

AGENDA SUPPLEMENT (1)

Meeting: Cabinet
Place: Committee Room III - County Hall, Trowbridge
Date: Tuesday 14 December 2010
Time: 10.30 am

The Agenda for the above meeting was published on 3 December 2010. Statements and questions from members of the public were subsequently received and are attached to this Agenda Supplement.

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Yamina Rhouati, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line 01225 718024 or email yamina.rhouati@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications on direct lines (01225)713114/713115.

This Agenda and all the documents referred to within it are available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

5. Public participation

- a) **Public Participation - Development of Parks and Outdoor Recreational Facilities (not on agenda) (Pages 1 - 2)**
 - b) **Public Participation - Review of Indoor Leisure Facilities - overview of public consultation and the refined proposal (Pages 3 - 6)**
 - c) **Public Participation - Wiltshire Local Transport Plan - Car Parking Strategy (Pages 7 - 106)**
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DATE OF PUBLICATION: 13 December 2010

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 December 2010

Item 5 – Public Participation

Question from Mr Michael Sprules, Chairperson of R.A.D.A.R (Residents Against Development Affecting Recreational Land) - Development of Parks and Outdoor Recreational Facilities

As a result of the presentation given to Chippenham Town Council last night by Linden Homes, an Application for 78 residential dwellings, on Westinghouse Sports Ground, will be submitted to Wiltshire Council within the next ten days (and may already have been submitted by the date of Cabinet).

Taking into account the Housing Land Availability Assessment, the response, to my e-mail to Martin Drennan at Sport England and the contents of the letter to my local Member of Parliament, Duncan Hames, from Invensys, does the Cabinet concur that an Application put forward on land that has been " Incorrectly Identified " as "Previously Developed Land", by third party Chartered Surveyors, could potentially set a disastrous precedent, that could leave ALL parks and outdoor recreational facilities AT RISK, from unscrupulous developers, throughout the whole of Wiltshire ?

May I thank the Cabinet for affording me the time, once again, to answer this question.

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**Item 5 – Public Participation
Review of Indoor Leisure Facilities - overview of public consultation
and the refined proposal (item 7)**

Statement from Ms Miriam Elloway

I am hoping that you will take into account the needs of the swimming group I attend the three one hour per week therapeutic sessions with, when making your decisions about Westbury's historic bath.

The regular members I attend with are about 30+ in number and are all over 60 years of age and suffering from various ailments (see the Save Westbury Swimming Pool website for their testimonies). The pool is a lifeline for some of our members; it allows for gentle exercise in warm water and also offers a safe and friendly environment where people meet in friendship. Part of its attraction for so many of the pool users is the small intimate nature of the building and certainly none of my group would visit, never mind regularly use, what would be to them, a more intimidating facility. If you provide a bigger new pool you will not be giving these pool users what they want and need. They want the pool to continue to benefit the people of Westbury and they want it to remain in the hands of the Council. The town has a strong attachment to this building and the services it has provided over so many years.

We were sorry to see that no mention was made in your report of the unique nature of the building with its listed status.

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**Item 5 – Public Participation
Review of Indoor Leisure Facilities - overview of public consultation
and the refined proposal (item 7)**

Question from Mr Stephen Walls

a). In a recent e.mail from Robin Townsend, he states that discussions with neighbouring authorities such as Swindon, the intention is to ensure that services are not duplicated or that any authorities facilities replace another but compliment each other. With Swindon having to make savings and Leisure a probable target is the council content that there will be sufficient leisure facilities around the east of the county?

b). In appendix A, the Lime Kiln in Wootton Bassett will remain the responsibility of the council until the future management arrangements are determined. Is there a time scale for this? Also I understand discussions are being held regarding a campus solution in Wootton Bassett. Can you supply further details, who is involved and what is the scope of any campus solution.

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Wiltshire Council

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

**Question from Michael Williams MBE, Chief Executive
Wessex Association of Chambers of Commerce**

Would the cabinet take note of the content of correspondence to Cllr Tonge, Cabinet Member for the Highways & Transport, with the view that the contents be taken into consideration before taking any final decision on the Car Parking Strategy.

I attach a copy of the letter send to Cllr Tonge for your information.

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Wessex Association of Chambers of Commerce

The Chambers of: Bradford-on-Avon Calne Chippenham Corsham Cricklade Devizes Frome
Malmesbury Marlborough Melksham Mere Pewsey Tidworth Trowbridge Warminster Westbury
Wilton Wootton Bassett (Linked with Cricklade
Business Association)



Pentagon House : 52 Castle Street
Trowbridge : Wiltshire : BA14 8AU
Telephone: 01225 355553 Fax: 01225 355554
E Mail: info@wessexchambers.org.uk
www.wessexchambers.org.uk

Councillor Tounge

2nd December 2010

Our ref: HMH/TP

Your ref:

Dear Cllr Tonge

CAR PARKING PROVISION

We have in writing and at our meeting expressed the views of the Chambers that represent well over 1,000 businesses.

Our recent meeting concentrated on a few things that the Council were exploring but did not address the central issue of a car parking policy which should be linked to an integrated economic regeneration and development approach.

We are extremely concerned that as it stands the Councils attitude to car parking is very simplistic in that it is a revenue raising exercise.

There are no impact assessments on local traders and no consideration has been taken of the likelihood that a change in policy will not raise revenue but will result in car parking outside of the regulated sites.

Indeed, we have yet to see the figures that indicate that Wiltshire does make money on car parks at all. The provision of revenue figures is welcome but the key factor are the costs allocated with these sites.

We are very aware of one central fact – an increase in charges on a change in the charging policy will have an impact on shopping patterns and traffic movements.

This is not a County where the vast majority of urban areas fit neatly into a few bands. Other than the three large centres all the towns have different trading patterns dependent on a number of factors such as tourism and proximity to a larger urban area.

The three large towns also have a mix of council controlled pay sites, and private sector sites some of which are free. This makes it very difficult to foresee what effect an increase on the council sites will have in the overall scheme of things.

We welcome your disclosure that you are actually looking at:-

- a. Pay on exit or a telephone scheme similar to that employed at railway car parks.
- b. Distinguishing between short-term parking for shoppers and the requirements of employees which are vital in low wage, rural economy where public transport is not always an option.

The draft consultation document has identified 4 bands of which band D may be allowed to 'buy out' for an agreed sum. Can you confirm whether this will be extended to Band C as well?

We have re-consulted with our Member Chambers and as a group we are very concerned that the policy put forward is purely a knee jerk reaction to an immediate financial problem and is an imposition of a 'one size fits all' approach which is quite inappropriate. Nowhere have we seen a discussion of a car parking policy as a tool of an economic development program, backed up by impact assessments both on the County and individual towns.

We cannot understand a policy that does not:-

- a. Reflect where the Council wishes growth to be in the future.
- b. Recognise the different roles of the three economic centres and the other towns in Wiltshire.
- c. Contain a discussion of future planning requirements in respect of the provision of car parking on new and altered development sites.
- d. Recognise different towns have different trading patterns.
- e. Consider the development of a policy which will deal adequately with the problem of parking outside of the car parks which will be especially relevant because of the increases envisaged.

We recognise the economic reality of the Councils position and also recognise the need for all revenue producing areas to maximise their potential but believe that a straight increase across the board based on the present system (flawed that it is) would have a smaller impact on business than the proposed policy changes which are based on a wish to harmonise and standardise policy without regard to impact and without grasping this opportunity to integrate with planning, public transport delivery and economic development.

Yours sincerely

Harry Hilliard
Email harryh@monahans.com

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

**Statement and question from Jonathan Knee, General Manager,
HJ Knee Ltd Department Store, Trowbridge**

My name is Jonathan Knee and my family business H.J.Knee Ltd has been trading on Fore Street in Wiltshire County Town for 131 years, we are the oldest Department Store in the West Country and one of the oldest in the UK.

I am against the increase of car parking charges in Wiltshire. I am aware of the revenue that the county generates from the existing charges and would strongly recommend maintaining those levels at a time when the need for local jobs is of such a crucial importance to the future of our county and country.

Due to decisions of the past, our challenge is set – out of town shops with vast areas of free parking versus the traditional high street with council owned “pay & display”. It is a simple dilemma for some people who may have lived in a town for many years yet never visited its high street, they park for free and shop out of town (they probably have no contact with another human being and may even scan the products through themselves and pay a computer!). But what I see on Fore Street in Trowbridge is a community that loves its town centre shops and the identity it brings to their town, receive fantastic customer service and be treated like a human being rather than an internet order number. They like to catch up with friends and family – to keep with tradition.

I am asking you to protect this tradition by saying NO to any form of increase in car parking charges in Wiltshire.

I think it is time for the County to take a long hard look at itself and to start thinking long term rather than chasing a quick buck. Start protecting our future with a long term plan for business growth and generation - right in the heart of our market towns in Wiltshire.

The car parks should be maintained using the money that is generated from existing revenue streams that the council have. Car parking charges do NOT help the community or its businesses.

Does the committee agree with me that the communities that exist on our High Streets should be protected from those factors that are within the councils control, including any increase in car parking charges? If not, please explain your reasons?

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

Statement from the Porton Down Tripartite Estates Group

We have recently been made aware that Wiltshire Council has consulted upon the introduction of a Workplace Parking Levy for businesses in the Salisbury Area as part of a wider consultation on parking strategy for Wiltshire. This consultation closed in September this year and is due to be referred to the Council's Cabinet for decisions on 14 December. We would request that the views within this letter be included as part of this consultation process and be specifically referred to the Cabinet at their meeting as an objection from a major employers' group.

It is acknowledged that a Workplace Parking Levy could, if implemented correctly, have a positive impact to deliver behavioural changes in travel in some major city centres. However, it is a totally inappropriate tool to implement in a county like Wiltshire and, in particular, in a rural location such as the Porton Down Campus. Such a levy would be seen by both the employers and employees alike as a direct tax on business. Possible adverse impacts of such a levy would include additional employer costs, taxation issues, loss of goodwill for existing Travel Plan measures and support costs and probable parking displacement onto surrounding residential roads by those employees unable to travel sustainably and unwilling to pay the parking levy.

Due to the specialist nature of the work carried out at this campus, it is necessary to recruit the best staff from a broad geographical area. Any parking levy would make recruitment more difficult and for organisations with staff in multiple counties, would raise problems of fairness of treatment of staff at affected locations.

The Porton Down Campus is a strategic employment site within South Wiltshire, which currently attracts high value science and technology employment opportunities to the area. Historically the campus's poor transport infrastructure has resulted in the majority of employees being forced to commute by car to the site. However, over the past four years the employers at the Campus have invested heavily in sustainable transport solutions to reduce the reliance upon the single occupancy car travel to the site and have implemented a travel plan which is well respected within Wiltshire Council and used as best practice. This is now being increasingly well supported by employees at the site and the threat of such punitive measures would, we believe, undermine much of that goodwill.

The campus employers consider that the introduction of any workplace parking levy that included the Porton Down Campus would be an unnecessary additional financial burden, which would not benefit the campus as the majority of sustainable transport infrastructure solutions is paid for by the campus itself and not by Wiltshire Council. Such a levy could have a significant impact upon the ability of the employers to attract new investment to the site; in particular, Porton Bioscience and Technology Centre will be providing opportunities for major new commercial investment on its land that would generate the scientific and research employment opportunities so valued by Wiltshire Council. The attractiveness of the site would be potentially reduced if the spectre of Workplace Parking Levy hung over the site and thus threatened recruitment and travel of the workforce.

The Campus employers note that the Transport Minister Phillip Hammond MP requires local authorities to demonstrate to him, prior to him authorising a workplace parking levy scheme, that they have properly addressed concerns raised by local businesses in consultations. It is also noted that 62.4% of respondents to the car parking strategy questionnaire were against any form of workplace parking levy. The business community has not been specifically consulted upon any workplace parking levy and we feel that the Cabinet should consider removing it entirely from its plans until it can be reassured that any such levy has the support of the business community. This is something we feel it is unable to do at the present time.

Please ensure that this is brought to the attention of the Cabinet prior to their meeting on 14 December.

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

Statement from Col (Retd) CA Heggie, Amesbury

I understand that parking charges are to be introduced in Amesbury. This will be a disaster for the town centre, the heart of the Amesbury community.

One of the attractions of visiting the shops in Amesbury has always been that the parking is free. The imposition of a parking charge will undoubtedly have a detrimental effect out of all proportion to the fee actually charged. As a shopping centre Amesbury is already on the verge of going under.

Already there are several shops that have been vacant for over a year and others are closing by the day. Many shops, of course, are under threat from a new Tesco Superstore that has just opened about a mile east of the town centre as well.

Please do your utmost to prevent this folly. I am very concerned for the long term future of Amesbury as a community, a community that it has taken centuries to build.

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**Item 5 – Public Participation
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Statement from Mr Brian C Thompson, Amesbury

I am writing to register our concern that consideration is being given to introduce charges to the car parks in Amesbury which are currently, and have been for many years, free of charge.

Amesbury is going through a critical time with every endeavour being made to revitalise the centre of the town. There are at present several shop premises vacant and if this trend were to continue it would be the end of Amesbury as a compact shopping location to the serious detriment of the inhabitants.

The impact of introducing charges will deter motorised people from using the town for shopping which in turn would necessitate more shops closing. The viability of the retail businesses would be lost, as to sustain a service the town require both vehicular as well pedestrian shoppers.

We urge you not to impose the charges but to retain the present arrangements to the good of both local residents and also all in the community.

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Statement from Mrs P H and Mr D J Skinner, Amesbury

We wish to represent to you in the strongest possible terms the detrimental affect the loss of free parking would have for the residents of Amesbury. It is our opinion that the loss of this much valued facility would not only cause distress to local residents, but would inevitably lead to a loss of business in this small market town. All actions by local government should be endeavouring to improve the quality of the amenities in Amesbury and not to destroying them by taxing the residents and others with un-necessary and uncalled for taxes.

I think it also questionable that you have the right to take a gifted facility (the central car park) away from us without our express agreement, This is a matter solely for the residents of Amesbury and not for the county council and you should abide by whatever decision is made by our councillors in this mater. The Coalition Government has declared that decisions affecting local affairs is to be devolved back to the people (residents) and this is an ideal opportunity for that to be demonstrated.

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

Statement from Mr Terry Fell, Devizes

I would request that in giving consideration to any changes to the present arrangements for parking in Devizes Market place and increased charges for Station Road car park that the Committee also takes into account my own views on this matter

(1) The present 60 minutes parking arrangement in the Market Place works well for the people of Devizes and has no effect on any other Town in Wiltshire any shorting of this time will be considered anti business by many people.

(2) If the parking charges are increased as proposed for Station Road will the Committee also be putting plans into place to deal with the large increase in side road parking in Devizes which will take place as a result of this change. I live in the Hillworth area and Hillworth Road like many other roads in Devizes is used as a parking area by people working in the Town cars being parking from 8 to 12 hours each day causing traffic problems every day of the working week. The proposed increase will only exacerbate the problem.

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

Statement from Mrs Susie Heggie, Amesbury

I am writing to express great concern at the plans of Wiltshire County Council to charge for parking in Amesbury's car parks in future.

Already there are several shops empty in our town centre and another closed yesterday – our greengrocer. To impose charges will hasten the demise of Amesbury centre as a place to visit and shop and the heart of the community will become a depressed and sad area.

This is particularly sad as in the past few years more shops have opened in the town – a butcher's and gift shops which will be now be further threatened. The opening of a weekly market in part of the town will do nothing to mitigate this sad state of our small town in the south of Wiltshire (the home of Stonehenge and so a possible tourist venue).

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

Statement from Dee La Vardera, Devizes

I have just read the article in this week's Gazette & Herald about the proposed rise in car parking charges across Wiltshire. Whilst I understand the need to raise more revenue in these difficult times I think the level of the increase is outrageous.

I work for Age UK Wiltshire in Devizes and use the car park three days a week and a 93% increase in the all day charge is unacceptable. I can understand raising it to £3.50 for example or incrementally over a period of time.

I am shocked at the Calne proposal which amounts to a 336% increase. Many people park there in order to take the bus into work in Chippenham which saves more cars on the roads and alleviates the parking problems in Chippenham. How will these proposals affect businesses - particularly small ones which don't have the luxury of large car parks like the supermarkets?

I also fear - wearing my Age UK Wiltshire hat, that older people will be further penalised by the cost - whether all day or, in particular, in the former Free Zones, where they will need to pay, even if they are just popping in for basic shopping needs or a doctors' appointment for example. The car is not a luxury in a rural area and is a life line for many.

I trust you will reconsider the amount by which you increase car parking charges and fix them at a more modest level to start with.

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

Statement from Dr Brian Batten

There is increasing concern in the local community that charges are to be introduced for using this facility. I wish to add my personal objection to those of others with the earnest hope that the proposals will not be voted through.

Most of us are only too well aware that free parking is a luxury that we have enjoyed for a long time and must rate as a great attraction for those who travel from surrounding villages. Amesbury is a small commercial centre with essential services as well as a few shops which are finding it harder and harder to remain solvent with the increase in competition from large outlets.

I can't help thinking that the additional costs involved with the installation and running of a meter system in such a small car park would result in diminishing returns and that the present funding arrangements should be continued presumably through the rating system.

I sincerely hope that the council will decide against introducing a charge for the use of the car park.

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**Item 5 – Public Participation
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Statement from Lt Col N O H de Foubert, Amesbury

The centre of Amesbury is being extremely hard hit not only by the recession but also 'out of town' supermarkets on the villages' periphery. Several of our long standing local shops have closed and if the current trend continues more will most definitely also cease to trade. The present proposal to charge for parking in the currently free car park will I'm confident deter shoppers coming to the town and will further enhance trade in the local supermarkets where parking is free.

It would be a tragedy should 'Amesbury Village' centre be further disadvantaged by charging for parking; may I ask that you consider seriously the danger that this proposal could have upon the future centre of our town.

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

Statement from Major General & Mrs Patrick Brooking

As a long time concerned resident of Amesbury, I am writing to you regarding the possible Parking Charges in discussion for our Town Centre.

Amesbury is fast losing its character and its character partly due to the new Tesco on its outskirts, which is also close to a FOCUS and a Lidl. We are told we must have a Tesco Petrol Outlet, although we have a new one in the central area.

Shops are already in difficulty and are closing - Crouch the Fruit & Veg shop only this weekend. We already have an empty chemist due to relocation, a large empty 'old' Co-op, due to the opening of a bigger Co-op – now 3 years old!

If you allow parking charges in our 2 central car parks, this will be a further cause of people going elsewhere. Our central shopping community will cease.

Please don't go down that road as we will be left with a 'ghost town' with only pubs, clubs, estate agents and hair dressers – the latter already feeling the pinch.

Surely Mr Cameron's 'Bigger Society' does not mean an empty centre to our Community!

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

Statement from Mr Michael Freedman, Amesbury

As a resident of Amesbury, I am writing to you to express my concern at the possibility of your imposing car park charges in the Town. Our car parks have always been free to use, and the local shops have benefited from this. It would kill local trade, especially as a new Tesco store has recently opened just outside the town centre, where car parking is free.

As a Council, surely you have a duty to protect our shops, which are at the heart of the community. Some have already closed, and car park charges would accelerate further decline. This must not be allowed to happen and I urge you turn down any motion for charges to be made in the future. You must now allow our Town Centre to die.

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**Item 5 – Public Participation
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Statement from Martin and Rosemary Gairdner, Berwick St James

We live near Amesbury and use the town for shopping and other purposes. We understand that the Council is proposing to impose parking charges for public parking in the town.

We are already concerned at the regular closure of businesses in the town which has recently been exacerbated by, we would guess, the opening of a Tesco store only a mile or so from the town centre. We are, consequently, dismayed at this latest proposal, which can only have the effect of driving more shoppers to Tesco, or to Salisbury, and further decimating the town.

We don't know the economics of this proposal, but we ask whether the Council has fully evaluated the consequences. On the one hand there will be a degree of parking income, though Tesco and Co-op stores have their own free parking; on the other, the Council will no doubt have to employ parking attendants and bear the cost of signage and machines. Additionally, it can expect the advent of these charges further to encourage shoppers to avoid the town and thus to force more businesses to close. Not only is the parking charge income likely to be on a downward spiral but the Council gradually lose business rates.

We have to ask whether the Council has a joined up policy for the town. It has recently spent thousands of pounds and caused endless inconvenience on 'improving' the main shopping street. (Most of us thought it was perfectly all right before; and that the money was largely wasted, but that is another story). What was this money spent for if not to encourage shoppers? So now, the Council wishes to discourage them. This is surely madness.

We earnestly ask you to dismiss this idea, unless you want Amesbury to become yet another rural ghost town.

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

Statement from Mr and Mrs Rogers

We understand there is a proposal to introduce car parking charges in what are currently free car parks in Amesbury Town. Whilst this would not directly affect us, we are convinced that it would be very harmful to the already dwindling number of shopkeepers in the town and unfair to those who live some way from the Town centre or who due to age or infirmity have to drive to the shops.

We appreciate of course that in the current economic climate the council needs to raise funds to meet their increasing financial obligations. If revenue has to be raised from parking charges then it should only be done on the basis that the first two hours parking are free or that the charges only apply (but then at a higher rate) between 08.00 and 10.00 am.

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

Statement from Mr and Mrs Rose

We are very concerned at the possibility of the present free car parking being chargeable in the future, in Amesbury Town Centre.

One of the positive aspects of visiting Amesbury Town Centre, both for Residents and Visitors, is the free car parking and for thus to change will have a negative effect on people visiting out Town Centre.

We need people to visit out Town Centre. We are very concerned that there are currently three empty shops (including the old Co-op) and we have just heard that two other shops have closed, this will make a total of five. Charging for Car Parking will have a detrimental effect for the future of the other shops in Amesbury and also for the heart of the community.

The Amesbury Community Centre is trying hard to encourage more people to come to Amesbury and create a community spirit and charging for car parking will put people off coming here.

We hope you will consider the above points and put them forward in your forthcoming meeting on 13th December.

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

Statement from Mr Brian Deeley on behalf of the Trustees, Staff and Volunteers of Age UK Wiltshire

It is with significant concern that we read of the proposed increases to car parking charges to be considered by the Cabinet of Wiltshire Council. Age UK Wiltshire has its main offices located in Devizes and would like to ensure that the following points of concern are brought to the attention of the cabinet;

1. For many older people the use of the car parking facilities within our urban centres is not a matter of choice but one of necessity. The erosion of key facilities within many of Wiltshire's rural communities has meant that the only method for accessing the same is by having affordable car parking facilities within our towns and villages. The reported rise in charges is totally disproportionate to the minimal increases in income that many older people will be receiving.
2. A vital aspect of the ability of Age UK Wiltshire to deliver its services is the commitment of our team of volunteers, many of whom are either based in, or have to visit our offices in Devizes. The increase upon the costs of volunteer expenses will have a significant impact upon our overheads. This at a time when increasing service demands are being placed upon the voluntary sector.
3. The majority of our staff are based at the Devizes office. Many of these work on a part-time basis. The effect upon these valued and very necessary members of the Age UK Wiltshire team will be considerable.

Whilst it is appreciated that the current economic climate demands that difficult decisions have to be made, it must be questioned whether the potential car parking charge increases can be considered acceptable in that they will impact upon some of the most vulnerable within our society.

Recent strategy documents issued for consultation by Wiltshire Council (and others) fully recognise the changing demographic of the county and the need for the continued development and involvement of a strong voluntary sector. The reported charge increases would appear to do little to support these laudable goals.

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**Item 5 – Public Participation
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Statement from Mr Colin Garrett – Devizes Resident and Tax Payer

As a Devizes Resident of over forty six years, i am contacting you to place my objection to your proposal to limit parking in the market place Devizes.

Half an hour will not be enough to encourage to park and use local shops, i believe such a restriction would be of detriment to our town.

I am convinced your figures will no doubt prove conclusively that people do not park in the market place for an hour now, but these facts are flawed on the basis that 99% of people park legally, and within the current restriction of one hour (also proven by the small number of parking tickets issued due to vehicles overstaying).

As a small market town it is important to encourage people to come into and use the town centre, otherwise it will die, and then no doubt result in an expensive town centre regeneration program!

Please give the people of Devizes what they want, a healthy town centre, or is it too democratic to listen to the people?

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

Statement from Mr F A Bush

I understand the Wiltshire County Council will be considering on the 13th December the imposition of parking charges in the main car park in Amesbury. As you are, I trust, already well aware there are a significant number of empty retail premises in the centre of Amesbury with little apparent prospect of any of them being filled. Indeed the likelihood is that more will follow, not least because of the new Tesco store recently opened out of town on the London Road.

Given the worrying increase in the “ghost town” aspect of Amesbury and the old Co-op building, empty now for some years, is the worst but not only eye soars, it behoves us all, and particularly local and County councils, to encourage as much as possible the retention and, indeed, regeneration of shops in the centre of town. The imposition of parking charges in the main car park will undoubtedly have entirely the opposite effect with more and more people shopping at out of town stores where parking is free. The, I suspect, relatively limited revenue from parking charges from a diminishing number of shoppers will be more than offset by the seriously adverse effect on the centre of Amesbury.

This is not an isolated view and I know my concerns are widely shared in Amesbury. I will, however, let other speak for themselves. I would therefore ask that your Council listens to the local population and considers very carefully the impact and wider issues of introducing parking charges. The cons greatly outweigh the pros and there is no question that, in the overall scenario, the proposal should be dropped.

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

Statement from Mr Ian Storey

I wish to register my objection to the proposed increase in car parking charges in Corsham:

1. Wiltshire Council is subsidising concessionary bus fares for the 60+, thus enabling them to shop outside of the town to Bath and Chippenham for free. This is not supportive of the economy of Corsham. I speak as an eligible person.

and,

2. The premise that Corsham needs to maintain parity of charges with the neighbouring towns of Bath and Cirencester seems to be a flawed premise. Surely Corsham (and similar Wiltshire towns near to the periphery of Wiltshire) need to consider whether a cheaper charge could be an economic incentive to shop in Wiltshire?

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

**Statement from Mr John Coleman for and on behalf of Amesbury
Redevelopment Partnership**

Ref: Car Parking Charges at Amesbury

I am writing to you as landlords of the retail units at Stonehenge Walk, Amesbury.

We are appalled at the stance of Wiltshire Council in its proposals to charge for parking at Amesbury. In the current economic climate and the state of the businesses in the centre of Amesbury with the recent opening of Tesco's out of centre supermarket, imposing car park charges will sound the death knell for town centre businesses.

As landlords we have in the past week lost two tenants whose businesses have been destroyed by the opening of Tesco's and the associated road works at the crossroads at Countess Road/High Street. These road works were deliberately delayed by Tesco's and their actions have had the predicted outcome. The prospect of car parking charges at Amesbury was in part instrumental in their final decision to close their businesses. (Amesbury Baby Care Centre and Wildcardz.) As a secondary trading position we are particularly susceptible to adverse trading conditions and will soon have 4 empty units, which will adversely affect both the local economy and Wiltshire Council's own income. We would suggest that any income generated by car parking charges will be more than offset by loss of revenue through business rates etc.

You will also be aware that Crouch's greengrocers have closed this week, which is a town centre business in a prominent trading position.

I would request that this letter be read to both the Amesbury Town Council and the Wiltshire Council before any decision is taken.

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

Statement from Mr John Niklin, Chairman of the Car Parking Strategy working group, for and on behalf of Warminster Town Council

Warminster Town Council have a significant concern about the underlying tenet of the policy which is the supposed underlying need for harmonization. Although we note that the particular word is largely absent from the report before you today. We wonder what, if any, research led to this assumption and whether it has been challenged and revisited? It might be noted that when North Yorkshire conducted a root and branch review of parking policy, one of their key findings was that harmonization of parking policy across the county was neither beneficial nor sensible since virtually every town could reasonably prove to be a “special case”. I believe that the letter sent to you by WALC, representing the smaller councils across the council, perpetuated a similar view. Warminster is, of course, a special case along with Amesbury, Bradford-on-Avon and every other town in our diverse county. I think it’s pretty fair to say that most towns are happy for you to harmonise parking across Wiltshire....but.....not in our town as we are a special case!

Looking at the supporting papers for the car parking agenda item, one of the opening observations is that “There is a general lack of consistency in parking charges, standards and management in Wiltshire.” The reason for this is simple: that the towns have developed their specific charging structures (including provision of free parking) due to their own special needs, understood by local people and adapted over the years as towns, habits and needs develop. Even at this stage you are proposing a special arrangement for Devizes based on a perceived need to equalise a special arrangement in Marlborough, along with options for smaller towns to either buy back some spaces, or take over their own parking – some will pursue this avenue and others will not. Meanwhile Salisbury has an excellent park and ride system – but is the only town to have one. So where is the harmonization? There appears to be no evidence that the diverse, variable approach that had developed under District Councils was broke; so why fix a system that ain’t broke?

One final matter to ask you to consider and that is reference to the part played by (quote) “sustainable transport measures – e.g. local bus services” in Wiltshire Council’s proposed strategy. In Warminster we witness buses, often unsuitably large and belching diesel fumes, travelling in and out of town almost always either empty or with single digit numbers of occupants. The bus companies are receiving subsidies from this council to provide a service

that is barely used, inefficient, cost-ineffective and, what's more, polluting. If sustainable transport is accepted as a goal then I suggest that we stop kidding ourselves that rattling, rumbling, belching 52-seaters buses are that incarnation. They represent an assault on our town, largely paid for from our local taxes. If you genuinely want to start down the path toward sustainable options then you will need to be more forward thinking and seek significantly more innovative solutions.

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

Statement from Mr John Todd for and on behalf of The Stonehenge Chamber of Trade

Ref: Car Parking Charges at Amesbury

I have been asked to write to you prior to the cabinet meeting on the 14th December as The Stonehenge Chamber of Trade have some background information which we wish to inform you of prior to decisions being made that affect our town and its viability.

Amesbury is currently in severe recession with no growth reported by chamber members over the past year. The general knock-on effects of recession have been felt amongst our traders for the past three years, but most noticeable over the past nine to twelve months where trading has been quite challenging for some. Two shops have ceased trading within the last week, and another to cease trading just before Christmas.

An indication of what has happened to Amesbury and its surrounding area can be summarised as being due to the following factors:

1. The general knock-on effects of recession whereby the public are very mindful of what they spend, how they spend and if spending is necessary at all. Shops that sell food items seem to fair quite well, but generalised goods outlets are not fairing very well at all.
2. The threat of redundancies locally in the public sector employers especially Quinetic, along with the general uncertainty for the future has again had a knock-on effect of spending being withdrawn locally.
3. Despite the introduction of a shop local campaign by the Chamber, this has had limited result.
4. Over the past nine months there have been road works which have jammed up the town in all directions. These schemes are a) The Bulford Bridge replacement. b) The resurfacing of Countess Road to Durrington roundabout. c) The installation of cabling on A303/A345 Countess roundabout. d) The repairs to Larkhill Road, Durrington. e) The construction of the new roundabout to Tescos, London Rd Amesbury. f) The construction of a new roundabout A345 Netheravon Rd, Durrington and finally g) The extensive works carried out to the Town Centre traffic lights area to provide better HGV access to and from London Rd Amesbury.

These road works in the above areas have caused major congestion at all times of the day and seem to be concurrent with each other and have caused much misery to those motorists who have been caught up in the traffic queues.

Our traders report back to the Chamber that local shoppers are avoiding Amesbury because of the congestion making Andover and Warminster an attractive hassle free

experience. This has been a major contribution to our trader's demise and that of the town centre.

5. The Amesbury Market has recently been returned to the town. Ideally it should have been placed in the town centre on the street which was the Chamber preferred option. The current position in the main car park is proving to be depriving shoppers of parking space as the market takes up over half the car park, and the traders vehicles take up spaces left in the remainder.

6. Out of town development will always encroach on town centre trade. This is now highlighted by the arrival of Tesco in London Road. Planners need to be balancing town centre viability in any decision taken in the future.

7. There is a proposal to bring car parking charges to Amesbury. The Chamber believe that this will further remove shoppers, especially short term who only need to go to one or two outlets, from doing business with Amesbury Traders. There is a danger that if charges are brought in it would seriously impact on the viability of traders in the town and shoppers may well be attracted to using the supermarkets where free parking is offered.

One of our members suggested a free period of 2-3hrs for short term parking. This would be of help in finding a solution to encouraging shoppers into the town if charges were to be introduced.

The Chamber understand the financial constraints and consider that if Wiltshire Council could grant a concession to Amesbury on car parking charges, similar to that given to Devizes and Westbury, shoppers may be enticed into the town centre.

The Chamber question the viability of providing chargeable parking in Amesbury with the cost of managing and running such a scheme, versus the costs taken in predicted revenue. Has the predicted revenue from such a scheme been calculated if it were to be introduced?

Very shortly a bus hopper service will be introduced in accordance with a section 106 agreement and Tesco, which will see a half hourly service which will further take vehicles out of the town centre, and reduce revenue if charges were to be introduced.

Our town is in turmoil, and with current business closure rates the Chamber look to Wiltshire Council for help and assistance.

Please see article from Salisbury Journal. The link is;
http://www.salisburyjournal.co.uk/news/8724168.Problems_for_Amesbury_town_centre/?ref=mr

The chamber request that our points in the above paragraphs are taken into account when making any decision regarding our members interests locally.

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

**Statement from Mr Richard Jaggs for and on behalf of the Devizes
Chamber of Commerce**

Just wanted to confirm the Devizes Chamber of Commerce position ahead of the vote on Tuesday.

We understand the enormous financial pressure that is on Wiltshire Council at the moment, but we are concerned that the Council see the parking strategy as an exercise in achieving pricing consistency and raising revenue. As the representative body for independent business in the Devizes area we must point out that the proposed changes will have a negative effect on town centre independent businesses, a group that does so much to make Devizes the attractive town that it is. It's tempting to think that the effects of the proposed changes will simply be temporary, however you must realise that many local businesses already operate on the margins of viability.

Currently Devizes is very fortunate to have a relatively healthy independent commercial sector, where many other similar town centres have effectively died. It would be a tragedy to see Devizes go the same way, we must do all we can to protect the delicate commercial balance, and the parking strategy is a very important part of this.

The Devizes Chambers position on parking is as follows:

- Long stay/ all day parking charge increases should be kept to a minimum. It's very important that there is reasonably priced parking for employees of businesses based in the town.

- Free 1 hour and 2 hour on street and 1 hour Market Place parking to be maintained. This is essential to encourage people to come in to shop and to keep a good number of shoppers in the town though-out the day and give shoppers a reasonable time to shop/ have a coffee/ sandwich etc.

We are very concerned about the effect of taking the free Market Place parking to 1/2 hour and the increases in long stay parking. In Devizes' main long stay car park, Station Road, the price will rise from £2.90 to £5.60 per day. Someone who works in Devizes will therefore have to spend an extra £60 per month on parking - simply too much.

I therefore urge you to retain the free 1 hour parking in the market place and reduce the increases in long stay parked, particularly in Station Road Car park, to a more reasonable level.

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Statement from Mr W G V Hall, Director, Martingate Centre Ltd, Corsham

On 19th October Martingate Centre Ltd, following a consultation meeting with Mr Chris Major, formally asked our local councillors to answer three specific questions. We have not received any answers.

In particular, and in the context of a fair policy for all across the county we asked, "why our shopkeepers should continue to bear the cost of repairing and maintaining the Newlands Road Car park while this is paid for by the Council out of the parking charges in all other car parks in the county?" The maintenance responsibility lies with the Martingate and the cost is recharged to the tenants under the centre service charge. We suggested that if this arrangement continued, the 20p first hour should be retained. We also suggested the provision of some free parking in the adjacent underutilised long term car park.

If the council is not prepared to accept parity on car park maintenance costs consistent with parity on parking charges, Martingate would now like to propose that a limited number of free spaces at the top end of the long park (about 20) be made available free of charge for the first hour for our shoppers.

I would be grateful if you would draw this matter to the attention of the cabinet.

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Statement from Ms Anne Richards

I write to express my horror at the proposal to increase the charge for all day parking in Station Road, Devizes to £5.60, which would simply make it financially impossible for me to continue my job.

How do you expect anyone on an average wage to be able to afford £112 a month of income after tax? The only alternative for the scores of us who park in Station Road daily will be to clog up residential streets. I for one refuse to do this having experienced the difficulties of commuter parking outside my previous home in Bristol.

Public transport, however much you promise to improve it, is never going to offer a fast, reliable link from Marlborough to Devizes at the flexible, often off-peak and odd ball times that I require, especially to fit in with the needs of my children.

I have commuted to Devizes for more than ten years, contributing not only to its car park but to the economy of its shops and sandwich bars. I pity for the town's future if this proposed charge is approved and forces scores of workers to go elsewhere.

Please think again.

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Statement from Ms C Kisley

Are you, and the W.C.C mad?

I refer to the proposed parking charges in Amesbury centre. These are out of order and against public opinion.

The car park were given, decades ago, by local benefactors, to be free for ever. This should continue, as was their wishes. The centre includes banks, P.O, medical services (doctors, dentists, chemists, etc) etc and performs a useful service to the whole extended community.

Recently a Tesco has opened out of town and attracted popular acclaim. I have not been there, preferring to shop at local butchers, bakers, greengrocers, etc. Already one greengrocer has gone out of business since the opening of Tesco. How many more small shops will close if you put parking charges on?

It is utterly ridiculous to contemplate such a move at this extremely sensitive time.

P.S I am a Moonraker, born in Salisbury so the fact that I live in Hampshire should not concern you, as the village where I live is the only village of Salisbury Plain to be over the border.

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Statement from Ms Judy Bridger

No! No! No! No! No! No reduction of the free hour's parking in Devizes Market Place, please. Councillor Richard Gamble, please take note of the people who live and work here in Devizes - are you trying to ruin businesses and stop people coming in from the surrounding villages? Why does everywhere have to be the same? Places are different and need different arrangements. Please reconsider and stop this ridiculous proposal.

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Statement from Julie Owen from Lower Compton

Further to the article in the Gazette & Herald today regarding the increased parking charges I write to express my horror at the huge proposed increase for all day parking in Calne Church Street Car Park to £5.60.

I work in Calne and if the proposed increases are approved then I will have to pay £112.00 per month (as against the current £24.00 per month) for the privilege of working in the town. This is a massive amount of money particularly given the current economic climate.

In the alternative, of course, I could park in the free Sainsbury's bottom car park and then add to the already unacceptable congestion in the town centre.

Calne is a small town and the only people who are likely to require all day parking are those who work here and have no choice but to park all day. I think it is highly unfair to penalise people who are working in the town. If people do not work here then there will be no shops or services and thus it will become a ghost town.

The parking used to be completely free and I do not mind paying something towards parking, but the current proposals smack of pure greed.

I trust these comments will be taken into consideration.

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Statement from Ms Margaret Rawlings

Just a comment regarding the proposed increases in parking charges.

I live in St Paul Street, Chippenham and my very elderly father lives in Dallas Road, Chippenham. I pass Spanbourne Avenue car park several times a day. It used to be almost full by 9am, but now if there are half a dozen cars there by 10am it is busy - usually there are just two or three. Everyone now parks in Dallas Road and the surrounding residential roads rather than pay for the car park. So, if I visit my father after 9am it is rare for me to be able to park anywhere near his house, if I can stop in Dallas Road at all. This can make unloading shopping or taking him to appointments awkward.

Surely it makes more sense to charge less and have the car parks used, than to price people out and force them to clog up even more residential roads on the outskirts of town, causing congestion and annoyance?

Please can a bit of common sense be applied.

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Statement from Ms Mary Wilson

I was horrified to hear that they are thinking of charging for car parking in Amesbury. Apart from the fact that the land was given to the people of Amesbury for parking, someone like me, who lives between Amesbury and Salisbury, would most likely opt to go to Salisbury where there are many more facilities. It would seem that the Council have a death wish for Amesbury.

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Statement from Ms Sue Atkinson

I would like to register my disgust at the proposed parking increases for Calne.

The daily rate has already increased this year by 20% to £1.20 with a similar amount for the 4 hourly parking. To increase the daily rate to £5.90 is unjustified, a rise of around 490%. These prices will kill the little trade we have in the town when the public can go to bigger towns offering more facilities for the same price.

I currently choose to pay for parking when I get the bus to Bath or Swindon rather than take up a "free" parking place for the day but be assured I will not pay £5.90. Everyone will lose out.

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Statement from Ms Victoria Morris

I am dismayed to hear about the proposed parking charge increases that I have read about in today's Gazette and Herald.

We are encouraged to spend locally on our high streets which many of us enjoy doing and wish to continue doing so. Unfortunately sometimes I feel Wiltshire Council is unwelcoming to visitors to the high street with their unfair charging. I learnt the hard way Christmas shopping in 2009 that you can only park on Marlborough High St for 2 hours (having unloaded my child and pushchair and then gone to the ticket meter). On my second visit I tried to park in the Waitrose car park having been told you can park there for longer. What I found appalling was you charge more per hour for the visitor who stays 3 hours compared to staying 1 or 2 hours. The higher charges for a longer visit sent me a very clear message of not being welcome and that Wiltshire Council did not wish me to shop locally.

The council must remember Wiltshire's high streets are competing with out of town shopping centres which offer free parking with bigger more child friendly loading spaces. It is not the fact that I object to paying for parking I object to being penalised because I take longer than 2 hours to shop. There are many people who can't whizz round and need longer time including the elderly and those of us with children in tow.

I understand money is short and parking charges are probably a good revenue earner for the County however please make charges fair eg the same hourly rate however long you park in the shopping car parks (not the commuter car parks). Do not penalise those of us who need longer when shopping.

Please consider these thoughts when discussing changes to parking charges.

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**Item 5 – Public Participation
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Statement from Mr Brian Crook, Devizes

I am writing to you as a resident of our lovely, happy market town of Devizes. The current one hour parking system in the market square is terrific, beneficial to both shoppers and to the commercial interests of Devizes, loved by all the Devizes community and admired by many visitors from outside.

To cut this to half an hour would be an act of deliberate self-inflicted vandalism.

Let me give an example. You want to post a letter or parcel at the post office. You park in the Market Square. It takes 10 minutes to walk up the Little Brittox, the Brittox and Maryport Street to Sainsbury's on the corner of Monday Market Street, and right through into the back of the shop to the post office counters. There is always a queue there, so it's several more minutes waiting for a till to become free. Then you have immediately to get back to your car, if its not too late already. There is absolutely no time to pop into Boots to get your prescription, or to the bank to get some cash, or buy the bread, or chat to anyone you meet in town, as we all do, and which makes this such a happy community.

Meanwhile more and more cars are circulating in Long Street - High Street - Sheep Street - Market Square - New Park Street, having had to move prematurely before getting their jobs done, looking for parking spaces; more traffic, more noise, more pollution, more short tempers, more pressure and anger - just the opposite of what we want to create.

In sum, Devizes' current one hour Market Square parking limit is perfect, and hugely valued by our happy community. I ask you most sincerely not to destroy what we all want to retain, the facility that makes Devizes such a special, cheerful and friendly town.

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Statement from Terry Parkinson

I am writing to forward a residents' view on the proposal of the council to vote next Tuesday on increasing car parking charges in Salisbury. I feel strongly that the imposition of a minimum 2 hour parking fee is wrong and that this will be harmful to pensioners, lower paid workers and to retailers. People will be discouraged from parking for a small amount of shopping that could be collected within 1 hour and are likely to look for other locations where they would not have to pay £2 for a brief shopping visit.

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**Item 5 – Public Participation
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Question from Vince Delderfield

Would someone please advise me how they can justify 100% increases in charges to park outside my own house when there is a credit crunch and inflation in single figures? I would like the names of the individuals concerned (FOI request will be forthcoming if necessary – so please avoid yet more bureaucracy which costs time and money - yes my money not yours). This e-mail is aimed at the people responsible for the decision not the individuals receiving it who are just doing their job. If this is an example of the new unified council you can be sure what support you will get from me in future. I require logical answers not 'we have got to get our funding from somewhere' or 'the government has decreased our budgets' and other pathetic excuses. Logic involves a relationship between the action (in this case the 100% increase) and the cause of the increase (i.e. the changes related to the cost of administrating this additional new tax).

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Statement from Mr and Mrs Larden

We wish to complain about the proposed increase in parking charges in Devizes. This will adversely affect the prosperity of our Town. We do not wish to see any more empty shops than we already have. Drivers should be encouraged to park in Station Road. Why are you spending taxpayers money on Consultants who are no doubt being paid exorbitant fees!?

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**Item 5 – Public Participation
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Statement from Nicholas Godden

I am writing to mention my deep concern about the suggested changes to parking in the Market Square in Devizes. Devizes centre is now our main shopping area as there is no provision of shops or post offices in the local villages (other than the community shop in All Cannings). There is no regular bus service from our village. We are generally dependent on car transport. I am not alone in wanting to support Devizes as a fast recovering commercial centre. I would like however to object violently to the suggested cut to half an hour the free parking in the market place. One hour gives enough time for most daily shopping requirements. Half an hour would be unnecessarily restrictive. The further idea of charging for parking in Devizes centre is crazy. Devizes is not a wealthy town and it needs all the help and support it can get from surrounding supportive village residents. It is different to Marlborough and this difference should be respected. In Wiltshire the one size fits all policy is not necessarily the correct one. Please forward this plea to the correct councillor and officer and acknowledge its receipt.

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**Item 5 – Public Participation
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Statement from Mr Pete Hawkins

The proposed increases in car parking charges in Wiltshire are a disgrace. The comparison with other counties is fatuous because all counties and areas have different levels of bus and train services-country districts in Wiltshire have virtually none. This is a money making exercise at the expense yet again of motorists who have no choice other than to use cars. I notice that there are no proposals to charge for workplace parking spaces-how convenient for Council workers. No doubt all the very well-paid Council officers have their own free spaces but then, as with turkeys voting for Christmas, I would not have expected anything else.

My wife, who is directly affected by these absurd proposals, only read about them when it was too late to mail you before your deadline. Not much time to complain was there?

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**Item 5 – Public Participation
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Statement from Mr Marcus Kirschner

If there is a need to harmonise car parking charges in Wiltshire, then I would expect car parking charges in some area to be reduced while others would be increased, if the total revenue to be raised is to stay the same. Will you be reducing car parking charges in some areas so that the total revenue is still the same?

The proposals that I have seen only talk about increasing car parking charges. Please can you confirm this proposed car parking charge revision is not a revenue generating exercise?

If this is a revenue generating exercise, please can you confirm how much extra revenue you expect to generate?

I was told that amalgamating local councils into a single Wiltshire County Council was recommended in order to save money. Is this proposed car parking revision, proof that these recommendations were never justified, and that the council will look at any method of increasing revenue by hitting the public at every opportunity?

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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.

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**Item 5 – Public Participation
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Statement from Mr Tony Morton

I have only just been able to read the Gazette & Herald, and find it extraordinary that the first we should know about changes in parking charges should be from the newspaper, with less than 24 hours to comment. Having been away, even if I had been at home, this is quite unacceptable notice for sensible comment.

There is no logical reason why charges should be common across the county. It may appear tidier, but it is completely at odds with government policy of local initiatives.

Since coming to Devizes 14 years ago one of the things which has been a real plus has been the ability to park for up to an hour in the Market Square or elsewhere without charge. As a result we go into Devizes for many tasks for which we might go elsewhere. Although many of these tasks might be complete in 30 minutes, there are many occasions when we do a number of things and take longer than this. Local businesses will suffer, and in turn so will we as they close their doors. This is quite different from asking people to pay for services such as libraries or leisure centres, where THEY get a direct benefit, here we are dealing with the viability of the town, and although Wiltshire may appear to benefit that will be at the expense of the economy on which it depends. It also seems extraordinary to double all day charges for those working in the town. This might be justified if there was such demand on facilities that people couldn't find space, but should be considered on the basis of supply and demand. Shop workers and other employees in Devizes are not paid the same wages as those in every other town in Wiltshire, so that it is absurd that the argument should be that every worker in Wiltshire should pay the same to park. This is going in the face of the present government policy of 'localisation' and is dreadful.

**THERE IS NO LOGICAL REASON TO APPLY COMMON CHARGES
ACROSS THE COUNTY.**

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

john.glen.mp@parliament.uk

www.johnglenmp.com

Dick Tonge
Wiltshire Council
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
BA14 8JD

13th December 2010

Dear Dick

Having attended a meeting of Salisbury City Centre Management on Friday, I am writing to you ahead of the forthcoming vote on parking charges to make the case for Salisbury City Centre not to become the victim of a county-wide approach to pricing policy.

People who shop in Salisbury typically weigh up the relative merits of going to Southampton, Winchester or Andover – not Trowbridge, Melksham or Chippenham. The fact that the latter are included in the same county is a geographical reality, not an economic one.

I am sure you will agree that, when it comes to determining the viability of a particular city centre, the most meaningful comparisons are to its **actual** competitors for footfall and retail spend.

Furthermore, Salisbury's retail centre is still a work in progress. It is about to be enhanced by major changes to the Market Square and The Maltings project and does not need to be undermined in advance by measures that risk alienating any of its current clientele.

I am, of course, aware that Salisbury is starting from the unfortunate position of having an expensive and under-utilised park & ride provision that is still some way off justifying the investment made in it. If our experience to date has taught us anything, it is that park and ride is not a hit with short-term visitors to the city. The best avenue to improve take-up is, in my opinion, to aggressively market it to city centre workers, making a special effort to ensure a smooth-running service at times when local commuters need it.



Of course, I fully appreciate the pressures imposed on Wiltshire Council by the local government settlement and applaud the steps taken in many areas to deal with the tough challenges you face.

It is my view that Salisbury CCM is not blindly opposing all price hikes but has proposed viable alternatives and I would only ask that, if prices do have to rise, you first take account of some of the board's ideas for improving revenue generation in the existing car parks.

One such idea is the installation of pay-on-exit barriers in the Central Car Park to encourage people to spend longer in the city centre, rather than racing to meet a self-imposed one or two hour 'deadline' determined at the point of arrival.

David M. Auld

PP **John Glen MP**
Member of Parliament for Salisbury

cc Jane Scott
John Brady
Richard Clewer
Chris Cochrane
Mary Douglas
Bill Moss
Paul Sample



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LONDON SW1A 0AA

john.glen.mp@parliament.uk

www.johnglenmp.com

Dick Tonge
Wiltshire Council
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
BA14 8JD

13th December 2010

Dear Dick

I am writing to you to make you aware of grave concerns about the possible impact of the forthcoming vote on parking charges on Amesbury Town Centre.

A number of retailers are under threat of imminent closure and, with the recent opening of a brand new out-of-town Tesco, the pressures on Amesbury's shopkeepers are particularly acute – and only likely to intensify.

Amesbury is already being squeezed by the wider range of facilities in nearby Andover and Salisbury and retaining affordable parking in the town is integral to the viability of its local retail offerings.

I believe that there is a case to be made for a careful assessment of the impact on diminished income from business rates that will occur as a result of the deterioration of the local economy in Amesbury's.

As the local MP, I hope that both local representatives and the council as a whole will be able to avoid applying a blanket increase in charges to a town where the trading community is experiencing such intense pressure.

I am informed that Amesbury Town Council has expressed an interest in exploring the provisions of the new localism bill with a view to purchasing the town's main car park in



order to shelter its retailers, at least in the short-term, from hikes in parking charges – an explicit recognition of the uniqueness of Amesbury's retail landscape.

Sarah M'Call

PP **John Glen MP**
Member of Parliament for Salisbury

cc Jane Scott
Fred Westmoreland
John Noeken
Andy Rhind-Tutt

**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

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

Statement from Wiltshire Councillor Russell Hawker, Westbury West Division

Congratulations to all of you for grasping the nettle and coming up with what I regard as a good overall strategy for rationalising car parking charges in Wiltshire Council's car parks.

Thanks also to Robert Murphy for his patience and efforts in explaining to me the rationale (some of which is totally illogical) behind some of the proposals.

Unfortunately, some of the details in the proposals have not been thought through very well and, if implemented, will directly and quickly damage some of the weakest town and village centres.

My professional background is as a chartered valuation surveyor who, amongst other things, has specialised in valuing and analysing commercial property for investment, development, occupational and trading purposes and has worked for 5 of the current top 10 firms of UK / international surveyors and a major UK property Plc as group investment surveyor (now called Peel Holdings Ltd) In essence, ***you can verify what I am saying by speaking to any genuine specialist commercial property chartered valuation or general practice surveyor active in retail property agency or valuation work in the UK.*** Please be aware that most of the larger firms of chartered surveyors / international property consultants in the UK tend to run their retail property teams from bases in London. Local agents will tend to have a very incomplete picture outside their local patch.

What follows are brief points to illustrate the problem as I see it. I would be happy to explain further if asked.

1. It is irrational to lump all "market towns" in one banding - they are far too varied in strength

The true best indicator of the strength or weakness of a retail centre is its top "Zone A rental value". Zone A represents the first 20 ft depth of shops measured from the front. All properly known deals are analysed to allow for shape and return frontages so that "Zone A equivalent" figures are obtained for every retail centre. This is the definitive common currency that allows retail

centres to be instantly compared for attraction and trading strength anywhere in the country.

Top Zone A rents in several Wiltshire towns / large villages are as follows:

Salisbury	£	120 - 150 per sq ft (psf) - Salisbury has two separate prime locations.
Trowbridge		65
Chippenham		65
Marlborough		60
Devizes		50
Amesbury		35
Bradford on Avon		35
Warminster		35
Malmesbury		30
Melksham		25
Tisbury		19
Westbury		18
Mere		15

The towns in the proposed Band 3 have Zone As that range from £60 down to 15 psf.

A top Zone A will be achieved in the very best positions - typically by a Marks and Spencer in a large town or a Boots / main supermarket in a smaller town centre. Zone As will fall away quickly the further the distance from the prime location. Therefore many shops in Salisbury will be at sub-£60 psf. The overall mass of shops in any centre combines to create the top zone A location and its value, which represents a good indicator of the overall strength of the retail economy of the centre.

It is important to appreciate that any shop rents reflecting a Zone A of less than £20psf represents a seriously weak location where one can expect distressed businesses, charity shops, empty units for long periods of time etc

Such weak centres will typically provide only convenience shopping and no comparison shopping (such as shoe shops, ladies /menswear, jewellers). They do not have the critical mass to be attractive if parking is charged for.

Such centres often depend on free parking just for survival. Removal of free parking in weak centres results in more closed businesses, empty units, charity shops and a more rapid cycle of decline.

Westbury town centre is in a clear cycle of decline such that the prime location itself now includes charity shops and long term empty units (compared to stronger centres where the charity shops are relegated to secondary or tertiary locations).

To propose the same car park charges for towns that are so varied in economic strength shows a complete lack of understanding (or a

deliberate indifference to and lack of care towards) the difference in value customers place on the car spaces in different locations.

It would be completely rational to put Marlborough and Devizes into Band 2 and Westbury into Band 4 .

Marlborough and Devizes would easily sustain the increased charges because they would remain superior in their attraction to shoppers.

Locals would bleat about increased charges, but the reality is that they will continue to use the centre and the charges will better reflect the actual value of the car spaces.

2. It is irrational to only make up to 25% of short term spaces available for free in very weak centre.

Westbury currently has most of its short term parking available free for 1 hour. Until recently it was 2 hours free. The change has immediately reduced trade in the town with the streets noticeably quieter.

Let me be blunt. The proposal to take away free parking altogether in a weak and declining centre like Westbury if the town council refuses to be bullied into paying exorbitant subsidies WILL quickly destroy a significant proportion of the already weak retail businesses in the town centre. Several more shop units will be empty by Summer 2001.

The idea that reducing free parking will encourage other modes of transport such as bus journeys is pie-in-the-sky nonsense. Car drivers will simply drive to other towns more than they already do.

The West Wiltshire Retails Needs Assessment undertaken in early 2007 established that most retail spend by Westbury residents is undertaken outside the town already. It should be the council's objective to reduce journeys out of the town by helping to rejuvenate the town centre and its retail system. When starting from such as low base as one has in Westbury, only FREE PARKING will work to attract new businesses and customers.

NB. Only 25% of spaces free will simply cause too much irritation to shoppers who will end up waiting and losing their patience.

To ignore these simple economic fact would be incompetence.

3. The proposed charge rate of £500 per space per annum is far too high and unjustified in very weak centres.

The proposed subsidy to achieve free parking should reflect the VALUE of the spaces - not the cost of management. To ignore the economic value (ie. what fees they can generate in a free market), is to lose sight of the need to base

decisions affecting the economic strength of our towns on economic values and indicators in the first place. The proposed disconnect between economic value and cost of management reflects a lack of logic and lack of understanding of the economic dynamics of town centres, which harm the weakest town centres.

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.

Wiltshire Council

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14 December 2010

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

Statement from Terry Parkinson, Salisbury

I am very concerned to read in the Salisbury Journal that there is a meeting scheduled for Tuesday 14th December which includes among other options increasing car parking charges 100% for short stay parking by setting the minimum duration at two hours instead of the 1 hour that currently applies. This change penalises the lower paid and pensioners and is a retrograde step for retailers who will lose trade from those who only want to park briefly to go to 1 or 2 shops. Parking fees are rapidly reaching a level where they discourage frequent shopping trips in favour of planning to do fewer large shopping trips or using convenience stores where there is short parking with no fee. I see no reason to harmonise parking charges across Wiltshire as parking pressures vary at different locations. However, if this is a misguided attempt to force more drivers into the Park and Ride sites this will fail. The Park and Ride is a good concept for tourists wanting to spend a day in Salisbury or for those living outside who work in the city centre but it does not meet the needs of local residents wanting to get several bags of shopping into the boot of their car. For that, city centre car parks will always be needed.

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