

Minute Item 23

Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee: Monday 5th November 2012

The following comments are submitted by Suzanne McIvor as representative of The Harbord Road Area Residents' Association. The car park referred to is the main Cutteslowe Park car park at the end of Harbord Road.

BACKGROUND

- During the "consultation" prior to the introduction of parking charges a large number of representations were made to the Council and to this Scrutiny Committee. The concern was that park-users would simply park for free in the side roads adjacent to the park. (This concern was also recognised by the Council in the City Executive Board Report which initially proposed the charges (dated 8th Sept 2010)).
- **As predicted parking charges have caused real problems for residents of the roads adjacent to Cutteslowe Park. Many park-users choose to park on side roads and walk just a few steps to avoid the parking charges. Although Harbord Road has the greatest problems many other roads are also affected, for example in the Kendall Crescent Area.**
- In view of the large number of park-users and peak usage at certain times this causes serious congestion in Harbord Road. **Park-users park either side of narrow driveways and opposite driveways. As Harbord Road is only three cars wide residents cannot get their cars out of their driveways with the problem being greater for the more elderly residents of which there are many.**
- **The area close to the park gets especially congested and the mixture of pedestrians and cars opposite the turning to Park Close is dangerous.**
- For those who do not know this area, as well as being used for leisure purposes by many people, a large number of groups use Cutteslowe Park. Examples are Summertown Stars (in very large numbers on Saturday), runners for the growing Saturday Parkrun, other footballers, a large number of dog walkers, CPMR – the miniature railway (can have 400 visitors on a busy afternoon). It is also used as an overflow car park for the BRN hockey / tennis club.

COMMENT ON THE REPORT "PARKING IN THE PARKS REVIEW" (dated 12th Sept 2012)

- **The Customer Feedback Section 7 of the report produced by Mr Summers is not accurate. The complaints made to local Councillors have been relentless from the time the charges were introduced.**
- **There has been no review of the effects of the introduction of parking charges and any small enquiry would have quickly revealed the extent of the problems.**
- **It is not merely a claim that park-users are using Harbord Road as an alternative to parking within the car park, it is the truth. The effects on residents are considerable, worsening and widespread.**
- As the report states, The County Council is currently consulting with residents in Harbord Road. However, the consultation actually covers a much wider area than just Harbord Road and the proposals are currently being extensively rewritten as a result of the responses received.
- **During this consultation, most people of the many who responded cited the introduction of parking charges as the main reasons for the parking problems in the area, particularly Harbord Road.**
- The County Council has stated that there are insufficient funds for a Residents' Parking Scheme so the outcome may well be an unsatisfactory compromise.

PROPOSAL

- **It would not be unreasonable to expect a review of the current situation rather than this inadequately researched report.**
- **Residents would like to see the parking charges abolished because this would have an immediate and beneficial impact on surrounding residential areas.**
- A less satisfactory alternative would be to remove the charges for parking 0 – 1 hours as this would take a lot of users out of the charging bands so they would use the park car park rather than the residential streets.

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