

Formal Council Questions and Responses

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1 **Question to the Cabinet Members for Streetscene and Regeneration & Housing :
2019/5 - Free/subsidised parking for city centre shoppers**

Councillor Joan Watkins asked:

The Westminster Commons Housing Communities and Local Government committee is recommending Councils should test impact of free or subsidised parking for shoppers. Would the Cabinet Member agree that such recommendations be brought forward in Wales in order to support a growth in footfall on High Streets such as Newport?

Councillors Roger Jeavons and Jane Mudd responded:

In 2015 Welsh Government commissioned an independent assessment on the impact of car parking charges on town centre footfall.

The report concluded that car parking charges are only one of a number of factors at play in influencing footfall and city centre vitality. Typical examples were, availability of spaces, proximity to destination, traffic flow, signage, retail offer and security.

Current parking income not only supports the maintenance of off street parking assets. It also contributes to sustaining other council run city centre services against a backdrop of increasing demand and stakeholder expectation.

There are a total of 2877 paid for parking spaces within the city across both the private and public sector, which ensures customer choice is maintained

In addition, there are several lengths of road within the city centre subject to limited waiting traffic orders, generally restricted to 20 minutes, 1 and 2 hour maximum wait. This provision of 193 free on street parking places provides a viable option to paid for services which the council also wishes to promote.

With Civil Parking enforcement being implemented in July, effective enforcement will ensure a steady turnover of convenient free on street parking spaces throughout the parking period.

There are also 85 free on street Disabled Persons Parking Places within the city in addition to additional parking allowed through the blue badge scheme. In addition, disabled parking within our surface car parks will remain free.

Additionally, the city centre enjoys excellent public transport links, with both bus and rail linking directly into the city centre. With current levels of car usage accepted as being unsustainable and expected to rise, it is important that public transport is also recognised as a viable alternative to the car.

Therefore, with paid for parking within the city representing excellent value, the availability of free on street parking, excellent public transport links and all off street parking within short

walking distance of the centre it serves, there are currently no plans to introduce free parking within council operated car parks as evidence suggests that this would not contribute to an increased footfall in the city centre.