

**4 AUGUST 2015**

## **Update from Car Parking Working Group**

**Portfolio Holder** Cllr Neal Davey  
**Responsible Officer** Head of Finance

**Reason for Report:** To update the PDG with regard to the proposals being considered by the Car Parking working group.

**RECOMMENDATION:** To agree the proposals from the working group be included in the draft budget considerations to be discussed at the November meeting of the Managing the Environment PDG with all the other service proposals in order to set a balanced Council budget for 2016/17.

**Relationship to Corporate Plan:** To deliver our Corporate Plan's priorities within existing financial resources.

**Financial Implications:** The proposals that have been recommended by the car parking working group could potentially increase revenue from our Pay & Display car parks by circa £98k over the next 4 financial years.

**Legal Implications:** It is a statutory requirement for the Local Authority to set a balanced budget.

**Risk Assessment:** After any fees/charges are introduced officers will monitor future usage levels and income being received and report back to Members on a regular basis.

### **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 At a meeting of the Managing the Environment PDG on the 13 January 2015 it was recommended to set up a small officer/Member working group to look at all areas of future car parking strategy. This would consider: fees/charges, review of current usage levels/patterns, cost of running the service, existing dispensations/concessions, etc.

### **2.0 Update from these meetings**

2.1 The initial scope for the working group was identified at the first meeting and considered: number/location of car parks and the amount of spaces in them, condition survey and maintenance plan, income generated per car park, budget position, overnight parking, current charges, local benchmarking of charges, vacancy levels per car park, audit report and officer issues.

2.2 So far there have been 4 meetings where both officers and Members have all engaged in lively debate about a significant number of service related issues.

### 3.0 Proposals/recommendations

3.1 The working group has currently reached an overall majority decision on the following proposals/recommendations:

- That all Pay & Display car parking is increased by 10p per tariff with effect from 1/4/16 and another 10p with effect from 1/4/18. This would result in a total increase of 20p over the next 4 financial years. It is estimated based on current usage levels that this should generate additional income of circa £48k in 2016/17 and 2018/19.
- All District permits will be increased by 3% in 2016/17 and 3% in 2018/19 – so a cumulative increase of 6.0% - which actually means an average rate of increase of 1.5% per annum over the next 4 financial years. This would generate additional income of £1k every other year.
- A pan-District permit be introduced at a flat fee of £450 – for use only in the long stay car parks.

The full impact of these proposed charges, along with the associated increase in income is shown on Appendix 1.

Note 1 – all car park charges have not been increased for the past 2 financial years.

Note 2 - With regard to all District permits it was agreed that we need to do more to advertise/promote the up-take of these items.

Note 3 – both of the above decisions effectively agree the Council's pricing strategy for the next 4 years.

3.2 In addition to the above proposals the working group also identified a number of existing dispensations that it felt was appropriate to receive formal approval from the PDG. These are detailed below:

- Castle Primary School next to Will St – drop off at 8.50 – 9.10am and pick up 3.25 – 3.45pm
- Dance class Mkt St - Saturdays
- 4 free Fridays in run up to Xmas - Saturdays
- Monthly food markets (\*)
- Some town/parish councils (\*)
- Officers/members in various cparks
- Road closures (\*)
- Market traders – currently provided with one space included in the trader's stall/pitch hire of £14 per day.

- Permit discounts for bulk buying – for purchases of 10 or more permits?  
(\* )

(\* ) Note – it is proposed that the following items above are delegated to the HoF and Cab Member for Environment to agree appropriate discount rates or terms.

#### **4.0 Other work still ongoing**

- 4.1 As part of the review of the working group we also considered the Council's provision of amenity car parks. Currently the Council has 9 General Fund amenity car parks in various locations within the District boundaries. These car parks are provided at no cost to users but obviously have an ongoing maintenance, utility and enforcement cost. It should be noted that some are very well used, some less so and the total maintenance cost estimated for the next 5 years is circa £80k.
- 4.2 The working group has agreed that the Head of Finance arranges discussions with the relevant Town/Parish Clerks and/or Chairmen to discuss the future provision of amenity car parks to consider some of the following possibilities; introduction of P&D, permits, asset sale or transfer – after more extensive work on establishing usage levels, patterns, categories of users – i.e. residents or commuters, etc.
- 4.3 It is anticipated that the Head of Finance can give the PDG a verbal update at the meeting on how these discussions are progressing.

#### **5.0 Conclusion**

- 5.1 Any change in pricing strategy will always be subject to user demand, market conditions, alternative provision, the economic position, what is commercial on offer in close proximity to a car park, etc. Therefore, after any price change officers will monitor income and usage levels and report back to the PDG to keep all Members informed of any material changes against what has initially been predicted.

**Contact for more information:** Andrew Jarrett – Head of Finance  
**Background Papers:** Minutes of Working Group

**File Reference:**

**Circulation of the Report:** Management Team, Members & Relevant Service Managers