

Report to: Council



Date of Meeting 22nd March 2022

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Car parking issues

Report summary:

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

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

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.

Reason for recommendation:

To deal with a car park specific issue as detailed in the report and to ensure that the Council can deal with car parking matters expeditiously going forward.

Officer: Henry Gordon Lennox, Monitoring Officer and Andrew Ennis, Service Lead Environmental Health and Car Parking

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk;

Links to background information: None

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

Better homes and communities for all

A greener East Devon

A resilient economy

Report in full

1. Members have recently approved an increase in car park charges in a number of car parks across the district as part of the approval of the budget for 2022/23.
2. There is one aspect of the decision that has been reflected upon by the Administration and following further consideration a proposal has emerged to give Roxburgh car park in Sidmouth a unique status within the car park portfolio. In recognition of its value to the town as the car park of choice for local shoppers needing a quick “in and out” trip to the town, the intention is to re-designate Roxburgh short stay car park as a “shoppers” car park. Unlike the other short stay car parks in our portfolio, where the intent is to encourage visitors to take in the various offers and attractions of the town at their leisure, customers at Roxburgh will not be given their additional hour of free parking.
3. The proposal is therefore;
 - a. The maximum stay in Roxburgh will be just two hours to encourage turnover of spaces.
 - b. Charges will apply between 08:00 to 18:00 daily
 - c. The tariff will be 75p minimum payment (for 30 minutes parking) and £1:50 per hour with a strictly enforced maximum stay of just two hours. This maximum stay will also apply to permit holders.
 - d. The tariff will be applied between 1 April and 31 October each year and in common with our other pay and display car parks, the East Devon winter tariff will then apply until 31 March on the following year (unless Good Friday precedes 31 March in any year in which case (for the avoidance of doubt) this means that the winter tariff will end and the regular tariff will start on Good Friday instead of 1 April on that year).
4. It is considered that this will be of benefit to the residents and businesses of Sidmouth and provide an appropriate balance between the needs to service the leisure industry and the local needs of those living and operating businesses in Sidmouth. This arrangement can be implemented from an operational perspective.
5. It is necessary for this to be a Council decision because the Car Parking Strategy is listed within the Policy Framework. Further it is necessary to call an extraordinary Council meeting to deal with this matter to ensure that the above changes, if agreed, are consulted on at the same time as the other changes which were agreed by Council at its 23rd February meeting and to ensure that the changes are brought in as contemporaneously as possible.
6. It is worth noting that there have been a number of other car parking decisions which have been problematic as a consequence of having to bring car parking matters to Full Council;
 - a. Websters Garage Car Park – dealt with by way of specific report to 20th October Council.

- b. Sideshore Car Park was intended to be dealt with at an extraordinary Council meeting (12th April) but the death of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh meant this was cancelled and urgency powers - under the extended procedure due to the decision being outside of the Policy Framework – had to be utilised. It had been considered by the Cabinet at its 31st March 2021 meeting.
 - c. Introducing EV charging points – a report urgently seeking authority to work with partners and suppliers (Innovate UK funded Exeter Rapid Charge Project) to introduce electric vehicle charge points into our public car parks was considered by Cabinet in March 2021 which then necessitated delayed consideration until Council on 28 April 2021.
7. What the above demonstrates is the impact of having the Car Parking Strategy as part of the Policy Framework and the inability to utilise the regular Cabinet meetings and / or delegated powers to take what should have been straightforward decision in such matters. Consequently it is recommended that the Policy Framework (as detailed in the Constitution) is amended to remove reference to a Car Parking Strategy. This will mean responsibility for car parking matters will revert to being the responsibility of Cabinet, which was previously the case.

Financial implications:

The financial implication relates to the budgeted car park income derived from the car park charges agreed for April 2022. The hourly charge agreed for Roxburgh car park from April is £2 (£2 is charged per hour for the first three hours and the fourth hour being free). The proposal in this report is to charge £1.50 an hour but the maximum stay is 2 hours and to restrict permit holders to a 2 hour stay. This car park will have a unique charging policy making it difficult to predict the effect on projected income; the hourly charge proposed is less but the restricted stay should drive a quicker turnaround of spaces with no fourth hour being free. Although current ticket purchases are largely for 2hrs or less. Taking these factors into account it is considered there will be a loss in projected income to that budgeted in the order of £32k, it is suggest however no amendment is made to the 2022/23 budget on the basis that the budget was set prudentially, including a £232k reduction in car park income for associated risks.

Legal implications:

The changes proposed are for Council to decide upon. Otherwise the legal implications are detailed in the report.