

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO APPEALS &  
COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE**

**10 SEPTEMBER 2013**

**REPORT OF CORPORATE  
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT &  
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

**PROPOSED OFF STREET CHARGING – YARM TOWN CENTRE**

**1.0 SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' views on the unresolved representations received following the statutory advertising of the proposal to introduce pay and display charges for long stay / all day, off-street car parking at the two Council owned public car parks; The Old Market and at Castle Dyke Wynd, Yarm.

There is considerable historical background surrounding the parking situation in Yarm, this is detailed in the report for Members attention.

In January 2013, Cabinet authorised the statutory process for the implementation of the agreed changes to parking arrangements in Yarm to be progressed. A review of the impacts of the scheme was agreed to be conducted 12 months following implementation.

The advertised tariff is £2.40 all day applicable Monday to Saturday between 9am and 5pm inclusive, these off street charges would also apply to registered blue badge holders. The proposed tariff would be equitable with most of Stockton town centre long stay car park charges excluding Thompson Street and Alberto Street which are £1.50 given their distance from Stockton High Street. The Council's off street car parks in Yarm are considered to be conveniently located to Yarm High Street, although in response to the assertions received consideration to amending the level of tariff has been given as part of this report for Members attention.

1553 representations were received during statutory advertising, principally relating to the proposed charges for car parking in the High Street. Therefore, this report concentrates on the representations relating to long stay parking opportunity off the High Street and the level of the proposed off street tariff.

The report presents the response of the Head of Technical Services to these objections.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:-

- (i) Members give consideration to the objections and representations received from local residents, local businesses and other interested parties, including Ward Members, Yarm Town Council and Yarm Chamber of Trade, and also to the comments of the Head of Technical Services as detailed in the report.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND (see drawing TM5 / 762 in Appendix 1)**

#### **Current off street car parking arrangements in Yarm**

- 3.1 There are two off street car parks in central Yarm; Castle Dyke Wynd (23 spaces) and The Old Market (16 spaces) under Stockton Borough Council ownership. Both car parks are currently free of time limitations or charges and are full to capacity during weekdays.
- 3.2 Castle Dyke Wynd car park is located to the east of Yarm High Street to the rear of Fairfax Court. Adjacent to the Council car park is a similar facility providing private car parking and service access to units in Fairfax Court. The private residential parking places are controlled and enforced by the private management company.
- 3.3 Vehicular access to Castle Dyke Wynd car park is via Central Street and there are good pedestrian links to the High Street. The car park does generate additional traffic along Central Street which is narrow, and drivers must negotiate potential conflicts with pedestrians at the High Street footway. However, existing traffic volumes and speeds remain low and waiting restrictions prevent on street obstruction.
- 3.4 The Old Market car park is to the west of the High Street, located at the entrance to the Old Market residential development, off Bentley Wynd, that also provides some private car parking for residents. The Old Market itself experiences high levels of on street parking which at times causes obstruction.
- 3.5 Vehicular access is from The Old Market which forms a priority junction with Bentley Wynd. There are easy pedestrian links to Bentley Wynd and West Street although the route is slightly uphill. During the opening hours of Yarm library a shorter pedestrian route to the High Street is available.
- 3.6 Car park running costs (such as business rates, water rates, insurance, winter maintenance, cleansing, repairs and maintenance) amount to a significant annual revenue commitment for the Council and are usually met from income from charges. To date the running costs of these car parks has been met from the income from Stockton town centre car parking alone.
- 3.7 There are a number of privately managed car parks in Yarm that are for use by residents only and enforced by private enforcement companies, whilst these car parks are typically under occupied Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm when residents tend to be out at work, spaces are often allocated with a property tenancy so there are legal issues in making more efficient use of those private parking areas. Sainsbury's private car park has signs erected which specify 1 hour free parking for their customers with a maximum stay of 1 hour, no return within 2 hours. Smart Parking Ltd also trading as Town & City Parking are the appointed management company and the signs on site advise they will make checks on the duration of stay and issue a £60 fine for contravention. Information regarding enforcement of the system such as numbers of tickets issued and frequency of patrols is not available from Sainsbury's.
- 3.8 Season tickets are available in the Council's long stay charging car parks in Stockton town centre. Council staff permits are charged to staff at long stay season ticket prices. If charges are implemented in Castle Dyke Wynd and The Old Market, season tickets have also been included within the advertised proposals and would be a discounted cost option for motorists.

## Previous proposals

- 3.9 At a public meeting held in Yarm on 25 January 2010, the option of providing long stay parking on Brickyard Allotment site was accepted as not feasible for any further consideration, due to strong opposition from allotment holders, and it was agreed that alternative sites in a more central location should continue to be investigated. Although sites were identified they are privately owned and discussions with appropriate land owners were required and took place. The option of compulsory purchase if necessary was agreed in January 2013 by Cabinet.
- 3.10 The meeting in 2010 also heard from Yarm residents and traders who felt some measures arising from the 2009 consultation could be brought forward quickly whilst the longer term goal of providing additional long stay off street car parking was being pursued. These measures were essentially:
- to introduce waiting restrictions to help control the worst cases of obstructive parking in the Wynds and Streets surrounding the High Street
  - to introduce some medium term car parking (for longer than the 2 hour stay permitted by the Disc Zone system) via pay and display.
- 3.11 Authorisation to advertise these proposals was given on 26 August 2010 (Decision record TS.T.44.10). At that time the advertised proposals were to introduce charges for parking Monday to Saturday between 8am and 6pm in Castle Dyke Wynd and The Old Market (both at £1.00 for the first 2 hours, then £1.00 for each subsequent hour equivalent to the current short stay off street tariff in Stockton town centre which also offers medium stay as an option). Statutory advertising ran from 6 January 2011 until 27 January 2011 during which time the Council formally received 296 individual statutory objections, in addition to 8 petitions containing a total of 1131 names. Whilst 8 petitions were received, it is worthy of note that the lead petitioner was in most instances already a statutory objector and the petition header was a repetition of their own objection letter.













## 7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost of the first public press notice associated with the off street permanent Traffic Regulation Order was £205.41. A second notice would also be required if the proposals progress to the Traffic Regulation Order being made and implemented so the total for the Statutory advertising element would be £410.82.

The estimated cost of each associated pay and display machine is £3,950 plus an additional £330 for installation, it is anticipated that 2 machines would be needed for the off street car parks (£8,560 both installed). Amendments to the signing would be required, detailed estimates have not been prepared at this stage given the ongoing Statutory process. Initial Capital expenditure to set up the off street aspect of the scheme is in the region of £16,000

The total running/ongoing costs are estimated at a sum in the region of £12,000 per year and would be met from income into the car parking account.

## 8.0 POLICY CONTENT

The proposals are in accordance with the Council's Parking Plan.

## 9.0 CONCLUSIONS

A strategy that deals with provision of car parking across the Borough that reflects the economic position of the respective centres is considered to be good practice. The Borough wide parking strategy for the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees made a series of recommendations for each of the Borough's town centres; Stockton, Thornaby, Billingham, and Yarm.

The move towards a more flexible system on Yarm High Street means that parking for longer than the current disc zone allows would be an option, albeit at a charge under pay and display rules. Therefore, it is now intended that the off street car parks should continue to provide long stay parking rather than the originally suggested medium stay provision as advertised in 2011.

A modest tariff similar to that operating in Stockton town centre has been suggested in order to cover operating costs but Members may wish to consider reducing the level of tariff in one or both car parks to address the representations received about possible displacement of parking to nearby streets.

It is recommended that the Traffic Regulation Order is made and that a review of the impacts is conducted, as approved by Cabinet, 12 months following implementation.

### **Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services**

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### Environmental Implications

The proposed charges reflect the Council's objective of encouraging sustainable travel to town centres by commuters. Charging for commuter parking may encourage greater car sharing. Street clutter from new posts and signs would be minimised as far as practicable but must still be informative for motorists and meet Regulatory requirements.

Pay and display machines would be painted black in accordance with similar machines used in other Conservation Areas. Urban Design and Historic Buildings/Conservation considerations would be taken into account prior to implementation.

### Community Safety Implications

Visitors and shoppers in Yarm will have convenient and secure off street car parking facilities.

### Background Papers

Parking Plan 2004

Report to Cabinet 16 December 2010 - Environment Select Committee Report

NEMS Market Research – Yarm Town Centre Car Parking Study September 2011

Borough Wide Car Parking Strategy - Report to Cabinet 8 December 2011 – Borough Wide Parking Review

Report to Executive Scrutiny 19 January 2012 – Borough Wide Parking Review Call-in Report.

Report to Cabinet 9 February 2012 – Borough Wide Parking Review Next Steps

NEMS Residents Survey Report – June 2012

Judicial Review decision – October 2012 Case Number CO/2469/2012

Cabinet Report 10 January 2013 – update on Borough Wide Car Parking Strategy

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD 3)

Officers Traffic Group meeting minutes 7 March 2013 (item ref 30/13)

Cabinet Member Report TS.T.44.10

Cabinet Member Report TS.T.123.12

### Education Related Item?

No.

### Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Yarm : Councillors M. Chatburn, B. Houchen and A. Sherris.

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