

Extract from the minutes of the meeting of the County Council's Cabinet held on 6th December 2005

245/05. CHARGES FOR RESIDENTS' PARKING PERMITS

(Agenda Item 7)

The Cabinet considered a report (CA7) which outlined issues relating to the introduction of charging for residents' and visitors' parking permits in Oxford.

Mr Lester was concerned that the residents' parking scheme in the area surrounding Kassam Stadium should remain free as it had been introduced for the protection of residents when the stadium had been imposed upon them.

Councillor Gatehouse, speaking as a local member, endorsed Mr Lester's comments. She suggested that undertaking consultation on a proposal to charge would not be productive as the outcome could be predicted.

City Councillor Sanders questioned the need for the charges for residents as other parking income could be used to offset the costs of residents' parking. She referred to a petition of 900 signatures that had been presented to the Cabinet Member for Transport opposing the proposed charges and to the opposition of the Oxford City South East Area Committee.

Councillor Brighthouse, speaking as a local member, commented that the Health Service organisations and Brookes had provided substantial contributions to defray the costs of accommodating their developments in Headington but that the residents were now being expected to pay also. She urged the Cabinet not to adopt the scheme and not to put it out for consultation.

City Councillor Rundle was pleased to see that the Council was not choosing to charge without due process and hoped that the consultation would be properly conducted and robust. He referred to congestion as being a problem affecting the whole of Oxfordshire and suggested that there was inconsistency with the removal of evening and Sunday parking charges in the city centre.

Councillor Johnston, speaking as Shadow Cabinet Member for Transport, welcomed the proposed consultation process subject to use of proper methodology to ensure a representative outcome. Some of the issues he would like addressed through consultation were differential charges (for areas with differing demands), enforcement levels, information on various payment methods, the proper provision of financial information to the public and any improvements the public would like to see.

Councillor Robertson responded that the range and scope of the consultation would be decided taking into account the comments made today.

Mr Dix confirmed that development contributions had been secured which were helping with the setting up of residents' parking schemes, but that this would not extend to funding their ongoing running costs and no indication had been given that the schemes would remain free. He undertook to investigate reports from some of the speakers of poor enforcement of existing residents' parking around Kassam Stadium.

RESOLVED to:

- a. confirm the intention, subject to consideration of the outcome of consultation in accordance with (b) below, to introduce charges for residents' and visitors' parking permits in Oxford;
- b. noting that Oxford City Council were unwilling to make a contribution to the costs of the parking permits scheme, authorise consultation on the proposals for the introduction of charges on the basis set out in the report;
- c. authorise consultation at the same time on the introduction of charges to allow parking for operational reasons in residents' parking zones in accordance with such principles as were agreed for parking dispensations generally.