

## **Wiltshire Council**

### **Cabinet**

**14 December 2010**

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#### **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.