

Report to: **Executive**

Date: **22 April 2021**

Title: **Motorhome Policy**

Portfolio Area: **Environment Services (Cllr Keith Baldry)**

Wards Affected: **All**

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Date next steps can be taken: Upon the expiry of the call-in period

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RECOMMENDATION:

That the Executive be RECOMMENDED to approve variation of the off street parking orders, by the Head of Assets in consultation with the Commercial Portfolio Holder and Leader of the Council to allow overnight sleeping within designated car parks as set out in Option B.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 With the ever-increasing numbers of motorhomes/campervan users opting to use car parks and other locations for overnight stays in the South Hams, this report identifies opportunities to amend car park operations and makes recommendations relating to overnight sleeping within our off-street car parks.
- 1.2 The outcome from this report are:
1. To introduce a motorhome/campervan (max length 8 metres) policy that permits overnight sleeping for a maximum stay of two consecutive nights only with a no return within 48 hours in nominated car parks.
 2. To apply an overnight tariff of £15 (maximum use of two parking bays) from 6pm until 9am for those choosing to stay within the car park

3. The Off Street Parking Places Order is amended to permit overnight sleeping in nominated car parks only

1.3 The recommendations will enable the Council to continue to manage off-street parking in an efficient and effective manner whilst taking the opportunity to promote tourism and maximise the potential benefits to our local economy.

2. Background

2.1 A motorhome/campervan is defined as 'a motor vehicle which is constructed or adapted for the carriage of passengers or their effect and which contains as permanently installed equipment, the facilities which are reasonably necessary for enabling the vehicle to provide living accommodation for its users'.



2.2 The number of motorhomes have been increasing in recent years with the Campaign for Real Aires UK (CAMpRA) stating there are 357,000 registered motorhomes in the UK.

2.3 The caravan and motorhome industry is worth £6 billion per year to the UK's economy. The Caravan and Motorhome Club states £4 million is spent by Club members off site in local tourism economies annually. CAMpRA states the average daily spend of a motorhome user excluding fuel is £47.

2.4 Motorhomes/campervans are currently permitted to park in allocated car parks (Longmarsh, Cattlemarket, Leonards Road, Park & Ride and Poundwell Meadow overflow car park) provided a pay & display ticket is purchased for each bay in which they park. However, overnight sleeping/camping is not permitted in any of our off street car parks as stipulated in our Off Street Parking Places Order.

2.5 The relaxation of some of the restriction originally put in place as part of the Covid 19 lockdown led to a fairly marked and immediate increase in numbers of visitors to the area and in particular our coastal locations. We saw an ever-increasing

number of motorhome/campervan users opting to use car parks and other locations for overnight stays in the South Hams. This did create some tensions in areas such as Slapton.

2.6 Notwithstanding this, motorhome/campervan usage has the potential to deliver the following benefits:

- Improved local tourism industry
- Increased local spend
- Extended tourist season

2.7 It should also be noted the negative impact can be as follows:

- Illegal dumping
- Increased traffic
- Increased antisocial behaviour

2.8 This report reviews our current policy and identifies a system of rules and regulations required to ensure locations are effectively managed to allow the benefits identified above to be realised.

2.9 There is currently no national guidance for local authorities in the UK regarding the development of motorhome facilities, nor is there a consistent approach nationally. There is however, an opportunity for the Council to be accessible to this sector of the tourist industry and provide a motorhome/campervan policy for the South Hams within its Council operated car parks.

2.10 Local Authorities in Devon who have made provisions for motorhomes include (but may not be limited to):

Council	Number of Car Parks Applies	Cost to Park Overnight	Maximum number of nights stay	Number of overnight stays generated	Income Generated
Torridge District Council	5	£5 per night per parking space between 6pm and 10am	2 consecutive nights	unknown	unknown
East Devon District Council	2	£11 for 24 hours	3 consecutive nights	362 transactions 2019/20	£3982

2.11 East Devon District Council have just completed a pilot which commenced in 2018. The scheme has largely been a success. They are currently reviewing their pricing and are exploring the

possibilities of creating dedicated motorhome/campervan pitches within a site with appropriate facilities to allow longer stays.

3. Outcomes/outputs

To manage the provision of motorhome parking within our off street car parks, there are three proposed options to be considered;

3.1 Option A – Retain Current Policy of No Overnight Sleeping

Currently, motorhomes are only permitted within our car parks for parking provided they fit within a marked bay or within the nominated motorhome car parks (Longmarsh, Cattlemarket, Leonards Road, Park & Ride and Poundwell Meadow overflow car park) and they purchase pay & display tickets for each bay in which they are parked. No overnight sleeping is permitted.

3.2 Option B – Permit Overnight Sleeping in Nominated Car Parks

Those car parks which have been selected as suitable locations for overnight sleeping are set out in the table below.

Town	Car Park	No of Parking Spaces	No of Litter Bins	Lighting	Nearest Public Toilets	Close to local amenities	Notes
a.Ivybridge	Leonards Car Park	187 car parking spaces	1	8	Glanvilles Mill pay on entry toilets available all year round and located in the car park below Leonards Road	Short distance from the main centre of the town	
b. Kingsbridge	Quay Car Park Southern Area Only	Approx. 25 spaces	3	3	Quay toilets located approximately 200 metres away however, closed at night due to vandalism	Very short walk to centre of Kingsbridge main street	
c.Kingsbridge	Cattlemarket Car Park	115 car parking spaces, 2 motorcycle bays and 4 coach bays	2	1	Quay toilets located approximately 200 metres away however, closed at night due to vandalism	Very short walk to centre of Kingsbridge main street	access path leads from cattlemarket to Quay

d.Modbury	Poundwell Meadow Overflow Car Park	48 car parking spaces	1	7	Brownstone Street toilets located approximately 200 metres away open all year round 24/7	very short distance to the main high street	Car park leads to a public right of way which is popular with walkers
e.Totnes	Longmarsh Car Park	167 car parking spaces	2	2	Steamer Quay toilets open daily between 7am and 6pm	Short walk to the centre of the town	located away from residential area
f.Dartmouth	Park & Ride Car Park	approx 167 parking spaces	1	3	Toilets located on site but only open March - October in line with the P&R service operating		
g. Slapton	Memorial Car Park	Approx. 70 bays plus unmarked bays	3	0	Toilets located at Torcross Tank and Strete Gate	Pub & cafes located 1.5 miles from the car park	Car Park heavily used in the summer months
h.Torcross	Torcross Tank Car Park – restricted to coach bays only	86 car parking spaces and 5 coach bays	2	none	Torcross Tank toilets located within the car park which are open 24/7	pub, cafes and beach located on opposite side of the road	Car Park heavily used during the summer. Parking for motorhomes should be within the coach bays only
i.Salcombe	North Sands Car Park	82 Car Parking Spaces	2	none	North Sands toilets located short walk from the car park which are open 24/7	Winking prawn located next to the car park	Car Park heavily used during the summer.

3.2.1 Memorial Car Park, Slapton

- Following a significant demand for overnight parking at Memorial car park, Slapton it is recognised that we wish to effectively manage overnight sleeping whilst providing the opportunity to enjoy this location.
- For the period of the 12 month pilot, the height barrier would be lifted to allow **only** self contained (**ie must have on board toilet**) motorhomes to overnight sleep within the car park.

- Should we experience antisocial behaviour at this car park, the Council reserves the right to reinstate the height barrier and prevent overnight sleeping without notice or further consultation.
- Signage will be in place to clarify the rules and ensure the clear messaging.
- Evening patrols will be carried out to ensure only motorhomes with on board facilities are parking in the car park and the code of conduct is being adhered to. Vehicles without toilet facilities will be asked to move on, to a more appropriate location with facilities.

At the time of writing, the Parishes of Slapton, Strete and Stokenham are yet to formally consider this location for inclusion in the Pilot Scheme. A verbal update can be provided at the Executive's request during the course of this item.

3.2.2 The criteria for considering car parks where overnight sleeping would be permitted is as follows:

- a) Size and location of the car park
- b) Proximity to public toilets
- c) Provisions within the car park eg lighting, bins
- d) Proximity to local amenities ie restaurants, shops etc
- e) Accessibility
- f) Motorhome parking is permitted during the day and evening

3.2.3 The cost of local campsites with facilities for overnight camping it ranges from £12-£22 per night. Therefore, an overnight tariff of £15.00 per night for a car park stopover would be introduced. It also takes into consideration other local authority charging for motorhome/campervan overnight stays.

3.2.4 The overnight tariff would permit overnight sleeping from 6pm until 9am, with permitted parking across two parking bays only. Tickets would be purchased from the pay & display machine or through the Ringgo cashless payment system.

3.2.5 The Off Street Parking Places Order would require amendment to allow overnight sleeping in nominated car parks only and to introduce an overnight parking tariff. This would involve a 21 day consultation with the public.

3.2.6 Terms and conditions would be:

- a maximum stay of two consecutive nights only with a no return within 48 hours
- a maximum length of 8 metres (restricts parking to two parking bays only. It should be noted 96% of motorhomes are 8m or less) and
- a minimum distance of 6 metres must be maintained between motorhomes (best practice for fire safety)

- 3.2.7 An alphanumeric keypad would be installed on the pay & display machines in the nominated car parks to allow Civil Enforcement Officers to manage the maximum stay of two consecutive night restriction.
- 3.2.8 Clear signage would be erected within the car parks stating the terms and conditions of overnight sleeping which would include the maximum permitted stay, making it clear fines will apply should contraventions occur and we would encourage users to behave in the appropriate manner and respect their surroundings.
- 3.2.9 The Council would adopt a code of conduct for motorhomes users which would include:
- Leave no trace in respect of rubbish
 - Careful and respectful parking
 - Don't overcrowd a site
 - Don't overstay your welcome
 - Actively support the local economy
 - Payment of all required charges
- 3.2.10 The usual contraventions of the car park would still apply for overnight stays, such as the prohibition of any open cooking or fires within the car park. Motorhomes would not be permitted to put out awnings, BBQs, tables, generators etc
- 3.2.11 No additional provisions will be provided however, public toilet provisions are generally located within close proximity of the car park.
- 3.2.12 Many motorhomes can go several days between needing to empty and refill waste and fresh tanks. Therefore, there is not a requirement to provide all these services for the maximum time we are permitting.
- 3.2.13 A similar scheme to the above has been in operation in East Devon and Torridge with reports of enhancing businesses within the local area.
- 3.2.14 This policy would attract self-contained (contain onboard facilities) motorhomes who require short term overnight sleeping whilst on route to dedicated campsites with facilities or those who are touring with minimum time spent in any one area.
- 3.2.15 Option B would be operated as a pilot for up to 12 months but at least for the 2021 Summer season to allow review of the success of the policy and to evaluate whether the policy should:

- i. No longer permit overnight sleeping within our car parks
- ii. Continue under Option B
- iii. Recommend further enhancement of facilities as identified in Option C

3.3 **Option C – Provision of Additional Facilities**

If the trial for overnight sleeping in designated car parks is successful, officers could give long term consideration into providing additional facilities which would enhance the appeal to users. These may include:

- a) Waste disposal (black/grey waste)
- b) Electrical hook up
- c) Showers
- d) Drinking water provision
- e) Enhanced waste disposal
- f) Dedicated marked bays within the car park

3.3.1 This option would require a further report to be brought back to the Executive. It is suggested this is following the trial of overnight parking.

3.3.2 Should enhanced facilities be provided, planning and licencing requirements would need to be considered.

3.3.3 This report would assess the success of the trial and provide fully costed options which may be available.

3.3.4 Installation of facilities can be extremely costly so we would need to ensure the pilot scheme was a success before committing capital spend. For example a chemical disposal units ranging from £320 - £680.



3.3.5 A cost-benefit analysis would therefore have to be carried out prior to proceeding with extending the policy.

4. Options Available and Consideration of Risk

- 4.1 The proposals to allow overnight sleeping within the nominated car parks does have potential risks which need to be considered.
- 4.2 These risks include:
- Increased waste generated within the car parks and not disposed of correctly
 - With toilets with limited operational hours those that do not have self-contained units may choose to toilet outside
 - Chemical toilets may be disposed of through the public toilets blocking systems
 - Increased antisocial behaviour eg noise
 - Excessive number of motorhomes may create blind spots and fire hazards

These risks will be monitored in all car parks throughout the trial period proposed.

- 4.3 The proposals will be the subject of a 21 day consultation exercise and, if necessary, concerns will be reported back to the Executive before the Parking Order is amended.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 The proposed way forward is to permit overnight sleeping in nominated car parks but provide no facilities (other than use of existing public toilets) and charge an over tariff of £15.00 per night for a maximum stay of two consecutive nights.
- 5.2 The proposed changes should be made to amend the Off Street Parking Places Order in accordance with the recommendations.
- 5.3 Should the Recommendations be accepted, the following steps will occur:
- a. 21 day consultation commence to which customers will be alerted by notice in the local press, on the Council's website and in all affected car parks.
This will allow customers to make comments on and/or objections to the proposals, should they wish to do so.
 - b. If a significant number of representations were to be received, the matter would be referred to the Executive for further consideration,
 - c. Otherwise, the detailed implementation of the recommendations should be delegated to the Head of Assets in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for car parking for implementation.

5.4 This proposal fits with the following priorities:

- Council
- Communities
- Environment

6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	<p>The Council has power to provide and to regulate off-street car parks under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 set out the procedures to be followed before and after making any order regulating the use of car parks.</p>
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	Y	<p>It is anticipated that allowing overnight sleeping within the nominated car parks could generate an additional £15,360 per annum income. (Based on 4 users per car park per week for 32 weeks of the year at £15.00 per user).</p> <p>To install the alphanumeric keypads on the pay & display machines will cost £9,022.</p> <p>Additional signage costs – approximately £75 per sign.</p> <p>Additional overtime resource will be required to enforce the carparks.</p> <p>Additional emptying of bins and street cleansing could be required at busy sites in the peak summer season.</p> <p>The cost of implementing the changes will be met from the car parking budget.</p> <p>The difference between the income and expenditure on Off Street Car Parking is used to support costs associated with the operation and maintenance of parking services, its infrastructure and the maintenance of off street car parks. It is also used to support and provide other Council services such as street cleansing, toilets, parks and</p>

		open spaces and other lawfully incurred identified expenditure.
Risk		Without a structured policy, the Council could risk the potential for maintaining and improving parking provisions, which could jeopardise town centre vitality. There is a risk that without a clear policy for motorhome/campervan users the challenges and issues felt last year will continue to be repeated. There is a risk that a significant number of objections to the proposals may be received, which would postpone any implementation, as the objections would have to be considered by the Executive ahead of any changes.
Supporting Corporate Strategy		Council Communities Environment
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact	Y	There are no negative impacts. There may be small positive impacts with customers considering alternative means of transport or care sharing.
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity		No implications.
Safeguarding		No implications.
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		No implications.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		No implications.
Other implications		None at this stage.

Supporting Information

Appendices:

Appendix A- example of car park signage

Background Papers:

None