

Individual Executive Decision Notice

Report title	Christmas Parking Offer 2021	
Decision designation	GREEN	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Steve Evans, Cabinet Member for City Environment and Climate Change	
Wards affected	(All Wards);	
Accountable Director	Ross Cook, Director of City Housing and Environment	
Originating service	Parking Services	
Accountable employee	Deborah Binder	Service Lead, Parking Services & Enforcement
	Tel	01902 550308
	Email	deborah.binder@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Councillor Steve Evans	26 November 2021

Summary

This report seeks approval to offer free parking, after 3pm, on four council owned City Centre car parks for a limited period prior to Christmas. This will offer continued and much needed support to businesses and the retail economy following the impact sustained, over the previous 18 months, due to varying levels of Covid restrictions.

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

That the Cabinet Member for City Environment, in consultation with the director City Environment.

1. Approve the Christmas Parking offer, option1, providing free parking after 3 pm on Monday to Friday, from 1 December 2021 – 24 December 2021, if parked on the any of the following 4 city centre car parks: School Street, Peel Street, Market Car Park and Fold Street car parks

Signature

Signature

Date:

Date:

1.0 Background

1.1 To support the city centre retail economy and businesses, and to encourage customers back onto the high street. To provide a Christmas parking offer that spreads the footfall in the city centre. The Mander and Wulfrun shopping centres has announced their parking offer, free all day parking on Sundays during December. We propose to offer free parking on weekdays, which compliments the Mander and Wulfrun shopping centres Sunday offer, therefore providing alternative parking opportunities to attract as many would be shoppers and visitors as possible.

2.0 Evaluation of alternative options

2.1 Option 1.

On Monday to Friday, for the period 1 December – 24 December, offer free parking after 3 pm. This offer will be applicable on 4 city centre car parks: School Street, Peel Street, Market Car Park and the popular shopper's car park in Fold Street. The potential loss of income could be £2,638, this calculation is based on income from September 2021

2.2 Option 2.

On Monday to Friday, for the period 1 December – 24 December, offer free parking after 3 pm. This offer will be applicable on 3 city centre car parks: School Street, Peel Street and Market Car Park. Fold Street car park has been removed from this offer. The potential loss of income could be £737, this calculation is based on income from September 2021

2.3 Option 3

On Monday to Sunday, for the period 1 December – 24 December, offer free parking after 3 pm. This offer will be applicable on 3 city centre car parks: School Street, Peel Street and Market Car Park. The potential loss of income could be £783, this calculation is also based on income from September 2021

2.4 It should be noted that in addition to the above offers, free evening parking is also available, after 5:30pm Monday to Sunday, on Bell Street, Temple Street, Snow Hill and Tempest Street car parks. Free on-street parking is available Monday to Sunday, after 6:00pm.

2.5 Appendix 1, provides a map which illustrates the location for each of the car parks included in the free parking offers. Also included are the locations of the normal free parking opportunities in the city centre.

- 2.6 Signage, advertising the applicable free offer, will be erected on the appropriate Car Parks and Pay & Display machines. The RingGo pay by phone application will require reprogramming to reflect the necessary changes, costing in the region of £250. Regardless of which option is implemented the above costs will be applicable.
- 2.7 The introduction of parking chargers on the car parks in Wednesfield Town was scheduled to be implemented late October. However, it is proposed that the implementation of parking charges is delayed until Tuesday 4 January 2022. This is to avoid disruption and additional costs having introduced agreed tariffs and within weeks change the parking charges to facilitate a Christmas offer.

3.0 Reasons for decision

- 3.1 All of the above options support the potential to increase footfall, attracting parents after school times and those wanting to shop outside normal office hours. Both the Mander and Wulfrun Shopping Centre's offer free parking on their City Centre car parks on Sunday's during December. Should the Council offer option 1, which includes the popular Fold Street car park, but does not offer any concessions at the weekends, the combined free parking offers will attract custom/ footfall throughout the week, evenings and weekends which will help reduce the potential for crowds and congestion.

4.0 Financial implications

- 4.1 As a result of implementing option 1, there will be a potential loss of car park income amounting to approximately £2,638. Appendix 2 provides a breakdown and summary of the potential loss of income.
- 4.2 The additional £250 expenditure will be funded from the Operational car park budget G10539. [SB/18112021/O]

5.0 Legal implications

- 5.1 These proposals do not require a temporary or permanent amendment to the current applicable Traffic Regulation Order. KR/24112021/A

6.0 Equalities implications

- 6.1 Council owned car parks offer appropriate parking provision for visitors to the City, including mobility impaired and those with hidden disabilities, as such supporting access to retail businesses and services in general. The disabled parking provision will not be affected by these proposals.

7.0 Climate change and environmental implications

- 7.1 The proposals are aimed at both supporting the City Centre economy and to discourage excessive congestion and pollution caused by many motorists trying to gain access to the City Centre. Three of the car parks, included in the offer, are active travel car parks located on the peripheral of the city.

8.0 Human resources implications

None

9.0 Corporate Landlord implications

None

10.0 Health and Wellbeing Implications

10.1 This offer provides greater opportunities for the public to visit the City Centre therefore avoids crowding and lengthy queues within retail outlets and businesses.

11.0 Covid Implications

11.1 The proposals will assist in spreading demand and even out visitor numbers helping to reduce the potential to spread of infection and maintain social distancing in our City Centre.

12.0 Schedule of background papers

12.1 N/a

13.0 Appendices

13.1 Appendix 1 - Car Park Map - Xmas Offer Free after 3PM (2021)

13.2 Appendix 2: Christmas Parking Offer 2021 (Potential loss of income)