

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary consultative meeting of Council held Online via the Zoom App on 22 March 2022

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.16 pm

76 Public speaking

The Chair welcomed members of the public and Councillors to the meeting and explained that all participants were taking part remotely and the meeting was also being viewed online and recorded.

The Chair advised that based on the decision at the Council meeting on 8 December, when Members voted in favour of the continuation of virtual meetings until 11 May 2022, the Council had delegated much of its decision taking power to Senior Officers, due to continuing concerns related to COVID risk in this area. Consequently, the meeting was being held on a consultative basis only, and the normal procedural rules as detailed in the Council's Constitution, would continue to be closely adhered to.

Accordingly, where the meeting would have normally decided a matter, it will now make a recommendation to a Senior Officer. The Officer will then take that recommendation into account, when making their decision.

The Chair then started the meeting with a roll call of those present, and confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

During the meeting the public would be able to participate if they had pre-registered to speak. Two members of the public had pre-registered to speak at this meeting.

Mr Mike Goodman referred to the petition against the increase in car parking charges and asked the Council to re-think its decision to raise charges on 21 car parks. Mr Goodman was of the view that the lack of consultation goes against the Council's Community Engagement Strategy. Budget papers had not provided any detailed information of the impact of the increases on equality and diversity. There had been confusion about the number of car parks affected by the increase and there was no full car parking strategy in place. Mr Goodman requested a public consultation in order to deliver a full car parking strategy.

The Chair thanked Mr Goodman and advised that Members would take his comments into account.

Mr Richard Eley noted that the proposed change to the Roxburgh car park is a modest change, although he questioned why this car park had been singled out. Mr Eley was of the view that changes to car parking charges had been rushed through without proper consideration and that the impact could be serious if the changes do not work. Mr Eley considered that the Council's leap of faith is of interest nationally as there is little research in this area. Mr Eley requested that full car parking data be made available to avoid repeated Freedom of Information requests going forward.

The Leader of the Council responded that there was no apparent reason why car parking data could not be made available.

The Chair thanked Mr Eley for his contribution which would be taken into account by Members.

77 **Declarations of interest**

Minute 78. Report on Car Parking issues.

Councillor Iain Chubb, Personal, Serving Member of Devon County Council which deals with Highways & Parking services.

Minute 78. Report on Car Parking issues.

Councillor Ian Hall, Personal, Serving Member of Devon County Council and Vice Chair of HATOC (Highways & Traffic Orders Committee).

Minute 78. Report on Car Parking issues.

Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, Serving Member of Devon County Council which deals with Highways & Parking services.

Minute 78. Report on Car Parking issues.

Councillor Stuart Hughes, Pecuniary, Cabinet Member for Highways Management at Devon County Council (DCC). Due to a potential conflict of interest between EDDC and DCC the Cllr will leave the meeting at item 4 on the agenda relating to the report on car parking issues.

78 **Report on Car Parking issues**

The Monitoring Officer presented the report which asked Members to consider the need for a bespoke approach to car parking at Roxburgh car park, Sidmouth and to consider removing the Car Parking Strategy from the Policy Framework.

It was noted that paragraph 5 of the report should read that, if the changes are agreed, they are notified at the same time as the other changes which were agreed by Council at its meeting on 23 February 2022.

Comments from Members included the following:

- A lot of work over the past two years by both Officers and Members had gone into the changes to car parking and those involved should be thanked.
- Residents permits are very good value and should be promoted.
- In the interests of democracy and transparency, all Members should be involved in decision making and the Car Parking Strategy should not be removed from the Policy Framework.
- The change to Roxburgh car park had not been proposed during discussions on the budget and a shoppers' car park is not unique to Sidmouth.
- Increasing car parking charges will have a detrimental impact on high streets and strategy should not be made on the hoof.
- The proposed change to Roxburgh car park could result in increased congestion in Sidmouth, with users staying for a shorter time and spending less money.
- The whole car park charging regime, with proper impact assessments, should be brought back to full Council.
- It was noted that the petition had not included the fact that for five months of the year the charge is £2 per day and that parking permits are available.
- If the increase in car parking charges proves to have a detrimental impact on the Council's impact, action should be taken immediately to address the issues.

- Members should bear in mind that car parking charges have not been increased during the previous twelve years.
- Proposed changes to car parking in Sidmouth have come after council tax bills have been delivered.
- The large increase in car parking charges should not be used to fund other Council services and other sources of income should be found.
- Other locations in the South West have higher car parking charges than East Devon.
- Officers' advice should be followed to avoid making rushed decisions.
- A wider range of alternative car parking charges had not been considered as part of the budget discussions and other pricing options should be looked at.
- The Car Parking TaFF had had the opportunity to undertake a full review of car parking, however, its work had not been completed.

The Chair invited Members firstly to vote in favour or against recommendation 1 of the report, followed by a separate vote on recommendation 2.

Following the votes, the Chair confirmed that both recommendations would be passed to Senior Officers for approval.

Recommendation:

1. That Roxburgh car park, Sidmouth is subject to the revised arrangements as detailed in paragraph 3 of the report.
2. That the Car Parking Strategy is removed from the Policy Framework and the Constitution amended accordingly, and recommend that Senior Officers approve what is agreed.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

J Kemp	J Loudoun	M Howe
V Ranger (Vice-Chair)	D Bickley	B Ingham
M Armstrong	J Bailey	G Jung
S Jackson	P Hayward	H Parr
S Chamberlain	S Hawkins	G Pook
P Arnott	A Moulding	G Pratt
K Bloxham	D Key	M Rixson
F Caygill	C Gardner	E Rylance
A Colman	D Manley	B De Saram
R Lawrence	C Brown	B Taylor
T Woodward	M Chapman	I Thomas (Chair)
N Hookway	I Chubb	E Wragg
C Wright	A Dent	T Wright
O Davey	D Barrow	S Hughes
J Whibley	P Faithfull	A Bruce
V Johns	S Gazzard	J Bonetta
D Ledger	I Hall	
J Rowland	M Hartnell	

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
Henry Gordon Lennox, Strategic Lead Governance and Licensing (and Monitoring
Officer)
Sarah James, Democratic Services Officer
Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (and Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Andrew Hopkins, Communications Consultant

Councillor apologies:

P Millar
M Allen
P Skinner
P Twiss

Chair

Date: