

**Oxford City Executive Board  
13 February 2018**

**Questions from members of the public**

1. Re proposed Headington Car Park Charges:

Question from Mrs Stefanie Garden:

*“Over 500 people objected to the original proposals - why hasn't there been further public consultation now that you are planning to change the number of tariff bands as well as the charges?”*

Response from Cllr Alex Hollingsworth, Board Member for Planning and Regulatory Services:

*Local Authorities are able to alter parking charges in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, which allows the change of tariffs without formal consultation. However, it is important to the City Council that we do consult on proposed changes, and to adjust the proposals in the light of comments received, which is what we have done in this case.*

2. Re proposed Headington Car Park Charges:

Question from Mr Guy Garden:

*What impact assessment has been made on the vitality of small businesses in Headington - won't these parking increases meet with resistance from the public who may choose to shop or do business elsewhere resulting in business closure with a loss of rates?*

Response from Cllr Alex Hollingsworth, Board Member for Planning and Regulatory Services:

*The City Council has operated off-street car parks for many years and during this time has gained valuable experience in setting tariffs to balance different objectives; careful and detailed analysis of proposed tariff structures is undertaken by the parking service with support from finance colleagues.*

*In respect of the Headington tariff structure, analysis shows that during the last three years usage at this site was broadly in line with Summertown car park, which has had separate bands for 0-1 hours and 1-2 hours. This was not unexpected considering the demographics of both locations are similar and the retail offering is comparable. Officers therefore concluded that if a similar tariff structure was introduced at Headington car park, usage would remain broadly similar.*

*With regard to your specific concern regarding the parking charges and displacement to other locations, our experience does not suggest that this would be a significant factor. Data shows that the majority of usage is condensed within the first few tariff bands. However, we acknowledge that each car park is used for different purposes and are aware that the proposal may encourage some customers to utilise public transport. Therefore some resistance was factored into the financial assessment.*

*Therefore while the City Council accepts that any increase may meet some initial resistance, the proposed tariff structure for Headington will be identical to that at Summertown and at Union Street, and therefore it is not envisaged there will be displacement to these sites as opposed to Headington.*

*Parking tariffs are set at a level that manages the available capacity, achieves regular a turnover of vehicles to ensure that customers for local businesses have some to park, and which assists in recovering costs associated with providing these facilities. If the level of parking exceeds supply it is usually because we have not priced it effectively. If parking charges are too low our experience is that that parking spaces are occupied by employees which prevents customers from making full use of the car park.*

*Headington, like other district centres, is well served by public transport options, and is in easy walking and cycling distance for many potential customers. Car parking provides an important option for some customers, but it is not the only option, and should be seen in the context of a achieving a balance between different modes of transport. The City Council's assessment is, therefore, that the proposed changes to parking tariffs in Headington will not have a negative impact on businesses.*

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