

MINUTE EXTRACT

CABINET

19 JUNE 2017

10 CAR PARKING CHARGES TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER - CONSIDERATION OF FURTHER REPRESENTATIONS



Councillor Stuart Whittingham, Cabinet Member – Highways and Transport, said:

“These proposals have been put forward as part of the plan to help us achieve £45 million in savings without cutting back on the services which people most rely on.

A key area of concern has been the possible impact on the local residents and businesses that rely on the use of our parks on a daily basis and we are looking to introduce a household membership scheme that will equate to a cost of £1 a week in response to this.

It is important that we properly consider these further representations received and I would like to thank everyone for their comments, however I am satisfied that all important points have been taken into account and the Council should now press ahead with implementing these proposals as quickly as possible.”

Councillor Stuart Whittingham introduced a report which considered representations submitted against the modified Traffic Regulation Order consulted upon in respect of the following proposed car parking charges budget savings options:

- Increase car parking tariffs at all Council operated car parks by 20p; and
- Introduce car parking charges in country parks with charges of 50p for 1 hour, £1 for 2 hours and £2 all day in Arrove Country Park, Royden Country Park, Eastham Country Park and Thurstaston Country Park.

The report recommended approval of a revised set of proposals taking into account the representations received to the modified published proposals.

The Cabinet noted that the Wirral Plan 2020 pledge relevant to this report, and to the parking service area, was Pledge Thirteen: Transport and Technology Infrastructure fit for the future, and the proposal supported the Transport Strategy priority to keep traffic moving safely and efficiently.

Councillor Whittingham referred to the Government’s austerity measures which had meant tough decisions like these ones having to be taken. He informed that Council

Services, as well as other Public Services e.g. Police and Fire, NHS, were being cut to the bone.

Councillor Whittingham drew attention to the fact that even though the proposals had been reduced from those originally consulted on back in January 2017, there was still an important requirement of the statutory process to give notice to inform persons affected of the modifications and to give due consideration to any further representations received.

Notices had been erected at the sites and a public notice had formally advertised this in the local press on 8 March 2017. During this formal notice period the following further representations have been received:

- 141 individual representations (via letter or email) to all of the modified car parking charges budget proposals; and
- 16 of the individual representations included specific traffic management concerns. The general concern was of the traffic impact in other areas, displaced parking in to adjacent roads, traffic congestion, blocked access, dangerous parking, road safety concerns, conflict and inconvenience with residents.

On detailed assessment, officers were satisfied that there were no fundamentally different or new points being raised that had not already been considered hence it was recommended that authority be given to implement these proposals without further delay. All representations had been made available to Members of the Cabinet in advance of the meeting.

This matter affected all wards in the borough and was a Key Decision included on the Council's Forward Plan.

Councillor Phil Davies informed that by its actions, Central Government had slashed the Council's budget. If its austerity policies were reversed the Cabinet would reverse its decisions on car parking charges. Until then, Members had difficult decisions to make. The Government could listen or plough on with its disruptive policies. The Cabinet had listened to the representations made by local businesses, local Groups etc. The funding that would be generated from car parking charges would be reinvested. The challenge was what are the alternative savings, if not these ones? Sadly, the Cabinet must continue with this car parking charges policy but it had taken on board the further representations it had received.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- (1) notes the report and the objections received to the modified charges and published Traffic Regulation Order consultation;**
- (2) approves the increase in car parking tariffs at all Council operated car parks, where charges already apply, by 20p;**

- (3) approves the introduction of car parking charges in country parks with charges of 50p for 1 hour, £1 for 2 hours and £2 all day in Arrowe Country Park, Royden Country Park, Eastham Country Park and Thurstaston Country Park;**
- (4) approves the introduction of a household membership scheme for the use of country parks in (3) at a cost of £50 per annum; and**
- (5) approves and confirms the draft Traffic Regulation Order appended to the report giving effect to (1) to (4) above.**