

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 December 2010

**Item 5 – Public Participation
Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 – Car Parking Strategy (item 6)**

Statement from Amesbury Town Council

INTRODUCTION

- Amesbury has a population of over 10,000 and has grown significantly over the past 10 years.
- The newest large housing development has brought many hundreds of families to the area with limited income where cost savings to them are paramount.
- A new out of town supermarket has been built and recently opened. This has taken a sizeable chunk of business out of the town centre.
- Since Tesco opened its doors, three town centre shops have closed through dire trading conditions.
- Tesco has a large free car park.

As “hands on” councillors representing the town and with the Chamber of Trade support here today, we can confirm to you that it is the free parking that has kept the remaining trades alive.

We are not against car parking charges where appropriate, but placing a charge on our car park at this time is not appropriate and will severely damage the only hope there is for this town’s survival and recovery.

PROPOSAL

We therefore ask those decision makers here today to consider the following:

Amesbury car parking is left ‘free of charge’.

The car park was originally bought by the Rural District Council. The money used to buy this came in part from Amesbury traders who agreed an uplift in their business rates to ensure there was adequate free parking for town visitors.

The car park was transferred to Salisbury District Council and now Wiltshire Council.

Your decision to overturn free parking in Amesbury will drive the final nail in the coffin of the town we represent.

On this basis we have agreed that if you cannot exclude Amesbury from car park charges we would request under the new Localisation Bill an option to purchase the car park (immediately) and take it back into our ownership from Wiltshire. This will ensure that we, as elected representatives can use our resources to do all we can to help traders and safeguard the town's future viability.

We appreciate this is an innovative request, which we also made earlier in the year, and would request time being given to this important