

**Decision under Delegated Powers
Free Christmas Sunday Parking at Loughborough Car Parks 2014
(4 weeks approaching Christmas Day)**

Officer Requesting Decision

Street Scene 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 Sunday 30th November and 7th, 14th and 21st December 2014.

Reason

The free parking promotion is recommended to encourage Christmas 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.

Authority for Decision

Section 8 of the Constitution (last updated April 2014) contains authority to the Head of Regulatory Services to:

- provide, manage and maintain the Council's off-street car parks and in consultation with the Head of Paid Service, to manage staff parking arrangements (item 6 on page 8-26) and
- 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 8 on page 8-26).

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 the four Sundays leading up to Christmas and starting with the Christmas lights switch on. Charnwood Borough Council has worked with partners on previous 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 park 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.

Over the four week period there will be an estimated loss of income from the car parks budget of approximately £2,100 based on current parking trends. The Loughborough BID board has agreed to support this loss of income by making a contribution of £700 to Charnwood Borough Council. Charnwood will cover the remaining loss of income estimated to be £1,400.

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: