

**Council Meeting  
27<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

**Motion submitted by Councillor Steven Leigh MBE under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**Car Parking Concessions will boost Local Economy**

**This council notes that:**

- The hard work and determination of Calderdale Council to support residents and local businesses through the Covid-19 Pandemic and Cost-of-living Crisis.
- The Cost-of-living Crisis and Covid 19 Pandemic had devastating effects on residents and businesses in Calderdale, many SME's and high-street businesses have been particularly affected.
- The recent Review of Parking Charges will increase Parking Charges across the Borough with Halifax, Brighouse and Hebden Bridge all facing increases up to 100%. This policy also includes a planned 300% increase to Parking Charges at Shibden Park.
- That the imposition of higher Parking Charges will compound existing difficulties for residents and businesses in Calderdale.

**This Council acknowledges that:**

- The increases in Parking Charges will discourage people from visiting our towns and will exacerbate the disastrous policy change in 2021 which extended Parking Charges from 6 PM to 8 PM and to include Sundays in many popular areas.
- The recent increases will reduce footfall in our town centres and the spending power of residents will be further squeezed, resulting in adverse economic effects and potential job losses to the region.
- That residents and businesses oppose the increases. Research by Brighouse BID showing that 92% of businesses oppose the increases in on-street charges and that 100% are in opposition to the off-street charges. This opposition also extends to the planned 300% increase at Shibden Park, and residents and local groups continue to actively campaign to mitigate those increases.
- There was a shortfall of £800,000 in the Parking Services Budget last year, part of which was due to lower revenue having been estimated. Therefore,

actual income realised by the recent increases could well produce less than estimated in the budget because income was already being underachieved during the previous scale of Parking Charges.

**The Council accepts:**

- That enlightened Local Authorities will be doing everything in their power to encourage residents to use local shops and support local businesses. Therefore, our Council should endeavour to create a new Parking Strategy that will not deter people from our town centres, by introducing lower parking charges and limited free parking at set times and certain times of the year.
- It should embrace and enhance the Conservative Government investment of over £50 million to revitalise town centres in Calderdale - with Halifax receiving £11.7m, Brighouse £19m, Todmorden £17.5 and Elland £6.3m, together with £20m for a new rail station in Elland.
- That the decision to impose recent increases means the Council not only chooses to ignore the potentially damaging effects which these Parking policies will have on our town centres, and the finances of people in Calderdale - but ignores public opinion.
- The implementation of the Green Permit will increase inequalities across the Borough because owners of expensive electric cars will enjoy cheaper parking, subsidised by non-electric cars that will be paying more.
- The decision to increase Parking Charges at Shibden Park by 300% will deter people from visiting, and the suggestion by the Cabinet that residents should purchase a £100 parking permit for the year during the Cost-of-living Crisis is unrealistic. Many residents cannot afford to pay a £100 lump sum to the Council, especially those on low-income who want to have an occasional and affordable day-out with their families.

**This Council resolves:**

- To call on the Executive to develop fully-costed proposals designed to attract visitors to Calderdale. This new strategy should explore opportunities for lower parking charges and limited free parking at set times. Examples could include Friday evenings, Sunday all day, and special holidays and during the Christmas period. These proposals will also examine the affordability and opportunity cost of the Green Permit.

**Motion seconded by Councillor Howard Blagbrough**