

COUNCIL MEETING – 17 DECEMBER 2002

REPORT OF COUNCILLOR BULGIN - PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION

I have been considering how best to achieve an inflation-only increase in the total income from car parking charges. Converting this into actual coinage within the tariff structure is not easy.

I have therefore decided to advertise proposals immediately after Christmas to increase the charges in the medium stay (Shopper 2) car parks by 10p per hour. This will bring in an estimated additional £47,000 in a full year and will affect the Belvedere Road, Castle Street, Duke Street, Elms Parade, Greenbrook Terrace and Wood Street Car Parks.

Charges in the central short-term car parks and the commuter car parks will not be increased.

The comments made by several Members about the apparent under-usage of the top floors of the Old Market Shoppers Multi-Storey Car Park, as well as the recommendations which came from the Review Panel following their recent deliberations, have also been taken on board.

This car park's present designation of Shopper 1 reflects its most central location. I do however agree that we cannot be seen to have such an asset not being fully used and am grateful to those who have provided graphic evidence to back up their arguments. I believe that we should encourage some longer stay usage, whilst protecting the shopper and visitor customers.

To achieve this, I am proposing that the top two floors be made a minimum stay of 4 hours and that the charging structure lies between the Shopper 1 and Shopper 2 rates. This will give an all day charge of £3 instead of the present £4.

Moving on from parking matters, we will be carrying out a preliminary consultation with Monkton Heathfield residents during the first quarter of 2003. This will be purely exploratory to find out from the local people what they want to see in the Development Guide for Monkton Heathfield.

Finally, I am pleased to report that a brief for consultants for the Taunton Urban Design Framework (UDF) is being prepared. The UDF will build on the existing Local Plan Policies to provide Supplementary Planning Guidance for the development of the centre of Taunton. Such guidance will reflect the aspirations of the Vision and will allow Taunton to fulfil its role as a Principal Urban Area.

Councillor Roy Bulgin

