

Minutes of Town Centre Parking Meeting
Thursday 01st March 3:30pm
Redditch Borough Council

Present:

Lyndsey Hadley	RBC Town Centre Coordinator
Debbie Degge	WCC Senior Highways Liason Engineer
Ian Connolly	West Merica Police – Traffic
Peter Mitchell	Petitioner
Dean Corrigan	Petitioner
Affy Qadeer	Vice Chair – Town Centre Partnership
Cllr Brandon Clayton	

1. Welcome and introductions

Introductions from all persons present and apologies from Sue Garrett – Senior Licensing Practioner from Worcs Regulatory Services.

2. Background Information

Lyndsey informed the group that as a result of the petition being presented at O&S and Executive Committee Officers had been asked to facilitate a meeting with relevant agencies and stakeholders, including the petitioners, to discuss proposals for short stay car parking in the town centre.

The petitioners gave an overview as to why the petition had been originally submitted to the council which in essence was that the Town particularly Church Green West and Unicorn Hill side did not have adequate short stay parking for the businesses in that location. Petitioners showed comments from The Standard Newspaper facebook page, an email to the MP and press cuttings regarding the issue and level of support.

3. Short Stay Parking

Mr Qadeer spoke of 2 issues one being short stay parking and the other being deliveries for businesses in Church Green East. Short stay parking is limited in the Church Green area at present which is not helping footfall particularly when people just want to drop items off/visit the bank etc and there are no short stay bays to accommodate this. In addition since the traffic order came into effect in Church Green East deliverie drivers have been booked when making deliveries to existing businesses. The issue with deliveries is affecting the day to day running of businesses as there is limited space to the rear of properties in Herbert Street. In the current economic climate where there are a high proportion of empty units the council should be doing everything possible to encourage operators to stay rather than presenting them with additional problems such as this.

Mr Mitchell and Dean Corrigan stated the absence of a short stay car parking facility on Unicorn Hill was compromising the function of local businesses. It was felt that this was having a negative affect on business, particularly as suppliers were currently unable to park outside a particular unit for a short period to drop off supplies. The group then proceeded to discuss a number of locations as possible sites for additional parking however as space is limited within the Town Centre it was proving difficult to find possible solutions;

Church Green West – Highways and West Mercia explained it would not be possible to implement new short stay spaces here due to the bus stops located in the vicinity and the number of buses pulling into the area. The amount of space the buses need would when pulling in and out would make it dangerous for any parking to be accommodated here if space would allow.

Church Rd – the group discuss how well utilised the parking bays in Church Rd were. Debbie Degge informed the group these were disabled parking bays and were used in the day. No other locations were available in this area for short stay parking.

Unicorn Hill/Bates Hill – Petitioners stated that the shorts stay bays on Bates Hill were well utilised whilst the Unicorn Hill taxi rank in the day was very slow moving with taxis waiting there all day at times for a fare. The group debated the possibility of using 4 taxi rank spaces in the day for short stay and reverting back to a taxi rank in the evening as an experimental traffic order which Highways, West Merica and Cllr Clayton agreed to. The benefit of having an experimental traffic order would be to see how this worked for both parties before making permanent. Lyndsey explained this would have to be fed back to Taxi Licensing for their views.

4. Coach drop off and current traffic orders

Traffic orders were discussed throughout the meeting but focussed on the Church Green East traffic order and the issues of loading/unloading for business deliveries. Coach drop off were not discussed due to time.

Conclusion

County Councillor Clayton supported alterations to the following Traffic Orders. These Orders will be done on a 12 month Experimental basis first.

1. Unicorn Hill – The 4 Taxi Rank spaces nearest the Traffic Signals be changed to limited waiting in the day, times to be the same as those on Bates Hill, and Taxi Rank at Night.
2. Church Rd – Make the Disabled Bays – 8am to 6pm only so that free parking is available here for Restaurants etc at night
3. Church Green West – Low Priority - investigates the provision of a Single Yellow line 8 to 6 restriction.

4. Herbert St – Requests the provision of Two Loading/Unloading only bays in the existing limited waiting bay. This will depend on feedback of Trader requirements to Lyndsey from Town Centre.