

Agenda Item 44.

TITLE	Woodley Car Parking Trial
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on 28 September 2017
WARD	None specific
DIRECTOR	Josie Wragg. Interim Director of Environment
LEAD MEMBER	Chris Bowring Executive Member for Highways and Transport

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Woodley Town Centre Management Initiative (WTCMI) proposed an alternative charging regime to the borough wide Evening and Sunday Charges during the public consultation in 2016. WTCMI expressed concerns over the viability of Woodley 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

To approve an extension of the current Woodley car parking trial beyond 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) to the end of January 2018.

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 to the end of January 2018 to allow further data to be collected from the trial.

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 concern 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 borough wide 2016 consultation response, these were not progressed 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. A report came back to Executive on 23 February 2017 which concluded the data from the trial had not provided a full 12 months seasonal data and was therefore considered inclusive. The 23 February 2017 report recommended a further 6 month extension to the trial to September 2017, which was approved.

Issues for consideration

Woodley Car Parking trial has been operating since September 2016 and is due to expire in September 2017, when it would revert to the Sunday and Evening charging that operates elsewhere in the borough without a further Executive decision to extend or make permanent the current trial.

Due to these timescales it is now recommended that the current Woodley Car Parking trial is extended to the end of January 2018, to allow further data to be collected and analysed over a full year, and be factored into a future permanent decision relating to Woodley.

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 from the end of September 2017, which operates elsewhere across the borough. Both options are designed and forecast 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
 23 February 2017 Executive Report – Woodley Car Parking Trial

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