

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Car Parking Task and Finish Forum held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Border Road, Honiton, EX14 1EJ on 7 November 2019

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.10 pm and ended at 7.30 pm

1 Public speaking

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

2 Election of Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Alan Dent be appointed Chairman of the Car Parking Task and Finish Forum (TAFF).

3 Declarations of interest

Minute 6 Car Parking TAFF Terms of Reference Cllr Eleanor Rylance – Personal Interest – Broadclyst Parish Councillor

Minute 6 Car Parking TAFF Terms of Reference Cllr Jack Rowland – Personal Interest – Seaton Town Councillor

Minute 6 Car Parking TAFF Terms of Reference Cllr Joe Whibley – Personal Interest – Exmouth Town Councillor

Minute 6 Car Parking TAFF Terms of Reference Cllr Maddy Chapman – Personal Interest – Exmouth Town Councillor

Minute 6 Car Parking TAFF Terms of Reference Cllr Bruce De Saram – Personal Interest – Exmouth Town Councillor

Minute 6 Car Parking Terms of Reference Cllr Andrew Colman – Personal Interest – Exmouth Town Councillor

Minute 6 Car Parking Terms of Reference Cllr Kim Bloxham – Personal Interest – Cranbrook Town Councillor

4 Matters of urgency

There were no matters of urgency

5 Confidential/exempt items

There were no matters which the officers recommended be dealt with in Part B.

6 Car Parking TAFF Terms of Reference

Members of the Car Parking Task and Finish Forum (TAFF) discussed potential terms of reference and the purpose of the TAFF. They received a draft scoping report from Andrew Ennis, Service Lead – Environmental Health and Car Parks and agreed that this would provide the four cornerstones of the TAFFs terms of reference, along with the Climate Emergency and Equality Issues.

It was recognised that it was important to create a discipline around scoping the TAFF terms of reference, particularly as this is a wide subject area. Members agreed the importance of identifying what is in scope, what is out of scope, the evidence required, who is to be invited to attend the TAFF, the timetable and key outputs anticipated.

During discussions the following points and questions were noted and would be used to scope the terms of reference:

-) How are our car parks operating and what is their impact on the town centres.
-) There were 57 car parks in East Devon and they raised a significant amount of revenue for the Councils General Fund.
-) The town centres of East Devon relied upon the car parks to bring in shoppers.
-) Importance of not reducing the £3.4M of income from car parks as this would make a substantial hole in an already stretched budget.
-) Improve the interface between on street parking and our car parks. Could we talk to Devon County Council (DCC) about car parking charges? Andrew Ennis confirmed that discussions were held with DCC on this issue.
-) Each town in East Devon had different needs and issues and so is there a need to look at bespoke solutions for each town.
-) It is necessary to consider the provision of free car parking as towns in other districts had done this and it had created additional business for shops in the high street.
-) Parts of Exmouth were being considered for resident parking and the TAFF should take into account the implications of residents parking schemes.
-) Was renting individual car parking spaces in a car park an effective way of utilising spaces?
-) Different ways of paying for car parking should be investigated. There were 43 contactless payment machines now in East Devon car parks. The possibility of having an oyster card discount scheme for local residents should be investigated.
-) Bearing in mind the climate emergency there should be an incentive to use electric vehicles with the possibility of lower car parking charges.
-) So far, after the initial set up costs, all income from the Manor Pavilion car park had gone to the theatre.
-) There were asset transfer opportunities for town and parish councils to take control of car parks. This had already happened in Beer and Dowell Street West in Honiton. The financial implications would need to be assessed.
-) If the first two hours were free how would it work? Andrew Ennis reported that this was difficult to manage and it was considered that East Devon's car parking charges were reasonable at present.
-) Cost of car park maintenance and why should people in paying car parks subsidise those in free car parks? The maintenance budget for car parks was split down into the cost of individual spaces over a time period. The maintenance cost did not include car park inspections.
-) Coach and camper van parking in Exmouth was an issue that needs consideration by the TAFF. There were particular problems with camper vans parking on Exmouth seafront. Exmouth Town Council currently had its own TAFF considering car parking issues in the town and the results of this would be considered by the

TAFF. Andrew Ennis reported that he expected to present the review of operations shortly to the Exmouth TAFF.

-) Potential conflict existed between DCCs recent resident car parking consultation and EDDCs car parking provision in Exmouth. Andrew Ennis confirmed that he had not discussed the issue of resident car parking in Exmouth in detail with DCC.
-) Need for car parking charges to support the General Fund. Car parks income of £2.4M (Net) which was 30% of the Council's fees and charges income. Any changes in car parking charges could have a big impact on income.
-) Importance of including Equalities and Health & Well Being issues in the TAFFs terms of reference.
-) Possible changes to the way charges in car parks, such as paying for the amount of time in a car park rather than prepayment.
-) Importance of speaking to towns who were doing things differently.
-) There is a need to have regard to the financial impact of any decisions.
-) Importance of security of car parks, keeping them safe and clean.
-) Need to gather evidence and for Andrew Ennis to complete the spreadsheet he had provided for information.
-) Need to consult with town and parish councils as well as chambers of commerce.
-) Look at providing residents with a discount scheme.
-) The 2020/21 budget had assumed a no change for car park charges.
-) Contact other Councils to obtain their budget figures to show how they manage the income from car parks and how – where appropriate – that income contributes to the overall budget.

RESOLVED that the following be agreed as the Car Parking TAFF terms of reference;

1. Asset management

To consider the prudent management of the Council's assets (viewed at this stage through a district-wide lens) and to balance local sensitivities including an expectation (or desire for) free car parks alongside their potential. For example, if we sold some or all of our assets what would a private sector provider do with them?

-) Issues include the level and cost of maintenance, landscaping
-) Investment in new technology – payment options, EV charging
-) Tariffs – what is appropriate – market rates, benchmarking
-) Business Model – we pay substantial VAT and Business Rates – are there alternative models worthy of consideration? Asset transfers? Private sector operators?
-) Could our car parks generate other income – advertising revenue, event spaces in their own right – or parking to support other events?

2. Communities

To consider the value of our concessions, free parking offers and inexpensive permits for regular customers.

-) Support for local and charitable events
-) Free parking for Volunteers engaged in beach cleans and other activities

-) Should we continue to provide “Special dispensations” – e.g. RNLI, Exmouth Beach surf lifesaving, LED Exmouth Pavilion, LED staff, LED Exmouth members
-) Boat storage
-) Car boot sales
-) Implications of charges for the less well off
-) Local sensitivities – expectations of free car parks

3. Economy

-) Reasonable tariffs
-) Perception that other councils don't charge
-) Should we promote / provide park and ride
-) practical issues – our towns are all different – our local high streets need to be supported
-) Parking availability in good locations is a valuable commodity and people will pay
-) Good management of short stay turnover is important
-) Winter offer - £2 all day. A success?
-) Campervans and motorhomes – policy? Supporting tourism? Revenue generation opportunity for EDDC.
-) Boat storage

4. Statutory

-) Class of vehicle
-) Maximum stay
-) Tariff
-) Onstreet congestion
-) Onstreet parking stress
-) Road safety
-) Relationship with on-street availability, maximum stay and tariff

5. Climate Change Emergency

6. Equality and Health and Well Being issues

The date of the next meeting would be Thursday 28 November at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

K Bloxham
M Chapman
A Colman
B De Saram
A Dent (Chairman)
M Howe

V Ranger
J Rowland
E Rylance
J Whibley

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

C Gardner
P Hayward
V Johns
G Jung
D Ledger
K McLauchlan
A Moulding
M Rixson

Officers in attendance:

Simon Davey, Strategic Lead Finance
Andrew Ennis, Service Lead Environmental Health and Car Parks
John Golding, Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment
Christopher Lane

Councillor apologies:

P Millar
T Woodward

Chairman

Date: