



Rochford District  
Council

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>CHRISTMAS PARKING SUSPENSION</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>Executive Lead Member for Public Spaces &amp; Assets</b>

### REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out that car parking charges in all Council car parks are suspended on the Saturdays during December prior to Christmas. The dates are 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2023.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1 -** That car parking charges in all Council car parks are suspended on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2023.

### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

#### 1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 The suspension of parking charges is undertaken as an act of good will by the Council, demonstrating support for the Council's local businesses.

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Council since 2009 has been offering free car parking on Saturdays during the December period.
- 2.2 The suspension of parking charges for the Saturdays within December is undertaken as an act of good will by the Council and as a show of support for our local businesses. It is assumed this act of good will, will result in a loss of income of £11,000.

2.3 The Saturdays in December that free parking is offered is 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

2.4 In order to implement the suspension notice, the Council must notify it's pay by phone provider to enable this.

### 3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 The Council has considered the following alternative options:

- No free Saturday parking
- Offer Free Saturday Parking for 4 weeks.
- Offer free Saturday parking for 1, 2 or 3 weeks as detailed within the table.

3.2 The monetary impact on these options is tabled below:

Saturdays	Loss of Income
No Free Parking	£0
23 <sup>rd</sup> December Only	£2,750
23 <sup>rd</sup> and 16 <sup>th</sup> December Only	£5,500
23 <sup>rd</sup> , 16 <sup>th</sup> and 9 <sup>th</sup> December Only	£8,250
23 <sup>rd</sup> , 16 <sup>th</sup> 9 <sup>th</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> December Only	£11,000

3.3 A further option that has been is whether the Council should look at alternative times of the year to support local businesses when there is less natural footfall. For example, after the Christmas period, offering free parking in January to increase footfall to local businesses.

The Council would need to engage with local businesses, and it is recommended that the Council carries out this engagement during this municipal year with feedback being considered. This will inform the future recommendations for any additional or different future schemes.

### 4.0 RELEVANT RISKS

4.1 There is a reputational risk to the organisation, since 2009 the Council has offered free parking on Saturdays in December. Therefore, there is an expectation that this continues and change to any proposal with require communication support.

4.2 There may be financial risk to the Council if the pay by phone provider is not notified within a relevant time frame.

**5.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 This report does not require any engagement or consultation, however, highlights there is an opportunity for future engagement or consultation.

**6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The financial implications are highlighted within the table of the report. This table highlights the potential loss of income to the Council in supporting this initiative, however the Council already accounts for this in its base budget.
- 6.2 Any cost attributable to implementing the scheme will be met from existing budgets.

**7.0 LEGAL/GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no direct legal or governance implications arising.

**8.0 EQUALITY & HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are to be no impacts (either positive or negative) on protected groups as defined under the Equality Act 2010.

**9.0 ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no environment and climate implications identified.

**10.0 ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 Free parking can encourage footfall to local high streets and support local businesses by encouraging visitors to dwell for longer. There is an opportunity to explore further how the Council through its car parking structure can encourage economic support to the district.

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**APPENDICES**

None

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
None	N/A