

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, SPECIAL MEETING

**THE EARL BALDWIN SUITE, DUKE HOUSE, CLENSMORE STREET,
KIDDERMINSTER**

MONDAY, 22ND NOVEMBER 2010 (6PM)

Present:

Councillors: G W Ballinger (Chairman), H E Dyke (Vice Chairman), J Aston, J Baker, R Bishop, A J Buckley, N Gale, J Greener, I D Hardiman, P B Harrison, P V Hayward, M A W Hazlewood, J Holden, T Ingham, M B Kelly, H J Martin, D McCann, D J Millis, J Parish, J Phillips, M Price, K H Prosser, M A Salter, J A Shaw, D R Sheppard, J Thomas, and S J Williams.

Observers:

Councillors: J-P Campion, N J Desmond, M J Hart, and G C Yarranton.

JS.1 Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Phillips.

JS.2 Appointment of Substitutes

No substitutes were appointed.

JS.3 Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were made.

JS.4 Wyre Forest Car Parking Review – Phase II

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services regarding the Wyre Forest Car Parking Review - Phase II report, which had been considered by Cabinet on the 16th November 2010.

The Chairman advised Members that the intention of the joint meeting was to establish a review panel to consider the issue in greater depth, and for Members to raise any points to be considered within the review.

18:04 Councillor M Hart entered the meeting at this point.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Services advised the Committee of the rationale behind the report, and a discussion ensued, a summary of which is provided below:

- A Member requested clarification regarding Westbourne Street Car Park, Bewdley. In response the Cabinet Member clarified that following a decision of the Full Council it was no longer listed in the Council's Car Parks Order, and that he would discuss the situation with the Member following the meeting.

- The Cabinet Member clarified that the parking charges were proposed to change in January 2011 and also in October 2011 due to the anticipated increase in the Value Added Tax (VAT) rate.
- A Member felt that according to the proposed charges visitors to Bewdley and Stourport might end up paying the highest to park.
- In response to a query from a Member, the Cabinet Member clarified that an hour of free parking across the car parks would be enforced in the same way as other parking enforcement and would not require the issuing of a ticket.
- A Member requested confirmation that the parking charges were expected to be revenue neutral and also requested budget projections for this.
- A Member requested figures be provided which set out the pricing and revenue for the current financial year.
- A Member queried whether the hour's free parking would require additional Civil Enforcement Officers, to which the Cabinet Member responded that it would not.
- A Member requested a list of percentage increases or decreases for all the car park charges.
- A Member identified that phase one of the Parking Review stated that there was a risk of anticipated revenue not being met due to changes in parking charges, and that if it was not, there was an option for Members to reconsider the charges as part of the budget process. In the light of this the Member requested the anticipated income of Vale Road Car Park , Stourport-on-Severn, following the introduction of charges and whether to date, this had been met.
- A Member queried whether the Council was in discussion with the owners of Weavers Wharf, Kidderminster concerning its car park prices. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that the Council did not control the prices of the car park but that discussions would be taking place with the owners.
- In response to a Member, the Cabinet Member commented that he felt that the Council's parking arrangements contained many inconsistencies which required a review.
- In response to a Member the Leader of the Council advised that there were currently no proposals for the Broadwaters, Kidderminster Car Park and that this was subject to ongoing discussion and consultation.
- A Member suggested that a ticket machine could be used which issued a ticket for all users of the car parks, whether staying within a free period or otherwise, and commented that this might help Civil Enforcement Officers to identify people overstaying the free hour's parking.
- A Member requested projected revenue figures based on the assumption of the same level of usage across the car parks after the new charges had been introduced. In addition to this, he requested a full set of figures from October 2009 to October 2010.
- A Member queried why the figure for Senior Citizens Tickets was listed to decrease between January 2011 and October 2011. In response, the Management Accountant advised that it was in order to keep a sufficient difference in price between the 6 month and 12 month pass.
- A Member felt that the free hour should be extended to 90 minutes on Sundays in order to allow free parking for church services, and queried what the revenue implications would be for 90 minutes free parking both all week or just on Sundays. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that it was possible to alter the charging structure and to allow for longer

free parking, but that this would need to be recuperated by charging a greater amount elsewhere.

Councillor J Shaw left the meeting at 6:55

The Vice Chairman outlined to Members a proposal to establish a review panel and suggested that a mixture of Councillors from the three towns and also rural areas should be represented on the review. Members were advised that in order to feed back to the January 2011 meeting of the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee, the review panel would need to complete its work by approximately 20th December 2010. This short time frame meant that the dates for review meetings were limited.

Members were advised that it was intended to consult with Bewdley and Stourport Town Councils and Churchill and Blakedown Parish Council over the proposed parking charges, and for them to feed into the review at some stage. In addition, a press release would be issued which would publicise the opportunity for the public to comment on the proposals. It was also suggested that posters be placed in the Worcestershire Hubs to inform people of the consultation.

A Member requested that an Officer attend the review panel to provide information on ticket machines.

A Member suggested a briefing be provided to Members on Civil Enforcement Officers and their procedures and instructions.

Agreed:

- 1) A review panel be established to consider the issue in greater depth, with the following Members: R Bishop, H E Dyke, J Greener, N Gale, P V Hayward, J Holden, T Pitt, K H Prosser, M A Salter, and J Thomas.**
- 2) Three initial meetings be held on the 30th November at 4pm, 9th December at 4pm and 16th December at either 4pm or 6pm, with clarification of venues to follow.**
- 3) A Press release be issued to publicise the opportunity for public involvement and comment, to be accompanied by posters in the Worcestershire Hubs.**
- 4) The Assistant Scrutiny / Committee Officer to write to Bewdley and Stourport Town Councils and Churchill and Blakedown Parish Council to request their participation in the review.**
- 5) Details of the following be provided to the review panel:**
 - a) Financial projections for the revenue of the car parks following the changes, and confirmation that they are revenue neutral.**
 - b) Pricing and revenue figures for the current financial year.**
 - c) A list of percentage changes in charges for all of the car parks.**

- d) Details of the anticipated income of Vale Road car park following the introduction of charges and whether to date, this had been met.**
- d) Projected revenue figures for all car parks based on the assumption of the same level of usage after the changes to charges had been implemented.**
- e) A full set of figures for car parking from October 2009 to October 2010**
- f) Details of the cost of providing 90 minutes free parking both:
 - 1) All week**
 - 2) At weekends****
- g) Details of whether a ticket could be issued for the free 60 minutes to help identify people overstaying the period.**
- h) Details of the average ticket income received per week per car park.**
- i) Details of how many Unrestricted Season Ticket holders use each Car Park both:
 - 1) Monday to Friday**
 - 2) At weekends****
- j) Details of how many Restricted Season Ticket holders use each car park both:
 - 1) Monday to Friday**
 - 2) At weekends****
- k) Details of the average stay of people who purchase tickets on each car park.**
- l) Details of how many season tickets of each type had been issued in 2010/2011 to date.**

The meeting ended at 19:14