

**Agenda for Car Parking Task and Finish Forum  
Tuesday, 2nd February, 2021, 10.00 am**



**Members of Car Parking Task and Finish Forum**

Councillors K Bloxham, C Brown (Chair), M Chapman, A Colman, O Davey, M Howe, B Ingham, V Ranger (Vice-Chair), E Rylance and J Whibley

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**Venue:** Online via the Zoom App

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(or group number 01395 517546)  
22 January 2021

**Important - this meeting will be conducted online and recorded by Zoom only.  
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This meeting is being recorded by EDDC for subsequent publication on the Council's website and will be streamed live to the Council's Youtube Channel at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmNHQruge3LVI4hcgRnbwBw>

Public speakers are now required to register to speak – for more information please use the following link: <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/have-your-say-at-meetings/all-other-virtual-public-meetings/#article-content>

- 1 Public speaking
- 2 Minutes of previous meeting (Pages 3 - 6)
- 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 Topics for discussion (Page 7)

- a) A revised policy for motorhomes and campervans in EDDC pay and display car parks (Pages 8 - 9)
- b) A review of options (including possible asset transfer) for managing all car parks that do not generate any revenue income or operate at a net cost to EDDC. (Pages 10 - 12)
- c) Consideration of the introduction of evening charges in car parks where we currently do not charge for parking between 18:00 and 08:00 on the following day. (Page 13)
- d) Consideration of the introduction of Sunday charges for car parking in our inland car parks. (We already charge for car parking on Sundays in the car parks in our coastal towns). (Page 14)
- e) The EDDC climate emergency declaration and action plan and the role of our car parking strategy in tackling this (with specific reference to investment in electric vehicle charging infrastructure and appropriate charging tariffs). (Page 15)
- f) The use of cash and incentives to use alternative payment methods  
Paper to follow for meeting on 11th January.
- g) Alternative sources of revenue (events, advertising, private sector management options)  
Paper to follow for meeting on 11th January.

8 Any other matters

[Decision making and equalities](#)

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**EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the meeting of Car Parking Task and Finish Forum held at Online via the Zoom App on 26 November 2020**

**Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.25 am

**35 Public speaking**

There were no public speakers at the meeting.

**36 Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 November 2020 were agreed as a true record.

**37 Declarations of interest**

Declarations of interest.

Councillor Andrew Colman, Personal, Exmouth Town Councillor.

Declarations of interest.

Councillor Eleanor Rylance, Personal, Resident and member Broadclyst Parish Council.

Declarations of interest.

Councillor Joe Whibley, Personal, Exmouth Town Councillor.

Declarations of interest.

Councillor Maddy Chapman, Personal, Resident and user of car parks in Exmouth..

Declarations of interest.

Councillor Olly Davey, Personal, Exmouth Town Councillor.

**38 Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

**39 Confidential/exempt items**

There were no items which officers recommended should be dealt with in this way.

**40 Car parks tariff review**

Consideration was given to the Service Lead – Environmental Health and Car Parks’ report which set out proposals to introduce changes to the car parking tariffs in some of the Council’s car parks. It provided recommendations for more efficient operational management options for the busiest car parks, including revised tariffs in the context of a strategic objective to maximise the value of the Council’s car parking assets, whilst also introducing a revised pricing structure for car parking permit to support communities and local economies.

Detailed discussion took place over the proposals in the report and included the following points:

- Car parking charges had not increased for 10 years, despite VAT rising from 15% to 20% during this time, with EDDC absorbing this increase.
- The Council needed to raise extra revenue. If parking charges were not increased then there was likely to be a rise in Council Tax.
- Increasing parking charges could gravely risk the future of local high street businesses.
- People needed to be encouraged to come and shop/spend in the town centres. Charges should not be increased, but the length of time available for parking should be reduced.
- There should be 'shoppers only' car parks for a limited period of parking time, to discourage people from using these car parks as long stays.
- Residents parking permits would not increase the footfall to businesses.
- In order to maximise revenue there was merit in increasing charges for beach car parks – raise more funds from coastal locations and ensure good facilities were provided in these areas to attract visitors.
- Some beach car parks were very close to town centre car parks, therefore there was the danger that if the 'shopping' car parks were cheaper beach users might fill these up.
- There was a need to support retail and protect the car parks.
- Prices could be frozen for residents and increased for non-residents of East Devon.
- Had there been consultation with Devon County Council over the cost of their on street parking charges.
- There were large variances in on street parking charges across the district.
- Concern that there could be a negative impact on disabled people if parking charges were raised at the most conveniently located car parks – was there an equalities impact assessment on this.
- If parking charges were not raised then people would continue to drive into town centres and contribute to pollution. A small increase would not deter people from using car parks.
- Town centres would need to change in the future and function differently, but people would still need to access them.
- There was a need to increase income for the Council, but also the need to be aware that the public could have a lack of funds. Offering a permit would help compensate for a larger increase in fees.
- The motor home spaces along Exmouth seafront were often taken up by vans used for watersports. There was also the problem that no facilities for motorhomes were provided at the Maer, resulting in people disposing of their grey water there as the regulations were not being enforced.
- Green travel should be considered, with greater investment in electric charging infrastructure in car parks.
- The future of green travel was important, but how vehicles would be fuelled in the future was unclear.
- Ideally in the future people would be travelling less by car. Town centres should be car and pollution free, instead being open green clean spaces. In which case car parks could even become redundant.

In response to some of the points raised the Service Lead – Environmental Health and Car Parks replied:

- Equalities was an important point and he believed that the impact was low. Disabled drivers had a number of options and would have the option of very affordable permits (which worked out at approximately £2/week). Disabled blue badge holders could park on street with no charge and therefore the number of disabled drivers using paying car parks was low in comparison to free on-street car parking.
- EDDC provided a means tested hardship scheme for local residents, who through this could get a parking permit for free.
- £10/month for a parking permit was excellent value and would be of great help to residents and businesses. If agreed, this could be carefully and sensitively promoted. Any harm to local businesses by increasing car parking tariffs would be mitigated by offering a permit for £10/month.
- EDDC had an ongoing dialogue with DCC about charges for off street car parking, which tended to be higher and for a shorter time. Consultation would ensure that the two authorities remained in line.
- When previously consulted about reducing the length of stay in short stay car parks, the Chamber of Commerce had expressed concern about the time constraints.
- The report contained a recommendation that a revised policy for campervans and motorhomes be introduced.

#### RECOMMENDED:

1. to propose the introduction of a 20p per hour tariff increase in East Devon District Council's category 1 (prime location) car parks effective from April 2021.
2. to propose the introduction of a revised parking structure for car park permits with a £120 per annum for a single town (and an additional £24 per each town added) up to a maximum annual permit charge of £240 to cover all towns. This would provide a 'pay monthly' scheme for all regular customers starting with a single town permit for just £10 per month.
3. that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive and relevant Portfolio Holders to introduce a revised policy for campervans and motorhomes, with the policy first coming back to the Car Parking Task and Finish Forum for consideration.
4. To repurpose the Car Parking Task and Finish Forum to report back to the Scrutiny Committee in Spring 2021 to:
  - a. Consider in more detail the options for supporting the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan.
  - b. Develop a range of options for the future management for the Council's category 2 car parks.
  - c. Consider any other measures including the possibility of introducing evening charges in certain car parks.

#### **Attendance List**

##### **Councillors present:**

C Brown (Chair)

F Caygill

M Chapman

A Colman

O Davey

M Howe

E Rylance

J Whibley

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

P Arnott  
G Jung  
D Ledger  
T McCollum  
A Moulding  
M Rixson  
J Rowland  
E Wragg

**Officers in attendance:**

Ashley Burnett, Acting Business Support Team Leader, Car Parks  
Bhavna Chandra, Business Support Officer, Car Parks  
Simon Davey, Strategic Lead Finance  
Andrew Ennis, Service Lead Environmental Health and Car Parks  
Susan Howl, Democratic Services Manager  
Alethea Thompson, Democratic Services Officer

**Councillor apologies:**

K Bloxham  
B Ingham  
V Ranger

Chairman .....

Date: .....

## Car Parks TAFF Discussion Papers – 2 February 2021 and 11 February 2021

### Contents:

1. A revised policy for motorhomes and campervans in EDDC pay and display car parks
2. A review of options (including possible asset transfer) for managing all car parks that do not generate any revenue income or operate at a net cost to EDDC.
3. Consideration of the introduction of evening charges in car parks where we currently do not charge for parking between 18:00 and 08:00 on the following day.
4. Consideration of the introduction of Sunday charges for car parking in our inland car parks. (We already charge for car parking on Sundays in the car parks in our coastal towns).
5. The EDDC climate emergency declaration and action plan and the role of our car parking strategy in tackling this (with specific reference to investment in electric vehicle charging infrastructure and appropriate charging tariffs).
6. The use of cash and incentives to use alternative payment methods
7. Alternative sources of revenue (events, advertising, private sector management options)
8. Any other matters

### Introduction

This Council currently owns and manages 57\* public car park sites across the district.

*\*There are a number of other areas that are used for parking in connection with other sites and buildings that the Council owns and manages (these include car parking for certain parks and playing fields, local nature reserves, housing estates, Council depots and industrial estates). These are not currently managed by the car parks team and have not been included within the scope of this discussion paper.*

We operate 45 of these public car park sites on a pay and display tariff. One of these (Mill Street in Sidmouth also offers some reserved parking spaces on short term leases).

Of the remaining 12 sites:

1. Holmdale (in Sidmouth town centre) and Helena Place (in Exmouth) are currently available exclusively for reserved parking on short term leases,
2. Exmouth lorry park is currently in use free of charge as the main compound for the Exmouth tidal defence contract works (part of this council's contribution to the scheme),
3. Upper Station car park is currently being leased to Budleigh Salterton Town Council for £500 per annum and is then made available for unrestricted parking free of charge at the point of use,
4. Blackmore Gardens in Sidmouth is currently leased to NHS Property Services for £126 per annum and is then made available for unrestricted parking free of charge at the point of use,
5. Seaton Jurassic Coach Park is currently available for coach and bus parking free of charge to help promote Seaton as a Coach friendly town,
6. Temple Street in Sidmouth offers a combination of short term free of charge parking and reserved parking spaces on short term leases and
7. the remaining 5 sites (The Green in Broadclyst, Brook Road in Budleigh Salterton, Jarvis Close in Littleham, School Land in Newton Poppleford and Manor Farm Estate in Sidbury) continue to offer public car parking free of charge and therefore the council incurs a net cost including maintenance and business rates in operating them.

### Discussion Paper 1 Proposals for a revised policy for campervan and motorhome parking

We continue to see increasing numbers of campervans and motorhomes on our highways and in our public car parks. Most recently on 4 March 2015 Cabinet approved a policy that prohibited the parking of motorhomes and campervans in our car parks between the hours of 22:00h and 08:00h the following day. This, in my view is now in need of a revision to recognise both the demand for short term overnight pitches for campervans and motorhomes – and to acknowledge that measures to carefully and sensitively fulfil this demand (rather than continuing to treat overnight parking as a “parking contravention” or some form of “anti-social behaviour”) may well have benefits for both our town economies and for our own revenue. It is also the case that our own residents are choosing small and medium sized camper vans as either their main or second vehicle and in some cases our own policy currently prevents them from parking overnight in public car parks close to their own homes.

Some years ago we used to have simple rule in our Parking Places Order that specified “no overnight sleeping”, and that has widely been acknowledged in the industry as being almost impossible to enforce. In more recent years we have seen a new problem emerge – with our inexpensive permit tariffs (just £100 per year) we were inadvertently encouraging local motorhome and campervan owners to use some of our car parks as a cheap storage facility for their vehicles – with consequent lack of parking availability for visitors and town centre shoppers. Accordingly Cabinet considered papers that I had prepared and made decisions that this Council:

- (a) wished to encourage day visitors in motorhomes and campervans – so these vehicles are currently allowed to use any car park on any day but only between 08:00h and 22:00h daily)
- (b) was interested in a pilot scheme whereby we would consider the impact of allowing overnight “camping” for up to 3 consecutive nights in specified car parks in Exmouth (this pilot is about to enter its third season at the request of Exmouth Town Council) and
- (c) that overnight parking of any campervan or motorhome would not be allowed in any other car park (to prevent both storage and overnight camping).

The Exmouth pilot has been interesting and I would ask Members to endorse the following principles and to allow the detailed policy to then be developed by Officers in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader.

1. The Exmouth pilot has been broadly successful and there is a significant and growing demand from our visitors for short duration “aire” style facilities throughout East Devon. The Council will in consultation with Ward Members seek to introduce a revised policy that welcomes over-night stays in specified car parks across East Devon unless there are local circumstances that would mean that there would be an unacceptable negative impact in the vicinity.
2. Motorhome and campervan customers will NOT be eligible for purchasing our standard car park permits and will only be permitted to use our pay and display car parks on a “pay as you use” basis. The hourly, daily, 3 day, 5 day, weekly and overnight tariffs will be reviewed and will recognise the value of the car parking asset alongside other facilities available locally and will ensure that larger vehicles pay for the number of parking bays that they occupy (including any spaces that they prevent other vehicles from occupying (due to their size).
3. The tariff will allow an overnight stay in approved car parks (where no other facilities are provided) of one, two or three consecutive nights only (with no return permitted within 24 hours).
4. Residents will still be unable to purchase a parking permit to use our public car parks for long term storage of motorhomes and campervans when they are not in use. However, we will

on a case by case basis consider “exemption” permits for residents who can demonstrate that they rely on a small campervan as their regular daily transport and that they do not have suitable alternative off-street parking facilities available elsewhere. One safeguard that we can introduce is to make it a condition that the exemption will only apply in areas where the resident lives in close proximity to the car park in question and where the vehicle is registered and insured in their name at that home address.

5. Finally Officers would also like to explore the possibility of creating dedicated motorhome / campervan pitches within a site with appropriate facilities to allow longer stays and for which a premium overnight rate of say £30 per night could be expected.

We would propose beginning a formal consultation process with local Members and Natural England this winter to consider the impact of such a development on the site of Exmouth’s former lorry park adjacent to the Estuary. The implementation of this would be subject to further consideration by Members in due course in terms of financial investment decisions and may also need to be the subject of a planning application depending on the exact details of the change from “lorry park” to “camp site”

**Discussion Paper 2 Category 2 car parks**

1. The TAFF has already considered and debated opportunities around charges in our category 1 car parks. In my earlier report I then made reference to car parks that we maintain that are either (a) available for use without charge or (b) are not earning sufficient revenue to meet their own operating costs. I have (arbitrarily for the purposes of this TAFF) categorised these car parks as our category 2 car parks. This definition does however come with caveats and in our debate we should be aware that some of our operating costs (typically management, costs, staffing costs, supplier charges for supporting our ticket machine network, cash collections, card payment charges and other organisational on-costs and recharges) simply cannot be directly attributed to individual car parks.
2. Each of our car parking assets incurs a range of direct and other costs associated with ownership, maintenance and management including business rates, electricity charges, boundary and surface maintenance, tree and landscaping maintenance and insurance liability. The way I have presented costs has been to apportion these according to the number of spaces within each car park and whereas this does have some clear rationale, there are some “losers” – typically relatively large car parks like for example the Cliff Top car park at Beer Head is a field with a notional 300 spaces so it does carry what is probably a disproportionate share of these costs relative to the revenue it earns. Similar issues arise with Maer Road car park in Exmouth.
3. It is suggested that we should now consider the potential for each of the following assets to generate revenue and in some cases to fund overdue repairs along with consideration of the community value of each car park and where factors “other” than net cost are recognised as important for communities to go on to consider alternative models for management and even ownership of these car parking assets going forward. Our community asset transfer policy will clearly be a relevant consideration here.
4. The following “category 2” list in table 1 sets out the position for each of the car parks that appear to sit in this category and each one of them now merits further scrutiny including consideration of an asset transfer in appropriate cases.

**Table 1 – car parks in category 2**

	Gross income	Operating costs	Net cost in 2019/20
Town Hall Seaton	£2,481.80	£3,720	-£1,238
Jarvis Close car park Littleham	£0.00	£1,250	-£1,250
Estuary Lorry Park Exmouth	£2,520.20	£3,830	-£1,310
Dolphin Street Colyton	£9,881.95	£11,255	-£1,373
Brook Street Ottery St Mary	£4,988.60	£6,812	-£1,823
Blackmore Gardens car park Sidmouth	£126.00	£2,083	-£1,957
Underhill Lympstone	£12,356.35	£14,432	-£2,075
Seaton Jurassic Coach Park, Seaton	£222.00	£2,366	-£2,144
Manor Farm Estate car park Sidbury	£0.00	£2,495	-£2,495
The Green car park Broadclyst	£0.00	£4,271	-£4,271
School Lane car park Newton Poppleford	£0.00	£4,385	-£4,385
Brook Road car park Budleigh Salterton	£0.00	£5,930	-£5,930

Upper Station car park Budleigh Salterton	£500.00	£11,354	-£10,854
Maer Road L/S, Exmouth	£22,571.60	£34,866	-£12,294
Cliff Top L/S, Beer	£15,422.81	£44,874	-£29,451

**Discussion Paper 3 - Evening charges for car parks**

Our short stay car parking tariff currently allows members of the public to park free of charge between 8pm and 6am. We know that the evening period (typically 5pm to 9pm and beyond) can be busy and is presently unregulated with no need for enforcement officers to visit during non-charging hours. It is proposed to introduce an evening parking charge (initially at a flat rate of just £1) to make a proportionate contribution to management, enforcement and wear and tear costs associated with the facility. The affected car parks would be:

Lace Walk short stay car park	Honiton
West Street short stay car park	Axminster
Orchard car park	Seaton
Central car park	Beer
Ham East / West / Roxburgh and Mill Street	Sidmouth
Rolle Mews car park	Budleigh Salterton
London Inn car park	Exmouth
Imperial Road car park	
Exmouth Pavilion car park	Exmouth

## Discussion Paper 4 - Sunday charges for car parking

1. Our present car parking tariffs already treat Sundays as a normal trading day in our coastal towns along with Colyton and Lympstone. However, for historic reasons we have not asked for payment for use of our car parks in Ottery St Mary, Honiton and Axminster on Sundays.
2. These car parks are available for use and there is an argument that prior to the pandemic, we were seeing levels of commercial activity in our towns on Sundays that was largely not happening in the past.
3. We have no data on car park use on Sundays in these towns and it is extremely difficult to estimate the level of revenue that might accrue from the introduction of Sunday charges here. It is similarly problematic in trying to quantify the impact that new charges would have locally. Anecdotally it does seem clear that a significant number of cars are making use of these facilities on Sundays and that some local businesses and leisure facilities are open. It would therefore be reasonable to suggest that charges should be imposed so that customers using our car parking facilities are then paying towards their maintenance and management and Members may take a view that there is no logical reason to continue with this no charges on Sundays' policy in these towns.

## Discussion Paper 5 - Climate Emergency Declaration an Action Plan

1. It seems clear that our priority of providing plentiful and affordable car parking in our towns to encourage motorists to drive to town centre locations to spend time and money in town centre businesses is based upon sound research and data published by the British Parking Association. Visitors to towns want to be confident that they will find parking close to their intended destination and they have no issue with paying a fair and reasonable tariff for using that facility.
2. It is also becoming clear however that increasingly the public is more aware of our climate emergency and this Council has now committed to an action plan to play its part by seeking to reduce our local carbon footprint. This is also a priority for this Council.
3. These two priorities are therefore in conflict.
4. There is of course a far bigger debate around the use for private vehicles generally, public transport accessibility in rural areas but alongside national policy, there is an opportunity for EDDC to begin to contribute to the infrastructure for electric vehicle charging infrastructure locally. There may also be opportunities to consider whether our tariffs are currently fit for purpose and encouraging the behaviours that we need to see emerging to help us tackle this emergency. It could easily be argued that higher tariffs in the most popular and congested car parks would not only contribute revenue towards investment in electric vehicle charging infrastructure but they could also “nudge” the public behaviour towards alternatives including avoiding car journeys altogether by shopping locally and abandoning unnecessary car journeys into town centres or by choosing active or public transport alternatives where these are viable.
5. Timing of any of these measures will be important and at this stage Members are being asked for their views on a direction of travel rather than any site specific decisions.
6. My recommendation would be that there should now be consideration given to a specific budget provision for the rollout of electric vehicle charging infrastructure. A number of options are available across the industry and these are often summarised as being on a continuum between simply leasing land to a private sector operator who will lease “x” numbers of parking bays (in carefully selected locations of their choosing of course) and over the next twenty or so years will develop and operate their own services – through to a local authority controlled business venture in which Councils invest in their own infrastructure and evolve into new areas of business (usually with a private sector partner) including sustainable power generation (through photovoltaic infrastructure), on site battery storage, electric vehicle hire and car clubs and the onward sale of electricity to residents through electric vehicle charging points and other possible outlets including leisure centres and other large energy users. The latter is of course higher risk but with potentially far better long term outcomes for residents.