

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**HIGHWAYS AND NEIGHBOURHOODS
CABINET MEMBER**

'GO TO TOWN' INITIATIVE – FREE PARKING

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet Member approval to introduce temporary free parking, as part of the 'Go to Town' initiative, being run in partnership with the Scunthorpe Telegraph.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Car parking charges are in place on all of the council's pay and display surface car parks, and the Parishes multi storey car park, seven days per week.
- 2.2 In order to help local businesses, the council introduced free parking for one or two hours in a number of car parks in September 2011. This was followed, in May 2012, by the relaxation of charges after 3.00 pm in further car parks.
- 2.3 The council is now launching another new initiative to further help local businesses over the Christmas period. For the first time, vouchers will be made available through the Telegraph newspaper providing additional free parking. This should encourage even more visits to the local town centres. This latest initiative would operate between 22 November 2012 and 22 January 2013. This should give a boost to both the pre-Christmas trade and January sales.
- 2.4 This report is urgent as an immediate decision is needed to meet deadlines for the Telegraph.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 The Cabinet Member has the option of either approving the initiative or not.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 The proposed initiative would require the Scunthorpe Telegraph to print two different vouchers each week. These would entitle readers to some free parking in Scunthorpe, Ashby and Brigg, over the following seven days.
- 4.2 One of the vouchers would be valid for the following Saturday and Sunday, in any 'pay and display' car park in Scunthorpe, Ashby and Brigg. Displaying the voucher in the vehicle windscreen would exempt the driver from car parking charges for the whole of that day.
- 4.3 The other voucher would be valid in the Parishes multi storey car park. It would provide two hours' free parking, on one occasion, at any time during the following week (Thursday to Wednesday). It would be a requirement that the driver surrendered their voucher at the car park office. The cost to park for two hours in this car park is £1.50, so this amount would be deducted from their total parking fee.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Finance

- 5.1.1 It is difficult to predict how many drivers will make use of the vouchers. Based on usage figures for the same period last year, if 50% of drivers used the vouchers, it could cost in the region of £67,000. This does not take account of drivers who previously parked during the week, who may now visit at the weekend. There would be a £250 charge to update the parking software and £2,700 incurred in extra staffing costs (see below).

5.2 Staffing

- 5.2.1 In order to refund the parking fees at the Parishes multi storey car park, it is anticipated it will be necessary for another member of staff to be present during busy periods. This would cost approximately £2,700.

5.3 Property and IT

- 5.3.1 There are no property or IT implications to this report.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)

6.1 Statutory, Environmental, Diversity, Crime and Disorder

- 6.1.1 There are no statutory, environmental, diversity or crime and disorder implications to this report.

6.2 Risk/Other

6.2.1 Drivers should be encouraged to display their voucher to avoid receiving a penalty charge notice.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

7.1 The council understands the importance of supporting local retailers and the 'Go to Town' initiative will maximise the potential revenue benefits of the Christmas and New Year period. There is a real opportunity to work with businesses in this manner and it would be hoped that they would maximise their opening hours to assist with this initiative.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That the Cabinet Member approves the 'Go to Town' free parking initiative to operate between 22 November 2012 and 22 January 2013.

DIRECTOR OF PLACES

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Previous usage statistics held by Parking Services