

# **PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL**

## **Environment and Infrastructure Committee**

**7 November 2018**

### **FREE FESTIVE PARKING**

#### **Report by Depute Director (Housing and Environment) (18/365)**

This report recommends that the Free Festive Parking initiative operates on each Saturday from 1 December until 29 December 2018 inclusive in all Council operated car parks across the whole Perth and Kinross area.

#### **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 A free festive parking offering has operated over the winters of 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18.
- 1.2 Following a review of the impact of the Free after 2pm programme in 2016/17, feedback from the Perth Traders Association (PTA) was that, while a discounted parking scheme was welcome, the economic benefit of the Free after 2 scheme was difficult to quantify and was fairly limited. It was also seen to be a difficult offer to promote.
- 1.3 The PTA asked the Council to consider changing the Free after 2pm scheme to a Free Saturday Scheme during December 2017 for all car parks in Perth and Kinross. The primary reason for this was that changing trading patterns show that December is no longer the prime trading month for Christmas. In addition, trading patterns are changing so that Saturday is no longer necessarily the key trading day. Therefore, additional support to boost trade on Saturdays in December was requested.
- 1.4 This request for free Saturday parking during December 2017 was approved by the Council's Environment, Enterprise and Infrastructure Committee on 8 November 2017 (Report No.17/370 refers). Appendix 1 details the participating car parks.
- 1.5 Feedback was gathered from Perth City Centre businesses after the 2017 parking offer, to establish the impact of the Free Festive Parking offer. 26 responses from businesses ranging from Debenhams and the St John's Shopping Centre to smaller independents were received.
- 1.6 A summary of the responses is provided below:
  - 100% of businesses felt that the promotion encouraged people to stay longer in the city
  - 80% felt it was well advertised
  - 84% felt it had a positive impact on their business
  - 68% felt it brought additional footfall to their businesses
  - 95% would be in favour of a similar promotion

- 1.7 Footfall for December 2017 in Perth & Kinross decreased by 4.5% on the previous year – mirroring the national trend of a 4.7% decrease across Scotland and 3.5% across the UK as a whole (Springboard).
- 1.8 Evidence from the PTA to date shows that the lower footfall does not necessarily equate to lower sales – in fact some businesses reported that they had strong December trading in 2017. However nationally, footfall figures show that November was the busier month, reinforcing the Council's decision to support businesses in the key month of December.
- 1.9 Parking financial data for income generated from off street parking during November and December demonstrates the following:

Year	November (£)	December (£)
2013/14	131,196	141,452
2014/15	131,914	146,204
2015/16	139,968	136,049
2016/17	110,335	108,776
2017/18	146,074	116,522

- 1.10 The 2016/17 figures reflect the closure of Canal Street Multi Storey Car Park until 14 November as well as the free period afterwards for this car park to allow the new offering to bed in.
- 1.11 Feedback via social media was overwhelmingly positive with a large number of comments welcoming the Council's support for businesses. In particular, comments welcomed the free parking across the area with particular reference to parking in Pitlochry, Dunkeld and Crieff.
- 1.12 Feedback from other digital marketing with the Courier, STV and Smooth FM also showed good levels of engagement.
- 1.13 The key learning from the 2017/18 promotion was related to taking all steps possible through communication and engagement to make it clearer what the parking offer is, and which locations are included and excluded. To aid motorists, all parking meters in the free car parks will be covered each Saturday.

## **2. PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 The specific proposal for Christmas 2018 is free parking all day on the Saturdays from 1 to 29 December 2018 inclusive in all Council operated car parks across the whole Perth and Kinross area.
- 2.2 It is proposed to use media and advertising to promote the offer, with an initial press release following Committee approval.

- 2.3 Based on current income levels from the car parks concerned, the cost of operating a “Free on Saturdays” promotion in 2018 in terms of lost income is estimated at approximately £25,000. This will require to be met from the Parking Services Revenue Budget.

### 3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The principle of free parking has been, in general, well received by residents, visitors and businesses over the last 6 years. It has provided a tangible demonstration of the Council’s commitment to supporting retailers and the local economy during the festive season.
- 3.2 It is recommended that the Committee agrees to offer free parking on Saturdays from 1 December to 29 December 2018 inclusive in all Council operated car parks across the whole Perth and Kinross area (Appendix 1).

#### Author

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#### Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Keith McNamara	Depute Director (Housing & Environment)	17 September 2018

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## IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

<b>Strategic Implications</b>	
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement /Perth City Plan	<b>Yes</b>
Corporate Plan	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Resource Implications</b>	
Financial	<b>None</b>
Workforce	<b>None</b>
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	<b>None</b>
<b>Assessments</b>	
Equality Impact Assessment	<b>None</b>
Strategic Environmental Assessment	<b>None</b>
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	<b>None</b>
Legal and Governance	<b>None</b>
Risk	<b>None</b>
<b>Consultation</b>	
Internal	<b>None</b>
External	<b>None</b>
<b>Communication</b>	
Communications Plan	<b>Yes</b>

### 1. Strategic Implications

#### Community Plan

- 1.1 The activities contribute to the Community Plan's strategic objectives of 'Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy', and a 'Safe Welcoming Environment' and the outcomes of 'a thriving, expanding economy' and 'employment opportunities for all'.

#### Corporate Plan

- 1.2 Perth and Kinross Council Corporate Plan 2018/2022 sets out five strategic objectives:
- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
  - (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
  - (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
  - (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
  - (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.
- 1.3 This report relates to Objective No (iii) 'Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy' and the outcome of 'Thriving, expanding economy' by encouraging and supporting tourism.

## **2. Resource Implications**

### Financial

- 2.1 Based on current income levels from the car parks concerned, the cost of operating a “Free on Saturdays” promotion in 2018/19 in terms of lost income is estimated at approximately £25,000. This will require to be met from the Parking Services Revenue Budget.

### Workforce

- 2.2 There are no workforce implications as a result of this report.

### Asset Management

- 2.3 There are no asset management implications arising as a result of this report.

## **3. Assessments**

### Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.
- 3.2 This section should reflect that the proposals have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:
- (i) Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA.

### Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.3 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals. No further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

### Sustainability

- 3.4 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. In terms of the Climate Change Act, the Council has a general duty to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and the community, environmental and economic impacts of its actions. The activities in this report will contribute towards sustainable economic development in Perth and Kinross.

## Legal and Governance

- 3.5 The consideration of the report is in line with the Council's Scheme of Administration and specifically the role of the Enterprise and Infrastructure Committee in developing measures to support and promote economic activity and to plan key infrastructure. Legal Services has been consulted on these proposals.

## Risk

- 3.6 Risks and the controls required to mitigate any risks will be reported through the Council's risk management process.

## **4. Consultation**

### Internal

- 4.1 Heads of Finance, Democratic Services, Legal and Governance

### External

- 4.2 Perth Traders Association

## **5. Communication**

- 5.1 Communication will be undertaken by the Council and businesses.

## **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 6.1 None.

## **7. APPENDICES**

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – List of car parks included in the scheme