

DELEGATED DECISION – ADDENDUM TO DD 203(2021)

Decision of Officer Making the Decision

Rob Mitchell, Chief Executive

Date: 31 January 2022

DD Reference number: DD203 2021 – Extension of free parking for Sundays, evenings and daytime up to 1 hour and free permits for town centre staff in Beehive Lane car park to support the town centre Bedford Square re-generation programme **(Appended)**

Officer Requesting Decision (Addendum)

Car Parks and Civil Enforcement Manager, Karl Harrison & Head of Regulatory Services, Alan Twells

Decision and Date (for Addendum)

Further extension of free parking for Sundays, evenings and daytime up to 1 hour and free permits for town centre staff in Beehive Lane car park to support the town centre Bedford Square re-generation programme up to the 1 June 2022.

Recommendations / Addendum

To approve a further extension of parking concessions as detailed in the SLT Report January 2022- Bedford Square Gateway Project – Review of Parking Concessions he report (report appended). The recommendations being:

- *Extend the free staff parking permit scheme from 31 January up to 30 April 2022 (to include free staff parking permits for use in the Beehive Lane car park by employees of businesses who normally have access to private parking within the scheme area, and up to four free staff parking permits per business for other businesses located in the Bedford Square Gateway area). Permits will be withdrawn on a phased basis according to the road reopening schedule.*
- *Extend the free parking tariffs concession for the Beehive Lane car park from 31 January to 31 May 2022* (to include free parking for Sundays, evenings and daytime up to one hour in Beehive Lane car park).*

All recommendations subject to review if there are any further changes to the construction programme.

*Note that the 31 May 2022 is a Wednesday followed by 2 bank holidays on Thursday 2nd June and Fri 3rd June. To avoid confusion, it is recommended that parking charges are re-introduced at the concessionary bank holiday rate on Thursday and Friday followed by full prices on Saturday 4th June 2022.

Reasons

The Bedford Square Gateway Project (BSGP) was initially planned to be complete in November 2021. However, the planned project program has had to be extended up to the Summer of 2022. The impact of the construction works on local businesses and shoppers will reduce incrementally as and when the roads and car parks are reopened:

- Wards End to South Street will be reopened by 31 March 2022 – this will enable traffic to access Wards End up to South Street and exit via South Street, opening up on-street parking in this area and enabling access to private parking in Bleach Yard.
- Wards End from South Street to Granby Street will be reopened by 30 April 2022, opening up on-street parking in this area and enabling access to private parking in Mills Yard.
- Bedford Square South car park and the slip road between Southfield Road and Woodgate will be closed from 31 January to 30 June 2022.

Initial authorisation for free parking for up to 1 hour, evenings and Sundays was given in a Delegated Decision in May 2021 (DD 102), for a period of up to 7 weeks. It was then further extended in an addendum to the delegated decision up to 7 November 2021 (start of the fair week).

The last Delegated Decision in November 2021 (DD 203) extended the free parking for up to 1 hour etc. and free permits for town centre staff in Beehive Lane up to the end of January 2022 with a caveat that it was subject to review.

The report to Senior Leadership Team makes the following statement as reason for further extension of the free concessions offered to the public and town centre business staff:

“...the review acknowledged that these original objectives are still very relevant with regard to the concessions schemes. Local businesses in the Bedford Square Gateway area will continue to be impacted by construction work and road closures associated with the Bedford Square Gateway Project until the end of April and impacts on free parking until June 2022. Additional factors that have been taken into consideration in this review include the slow down of trade post-Christmas, the specific impact of the Omicron variant and the fact that even when the roads have been reopened there will still be a period of readjustment afterwards for businesses and shoppers until they become familiar with the new arrangements, which will undoubtedly still have an impact on footfall in the short term. Furthermore, the review has considered whether the withdrawal timeline for some of the concessions, such as the free business parking permits, should be linked to the road reopening schedule.”

Authority for the decision

The Head of Paid Services is delegated under the Council’s Constitution, Section 8, Scheme of Delegation to Officers, Page 8 – 4 to 8 – 5


“9. To authorise urgent expenditure.

10. To deal with emergency issues or those that are urgent, including authority to make temporary changes to management arrangements for a period of up to 3 months and generally to give effect to anything that is required to be done in those circumstances that are not otherwise provided for in the delegation arrangements.”

Additionally, the Head of regulatory Services under The Council’s Constitution, section 8, Scheme of Delegation to Officers Page: 8-27, Street Management, bullet point 7:

“To use car parking promotions as an operational tool to encourage users to park in Council town centre car parks when it is considered beneficial to the town and the Council.”

Decision and Date



Robert Mitchell (he, him, his)
Chief Executive

09/02/2022

Background

DD203 2021 “Extension of free parking for Sundays, evenings and daytime up to 1 hour and free permits for town centre staff in Beehive Lane car park to support the town centre Bedford Square re-generation programme”.

This DD sets out the reasons for offering ‘free’ parking permits but also details the financial implications on the parking revenue account for the authorised period up to the end of January 2022.

The Bedford Square Gateway Project (BSGP) Board has put forward a Briefing Paper to the Senior Leadership Team with proposed options from Feb 2022.

It is acknowledged that businesses will still be affected by road closures, the loss of free on-street parking and limited access to private parking areas for the weeks to come however, there will be a gradual opening up of the town centre and more availability of on-street parking spaces.

The Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team have been consulted regarding the proposed extension of free parking and the financial implications and he has agreed that we extend the free parking schemes until the end of May/beginning of June 2022 as detailed in this DD addendum. The Chief Executive has also consulted with the Leader of the Council before making this decision.

Options

The proposed options for an extension to the ‘free’ parking are included in the SLT report appended to this DD. SLT decided that the options they have agreed to implement are detailed in the recommendations above.

Financial Implications

The original DD (203) estimated a total cost for the ‘free’ parking schemes at Beehive Lane as approximately £68,500 in support of the BSGP.

Car park software reports, which detail the actual cost of the ‘free’ parking tickets, up to end of Jan 2022 only, show a total cost of:

Staff permits:	£13,946
Free 1 hr etc.	<u>£37,567</u>
Total up to Jan 2022	<u>£51,513</u> (exc. vat) [£61,815 (inc vat)]

Additional cost estimates for a further extension of the 'free' parking promotions as detailed in this DD Addendum are as follows:

1. Free staff permits for town centre businesses - £8,000
2. Free 1hour, Sundays and Evenings - £29,000 (£14,000 in 21/22 and £15,000 in 22/23)

Total additional estimated cost of further extension of 'free' parking promotions included in this DD addendum estimated at approximately = £30,000 to £37,000

Reports have been collated as the scheme has progressed, detailing the actual costs for tickets used for 'free' parking.

The loss of income is against Beehive Lane M510 J0502. This is in excess of any loss previously reported in the MTFS due to the pandemic recovery and other car park closures. For the financial year 21/22 the losses will be recorded in the budget monitoring forms.

Under this DD addendum, for an extension of free parking up to the end of May 2022, in year service pressures have been identified for the financial year 2022/23:

£15,000 from Beehive car park income M510 J0502

In addition, Granby Street car park has been impacted by road diversions and free parking at Beehive but has not been included in estimations for loss of income.

Also in addition, DD (186), Southfields Ext car park is closed to support BSGP (originally only closed to Oct 21 but extended to spring 2022). This identifies a net budget deficit of **£61.8k** for the year 21/22 and **£19k** for 22/23

Reasons for further losses in income due to supporting Bedford Square Gateway Project will be recorded in the budget monitoring papers.

Key Decisions

No

Background Papers

- DD 203 2021: Extension of free parking for Sundays, evenings and daytime up to 1 hour and free permits for town centre staff in Beehive Lane car park to support the town centre Bedford Square re-generation programme
- SLT Report January 2022 Bedford Square Gateway Project – Review of Parking Concessions