

SMT Committee	
Meeting Date	21 January 2025
Report Title	Cashless Parking Payments Contract Extension
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins
Head of Service	Martyn Cassell
Lead Officer	Alexander Wells
Classification	Open
Recommendations	1. That the Committee approves the extension of the Cashless Parking contract with RingGo UK Ltd to run until 2 July 2027.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The current cashless parking contract is due to expire on 2 July 2025.
- 1.2 This report summarises the possible options Swale Borough Council can take effective from 2 July 2025 with a recommended option of actioning the extension clause within the existing contract with RingGo UK Ltd, giving us until 2 July 2027 to explore further options.

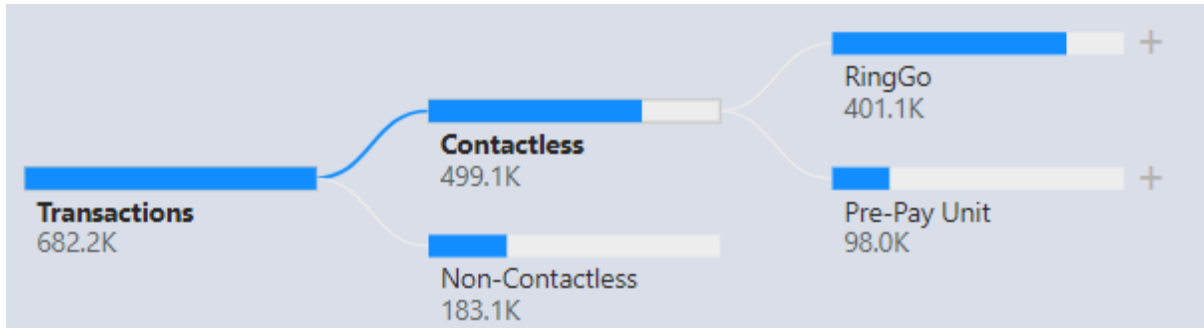
2 Background

- 2.1 On 2 July 2022 Swale Borough Council, entered into a three-year contract with RingGo Limited to provide cashless parking payment services.

The contract facilitates:

- The ability to get directions to all council parking facilities
 - Pay for parking within the councils car parks without the need to attend the pay unit
 - Extend a parking session remotely without the need to return to the vehicle/car park
 - Receive a text message reminder before parking payment expiry
 - Manage parking locations to enable easy parking transactions
 - Provide customer tracking back to the vehicle when parked
 - Allows customer to download receipts
 - Provides live chat assistance if required
- 2.2 The current service contract expires on 2 July 2025; however the agreement provides a provision to enable an extension of the contract of two years to 2 July 2027.
 - 2.3 Since the start of the contract RingGo Limited have consistently provided excellent services fully in accordance with the requirement of the contract specification and at no cost to Swale Borough Council.

2.4 The number of customers electing to pay for parking through cashless methods in Swale has increased year on year, with 73.1% of customers using cashless payments since the start of the year (as of 31 September 2024). 58.8% of these transactions were made through RingGo Limited with this service now becoming the preferred payment method for our customers.



2.5 The number of parking sessions through RingGo increase on average between 11% and 13% each month confirming a transition from the reliance on cash transactions. It must be noted that all of our machines retain the payment by cash option and extending this contract will not impact that provision.

	Sessions 2022	Sessions 2023	% increase
Aug	63,073	69,312	10%
Sep	54,302	64,692	19%
Oct	57,810	64,095	11%
Nov	53,964	60,785	13%
Dec	58,973	65,421	11%
Overall	288,122	324,305	13%

	Sessions 2023	Sessions 2024	% increase
Jan	55,454	62,519	13%
Feb	54,202	63,276	17%
Mar	63,031	69,996	11%
Apr	66,057	68,978	4%
May	65,736	73,672	12%
Jun	66,830	69,129	3%
Jul	67,232	73,987	10%
Aug	69,312	80,109	16%
Rolling 12 Mth	726,664	805,862	11%

2.6 On average 425 new customers are recorded using the cashless service each month with around 62,397 repeat customers using the service.

Month	New	Repeat	Grand Total	%
Sep	337	59,667	60,004	0.6%
Oct	370	59,030	59,400	0.6%
Nov	352	55,866	56,218	0.6%
Dec	366	59,831	60,197	0.6%
Jan	331	57,378	57,709	0.6%
Feb	404	57,740	58,144	0.7%
Mar	410	63,981	64,391	0.6%
Apr	421	63,134	63,555	0.7%
May	589	67,341	67,930	0.9%
Jun	463	63,442	63,805	0.7%
Jul	472	67,697	68,169	0.7%
Aug	586	73,072	73,658	0.8%

- 2.7 Customers using RingGo also spend more on average, with Pay and Display customers paying via cash spending £2.12 on average per transaction compared to RingGo users spending £2.89 per transaction (based on year-to-date figures as of September 2024).

3 Proposals

- 1.1 RingGo UK Limited has indicated a desire to continue to provide services under contract and have committed to continued development of services throughout any extended contract period.
- 1.2 A two-year contract extension will therefore allow a continuation of quality cashless services to our customers until July 2027, when the contract for cashless service provision will be subject to an open tender.

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 4.1 Allow the contract to expire in July 2025 and retender services:
The current agreement is provided at no cost to Swale Borough Council or its customers, whereas a new agreement is likely to increase costs through a transaction convenience fee which will either be an additional cost to the council or be required to be passed on to the customer thus increasing tariff charges.
- 4.2 Do nothing and rely on cash and card payments through the council's pay and display units:

The number of non-card cashless transactions is increasing significantly each year with over 58% of our customers using the RingGo APP (based on year-to-date transaction data as of September 2024). This number is increasing each year as customers prefer the ease of APP transactions to traditional pay unit methods. Therefore, relying solely on pay unit transactions may displace these customers to private car park operators providing the same cashless services.

Additionally, as customers have a higher average spend using RingGo, removing RingGo will likely have a significant negative impact on Parking revenues.

4.3 Do not extend the RingGo contract and instead sign up to the National Parking Platform:

The National Parking Platform (NPP) allows local authorities to have multiple cashless apps operating in their district, allowing customers freedom of choice rather than being tied to a single supplier. However, the system is currently in early stages and there isn't sufficient data to assess its viability. Additionally, compared to the current contract we have with RingGo with no fees imposed on customers, the NPP imposes two sets of fees on the customer, one due to the app operator and one due to the NPP themselves e.g. treasury. Continuing to monitor how the NPP progresses as adoption increases is advised and this supports extension of our current RingGo contract.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 No consultation required.

6 Implications

6.1 Choosing any option other than the preferred option may lead to significant loss of revenue for Swale Borough Council.

6.2 Choosing any other option than the preferred option may remove additional accessibility options for members of the public.

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The Corporate Plan 2023 – 2027 supports the community with Parking Services providing vital services to residents and visitors across Swale.
Financial, Resource and Property	<p>The current cost to the council for cashless parking payment services is zero. However additional services such as optional text reminders are charged to the customer making the transaction resulting in an income to the supplier.</p> <p>Income to the supplier for these services is estimated at £268,968 for the duration of the extension period.</p> <p>If Members choose to reject the contract extension there will likely be a significant reduction in Parking Revenues as shown below with 73% of people using cashless payments for car parking.</p>
Legal, Statutory	Parking Services will work with Mid Kent Legal Services and the

and Procurement	supplier to action the extension cause within the existing contract.
Crime and Disorder	There is no planned impact on crime and disorder.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	The preferred option reduces the reliance on paper (used to dispense pay and display tickets/receipts) and also vastly reduces the amount of CO2 produced during the cash collection process, where vault boxes are collected from every location in Swale in a heavy-duty secure vehicle and driven to a secure sorting facility.
Health and Wellbeing	There is no planned impact on health and wellbeing.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	There are no planned safeguarding implications.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	There are currently no significant risks other than the risk of lost revenue mentioned above. There is no predicted impact on Health and Safety.
Equality and Diversity	The preferred option will continue to provide additional accessibility options for customers unable to access or interface with existing physical Pay and Display units.
Privacy and Data Protection	There is no planned impact on Privacy and Data Protection.

7 Appendices

7.1 N/A

8 Background Documents

8.1 N/A