

1. Why was no consultation carried out with the Parish Council / Traders / Public prior to increasing the charges?

The car park is already regulated by tariff and these have simply been increased to ensure they remain appropriate and proportionate. No-one wants to pay more to park, but after six years of stagnation a rise is now deemed necessary.

2. When the fees were increased in 2011 a full consultation, which included the Parish Council was undertaken, what is the difference now?

A full parking review has not been undertaken, as it was in 2011. Tariffs have simply been increased to ensure they remain appropriate and proportionate. We are undertaking a wider parking review next year with a view to reviewing provision in some of the other market towns.

3. Please note that when Stamages Lane Car Park was free (like many other Parish /Town car parks in the District), it was being abused, the Parish Council asked for a nominal fee to be introduced which would give the District Council enforcement powers. Therefore, was any consideration given to this background when reviewing further increase in fees?

This is often the rationale for introducing charges. Free car parks can tend to attract more residents and traders, than visitors and this impacts the vitality of the centre.

4. Why was it considered appropriate to commission an external consultant to produce a report?

We wanted independent assurance that an increase in our existing parking tariffs was appropriate.

Questions relating to the ARUP Report?

5. How much did the report cost?

£3,840

6. **Introduction** - Can you confirm that the assertion in the Introduction that SDC commissioned the report to include current thinking and relating this to the local context has been satisfactorily covered in the report?

We are happy that the report gave an overview of current themes and trends in parking and that appropriate benchmarking was illustrated. Obviously SDC Officers are better able to translate these wider findings to a local context. The report was ultimately intended to give oversight.

7. **Page 2** – Please can you take note that Stamages Lane is very rarely at 100 % capacity, so can you assure the Council that no credence was given to the assertion that ‘cruising’ for parking will generate congestion and generated extra additional millage?

We are aware that Stamages Lane Car Park is rarely completely full.

8. **Page 8 – 2.4** Do you agree that the statement that people expect to pay more for parking in the Town Centres than out of Town Retail outlets is applicable to Painswick?

Yes, people expect to pay for parking in Towns but not in Retail Centres that are generally 'out of town'.

9. If yes then why is Parking free in many other Towns / Villages throughout the District?

We are undertaking a wider parking review next year with a view to reviewing provision in some of the other market towns. Recommendations were made to introduce further parking regulation in 2011, but this wasn't enacted.

10. **Page 14 - 3.1** - Why does the report make mention of a two-tier local government arrangement in the area, when quite clearly throughout the District it's a three-tier scheme? The two-tier arrangement is mentioned throughout the report...

A two tier local government structure is common terminology to describe the landscape in Gloucestershire.

11. Is this the reason why Painswick Parish Council was not involved in the consultation?

No

12. **Page 16 – 3.3** – The report details that no car park increases have been applied since 2011 at that the average RTI per annum is 2.43% increase, on this basis the base rate of 20p for the first hour would now be 23p, why was it decided to increase base rate to 40p – a 100% increase?

We accept the 1 hour tariff point is seeing a 100% increase. However, had tariffs been reviewed annually in the period, it is likely a minimum 5 pence increase per annum would have been implemented. Had this have happened, the same tariff point would now stand at 50 pence.

Conclusion:

The Parish Council is concerned about the total lack of consultation, whilst it understands that SDC has a statutory power under the Off Street Parking Places Order of 2010 to increase parking fees, the Council believes that under the terms of the current National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF) it has not been clearly demonstrated in the ARUP report that the "increase in fees will not undermine the vitality of it Town Centres"

Recommendation:

The Parish Council asks that the proposed car parking increases be deferred until a full strategic parking review is conducted throughout the District, which will involve a full consultation process.

If the car parking charges are not deferred then this Council may consider consulting with both Stroud and Stonehouse Town Councils with a view to seeking a Judicial Review (JR). Further detail, questions and supporting information will be noted and taken away from the meeting for review by the officer with delegated authority to implement the tariff increase. A formal response will follow.