

# **AGENDA FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL**

# **MONDAY 16TH DECEMBER 2024 IN THE GUILDHALL**

There are stairs to the Council Chamber but if any member of the public has mobility issues the Council can

relocate to the Main Chamber.

## You are hereby **SUMMONED** to attend an extraordinary meeting of the Council, on **Monday 16th December 2024** at 5**.30pm** for a maximum of 50 minutes for the purpose of transacting the following business:

### **WELCOME TO ALL ATTENDING AND OBSERVING**

The Chair will read out the following statement:

Welcome to everyone attending and observing the meeting.

A reminder that open proceedings of this meeting will be video recorded. If members of the public make presentations, they will be deemed to have consented to being recorded. By entering the Council Chamber attendees are also consenting to being recorded.

This meeting is limited to 50 minutes and therefore members are asked to raise their points succinctly and not repeat the same view expressed by colleagues if it does not add to the debate.

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

To receive apologies and to confirm that any absence has the approval of the Council. The Mayor will request confirmation that all Members have completed or made any necessary amendments to their Declaration of Interests.

1. **SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL CAR PARKING CHARGES CONSULTATION**

To consider the Council’s response to the South Hams District Council Car Parking Changes Consultation (deadline or responses 5th January 2025). Document attached.

Agenda produced by:

Catherine Marlton

Town Clerk

11th December 2024

**USE OF SOUND RECORDINGS AT COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

**The open proceedings of this Meeting will be audio and video recorded. If members of the public make a representation, they will be deemed to have consented to being recorded. By entering the Council Chamber or Zoom meeting, attendees are also consenting to being recorded.**

**Televised, vision and sound recordings or live broadcastings by members of the press or public at Council or Committee debates are permitted and anyone wishing to do so is asked to inform the Chairman of the respective Committee of their intention to record proceedings.**

**ITEM 3 – SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL CAR PARKING CHARGES CONSULTATION**

**Subject:** Analysis of Proposed Parking Tariffs for Totnes Compared to Other Towns

**Purpose:** This report provides benchmarking analysis of the proposed parking tariffs for Totnes and highlights key observations and previous concerns raised by Totnes Town Council.

**Proposal for Totnes:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Column A | Column B |
| **All Totnes car parks except Longmarsh** | **Parking Tariff** | **Residents Tariff** |
| 30 min | £1.50 | £0.90 |
| 1 hour | £2.00 | £1.50 |
| 2 hours | £3.00 | £2.50 |
| 3 hours | £4.50 | £3.50 |
| 4 hours | £6.00 | £4.50 |
| All day | £10.00 | £8.00 |
| **Longmarsh** |  |  |
| 30 min | £0.50 | £0.40 |
| 1 hour | £1.00 | £0.80 |
| 2 hours | £2.00 | £1.50 |
| 3 hours | £2.50 | £2.00 |
| 4 hours | £3.50 | £2.50 |
| All day | £6.00 | £5.00 |
| Motorhomes | £15.00 | £15.00 |

**Press release from SHDC:**

New proposals discussed for a resident discounted parking scheme

It is expected councillors will have a wide-ranging debate when the latest proposals for a new resident discount parking scheme are considered by the South Hams Executive later this week.

Changes to the original proposals have been made, after town councils expressed some concerns during consultation and engagement with them. Amendments include lowering the resident sign-up application fee to £5 per vehicle, scrapping the restrictions on the number of cars per household, and taking into consideration the economic support visitors offer to the district.  Like residents and businesses, town councils will have the opportunity to respond to the formal consultation.

Car park prices have been frozen for the past 4 years to support residents and businesses throughout the cost-of-living crisis. With rising costs and inflation, the time has now come to consider other measures, so visitors make a fair contribution towards the increasing costs of services and facilities they use.

The recommendations to be discussed by the Executive on Friday 6 December include:

* Amending the pay and display charges and permit charges
* Launching a residents parking discount scheme, offering lower parking tariffs to residents who sign up.

**Cllr Victor Abbott, Executive Member for Community Services and Operations, said**: “The proposed scheme means residents will pay less than the advertised car parking rates while still valuing our visitors and the impact they have on our local economy. Charges will remain competitive with other areas in Devon and Cornwall.

“After listening to our town councils, we will soon be asking all our residents what they think of the proposed parking charges. If the recommendations are approved on Friday, we will consult with the public on the new proposed tariffs.”

Members of the Executive have different views on the details of the scheme and are expected to have a robust discussion at their meeting.

**Cllr Nicky Hopwood, Leader of the main opposition group and Executive Member for Customer Services, said:** “I don’t agree with a different tariff for visitors and residents – it should be one price for all.  Businesses in our towns and villages rely on tourists and they will be penalised by having to pay more to park.

“We’re in a cost-of-living crisis and we need to keep our towns and village centres alive. By putting car parking charges up we are hitting people in the pocket – we need to help people not charge them more.

“I also disagree with the £5 registration fee per car to claim the residents’ discount.  In this present cost-of-living crisis I don’t believe this is necessary.”

If the recommendations are approved, residents will be asked for their views on the proposed parking charges later this month, before a final decision is made in January 2025.

**Section of draft minutes of SHDC Executive:**

Car Parking Proposals E.73/24

Consideration was given to a report that set out proposals for the increase of car parking charges across the South Hams district. During the ensuing debate, the following points were raised:

1. Whilst being informed that the proposed Residents Parking Discounts Scheme permit could be utilised throughout the South Hams, some Members still expressed their concerns and reservations over the suggested £5 administration fee.

Such were the extent of these concerns that an amendment was PROPOSED and SECONDED that read as follows:

1. That the Head of Community Services be authorised to publish notice of proposals to amend the Off-Street Parking Places Order as follows:

iv. To include a Residents Parking Discount Scheme (as described in Section 3 of the published agenda report), subject to deletion of Section 3.4 (i.e. that an administrative fee of £5 be imposed to join the Scheme).

In debate on the amendment, some Members were of the view that the Scheme was becoming overly complicated and, as a result, felt that a more straightforward approach should be adopted. In addition, some Members were opposed to the principle of residents having to pay for a membership to the Residents Discount Scheme.

In contrast, other Members questioned as to how else the administration costs associated with the Scheme would be funded and highlighted that the £5 fee would be offset by just a few visits to a Council owned car park.

When put to the vote, the amendment was declared LOST;

(b) With regard to the proposals specifically relating to Fore Street, Kingsbridge, a local Ward Member emphasised that, if approved following the public consultation exercise, this would constitute a significant charging increase. The local Ward Member felt that this would be an unacceptable increase and would await the results of the public consultation with interest. In response, officers informed that these proposals had followed a re-modelling exercise in light of the initial consultation feedback from Kingsbridge Town Council whereby this Car Park should be re-classified from a long stay to a short stay facility;

(c) A local Ward Member read a statement on behalf of a Dartmouth Parking Community Group that set out its serious reservations over the proposals. In particular, the statement emphasised that, if the proposals were to be adopted, then the detrimental impact to local residents and businesses would be incredibly severe. In reply, other Members made the point that the proposals had been amended in light of the comments received from Dartmouth Town Council (regarding it not supporting a standardisation of charging) and this statement therefore suggested that the Community Group was totally at odds with the views of its local town council;

(d) In response to some concerns being expressed at the timing of the public consultation exercise, Members encouraged those interested town and parish councils (who were not currently due to meet during this period) to convene an extraordinary meeting to enable for them to make a formal response to the proposals;

(e) Regarding the proposed increases, Members highlighted the significant revenue budget pressures facing the Council and emphasised that, if the proposals as drafted were adopted, then the charges would still be lower than a number of neighbouring local authorities in Devon and the South West.

It was then: RESOLVED

1. That the Head of Community Services be authorised to publish notice of proposals to amend the Off-Street Parking Places Order as follows:

i. ii. iii. To amend the pay and display charges and permit charges in accordance with Appendix A of the published agenda report; To change Fore Street Car Park, Kingsbridge from a long stay car park to a short stay car park with a maximum stay of 4 hours, no return within 2 hours; To amend the tariff at Leonards Road Car Park, Ivybridge to have one, two, three, four and all day tariff option; and iv. To include a Residents Parking Discount Scheme (as described in Section 3 of the published agenda report);

2. That the Head of Community Services prepare a subsequent report summarising any representations received in response to the notice of proposals for consideration by the Executive before deciding whether to make the off-street parking places order as proposed or with modifications;

3. That the Director of Customer Service and Delivery be authorised, in consultation with the lead Executive Member and the Leader of Council, to vary the charges payable in respect of off-street parking places to reflect annual changes in the September Consumer Price Index (inflationary uplift) subject to giving the public notice in accordance with Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 specifying the charges payable when the notice comes into effect; and

4. That the lead Executive Member instigates a review of parking permits in consultation with the five main towns and brings a further report with proposals within 9 months of this meeting.

(NOTE: THIS DECISION, WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE FROM 5.00PM ON TUESDAY, 17 DECEMBER 2024 UNLESS CALLED IN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES))

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| **1. Short-Stay Parking (1 Hour)** | | | |
| **Town** | **Standard Tariff** | **Resident Tariff** | **Notes** |
| **Totnes** | £2.00 | £1.50 | Proposed under SHDC scheme for most car parks. |
| **Kingsbridge** | £2.50 | £1.70 | Higher base rate than Totnes but comparable resident discount. |
| **Dartmouth** | £2.50 | £1.90 | Mayor's Avenue (high season) |
| **Salcombe** | £2.50 | £1.70 | Creek Car Park (year-round) |
| **Ivybridge** | £1.50 | £1.00 | Lowest among SHDC towns. |
| **Crediton** | £1.60 | Not specified | Market Street -Mid Devon District Council |
| **Barnstaple** | £1.30 | Not specified | Town centre - North Devon District Council |
| **Ashburton** | £1.40 | Not specified | Teignbridge District Council |
| **Tavistock** | £1.30 | Not specified | Wharf and Brook Street Car Park, - West Devon Borough Council |
| **Newton Abbot** | £2.40 for up to 2 hours | Not Specified | Venture Court - Teignbridge Council |
| **Dawlish** | £1.80 | Not Specified | The Strand - Teignbridge Council |
| **Teignmouth** | £1.80 | Not Specified | The Point (and most other car parks) -Teignbridge Council. Summer and winter tariff currently showing as the same. |
| **Bideford** | £1.50 | Not Specified | All short stay car parks - Torridge District Council |
| **Okehampton** | £1.00 | Not Specified | Market Street short stay - West Devon Borough Council |
| **Exmouth** | 50p for 30min £1 for 2hrs | Not Specified | Short Stay, Exmouth - East Devon District Council |
| **Sidmouth** | £2.00 | Not Specified | Manor Road- East Devon District Council |
| **Seaton** | 50p for 30min £1 for 1 hour | Not Specified | Orchard Road - East Devon District Council |
| **2. Long-Stay Parking (4 Hours)** | | | |
| **Town** | **Standard Tariff** | **Resident Tariff** | **Notes** |
| **Totnes** | £6.00 | £4.50 | Proposed SHDC scheme for long-stay car parks. |
| **Kingsbridge** | £7.00 | £6.00 | Slightly higher than Totnes for both standard and resident tariffs. |
| **Dartmouth** | £8.00 | £7.00 | Mayor's Avenue (high season) |
| **Salcombe** | £7.00 | £5.00 | North Sands (high season) |
| **Ivybridge** | £4.50 | £4.00 | Competitive long-stay rate compared to other SHDC towns. |
| **Crediton** | £3.80 | Not specified | Market Street - Mid Devon District Council |
| **Barnstaple** | £5.20 | Not specified | Town Centre - North Devon District Council |
| **Ashburton** | £3.20 | Not specified | Long-stay tariffs by Teignbridge District Council. |
| **Tavistock** | £3.00 | Not specified | West Devon Borough Council-managed car parks. |
| **Newton Abbot** | £5.00 | Not Specified | Cricketfield Car park, Livestock Market - Teignbridge Council |
| **Dawlish** | £4.30 | Not Specified | Teignbridge Council - Barton Hill |
| **Teignmouth** | £4.20 | Not Specified | Teignbridge Council - The Point (and most other car parks) Summer and winter hours currently showing as the same. |
| **Bideford** | £4.00 | Not Specified | Torridge District Council - Riverbank Long stay and all other long stay car parks |
| **Okehampton** | £2.90 | Not Specified | West Devon Borough Council - Mill Road Car park |
| **Exmouth** | £3.50 (£2 winter) | Not Specified | Queen's Drive Echelon, Exmouth - East Devon District Council |
| **Sidmouth** | £8.00 | Not Specified | Manor Road - East Devon District Council  £2 per hour until 8 hours is reached then you can stay for 24 hours. |
| **3. All-Day Parking** | | | |
| **Town** | **Standard Tariff** | **Resident Tariff** | **Notes** |
| **Totnes** | £10.00 | £8.00 | Proposed SHDC scheme. |
| **Kingsbridge** | £10.00 | £8.00 | Matches Totnes' proposed rates. |
| **Dartmouth** | £10.00 | £9.50 | Park & Ride standard tariff. |
| **Salcombe** | £10.00 | £8.00 | Creek Car Park (high season). |
| **Ivybridge** | £7.50 | £6.50 | Most affordable among SHDC towns. |
| **Crediton** | £6.40 - £13.00 | Not specified | Market Street -Mid Devon District Council |
| **Barnstaple** | £2.50 - £13.00 | Not specified | Varies by car park - North Devon District Council |
| **Ashburton** | £4.20 | Not specified | Long-stay tariffs managed by Teignbridge District Council. |
| **Tavistock** | £5.00 | Not specified | West Devon Borough Council |
| **Newton Abbot** | £6.20 | Not Specified | Cricketfield Car park, Livestock Market - Teignbridge Council |
| **Newton Abbot** | £4.30 | Not Specified | Multi-Storey (over 4 hours)- Teignbridge Council |
| **Teignmouth** | £6.20 | Not Specified | The Point (and most other car parks) - Teignbridge Council |
| **Dawlish** | £4.60 | Not Specified | Barton Hill - Teignbridge Council |
| **Bideford** | £5.50 | Not Specified | Riverbank Long stay - Torridge District Council |
| **Exmouth** | £6.00 (£2.50 winter) | Not Specified | Queen's Drive Echelon, Exmouth - East Devon District Council |
| **Seaton** | £6 - £10 | Not Specified | East Devon District Council |
| **Sidmouth** | £8 | Not Specified | Manor Road, East Devon District Council - The charge goes on at £2 per hour until you have paid £8 and then you can stay for 24 hours. |

**Key Takeaways for Totnes**

1. **SHDC Comparisons:** Totnes’ tariffs are generally aligned with Kingsbridge and Salcombe but less competitive than Ivybridge, especially for all-day and long-stay parking.
2. **Regional Comparisons:** Totnes' proposed rates are significantly higher than similar-sized towns.

**Previous Concerns Raised by Totnes Town Council**

In its original submission to South Hams District Council (SHDC), the Town Council expressed concerns regarding:

* **Benchmarking:** The fairness of comparisons with towns such as Exeter and Padstow, which differ significantly in size and visitor demographics.
* **Visitor Deterrence:** The risk of deterring visitors due to higher charges, particularly given economic challenges and competition from nearby towns with lower tariffs.
* **Transport Alternatives:** The lack of viable alternative transport options, which undermines the rationale for raising parking fees as an environmental measure.

**Action Required:** Please review this information and prepare for discussions at the Extraordinary Full Council meeting on 16th December, which is the opportunity for the Town Council to respond to the consultation before the deadline of 5th January 2025.

Catherine Marlton

11th December 2024