
Report to: **Executive**

Date: **28 June 2023**

Title: **Dartmouth Health Hub – Off-Street Parking Order Amendment**

Portfolio Area: **Community Services and Operations - Cllr Victor Abbott**

Wards Affected: **Dartmouth**

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

Date next steps can be taken: After the call in period for Executive

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Executive is RECOMMENDED to:

- 1. Approve the following amendments to the South Hams District Council (Off-Street Parking Places)(Variation No.1) Order 2022:**
 - i. A new car park to be named as Dartmouth Health Hub Car Park and incorporated into the Order**
 - ii. Introduce pay and display charges at the Dartmouth Health Hub Car Park in accordance with Appendix A**
 - iii. Amend the pay & display charges in Dartmouth Park & Ride Car Park in accordance with Appendix B**
 - iv. Introduce Dartmouth Health Hub Car Park Reserved Parking Permit for Health Hub staff use only**
 - v. Introduce eight free one hour only parking bays within the car park**
- 2. Approve the variation to the Off Street Parking Order to reflect amended recommendations as above for introduction as soon as the order is complete.**

1 Executive summary

- 1.1 Following the closure of the hospital and Dartmouth Clinic, the Council worked in partnership with the NHS Trust to provide a key health facility. This was to ensure residents in Dartmouth had access to a modern GP facility. This provides significant health care benefits to the population of Dartmouth and the surrounding parishes and improves the capacity for health care which was under strain.
- 1.2 In accordance with good practice, the health care facility was able to be located alongside leisure facilities, due to the location of the Council's land holdings, facilitating improved preventative care measures.
- 1.3 In July 2019, the Council approved the funding for Dartmouth Health and Wellbeing Hub construction project in the Council's capital programme, and it has now reached completion. A parking order is required to regulate the new short stay car park for the facility.
- 1.4 A previous report considered by the Executive at its meeting on 18th July 2019 anticipated that the car park would be a pay & display car park and suitable tariffs would be derived that are compatible with the facility and the adjacent long stay Park & Ride Car Park.
- 1.5 On 2nd March 2023, the Executive agreed to give notice of the proposals to amend the South Hams District Council (Off-Street Parking Places)(Variation No1) Order 2022 detailed in the report considered by the Executive and to seek the views of the public on such proposals (Min. E.89/22 refers).
- 1.6 The main objective of the consultation was to seek views on the introduction of:
 - I. Pay & display charges at the newly created Dartmouth Health Hub Car Park
 - II. Amend the pay & display charges in the Dartmouth Park & Ride Car Park
 - III. Introduce Dartmouth Health Hub Car Park Reserved Parking Permit for Health Hub staff use
- 1.7 The public consultation concluded on Thursday 30th March 2023. During the period, 53 responses were received, of which 52 were formal objections and 1 supported the proposals. See Appendix F. The response rate to this consultation was very low given the size of the cohort of people who were consulted.
- 1.8 Dartmouth Health Hub as of 30th September 2022 had 8051 registered patients as per the patient online management information (POMI) system' source:healthGPS.

- 1.9 The table below shows a summary of the 53 responses which have been identified into common 'themes' with the objections raised

Objects to cost of parking with suggestion of free parking, reduced tariffs, concession for Blue Badge Holders	45
Objects to cost of parking and concerns of parking in residential areas as a consequence	3
Objects to cost of parking and cost of Permits for Staff	4
Support proposal	1

- 1.10 Having comprehensively reviewed the objections received, and listened to feedback from the community and through representation made by the Council ward members, a change to the scheme as consulted upon is recommended.
- 1.11 Recognising the specific nature and location of this car park, and its primary purpose to support a local health care provision, it is recommended that eight, one hour only free parking spaces are introduced. In doing so, many people wishing to visit the doctors will be able to do so free of charge.
- 1.12 This is in addition to the extra free hour that all blue badge holders benefit from when they purchase any parking ticket in all our car parks.
- 1.13 Legal advice has been sought with regards to the requirement to reconsult on these proposals, and it is advised that this change does not require a reconsultation and can be implemented.
- 1.14 The Notice of Making will be advertised informing of the decision in the local press, car parks and website in relation to the car parks as in Appendix A, B and D.

2. Background

- 2.1 At the meeting on 2nd March 2023, the Executive resolved to undertake a 21 day public consultation before making a decision as to implement the proposed amendments to the Off-Street Parking Order.
- 2.2 The Council has a legal obligation to undertake a statutory consultation and advertise the appropriate amendments to the

Off Street Parking Order before implementing any changes to parking arrangements, including fees and charges.

- 2.3 The proposed tariffs were arrived at having considered the predicted trip rates, adjacent car parking usage and type and the Executive approval in 2019. Furthermore, the NHS Trust were consulted who confirmed the proposals to be inline with what they would expect in similar car park sites.
- 2.4 24 parking bays are allocated to the NHS as part of the lease of the Hub. We understand these will be used by medical centre staff only (includes parking provision for Dartmouth Caring and 2 GP on call bays).
- 2.5 This provision will be managed by the NHS in accordance with their permit policy for staff.
- 2.6 The 21 day public consultation commenced on Thursday 9th March 2023 with the closing date for responses being Thursday 30th March 2023.
- 2.7 Residents were informed of the consultation by the following methods:
 - Notices advertised in the local press
 - Notices displayed in all our South Hams District Council car parks
 - Council website
 - Social media platforms

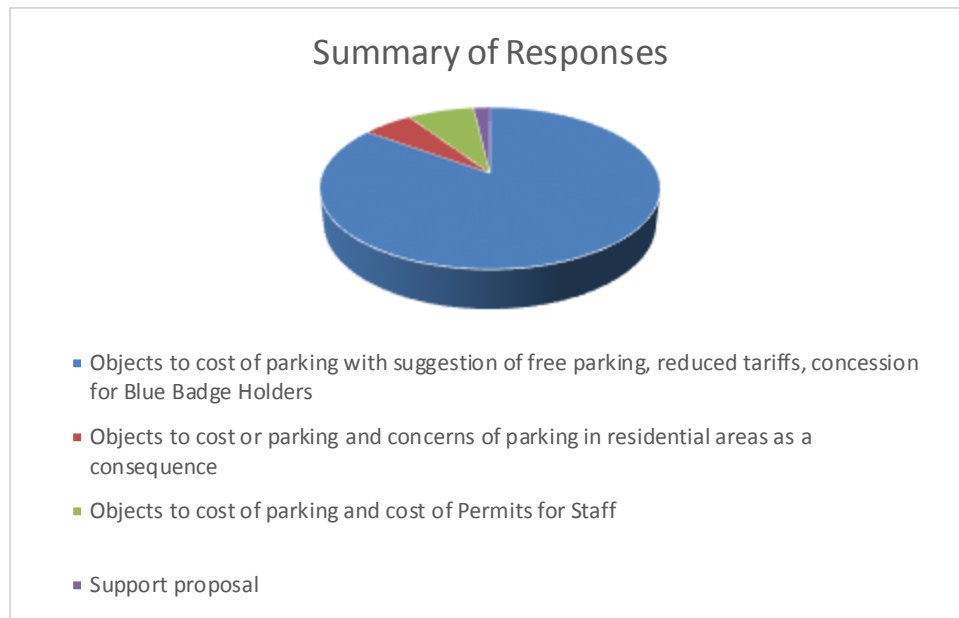
3. Outcomes

- 3.1 The Council received 53 responses to the consultation. Of the 53 responses received 52 objected to the introduction of pay & display charges and permit charges at the Dartmouth Health Hub Car Park only and only 1 supported the proposals.
- 3.2 In summary the objections related to the charges being implemented at Dartmouth Health Hub Car Park only and all objections mention the principle of paying to park to visit a health and wellbeing services as the main objection. The responses can be grouped as the following 'themes':
 - **Charging to Access Health & Wellbeing Services**- The majority of the responses mention in their objection the principle of being charged to park when visiting the medical centre. Suggestions included a period of free parking, concessions for Blue Badge Holders or a reduction in the tariffs proposed.
 - **Concerns of Parking in Residential Areas** – There were concerns that charging to park could encourage visitors to

the medical centre to park in residential streets to avoid parking charges, causing congestion.

- **Cost of Permits**- It was suggested parking permits should be free to NHS staff.

3.3 The proportion of responses per theme is shown in the pie chart below:



4. Options Available

- 4.1 The car parking tariff as originally consulted upon met the high level objectives agreed at the Executive in July 2019, so as to fund the cost of the borrowing used to fund the car park construction.
- 4.2 As set out within the Council report of 11 February 2021, the business case for the Council undertaking borrowing for the car parking provision, was based on an estimated construction price of £500,000. The annual additional car parking income was conservatively estimated at £35,000 per annum, with an estimated pay back period of the £500,000 borrowing of approximately 14 years.
- 4.3 Recognising the community aspiration to allow free parking for GPs visits, whilst balancing the need to repay the borrowing, the tariff has been amended as set out above. Introducing eight free one hour parking bays will have a revenue impact of approximately £10,000 per annum which is a cost that the Council will need to absorb.

- 4.4 The exact usage of the car park and how it interacts with the Park and Ride, the Leisure Centre Car Park, and the multiple free car parks in the vicinity will need to be monitored closely.
- 4.5 The option to amend the parking tariffs in the future, to ensure that the facility, visitors and the community are well served by the parking facility should be considered, if the monitoring of usage shows that this is not the case.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 Having reviewed the objections received, and recognising the exceptional nature of this car park and its primary purpose to support a local health care provision in this instance only we have introduced eight, one hour only free parking spaces.
- 5.2 The anticipated reduction of income of £10,000 / yr will be managed across the wider Council budget. Had this been included in the original business case from 2021, the repayment on construction costs would be pushed out from 14 years to 20.
- 5.3 Legal advice has been sought with regards to any requirement to reconsult. Due to there being no fundamental difference to the revised proposal ie offering eight, one hour only free parking bays with all other charges remaining the same thereafter, there is no requirement to reconsult.
- 5.4 The parking charges and car park operation will continue to be reviewed in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder to ensure the parking tariffs and operations suit the needs of the medical centre and the park & ride operation.
- 5.5 The delivery of the Dartmouth Health Hub and infrastructure improvements are key actions in the Better Lives for All Thematic Delivery Plan (Action CW1.2 and TE1.8 respectively). Regulation of the car park ensures that parking is made available on a basis that should ensure that parking is available for those wishing to use the Hub. The provision of electric charging points in the car park contributes Action AM1.5 of the Thematic Delivery Plan.

6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	
Legal/Governance	Y	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.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	Y	The financial implications are set out in Section 4. Introducing eight free one hour parking bays will have a revenue impact of approximately £10,000 per annum which is a cost that the Council will need to absorb.
Risks		The Off Street Parking Order must be amended to ensure we can take enforcement action against drivers who park in a hazardous manner or otherwise misuse a car park.
Supporting Corporate Strategy		See paragraph 5.4 of the report
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact	Y	
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality & 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: Schedule of Charges Dartmouth Health Hub

Appendix B: Schedule of Charges Dartmouth Park & Ride

Appendix C: Dartmouth Health Hub Plan

Appendix D: Schedule of Permit Prices Dartmouth Health Hub

Appendix E: Dartmouth Park & Ride Plan

Appendix F: Summary of Consultation Responses

Background Papers:

None