

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER E

Staff Comments Staff Car Parking Changing the Way We Work User Group Consultation

Essential Use

If charges are introduced should be a discount for those staff who are obliged by either their job description or terms of service to have a car available as part of their role

Placing a levy on parking automatically disadvantages members of staff who are required to bring a vehicle with them to work to carry out their duties. The car user allowances are intended to reimburse staff for the full cost of providing a car to perform their role. If a parking charge is placed upon these staff, it could be strongly argued that the car allowances would need to be increased to compensate for this unavoidable additional motoring cost. At present a parking permit is issued to staff required to use their vehicle for work to avoid them being subjected to parking charges around the district.

Members of staff who do not require a vehicle during the working day for council business have the choice of paying to park, or finding alternatives such as public transport and car sharing. There is additional inconvenience, but the cost is hypothetically avoidable for these staff if they wish to find alternatives.

Equality Impact

A 'no charge' at Hertford car parks option would avoid all the many and varied problems that will otherwise ensue.

Charges could have a disproportionate effect on part-timers where their working arrangements are dictated either by needs of their service or for childcare or other responsibilities so that they work over more than two or three days (e.g. those that work school hours over five days but are only contracted for 18.5 hours a week). When added to the length of time walking from car park they may be having to pay almost as much, or indeed as much, as a full timer to park.

Those working part time will suffer yet again. For example, if you pay per day or even per week to park in Gascoyne Way for example, it works out cheaper than paying by hour. Yet for many the reason they work part time is to accommodate school hours. They will never be able to benefit from the economies of scale of cheaper long stay parking. This also applies for those who may be able to leave the car at home or car-share but on some occasions will need to drive in.

In the event of an annual fee this should take account of annual leave and be pro-rata for part-time staff

Charging could detrimentally effect service flexibility where part timers are prepared to come in for extra meetings etc on days not normally worked but will be disinclined to do so if they have to pay for extra parking.

Charging could have a huge effect on those on a low salary.

Custom and Practice Issues

This is terms and conditions issue, all other changes to terms and conditions have had a manner of compensation or a protection period. A period of consultation at least should occur. Free parking should be provided for staff until the decisions made are equitable and agreed.

Has the equitability of this proposal been considered in the light of all the other pay cuts, costs, freezes and loss of benefits? At the end of the T&C 3 year period I will have lost circa £3,000 worth of benefits. Is this reasonable?

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER E

Impact in Time

If staff have to spend 30 minutes at least of their own time travelling to and from external parking spaces, for some staff this may mean having to work an additional day or half day to work their hours within an inflexible time constraint. Again this is at their own cost.

Impact on Staff

I am strongly opposed to being charged for car parking. It would represent a considerable cut in salary at a time when morale is very low anyway. Also, if we have the number of empty parking spaces suggested, surely it would be cost neutral to allow those of us who do not get granted a place at East Herts, to be given a free parking space in the town. I don't envisage a public outcry over this. There are many instances of other large organisations that have free staff parking.

Councillor Parking

Will the visitor car park (or certain spaces within it) be subject to the parking levy? The reason for asking is that under the new arrangements some of the spaces in the visitor car park will be used by councillors. It would be manifestly unfair, that if the "staff car park" was subject to the levy but councillors didn't have to pay (at least a pay and display charge). Furthermore, will the visitor car park become pay and display to bring it into line with all other council car parks?

If we have to pay everyone should pay (Councillors included).