

Appendix 4 – Consultation Summary and Officer Response

Ref	Objection/Concern	Officer Response
1	<p>Economic Impact</p> <p>The proposals will have a negative impact on the city centre economy and local businesses.</p> <p>Example comments:</p> <p><i>“This will have negative impact on the economy of the local businesses that are just starting to recover after the effect of the pandemic. The general public will start to use neighbouring towns in the evening taking much needed business away from Southampton”</i></p> <p><i>“Free parking encourages more people to visit high Street shops, retail services and food places. I avoid places that have parking charges.”</i></p> <p><i>“Free parking is a great incentive to actually encourage people to visit the city centre restaurants and facilities. I have parked in car parks to attend the Mayflower Theatre and the West Quay restaurants and have never struggled to find a space to park. If I had to pay to park, I would not visit these facilities so often.”</i></p>	<p>There is no conclusive link between the health the city centre economy and car parking charges.</p> <p>The cost of parking is just one of numerous variables which influence the economic success of the city centre. As well as many factors unrelated to parking, the availability and quality of parking provision play a role in making the city centre an attractive destination. The implementation of evening and overnight charges would be expected to facilitate these two elements.</p> <p>If the implementation of parking charges was detrimental to businesses, the major shopping centres within City Centres would not charge for parking within their car parks. However, this is not the case. West Quay charge £2 after 5pm in both their multi-storey and podium car parks while the Retail Park maintains their parking tariffs until 8pm.</p>
2	<p>Cost of Living</p> <p>Significant increases in the cost of living have reduced the ability of many to pay additional parking charges.</p> <p>Example comments:</p> <p><i>“With the cost of living crisis, many rely on free parking in evenings. This will be a further strain for the locals in Southampton”</i></p>	<p>A maximum £2 charge for parking represents a small proportion of the costs associated with an evening out (cinema, restaurant, drinks, petrol, theatre).</p>

	<p><i>"It's expensive enough as it is to go out. Pay for bridge pay for parking pay for fuel your all taking the mick wanting more. If a family or a couple want to go out in the evening for a treat they shouldn't have to find an extra few quid on top to pay for parking when the town centre is empty at night"</i></p> <p><i>"At a time where energy bills have become extortionate & high petrol prices. Do you really think its a good time to add more misery. It'll become a ghost town."</i></p>	
3	<p>Lack and unsuitability of public transport</p> <p>Public transport options to the city centre are not suitable or available for many people as such there is a requirement to drive and use parking.</p> <p>Example comments:</p> <p><i>"The lack of decent public transport forces people to use their own vehicles to go into the city centre"</i></p> <p><i>"Buses are not the answer. Tried it once. Did not appreciate having to wait over 20 minutes in the cold and dark after visiting the Mayflower."</i></p> <p><i>"Buses are so reduced in evening, parking is essential"</i></p> <p><i>"I live outside of the city where public transport costs can be quite high, particularly if a family are travelling in for an event. Having free parking is a huge incentive for those outside of the city. These proposals and the added cost will be yet another barrier in stopping people from being able to access the amenities and events if they live outside of the city"</i></p>	<p>There are a range of Bus Services that operate during the evening including late night services.</p> <p>The Council will continue to support the Night Time Bus Fare of £1 and has recently introduced another initiative, 5 travel for £5 to assist family groups using Public Transport.</p>
4	<p>Safety</p> <p>Using public transport or walking from alternative parking locations will create a safety issue for vulnerable individuals.</p> <p>Examples comments:</p>	<p>The Council recognises that night time safety is a concern amongst the public particularly if travelling home alone.</p> <p>However, it is not within the function of parking charging policies to manage these issues.</p>

	<p><i>“As a single woman I want the safety of a car in the evening - not waiting for a sparely timed bus and having to walk home from a bus stop”</i></p> <p><i>“Not everyone can use public transport especially in the evenings. The air quality is not affected by a PARKED car. The cost of policing on-street car parking cannot be met realistically (off-street maybe can). My personal safety as an elderly person is at risk on the streets walking to and from bus stops. I do not live by a bus stop.”</i></p>	<p>The Council works closely with the Police on supporting Safer Neighbourhoods to improve public safety at night.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Revenue raising</p> <p>The evening and overnight parking charges are only being introduced to raise money for the Council.</p> <p>Example Comments:</p> <p><i>“Why don’t you just admit its all about extra revenue !!!!”</i></p> <p><i>“Absolutely diabolic. The prices to park during the day are ridiculous as they are and now you want to continue that. Another money making scheme for a greedy council, who don’t prioritise important issues within city, but only look at ways to make money.”</i></p>	<p>Parking Charges not implemented to raise revenue, but to address policy goals as outlined in the proposal. Any surplus revenue is used for the public good, with on-street surplus specifically ring fenced for transport related expenditure.</p>
	<p>Confusing tariff structure</p> <p>Having a separate evening charges tariff causes confusion.</p> <p>Example comments:</p> <p><i>“The separate evening tariff is too complicated. If you have to introduce evening charges, just extend the time the daytime tariff ends.”</i></p>	<p>A separate evening tariff structure enables the Council to offer a charging level that is more reflective of the demand at that period. The Council operated a similar tariff structure to that proposed between 2013 and 2021.</p>

<p>Impact on City Centre residents</p> <p>Residents within the city would be unfairly impacted by the introduction of evening parking charges. The cost of parking would be unsustainable for them and their visitors.</p> <p>Example responses:</p> <p><i>“I wish to object to the proposals as a city centre resident, because I have a disability and the reduced parking charges have meant my family have been able to visit in the evening, which has been a lifeline of support.”</i></p>	<p>The Council maintains a series of City Centre Season Tickets by means of a mitigation for residents who need to own a car. The cost of these season tickets had been lowered following the removal of evening parking charges last year and it has not been proposed to increase the cost of the season tickets as part of this proposal.</p> <p>The Council has also proposed reinstating the £150 Overnight Season Ticket as part of this proposal.</p> <p>However, part of the reason for implementing Evening Parking Charges is to manage demand for parking by City Centre residents. There is only a limited amount of parking available relative to other residential areas and the Bargate Ward (which covers the City Centre area) is projected to have a population of circa 28,000 by 2024.</p> <p>Were evening charges not implemented and maintained, the Council would expect to see levels of car ownership within the City Centre increase over time to the detriment of parking availability, congestion and air quality.</p>
<p>Impact on community groups</p> <p>The proposals will have a negative impact on many charities, societies and other community groups which operate in and around the city centre in the evening. The cost of parking would make it impossible for some participate in these groups.</p> <p>Example responses:</p> <p>“Need to park regularly -2x weekly - near Above bar Church for eg.youth activities - so appreciate free parking after 1800hrs”</p> <p><i>“I am one of a small handful of dedicated Volunteer Front of House personnel at the Mast Mayflower Studios, within the Cultural Quarter of Southampton City Centre. As such, we are called to staff the Theatre as required, on a regular basis but at irregular times.</i></p>	<p>The Council will investigate reinstating the Evening Parking Pass for charity workers.</p>

As Volunteers, it will not come as any surprise, the majority of us are Senior Citizens and do not live close to the City Centre. Consequently, as Public Transport to the Venue is either infrequent or not in operation particularly late at night, it is necessitated we use our own Vehicles for transportation. Hence, the use of nearby Parking facilities is unavoidable.

The primary reason we have all enrolled to Volunteer our unpaid services at the Mast Mayflower Studios is to support, foster and promote the struggling Arts in the Community.”

I fear the proposals, to introduce additional Off Street overnight Parking Charges, will of course impact on our preparedness to expend and sustain the further Tariffs.”