



SOUTH NORFOLK PLANNING & ECONOMIC GROWTH COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the South Norfolk Planning & Economic Growth Committee of South Norfolk Council, held on Tuesday, 1 October 2024 at 10.00 am.

Committee Members Present: Councillors: V Thomson (Vice-Chair, in the Chair), C Brown and D Sacks

Apologies for Absence: Councillors: J Woolliscroft (Chairman) and B McClenning

Substitute: Councillors: T Graham (In place of J Woolliscroft)

Cabinet Member in Attendance: Councillor: L Overton-Neal

Officers in Attendance: G Denton (Assistant Director of Economic Growth), D Disney (Economic Development Lead) and J Hammond (Democratic Services Officer)

Also in Attendance: Councillor J Webber

5. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr B McClenning and Cllr J Woolliscroft, with Cllr T Graham substituting.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

7. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2024 were confirmed as a correct record.

8. CAR PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Assistant Director of Economic Growth introduced the report, which presented the proposed Parking Management Plan for adoption by Council.

Ensuring the provision of high-quality and up-to-date off-street parking in Market Towns within the district was crucial to supporting the local economy and

enhancing the vitality of high streets. The Parking Management Plan formalised the scope and approach to parking services and updated the five parking principles, making them clearer, and reflective of the Council's Strategic Asset Management Plan. The five Parking Principles were:

- **Improved Standard of Service:** The public should expect an enhanced level of service concerning maintenance, security, and other aspects of car parking functions.
- **Consistent Charging Approach:** Charging for car parks should be consistent across the district to encourage the utilisation of market towns.
- **Tariff Structure to Encourage Usage:** Charges and free parking periods should be structured to promote short-stay use in town centres and long-stay in other areas.
- **Cost Responsibility:** The cost of maintaining car parks should primarily be borne by beneficiaries rather than the general taxpayer, where market conditions allowed. Car parking income should be retained in a car park reserve and utilised to enhance maintenance or reduce costs in subsequent years.
- **Alignment with Council Principles:** The charging regime should be consistent with the overarching principles of the Council.

The plan recognised evolving trends in car park usage, payment behaviours, and the growing demand for sustainable vehicle options, and set out proposed responses to these changes.

Discussion turned to the Electric Vehicle Charging Point's (EVCP), and some members felt that the current cost of charging Electric Vehicles (EVs) in Council-run car parks was too expensive. The Assistant Director of Economic Growth advised the Committee that the current charge was set at 55p per kilowatt hour (kWh), which was average across the district. He added that the price had been set to allow the provision of EVCPs to be cost neutral, excluding the initial set up costs.

One member highlighted that some Councils currently charged approximately 25p per kWh, which incentivised more people to use the Council-run EVCPs. The Economic Development Lead confirmed that some Councils were subsidising their EVCP charges which allowed them to charge less per kWh. However, when the Parking Principles were adopted by Council, it was agreed that the cost responsibilities should be borne by the beneficiaries (in this instance, EVCP users) not the general taxpayer. He advised members that if they wished to change this principle, it would need to be agreed by full Council.

The expanded EVCP network needed revised Traffic Regulation Orders to restrict EVCP bays to re-charging EV users only. Some members noted that both EV and non-EV vehicles parked in the EVCP bays without charging. The Economic Development Lead explained that the TRO would make parking in the EVCP bays without charging enforceable by the parking enforcement team. He reiterated that EVs could not park in the EVCP bays if they were not using the charging facility.

It was highlighted that some of the parking bays were too small for EVs to fit in. The Economic Development Lead confirmed that the Team had had to react to the larger size of both EVs and vehicles in general. The Management Plan, if approved, would allow the Council to amend the size of parking bays when

resurfacing car parks.

The report proposed measures to improve the clarity of payment options and ensure parking principles were maintained, with the aim of enhancing user experience and driving longer dwell times to benefit local business.

In response to a query, the Assistant Director of Economic Growth outlined all payment methods available at Council-run car parks, these were:

- Cash and coin.
- Credit / debit card.
- Check-in, Check-out (Ci-Co).
- Pay by phone or smartphone app.

The Committee highlighted the need for better communication regarding the different payment methods and how the free hour worked. The Assistant Director of Economic Growth explained that the Team was working on a programme of marketing which, alongside the new tariff boards, would make the parking and paying process clearer for all users of the carparks.

Regarding the tariff boards, one member queried whether the design of the boards would be brought to the Committee before implementation. Officers agreed that the boards would be shown to the Committee before they were installed. Members were further advised that the design of the boards had been completed, however, they would not be produced until the tariffs had been agreed by Council.

In response to a question, the Assistant Director of Economic Growth explained that the tariffs would be reviewed annually and reported to Cabinet as part of the annual fees and charges report which formed part of the budget. He added that the price point of the tariff had been set in order to reflect the projected medium capital costs, which would future proof the tariff boards, as the cost of implementing the boards was approximately £15,000. Despite being reviewed annually; the tariffs would only be changed in the event of:

- Legislative changes.
- Projected medium term capital (2-5 years) costs exceeding net revenue contributions to the reserve.
- Any change delivers a net revenue increase to cover the cost of implementation.

After further discussion it was,

RESOLVED

TO RECOMMEND THAT CABINET:

1. Recommend to Council approval of the Parking Management Plan and revised principles.
2. Recommend to Council approval of the revised fees and charges for carparking as set out in the Parking Management Plan.
3. Delegate to the Assistant Director of Economic Growth to make applications

for revised Parking Orders and to obtain necessary Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to support the allocation of Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP) only bays.

9. PLANNING & ECONOMIC GROWTH COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee noted each item within the Work Programme.

(The meeting concluded at 10.52 am)

Chairman