

**MATTERS REFERRED BY PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE  
AND/OR SELECT COMMITTEES - ADDENDUM**

The following extracts from the minutes of the meeting of the Environment Select Committee on 25 October 2011 were not available when the Cabinet agenda went to print but have now been published.

(a) Annual Review of Parking Charges 2012/13 and Christmas Parking 2011

“Car Park and On Street Charges 2012/13

The Parking and Amenity Manager informed the Committee that 84% of car park revenue came from Sevenoaks town centre and this rose to 95% once the Sevenoaks station car parks were included.

A motion was moved and duly seconded that the tariffs not be raised for the car parks in Sevenoaks town centre for the year 2012/13. The motion was discussed.

It was suggested that the tariffs not be raised because this would be contrary to the Council's plans to promote the local economy. Shoppers already faced a fall in wages in real terms and so would go instead to out-of-town shopping centres or other towns, in which it was generally cheaper to park.

The Head of Environmental and Operational Services reminded Members that the budget currently planned for a 2.5% increase in income. The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Improvement, not on the Committee, added that parking was one of the few areas of income over which the Council had control and if the money was not raised it could result in cuts to other services.

Members suggested that the burden could move instead onto commuters or long-stay car park users. A Member felt commuters were already feeling pressures from increased costs elsewhere. Another Member was concerned that raising the tariff for long-stay parking would result in increased costs for employees in the town.

The Portfolio Holder for The Cleaner and Greener Environment, not on the Committee, pointed out that Sevenoaks had the fewest empty shops in the country, for any comparably sized town.

The motion did not carry.

The Head of Environmental and Operational Services informed Members that income from car parks was currently on target for the year, however on-street parking was currently £22,000 short of target and forecast £40,000 short of target by year end. This was because of income shortfall in day-tickets and parking enforcement.

The budget had taken no account of additional income from the Knockholt station commuter parking scheme. The estimated £59,000 income from this was expected to pay for implementation in 2011/12 and make up the current shortfall in income from 2012/13. The parking scheme was also due to be reviewed in 2012.

Options 2 and 3 offered opportunities to raise additional income to assist the Council's overall budget position. There had been no previous experience of drop-off in use from a rise in prices.

The Chairman took indicative votes on the three options for increases to car park and on-street charges. Option 1 had the most support.

#### Tariff Structure in Swanley, Knockholt Station and the Sevenokas Rail Commuter Areas

The Parking and Amenity Manager explained that the purpose of the restructure was to bring these areas into line with the rest of the district.

Both local Members for Halstead, Knockholt and Badgers Mount were concerned that this proposal meant significant rises in tariffs in the Knockholt area for 4 hour parking even though charges had only recently been introduced to the area.

A motion was moved and duly seconded that the restructuring go ahead, except for in Knockholt. The motion was discussed.

The Chairman of the Joint Transportation Board, who sat on the Committee, felt it was the wrong time for such a restructuring. The new Knockholt parking scheme should be allowed to settle first.

A Member believed that Knockholt should not be given special treatment. He believed the new tariff structure was also inappropriate for Swanley. Each of the Swanley parking areas were a long way from the town centre and a large car park had also recently closed. Short-term tariffs would be unsuitable.

The motion did not carry.

A motion was moved by the Chairman that the proposals, as recommended in the report be approved. The motion did not carry.

A motion was moved and duly seconded that the change be made in the Sevenoaks rail commuter areas but not in Swanley or at Knockholt station. This arrangement was to be reviewed in 6 months. The motion was carried.

#### Christmas Parking 2011

The Parking and Amenity Manager told Members that Sevenoaks Town Council and the Sevenoaks Chamber of Commerce had both been of the view that Saturday the 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of December were most appropriate dates for the free Christmas parking.

Officers confirmed funding for the loss of income from the proposal came from a supplementary estimate.

Resolved: That Cabinet be recommended to:

- (a) agree option 1 as the proposed increases to car park charges for 2012/13;
- (b) agree option 1 as the proposed increases to on-street parking charges for 2012/13;
- (c) agree the proposed changes to the on-street tariff structure in respect to the Sevenoaks rail commuter areas, but oppose changes in respect of Swanley and Knockholt station which should be reviewed after 6 months; and
- (d) agree free parking throughout the district for two Saturdays before Christmas 2011, with 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> December as preferred dates".

(b) Cleaning of Private Streets

“The Head of Environmental and Operational Services drew Members’ attention to the £162,000 reduction in the budget for street cleaning in 2011/12. This had already resulted in a reduction of four operatives and a supervisor.

He explained that some private streets continued to be cleaned free of charge because these streets had been on the schedule when the service was first exposed to Compulsory Competitive Tendering prior to 1990. The proposal was to bring these streets in line with other private roads which the Council charged to clean.

In response to a question he explained how residents could pay for the services: a residents’ association may agree to pay the Council; residents may form a special group for the purpose; or a single resident could pay and then ask their neighbours to reimburse the cost.

A local Member for Badgers Mount stated that, although many of its streets were affected by the change, residents seemed unconcerned.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that:

- (a) the residents in the private roads listed in the appendix be advised that, with effect from 1 April 2012, the Council will no longer be able to clean these streets free of charge; and
- (b) the Council offer to clean these streets from 1 April 2012, only on a chargeable basis”.