

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL PEEBLES PARKING WORKING GROUP

MINUTES of Meeting of the PEEBLES
PARKING WORKING GROUP held via
Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, 9 August
2023 at 4.00 pm

- Present:- Councillors R. Tatler (Chair) and E. Small
- Apologies:- Councillors J. Pirone, V. Thomson, J. Smith (Peebles Civic Society), D. McGrath and K. Guiney (Peebles Retailers Association)
- In Attendance:- P. Gilhooly (Team Leader), G. Haldane (Assistant Engineer), J. Little (Parking Supervisor) C. Carlton (Tweeddale Area Partnership Place Making Working Group) G. Grant, S. Watson (Peebles Community Council), L. Cuerden (Democratic Services Officer).

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed Crick Carlton from the Tweeddale Area Partnership Place Making Working Group and provided a brief summary of the history of the working group to date. There was to be a discussion on the matter of off-street parking in Peebles at the next meeting of the Tweeddale Area Partnership on 22 August 2023.

2. NOTE AND ACTION TRACKER

There had been circulated copies of the Note of the Meeting held on 18 May 2023 and the Action Tracker. There had been a query about the omission of the agreement to the proposal to maintain the current free parking regime at Neidpath and Kingsmeadows car parks. The recording of the meeting of 18 May was later reviewed; there had been no agreement to maintain the free parking regime at the two car parks.

DECISION

AGREED the Note and the Action Tracker.

3. PARKING SURVEY RESULTS

- 3.1 With reference to the Note of the meeting on 18 May 2023, there had been circulated results from the Citizen Space online survey. The results summary prepared by Gary Haldane detailed that 64.4% of the 415 respondents were not in favour of standardising parking charges. With regards to the introduction of parking charges in Kingsmeadows and Neidpath car parks, 27.7% and 20.2% were in favour respectively. For East Station/Edinburgh Road car park, 46.7% of respondents were in favour and 46.7% were against parking charges (multiple selections were possible). The number of SBC paid parking car parks was confirmed as follows: Hawick – 5; Galashiels – 5; Peebles – 3; and Melrose – 1. Eyemouth paid parking was administered by the Eyemouth Harbour Trust. Both Kelso and Selkirk had removed their paid parking. The reason for paid parking in East Station on a Saturday only could not be ascertained from previous reports and Minutes.
- 3.2 With reference to the Note of the meeting on 18 May 2023, there had been circulated a copy of the results from the parking beats survey carried out by Streetwise. One result showed that 75% of respondents would not let parking charges deter them from visiting/shopping in Peebles.

DECISION NOTED

4. OFF STREET PARKING PROPOSALS

- 4.1 There followed a discussion on off-street parking during which a variety of opinions were expressed. Crick Carleton reported that parking and traffic were the second most raised issue in recent Area Partnership Place Making surveys. Opinions were mainly negative and related to the volume of traffic, safety concerns and on and off-street parking behaviours. The surveys pointed to a need to encourage people to limit private car use particularly for short journeys with an emphasis to walk, cycle or wheel instead. With regards to off-street parking, there was a suggestion that parking charges might effect behaviour change and moderate the use of the car parks that were close to or at full capacity. With regards to signage, it was suggested that the number of places per car park be included along with their location and that of public toilets. The matter of on street parking was out with the scope of the Working Group. The decriminalisation of on street parking was a matter for Scottish Borders Council and there was to be consideration of the process in due course. Currently there was no legal mechanism in place for Scottish Borders Council to ticket vehicles parked illegally on the street. Additional car parking for large events would be for Planning to determine.
- 4.2 There was a suggestion that money raised from parking charges be used to install and maintain EV charging points. It was pointed out that the surplus income generated through EV charging points themselves was affected by changes to price of electricity. The £26 annual parking pass (equivalent to 50p per week), available to anyone, was to be promoted. It was to be noted that not all car parks across the Borders region accepted the annual pass, particularly the locations in town centres (e.g. the Interchange, Galashiels) to discourage the practice of parking for the whole day which prevented a regular turnover of spaces and impacted the income generated. A limit on the allocation of spaces for annual pass holders in car parks was suggested, while it was also to be noted that Scottish Borders Council continued to promote park and ride in alignment with Net Zero responsibilities. It was to be noted that the income generated from off street paid parking was to fund its associated costs first and foremost, namely the administration by the parking attendant and parking supervisor and the initial outlay of any paid parking infrastructure. Consequently, it was to be at least 5 years before any profit was available to fund community projects. The current paid parking regime in Greenside, Swimming Pool and East Station car parks had generated £10-12k per annum. It was advised that any changes to the paid parking regime would have to align with existing provision elsewhere in the Borders: 50p for 1-2 hours; £1.50 for 2-4 hours; £3 for 4-6 hours and £5 for 6+ hours in any one day.
- 4.3 There was to be a meeting with members of the Peebles Retailers Association on 30 August to garner opinion on paid parking proposals. With reference to paragraph 4 of the Note of the meeting of 18 May 2023, the recommendations agreed so far were to be discussed at the Tweeddale Area Partnership on 22 August 2023. There was a request for a further Citizen Space online survey to consult the public on changes to the parking regime in East Station car park. There was a request for the survey to be well publicised locally.

DECISION AGREED:

- (a) **to continue discussion on issue of parking charges at East Station, Neidpath and Kingsmeadows car parks at the next meeting;**
- (b) **officers to conduct a four week long Citizen Space online survey on the proposal to introduce standardised parking charges 6 days week in East Station car park; and**
- (c) **The Chair was to produce a report and proposals to take to the Tweeddale Area Partnership for discussion on 22 August 2023.**

5. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting was to be scheduled following consultation with Philippa Gilhooly and the circulation of the information pack from the next Citizen Space survey.

The meeting concluded at 5.00 pm