

TITLE	Woodley Car Parking Trial Extension
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on 23 February 2017
WARD	None specific
DIRECTOR	Josie Wragg, Interim Director of Environment
LEAD MEMBER	Malcolm Richards, Executive Member for Highways and Transport

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

The Woodley Town Centre Management Initiative (WTCMI) proposed an alternative charging regime to the borough wide Evening and Sunday Charges during the public consultation. The WTCMI expressed concerns over the viability of the town during the hours of operation for the Evening and Sunday charges. This trial was aimed to see if the proposal was financially viable.

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive is asked to approve an extension of the current Woodley car parking trial until September 2017 including the increase of the 1 hour parking charge increase in the Woodley car parks (Crockhamwell Road, Headley Road, Lytham Road East, and Lytham Road West) from 70p to 80p which have been operating as part of the trial.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

This report requests that the trial of 1 hour daily rate parking charge increase in Woodley as proposed by the Woodley Town Centre Management Initiative is extended beyond March 2017 to allow further data to be collected.

Background

On the 17th May 2016, the council approved the implementation of Evening and Sunday Charges. In line with the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) legal process, which established the ability for the council to implement charging in car parks and enforce the compliance with these charges, the council followed consultation on the new charging regime. During the consultation, some groups expressed concerns about the impact on their communities. These concerns were addressed in the original report to the Executive and were fully considered at the time of the decision. The Woodley Town Centre Management Initiative (WTCMI) proposed an alternative to the Evening and Sunday Charges in Woodley which was considered potentially financially viable at the time. The proposal was to increase the 1 hour parking charge in the Woodley car parks (Crockhamwell Road, Headley Road, Lytham Road East, and Lytham Road West) from 70p to 80p instead of implementing Evening and Sunday Charges in these car parks. Although other alternative charging regimes were included in the consultation response, these were not considered further as they were not considered financially viable.

Whilst the WTCMI proposal was considered to have some merit, there was a risk that the proposal from the WTCMI may not deliver its financial expectations. Due to this Executive approved a trial on 28 July 2016, with a view to the reported results being brought back to the Executive in March 2017 in order to measure the income generated in comparison with that predicted in the Evening and Sunday Charging proposals.

Issues to be Considered

The Woodley Trial and Evening and Sunday Charges have been in operation for six months. While data has been collected during this period, initial analysis shows that further data is required to form a comprehensive picture of the trial including seasonal variations. It is proposed that when sufficient data has been collected and analysed that a further report will be brought to Executive with a recommendation of whether to make the Woodley Parking Trial permanent, or whether to revert to alternative proposal.

If the Executive does not resolve to extend the trial beyond March 2017, the council would be required by the 31 March 2016 Executive resolution to revoke the Woodley trial 10p charge increase and invoke the Evening and Sunday Charging that operates across the borough outside the Woodley trial area. This process would be completed via a 21-day notice period.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year from 1 st September 2016 to 31 st March 2017	£0k	Yes	Revenue

Next Financial Year (Year 2)- is trial period is extended into 2017/18	£0k	Yes	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)- if trial period extended and continued into 2018/19	£0k	Yes	Revenue

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

If the trial is not extended then the Sunday and Evening Charging regime would be brought into operation which operates elsewhere across the borough. Both options are designed to bring in the same level of income to the Council; therefore there are no financial implications associated with this decision.

Cross-Council Implications

None

List of Background Papers

31 March 2016 Executive Report - Introduction of Sunday and Evening Charging
 28 July 2016 Executive Report – Woodley Car Parking Trial

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