

**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**26<sup>th</sup> July 2011**

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**Subject: Car Park Redemption Scheme (applicable to off-street car parks only)**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Dick Tonge - Highways and Transport**

**Key Decision: No**

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### **Executive Summary**

This report sets out the proposed redemption scheme that will if adopted apply across all Wiltshire Council owned and operated car parks in Wiltshire.

### **Proposal**

That Cabinet consider:

Delegating authority to the Corporate Director of Neighbourhood and Planning in agreement and consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, to develop the detail and implement a car parking redemption scheme across Wiltshire.

### **Reason for Proposal**

To implement a car park redemption scheme to offset the impacts of the recession on town centres in Wiltshire.

**Mark Boden**  
**Corporate Director, Neighbourhood and Planning**

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### 1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To consider introducing a car parking redemption scheme in Wiltshire.

### 2.0 Background

2.1 In April 2011 Wiltshire Council introduced a new car parking charging structure across the county in council-operated car parks. Chambers of commerce and town centre retailers have expressed concern about the possible effect car parking charges may be having on trade. Research undertaken to date has demonstrated that retail trade is being affected nationally and has been declining on an annual basis over the last three years as the result of the recession and other factors such as internet buying.

2.2 This report sets out the proposed redemption scheme that will if adopted apply across all Wiltshire Council owned and operated car parks in Wiltshire.

2.3 The council recognises that currently there are redemption schemes in operation in several towns in Wiltshire.

2.4 Devizes, Warminster, Wootton Bassett, Melksham and Corsham all have redemption schemes that involve local retailers giving refunds against the cost of parking. Some of these schemes are supported by groups of local traders and others are applicable to specific retailers.

### 3.0 Main Considerations for the Council

3.1 The car park redemption scheme will be restricted to specific independent retailers that are less economically resilient than high street multiples.

3.2 The scheme will involve retailers offering a level of discount decided by them individually. The redemption scheme will apply to all pay and display off street car parks and for all tariffs and duration of stay.

3.3 It is envisaged that the scheme will be delivered in partnership with chambers of commerce and/or town councils. It is anticipated that the chambers and/or

town councils will market and administer the scheme; if they do not wish to participate in the scheme it will not apply in that particular community.

3.4 The scheme will exclude park and ride, Salisbury on street parking and MiPermit mobile telephone payments.

3.5 The Council will pay for promotional material, signs, two-part tickets and the conversion of the machines; and will co-ordinate the promotion of the scheme.

#### **4.0 Environmental and Climate Change Considerations**

4.1 Any steps to reduce parking charges have the potential to increase the number of vehicles entering town centres. This will result in a detrimental impact on congestion, air quality and carbon emissions. That said, it is acknowledged that this paper is only recommending a small temporary reduction in charges to contribute towards boosting the local economy.

#### **5.0 Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

5.1 The reason the proposal is particularly targeting independent retailers is that they are less economically resilient in the current recession when compared to high street multiples.

5.2 The proposal's project team will engage with the Corporate Equalities team to continually provide quality assurance to the proposal in relation to promoting equalities and inclusion as part of an integrated approach to delivery.

#### **6.0 Risk Assessment**

6.1 A full risk register will be completed once delegated authority to develop the redemption scheme has been approved.

6.2 Chambers of commerce, town councils and retailers may not "buy into" and support the scheme.

#### **7.0 Financial Implications**

7.1 The current approved car parking tariffs will remain unchanged, as detailed the Car Parking Strategy 2011-2026.

7.3 It is estimated that the internal costs to Wiltshire Council to set up and implement the scheme will be £50,000. This will be funded from the economic development budget.

#### **8.0 Legal Implications**

8.1 The decision can be taken under section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 in that it has the aim of promoting or improving the economic and/or social well being of Wiltshire County. It does not make any policy changes to the Budget and Policy framework.

8.2 As the proposal is being offered across the county to all members of the public this proposal is consistent with the council's obligations under s149 of the Equality Act 2010.

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**The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:**

None