
CHRISTMAS PARKING OFFER

**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Nick Wallis,
Leisure and Local Environment Portfolio**

**Responsible Director – Ian Williams
Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval on proposals for seasonal parking offers in the town centre to support trading.

Summary

2. Seasonal parking offers at Christmas support local retail trade and encourage both existing and new customers to shop in Darlington. This report proposes parking offers to run from the Christmas Lights Switch On until 2 January 2019. The offer is for all off-street short and long stay car parks to be free after 3.00pm during the above period.

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that the Council implements free parking after 3.00pm in Council short and long stay off-street car parks from 22 November 2018 until 2 January 2019.

Reasons

4. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-
 - (a) To support seasonal trading in Darlington Town Centre.
 - (b) To attract existing and new customers to the Council's car parks.

**Ian Williams
Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services**

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

DW : Extension 6618

LC

S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no implications on crime and disorder.
Health and Well Being	There are no implications.
Carbon Impact	There are no implications.
Diversity	There are no implications.
Wards Affected	The proposals affect Park East ward.
Groups Affected	Town centre businesses and town centre visitors arriving by car.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend a change to the Council's budget or policy framework.
Key Decision	This is a key decision due to the effect that it could have on those who use the town centre.
Urgent Decision	This is an urgent decision as the proposed needs to be implemented in a short time frame.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The recommendations support retail traders in the town centre.
Efficiency	No impact.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

5. In recent years, the Council has applied concessions as do most other towns on its parking fees in the Darlington town centre over the Christmas period to support seasonal trading.
6. On 22 November 2018, the Christmas lights will be switched on. It is proposed that from this date until 2 January 2019 that parking will be free after 3.00pm in the Council's short and long stay off-street car parks.
7. This may encourage shoppers to change patterns and shop later in the day resulting in a demand towards peak hours in terms of traffic.

Financial Implications

8. Based on assessments of income after 3.00pm it is anticipated that this could mean an impact of approximately £25k on parking revenue and will be absorbed in the operational budget.

Practical Implications

9. A number of practical steps need to be taken to implement this offer. This includes publishing a notice of the Council's intentions to change its parking tariffs, changing the tariffs on the pay machines, providing information at pay points and promoting and advertising the offer to the public and to retailers.

Consultation

10. In part this proposal is in response to requests from retailers to support the Christmas shopping period with an attractive parking offer.
11. This offer is complimentary and additional to the existing 2-hour free offer currently in place on long stay car parks.