

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

**Statement from Wiltshire Councillor Nigel Carter, Devizes North**

I write to ask you to recommend that the strategy on countywide car parking be returned to the officers for corrections and additional justification before you reach your final conclusions. In making the following comments in support of this request, I acknowledge the bias in discussing Devizes. It is the community I represent and know best and whose economy I seek to protect. However, some of my remarks may have relevance to other communities.

1. Page 11, para 19: is disingenuous in its comments. The Environment Select received a briefing paper (no 40, dated July 2010) comprising barely one side of A4 discussing the principles around which the consultation was undertaken. This was supplemented by an additional paper summarising the findings of the consultation and actions outstanding, including feed-back to community area boards. No draft strategy was available for consideration by the committee.

The actual minute from the 2 November meeting states: *To congratulate the cabinet member on **the work undertaken** and note the update provided and request that the comments are taken into consideration by the Cabinet member prior to the final reports submission to cabinet.* I have been unable to identify any recognition in the strategy for a minority report from the 2 November meeting.

2. Foundation for Decision. Cabinet members are asked to make their decision largely on the basis of qualitative recommendations. No financial information – e.g. GVA in the community, community *per capita* income - is considered, nor any reference made to current community financial parking contributions or any 'earnings per space' that might apply. These would contribute to a more considered view on the relevance of banding and how charges within the community might be better/differently determined.

In papers circulated to a private meeting of Devizes CAB members, but not distributed, Marlborough and Devizes were the single biggest contributors of parking fee income after Salisbury. At 55

pence for the first hour, Devizes has one of the highest charges in the county for off-street parking. The £1.30 charge for 2 hours parking remains higher than the proposals (page 17, para 56, Preferred Option) for Monday-Saturday parking

3. Parking Control - Short-term Parking. The policing of the 30-minute parking limit will entail significant additional effort by parking officers. The only financial justifications offered are those which appear on page 28, para 112, and no reference to penalty income versus cost of policing is discussed, nor measures justified. In making the parking regime in Wiltshire potentially revenue neutral/slightly positive, the absence of discussion on the costs of parking control versus penalty revenue generated seems remarkable.
4. Safer by Design (page 34, para 1.2 h). No standards are identified or descriptions offered of the criteria for this improvement.
5. The National Context (page 38, para 2.2, ref. PPG 13). This conflicts with Wiltshire Council's policy of 'centralising' amenities on campuses. While possibly/potentially still convenient for the urban dweller, it will still require access to the car for many users – the template for this is, of course, the current access to minor injury units and major hospital facilities, where bus (sustainable mode?) routes are wholly inadequate to the needs of a rural community. No discussion has been offered on what the further ambition for the promotion of sustainable transport might mean in terms of service provision in the county. It is important that the ambition is set into some sort of context, before conditions are attributed to parking development.
6. Long Stay Parking in Devizes. Given that the strategy implies a continuation in the high level of short term parking charges, while others catch up, the huge leap in day charges for long stay parking – effectively a hike from £2.70 per day to £5.10 per day – seems unjust and unjustified. The paper does not seek to confirm the lack of parity in this case.

I believe that a suitable amended/reinforced document would be welcome as a further case for public consultation but that to rush it forward for confirmation in its current form smacks of unseemly haste.

However, if you are minded not to support a resubmission of the strategy with a more carefully quantified rationale, you are asked to consider an amendment that retains the 1-hour free parking in Devizes Market Place and, in the interests of fairness, introduces a (minimum) three-year 'phased catch up' for the long stay parking in Station Road car park.