

Agenda Item No. 4(b)

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER - HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE**

**7 December 2017**

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**WILLINGTON PICNIC SITE**

- (1) **Purpose of Report** To agree the principle of the County Council leasing Willington Picnic Site car park to the Green Dragon Public House.
- (2) **Information and Analysis** At its meeting of 26 May 2015, Cabinet considered a report proposing the introduction of car park charges at Willington Picnic Site and resolved to begin the process of making a legal Order to enable this to commence (Minute No. 201/15 refers). Following the various consultation processes, a second meeting of Cabinet, held 5 April 2016, agreed to make the Order and the Derbyshire County Council (Off Street Parking Places) (Amendment) Order 2016 was subsequently made (Minute No. 112/16 refers). This enabled both the charging at Willington and the different levels of charges to be made at the site.

During the consultation period, concern was expressed about the effect on local businesses of the introduction of charges. To address these concerns, it was felt that the introduction of the first hour free parking and no charges after 5.00pm would mean the impact on local shops and pubs would be minimalised. Following the decision to implement charges, however, a number of local businesses approached the County Council with the idea of exploring ideas whereby car park users could “redeem” all or part of their car park fee in the business. As a result of these discussions, the Green Dragon public house, which adjoins the car park, put forward a proposal to lease the car park, and levy charges, in return for which it would pay the County Council a licence fee and a percentage of income from the car park.

The original proposal to charge at the site was based upon the expectation that such charges would generate a significant income to help maintain this and other countryside sites in the local area. However, this has to be reconciled against the development costs of the scheme, the running costs and potential loss of income when machines are out of action. Given the reduction in staff in the Countryside service over the last three years and budget pressures, the ability to manage charging at the site would be a

challenge and the potential to have a guaranteed income without the need for County Council input into management does have advantages.

In the original proposal, the introduction of pay and display machines was estimated to potentially generate a gross income of between £43,000 and £48,000. This amount would not be guaranteed, however, and income could be lost if the machine was out of action for any reason or if parking behaviour changed due to changes being imposed, especially by commuters. Operating costs would have been in the order of £7,500, giving a maximum potential net mean of £41,500.

If the County Council were to implement the scheme itself, there would also be a set up cost for the machine signs, etc, of approximately £4,600.

The Director of Property was asked to explore the proposal for the Green Dragon public house to lease the site on the basis that the existing public use of the car park, and the site as a whole, would not be restricted and the proposal would not be financially dis-advantageous to the County Council. As a result, an outline proposal has provisionally been agreed with the Green Dragon. Under this proposal, it would pay an annual rent of £18,000 plus 10% of the gross car park ticket income, the licence would be for 6 years (outside of Landlord and Tenant Act 1954) with a review at 3 years. It is anticipated that the Green Dragon will subcontract the whole management of the system to a parking company which will be contracted to pay 10% of the gross income direct to the County Council. This will be audited. Most parking companies operate on-line computerised management system which include an audit trail. The detail of this will be included in the licence issued. The tenant would be responsible for all outgoings.

If agreed, the Director of Property would be able to agree the proposal under delegated powers being under 7 years and for less than £20,000 per annum.

Although less than the original estimates for anticipated income, it is felt that, as the proposal removes the need for the County Council to manage the car park, it offers benefits to local businesses and provides a guaranteed income for the County Council and the proposal should be accepted.

### **Local Member Comments**

The local Member, Councillor Ford, supported officers exploring these proposals with the expectation that it would deliver a scheme that was mutually beneficial to both the Council and local businesses.

**(3) Financial Considerations** The financial details are set out in the body of the report. The proposal will generate a guaranteed income of £18,000 per annum plus a further 10% on the car park income generated.

(4) **Legal Considerations** If the decision of the Cabinet Member is to proceed, the Derbyshire County Council (Off Street Parking Places) (Amendments) Order 2016, which is now in force, will have to be revoked. This is because the County Council cannot be used to enforce a private parking scheme. Revocation of the Order will be subject to a separate report in due course.

(5) **Social Value Considerations** The proposal offers the opportunity for car parking charges to be redeemed against purchase in all local shops and business premises therefore supporting the viability of local businesses. It also enables local countryside sites to be managed sustainably in the future, giving a guaranteed level of income.

### **Other Considerations**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property, social value and transport considerations.

(5) **Key Decision** No.

(6) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(7) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details – Chris Coombs, extension 39821.

(8) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That the Cabinet Member approves the principle of leasing the car park at Willington Picnic Site to the Green Dragon public house.

**Mike Ashworth**  
**Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment**