

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

UPDATE OF FREE PARKING POLICY

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on North Lincolnshire Council's Free Parking policy and impact on visitors accessing the Town Centre areas.
- 1.2 To determine if the policy is appropriately supporting the positive delivery of NLC Economic Growth Plan and Economic Renewal Plan

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 To support the Town Centre's economy, 2 hours free parking, was introduced at all North Lincolnshire Council's Pay and Display car parks in 2014. The aim of free parking is to encourage visitors to the town centre shops and amenities at no cost and enable the town centre to compete with out-of-town retail estates
- 2.2 Prior to 2014 the cost of parking was £1.50 for 2 hours within North Lincolnshire. Since its introduction over 13 million free parking tickets have been issued. Whilst the full value this has had to business is difficult to quantify, customers within North Lincolnshire have benefited to the tune of £19.5 million.
- 2.3 On average 1,662,900 pay & display tickets would be obtained per year, of which 1,535,700 million were free. During 2020-21 at the peak of COVID 19 this fell to 844,000, with 797,500 free parking tickets issued.
- 2.4 Whilst paid tickets remain around 50% down on pre COVID figures, the numbers of free tickets have recovered to around 80%. Indicating that visitors are returning to the Town Centre and the free car parking policy is enabling this.
- 2.5 In terms of supporting the town centre economy it is these free parking numbers that are also an indication of the retail recovery. As the paid for parking is primarily used by town centre workers and not retail customers.
- 2.6 When 2 hours free parking was first introduced, 92.6% of pay & display tickets were free. This percentage has continued to rise over the years and despite the pandemic has risen to 94.7% in 21-22. This year looks to continue that trend with currently 94.8% of pay & display tickets being free.

2.7 In addition, free parking on a Saturday was also introduced. As no pay & display tickets are now required on these days it's difficult to accurately know how much free parking has been offered during the weekend.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 That Cabinet note the contents of this report and the impact of the 2-hour free parking policy.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 Not Applicable.

5. FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)

5.1 Due to behavioural changes during the pandemic, it is unlikely pay & display parking will recover to the pre pandemic rates. Budget income reductions to be noted, with current paid for parking revenue being cut by approximately 48%.

5.2 However the continued support of free parking has shown a much higher recovery than paid for parking. In the last year's 1.2 million free tickets have been obtained, a benefit to the consumers in North Lincolnshire of around £1.8m for Monday – Friday parking and access to Town Centre.

5.3 Over the last 8 years the free parking policy has benefited consumers of North Lincolnshire by around £19.5 million, encouraging local economic access and spend.

6. OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)

6.1 Not Applicable.

7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

7.1 Not Applicable.

8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

8.1 Not applicable.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That cabinet note the content of the report and continuation of existing policy.

DIRECTOR: ECONOMY & ENVIRONMENT

Church Square House
30-40 High Street
Scunthorpe
North Lincolnshire
DN15 6NL
Author: Richard Copley
Date: 10/11/22

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: None