

REGENERATION, CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23 JANUARY 2018

REVIEW OF PARKING CHARGES AT THE STRAND LEISURE PARK

Report from: Richard Hicks, Director, Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive

Author: Ruth Du-Lieu, Assistant Director of Front Line Services &
Tomasz Kozlowski, Assistant Director of Physical & Cultural Regeneration

Summary

This report provides a review of the impact on visitor numbers and income at The Strand Leisure Park following the introduction of Pay & Display Car Parking in July 2017. This report has been produced at the request of the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, following consideration at its meeting on 7 December 2017 in response to a petition presented by Councillor Stamp

1. Budget & Policy Framework

1.1 Parking Charges form part Budget Setting that is agreed annually by Council in February.

2. Background

2.1 As part of Budget Setting for the current financial year Pay & Display Car Parking was introduced at The Strand Leisure Park with an income target of £45k set within the Parking Account.

2.2 Pay & Display Car Parking went live at The Strand Leisure Park in July 2017 to align with the Summer Operating Period. To date a total of £35,000 has been secured against the Income Target set.

2.3 The Strand Leisure Park provides a range of paid and free recreational activities and is managed by Leisure, Sports, and Heritage & Tourism within the Physical & Cultural Regeneration Division. The Income Target for the Strand is £149,000 of which £30,000 relates to catering concessions.

3. Advice & Analysis

- 3.1 The impacts of adopting Pay & Display Car Parking at The Strand Leisure Park can only be compared against the paid activities as no car counters survey data is available for when the parking areas were free.
- 3.2 Analysis has been carried out on income levels and footfall for the paid attractions at The Strand Leisure Park which has shown that there has been no reduction in either since the implementation of Pay & Display charging, both income and footfall have increased against the previous year.
- 3.3 **Table 1** below provides a breakdown of Strand Income (Paid Attractions) against Parking Income that shows that there has been no negative impact on Strand Income Targets this financial year following the adoption of Pay & Display for this financial year.

Parking Services P&D Income July to December 2017	Leisure Services Income 2015	Leisure Services Income 2016	Leisure Services Income 2017
£35,048	£51,772	£39,750	£45,876

- 3.4 **Table 2** below provides a breakdown of Strand Visits (Paid attractions) against Parking Visits that shows that there has been no negative impact on Strand Visitor Numbers in respect of paid attractions this financial year.

Leisure Services Footfall 2015	Leisure Services Footfall 2016	Leisure Services Footfall 2017
22,122	14,629	17,696

The impact on visits to undertake free recreational activities such as use of the Play Area and dog walking cannot be quantified as no counter survey is available.

- 3.5 As shown in tables 1 & 2 above, both footfall and income levels have increased against the previous year which indicates that the implementation of the parking charges has had no negative impact in relation to the number of users to the paying attractions.
- 3.6 Since the implementation of the parking charges parking availability has become much more obtainable. It was known that the local businesses and students were making use of the car park for their own purposes. Prior to the parking charges the top parking area was always full to capacity Monday to Friday throughout all seasons. Since the implementation of the parking

charges this same parking area is now empty apart from during the summer months. This has confirmed that previously this parking area was used by the local businesses and students and now this parking area is only utilised during the summer months by the leisure park users.

4. Risk Management

- 4.1 **Table 3**, sets out the risks associated with the adoption of Pay & Display Car Parking at The Strand Leisure Park.

Table 3

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk Rating
Parking Income	Income Target not achieved.	Monthly monitoring of the Parking Account	Low

5. Financial and Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.
- 5.2 Parking Charges form part of the Policy Framework for Budget Setting that is agreed annually (February Cycle) at Full Council.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 The Committee is recommended to note the review of the impacts on visitor numbers and income at The Strand following the introduction of Pay & Display Car Parking in July 2017.

Lead officer contact

Simon Swift, Head of Highways and Parking Services

Email: simon.swift@medway.gov.uk

Tele no: (01634) 331146

Appendices:

None

Background papers:

None