



Agenda for Car Parking Task and Finish Forum Thursday, 19th December, 2019, 6.00 pm

Members of Car Parking Task and Finish Forum

Alan Dent (Chairman), Kim Bloxham, Andrew Colman, Maddy Chapman, Bruce De Saram, Mike Howe, Paul Millar, Val Ranger, Jack Rowland, Eleanor Rylance, Joe Whibley, Tony Woodward.

Venue: Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Border Road, Honiton, EX14 1EJ

Contact: Chris Lane, Democratic Services Officer;

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(or group number 01395 517546)

11 December 2019

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- 1 Public speaking
- 2 Minutes of previous meeting (Pages 2 - 4)
- 3 Apologies
- 4 Declarations of interest
- 5 Matters of urgency
Information on [matters of urgency](#) is available online
- 6 Confidential/exempt items
To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded.
- 7 Review of Council's Car Parking Operations - Free and Non Profit Car Parks (Pages 5 - 14)

[Decision making and equalities](#)

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 28 November 2019

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.05 pm and ended at 7.35 pm

7 Public speaking

Liz McLean, Sidmouth Resident, wished to address the Committee on the issue of the Car Parking charges in East Devon and with the permission of the Chairman, made contributions and questions during the course of the meeting.

8 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 November 2019 were agreed as a true record.

9 Declarations of interest

Minute 12 Car Parking TAFF Terms of Reference Cllr Joe Whibley – Personal Interest – Exmouth Town Councillor

Minute 12 Car Parking TAFF Terms of Reference Cllr Kim Bloxham – Personal Interest – Cranbrook Town Councillor

10 Matters of urgency

There were no matters of urgency.

11 Confidential/exempt items

There were no matters which the officers recommended be dealt with in this way.

12 Review of Council's Car Parking Operations

Members of the Car Parking Task and Finish Forum (TAFF) discussed the Review of the Council's Car Parking Operations. Andrew Ennis, Service Lead Environmental Health and Car Parks gave a detailed breakdown of the income and expenditure for each East Devon owned car park. From this members understood that there were a number of free car parks provided by the Council that were a net loss cost to run per annum.

During discussions the following points and questions were noted:

-) Are VAT numbers on car parking tickets so businesses can claim it back? Andrew Ennis, Service Lead – Environmental Health and Car Parks agreed to investigate.
-) Are there any costs we can cut or reduce? What was the policy staff recharge for?
-) If town/parish councils ran the smaller car parks that operated at a net loss, could they operate these more efficiently?

-) The free car parks were often in areas where there was no other parking and a consequence of charging for them would be more on-street parking.
-) Acknowledgement of the importance of car parking charge income for the Council's General Fund, particularly bearing in mind the reduction in Government grant and the forecast budget deficit.
-) If a town or parish council felt it was vital that a car park was free then they should be willing to take over the running costs.
-) It was reported that the £2 winter parking charge was often used by workers parking all day and filling up car parks. There was a need to increase turnover in these car parks to help the trade for town centre shops. A solution could be to make the winter £2 charge for long stay car parks only
-) Importance of looking at each car park individually and also a town by town basis.
-) The Council were trying to manage the car parks better.
-) The Council had declared a climate emergency but have no budget for it, would money from charging for the free car parks be better spent on this.

RESOLVED: 1. that Andrew Ennis, Service Lead – Environmental Health & Car Parks circulate the detailed breakdown of costs for each car park to all members of the TAFF as well as answers to questions around recharging issues.
2. that a short factual report be prepared on all car parks with residual income below £0 for the next meeting of the TAFF.
3. that the £2 winter car park offer be investigated to see whether the charge is too low and to encourage greater turnover in car parks.
4. that the TAFF investigate whether an increase in all car park charges by £0.10 would bring in extra income.

13 Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be held on Thursday 19th December 2019 at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

K Bloxham
A Dent (Chairman)
V Ranger
J Whibley

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

B Ingham
G Jung

Officers in attendance:

Andrew Ennis, Service Lead Environmental Health and Car Parks
Christopher Lane

Councillor apologies:

M Chapman
A Colman
B De Saram

P Millar
E Rylance
T Woodward

Chairman

Date:

Discussion document on the financially “negative” car parks:

1. Maer Road long stay car park, Exmouth



This is Exmouth’s largest car park with around 300 spaces including large spaces for several coaches and larger motorhomes.

Although still underused, the car park has recently been refurbished and we have already seen use increasing as Exmouth’s visitor numbers swell with good summer weather. We anticipate further increases in visitor numbers and therefore revenue as Exmouth’s visitor offer further improves with the completion of Queens Drive Regeneration phases 2 and 3.

The methodology we used to account for our non-specific costs (and agreed as reasonable at the first TAFF) will apportion relatively large sums to larger car parks such as this one so the bottom line cost of £25,244 should be (a) not as concerning as it would appear at first glance and (b) improving year on year from now on. The car park generated over £22,000 in revenue last year.

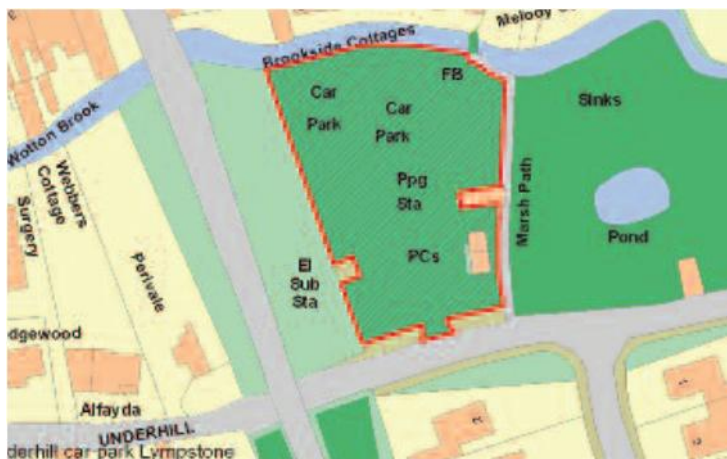
2 Cliff Top long stay car park, Beer



This is another large car park that generated a little over £15,000 last year but again, due to its size, with our “per space” accounting model it carries a large proportion of the services general costs.

The car park is an important facility for visitors wishing to access the Southwest coast path and acts as an important summer overflow car park for the village.

3 Underhill long stay car park Lymington



This is a busy car park and although pay and display transactions increase significantly during the summer, many of the spaces are occupied by permit holding residents and second-home owners/ Revenue is therefore relatively poor at just over £12,000 last year. The tariff here was increased in April 2019 and although this is currently our only public car here, we are currently exploring the possibility of offering an alternative car park for permit holders.

4 Dolphin Street long stay car park Colyton



This car park is well used and we consider it to be an important facility for the town helping to reduce on street parking stress and congestion. However it has historically been operated on a very low tariff (40p per hour) that we only increased to £1 per hour in April of this year so last year it produced less than £10,000 gross revenue but that may improve in the coming year.

5 Brook Street long stay car park, Ottery St Mary



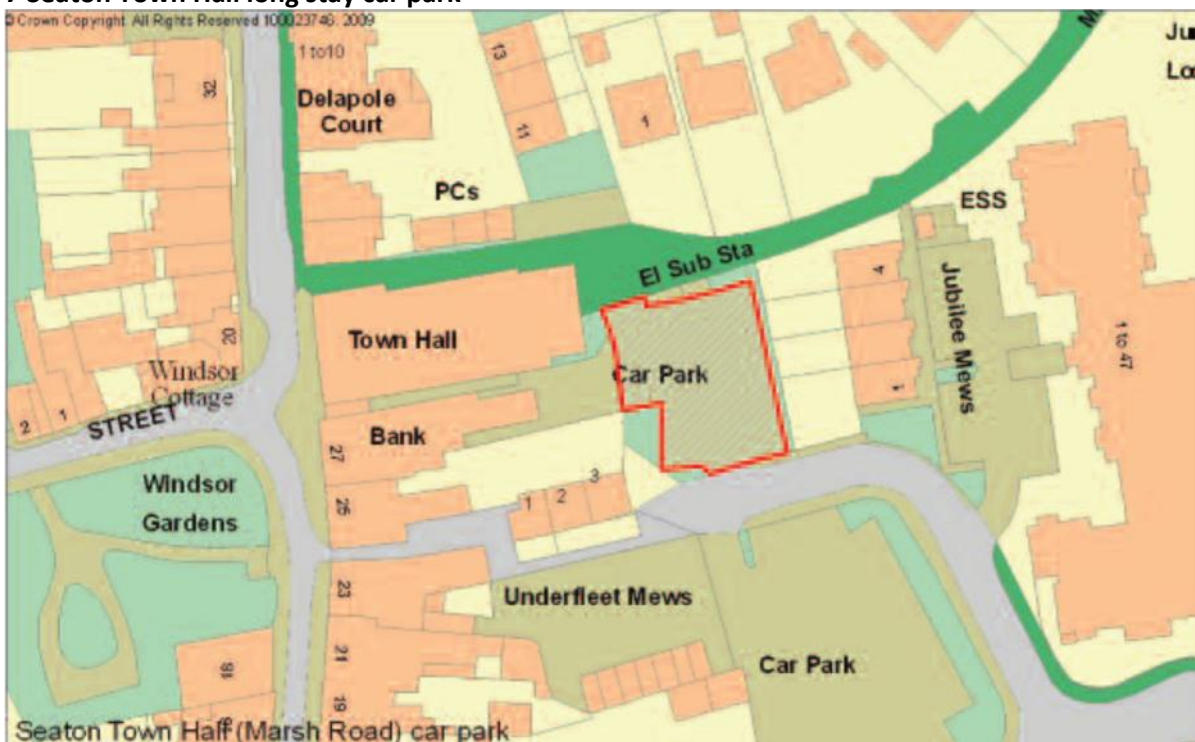
This car park is well used by permit holding customers and to a lesser extent by visitors on a pay and display basis. The car park produced just under £5,000 resulting in a small operating loss of just over £1,000 last year.

6 Estuary Lorry Park



The lorry park is currently being used as the main compound for the Exmouth Tidal Defence Works. I will be suggesting that an alternative use for this land could, subject to further consideration by Members (and subject to formal consideration by Development Management Committee in due course) be development of a properly designed motorhome and campervan facility.

7 Seaton Town Hall long stay car park



This small car park is well used, primarily by permit holders. It is conveniently situated for the town centre but its pay and display transaction revenue is very low (less than £2,500 last year). Consideration could be given to making this a short stay car park. This would prevent local workers and residents using permits to park here all day. This in turn would free up spaces for visitors and shoppers which could see a significant upturn in revenue.

8 Seaton Jurassic Coach Park



This has been underused and we have recently agreed to allow free of charge coach parking here to support Seaton’s bid to become a “coach friendly town”. The annual costs of operating this coach park are estimated to be around £2,300.

9 Upper Station car park, Budleigh Salterton



Little has changed here since our 2012 review. At that time we reported the following:

“The Upper Station Road Car Park is owned by way of a freehold interest by the Council and has been leased to the Budleigh Salterton Town Council since April

1974. The car park has 109 spaces. The current rent is £500 per annum and BSTC are responsible for all repairs and maintenance of the car park, including the boundary hedges and fences. At the moment, the Town Council are holding over on their lease but there is a provision in the lease that it may be determined at any time by either party giving to the other party not less than six months' notice in writing to that effect.

BSTC offer the car park as a free service to its residents. There is no provision in the existing lease to prevent BSTC charging car parking fees. The car park is primarily used by those who work in the town and shoppers.

The title is subject to restrictive covenants limiting use of the land to public car parking. In 2007, Officers identified that there was a potential to create a pay and display car park if the lease to BSTC was not renewed. At the time, concern was raised by both BSTC and Clinton Devon Estates (who benefit from restrictive covenants applicable to the site) as to the legality of EDDC considering the introduction of pay and display to the car park. Subsequently, the Council sought Counsel's opinion on the matter.

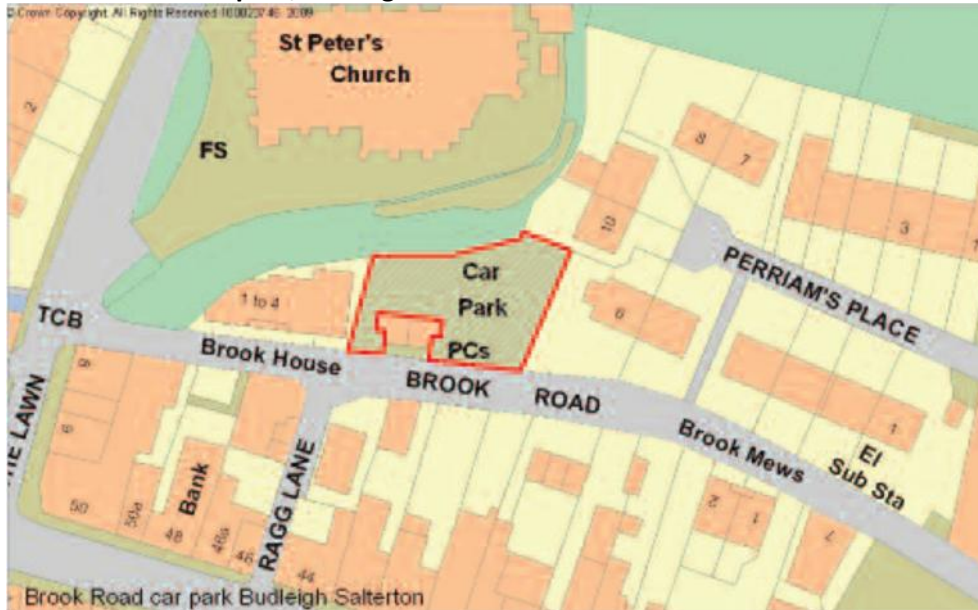
Counsel was of the opinion that EDDC could charge a reasonable sum for the use of the car park by the public and that there was no reason to suppose that standard car parking charges would not be considered reasonable.

The lease to BSTC could be terminated with six months' notice. Under the Landlord & Tenant Act 1954, the Council can refuse to renew a lease under certain circumstances. One reason for being able to refuse a new tenancy is that the Landlord wishes to occupy the premises. Compensation would be payable to BSTC equal to two times the rateable value totalling £11,400.

If the Council were to terminate the lease to use for their own purposes as a pay and display car park, the initial equipment set up costs are estimated at £4,500. The car park, based on the annual revenue returns for the Rolle Mews car park in the town, is estimated to have a revenue producing capacity of between £30,000 and £50,000 per annum.

BSTC have previously requested that the car park be transferred to them at nil consideration".

10 Brook Road car park, Budleigh Salterton



This is a shoppers' car park restricted to two hour maximum stays. There is an opportunity to use pay and display to generate revenue to offset the estimated operating costs which last year were over £5,000.

11 The Green car park, Broadclyst



Again, little has changed here since our 2012 review. At that time we reported the following:

This car park is the only car park owned by the Council in the village. The 0.32 acre site is held by way of freehold interest but is subject to a restrictive covenant, for the benefit of the National Trust, that it shall not be used other than as a public car park and that no buildings are erected on the land. The Parish Council has advised that the 41 spaces are used by visitors to the Victory Hall (owned by the Broadclyst Parish Council) together with patients using the Doctors' surgery and Cyst Caring Day Centre (volunteer staff and car drivers bring/collecting people). In addition, the car park is used by parents taking and collecting young children at the primary and pre-school. The Parish Church has no

parking on site and the car park is therefore used by the congregation. At night, the car park is used by local residents as there is no safe on-road alternative for over-night parking.

The Parish Council estimates that between 150 and 200 cars use the 41 parking spaces weekdays in term time and that between 8.45am and 9.30am it could be filled twice over. At present, in addition to the main car park, there are 7 public spaces in the small National Trust car park which is designated specifically for the village post office/shop and for users of the public toilets. The Parish Council has been working with the National Trust and Devon County Council to look at opportunities for additional car parking spaces at peak school start/finish times, but pedestrian safety issues remain unresolved and these discussions are now on hold.

Although the car park could potentially derive a small revenue income (estimated at £4,961 per annum), at an estimated running cost of £150 per space of £6,150 per annum plus the cost of installing a ticket machine at £4,500, the implementation of pay and display would not provide a net revenue income.

In addition, the Parish Council have looked at the use of the car park in some detail and it is clear that the car park being available for parents picking up and dropping off children at no charge/ without having to spend time buying tickets is of great community benefit in terms of safety for the local residents and the children attending the schools. However, while the Parish Council have put forward a strong case to have the car park remain free of charge, they are not prepared to assist in the running costs. The Parish Council considers that having taken over the maintenance of the public toilets in the village, no further financial burden should be paid for through the precept.

12 School Lane car park, Newton Poppleford



This car park is held by way of the freehold title and offers 33 spaces which are currently provided free of charge. There are various rights of access over the car park. The Parish Council would like the car park to remain free of charge and they advise that it is well used by the Doctor's surgery, Cemetery users, shoppers, the church, school teachers and by night, local residents.

There is no real difference of opinion concerning the importance and value of this car park to the local community. However demand is high and from an asset management point of view, this is potentially a valuable asset that could be effectively managed via a fair and transparent charging regime which could well generate a useful surplus. Alternatively the estimated annual running costs of £4,300 would need to be met from elsewhere.

13 Manor Farm Estate car park, Sidbury



The Manor Estate Yard car park is a small free car park providing 19 parking Spaces. We believe that it serves local residents during the evenings and at weekends and users of the adjacent parish hall and visitors to Sidbury generally during the day.

The estimated running costs of around £2,400 could be met by car park users in the form of permit parking and possibly pay and display. Alternatives might also be available including long term reserved car parking for nearby dwellings with no off street parking space.

14 Jarvis Close car park, Exmouth



This car park is currently managed as a short stay shoppers' car park located at Littleham Cross. It has just 12 spaces and is currently available for use free of charge. The Council is the freehold owner with no abnormal covenants and therefore has potential for alternative uses. However, it may be an important amenity supporting local shopping and therefore the local economy. We estimate its running costs to be a little over £1000 per year and at present we don't appear to be paying business rates on this car park.

15 Blackmore Gardens car park, Sidmouth



This car park is the freehold property of East Devon District Council but has been leased to NHS Property Services on condition that it be maintained for the benefit of users of the library and health centre.

Following complaints about “never being able to find a space” from the health centre’s patients’ group it has become apparent that the car park is not being actively managed and has become a useful free car park for Sidmouth’s residents and commuters.

We have entered into discussions with NHS Property Services staff to ascertain whether they would be interested in working with us to improve this situation. To date no proposals have been forthcoming and we have now opened a dialogue with our property services colleagues about the possibility of reacquiring possession of this car park and managing it on a pay and display tariff with “short stay” restrictions that will maximise the chances of library and health centre users finding a space.