

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 5 MARCH 2013

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

REDESIGNATION OF LINK ROAD AND NORTHGATE END CAR PARKS (BISHOP'S STORTFORD)

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL BISHOP'S STORTFORD

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To secure the Executive's agreement to the making of a Traffic Regulation Order in respect of two town centre car parks in Bishop's Stortford.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE: That:</u>	
(A)	the officer decisions in respect of objections to a recently advertised Traffic Regulation Order be upheld, and
(B)	the pay and display charges for 2013/14, as detailed in this report, be approved.

1.0 Background

1.1 East Herts Council has established seven policy pillars for the development of its parking service, through its Parking Strategy:

- We will seek to maintain car parking income at current levels in real terms.
- We will seek to ensure that users pay for the parking service rather than the council tax payer.
- We will promote existing and explore new technologies to improve the overall convenience of parking in East Herts.
- We will seek where possible and appropriate to match parking capacity with demand.
- We will seek to develop and implement parking solutions that reflect local needs.

- We will make the economic vitality of East Herts a core consideration when developing parking services.
 - We will continue to work with partners to look at what additional sustainable transport services may be appropriate and deliverable.
- 1.2 On 4 December the Executive agreed to the 2.5% uplift to the pay and display income budget required in the MTFP being funded from elsewhere, subject to further consideration within the budget setting process. Overall, East Herts Council does not seek to increase revenue through changes to car park charges in 2013/14; however there remains a need to shape patterns of parking to balance the needs of all motorists, particularly in Bishop's Stortford and to support the local economy.
- 1.3 The re-designation of the Council's town centre Link Road and Northgate End car parks in the town has been a Medium Term Financial Plan and Service Plan commitment for the Council since 2011/12.
- 2.0 Report
- 2.1 Currently Link and Northgate End car parks are only available for long-stay use during the week, meaning they are not available for use by shoppers or visitors to the town for short periods - customers upon whom our traders and other businesses depend.
- 2.2 The proposal to make Link Road and Northgate End car parks predominantly short stay has been supported by:
- A 2012 parking survey conducted by the Bishop's Stortford Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with the Bishop's Stortford Retail Association looking into worker parking needs in Bishop's Stortford.
 - A 2012 study by Mott MacDonald looking at overall parking availability in Bishop's Stortford.
- 2.3 It is apparent from both studies that some town centre car parks can be heavily parked by workers from early in the morning, thus making it difficult for the customers on whom many town centre businesses depend to find a convenient parking place.

- 2.4 The re-designation of the Council's Link Road and Northgate End car parks will establish more space for short-stay parking, congruent with one of the core wishes of businesses in the town.
- 2.5 The Council wants to encourage more long-stay car parking at the edge of the town. As a result, long stay parking will still be permitted in Link Road and Northgate End car parks, but it will be charged at a premium rate of £4.00 for up to 5hrs and £6.00 for all day. This should encourage a greater number of long stay parkers to park in the Council's Elm Road and Grange Paddocks car parks on the edge of town where the 5 hour rate is £2.00 and the all day rate is £3.00.
- 2.5 The Traffic Regulation Order required to effect this change was advertised on 20 December 2012. A copy of the legal Notice is attached as **Essential Reference Paper B**.
- 2.6 Any interested party may object to the making of an Order within 21 days of its advertisement. In the case of the Link Road and Northgate End proposals, twenty eight objections were received. These are summarised in **Essential Reference Paper C**.
- 2.7 Officers have considered the objections to these proposals which, as can be seen, comprise predominantly challenges to the long stay tariff changes proposed for these car parks. A number of objections were in a standardised format; therefore officers' responses are inevitably similar.
- 2.8 Although officers have delegated powers to resolve objections that are minor in nature, on this occasion the Executive is asked to uphold officers' decisions in each case. The Executive is further asked to agree the pay and display charges set out in **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**.
- 2.9 By virtue of a separate Traffic Regulation Order, yet to be advertised, minor modifications are to be proposed in respect of the Council's Grange Paddocks car parks, seeking to maximise their availability to long stay parkers whilst ensuring the needs of leisure users (and where appropriate local residents) are protected. Officers have been asked to enact the Link Road and Northgate End changes at the same time as the amendments in Grange Paddocks.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

None

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