



# NSC Car Parking charges proposal Portishead response

February 13<sup>th</sup> 2020

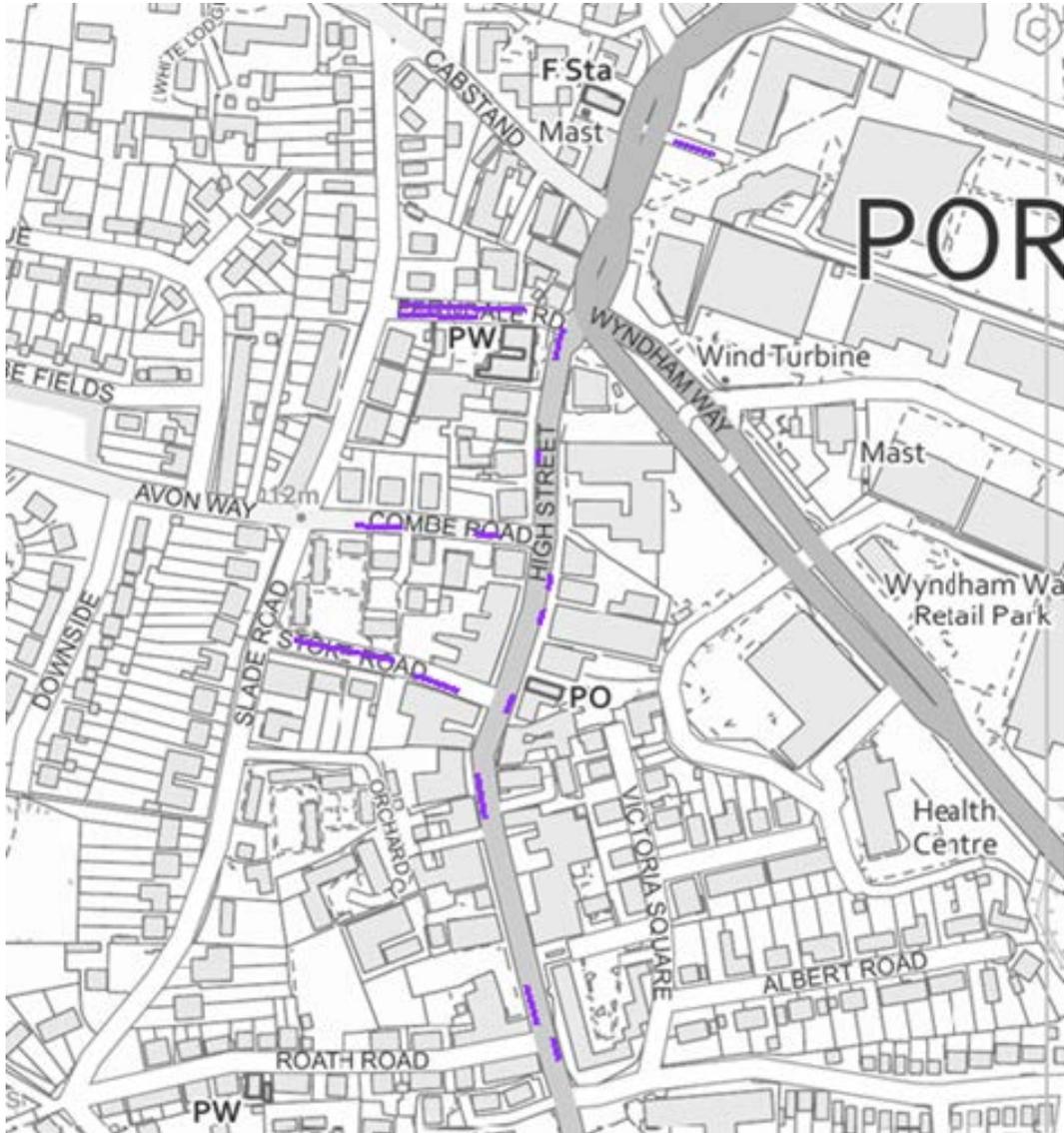
# North Somerset background and rationale

- **NSC Budget target to raise an extra£150K\*\* net revenue in 2020-21 and £220k per annum from FY21-22 onwards from “car parking” across North Somerset after investment and running costs**
- NSC has huge cost pressures that affect more vulnerable people due to ten successive years of government cuts in NSC central grants

\* From NSC Exec Meeting briefing paper Jan 7th 2020

\*\* From NSC 2020-21 Budget proposal

# Proposed Portishead “High Street” Areas



NSC is proposing charges on the “High St” areas marked in purple i.e. all those with current time waiting restrictions and Roath Road Car Park

# NSC Car Parking consultation update 12<sup>th</sup> Feb

1. The “unofficial” consultation done by Portishead Town Council to date shows that > 90% of people are against the parking charges as proposed by NSC

2. After representation from Councillors across the District, NSC has announced that it has updated the consultation and decision making process as follows.

- NSC “official” public consultation is due to start on the 17th February and run to 4th March – please make your comments known. PTC will make sure that comments provided to us are included. When we have details of the NSC web site link to use we will publish it here and on the Town Council website
- Once the NSC consultation period has ended, responses and alternative suggestions will then be considered and proposals revised.
- NSC then runs what is called a “statutory” consultation process in April / May . The statutory part is because if you are going to change or implement charges you have to do this in the right way legally.
- The final package, whatever it looks like by then, will be debated at a full meeting of the full North Somerset Council in June where all District Councillors, including your 6 Portishead District Councillors will have a free vote.

# Portishead Resident Feedback

- Facebook responses, public meeting attended by circa 50 people (majority living close to High St and Roath Road) and anecdotal evidence indicate 95%+ of people are against car parking charges
- Several hundred people have commented already across the public meeting and social media (and the official consultation period has not even started)
- High degree of dissatisfaction from residents with Councillors being stopped in the street, cafes and taking calls from disgruntled residents.

## **Summary of issues and comments raised:**

“There is no Parking problem to fix – we bumble along quite well”

“May as well just go to Cribbs if I have got to fiddle around with Parking meters”

“will just drive around more looking for a free space causing more congestion and pollution”

“How can you expect charity shop volunteers to pay £3 per day to park ”

# Portishead Resident Feedback (2)

“There are no viable public transport alternatives to get to work”

“Public transport is too expensive to use“

“There will be a Domino effect as other car park owners jump on the bandwagon”

“ The attempt to play the green card is disingenuous”

“As parents were encouraged to park away from school to keep the kids safe, and also get some walking in. Many of us use Roath road for this purpose and it’s about 10 mins twice a day. To charge to park will therefore simply mean we will either park on the roads more Meaning more danger for the kids and clog up the roads”

“Seems good value to me considering charges I have to pay visiting other towns and resorts. First 30mins free though “

Many comments predict the death of our high street.

# Portishead Chamber of Commerce Feedback

- Members are very much opposed to the parking charges proposed by NSC in the High Street, Roath Road Car Park etc.
- There is a strong feeling that this would be very detrimental to the High Street businesses and that this is amplified by the proximity of Portishead to the Mall and fears that this would encourage shoppers to go there where they can park easily and at no cost.
- There was general agreement that the current parking rules needed enforcing.
- The Chamber would endorse the view of local business and ask the Town Council to oppose the changes, albeit we fully realise that it is NSC's decision.

# Chamber of Commerce 2012 Data

Two surveys carried out in Portishead in July 2012

## i) High Street survey

93% High Street retailers against parking charges - 54 High Street retailers visited 50 against 2 for and 2 undecided.

## ii) Online Chamber Members survey

95% of responses opposed the introduction of parking charges - 37 responses / 35 opposed

# PTC Conclusions : (1) Business Case

- The business case is built upon extrapolated usage and revenue calculations from other parts of North Somerset with very different local characteristics. The data is therefore not robust so revenue benefit calculations are high risk.
- No detailed breakdown of costs have yet been provided.
- The business case is £760k investment to generate £220k per annum revenue
  - Even with a small shortfall in predicted revenue or increase in costs, benefits will be wiped out
- No allowance for the negative impact on Portishead residents has been included in the business case or any money provided to deal with the impact of the certain domino effect on other locations in Portishead

**Conclusion:** High level of risk that business case benefits will not be achieved

# PTC Conclusions: (2) Portishead impact

- NSC proposal has been built without consultation of Portishead high street users
- No attention has been given to the future strategy for Portishead High Street or Town Centre, for example factors such as:
  - The current NSC proposal to improve cycling in the high street area
  - The railway and railway station which will change the dynamic of the town
  - Portishead Neighbourhood Plan which aims at an integrated and planned approach to encourage more public transport, pedestrians, cyclists and bring more people to the High Street. These objectives will come into conflict with NSC if NSC is charging for Parking
- No consultation has taken place with bus companies or thought given to encouraging other modes of green transport
- The approach taken and proposal do not follow industry good practice guidelines
  - No account has been taken of the specific local environment – a fundamental omission
- It offers a “point” solution that will make the lives of Portishead People worse for a potentially small and high risk financial gain.

- *NB1: a previous attempt at implementing charges in the car park now owned by Aldi failed as it caused traffic chaos*
- *A number of recent attempts to try and introduce charges have also been rebuffed as they had no benefits*

# PTC alternative proposal: (1) Overall

## 1. Reject the current NSC proposals

But recognising the severe financial pressures that PTC is under we would suggest:

- Focus first on reducing the costs of collecting current parking charges across the district. The 36% operating profit seems low when compared with data available online.
  - Accelerating automated payment methods should be a priority. Many car parks including Weston Railway station (APCOA) are now automated payment only
  - Use of number plate recognition technology should be investigated

# PTC alternative proposals: (2) Portishead specific

- Implement proper enforcement of current restrictions and determine how much of the revenue gap can be closed by doing this
- Explore other area where time limits and /enforcement /resident permits would potentially benefit the town e.g. Harbour road, High Down School, St Peters school, Marina and determine how much of the revenue gap can be closed
  - Additional yellow lining would be needed in some places to allow this
  - It is Portishead's "turn" for Yellow Lines refresh in FY2020-21 which offers a potential opportunity

# PTC Additional Proposal

- NSC revert the ownership of Roath Road Car Park to PTC
  - (It was originally purchase by Portishead Urban District Council between 1967 and 1973 for just under £7k)
- PTC paid for Parking Enforcement Officer would manage enforcement
- We would review potential for business and resident permits to better manage the limited capacity for the different users (Residents, shoppers and businesses)

# How could this work?

**NSC** commit Officer Time to :

- Provide data on the level of enforcement over last 2 years and revenue raised so we can calculate business case
- Design and implement schemes for agreed areas
  - Take advantage of 2020-21 being Portishead Yellow Lining year

**PTC** fund and manage enforcement officer @ £30K – person works a 5 day week

**PTC and NSC** agree revenue split of enforcement revenue so that NSC meets its business case target.

# PTC Resolution

At the PTC Council meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020 the Council unanimously passed the following motion.

- To reject the NSC car parking charges scheme proposed for Portishead and request that North Somerset works with PTC to review and assess alternative proposals to assist in achieving the NSC budget shortfall.

Any questions?

# PTC proposal: Impact on NSC vs PTC and Portishead

## NSC Advantages

- Reduced Project costs: No expensive machines to implement
- Reduced operational costs: No car park and machines to maintain , no business rates to pay
- Reduced borrowing costs as Portishead out of scope
- Reduced Parking enforcement costs (staff and admin costs)
- One less thing to do, freeing up officer time

## NSC Disadvantages

- Loss of car park asset from balance sheets
- Loss of current enforcement revenue
- Loss of potential new car parking and enforcement revenue

Need costs from NSC to do financial comparison

## Portishead Advantages

- Gain of asset on balance sheet
- Gain of enforcement revenue
- Portishead would also benefit as the employee would also be deployed to manage parking and congestion in areas like the Village quarter, helping to keep the bus service running
- Positive impact on users of the high street as proper enforcement will encourage “churn” to the benefit of retailers
- Local approach will deal with small enforcement issue sensitively
- NSC Highways budget and Officer time could perhaps be more productively used on Portishead priorities such as traffic calming schemes to improve road safety
- Potential revenue from business permits in Roath Road car park to manage the current Post Office van situation
- Short term solution that does preclude any ideas from the Neighbourhood Plan or other strategic changes brought about by the railway
- **Could make people’s lives a bit better not worse!**

## Portishead Disadvantages

- Ongoing maintenance costs of machines and business rates
- Ongoing parking enforcement costs