
Report for: Economy and Assets PDG

Date of Meeting: 19 June 2025

Subject: Car Parking

Cabinet Member: Councillor John Downes, Cabinet Member for Finance

Responsible Officer: Matthew Page, Head of People, Performance and Waste.

Luke Howard, Environment and Enforcement Manager

Exempt:

Wards Affected: All

Enclosures: Appendix 1- Future Pay and Display tariff bands by car park

Appendix 2- Future Permit Proposals

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

This report presents the views of the car park consultative group and requests that the PDG considers these alongside any recommendations it may choose to make to Cabinet about the structure of fees from 2026/27 onwards.

It also takes the opportunity to make an onward recommendation to Cabinet on the advance notification of Christmas Car Parking, as recommended by the consultative group.

Recommendation(s):

- 1. That the PDG notes the views from the car park consultative group, and considers what any recommendations should be made to Cabinet as part of the budget-setting process for 2026/27.**
- 2. To recommend to Cabinet that it agrees five dates for free parking in the lead up to Christmas 2025**

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The parking service has been consulting with local community groups since March 2023 to help shape Council decisions regarding parking in the district. This group was formed to help facilitate direct feedback and consultation with local businesses and representatives.
- 1.2 The consultative group meet regularly with an aim of helping to inform decision-making that directly impacts individual communities. It is recognised that parking can be an emotive topic for communities and it is intended that this group helps enable a better understanding of community, retailer, and business ambition, in order to positively inform council decision-making.
- 1.3 The group has historically influenced decisions such as the introduction of a new 3 hour parking tariff at Market Place, Tiverton, as well as free Christmas Saturday parking dates to support local businesses and our town centres.
- 1.4 This report follows extensive discussions with the consultative group. Further financial analysis will be carried out on any proposals that the PDG believes should be recommended to Cabinet for consideration as part of the budget-setting process for 2026/27.

2.0 Pay and Display

- 2.1 The S151 officer has delegated authority to raise tariffs in line with inflation. However, pay and display tariffs have not been increased since June 2023. This is mainly due to the inflation rate not making it practical to propose any reasonable increase (due to the need to vary prices by practical denominations rather than odd pence). Therefore, any changes for 2026 onwards could usefully incorporate the 2-3 years' inflation at that point.
- 2.2 The increased operational costs of service provision will also need to be taken into account during budget-setting for the 2026/27 budget. These include higher transport and servicing costs as a result of moving to more modern, low or zero emission vehicles alongside the additional costs arising from government decisions on employee costs such as National Insurance. The parking service has worked with the consultative group on varying options to support this increase, ultimately concluding an inflationary rise to be the most fair and practical.
- 2.3 The consultative group concluded that a proposal for a 5% increase on all pay and display tariff bands to come in on or before the start of the 2026/27 financial year would best meet the objectives of balancing cost mitigation with fairness of increase, rather than targeting one specific set of charges for above-inflation increases. Should the PDG support this view, it is likely that

such a decision would fall within the delegated remit of the Section 151 Officer as per current policy.

- 2.4 To support the 5% increase of pay and display tariffs bands, a range of permit options were also proposed by the consultative group as a measure to support long term parking sustainability and affordability for the public.

- 2.5 Appendix 1 provides comparative detail for current tariff costs and the new proposals.

3.0 Permits

- 3.1 The service has received a variety of feedback regarding the reintroduction of day permits. It is recognised that for many users the day/night permit is not something they require, this mainly being due to an overriding need for daytime parking to accommodate work or business reasons with little requirement for the additional overnight element.

- 3.2 With this in mind, fresh consideration is being given to reintroduce the day permit as a permanent permit option. This permit would allow users to specify which long stay car park they wish to use and the permit would be valid between 6am and 6pm Monday to Friday.

- 3.3 Following discussions with the parking consultative group, there was a suggestion of an additional permit to be made available at the multi storey car park in Tiverton, specifically for businesses within the town. This permit would be offered at a discounted rate and would apply to businesses and their staff working within Tiverton. With the MSCP located centrally in the town, such a permit would appeal to a significant number of businesses and their employees.

- 3.4 The PDG should consider the appropriateness of this suggestion, since any introduction of a new permit would fall outside the delegated remit of the S151 officer and would, therefore, require a Cabinet decision. The proposed 'MSCP business permit' would be applicable for use in the MSCP strictly between 6am and 6pm Monday to Friday on levels 4 to 11.

- 3.5 Finally, in order to maximise take up of the allocated (numbered) spaces in the MSCP on level 1, the PDG should consider where a recommendation to Cabinet should be made to reduce the cost of these permits by up to 20%.

4.0 Christmas Parking

- 4.1 The parking consultative group has confirmed their request for free parking on Saturdays in the lead up to Christmas 2025. These free parking days are a huge support to local businesses during the festive period, supporting the local economy.

- 4.2 The requested dates for free parking are:
- 22nd and 29th November 2025

- 6th, 13th and 20th December 2025

4.3 Free parking on these dates will apply to the following car parks:

- MSCP, Tiverton
- Station Road, Cullompton
- High Street (St Saviours Way), Crediton

4.4 The PDG may wish to suggest that Cabinet seeks clarification from the relevant town councils on the date of their respective Christmas lights switch on, since in previous years the offer of free car parking has sought to provide coverage on the 4 Saturdays on the approach to Christmas, plus the date of the respective town's light switch on event, since this tends to be an afternoon/evening of activity and celebration that encourages community cohesion and participation.

Financial Implications

The report advises the PDG of the views emerging from the car parking consultative group. Any changes to policy beyond inflationary increases would need to be recommended to Cabinet to consider as part of the budget for 2026/27. A detailed analysis of financial implications would be made at that time.

Legal Implications

The Authority is required to comply with regulations set out in Section 35C Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. These regulations include guidance from the secretary of state set out in The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 (Regulation 25).

Risk Assessment

N/A

Impact on Climate Change

Proposals within this report are not expected to have any impact on climate either positively or negatively

Equalities Impact Assessment

No equality issues identified within the report

Relationship to Corporate Plan

This report aligns with the corporate plan to deliver sustainable parking options within communities. Therefore, supporting economy and growth within the district.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett
Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151
Date: 11 June 2025

Statutory Officer: Maria De Leburne
Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 11 June 2025

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford
Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director
Date: 11 June 2025

Performance and risk: Steve Carr
Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager
Date: 05 June 2025

Cabinet member notified: Yes

Report: Exclusion of the press and public from this item of business on the published agenda on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information. No

Appendix: Exclusion of the press and public from this item of business on the published agenda on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information. No

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Luke Howard - Environment and Enforcement Manager
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Background papers: N/A