved budget framework. These additional sums would require funding from Reserves or Underspends in year; whilst recognizing there would be potential to budget for the following financial year.