



## **Bury St Edmunds Area Working Party 9 July 2012**

### **Car Parking: Lawson Place and Southgate Community Centre**

#### **1. Background**

1.1 Ward Members together with Southgate Community Partnership have raised concerns over shortage of parking at Lawson Place, Moreton Hall and Southgate Community Centre.

#### **1.2 Lawson Place**

1.2.1 There is a well used car park immediately in front of the retail development, and despite the recent improvements in linking up both sections of the car park and creating 10 additional spaces there are frequent occasions when there is insufficient space available. Similar issues also occur on the adjoining Community Centre car parking area.

1.2.2 It is believed that a number of cars are being parked free for long periods with owners saving money by sharing car journeys or commuting by bus into town or to the hospital.

#### **1.3 Southgate Community Centre**

1.3.1 Blair Estates, owners of the Hardwick Shopping Centre have introduced a maximum 3 hour free stay for parking to the area within their control, which is immediately in front of the shopping parade. This has displaced long stay parking to the car park in front of Southgate Community Centre to the point when it is regularly full, thus denying users of the Centre the ability to park nearby. Inspections have revealed a number of vehicles have hospital workers' passes on the windcreens.

#### **2. Proposals**

2.1 It is important that an element of control is introduced to both these areas in order to free up space for legitimate users of both the retail area at Lawson Place and Southgate Community Centre. This proposal is not viewed as a revenue generator.

2.2 The ideal scenario is to allow for free short term parking (up to 3 hours) for users and to introduce punitive charges (£10 as per Hardwick) to discourage long stay parking beyond that. The parking regime would operate between 8.00 am and 5.00 pm weekdays reflecting the periods of high use.

2.3 Two possible alternatives:-

#### **Option 1: Pay and Display**

This would be as all other car parks managed by the Council. In order to prevent abuse of the machines i.e. frivolous issuing of tickets, there would need to be a token charge for up to 3 hours. However, the initial capital cost would be approximately £3,500 per site.

#### **Option 2: Pay and Phone**

Similar to Option 1, but instead of displaying tickets all payments to be made through Ringo (mobile phone) who is the Borough Council's current cashless parking partner. This is a low cost option of approximately £250 per site for signage.

2.4 Specifically in relation to the Southgate Car Park, numbered permits would be made available to the Southgate Community Partnership to pass to visitors who stay longer than 3 hours. Additionally, there are a small number of local residents who park in this area as there are no other parking facilities near their properties, and these would be issued permits.

2.5 Staff working in the retail units at Lawson Place would be encouraged to park across the road on the former Moreton Hall Community Centre site. Additionally we will liaise with the Community Association and offer our services and solutions to address the issues in their car park.

2.6 Discussions will also be held with retailers at Lawson Place to examine if a landline phone could be made available for those who do not have a mobile or find them difficult to use.

2.7 Attendants from the Car Parking Service will visit the sites and enforce on a regular basis.

### **3. Financial**

3.1 The cost of Option 1 is £7,000 plus consumables, and for Option 2 £250. In addition, for both options there is the cost of a Traffic Regulation Order which amounts to £1,000. These can be funded from the Car Parking Operating Account.

### **4. Equality Impact Assessment**

4.1 A Equality Impact Assessment (EQI) has been undertaken by officers and has concluded that no element of peoples' lives are affected by this proposal, rather it seeks to enhance the access of local communities involved and those visiting to have free and available access for up to 3 hours. A copy of the EQI is available for inspection.

## 5. Recommendation

- 5.1 The Working Party is requested to note the contents of this report and to **RECOMMEND** that:-

subject to consultation with Stakeholders, Option 2 outlined in paragraph 3.2 of Report D... Pay and Phone, be adopted and implemented and the costs of this be met from the Car Park Operating Account.

For further information please contact:-  
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