

Decision under Delegated Powers
Free Sunday Parking promotions at Loughborough Car Parks 2016

Officer Requesting Decision

Car Parks and Civil Enforcement Manager

Officer Making the Decision

Head of Regulatory Services

Recommendation

To approve the provision of free parking at Council car parks (except Browns Lane) for a maximum of 6 months on Sundays from 12 June 2016 to 18 Dec 2016. Street Management will work with the Loughborough BID to establish which car parks to offer the promotion i.e. Granby Street only or all car parks except Browns Lane and confirm the exact number of Sundays

Reason

Item 6 of the Council's cabinet on the 18th 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, Councillor Eric Vardy and Councillor David Hayes who agreed to the promotions for 2016 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.

2016 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.

The BID Team have approached the Council Street Management Service and proposed to offer jointly funded free parking on Sundays at town centre car parks (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. The following events are also scheduled during this period.

June:

Sunday 12th – Race for Life

Sunday 19th – Classic Car Show

Sunday 26th – Loughborough Twinning Event

July:

Sunday 31st – Loughborough by the Sea

August:

Sunday 14th – Loughborough Mela

November:

Sunday 27th – Christmas Lights switch on

December:

Sunday 4th – Santa Fun Run

Sunday 11th – Christmas event

Sunday 18th – Christmas event

The actual dates and number of Sundays will be finalised with the BID Team, but will be subject to a Maximum of a 6 month period.

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.

The proposals have been discussed with and agreed by the Lead Cabinet Members, Councillor Eric Vardy and Cllr David Hayes. This is subject to the maximum of 6 months.

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.

The estimated loss of income from the car parks budget over a period of 6 months is approximately £15,000 for Sundays based on current parking trends if all car parks are free.

The weekly loss of income is approximately £300 for Granby Street only and £700 if all car parks are free. It has been agreed to share the costs 50/50 between the Council and the BID. The loss of income from the Council, estimated at a maximum of £7,500 will be covered within existing budgets and Loughborough BID will be invoiced for the remaining 50%.

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: