

COMMENTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH)

OFF STREET CAR PARKING INVESTMENT AND AFFORDABILITY

- 5.1 The Panel received the Off Street Car Parking Investment and Affordability report at their meeting held on 5th February 2019.
- 5.2 A Member asked if consideration had been given to those residents who forget their vehicle registration or enter the incorrect vehicle registration. The opportunity to respond was not given.
- 5.3 A comment was made on the communications in respect of the proposed changes. In response, the Panel were informed that once the decision to invest has been taken, a full communications plan will be put in place.
- 5.4 In response to a concern about publishing a notice of variation without prior consultation, the Panel was informed that previous consultation has already been carried out and that showed customers support the introduction of improvements in convenience and of card payment facilities. Any additional consultation will further delay the final decision to order and implement equipment. The notice of variation is efficient and effective and is utilised by most other authorities. In addition, the Task and Finish Group expressed an appetite for wider parking bays. Officers will explore the practicalities of these through redesign and better use of space.
- 5.5 The expected additional car parking income was discussed. It was explained that the changes are designed to encourage “dwell times”, which will result in longer paid-for parking.
- 5.6 Concerns were raised over the amount of personal data being collected; however Members were informed that personal data will only be viewed by authorised personnel and will be managed and deleted in accordance with GDPR Regulations. Data for statistical analysis will be anonymised. The Parking Service is audited by the DVLA to ensure they are fully compliant in managing personal data. Any failures would result in a withdrawal of access to vehicle keeper information. It was confirmed that the Council has never failed to meet these requirements.
- 5.7 A Member commented that pushback might be expected from the public if the charging schedule is changed without the improvements being implemented and that openness on the future improvements will be required. It was clarified that the charging schedule will only be changed once the new machines are installed. A phased approach will be adopted, which is a requirement of ‘**Pay for What You Use**’.
- 5.8 A Member has questioned whether charging for car parking encourages retail in the town centres. The Panel was informed that car parks are not free as they have to be maintained and they incur business rates. If charges are lowered or withdrawn the Council would need to find additional funding streams from elsewhere in order to achieve the MTFs.
- 5.9 A member suggested that charging in non-charged car parks should be considered. It was clarified that the Task and Finish Group agreed early on that Sundays should not be charged and existing small non-town based car parks without charge should remain so. Opportunities should be explored to transfer the latter to community ownership where possible retaining their main use.