

COUNCIL – 18 DECEMBER 2008**CONCESSIONARY CAR PARKING FOR RESIDENTS****Report of Head of Environmental Services**

Statutory Powers: Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s35; Control of Off-Street Parking (England and Wales) Order 1978

Financial Implications:

A report submitted to the Executive on 4 September 2008 estimated the gross cost of up to £280,000 depending on the take up of the scheme.

Purpose

This purpose of this report is to bring before the Council the results of the consultation process on the Concessionary Car Parking Scheme for residents.

Priorities

The Car Parks service contributes to the following Council Priorities:

CP2: Create the conditions for the growth and maintenance of quality economic activity. CP5: Working with others to improve access to key services. CP6: Improve core service performance in a cost effective way.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council considers the prepared amendments and approves the South Hams (Off-Street Parking Places) (Residents' Parking Permit) (Amendment) Order 2009 and arrangements in this report that are intended to take effect on 1 February 2009.

Background

1. On 3 January 2008, the Executive discussed the subject of permits for residents. The recommendation was that the viability of adopting a residents' free car parking scheme be considered in the future.
2. On 29 May 2008, the Executive discussed the matter of offering free parking to the users of Ivybridge car parks. It was agreed that this would be introduced as a temporary arrangement for five months until the 31 October 2008.
3. On 22 July 2008, the Prosperity Policy Development Group considered a report entitled Residents Car Parking. The Group made a number of comments which were reported back to the Executive.
4. On 4 September 2008, the Executive considered a report entitled 'Concessionary Parking for Residents'. The decisions of the Executive were that:-
 - a) consideration has been given to the principle of introducing a concessionary car parking scheme for residents;

- b) options 1 and 3 combined (as outlined in the presented report) be the preferred option;
 - c) the Council be **RECOMMENDED** that a charge a £10 per permit be agreed;
 - d) the Council be **RECOMMENDED** that the scheme be introduced for a trial period of twelve months, subject to the necessary consultation and publicity process;
5. On 25 September 2008 at a meeting of South Hams District Council, it was resolved that a £10 charge including VAT per permit be approved and the scheme would be introduced for a trial period of 12 months, subject to the necessary consultation and publicity process.

Consultation

6. The consultation period ended on 15 November 2008. There were two responses: one letter and one email.
7. The letter raised the issue of whether the permits will allow parking in short stay car parks beyond the current time limits. This matter will be dealt with later in this report.
8. The other comment was from a current full permit holder who is concerned that the individual will not be able to find a space once the new 'cheap' permits are in place.

The Order

9. Once the Council have approved of the making of the Order, it will be published in the local press if there are no changes will take effect on 1 February 2009 at 0001 hours.
10. The take-up and use of the permit will be monitored to establish the success of the initiative and officers will report back to the appropriate committee.
11. A Member decision will have to be made before the anniversary of the permit's introduction to decide on the way forward. If a decision is made to not continue with the permit then a Revocation Order would have to be put in place with time allowed for due process. Therefore it is proposed that officers will report back before November 2009 so as to ensure there is ample time to deal with the prescribed process.
12. Any major amendments to the advertised draft Order will require further advertisement and consultation which will result in a delay of at least 28 days and mean the scheme will not start on 1 February 2009.

Recommended minor amendments to the Order

13. At the time of writing this report, officers have no clear prediction of the number of applications that may be made for the concessionary permit. There is some concern that if the permit proves to be popular then the issue date of 31 January 2009 may not be achieved for all applicants who applied before that date. So as to ensure we are fair and equitable it is proposed that the following rules apply:

- Permits issued before 1 February 2009 will expire on 31 January 2010;
 - Permits issued after 1 February 2009 will expire on 28 February 2010.
14. The order will be amended to show that the charge for a concessionary permit will be £10 (inclusive of VAT). This takes account of the recent reduction in VAT to 15%.
15. The matter of allowing the concessionary permit in short stay car parks has been reviewed. Given that one of the main reasons for introducing the permit was to promote the local economy it would be wrong to exclude short stay car parks that are centrally located in main towns. It is however important that users do not exceed the permitted length of stay allocated to the car park. Therefore an amendment needs to be added to the order. This will state that the length of stay in a car park utilising a resident's permit and any subsequent purchased pay and display ticket must not in total exceed the maximum permitted stay advertised in the specific car park.

Risk Assessment

Risk	Mitigation
The council's reputation is affected.	That both PR and financial mechanisms are put in place to support the decision.
The cost of this initiative exceeds the financial projections.	That the council puts in place contingency plans to meet the financial shortfall.
The cost of this initiative exceeds the financial projections	There is a review of the scheme and a report to be submitted in November 2009 to establish the financial viability of the initiative.
That the uptake will overwhelm Customer Services and cause complaints from the public	Arrangements are for the hand issue of permits by temporary staff and procedures streamlined. Extra staff temporary can be brought in quickly
Short stay car parks may become congested by permit holders exceeding the time limits allowed	Additional resources would be deployed to monitor and enforce overstaying.

Conclusion

16. The Council has been very keen to support this initiative. Careful monitoring of income levels and participation in the scheme will be reported back to Members so as to ensure that an informed decision can be made on the success of the initiative.

Chris Lucas
Head of Environmental Services

Council
 18 December 2008

Background Documents:

Report to and minute PPDG.4/08 of the Prosperity Policy Development Group meeting held on 22 July 2008 on 'Residents Car Parking'.

Report to and minute E.47/08 of the Executive meeting on 4 September 2008 on 'Concessionary Parking For Residents'.

Minutes 50/08 of South Hams District Council meeting on 25 September 2008
minute 50/08: Reports of Bodies: E47/08.

District of South Hams (Off-Street Parking Places) Residents' Parking Permit (Amendment) Draft Order 2009