

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Agenda Item**

**Date:** 20 November 2012

**5**

**Title:** **Car parking fees Christmas and New Year 2012/13**

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Susan Barker

Key decision: No

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## Summary

1. This report relates to proposals to support the vitality of the district's centres during the coming Christmas and New Year festive season.

## Recommendations

2. That car parking fees for the following car parks not be enforced for the period Monday 24 December to Tuesday 1 January inclusive:
  - Angel Lane and Chequers Lane, Great Dunmow
  - Lower Street, Stansted Mountfitchet
  - Swan Meadow, Saffron Walden

## Financial Implications

3. The potential loss of revenue based on usage of these car parks in the same period 2011/12 is £2,000. This can be met from the positive variation of car parks income compared to the budget figure.

## Background Papers

4. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

None

## Impact

5.

Communication/Consultation	The proposal is in response to approaches from town councils, businesses and partnerships. The measure will be publicised in advance through press releases. Management of several of our centre car parks requires consultation with
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	retailers/ parish councils.
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	none
Human Rights/Legal Implications	There is insufficient time to arrange for changes to the respective parking orders so the proposal would be implemented by non enforcement of the orders on the relevant days. Contractual requirements to consult with owners apply to some car parks. These car parks are not included in the proposals.
Sustainability	
Ward-specific impacts	Catchment areas of the centres
Workforce/Workplace	Parking Partnership staff will bag the machines

## Situation

6. The Economic Development Strategy recently approved by Cabinet includes the objective that the district's four centres should offer a viable and exciting offer as an alternative to out of centre shopping, the internet and competing town centres, and seeks to achieve year on year increases in footfall.
7. The council has been working with town and parish councils, Saffron Walden Initiative, chambers of trade and businesses to prepare town centre management plans but proposals have already emerged for initiatives to support retailing during the Christmas season. This is a crucial period for business incomes when margins are generated over costs. Requests have been received from Great Dunmow Town Council and Saffron Walden Town Council for parking charges to be waived in the run up to Christmas on Saturdays/ dates of promotional activities, and two days in the pre Christmas week respectively, and from the Saffron Walden Initiative for free parking after 3:00pm.
8. There is little capacity in car parks in the peak period before Christmas. Parking fees are a measure to manage demand at these times, and ensure that there is a turnover of users, and that opportunity exists for people to park and support trade with local businesses. The ticket machines are configured to support the current parking tariff arrangements. However, the council is in a position to offer concessions on Christmas Eve and between Christmas and New Year when there is space available and our local centres have the potential to limit the leakage of trade away out of the district to larger centres by an enhanced local offer.

9. The cost/ benefit and feasibility of free parking after 3:00pm more generally could be considered in setting fees and charges for the FY2013/14.

## Risk Analysis

10.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Free parking could attract all day users who work in the centres or other users, rather than shoppers	3 Measures could not be put in place for Christmas 2012 to ensure that spaces are not blocked by all day parking	2 The objective of providing free parking would not be met	Select days when demand for workplace parking would be reduced
Developing partnership relations will potentially be affected by alternative proposals in response to local requests	2 Specific requests have been made and not agreed	2 Parking is only one element of a centre's offer, and availability of space and convenience can be emphasised.	On going engagement with local partners to develop offer

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.