



**REPORT of
DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITY**

**to
COUNCIL
13 JULY 2017**

PERMIT FOR SCHOOL PARENTS PARKING

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report is to propose a new permit for Maldon Court School. The permit will enable parents to pre pay for the use of a Council car park for picking up and dropping off their children at school.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) that a new parking permit for parents of children attending Maldon Court School be introduced for parking in the Council White Horse Lane car park for a standard term of 38 weeks costing £200 per academic year. The Permit cost will be linked to the one hour parking charge and be subject to any future variation in parking charges;
- (ii) that the Council's Fees and Charges for 2017 / 18 be updated, accordingly;
- (iii) that the new arrangements commence at the start of the Autumn term, 5 September 2017 for a two year trial period and until then the current informal arrangements continue during term time (ending July 2017).

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 As part of the 2017 / 18 budget setting process it was agreed the existing 'informal' free use of the Council car parks by parents to drop off and pick up school children should be withdrawn (Minute No. 768 refers). This privilege had applied to three schools: St Francis Catholic Primary School, Maldon Court Preparatory School and the Watership Downs Nursery School. As a consequence the car park users were advised to purchase tickets for the period of their stay or purchase a standard £580 permit which enables them to park at any time.
- 3.2 Following the decision the three schools were written to advising that from the commencement of the summer term (18 April 2017) those parents using the Council car parks would have to pay the same minimum £1 rate as other users of the car parks for each stay. There were ten complaints from the Preparatory School and none from the other two schools regarding this decision. Some of the complainants accept that there should be a charge for the use of the car park but think that the £580 tariff is too high. From the responses received, the speedy nature of the morning drop off was felt

important by parents and that they did not have to go to the machine and pay each time, a permit would facilitate this. Some parents indicated they would be prepared to pay for a more appropriately priced permit.

- 3.3 It was proposed to the Community Services Committee meeting on 11 April 2017 that a permit for £200 per academic year be offered to each parent of the schools (detailed in paragraph 3.1 above). The proposal was not approved at the meeting (Minute No. 1182 refers) stating:

'the Council does not make available parking permits to parents of children attending Maldon schools to use in Council car parks and the Finance and Corporate Services Committee be advised accordingly'.

- 3.4 This decision resulted in further objections by the staff and parents of Maldon Court School.

- 3.5 The matter was then discussed at the Finance and Corporate Services Committee meeting on 26 April 2017 where it was resolved that:

- (i) the Finance and Corporate Services Committee support, in principle, a parking permit for parents of children attending Maldon schools;
- (ii) the Director of Customers and Community be requested to work up the proposal for a parking permit for parents of children attending Maldon schools in consultation with Members of the Community Services Committee and this be brought forward to the July meeting of the Council for consideration;
- (iii) the current informal arrangements for free use of the Council's car parks by parents to drop off and pick up school children be extended to end July 2017.

- 3.6 Further to the meeting of the Finance and Corporate Services Committee the available parking facilities at the schools and in the surrounding areas have been re assessed by Officers. It is evident that there is no ability to legally park, drop off or pick up at or near to the Maldon Court School, but it is feasible to do this at the other schools previously offered informal drop off and collection parking. This implies that other schools would be able to work with South Essex Parking Partnership to introduce the 3PR (Parking Rules) project as presented to Members of the Community Services Committee at 23 May 2017 meeting.

3.7 **3PR Project**

- 3.7.1 This is a project which has been developed by South Essex Parking Partnership, of which Maldon is a partner, to encourage considerate and safe parking around schools by parents at drop off and pick up times. An information pack has been created; this is given to the schools by the 3PR project co-ordinator or is accessible online. It involves the pupils and teachers monitoring parking and provides reward tokens for good parking by parents / carers. The tokens are collected by each class and counted resulting in the winners becoming parking champions.
- 3.7.2 This project is only successful where there are opportunities for parents to park a little further away from the school to avoid congestion and the associated problems.

Maldon Court School is unique in that it does not have this option whereas others schools do.

3.8 **Community Services Committee – 4 July 2017**

3.8.1 The Community Services Committee considered a report of the Director of Customers and Community on this matter seeking the Committees comments on the proposal to introduce a new permit scheme.

3.8.2 Following a debate it was agreed that:

- (i) *the contents of Appendix 1 (the report to the Council) be noted and amended prior to being presented to the Council to include explanation of the 3 Parking Rules Project;*
- (ii) *the Council be recommended to introduce a new permit scheme specifically designed to address a parking issue associated with Maldon Court School.*

4. **CONCLUSION**

4.1 The proposal for a schools parking permit is only applicable to the Maldon Court School due to the unique parking issues identified. The introduction of a school specific permit would enable parents to park in the Council’s White Horse Lane car park for 30 minutes at the start and finish of a normal school day. The cost of the permit will be at a rate which is reflective of their minimal use and in line with existing charges. The new permit system will be administered directly by the Council to parents to maintain control.

4.2 It is proposed that the permit is trialled for two academic years commencing September 2017 in order to assess its popularity.

4.3 In accordance with the recommendation from the April 2017 Finance and Corporate Services Committee, the Community Services Committee was consulted on this matter (being responsible for the operation of the Councils Car Parks) on 4 July and Members will be updated on views expressed at the meeting of Council.

5. **IMPACT ON CORPORATE GOALS**

5.1 This report links to the Corporate Goal of delivering good quality cost effective and valued services

6. **IMPLICATIONS**

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – The Council has adopted a ‘fair use’ and ‘user pays’ principle for its car parks recently introducing both evening and weekend charges. Feedback from parents affected seems to indicate a willingness to pay for parking but any charge should reflect the time spent in the car park and be convenient to use.

- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – No issues identified.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – None identified.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – The cost of the permit reflects the use of the parking spaces and a small administrative charge is included within the cost of the permit.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – Existing staff will administer and enforce the new permit. An administrative charge will be included within the permit to cover any additional costs.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – No issues identified.

Background Papers: None.

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