

CALL-IN REQUEST - CHANGES TO SHORT AND LONG STAY SPACES IN WINSOR ROAD, CIVIC CENTRE AND WESTFIELD ROAD CAR PARKS AND THE INTRODUCTION OF CHARGES IN CIVIC CENTRE AND WESTFIELD ROAD CAR PARKS, TOTTON

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 For the last 18 years Totton and Eling Town Council have paid New Forest District Council (NFDC) an annual sum to keep the NFDC owned Civic Centre and Westfield Road car parks in Totton town centre free. This amount covered the business rates on these two car parks but did not cover any of the other costs associated with providing public car parking.
- 1.2 This payment did not provide any financial reimbursement for the loss of parking income which would have been received by the District Council since car park Necharges were introduced district wide in 2003. Thus, a proportion of the annual revenue from all the other NFDC car parks had to be used to pay for the upkeep, maintenance, inspections and enforcement patrols of these two town centre car parks to enable them to remain free.
- 1.3 Totton and Eling Town Council have stated their intention to withdraw from this annual payment therefore it was considered right and proper to address this inequality and ensure that all the town centre car parks in Totton fit into the charging regime in force throughout the district. To date no payment has been received for 2020/21.
- 1.4 A survey carried out in 2018 highlighted a need to address the balance between long and short stay car parking spaces in Totton. This proposal addresses this by providing additional short stay parking which supports the local businesses by ensuring spaces are available to the public throughout the day, unlike long stay spaces where vehicles tend to park all day.
- 1.5 Following the Portfolio Holder's Decision made by Cllr Edward Heron on 11 September 2020 with regards to introducing Car Parking Charges into two car parks in Totton and changes to short and long spaces in three of the car parks in Totton, Cllr Caroline Rackham has given formal notice that she wishes the decision made by Cllr Edward Heron to be called-in. Her reasons are set out in paragraph 2.3 of this report.
- 1.6 In accordance with Council procedures, as no other call in notices have been received, the decision stands and Cllr Caroline Rackham has the opportunity to express her concerns about the decision to this Panel.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council operates car parks across the district and sets the appropriate car parking charges for the use of those car parks.

- 2.2 Councillor Edward Heron made a Portfolio Holder decision on 11 September 2020 and Appendix 1 of this report sets out the Portfolio Holder Decision which is the subject of this call-in.
- 2.3 Within the call-in period Councillor Rackham gave formal notice to call-in the decision and stated that:
- "This decision will be detrimental to businesses in Totton and is not in line with my understanding of the results from previous discussions with the town council."*
- 2.4 Cllr Rackham has been invited to attend the meeting in order to discuss her concerns with the Panel.
- 2.5 As set out in the Council's Constitution, where only one member of the Council has called-in a decision, the Panel should consider whether:

- a) The decision was within the Council's policy and budget; and
- b) If it was, whether the policy or budget should be reviewed

The views of the Panel shall then be reported directly to the Leader and the Council.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The financial implications of the Portfolio Holder's decision are set out in Appendix 1, section 5. However, it is estimated that making the Civic Centre and Westfield Road car parks pay and display will provide enough revenue to cover business rates, maintenance, inspection and enforcement costs. In addition, revenue from parking charges will also go to support other essential council services.

4. CRIME AND DISORDER, ENVIRONMENTAL, EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The decision to change car parking arrangements in three Totton Car Parks is expected to continue to support the town centre economy by providing enough short stay parking in the centre of the town whilst maintaining the provision of Long Stay spaces which will encourage commuter parking thus reducing emissions in the Totton area.
- 4.2 The current parking clock system which allows short stay parking for up to 3 hours at 7 pence per day will continue to provide support to local businesses. It is not anticipated that these changes will have a detrimental effect on the local economy, including shops, gyms and other businesses in the town centre.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The Portfolio Holder Councillor Edward Heron made a decision on the 11 September 2020 which is now being actioned.
- 5.2 Councillor Rackham gave formal notice that she intended to call in the decision, but as no other Councillors gave formal notice of call-in the Portfolio Holder decision stands.
- 5.3 Councillor Rackham has been invited to attend the meeting on the 15 October of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel to address the Panel.

6. RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 That the Panel consider Councillor Rackham's call-in submission.
- 6.2 That the Panel determine whether the decision was within the Council's policy and budget and whether the policy and budget to be reviewed.

For further information please contact:

Background Papers:

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