

## NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

### CABINET

At a meeting of the **Cabinet** held in Committee Room 1, County Hall, Morpeth on Tuesday, 13 November 2018 at 10.00 am.

### PRESENT

Councillor P.A. Jackson  
(Leader of the Council, in the Chair)

### CABINET MEMBERS

Daley, W.  
Homer, C.  
Jones, V.  
Oliver, N.

Riddle, J.  
Sanderson, H.G.H.  
Wearmouth, R.

### OTHER MEMBERS

Cessford, T.  
Davey, J.G.  
Dodd, R.R.  
Flux, B.

Grimshaw, L.  
Hill, G.  
Renner-Thompson, G.  
Swinburn, M.

### OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Hadfield, K.

Henry, L.  
Lally, D.  
Johnston, P.  
Naples, R.  
Scarr, B.

Committee Services and Scrutiny  
Manager  
Legal Services Manager  
Chief Executive  
Interim Executive Director of Place  
Planning Officer  
Executive Director of Finance and  
Deputy Chief Executive

3 members of the press and public were present

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## **59. REPORT OF THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PLACE**

### **(1) Improvements and Investment in Parking Provision**

The report provided an update on the progress being made against the parking Action Plans agreed for each of the 4 main market towns of Hexham, Berwick, Alnwick and Morpeth, and on progress with other works to improve parking provision across the County.

The report also detailed the proposed means by which the Council would fund its investment in car parks, including through a combination of increasing existing charges and introducing new charges at a number of tourism and railway station car parks.

The report also sought approval to the list of car parks, proposed tariffs, consultation arrangements and outlined the process and timetable for implementation should the proposal be approved by Full Council when setting the MTFP in February 2019 (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix C).

Councillor Sanderson thanked staff for their work on this project over the course of the last year. The proposals in front of members were the result of a year's worth of consultation meetings and represented a major investment, based on what the Council had been asked to provide. An eight week consultation period would now begin with the offer of direct meetings with town and parish councils on the table. However, he advised that with regard to the consultation, the issue would not go to the Local Area Councils, but would be submitted to Scrutiny as part of the process. He then highlighted the main areas of the report.

Regarding the introduction of charges, he accepted that these would not be popular, but they were modest, with the first hour being free in many areas. He reiterated that a significant investment was being made and he believed the charging proposals in tourist areas represented a fair and reasonable way to service the debt. The Council was one of only two in the whole country which did not charge for parking. He also made reference to improve parking facilities at train stations without there being a detrimental effect on surrounding residents as a result.

Member comments included:-

- Councillor Oliver felt this was a thorough piece of work which had involved a detailed assessment of needs and a well considered approach to spending large amounts of capital. The charging proposals were selective and small scale, and he reiterated that they did not mean a wholesale return to charges, as was being mis-reported on social media.
- Councillor Homer referred to the longstanding attempts to get solutions to the parking issues in Hexham under the previous Administration to no effect, which had

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had a negative impact on the town. Under the current Administration there had been significant efforts to find both a short term solution, and to find more spaces in the long term through a meaningful analysis of the situation. She thanked Councillor Sanderson and his colleagues for this. Regarding tourism, she did not feel there would be a great detrimental effect. There were very few places outside of Northumberland where it was free to park at the coast. The charges were not unreasonable but she supported the intention to consult.

- Councillor Daley felt the proposals were well thought out and demonstrated joined-up thinking. People visited for the coastline, castle and countryside and he did not feel that this would stop them coming. He also referred to the importance of new technology in the implementation arrangements which demonstrated that the Council was a forward thinking Authority.
- Councillor Wearmouth fully supported the proposals which he felt would address a situation which had not been dealt with by the previous Administration, and would have resulted in further problems up and down the coast and in town centre economies had it been left any longer. Advance Northumberland had been pleased to assist where it could and he supported the work on car parking provision which had been done thus far.

**RESOLVED** that:-

1. the good progress being made against the action plans for each of the four main market towns of Hexham, Berwick, Alnwick and Morpeth, and the progress with other works to improve parking provision across the County, be noted;
2. approval be given to the allocation from the £10m capital funding provision made in the MTFP for parking improvements, of:
  - a. £25,000 to enable scheme design and planning application submission to be progressed for the proposed development of a long stay car park on land adjacent to the railway lines on the north side of Berwick Railway Station;
  - b. £50,000 for the implementation of on-street parking improvements in the area under / near to the Royal Tweed Bridge, Tweedmouth to deliver an additional 16 long-stay spaces including 3 disabled bays at a cost of £50,000;
3. the proposed tariff structures for the coastal tourism and railway car parks as outlined in the report be approved, including an increase to the annual parking pass, subject to consultation; and

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4. the proposed approach to consultation, as amended, regarding the parking charges and implementation timetable be noted.

**CHAIR**.....

**DATE**.....