

Individual Decisions

The attached reports will be taken as
Individual Portfolio Member Decisions on:

19 March 2007

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| ID1407 | Central Car Park, Newbury | Cllr Keith Chopping | 1 |

Individual Decision

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|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|----------------------|
| Title of Report: | Central Car Park, Newbury | | |
| Report to be considered by: | Councillor Keith Chopping | on: | 19 March 2007 |
| Forward Plan Ref: | ID1407 | | |

Purpose of Report:

To inform the Executive Member for Planning and Highways of a proposal to introduce a pay on foot parking system in both sections of the Central Car Park and to seek authority to advertise and implement a revised tariff structure to optimise the benefits of the new system.

Recommended Action:

That the Executive Member for Planning and Highways resolves to approve the recommendations as set out in Section 4 of this report.

Reason for decision to be taken:

To improve the service offered in the Newbury Town Centre car parks during the impending period of development.

List of other options considered:

- (a) To implement the system in another Newbury car park.
- (b) To leave the car park using pay and display parking.

Key background documentation:

Letter and e-mails with Forest Heath District Council.

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| Portfolio Member: | Councillor Keith Chopping |
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Contact Officer Details

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|------------------------|--------------------------|
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Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 To recommend that both sections of the Central car park in Wharf Road, Newbury be converted from pay and display parking to pay on foot parking.
- 1.2 To recommend that the tariff structure of the Central car park is amended as set out in Appendix B (ii) to offer greater flexibility to customers.

2. Factors for Consideration

- 2.1 In May 2005 the Kennet Centre multi-storey car park converted from pay and display parking to pay on foot parking. The new system has proven very popular with motorists as it offers parking without the risk of a parking fine and there has been a substantial increase in both ticket sales and parking income compared to the previous pay and display parking.
- 2.2 In July 2006 the Northbrook multi-storey car park was also converted to pay on foot parking. It is believed that the introduction of pay on foot parking will lead to a similar increase in parking ticket sales and parking income in this car park.
- 2.3 On 1 November 2006, the Executive Member for Highways and Transport agreed an individual decision report to install pay on foot parking in the Bear Lane car park in Wharf Road, Newbury. This scheme is in the course of implementation.
- 2.4 Both the multi-storey car parks have extremely modern parking facilities offering fine-free parking and enhanced safety features that have gained both car parks the Secured Parking status. The multi-storey car parks will play a vital role in the Council's interim car parking strategy designed to protect the Town Centre trading core until the Park Way development is completed, probably in December 2009.
- 2.5 In November 2006, the Council was informed by Forest Heath District Council in Newmarket, Suffolk that it was removing from its' only multi-storey car park a nearly-new pay on foot parking system purchased from WPS (UK) Ltd and installed in July 2006: this company supplies the Council's pay on foot equipment. The system to be removed by Forest Heath District Council comprised two entry barriers; two exit barriers; two pay stations; a shelter; and a central management system. The Council made an offer to buy the system and that offer was accepted.
- 2.6 It is considered that this equipment could be used to convert both sections of the Central car park from pay and display parking to pay on foot parking by using one entry barrier; one exit barrier; and one pay station in each of the two sections of the Central car park. Although they are designed to operate in all weather conditions, the pay stations in both sections of the Central car park and the customers who use them will be partially protected from the elements by placing it inside a Perspex shelter, akin to a bus shelter. The conversion of the Central car park to pay on foot parking will be a far more modest system without the use of the Licence Plate Recognition System and Transponder system currently available in the two multi-storey car parks.

(a) Location of the new Pay on Foot Parking System

- 2.7 Of the Newbury Town Centre pay and display surface car parks that can be considered for pay on foot parking the Park Way, Jack Street and Northbrook Place car parks will be permanently closed to facilitate the new Park Way development. The Market Street and Cheap Street car parks are also planned for re-development, while those car parks to the West of the Town Centre at Northcroft Lane, Northcroft Lane West and West Street are either too far away from the shops to be attractive or not large enough to justify the investment. The Pelican Lane car park is slightly too remote from the main shopping area. Consequently, attention focuses on the Wharf Road car parks and of these the Wharf car park with its capacity of 42 vehicles is popular, but too small. This leaves the Central car park for consideration to convert to pay on foot parking.
- 2.8 The Central car park is split into two distinct sections by the coach park, and has a total capacity of 162 spaces: the Library section has 92 spaces and the "Oddbins" section has 70 spaces. An analysis of ticket sales and estimated occupancy rates for both car parks over the last three financial years is shown in Appendix A.
- 2.9 The two sections of this car park are favoured for the next introduction of pay on foot parking in a surface car park in Newbury. There may be a need to revise slightly the parking layout of the car park to facilitate the entry barriers and the exit barriers.

(b) Review of the Existing Tariff Structure for Central Car Park

- 2.10 The same tariff structure operates in both sections of the Central car park. It is proposed that the existing tariff structure should be reviewed to optimise flexibility in favour of the customer. However, the existing minimum and maximum parking charges and the hourly rate for parking will not be increased. The existing tariffs at the Central car park were implemented in April 2006 following a review of all Newbury car parking charges. The existing tariffs are shown in Appendix B (i) of this report.
- 2.11 While the Central car park offers customers proximity to the Town Centre it is not a short-stay shopper car park. For this reason the tariffs should allow for both short stay and longer stay parking. This will encourage a good turnover of parking spaces in the car park. The proposed tariffs for the Central car park after it converts to pay on foot parking are set out in Appendix B (ii).
- 2.12 The proposed tariffs set out in Appendix B (ii) still allow a minimum parking period of a half-hour and protects the core 3 hour parking vends. Parking time beyond three hours is sold in half-hour segments until the five hour threshold is reached. Parking beyond the five hours is no higher than the current maximum charge. It is considered that these tariffs will enable the Central car park to meet the needs of all customers and fulfil its parking role in the Town Centre. The use of half-hour parking time segments offers the customer a feeling of value for money and has proven popular in the multi-storey car parks.
- 2.13 The proposed charges are entirely consistent with those in the two pay on foot multi-storey car parks for customers requiring parking up to 5 hours. Customers will not incur a parking fine which currently costs £60, but reducing to £30 if paid within 14 days.

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 Commencing in the early part of 2007 a series of car park closures in the Newbury Town Centre area will commence that may ultimately lead to the loss of some 622 car parking spaces. This

period of Town Centre development is likely to prove to be testing for the traders and the Council has determined to do all that it can to promote and assist the Town Centre trading core during the period of development. The introduction of a pay on foot parking system at the Central car park will mean that of the Newbury Town Centre's remaining available parking stock some 2/3rds will be offered through pay on foot parking, which offers parking without the risk of a parking fine. It is considered that the provision of such parking facilities will do much to protect the Town Centre trading core during the period of Town Centre development and proves that the Council is making optimum use of the available Town Centre parking stock.

- 3.2 The purchase of the pay on foot equipment from Forest Heath District Council gives an opportunity to convert another of the existing pay and display surface car parks to pay on foot parking. The Central car park in Wharf Road has been identified as the most suitable location. It is considered that another pay on foot car park will promote and protect Town Centre trade during the impending period of development.
- 3.3 To encourage shoppers to make optimum use of the Central car park following the change to pay on foot parking it is proposed to adjust the tariff structure within the car park to offer customers more flexibility in the purchase of parking time. However, the existing minimum and maximum parking tariffs will not be altered, nor will the hourly rate for parking.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 That the revised tariff structure for the Central car park as shown in Appendix B (ii) of this report be advertised and implemented when the car park converts to pay on foot parking.
- 4.3. That the Parking Order for Central car park be amended as necessary.

Appendices

Appendix A: Ticket Sales and Income Statistics for the Central car park.

Appendix B (i): Existing Car Parking Charges at Central car park.

Appendix B (ii): Proposed Car Parking Charges at Central Car Park Using Pay on Foot Parking.

Appendix C: Summary of the Ward Member replies to the consultation.

Implications

Policy:

- (a) The proposal to introduce a pay on foot system in Central car park is wholly consistent with the Council's interim parking strategy to protect Newbury's Town Centre traders in the period of redevelopment.
- (b) The proposed revised charges for this car park are consistent with existing charges in Newbury.

- Financial:** The cost of the pay on foot system using reconditioned, but fully guaranteed equipment will be some £25,000 and will be met from approved budgets. Additional costs will be involved in preparing and installing the equipment. This totals some £20,000 and will be met from approved budgets.
- The costs of revised signs and amending the parking layout of the car park will some £2,000 and will be met from approved budgets.
- The cost of advertising the Parking order is estimated to be some £1,000 and will be met from approved budgets.
- Personnel:** None arising from this report.
- Legal:** The amendments to the Parking Order and the sealing of the amended Parking Order will be undertaken by Legal Services.
- The completion of the Maintenance Contract for the pay on foot system will be undertaken by Legal Services.
- Environmental:** The proposals within this report aim to protect and promote Town Centre trade in Newbury during the impending period of development by introducing a parking system without the risks of a parking fine.
- Equalities:** Blue Badge holders may continue to use the Central car park free of charge. Parking spaces with the disabled logo will be provided within any revised layout.
- Partnering:** None arising from this report.
- Property:** None arising from this report.
- Risk Management:** None arising from this report.
- Community Safety:** None arising from this report.

Consultation Responses

Members:

- Leader of Council:** No response received from Councillor Graham Jones by the end of consultation period (consultation e-mail sent on 13 February 2007). Any subsequent comments will be verbally reported when the decision is made.
- Overview & Scrutiny Commission Chairman:** No response received from Councillor Jeff Brooks by the end of consultation period (consultation e-mail sent on 13 February 2007). Any subsequent comments will be verbally reported when the decision is made.
- Policy Development Commission Chairman:** Not Applicable.
- Ward Members:** Ward Members for Falkland; Victoria; Northcroft; Clay Hill; and St Johns have been consulted and the responses are set out in Appendix C.
- Opposition Spokesperson:** Councillor Keith Woodhams welcomes pay on foot parking and will concur with local ward member views.
- Local Stakeholders:** Will be consulted as part of the statutory advertisement and consultation process.
- Officers Consulted:** Mark Edwards, Mark Cole.

Trade Union: Not applicable.

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| Is this item subject to call-in. | Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No: <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:</p> <p>The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Considered or reviewed by OSC or associated Task Groups within preceding 6 months <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Item is Urgent Key Decision <input type="checkbox"/></p> | | |

Appendix A: Ticket Sales and Income Statistics for the Central Car Park.

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Car Park</u> | <u>Tickets Sold</u> | <u>Income (£)</u> | <u>Estimated Occupancy*</u> |
|-------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2003/04 | Central | 112,475 | 129,461 | 59% |
| 2004/05 | Central | 119,754 | 139,288 | 57% |
| 2005/06 | Central | 117,068 | 132,647 | 61% |

N.B. Occupancy has been estimated by:

- (a) Maximum parking availability is 8 hours per day multiplied by 305 pay to park days multiplied by the number of pay to park spaces in each car park.
- (b) Occupancy is calculated by assuming each ticket sold at each tariff level parks for the maximum of the parking time purchased.

Appendix B:**(i) Existing Car Parking Charges at the Central Car Park.**

| <u>Time</u> | <u>Charge</u> |
|----------------|---------------|
| Up to ½ hour | £0.30 |
| Up to 1 hour | £0.70 |
| Up to 2 hours | £1.40 |
| Up to 3 hours | £2.10 |
| Up to 4 hours | £2.80 |
| Up to 5 hours | £3.50 |
| Up to 7 hours | £4.60 |
| Up to 10 hours | £6.00 |

(ii) Proposed Car Parking Charges at the Central Car Park Using Pay on Foot Parking.

| <u>Time</u> | <u>Charge</u> |
|----------------|---------------|
| Up to ½ hour | £0.30 |
| Up to 1 hour | £0.70 |
| Up to 2 hours | £1.40 |
| Up to 3 hours | £2.10 |
| Up to 3½ hours | £2.50 |
| Up to 4 hours | £2.80 |
| Up to 4½ hours | £3.20 |
| Up to 5 hours | £3.50 |
| Up to 5½ hours | £3.90 |
| Up to 6 hours | £4.20 |
| Up to 6½ hours | £4.60 |
| Up to 7 hours | £4.90 |
| Up to 7½ hours | £5.30 |
| Up to 8 hours | £5.60 |
| Over 8 hours | £6.00 |

Appendix C: Summary of Consultations with Ward Members

The Ward Members for Falkland; Victoria; Northcroft; Clay Hill; and St Johns wards were consulted in the preparation of this report. All ward members were consulted by e-mail sent on 13 February 2007.

The result of the consultation with Ward Members is:

Clay Hill Ward

Councillor Trevor Banning had not replied by the end of consultation period. Any subsequent comments will be verbally reported when the decision is made.

Councillor Phil Barnett had not replied by the end of consultation period. Any subsequent comments will be verbally reported when the decision is made.

Falkland Ward

Councillor Val Bull had not replied by the end of consultation period. Any subsequent comments will be verbally reported when the decision is made.

Councillor Caroline Suggett had not replied by the end of consultation period. Any subsequent comments will be verbally reported when the decision is made.

Northcroft Ward

Councillor Sue Farrant supports the proposal.

Councillor Tony Vickers had not replied by the end of consultation period. Any subsequent comments will be verbally reported when the decision is made.

St Johns Ward

Councillor Sally Hannon is happy with the report.

Councillor Emma Webster supports the report and thinks it will be of great benefit to move to pay on foot parking in both of the Central surface car parks.

Victoria Ward

Councillor Roger Hunneman had not replied by the end of consultation period. Any subsequent comments will be verbally reported when the decision is made.