

AGENDA
ITEM

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SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL

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NAME OF COMMITTEE	Executive
DATE	5 June 2014
REPORT TITLE	Review of arrangements for Blue Badge holders
Report of	Street Scene Manager
WARDS AFFECTED	All

Summary of report:

This report makes a recommendation in respect of reviewing the arrangements for Blue Badge holders when parking in the District Council's car parks.

Financial implications:

There is likely to be a very small increase in Pay & Display income, but this is by no means the focus of this report.

There will be no further cost to advertising this change as it may be added to some Parking Order amendments which are already in progress.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Executive **RESOLVES** to **RECOMMEND** to Council that:

Due to the DVLA making changes to the way in which road tax is handled, all Blue Badge holders should pay appropriate parking fees, regardless of whether or not their vehicle is tax-exempt, and that all Blue Badge holders continue to receive one free hour's parking in addition to paid time.

In addition, it is recommended that the South Hams District Council's Off-Street Parking Places Order be updated to reflect this change.

Officer contact:

Cathy Aubertin
Street Scene Manager
Cathy.Aubertin@swdevon.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Currently, all Blue Badge holders, with the exception of those who are vehicle tax-exempt, pay for parking, but are entitled to one free hour's parking. Those whose vehicles are tax-exempt are not currently required to pay for parking, and may park free of charge for three hours.
- 1.2 When Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) carry out their duties, they are able to see, from information on vehicle tax discs, whether the driver of the vehicle is tax exempt and, therefore, whether or not the motorists should have paid the appropriate Pay & Display fee.
- 1.3 From 1st October 2014, the DVLA will no longer issue paper tax discs to prove that tax has been paid so CEOs will be unable to distinguish which motorists should have paid.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 In order to provide a fair and equitable service, it is proposed that all Blue Badge holders should pay for their parking, regardless of whether or not they are tax-exempt, whilst still allowing a free hour's parking for those motorists.
- 2.2 Although this change to the Off-Street Parking Order has been prompted by the DVLA changes to road tax, it will result in a more equitable service for all motorists, and will mirror the service provided by neighbouring districts.
- 2.3 This change will also eliminate any confusion caused to some customers who drive eco-cars which, because they are also tax-exempt, leads some customers to believe that they also are able to park free of charge for three hours.
- 2.4 Although the majority of Pay & Display machines comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and should be accessible to disabled motorists, we will continue to sell parking tickets through the Street Scene team, to those disabled motorists who prefer to not use a Pay & Display machine.
- 2.5 However, if paying for parking is a concern for motorists, free parking is still available to Blue Badge holders on-street, where vehicles displaying a blue badge are able to be parked for on double yellow lines where they do not cause a hazard, although this is limited to three hours with no return for two hours. In addition, the on-street Pay & Display bays are currently free to all Blue Badge holders.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Council has power to provide off-street parking under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended).
- 3.2 The Council has the power to deal with the provision, management and control of car parks.
- 3.3 Council has the powers to provide this service under the General Powers of Competence in the Localism Act 2011.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There is likely to be a very small increase in Pay & Display income, but this is by no means the focus of this report.

4.2 There will be no further cost to advertising this change as it may be added to some Parking Order amendments which are already in progress.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

The Risk Management implications are shown at the end of this report in the Strategic Risks Template.

Corporate priorities engaged:	Community well-being Access to services Towards excellence Customer first
Statutory powers:	As stated in paragraph 3
Considerations of equality and human rights:	An equality impact assessment has been carried out and, as a result, no further actions are required.
Biodiversity considerations:	None
Sustainability considerations:	None
Crime and disorder implications:	None
Background papers:	None
Appendices attached:	None

STRATEGIC RISKS TEMPLATE

No	Risk Title	Risk/Opportunity Description	Inherent risk status				Mitigating & Management actions	Ownership
			Impact of negative outcome	Chance of negative outcome	Risk score and direction of travel			
1	Objections from customers	Customers who currently are entitled to park free of charge may object to this change to the Off-Street Parking Places Order	2	1	2	↓	This proposed change to the Off-Street Parking Places Order will be subject to a formal notice, followed by a 21-day public consultation period.	C Aubertin

Direction of travel symbols ↓ ↑