

AD HOC RURAL ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

17th MARCH 2016

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

STRATEGIC CAR PARK CHARGES AND DESIGNATION PROPOSALS

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. For members to consider the comments received in response to the consultation carried out regarding the proposed car parking tariff and other changes in Melton Borough Council's off street car parks. For Members after consideration of the comments received to approve the proposed changes outlined in Appendix B.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that:-

- (a) **Members note and consider the comments received in response to the consultation carried out to the proposed car park changes, as summarised in section 3.4-3.5 and attached as Appendix C.**
- (b) **The proposed car park tariff changes for 2016/17 for various off street car parks in Melton Mowbray as set out in Appendix B or a member preferred alternative, be approved.**

3.0 KEY ISSUES

Background

- 3.1 Members of this Committee at their meeting of 1 December 2015 (Continued and resolved on 15 December 2015) approved a number of tariff and designation changes to in the Councils off street car parks. The full report is attached as Appendix A.
- 3.2 After much debate and consideration members made the following recommendations:-
- (a) *The proposed car park tariff changes for 2016/17 for various off street car parks in Melton Mowbray as set out in Appendix B Option1 be approved.*
- (b) *The proposed re-designation of Burton Street Car Park to a short stay car park is approved, however, only the area near the town (split by Mucky lane) and the remainder remain as long stay.*
- (c) *The current 1 hour tariff current payable at the Mill Street Car Park is removed to align itself with other long stay car park tariffs.*
- (d) *The changes and proposed tariff increases as stated in (a), (b) and (c) above are implemented in line with the powers and duties delegated to the Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods (outlined in section 6) in order to proceed with the implementation as required.*

(e) A further report is brought back to this committee following consultation through the Melton Mail, the Council's website and the formal consultation as part of recommendation D.

3.3 Consultation Responses

In total the Council received:

- 77 comments received via the Melton Mail/Website
- 2 letters from residents
- 1 letter from LCC Highways
- 1 letter from the Melton BID

Members are asked to note that each comment will receive an individual reply. (Subject to the Council having an appropriate return email/contact).

3.4 The full list of comments received from the Melton mail/Website is attached as Appendix C.

The comments in the main can be summarised as below:-

- General comments/objections to car parking charge increases
- Comments around the Tuesday charges being too high
- Free 20 mins being a good idea, could we extend to 30 mins (or more)
- Considerable comments/objections relating to the designation changes to the Burton Street Car Park. Changed to short stay from long stay for majority of the car park) - this is mainly from people working in Melton and/or businesses in Melton.
- Lack of parking for 'town' residents
- Weekly permits increases too high.
- Objections to the removal of a 1hr tariff at Mill Street
- Irresponsible parking on on-street spaces
- Support for alternative ways to pay
- Guaranteed spaces for permit holders
- Better signage for motorcycles

There are also a small number of comments relating to other aspects i.e. development of a 2 story car park, car park strategy etc.

The 2 letters received from residents relate to:-

- Can we offer 30 mins free
- Tuesday prices too high
- Permit users being able to park anywhere on Burton Street car park

The Letter from the BID refers to making better use of car parks, concerns around the impact on businesses who use Burton Street car park as a long stay car park, support for the 20 mins free and consideration for business car parking needs.

The LCC Highways comments are focused on their concern for the 20 mins free. LCC highways are concerned that little will be achieved by a 20 min free period, a loss of paid car parking spaces and extra costs associated with enforcement and additional costs to operate and could potentially generate additional trips adding to congestion.

3.5 Proposals

Members are asked to note the comments contained in section 3.4 of Appendix A (report to REEA 1 December 2015) which highlighted the rationale for the proposals and how they align to the approved Council's Car and Coach Parking Strategy.

Officers have considered all of the comments and based on an understanding that the Council has two roles: one as a car park operator and one as a strategic policy maker ask members to approve the charges and changes detailed in Appendix B or a member preferred option which may require some assessment prior to final approval and implementation.

The main change is in regards to the free 20 mins period, officers feel that operating this initiative to all car parks will be difficult to enforce, will incur additional costs, take up paid spaces, which will be more needed and have an unknown impact on the town.

However, members are asked to approve a 'pilot' scheme whereby 10 'marked out' spaces are created at St Mary's Car Park on a free 20 min basis. This initiative is then monitored for a 6 month period to understand impact and usage. St Mary's car park has been suggested as officers feel this car park is the more likely of the town centre parks to attract usage of a free 20 min period , due to its location.

4.0 POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are clear links to some of the priorities in the Corporate Plan specifically:

- Promoting a vibrant and sustainable economy, focused on growth and prosperity
- Developing a thriving Melton Mowbray town centre that is the heart of the Borough.

5.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This should be seen by members as a package of measures aiming to offset some of these increases with items such as free for 20 mins etc. and the tariff proposed balances the needs of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) with the desire to increase footfall at quieter periods, regulate traffic flow and meet the need of local businesses in the town centre. It meets the council's approved charging policy taking into account coinage issues.

5.2 The report presented to members at their meeting of 1 December 2015 outlined the potential financial impact of the proposal; these revised proposal could result in additional income, as a result of only a pilot study of the 20minutes free period being implemented. ,to the overall revenue position to what was presented previously.

5.3 Members will be aware that whilst the 2016/17 budget has been successfully balanced, the finance settlement sets out significant reductions in Revenue Support Grant which is then phased out completely. As such the MTFS is indicating a shortfall in its general fund revenue budget of up to £900k to 2019/20. Investment is also needed to address some of the issues identified in the strategy such as RinGo (pay by mobile phone) and signage until such time as this may need to be reviewed in the future. The capital programme contains a number of required improvements works in 2017/18 and later years that will require funding and with the shortage of alternative capital resources this will provide much welcome funding. After expenditure on car parking any surplus on the car parking account can be utilised to fund expenditure on other transport related matters, environmental improvement including maintenance of amenity land and recreational facilities thereby reducing the burden on the general taxpayer. As such car parking income provides a important source of funding for the provision of such services.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The appropriate consultation, as per the Car Park Order changes legislation, has been undertaken; subject to member's decisions, the proposals can be introduced to commence on 1 April 2016.

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

7.1 There is no direct connection to community safety arising from this scheme.

8.0 EQUALITIES

8.1 A full Equalities Impact Analysis was completed as part of Car and Coach Parking Strategy (2015), there are not considered to be any direct equality issues arising from this report, since there are a range of charging options which will remain available to cater for the widest needs of local car park users.

9.0 RISKS

9.1 Probability

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Very High A				
High B				
Significant C		3		
Low D		4		
Very Low E			1,2	
Almost Impossible F				
	IV Neg- ligible	III Marg- inal	II Critical	I Catast- rophic

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Impact

Risk No.	Description
1	The proposals do not positively impact on behaviour of usage
2	Proposed tariff structure doesn't reflect users needs and results in complaints to the Council and reduced usage
3	Target date for Implementation Of 1 st April is not achieved
4	Assumptions regarding the level of income are incorrect resulting in a budget shortfall

10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1 Car Park charges and designation can impact climate control as they influence traffic flow and the use of cars. The proposals are designed to positively impact this by ensuring car park usage is appropriate and that their respective designation minimises traffic in the town.

11.0 CONSULTATION

11.1 The proposals approved by members on 15 December 2015, were highlighted in the Melton Mail (sent to every household in the borough), was made available on the Councils website and sent specifically to a number of targeted partners and stakeholders.

The results of this consultation are contained in sections 3.4 and 3.5 of this report.

12.0 WARDS AFFECTED

12.1 All wards with a business will potentially be affected.

Contact Officer: Harrinder Rai - Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods

Date: 8 March 2016

Appendices:
 A- REEA report of 1 December 2015.
 B- Proposed charges and changes
 C- Consultation responses

Background Papers: Melton Car & Coach parking Strategy October 2015

Reference: X drive/cttee/REEA/2015-16/ad hoc/170316/HR- Car Parking