



REPORT OF: Unison – Melton Branch

SUBJECT: Staff car parking charges

DATE: 31 October 2014

Unison fully supports and understands the aims of Melton Borough Councils Green Travel Plan, besides meeting a planning condition; it encourages behavioural change in respect of sustainable travel. Unison have themselves adopted a National Green Travel Plan, that demonstrates as a union their own commitment to reducing the impact of travel on the environment, by minimising unnecessary travel and by encouraging those who have to travel to do so in a more environmentally friendly way.

Melton Borough Council adopted a Green Travel Policy in September 2011 to encourage employees to choose alternative, sustainable modes of transport for travelling to and from the workplace. The entire process of compiling the plan was carried out with full consultation of The Green Travel Group which consisted of employees and members of Melton's Unison Branch Executive. Part of the Green travel plan was the implementation of a policy to charge employees for car parking.

In September 2011 Unison submitted a proposal to the Policy Finance and Administration Committee, requesting that the proposed car parking charges for staff be reduced, to mitigate any potential financial impact that this may have on the workforce. This proposal was agreed on the following basis, with a condition that this would be reviewed in a year's time. This was reviewed again in September 2012, with an agreement to freeze the current charges until September 2014.

Band 1 -4 = 75% discount

Band 5-8 = 50% discount

Band 9 and above = no discount (£1.00 per day 50p ½ day)

MBC employees have accepted the need for green travel and have adapted to the new charging system, some by choosing alternative ways of travelling to and from work, others by purchasing staff car parking tickets, or a mixture of both.

Unison can appreciate that most Local Authorities are under financial pressure, struggling with revoked funding streams and significantly reduced government grants, however; Unison

APPENDIX A

members were informed that the decision to introduce car parking charges was not part of any efficiency task, and has solely been introduced to encourage employees to seek alternative modes of travel and to reduce the councils CO2 footprint, and that any income generated would be utilised for green travel initiatives.

We have been informed that the total income collected from staff car parking tickets to date is:

2012/13 – Total £6366

2013/14 – Total £4783 (reduction due to period of free parking due to Burton Street works)

2014/15 – Budget and estimated £6500

Despite the substantial amount of income being generated from the introduction of car parking charges for staff, with the understanding that its intended use was for green travel initiatives, none appear to have been introduced and Unison are unaware that there are any future proposals planned for such initiatives.

What is certain at this point in time is that a freeze has been placed on public sector pay and that local authorities face cuts in financial grants and payments from central government, as well as significant changes to the Local Government pension scheme. Public sector employees are already effectively providing savings for their employers by not receiving even cost of living rises in the next few years.

Melton Borough Council employees have conscientiously taken on extra responsibilities, with in some cases excessive workloads, assisting the council through these difficult times by continuing to provide an efficient cost effective service, which serves the residents of the Borough.

On behalf of our members, Unison would like the following proposal to be considered, that will hopefully aim to seek a balance between financial constraints for Melton Borough Council and its employees, whilst still ensuring that green travel remains a high priority for the council and the workforce.

PROPOSAL:

That the current staff car parking charges, at the discounted rates remain unchanged, and that these charges are frozen for the next two years, to be reviewed in Sept 2016.