

**From:** Cllr B Ashcroft <[Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 24 December 2023 18:14

**To:** John Teasdale <[John.Teasdale@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:John.Teasdale@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Andy O'Brien <[andy.o'brien@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:andy.o'brien@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

**Cc:** Cllr G Allen <[george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** Car Parking Review - Call In

Dear John & Andy

Please find details for call in for the above and details of reasons for call in. Attached 10 responses from councillors.

Dear John,

I am writing to call-in the Parking Review decision which was sent to members on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2023. I believe there are a number of areas where the decisions taken were not in accordance with Part 2, section 11 of the constitution. These are outlined below:

11.2.1 having due regard to the policy framework

The report briefly states it is written to complete corporate plan number ECC23. On reading the corporate plan, it very clearly explains this target was supposed to *"complete a full review of car parks, also considering parking space requirements, regulation and ongoing payment considerations"*. As the following points make clear, the report itself cannot be considered a full review.

11.2.2 proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);

Whilst the report discusses a range of different issues and problems, not once does the report set out what the desired outcome is, which makes it effectively impossible to understand whether the recommendations are proportionate to the outcome. Of course, the report uses data to demonstrate option 3 could be seen as a middle ground, yet when taken together with the other recommendations, particularly removing free after three, it seems the consequences of the decision are rather more radical than proportionate. For example, the report suggests option three would generate an extra £267,245 which added to removing free after three takes the total increase very close to option four. Also, if a customer parked at 2pm for four hours, the cost hike will be over 328% more than the cost is today under the current scheme.

We would have expected to see that research had been completed to understand what the likely impact to retailers, shoppers and residents were in terms of footfall/impact, and whether the changes to ticket machines would present a barrier to some groups. Instead, the report concedes that *"Innumerable options exist for the provision of car parking and the charges applied, neither time nor space allows for coverage of every possibility."* It seems to us that instead of covering these real-world considerations, the report chooses to breeze over them and move directly to operating costs and budgetary income. Reading between the lines, due to the lack of specified outcome, it is probable the purpose of the decisions made is to increase income to the council. However, given the report states that the downturn in ticket sales is *"indicative of the need to regenerate the town centres by addressing the shift in retail habits towards internet shopping"*, it is not clear how increasing ticket prices would achieve this.

It is also quite obvious there has been zero consideration given to other vulnerable groups such as disabled people or groups who find it difficult to use technology for a variety of reasons. By failing to recognise these groups exist, the report is again flawed as the negative impacts to these groups cannot possibly have been balanced with the benefit to the Councils income.

11.2.3 due consultation and the seeking of professional advice from officers;

We recognise the report itself constitutes the seeking of professional advice from officers. However, the data officers have elected to use has significantly skewed the comparator data. For example, if

only Staffordshire authorities had been used as a comparator, option 3 would have been very different. As it is, car parks in Burton and Uttoxeter instead find themselves being compared with Derby City, Lancaster and Taunton, all of which have a very different customer offer and higher fees, whilst those most similar to our own towns, Tamworth, Cannock and South Derbyshire have all either reduced, frozen or have no fees at all. VFM Scrutiny are currently undertaking a similar review, yet their comparator set of authorities and charges are very different. This raises concerns about the quality of the data and hence the premise on which the new charges are based. What is completely absent from the report is any consultation with retailers, shoppers, residents or other vulnerable groups. Members simply have no idea what the thoughts of these groups are on the recommendations or what increasing the fees may mean to these groups, let alone removing free after three.

#### 11.2.6 clarity of aims and desired outcomes;

Aside from increasing fees because income is falling, it is not clear what the desired outcome is. If raising income is indeed the only desired outcome, then the report is flawed and potentially falls foul of 11.2.5 a presumption in favour of openness. No assessment of the likely impact to footfall has been made, there is merely an acknowledgement that raising fees may reduce footfall. We would have expected to see a balanced report explaining the benefits and risks of each option with regard to fees and, as suggested below, options concerning other elements of car parking too.

#### 11.2.7 a consideration of other options

Whilst the report contains four options with regards to fees there is no consideration of other options which include but not limited to alternative fees based on customer use, different fees across different tariffs e.g. 1 hour charges or 30 mins etc. It's also missing any consideration of an alternative to removing free after three, such as free after five or free for two hours and there are no options around removing ticket machines such as removing machines on smaller car parks or retaining one machine on each.

#### 11.2.8 where possible, reasons for decisions;

Reasons for the decisions could be summed up as declining car parks income means raise the fee, remove free after three, and the ticket machines are expensive, so remove them too. As above, there appears to be no consideration made to other aspects and it is difficult to conclude anything other than that the report has been written to argue for an increase in fees and removing free after three. The report, therefore, channels members in the direction of one outcome only. Perhaps it is not all that surprising the decision has been made.

#### 11.2.10 with due regard to any risks involved

The risks considered do not encompass those associated with increased pricing and the effects increased pricing may have on residents. Given the report states "*this backdrop is a crowded market place*", surely consideration of the risks such changes would have on the surrounding environment in terms of businesses and parking should be considered. In addition, increased non-payment in the light of increasing prices and reduced payment options seems to have been omitted. Additionally, there has been no assessment of increased enforcement costs as a result of extending the charging periods from 1500pm.

Whilst the report demonstrates a review of sorts, for the reasons already given, we do not consider the report has achieved a full review. Furthermore, there has been no assessment of parking space requirements which would have required a survey of each car park to understand why customers are using the service and could have demonstrated a clear need to implement a more flexible charging structure based on car park usage.

In the thread below, you will see at least ten members have agreed with these comments, and so we are requesting the decision is called into scrutiny. It is important the Council demonstrates to the public that it welcomes challenge and scrutiny, especially given the public interest in this topic.

Thanks  
Bev

Kind Regards  
Bev Ashcroft  
ESBC Councillor for Bagots & Needwood  
Mobile: 07876 151860 Home: 01283 712369

**From:** Cllr C Wileman <colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 24 December 2023 15:58

**To:** Cllr S Sankey <Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>; Cllr C Smedley <Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>; Cllr B Ashcroft <Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>; Cllr G Allen <george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>; Cllr M Ackroyd <Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>; Cllr L Beech <Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>; Cllr L Bullock <Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>; Cllr A Clarke <Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>; Cllr S Gaskin <simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>; Cllr V Gould <Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>; Cllr P Hudson <Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>; Cllr J Jones <Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>; Cllr R Lock <Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>; Cllr B G Peters <Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Car Parking increase Decision

Dear Bev,

I support the call-in for the reasons listed.

Kind Regards

Colin

Cllr Colin Wileman  
Ward Member for Brizlincote

**From:** Cllr S Sankey <[Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 24 December 2023 12:49

**To:** Cllr C Smedley <[Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr B Ashcroft <[Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr G Allen <[george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr M Ackroyd <[Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Beech <[Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Bullock <[Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr A Clarke <[Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Gaskin <[simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr V Gould <[Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr P Hudson <[Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr J Jones <[Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr R Lock <[Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr B G Peters <[Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Wileman <[colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** Re: Car Parking increase Decision

Dear Bev,

I support the call-in for the reasons listed.

Regards

Steve

Sent from [Outlook for iOS](#)

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**From:** Cllr C Smedley <[Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** Sunday, December 24, 2023 12:43:31 PM

**To:** Cllr B Ashcroft <[Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr G Allen <[george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr M Ackroyd <[Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Beech <[Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Bullock <[Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr A Clarke <[Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Gaskin <[simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr V Gould <[Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr P Hudson <[Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr J Jones <[Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr R Lock <[Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr B G Peters <[Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Sankey <[Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Wileman <[colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** Re: Car Parking increase Decision

Hi Bev

I support the reasons given for call-in

Kind regards  
Chrys

---

**From:** Cllr B Ashcroft <[Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 24 December 2023 10:05

**To:** Cllr G Allen <[george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr M Ackroyd <[Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Beech <[Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Bullock <[Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr A Clarke <[Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Gaskin <[simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr V Gould <[Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr P Hudson <[Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr J Jones <[Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr R Lock <[Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr B G Peters <[Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Sankey <[Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Smedley <[Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Wileman <[colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** Car Parking increase Decision

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If you could send your responses as soon as possible (no later than 5pm today) it would be very much appreciated.

I hope you have a wonderful Christmas and a great New Year. Again apologies for sending this so close to Christmas.

Bev

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Thanks  
Bev

**From:** Cllr L Bullock <[Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 24 December 2023 15:56

**To:** Cllr B Ashcroft <[Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr G Allen <[george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr M Ackroyd <[Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Beech <[Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr A Clarke <[Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Gaskin <[simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr V Gould <[Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr P Hudson <[Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr J Jones <[Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr R Lock <[Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr B G Peters <[Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Sankey <[Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Smedley <[Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Wileman <[colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** RE: Car Parking increase Decision

Hi Bev

I support the call-in for the reasons listed.

Many thanks

Liz

**From:** Cllr B Ashcroft <[Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 24 December 2023 10:05

**To:** Cllr G Allen <[george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr M Ackroyd <[Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Beech <[Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Bullock <[Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr A Clarke <[Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Gaskin <[simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr V Gould <[Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr P Hudson <[Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr J Jones <[Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr R Lock <[Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr B G Peters <[Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Sankey <[Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Smedley <[Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Wileman <[colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

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It is also quite obvious there has been zero consideration given to other vulnerable groups such as disabled people or groups who find it difficult to use technology for a variety of reasons. By failing to recognise these groups exist, the report is again flawed as the negative impacts to these groups cannot possibly have been balanced with the benefit to the Councils income.

#### 11.2.3 due consultation and the seeking of professional advice from officers;

We recognise the report itself constitutes the seeking of professional advice from officers. However, the data officers have elected to use has significantly skewed the comparator data. For example, if only Staffordshire authorities had been used as a comparator, option 3 would have been very different. As it is, car parks in Burton and Uttoxeter instead find themselves being compared with Derby City, Lancaster and Taunton, all of which have a very different customer offer and higher fees, whilst those most similar to our own towns, Tamworth, Cannock and South Derbyshire have all either reduced, frozen or have no fees at all. VFM Scrutiny are currently undertaking a similar review, yet their comparator set of authorities and charges are very different. This raises concerns about the quality of the data and hence the premise on which the new charges are based.

What is completely absent from the report is any consultation with retailers, shoppers, residents or other vulnerable groups. Members simply have no idea what the thoughts of these groups are on the recommendations or what increasing the fees may mean to these groups, let alone removing free after three.

#### 11.2.6 clarity of aims and desired outcomes;

Aside from increasing fees because income is falling, it is not clear what the desired outcome is. If raising income is indeed the only desired outcome, then the report is flawed and potentially falls foul of 11.2.5 a presumption in favour of openness. No assessment of the likely impact to footfall has been made, there is merely an acknowledgement that raising fees may reduce footfall. We would have expected to see a balanced report explaining the benefits and risks of each option with regard to fees and, as suggested below, options concerning other elements of car parking too.

#### 11.2.7 a consideration of other options

Whilst the report contains four options with regards to fees there is no consideration of other options which include but not limited to alternative fees based on customer use, different fees across different tariffs e.g. 1 hour charges or 30 mins etc. It's also missing any consideration of an alternative to removing free after three, such as free after five or free for two hours and there are no options around removing ticket machines such as removing machines on smaller car parks or retaining one machine on each.

#### 11.2.8 where possible, reasons for decisions;

Reasons for the decisions could be summed up as declining car parks income means raise the fee, remove free after three, and the ticket machines are expensive, so remove them too. As above, there appears to be no consideration made to other aspects and it is difficult to conclude anything other than that the report has been written to argue for an increase in fees and removing free after three. The report, therefore, channels members in the direction of one outcome only. Perhaps it is not all that surprising the decision has been made.

#### 11.2.10 with due regard to any risks involved

The risks considered do not encompass those associated with increased pricing and the effects increased pricing may have on residents. Given the report states "*this backdrop is a crowded market place*", surely consideration of the risks such changes would have on the surrounding environment in terms of businesses and parking should be considered. In addition, increased non-payment in the light of increasing prices and reduced payment options seems to have been omitted. Additionally, there has been no assessment of increased enforcement costs as a result of extending the charging periods from 1500pm.

Whilst the report demonstrates a review of sorts, for the reasons already given, we do not consider the report has achieved a full review. Furthermore, there has been no assessment of parking space

requirements which would have required a survey of each car park to understand why customers are using the service and could have demonstrated a clear need to implement a more flexible charging structure based on car park usage.

In the thread below, you will see at least ten members have agreed with these comments, and so we are requesting the decision is called into scrutiny. It is important the Council demonstrates to the public that it welcomes challenge and scrutiny, especially given the public interest in this topic.

Thanks  
Bev

**From:** Cllr R Lock <Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 24 December 2023 11:30  
**To:** Cllr L Beech <Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>; Cllr A Clarke <Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>; Cllr B G Peters <Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>; Cllr B Ashcroft <Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** DL Councillors-Conservative <DLConservativeCouncillors@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Re: Car Parking increase Decision

Dear Bev,

I support the call-in for the reasons listed.

Regards,  
Russell Lock

Sent from [Outlook for iOS](#)

---

**From:** Cllr L Beech <[Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 24, 2023 11:11:54 AM  
**To:** Cllr A Clarke <[Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr B G Peters <[Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr B Ashcroft <[Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** DL Councillors-Conservative <[DLConservativeCouncillors@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:DLConservativeCouncillors@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: Car Parking increase Decision

Thanks Bev,

I support the reasons you've given for call-in. Have a good Christmas.

Regards  
Laura

**From:** Cllr A Clarke <[Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 24 December 2023 10:43  
**To:** Cllr B G Peters <[Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr B Ashcroft <[Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** DL Councillors-Conservative <[DLConservativeCouncillors@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:DLConservativeCouncillors@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** Re: Car Parking increase Decision

Morning Bev,

I support all of reasons you've outlined for the call-in and would like to add my name in support.

Thanks,  
Adam

Sent from [Outlook for iOS](#)

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**From:** Cllr B G Peters <[Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 24, 2023 10:41:09 AM  
**To:** Cllr B Ashcroft <[Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** DL Councillors-Conservative <[DLConservativeCouncillors@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:DLConservativeCouncillors@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** FW: Car Parking increase Decision

Hi, reference your message below, I *support the reasons for call-in*

Regards - - Cllr Bernard Peters

**From:** Cllr V Gould <[Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 24 December 2023 10:26  
**To:** Cllr B Ashcroft <[Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr G Allen <[george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr M Ackroyd <[Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Beech <[Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Bullock <[Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr A Clarke <[Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Gaskin <[simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr P Hudson <[Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr J Jones <[Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr R Lock <[Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr B G Peters <[Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Sankey <[Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Smedley <[Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Wileman <[colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** Re: Car Parking increase Decision

I support this

Vicki

Sent from [Outlook for Android](#)

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**From:** Cllr B Ashcroft <[Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 24, 2023 10:05:20 AM  
**To:** Cllr G Allen <[george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr M Ackroyd <[Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Beech <[Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Bullock <[Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr A Clarke <[Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Gaskin <[simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr V Gould <[Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr P Hudson <[Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr J Jones <[Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr R Lock <[Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr B G Peters <[Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Sankey <[Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Smedley <[Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Wileman <[colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** Car Parking increase Decision

Dear all,

Apologies for sending Council business this close to Christmas however, we have only until Wednesday to call in the parking increases decision in to scrutiny for further challenge. Below you'll find a statement of why we believe the decision should be called in, if you agree with the statement please reply to me to say you "*support the reasons for call-in*". Only once I have ten can we send it on to the proper officer, so until all ten reply I can't do anything. If you could use the reply all function it would be helpful as the email will list everyone's responses in the one email.

If you could send your responses as soon as possible (no later than 5pm today) it would be very much appreciated.

I hope you have a wonderful Christmas and a great New Year. Again apologies for sending this so close to Christmas.

Bev

Dear John,

I am writing to call-in the Parking Review decision which was sent to members on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2023. I believe there are a number of areas where the decisions taken were not in accordance with Part 2, section 11 of the constitution. These are outlined below:

#### 11.2.1 having due regard to the policy framework

The report briefly states it is written to complete corporate plan number ECC23. On reading the corporate plan, it very clearly explains this target was supposed to "*complete a full review of car parks, also considering parking space requirements, regulation and ongoing payment considerations*". As the following points make clear, the report itself cannot be considered a full review.

#### 11.2.2 proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);

Whilst the report discusses a range of different issues and problems, not once does the report set out what the desired outcome is, which makes it effectively impossible to understand whether the recommendations are proportionate to the outcome. Of course, the report uses data to demonstrate option 3 could be seen as a middle ground, yet when taken together with the other recommendations, particularly removing free after three, it seems the consequences of the decision are rather more radical than proportionate. For example, the report suggests option three would generate an extra £267,245 which added to removing free after three takes the total increase very close to option four. Also, if a customer parked at 2pm for four hours, the cost hike will be over 328% more than the cost is today under the current scheme.

We would have expected to see that research had been completed to understand what the likely impact to retailers, shoppers and residents were in terms of footfall/impact, and whether the changes to ticket machines would present a barrier to some groups. Instead, the report concedes that "*Innumerable options exist for the provision of car parking and the charges applied, neither time nor space allows for coverage of every possibility.*" It seems to us that instead of covering these real-world considerations, the report chooses to breeze over them and move directly to operating costs and budgetary income. Reading between the lines, due to the lack of specified outcome, it is probable the purpose of the decisions made is to increase income to the council. However, given the report states that the downturn in ticket sales is "*indicative of the need to regenerate the town*"

*centres by addressing the shift in retail habits towards internet shopping”, it is not clear how increasing ticket prices would achieve this.*

It is also quite obvious there has been zero consideration given to other vulnerable groups such as disabled people or groups who find it difficult to use technology for a variety of reasons. By failing to recognise these groups exist, the report is again flawed as the negative impacts to these groups cannot possibly have been balanced with the benefit to the Councils income.

11.2.3 due consultation and the seeking of professional advice from officers;

We recognise the report itself constitutes the seeking of professional advice from officers. However, the data officers have elected to use has significantly skewed the comparator data. For example, if only Staffordshire authorities had been used as a comparator, option 3 would have been very different. As it is, car parks in Burton and Uttoxeter instead find themselves being compared with Derby City, Lancaster and Taunton, all of which have a very different customer offer and higher fees, whilst those most similar to our own towns, Tamworth, Cannock and South Derbyshire have all either reduced, frozen or have no fees at all. VFM Scrutiny are currently undertaking a similar review, yet their comparator set of authorities and charges are very different. This raises concerns about the quality of the data and hence the premise on which the new charges are based. What is completely absent from the report is any consultation with retailers, shoppers, residents or other vulnerable groups. Members simply have no idea what the thoughts of these groups are on the recommendations or what increasing the fees may mean to these groups, let alone removing free after three.

11.2.6 clarity of aims and desired outcomes;

Aside from increasing fees because income is falling, it is not clear what the desired outcome is. If raising income is indeed the only desired outcome, then the report is flawed and potentially falls foul of 11.2.5 a presumption in favour of openness. No assessment of the likely impact to footfall has been made, there is merely an acknowledgement that raising fees may reduce footfall. We would have expected to see a balanced report explaining the benefits and risks of each option with regard to fees and, as suggested below, options concerning other elements of car parking too.

11.2.7 a consideration of other options

Whilst the report contains four options with regards to fees there is no consideration of other options which include but not limited to alternative fees based on customer use, different fees across different tariffs e.g. 1 hour charges or 30 mins etc. It's also missing any consideration of an alternative to removing free after three, such as free after five or free for two hours and there are no options around removing ticket machines such as removing machines on smaller car parks or retaining one machine on each.

11.2.8 where possible, reasons for decisions;

Reasons for the decisions could be summed up as declining car parks income means raise the fee, remove free after three, and the ticket machines are expensive, so remove them too. As above, there appears to be no consideration made to other aspects and it is difficult to conclude anything other than that the report has been written to argue for an increase in fees and removing free after three. The report, therefore, channels members in the direction of one outcome only. Perhaps it is not all that surprising the decision has been made.

11.2.10 with due regard to any risks involved

The risks considered do not encompass those associated with increased pricing and the effects increased pricing may have on residents. Given the report states *“this backdrop is a crowded market place”*, surely consideration of the risks such changes would have on the surrounding environment in

terms of businesses and parking should be considered. In addition, increased non-payment in the light of increasing prices and reduced payment options seems to have been omitted. Additionally, there has been no assessment of increased enforcement costs as a result of extending the charging periods from 1500pm.

Whilst the report demonstrates a review of sorts, for the reasons already given, we do not consider the report has achieved a full review. Furthermore, there has been no assessment of parking space requirements which would have required a survey of each car park to understand why customers are using the service and could have demonstrated a clear need to implement a more flexible charging structure based on car park usage.

In the thread below, you will see at least ten members have agreed with these comments, and so we are requesting the decision is called into scrutiny. It is important the Council demonstrates to the public that it welcomes challenge and scrutiny, especially given the public interest in this topic.

Thanks  
Bev

**From:** Cllr G Allen <[george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 24 December 2023 10:41

**To:** Cllr V Gould <[Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr B Ashcroft <[Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr M Ackroyd <[Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Beech <[Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Bullock <[Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr A Clarke <[Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Gaskin <[simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr P Hudson <[Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr J Jones <[Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr R Lock <[Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr B G Peters <[Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Sankey <[Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Smedley <[Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Wileman <[colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** Re: Car Parking increase Decision

I support the reasons given for call-in.

George

Sent from [Outlook for Android](#)

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**From:** Cllr V Gould <[Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** Sunday, December 24, 2023 10:25:45 AM

**To:** Cllr B Ashcroft <[Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr G Allen <[george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr M Ackroyd <[Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Beech <[Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Bullock <[Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr A Clarke <[Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Gaskin <[simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr P Hudson <[Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr J Jones <[Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr R Lock <[Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr B G Peters <[Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Sankey <[Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Smedley <[Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Wileman <[colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** Re: Car Parking increase Decision

I support this

Vicki

Sent from [Outlook for Android](#)

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**From:** Cllr B Ashcroft <[Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** Sunday, December 24, 2023 10:05:20 AM

**To:** Cllr G Allen <[george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr M Ackroyd <[Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Beech <[Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Bullock <[Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr A Clarke <[Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Gaskin <[simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr V Gould <[Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr P Hudson <[Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr J Jones <[Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr R Lock <[Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr B G Peters <[Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Sankey <[Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Smedley <[Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Wileman <[colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** Car Parking increase Decision

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We would have expected to see that research had been completed to understand what the likely impact to retailers, shoppers and residents were in terms of footfall/impact, and whether the changes to ticket machines would present a barrier to some groups. Instead, the report concedes that *"Innumerable options exist for the provision of car parking and the charges applied, neither time nor space allows for coverage of every possibility."* It seems to us that instead of covering these real-world considerations, the report chooses to breeze over them and move directly to operating costs and budgetary income. Reading between the lines, due to the lack of specified outcome, it is probable the purpose of the decisions made is to increase income to the council. However, given the report states that the downturn in ticket sales is *"indicative of the need to regenerate the town centres by addressing the shift in retail habits towards internet shopping"*, it is not clear how increasing ticket prices would achieve this.

It is also quite obvious there has been zero consideration given to other vulnerable groups such as disabled people or groups who find it difficult to use technology for a variety of reasons. By failing to recognise these groups exist, the report is again flawed as the negative impacts to these groups cannot possibly have been balanced with the benefit to the Councils income.

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We recognise the report itself constitutes the seeking of professional advice from officers. However, the data officers have elected to use has significantly skewed the comparator data. For example, if only Staffordshire authorities had been used as a comparator, option 3 would have been very different. As it is, car parks in Burton and Uttoxeter instead find themselves being compared with Derby City, Lancaster and Taunton, all of which have a very different customer offer and higher fees, whilst those most similar to our own towns, Tamworth, Cannock and South Derbyshire have all either reduced, frozen or have no fees at all. VFM Scrutiny are currently undertaking a similar review, yet their comparator set of authorities and charges are very different. This raises concerns about the quality of the data and hence the premise on which the new charges are based. What is completely absent from the report is any consultation with retailers, shoppers, residents or other vulnerable groups. Members simply have no idea what the thoughts of these groups are on the recommendations or what increasing the fees may mean to these groups, let alone removing free after three.

#### 11.2.6 clarity of aims and desired outcomes;

Aside from increasing fees because income is falling, it is not clear what the desired outcome is. If raising income is indeed the only desired outcome, then the report is flawed and potentially falls foul of 11.2.5 a presumption in favour of openness. No assessment of the likely impact to footfall has been made, there is merely an acknowledgement that raising fees may reduce footfall. We would have expected to see a balanced report explaining the benefits and risks of each option with regard to fees and, as suggested below, options concerning other elements of car parking too.

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Whilst the report contains four options with regards to fees there is no consideration of other options which include but not limited to alternative fees based on customer use, different fees across different tariffs e.g. 1 hour charges or 30 mins etc. It's also missing any consideration of an alternative to removing free after three, such as free after five or free for two hours and there are no options around removing ticket machines such as removing machines on smaller car parks or retaining one machine on each.

11.2.8 where possible, reasons for decisions;

Reasons for the decisions could be summed up as declining car parks income means raise the fee, remove free after three, and the ticket machines are expensive, so remove them too. As above, there appears to be no consideration made to other aspects and it is difficult to conclude anything other than that the report has been written to argue for an increase in fees and removing free after three. The report, therefore, channels members in the direction of one outcome only. Perhaps it is not all that surprising the decision has been made.

11.2.10 with due regard to any risks involved

The risks considered do not encompass those associated with increased pricing and the effects increased pricing may have on residents. Given the report states "*this backdrop is a crowded market place*", surely consideration of the risks such changes would have on the surrounding environment in terms of businesses and parking should be considered. In addition, increased non-payment in the light of increasing prices and reduced payment options seems to have been omitted. Additionally, there has been no assessment of increased enforcement costs as a result of extending the charging periods from 1500pm.

Whilst the report demonstrates a review of sorts, for the reasons already given, we do not consider the report has achieved a full review. Furthermore, there has been no assessment of parking space requirements which would have required a survey of each car park to understand why customers are using the service and could have demonstrated a clear need to implement a more flexible charging structure based on car park usage.

In the thread below, you will see at least ten members have agreed with these comments, and so we are requesting the decision is called into scrutiny. It is important the Council demonstrates to the public that it welcomes challenge and scrutiny, especially given the public interest in this topic.

Thanks  
Bev

**From:** Cllr S Gaskin <simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 24 December 2023 10:16  
**To:** Cllr B Ashcroft <Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Re: Car Parking increase Decision

Hi Bev  
I will support the call in so put me on your list  
Simon

Sent from [Outlook for iOS](#)

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**From:** Cllr B Ashcroft <[Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bev.Ashcroft@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 24, 2023 10:05:20 AM  
**To:** Cllr G Allen <[george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr M Ackroyd

<[Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Mike.Ackroyd@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Beech <[Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.Beech@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr L Bullock <[Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Liz.Bullock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr A Clarke <[Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Adam.Clarke@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Gaskin <[simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:simon.gaskin@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr V Gould <[Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Vicki.Gould@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr P Hudson <[Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Philip.Hudson@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr J Jones <[Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Jacqui.Jones@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr R Lock <[Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Russell.Lock@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr B G Peters <[Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Bernard.Peters@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr S Sankey <[Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Sankey@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Smedley <[Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:Chrys.Smedley@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>; Cllr C Wileman <[colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** Car Parking increase Decision

Dear all,

Apologies for sending Council business this close to Christmas however, we have only until Wednesday to call in the parking increases decision in to scrutiny for further challenge. Below you'll find a statement of why we believe the decision should be called in, if you agree with the statement please reply to me to say you "*support the reasons for call-in*". Only once I have ten can we send it on to the proper officer, so until all ten reply I can't do anything. If you could use the reply all function it would be helpful as the email will list everyone's responses in the one email.

If you could send your responses as soon as possible (no later than 5pm today) it would be very much appreciated.

I hope you have a wonderful Christmas and a great New Year. Again apologies for sending this so close to Christmas.

Bev

Dear John,

I am writing to call-in the Parking Review decision which was sent to members on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2023. I believe there are a number of areas where the decisions taken were not in accordance with Part 2, section 11 of the constitution. These are outlined below:

#### 11.2.1 having due regard to the policy framework

The report briefly states it is written to complete corporate plan number ECC23. On reading the corporate plan, it very clearly explains this target was supposed to "*complete a full review of car parks, also considering parking space requirements, regulation and ongoing payment considerations*". As the following points make clear, the report itself cannot be considered a full review.

#### 11.2.2 proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);

Whilst the report discusses a range of different issues and problems, not once does the report set out what the desired outcome is, which makes it effectively impossible to understand whether the recommendations are proportionate to the outcome. Of course, the report uses data to demonstrate option 3 could be seen as a middle ground, yet when taken together with the other recommendations, particularly removing free after three, it seems the consequences of the decision are rather more radical than proportionate. For example, the report suggests option three would generate an extra £267,245 which added to removing free after three takes the total increase very

close to option four. Also, if a customer parked at 2pm for four hours, the cost hike will be over 328% more than the cost is today under the current scheme.

We would have expected to see that research had been completed to understand what the likely impact to retailers, shoppers and residents were in terms of footfall/impact, and whether the changes to ticket machines would present a barrier to some groups. Instead, the report concedes that *"Innumerable options exist for the provision of car parking and the charges applied, neither time nor space allows for coverage of every possibility."* It seems to us that instead of covering these real-world considerations, the report chooses to breeze over them and move directly to operating costs and budgetary income. Reading between the lines, due to the lack of specified outcome, it is probable the purpose of the decisions made is to increase income to the council. However, given the report states that the downturn in ticket sales is *"indicative of the need to regenerate the town centres by addressing the shift in retail habits towards internet shopping"*, it is not clear how increasing ticket prices would achieve this.

It is also quite obvious there has been zero consideration given to other vulnerable groups such as disabled people or groups who find it difficult to use technology for a variety of reasons. By failing to recognise these groups exist, the report is again flawed as the negative impacts to these groups cannot possibly have been balanced with the benefit to the Councils income.

#### 11.2.3 due consultation and the seeking of professional advice from officers;

We recognise the report itself constitutes the seeking of professional advice from officers. However, the data officers have elected to use has significantly skewed the comparator data. For example, if only Staffordshire authorities had been used as a comparator, option 3 would have been very different. As it is, car parks in Burton and Uttoxeter instead find themselves being compared with Derby City, Lancaster and Taunton, all of which have a very different customer offer and higher fees, whilst those most similar to our own towns, Tamworth, Cannock and South Derbyshire have all either reduced, frozen or have no fees at all. VFM Scrutiny are currently undertaking a similar review, yet their comparator set of authorities and charges are very different. This raises concerns about the quality of the data and hence the premise on which the new charges are based. What is completely absent from the report is any consultation with retailers, shoppers, residents or other vulnerable groups. Members simply have no idea what the thoughts of these groups are on the recommendations or what increasing the fees may mean to these groups, let alone removing free after three.

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