

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

**REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH &
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	11 SEPTEMBER 2019	AGENDA ITEM:	7
TITLE:	RESULTS OF STATUTORY CONSULTATION: a. MANAGEMENT OF PALMER PARK CAR PARK		
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides the results of the statutory consultation that has been undertaken, which proposed management of the car park (including charges) by Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) at Palmer Park.
- 1.2 Appendix 1 provides a plan to show the area covered by the advertised TRO.
- 1.3 Appendix 2 provides the responses that we have received to the statutory consultation.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee notes the report.
- 2.2 That the objections noted in Appendix 2 are considered and the Sub-Committee agrees to either implement or reject the proposals.
- 2.3 That, considering tariff-related objections received, the tariff be adjusted in the resultant order to extend the free parking period from 2 hours to 3 hours. The remainder of the tariff would have the timings adjusted, to resume from hour 4 onward (see Item 4.10).

- 2.4 That the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to seal the resultant Traffic Regulation Order and no public inquiry be held into the proposals.
- 2.5 That respondents to the statutory consultation be informed of the decision of the Sub-Committee accordingly, following publication of the agreed minutes of the meeting.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The provision of waiting/parking restrictions and associated criteria is specified within existing Traffic Management Policies and Standards.

4. BACKGROUND AND PROPOSALS

- 4.1 Parks & Open Spaces car parks are utilised by a diverse audience, many of whom derive social and health benefits from the use of associated park land and sports facilities. It is felt important to balance the needs/interests of user groups with the requirement to deliver services in a sustainable manner and tackle some of the issues that arise from inappropriate use of the parking facilities.
- 4.2 Palmer Park attracts parking from the surrounding area and a suspected level of daytime commuter parking, leaving little or no car parking for legitimate users of the leisure facility. There is additional concern that this issue will increase with the further introduction of parking management schemes in east Reading.
- 4.3 The Council's Parking Services Team already directly manages several Leisure car parks in-house, such as Kensington Road and Thameside Promenade.
- 4.4 A report to the January 2018 meeting of the Sub-Committee recommended that a Traffic Regulation Order be advertised for the proposed management of Palmer Park car park, including modest Pay & Display charging to assist with this management and to contribute to the costs associated with enforcement.

Officers proposed a tariff as follows:

- Free of charge - 1 hour
- 2 hours - 60p
- 3 hours - £1.50
- 24 hours - £10.00
- Night time - £2

4.5 The Sub-Committee agreed that the statutory consultation could be undertaken, but with the Pay & Display charging rates altered to the following:

- Free of charge - 2 hours
- 3 hours - 50p
- 4 hours - £1
- Each additional hour (or part, thereof) - +50p

There was no proposed alteration to the night time charge, but officers were asked to informally consult with groups/clubs/users of the park facilities and devise a permit/season ticket/exemption offering.

4.6 A statutory consultation has been undertaken, which finished on 5th September 2019. The night time rate has been applied between the hours of 8pm and 6am and Appendix 1 shows the area to which the TRO applies.

4.7 The area covered by the proposal is currently the paved/hard-standing areas on the park. Officers are reviewing enforcement/management options for some grassed areas of the park, which are occasionally opened for overflow parking.

These areas are Public Open Space and are likely to require additional legislative and consultation processes to be completed, for the same restrictions to be applied.

4.8 Officers are developing a parking permit facility that can be applied to certain established activities that take place at the Palmer Park facilities.

4.9 The Sub-Committee is asked to consider the comments of objection and support in Appendix 2 and agree to either implement the restrictions as advertised, or to withdraw the proposals.

4.10 The results of discussions that have taken place with established clubs and users of the facilities, in addition to the consultation responses received, have indicated a high level of demand for an increase to the 'free' period of parking. It is recommended that the restrictions be implemented with an adjusted tariff, which allows for 3 hours free parking, as follows:

- Free of charge - 3 hours
- 4 hours - 50p
- 5 hours - £1
- Each additional hour (or part, thereof) - +50p
- Night time - £2

It should be noted that parking during the 'free' period will still require purchase of a Pay & Display ticket, although the charge will be £0.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 This proposal supports the aims and objectives of the Local Transport Plan and contributes to the Council's priorities, as set out below:

- Keeping Reading's environment clean, green and safe
- Ensuring the Council is fit for the future

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

6.1 The statutory consultation was carried out in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The statutory consultation was advertised under the Traffic Management Act 2004 and/or the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 In addition to the Human Rights Act 1998 the Council is required to comply with the Equalities Act 2010. Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:-

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.2 The Council does not consider that the proposals will have a direct impact on any groups with protected characteristics. Informal and statutory consultations provide opportunities for objections/support/concerns to be raised and considered prior to a decision being made on whether to implement a scheme and these proposals do not remove parking availability for any user.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 It is intended that the scheme be funded using Transport Capital funding, which will include developer contributions (e.g. Section 106) wherever possible.
- 9.2 This proposal is designed to be self-financing, through revenues raised by the tariff and any enforcement action, and through increasing parking availability for users of the facilities, encouraging new members and continuation of existing memberships.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Off-Street Parking Management at Leisure Sites - Proposals for Statutory Consultation (Traffic Management Sub-Committee, January 2018).