

**Decision under Delegated Powers**  
**Free Sunday Parking promotions at Loughborough Car Parks 2015**

**Officer Requesting Decision**

Car Parks and Civil Parking Enforcement Manager

**Officer Making the Decision**

Head of Regulatory Services

**Recommendation**

To approve the provision of free parking at Council Car parks (excluding Browns Lane) on Sundays as detailed:

Car Show – Sunday 21 June 2015: all Council car parks

Race for Life – Sunday 19 July 2015: Granby Street only

By the Sea – Sunday 2 August 2015: Granby Street only

Mela – Sunday 16 August 2015: Granby Street only

Children's Literature Festival – Sunday 25 October 2015: all Council car parks

Christmas Sundays – 29 November, 6, 13, 20 December 2015: all Council car parks

**Reason**

Item 6 of the Council's Cabinet on the 18<sup>th</sup> December 2014 reviewed the report of the Car Parking Scrutiny management panel. Cabinet agenda item 66 resolution no.5 stated that:

(i) working with the Loughborough Business Improvement District and, subject to funding being available, the Council continue to offer selective free parking initiatives within the Town Centre Car Parks;

(ii) that the Head of Regulatory Services be given delegated responsibility, in consultation with the Lead Member for Regulatory Services, to determine the extent of any free parking initiatives;

The Head of Regulatory Services has consulted the Lead Member for Regulatory Services, who agreed to the promotions for 2015 in line with the Cabinet recommendation.

The free parking promotions are recommended to encourage trade in Loughborough town centre thereby adding to the vitality of the Town. The initiative is in partnership with Loughborough Business Improvement District (BID) and parking initiatives are recommended in the 2012 Portas Report.

2015 initiatives have been set to coincide with existing town centre events thereby encouraging more visitors.

**Authority for Decision**

Section 8 of the Constitution contains authority to the Head of Regulatory Services to:

- use car parking promotions as an operational tool to encourage car users to park in Council town centre car parks when it is considered beneficial to the Council and the town (item 9 on page 8-25).

## **Decision and Date**

### **Background**

The Council historically responded to the Town Centre Partnership (TCP) and Chamber of Commerce requests to offer free or discounted parking in differing schemes. The Loughborough Business Improvement District (BID), was set up in 2012 and their objective is to look for initiatives to support and improve town centre trade and commerce.

In 2012 the Council won funding under the 'Portas' review for town centre regeneration. As part of Charnwood Borough Council's Portas Pilot application it stated the Council would continue to support car park promotions in order to improve the vitality of the town centre.

It is recognised that shoppers will not come to a town centre based solely on parking prices as the quality of the retail experience is paramount, however, there is an opportunity to work in partnership with local partners to add to this experience through parking initiatives and incentives schemes.

It is proposed to offer free parking on Sundays at town centre car park (excluding Browns Lane) thereby encouraging increased town centre trade, meeting the requests of local traders and enabling a promotional campaign by the Borough Council and Loughborough BID for local residents and traders. The proposed dates are tied into existing town centre events thereby encouraging uptake and maximising visitors to the town centre.

Charnwood Borough Council has worked with partners on previous initiatives including free summer Sundays, free after 3 and Christmas promotions since 2009 to encourage additional footfall to the town centre.

The Loughborough BID has worked with the Council to develop this parking initiative and have agreed to part fund the costs for the loss of income anticipated as a result of the scheme. The Council has information regarding typical current usage of the car parks on Sundays, and actual uptake of spaces can be measured in the 'Pay on Foot' car parks: Granby Street and Beehive Lane (uptake cannot be measured in the smaller 'pay and display' car parks.) The Council and the BID team will measure the success of the scheme by monitoring the uptake of spaces within the car parks and any anecdotal comments from the public and shop keepers.

### **Financial Implications**

The Loughborough BID, has confirmed they will make a financial contribution towards the cost of this initiative, so as to help part cover any potential loss of income, and in promoting the idea with businesses and the general public.

There will be an estimated loss of income from the car parks budget of approximately £700 per Sunday for free parking in all of the Council car parks based on current parking

trends. The estimated loss of income for Granby Street only is approximately £300 based on current trends. The Loughborough BID board has agreed to support this loss of income by making a contribution of £350 per Sunday for all car parks and £150 for Granby Street only to Charnwood Borough Council. Charnwood will cover the remaining loss of income estimated to be £350 and £150 respectively.

The total loss of income for the above events is estimated at £2,700 of which the BID has agreed to contribute £1,350 and the Council will cover the remaining loss. The promotions and resultant loss of income have already been accounted for in the 2015/16 budget.

The Council will monitor the use and income from the remaining town centre car parks during the promotion period. If there is any significant variation to car park figures during this period, the scheme will be reviewed.

### **Risk Management**

| Risk Identified                   | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Management Actions Planned   |
|-----------------------------------|------------|--------|---|
| Failure to obtain partner funding | L          | L      | Confirmed agreement of Loughborough Business Improvement District (BID), if not received then scheme will be cancelled. |

Key Decision: No

Background Papers: