



INFORMATION NOTE

CHRISTMAS PARKING SCHEME UPDATE

Background

On 24 November 2015 an update on Christmas Car Parking was provided to the Operational Committee confirming that free parking is offered on all Council operated car parks on the three full weekends leading up to Christmas with an associated annual loss of income of approximately £8,000 since 2009. A committee member requested that the scheme be reviewed.

On 13 September 2016, following a car park working group meeting and consultation with businesses, a report was submitted to the committee confirming the free Christmas weekend parking with a revised estimate of annual loss of income of up to £9,000. As a result of the business consultation the committee were asked to consider whether they wished the scheme to remain the same or to amend it. After a detailed debate the committee voted in favour of the terms of the Christmas Parking scheme remaining the same.

2017 Update

In 2017 the Council's free parking scheme coincided with the national Small Business Saturday initiative, which is held on the first weekend of December when free parking is championed to encourage Christmas shopping at local small businesses. In 2017 there were four full weekends in December in the lead up to Christmas Day which meant the Council's free parking scheme would miss Small Business Saturday. As such advice was sought from the Operational Committee Chair with the possible scenarios below:

- Provide free parking on the first three weekends of December but miss out 23rd and 24th (for which the Council could be criticised as it runs contrary to the principle of free parking in the lead up to Christmas)
- Provide free parking on the three weekends leading up to Christmas but miss out the first weekend of December (for which we could be criticised for missing Small business Saturday at the start of the month)
- Extend the scheme to all four weekends (which would cost an additional £2,500 to £3,000 in lost income).
- Extend the scheme to all four weekends but restrict it just to the Town Centre car parks (St Annes Sq, Wood St, Public Offices, Town Hall, Pleasant St, Lytham Station, Dicconson Terrace and Bath St) (which would cost up to an additional £1,000 in lost income)

The advice received was to proceed with option 2 in line with what had been offered in previous years. There was limited criticism for not providing free parking on the first weekend of December.

2018 and Beyond

In 2018 the same issue as 2017 will occur with four full weekends in December before Christmas Day. Currently it is intended that the free Christmas Parking Scheme will be operated in the same way as 2017, which will mean free parking on 8th, 9th, 15th, 16th, 22nd & 23rd December. From 2019 until 2022 there will be three full weekends in December before Christmas Day.

FURTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM

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