

EXECUTIVE

Tuesday 13 August 2024

Present:

Councillor Bialyk (Chair)

Councillors Wright, Allcock, Asvachin, Foale, Vizard, Williams, R and Wood

Also present:

Councillor Jobson (as an opposition group Leader);

Councillor Moore (as an opposition group Leader); and

Councillor M. Mitchell (as an opposition group Leader).

Also present:

Chief Executive, Strategic Director for Corporate Resources, Service Lead, Legal Services & Interim Monitoring Officer, Head of Service, City Centre and Net Zero and Democratic Services Manager.

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made.

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CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader passed on his condolences and reflected on the memory of the former Lord Mayor and Honorary Alderman Marcel Choules, who had represented the Priory Ward and was well known across the city. References and Members' thoughts would be presented at the full Council meeting on 15 October 2024.

The Leader also welcomed the meeting of people from 'Exeter Together,' in standing up to racism, which was held on Saturday 10 August, which demonstrated Exeter being an exemplar city for community cohesion during recent troubling events.

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PARKING TARIFFS 2024

The Executive received the report which sought to make amendments under the Parking Places Order to Exeter City Council car parks, which was important in delivering key services to attract people to live, visit or work in Exeter.

Particular reference was made to:-

- There was a legal requirement to consult with residents, businesses, and communities as part of the process of amending the Parking Places Order.
- The six-week consultation period would commence the week beginning 19 August 2024, consisting of posters in car parks, an advert in the Express and Echo, an online consultation, and letters delivered to the residents around Belmont Road car park.
- The recommendations were related to comments and concerns received from the business community, InExeter and Exeter Chamber of commerce.
- Encouraging shoppers to visit the city on a Sunday, would assist in reducing busy Saturday congestion.
- The proposed introduction of car parking charges at leisure sites would ensure they were used by their intended customers, which was currently problematic at the Riverside Leisure Centre and Wonford Sports Centre.

- Income generated from city centre car parks would be used to address ASB within some car parks, in particular, the Cathedral & Quay car parks.
- During 2024 seasonal, business, and residential parking permits were being reviewed for eligibility, and once completed all permits would be available to purchase on the Council website.

Opposition group leaders spoke on the item as follows:-

- Cllr Moore made the following points:-
 - although parking tariffs contributed toward the transport challenges, it was important to address the volume of daily commuters coming into the city;
 - would income from car parking address structural problems in multi-storey car parks;
 - the analysis on transport carbon emissions was welcomed, and given the rise of emissions since 2020, the consultation should include reference to tariff change impact on emissions;
 - were bus ticket prices an incentive to reduce the number of cars driving into the city centre to tackle climate emergency;
 - more attention was needed on the creation of a new sustainable car park; and
 - the inclusion of secure bike racks was welcomed.
- Cllr Mitchell made the following points:-
 - there was a need to compare tariffs with other neighbouring city areas, to ensure the Council was in line with them;
 - car parking charges were a smaller aspect of a larger matter; and
 - there was a contradiction between raising income and delivering the Net Zero ambition in the Corporate Plan.
- Cllr Jobson enquired on whether the consultation would be available in hard copy for residents to read or comment on and whether consideration had been given on the signs for operating hours of various car parks?

The Leader in thanking opposition Members noted the issues raised and encouraged members to contribute them through the consultation process. He advised that the focus of the meeting was on the process.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- there was a challenging balance between achieving Net Zero in the city centre strategy and generating essential income from car parks;
- work was ongoing across the Council in achieving its objectives and there were issues of being in a two-tier system that needed to be considered;
- although there had been a decrease in the number of car parking tickets issued and city footfall, there was no data available to address the metrics of how people were coming into the city;
- would the consultation include detail on where car park income was used and what people were contributing toward;
- there were two stands in the process, relating to varying existing charges and introducing new charges;
- there were a number of car parks for leisure facilities, which were linked to the Healthy and Active City policy;

- it was important that there was strong engagement with car park users, key stakeholders, public and businesses in the consultation process; and
- there would be collaborative engagement with Devon County Council and Stagecoach, due to the limitations of the Council's role for transport matters.

The Leader in addressing points raised, made the following comments:-

- the Transport Working Group and potentially Scrutiny would address transport and corporate policy issues raised;
- the issues raised about the city centre strategy were important and were interlinked;
- £100,000 had been allocated to address antisocial behaviour and other matters, however, the Council required additional income to fully address these matters;
- hard copies of the consultation would be available to people and proper operating hour signage would be included;
- this was the start of a six-week consultation period, to enable the Council to listen to car park users and further changes could be made as a result of the feedback; and
- other issues would be picked up as a consequence of the consultation.

The Leader moved the recommendations, which was seconded by Councillor Wright, voted upon, and CARRIED unanimously.

RESOLVED that the Executive agree to:-

- (1) set aside £100,000 of the income achieved from Car Parks for maintenance and improvements to city centre car parks;
- (2) consult with nearby residents on a proposal to introduce residential car parking after 6.00pm at Belmont Road Car Park;
- (3) change the cost of seasonal, residential, and business parking permits as set out in the report presented at the meeting; and
- (4) amend the Car Park Places Order 2014 as follows:

- to change the car parking charges in accordance with the table in section 8 of the report;
- to re-introduce 1hr parking for city centre car parks located in Zone 2;
- to amend the opening and closing hours at the John Lewis car park to 8.00am - midnight;
- the addition of the following new car parks to the Parking Places Order in accordance with the plans at Appendix 2:

a. Central Zone

i. Paris Street Car Park (Old Bus Station site)

b. Zone 3

i. Pinhoe Railway Station Car Park;

ii. Bridge Road Car Park;

iii. Riverside Leisure Centre;

iv. Wonford Sports Centre; free for the first 3 hrs; and

v. Exeter Arena; free for the first 3 hrs.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.00 pm)

The decisions indicated will normally come into force 5 working days after publication of the Statement of Decisions unless called in by a Scrutiny Committee. Where the matter in question is urgent, the decision will come into force immediately. Decisions regarding the policy framework or corporate objectives or otherwise outside the remit of the Executive will be considered by Council on 15 October 2024.

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