
EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON 1 DECEMBER 2011

EEOSP.74/11 CAR PARKING STUDY

The Assistant Director (Local Environment) (Ms Culleton) presented report LE.27/11 that considered the results of the Car Parking Study. The report was considered as an addendum to the Local Environment Charging Report and included a new car parking charging structure approved by Executive on 22 November 2011.

The study had confirmed the decline in off-street parking revenues and estimated that there would be a shortfall in Pay and Display ticket sales as well as contract revenues. The study considered a number of questions concerning the division of long and short stay car parking demand, opportunities for alternative use for under-utilised parking space, the impact of alternative methods of charging, new technologies, tariff structure modifications and alternative tariffs for special events. The study also considered whether tariffs were sufficiently flexible to encourage maximum demand, whether parking services were sufficiently differentiated to help maximise revenues when appropriate, whether parking operations were sufficiently responsive to the private sector, whether car park demand was impacted by alternative parking opportunities and whether the quality of parking services could be improved.

The Assistant Director (Local Environment) stated that the Council's key objective was to provide a parking service that met the needs and aspirations of the local community. It was suggested, for reasons outlined within the report, that the tariff setting be disengaged from the Medium Term Financial Plan and realigned with the current parking market. It was believed that that would help to promote and achieve other stated objectives for parking policy and therefore bring about other benefits for the City. It was proposed that tactical pricing to attract a greater proportion of long stay parking could be the way forward. It was felt that commuter parkers were likely to continue to use a car park daily when it was felt to meet their requirements and expectations of reasonable cost. An increase in the number of contract parkers would also inherently mean that a degree of customer loyalty had been achieved for the Council's car park over the duration of the contract. It was felt that that approach was aligned with the current parking policy to encourage commuters to use the main access route car parks, rather than head into the City to seek out alternative parking.

As there were factors to be taken into consideration that would be part of the presentation to be delivered later in the meeting it was agreed that consideration of the car parking study would be made at that point.

A Member raised concerns that the study would not be discussed in public and questioned the Council's purpose for the car parks. The Chairman assured the Member

that the decisions would be made public. A Member suggested that a PR statement could be released informing the public of the discussion that had taken place and the decisions reached.