

Place and Resources Overview Committee – 19 October 2021

Agenda item 4 - Public Participation

Question from Robert Rodway

Re. Agenda item 10. Phase 2 Parking Charges Transformation Project.

“The existing residents parking permit for Wimborne Town Centre will increase from £80 to £260 under this proposal (report item 9.1(c)ii). As only 17% of respondents support this increase and the two most repeated comments were that parking charges were too high and permits should be kept affordable, may I ask the report authors to please provide the evidence to support their claim that this is what residents have asked for?”

Statement from John Gatrell (Wimborne Residents Action Group)

I am writing on behalf of Wimborne town-centre residents. The recent review of parking fees across the County has led to a more than threefold increase in the fee for Wimborne residents who have an unavoidable need to use town-centre car parks – from £80.00 to £260.00.

I understand that papers supplied by Dorset Council to Wimborne Minster Town Council during the consultation process failed to indicate the likely impact of the changes on residents. Wimborne Minster Town Council discussed the changes during the consultation period and concluded that the charges would not adversely affect Wimborne residents. At that time, this was a reasonable interpretation as the proposed increases were not included in that consultation. Indeed, they only became known once the opportunity to comment had ended. Lumping residents together with people who work in the town and who can either claim expenses from their employer or choose an alternative means of transport is blatantly unfair on those who live in the town, who pay council tax to Dorset Council and have a reasonable expectation of fairer treatment.

The proposal to increase the Residents Parking Permit from £80 to £260 cannot be described as fair to residents, as has been claimed by Councillor Bryan:

“We asked Dorset residents what they wanted from a new permit scheme, and we are proposing exactly what they have asked for...”

As the survey did not include even a hint of a proposed increase of 325%, his statement would appear overly optimistic at least.

For this reason, we believe that, to defend transparent governance, further consultation is sought on these specific changes or, alternatively, that the existing Residents Parking permit is retained, as a third option alongside the two new permits. We are therefore asking the Council to separate town-centre residents from the proposed “Live, work, play” permits, thus providing them with continued use of local car parks at a fee level which doesn’t penalise them for living in the centre of a town.