

Article for Parish Magazine

Sheila Beeton writes:

CAR PARKING IN DEDHAM

I wish to report to Dedham residents, local businesses and traders that Dedham Parish Council (DPC) has received proposals from Colchester Borough Council (CBC) to introduce car parking charges in the two public car parks in Dedham that are owned by CBC. These are the Mill Lane and Duck Pond car parks. The current timeframe for the proposed implementation is the summer vacation period of 2013.

A Draft Parking Strategy has been presented to DPC setting out the rationale for these proposals which include a number of implementation targets and a pricing policy strategy. No proposals are being made at this stage to change the arrangements which currently exist for parking in the High Street, or in Royal Square but CBC are willing to enter into discussions with DPC about both of these areas, should we wish to do so.

It has been made clear to DPC that the principle of paid car parking in the two car parks owned by CBC is not for negotiation and this has also been confirmed by our ward councillor, Mark Cable. We are, however, being consulted about some of the detail in the implementation of this strategy.

Whilst CBC has made clear that a key component of this strategy is financial, there is a recognition that Dedham also should be able to benefit from this arrangement and despite the fact that we do not own these two car parks, there is a proposal that after having deducted the costs of managing and maintaining these and the implementation costs for the new arrangements, DPC should be able to share in a percentage of any profit that may be generated.

CBC has asked to attend a meeting of the Parish Council so they can present the case for these proposals and respond to any questions from either the Parish Council or members of the public.

This is an important issue for Dedham and DPC is committed to ensuring that everyone in the village is aware of these proposals and has the opportunity to communicate their views both to DPC and CBC. The following arrangements are therefore being made to ensure that this happens:

- Receipt of these proposals was reported to the Parish Council at its meeting on 10th June.
- At this meeting it was agreed that this issue be a substantive item for discussion at the July meeting of the Parish Council on 8th July. This meeting will not be attended by CBC and will enable members of the public to raise issues with DPC.
- To facilitate this meeting and to ensure the widest circulation of CBC's proposals copies of both the Draft Parking Strategy and an Executive Summary will be placed on the DPC website and will be available on application from clerk@dedhamparishcouncil.org.uk.

- On Monday, 22nd July, I am proposing to call an Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council to consider this sole item. This meeting, which will be held at the Assembly Rooms commencing at 7.30 pm will be attended by CBC and will include Cllr. Hunt, the portfolio holder for parking matters at CBC and officers of CBC. Our Ward Councillor, Mark Cable will also be in attendance.
- Details of the above arrangements will also be made widely available within the village, on noticeboards, and in shop windows (subject to approval of traders).

In summary, DPC believes that this proposal will be implemented by CBC and whilst we may not necessarily support it, we do believe it is important to enter into discussions with CBC as soon as possible over the detail of the implementation.

Sheila Beeton,
Chair, DPC.