

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 December 2010

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

Statement from Kate Freeman, On behalf of Association of Kennet Passengers

Up until now Wiltshire's towns have tried to compete on free or cheap parking. The extent to which this incentive actually worked is a matter for conjecture but the important points we would like to make are:

- (1) There is no such thing as free parking. An average valuation of £500 per parking space per year has been calculated
- (2) Market days in Devizes take up about 40 parking spaces and yet Thursdays are a commercial success
- (3) Marlborough High Street charges for parking and the sky hasn't fallen in
- (4) Towns need to be accessible to everyone by all modes, not just to motorists. It is not fair to subsidise motorists' parking when many passengers pay high bus fares, a cost that particularly hits school leavers hard.

People tend to forget the many people who have little or no transport choices. The sad reality is that it is bus services, people's lifelines that are extremely vulnerable to cuts. To make sure each community area has the transport it needs we would like to see each area have a say in how their surplus parking revenue is spent on transport in their area.

For the first time Wiltshire, as a unitary authority, can implement a fairer way of approaching parking. There are details to get right, but for the first time towns can compete on merit and convenience rather than on the price of a parking space.

Members should see parking charges as a carrot, not a stick.