

Scrutiny Committee – 2 September 2019 Minute 53 (a)

To consider:

a) Car Parking Working Group report*

- The decision was illogical
- The decision diminishes legitimate income
- The decision went against the balanced recommendation of the Car Parking Working Group

The Chairman explained that he had called in the decision as he felt that having different charges for night time parking in different car parks across the District was illogical and that the findings and recommendations of the Working Group were balanced.

The Committee discussed the Cabinet decision to abolish night time car parking charges and the Chairman of the Car Parking Working Group explained that over the course of the Group meetings night time car parking charges had been discussed. He explained that the working group had a long discussion about the charges and had decided to retain the £1 charge but to introduce a lower priced permit which would be able to be paid in monthly instalments and would cost the user less than 30p per day.

The Cabinet Member for the Working Environment and Support Services explained that she was part of the original Car Parking Working Group and she felt that the decision to remove night time charges was not illogical. She explained that the charges in the Multi Storey Car Park had always been different than the Council's other car parks. She explained that in her opinion the policy to charge people to park overnight had increased the amount of car parking on local streets. She explained that no other local authority in the South West charged people to park overnight and that the decision would not have a detrimental effect on the Council's income. She further explained that the Cabinet had understood and considered the Working Group recommendation but they didn't accept them in their entirety.

The Chairman of the Working Party explained to members that those neighbouring authorities that didn't charge for overnight parking had a residents' parking scheme which raised income for overnight parking but in a different way. He explained that this had been looked at by the working group, but it was felt that the Council should assist residents to park securely at night but with a lower fee.

The Cabinet Member for the Working Environment and Support Services informed members that people were driving around and around in Cullompton looking for a free car parking space. She addressed the points about residents' parking permits and suggested that this was something that could be looked at.

The Chairman of the Economy PDG addressed the committee and explained that they had accepted the findings of the Working Group. He acknowledged the current poor uptake of night time parking permits but stated that as part of the discussion into the new charges, it was agreed that there needed to be a public engagement campaign.

There were further discussions about the night time parking charges and members considered:

- Current poor sales of night time permits
- People wanting to park outside their homes
- The financial aspect of removing night time charges

The Committee agreed that the Cabinet should reconsider their decision.

It was therefore:

RESOLVED that the Cabinet be requested to reconsider the decision to abolish night time car parking charges.

(Proposed by the Chairman)