

# **Management Committee**

## **8 November 2016**

### **Weymouth Town Centre Christmas Parking**

#### **Briefholder(s)**

Councillor Colin Huckle

**Senior Leadership Team Contact:** Martin Hamilton- Strategic Director

#### **Statutory Authority**

There is no legislation preventing the Council amending its charging hours

#### **Purpose of Report**

- 1 To consider supporting the Weymouth BID and allowing free parking from 3pm-6pm from 3rd December- 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016.

#### **Officer Recommendation**

- 1 To offer free car parking between 3pm- 6pm each day from Saturday 3rd December – Saturday 31st December 2016 in the following car parks:- Swannery, Melcombe Regis, Cosens Quay, Royal Yard, Governors Lane, Park Street, Pavilion and Council Offices to assist in the launch and promotion of Weymouth's Christmas festivities.
  - 1.1 To offer a combined promotional Ice Rink and parking for Swannery car park (only), giving a 50% discount on the daily charge from 9am until 3pm of the day of the Ice Rink ticket. The BID would sell the package and reimburse the Council for the parking element.

#### **Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3 The BID is making an effort to attract additional visitors to Weymouth Town Centre in the lead up to and throughout the Christmas period, but it does need the support of this Council.
  - 1.2 This year's proposal as above simplifies the charging mechanism for car park users but will detriment the Council's car park income.
  - 1.3 While this is acknowledged in order to encourage shoppers the Council does recognise the wider economic impact this proposal could have on the Town Centre.

#### **Background Information and Report**

- 4 The Council last year supported the Christmas event at a cost in the region of £10,000 due to lost income. This year the Council will be providing a higher level of free car parking, along with the promotional event and the cost to the council will therefore be in excess of this sum.

- 1.4 Weymouth BID is seeking continued support from this Council in its efforts to make Weymouth town centre a vibrant area in period leading up to Christmas and the New Year. The request that the Council received is for free parking each day from 3pm to 6pm from the 3rd to the 31<sup>st</sup> December. These car parks are free from 6.00pm until 8.00am nightly and thus there is also free parking in the evening.
- 1.5 In previous years the Council provided free parking from 3pm- 6.00pm but only each Thursday throughout December and from noon on the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday in December for the 'Victorian Evening'.
- 1.6 Last year this was extended further and proved to be successful, but the buy one get one free car parking hour apparently caused confusion and the changes this year hope to address this and make the charging regime clear and simple.
- 1.7 The BID is currently in the 2016 Christmas planning stage and are looking to stage a number of events including:
  - A Real Ice Rink in New Bond Street from the 3<sup>rd</sup> December
  - Potential weekend street markets
  - Themed events each weekend around the ice rink

## **Implications**

### **Corporate Plan**

5 Assisting in ensuring the economic viability and sustainability of Weymouth.

### **Financial Implications**

- 6 As at 30 September 2016 the financial position of the car parking budget appears slightly ahead of target to reach the budget projections for 2016/17.
- 6.1 Based upon the experience of last year it would appear more people visited the town centre car parks in December and less in January when compared to the previous year. The overall effect was as anticipated a fall in car park income but this was recovered due to increased operational efficiencies to give an overall budget income achievement.
- 6.2 Last year the Council supported the BID and subsidised parking at a cost in excess of £10,000 over the two months. With less chargeable hours and the promotional event support the cost of the subsidy and detriment to the Council's income is likely to be in the region of £15,000, although this figure is not know for certain.

### **Equalities**

7 N/A

## **Environmental**

8 N/A

## **Economic Development**

9 It is anticipated that this will have a beneficial impact on the commercial viability of the town centre by attracting more visitors throughout the Christmas period.

## **Risk Management (including Health & Safety)**

10 There is a risk associated with the potential loss of income on the annual budget not being met, but this is believed to be modest.

## **Human Resources**

11 Patrols will continue to ensure that the terms and conditions for parking are being complied with as well as providing a valuable customer service.

## **Consultation and Engagement**

12 The Council's reputation should be enhanced by this gesture of goodwill leading up to Christmas.

12.1 The changes to parking charges will be advertised clearly on machines and in conjunction with the BID so that members of the public are aware.

## **Appendices**

13 N/A

## **Background Documents (including relevant policy documents)**

14 N/A

## **Footnote**

Issues relating to financial, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.

**Report Author & Contact:** Jack Creeber

**Telephone:** 01305 838349

**Email:** [jcreeber@dorset.gov.uk](mailto:jcreeber@dorset.gov.uk)