

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

held on Tuesday, 4th September, 2012 at Committee Suite 1 & 2, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor D Stockton (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors A Barratt, H Davenport, W S Davies, K Edwards, R Fletcher,
P Hayes, S Hogben and P Hoyland

Officers

P Burns – Parking Manager
J Morley – Scrutiny Officer

Apologies

Councillors W Livesley, D Brickhill and W Fitzgerald

33 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

34 DECLARATIONS OF PARTY WHIP

None

35 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/ OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public wishing to speak

36 CHESHIRE EAST CAR PARK MANAGEMENT REVIEW

Consideration was given to the final report of the Task and Finish Group, which conducted a review of Cheshire East Car Park Management. The aim of the review was to ensure that Cheshire East Council's car parks were being managed in a way that assisted the vitality and viability of town centres and villages.

Members raised concern that the Town and Parish Councils had not been consulted during the review and that the group had not considered all the evidence available. It was highlighted that the investigation had been curtailed in order to meet Cabinet and budget timescales. In order to rectify this issue it was agreed that whilst Members were happy with the content of the report, amendments should be made to the recommendations to Cabinet.

The Portfolio Holder informed Members that, in line with the wishes of the Make It Macclesfield Business Group, he had set up a pilot car parking scheme, which allowed 4 hours parking for the price of 2 in 5 of the Boroughs car parks. The pilot would run for 6 months and be of no cost to the Council.

With regard to p22 – Parade Car Park, Alderley Edge, it was agreed that the report should be amended to reflect the fact that the Ward Councillor had been consulted as was happy with the proposals.

The Committee thanked the Task and Finish Group for the final report and its hard work during the review.

RESOLVED

1. That the final report be submitted to Cabinet for approval, subject to the recommendations being amended to read:
 - A. That Objective 2 of the Car Parking Strategy be amended to include specific reference to car parks that have no charges. Objective 2 should read as follows - “To provide excellent parking facilities at an appropriate charge (**which may include a zero charge**) to customers and Council Tax payers”.
 - B. That the actions points relating to Objective 2 of the Car Parking Strategy be amended to allow more flexibility in the development of car park tariff structures. The second bullet point should read as follows - “The scale of charges should **ideally** conform to a consistent pattern across stay periods in all towns.”
 - C. That where possible tariff structures should provide broadly consistent charges from one stay period to the next (i.e. cost per hour is the same for 1-2 hours as 3-4 hours) up to four hours.
 - D. That whilst tariff structures should ideally conform to a consistent pattern tariffs for each individual car park should be set based on the characteristics of the car park, demand for that car park, desired service users, local needs and relationship with other car parks in the same town.
 - E. That to achieve Cheshire East Council objectives each town or village should have individual parking management action plans based on the characteristics of the town or village and produced in partnership with the Parking Manager, Ward member, Town or Parish Councils. The action plans should achieve the Council’s over arching objectives without negatively affecting the economic vitality of neighbouring towns or villages. The decision to change the charging status of any car park will only be taken if it can be supported by evidence, illustrating both the need and benefit to the area and local community. Evidence must be brought to the attention of Ward Members, Town or Parish Councillors and must be open to legitimate challenge.
 - F. The income projection from parking for 2012/13 is too high and previous budget have been over optimistic. Future budget setting processes should be based on historic data to produce a more realistic income target for Parking Services.

- G. That initiatives to increase the use of car parks through new technology and sale of parking contracts be supported by Cabinet and the Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee.
 - H. That attempts to increase revenue generation to reach the parking service's budgeted income projection for 2012/13 should not include wide scale increases in charges as this may reduce demand and result in lower income overall. That residential parking schemes should be used to restrict on-street parking to provide residents with a reasonable expectation of finding a parking space near their home but only where it is deemed absolutely necessary.
 - I. That zonal charging should be implemented in towns and villages with multiple car parks to discourage long stay commuters from parking in central car parks to free up spaces for short stay users.
2. That with regard to the Parade Car Park in Alderley Edge, the report should be amended to reflect the fact that the ward Councillor had been consulted and was happy with the proposals.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 11.25 am

Councillor Stockton