

To: Please see Distribution list

**Your ref:** -  
**My ref:** JP/KP  
**Date:** 23 January 2017

Dear Members

### **Cornwall Council (Off Street Parking Order Charges) 2017**

Further to your letter of 12<sup>th</sup> December and the holding response before Christmas, we have now gathered more information relating to the proposed Off Street Parking Order 2017 and considered the matter further.

The fundamental issue you raise is about the generation of income from our car parks and the stated impact of this on the local economy and communities. We understand this concern, however, to support local economies and communities the Council needs to be able to meet its policies for front line service delivery, and in particular its maintenance of the highways for safety and effective movement of goods and people. This can only be achieved with sufficient funds, which includes the requirement in the Council's approved budget for additional annual inflationary income, including that relating to parking services.

The balance between charging for Council services and supporting local communities is recognised, and parking charges were held unchanged in 2016 as a consequence of an increase in income in the previous year. The parking service has also sought wherever possible not to rely on the car parks as the sole source of meeting its budget and has significantly reduced costs and installed and promoted new technologies to improve the offer for the customers, such as payment by phone which has seen a considerable increase in uptake.

The structure of car parking charges for many towns was determined in the 2015 Parking Order amendment whereby priorities for daytime and seasonal charging periods and the definition of long and short stay parking to support trade were developed wherever practicable, to reflect the individual nature of each town. We accept that proposals consulted upon sought to increase prices from this, but the locally established principles were retained.

We note your concerns about the proposal to increase the charges for the first two hours (typically by 10p), however to continue the aim to encourage longer stay in towns there are significant reductions proposed for the 3 and 4 hour charges (ranging from 20p to 80p per session). You will recognise this approach in Callington where the one hour charge is proposed to increase by 20p (to 50p), but there are reductions in the two hour charge from £2 to £1.50 and the three hour charge from £3.20 to £3.



Commuter parking has been an issue raised regularly by residents and businesses, for which the Council promotes a flexible period Season Ticket at significantly discounted cost to normal daytime parking rates. After reducing the price of these tickets in 2015, there is still no proposed increase, which combined with a pending on-line purchase will assist in supporting local residents who need to regularly park in our towns, typically for around 20-25% of the standard daily rate.

With regard to the recent consultation for an amended Parking Order for 2017, We are advised that in addition to the required legal publication and notification requirements the Council specifically invited, contacted or presented to a number of key stakeholders including BID managers, Chambers of Commerce, Town and Parish Councils and of course Local Members who were also provided with an All Member Briefing. The local media also raised awareness through regular reports and discussions. The feedback from the consultation yielded 17 individual responses from Local Members, including 13 who were also signatories to your letter, 15 responses from Town and Parish Councils, 6 from business groups and 78 from members of the public.

A large majority of the responses highlighted concerns with a proposal to generally increase charges and perceived impacts upon social and economic activity. There were also a number of comments and suggestions about traffic and parking in general, but it was evident that the proposed new evening charge in 28 towns and areas has generated particular attention.

The aim of the evening charge, which already exists in several larger towns, was to spread the inflationary increase required over a longer period thereby minimising the need to focus the increase in the daytime period

Notwithstanding all of the above, we recognise that the time given to the Parking Service and town representatives between the approval of the budget at Cabinet on 9 November 2016, and the deadline for a new Order to be finalised by the end of January allowed relatively little time for a dialogue. We have therefore agreed with the Cabinet Member for Transport and Cabinet colleagues to delay the implementation of the proposed schedule of charges associated with the Order to allow further local discussions to take place. The outcome of these discussions may generate alternative options for charging on a locally specific basis and therefore require a new consultation. Any shortfall in the Budget can be accommodated to allow sufficient time for full discussion and consideration before a new parking order is put in place.

In conclusion, may we assure you that it remains the Council's desire to achieve a balanced and rational approach to parking charges for the benefit of all parties.





Yours sincerely

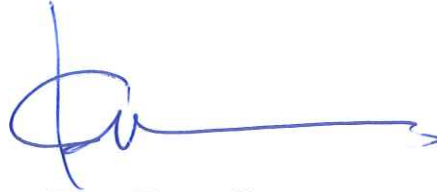


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