

## **Car Parking Charges**

### **Recommendations:**

- Following consideration of the budget consultation exercise and ongoing dialogue with local business leaders and other interested stakeholders Cabinet agree to amend the final budget proposals recommended to Council so that the car parking fees and charges tabled at the meeting are adopted in place of the car parking charges contained in the previously published fees and charges schedule.
- Cabinet recommend as part of the final budget proposals to full council that free parking be provided for blue badge holders at the Council's Country Parks

### **Reason for recommendations**

Budget consultation on the draft budget proposals identified concerns over the impact of car parking on local businesses, stakeholders and community groups during a time of regeneration in the town.

Following a series of meetings between the Council and stakeholders to further understand the impacts, whilst setting out a principle of not wanting to see any increases, businesses pointed to the areas which had most impact in retaining footfall, encouraged dwell time within the centre but had minimal changes in regard to the loss of budget.

The proposed changes therefore take on board consultation results and have been amended to support the town centre through the next stage of development.

Consultation also identified concerns about the arrangements for the Racecourse car park. The proposed charges have therefore been withdrawn to allow further consideration to be given to this area.

Budget consultation also included a significant number of comments on town centre car parking and Country Parks parking. As a result, the Country Park charges have also been re-considered and amended. This includes the introduction of free parking for blue badge holders at the Council's country parks.

### **Further information**

The draft budget signalled the start of consultation on the budget proposals contained within it.

The consultation received in excess of 3,000 comments and a significant number of them related to parking charges in the town centre and at the Country parks. As a result, Cabinet have amended these proposals and the car parking proposals have now changed as follows since the original draft budget proposals:

- The introduction of car parking charges for the racecourse have been withdrawn as part of these final budget proposals
- A park run season ticket is recommended to be introduced which can be used at all Country Parks in West Northamptonshire and will allow free parking for park runners between 8am and 10.00am. The cost for the year will be £5.00
- Introduction of hourly charges for the Country Parks rather than two hourly charges
- Reduction of the all-day charge at Country Parks from £12.00 to £8.00
- Reduction of £5.00 in the dual park annual season ticket

- Free parking for 2 hours in all Council owned Northampton Town Car Parks on Saturdays and Sundays
- Flat rate of £2.20 for all day parking on a Saturday and Sunday in all council owned Northampton Town car parks (for stays of over two hours)
- Parking periods payable per half an hour (instead of hourly blocks) for periods up to a total stay of five hours for Council owned town centre car parks.

### **Financial Implications**

The cost of withdrawing car parking charges from the racecourse (£60,000) and introducing a Park Run season ticket (£35,000) had already been included in the published final budget proposals.

The financial impact of the other changes highlighted above and in the revised fees and charges schedule for car parking totals £282,000 in lost income and the general contingency will be reduced by this amount to reflect the changes in the proposals