



PRCC.57 13/14
Committee: Prosperous Communities
Date: 25 th March 2014

Subject: Request for free parking for Love Your Local Market fortnight in May 2014

Report by:

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Purpose / Summary:

The purpose of this report is to seek members response to the request for free parking to support the “Love Your Local Market” fortnight in May 2014. The report includes the potential benefits of granting the request, a suggestion to maximise the benefit for the intended beneficiaries of free parking and estimates of the financial cost to the council in terms of lost parking revenue.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1) That members consider the request for free parking during Love Your Local Market fortnight**
- 2) If members are minded to grant the request, that they commence free parking from 10:00 am on the days where this concession will apply and RECOMMEND such to the Policy and Resources Committee.**

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: The council has a legal order in place which entitles it to charge for parking in its car parks. The council can choose to suspend the charges when it chooses.

Financial : FIN/102/14.

Lost revenue from income on the sales of car park tickets as detailed in the report.
Consideration needs to be given to the impact on income budgets for 2014/15.

Staffing : Parking enforcement is outsourced so the staffing implications would be limited to the resource time needed for in house staff to implement any changes.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights : There are no equality or diversity implications.

Risk Assessment : N/A

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities : None in relation to this request.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

x

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

x

Executive Summary

This report has been prepared in response to a request for free parking to be offered on market days during the Love Your Local Market (LYLM) fortnight in May 2014. The Localism team is aiming to further promote Gainsborough market using the LYLM fortnight as an aid to boosting footfall and trade during and beyond the fortnight.

The report identifies the potential lost income as a result of full or partial day's free parking and also uses the APSE five case model and SWOT analysis to fully consider the request.

1) Purpose of the report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek members decision regarding the request for free parking to support Love Your Local Market (LYLM) fortnight in May 2014. The request comes from the Localism team who run the Gainsborough market. LYLM is coordinated by the National Association of British Market Authorities to promote awareness and patronage of markets such as the one in Gainsborough. The request for free parking is aimed at boosting footfall to build further upon the LYLM promotion.

1.2 The Council operates car parks in Gainsborough and Market Rasen, as per the following table.

Location	No of spaces	Income per space	Cost per space
Gainsborough car parks			
Roseway	66	£641.59p	£106.28p
Ship Court	54	£705.34p	£87.26p
Lord Street	41	£454.91p	£100.28p
Whitton Gardens	11	£104.61p	£126.11p
Bridge Street	86	£443.30p	£81.09p
Beaumont Street	393	£160.62p	£799.31p
North Street	97	£42.36p	£94.06p
Market Rasen car parks			
John Street	93	N/A	£46.43p
Festival Hall	78	N/A	£44.74p
Kilnwell Road	18	N/A	£60.00p

2) Impact

2.1 In order to assess the likely financial loss in revenue if the request is granted, it is necessary to estimate the likely takings per day for the 4 days free parking within the fortnight.

Takings over a similar period last year averaged at £615 per day, however these figures are reduced by the free parking days and their proximity to the days when money was collected from the machines (our only yardstick by which to measure income). A recent report about the cost of free parking found that the average income for March and April 2013 was £760 per day. It is estimated that the income for the LYLM period (allowing for potential extra footfall due to the market promotion) would be around £680 per day which makes the predicted total loss of revenue for the four days at £2,720.

2.2 In order to give these figures some further context it would be usual to compare the above figures with footfall data.

2.3 The table overleaf shows the footfall counts taken on during 2013/14. Numbers of people are counted at four sites, three times a day.

2.4 The count taken on 8/6/13 was on a day when free parking was in place but it was also during the Riverside Festival and good weather, so the elevated numbers on that day are to be expected.

2012-2013 Footfall Count

		Market Place	Silver Street	Pingle Hill	Marshall Yard	Weather
Tuesday	10am	150	80	89	100	
15/05/2013	1pm	200	70	40	60	
	3pm	80	25	50	50	
Total		430	175	179	210	994
Thursday	10am	180	60	90	91	
17/05/2013	1pm	150	110	90	80	
	3pm	100	40	50	90	
Total		430	210	230	261	1131
Saturday	10am	225	104	141	102	Sunny/Free Parking/Riverside Festival
08/06/2013	1pm	314	437	220	232	Sunny/Free Parking/Riverside Festival
	3pm	189	256	188	199	Sunny/Free Parking/Riverside Festival
Total		728	797	549	533	2607
May Total		1588	1182	958	1004	4732
		Market Place	Silver Street	Pingle Hill	Marshall Yard	Weather
Tuesday	10am	142	75	94	89	Hot Hot Hot
17/07/2013	1pm	226	125	73	50	Hot Hot Hot
	3pm	77	73	62	41	Hot Hot Hot
Total		445	273	229	180	1127
Thursday	10am	97	65	84	113	Hot Hot Hot
19/07/2013	1pm	113	50	121	229	Hot Hot Hot
	3pm	47	46	63	42	Hot Hot Hot
Total		257	161	268	384	1070
Saturday	10am	124	71	110	126	Hot Hot Hot
13/07/201	1pm	158	84	99	118	Hot Hot Hot
	3pm	71	80	150	87	Hot Hot Hot
Total		353	235	359	331	1278
July Total		1055	669	856	895	3475
		Market Place	Silver Street	Pingle Hill	Marshall Yard	Weather
Tuesday	10am	127	96	95	90	Damp/Mild
15/10/2013	1pm	141	148	114	125	Sunny/Mild
	3pm	82	73	64	69	Damp/Mild
Total		350	317	273	284	1224
Thursday	10am	134	165	119	66	Sunny/Mild
17/10/2013	1pm	125	103	165	72	Sunny/Mild
	3pm	70	70	97	58	Sunny/Mild
Total		329	338	381	196	1244
Saturday	10am	133	78	97	101	Overcast/Mild
19/10/2013	1pm	169	93	201	132	Overcast/Mild
	3pm	80	63	175	92	Overcast/Mild
Total		382	234	473	325	1414
October Total		1061	889	1127	805	3882
		Market Place	Silver Street	Pingle Hill	Marshall Yard	Weather
Tuesday	10am	171	145	135	102	Overcast/Mild/Half Term
18/02/2014	1pm	222	177	82	177	Sunny/Mild/Half Term
	3pm	89	121	72	77	Overcast/Mild/Half Term
Total		482	443	289	356	1570
Thursday	10am	62	75	64	73	Rainy/Windy/Half Term
20/02/2014	1pm	86	105	130	102	Sunny/Windy/Half Term
	3pm	81	71	132	77	Sunny/Windy/Half Term
Total		229	251	326	252	1058
Saturday	10am	91	46	85	90	V.Windy/Cold
15/02/2014	1pm	123	84	148	125	V.Windy/Cold
	3pm	104	53	98	96	V.Windy/Cold
Total		318	183	331	311	1143
February Total		1029	877	946	919	3771

3) Considerations

- 3.1 If further free parking is to be offered, the likely shortfall in income that this would create will have to be funded from another budget.
- 3.2 It has been reported previously that there is anecdotal evidence to confirm that commuters who usually park on the streets also used the car parks for all-day free parking, which to some extent defeated the object of offering free easily available parking to support local businesses and market traders. To counter this on the previous occasion when free parking was offered, it was delayed until later in the day, to prevent the car parks being used by commuter parking to the detriment of availability for visitors to the market and local businesses. If the start of free parking were to be delayed until 10am, this *may* also serve to defray the loss of income to a small extent as there would be two hours of paid-for parking against the eight hours free parking on each market day within the LYLM fortnight
- 3.3 This equates to 20% reduction in the free parking period, but is unlikely to result in a directly proportional reduction in lost income as it is likely that the greater majority of short stay visitors normally arrive after 9am, so in turn they could easily adjust their visit to the free period starting after 10am. Therefore it is estimated that the reduction in loss of income due to delaying the start of free parking until 10am would be negligible, but if it were to be as much as 10%, the saving would be £272.

1 Background

- 1.1 The localism team is taking part in the national initiative to promote market trading – “Love Your Local Market” fortnight - and has requested free parking in the Gainsborough car parks to coincide with the event.
- 1.2 The national promotion runs 14th – 28th May 2014 and the request is for the council to grant free parking on both Saturdays and Tuesdays within this fortnight i.e. 14th, 17th, 20th and 24th of May.

2 The case

- 2.1 To assist with making the decision, a five case model and SWOT analysis of the proposal has been drafted, as follows;

Five case model of assessment

Strategic Case

One of the council’s key themes is a “prosperous and enterprising district” including the priority “an environment where an increased number of businesses can grow and prosper”. If the request for free parking were to be granted it would be supporting businesses in the district, in the form of regular shop and market traders, plus some additional traders that are occasional or ad-hoc traders in the town. Because the majority of traders are likely to be locally based, it would also support the “Think Local” incentive currently being championed by the council.

Financial Case

If free parking is granted for the full day on each of the four days within LYLM, there would be a financial loss of approx. £2,720. If free parking was to be granted from 10am on the same days, there would be an estimated loss of £2,448 plus the staff time costs of arranging and implementing it. The tasks involved are; publicising the free parking and also when its cessation, arranging and implementing the placing and removing of hoods over the ticket machines before and after free parking, liaising with the enforcement contractor regarding temporary cessation of enforcement. The deployment and removal of hoods is usually carried out as overtime and is therefore chargeable as a cost to the service.

Although past experience suggests it unlikely, it is possible that there could be a negligible increase in income in market stall fees if free parking were to attract additional casual traders on the free parking days. Casual traders pay £17.50 per stall on Tuesdays and £15.10 on Saturdays so if there were say, 2 extra stalls per day as a result of the free parking, the additional income would be £130.40p.

There is an allocated budget for car park income. Each additional period of free parking raises the risk that the budget will not be achieved.

Commercial Case

There is no direct commercial advantage to the council in granting the request. However, there is a potential commercial disadvantage. Previous incidences of free parking periods have generated negative responses from customers after paid-for parking resumes; either because they have misunderstood the arrangements or have received a parking fine or simply because they are aggrieved at having to pay after enjoying free parking.

Legal Case

The council operates the car parks under a legal order which enables it to charge for parking. It has the right to suspend these charges without legal implications.

Operational Case

This a straightforward process of ensuring that the Localism team (event organisers) adequately advertise the terms, especially in relation to when parking charges resume, and for our own enforcement contractor to be notified that enforcement would be suspended for relevant period. Follow-up operations in dealing with any complaints regarding parking fines issued after resumption of charges plus general complaints or comments about the resumption of charges would be dealt with by Property & Assets.

SWOT Analysis (of granting the request)

Strengths

- Supports an initiative being promoted by the council
- Supports a key corporate theme.
- Supports the "Think Local" initiative
- Supports local businesses
- Raises the profile of the town centre

Weaknesses

- Can generate a negative response from customers after paid-for parking resumes.
- Has a financial cost to the council.

Opportunities

- Could attract customers to the car parks who hadn't previously used them, but who choose to return as a paying customer in future.

Threats

- There are no obvious threats from the proposal.