

Chichester District Council

Cabinet

16 April 2024

Public Question and Answers Sheet

Question 1 from Simon Oakley:

Noting the flooding in way of the holiday and caravan parks at Bracklesham and Earnley last week, and the importance of sites such as these to Chichester District's visitor economy, could you advise as to what engagement CDC and its coastal engineering service, Coastal Partners, have had with the Environment Agency over the past two years with regards the state, and future, of the groynes and shingle covered, clay cored, coastal defence bank which lies, and in part lay, between the Western rock arm of the Medmerry re-alignment scheme and the East end of East Bracklesham Drive, given what happens to this coastal frontage will have implications for the coastal defence of the permanent dwellings in the Eastern part of Bracklesham?

Response from Cllr Brown to question 1:

Thank you for the question. The council's Coastal Partners have been working closely with the Environment Agency on all matters associated with managing these risks. The events affecting Medmerry Caravan Site and Bracklesham Caravan and Boat Club last week involved tidal levels that were similar to or exceeded the highest tidal levels ever recorded locally and are a stern reminder of the risks associated with the coast. The beach in front of the caravan parks is managed by the EA, but the beach is updrift of the section of foreshore managed by the District Council and thus impacts our management and so it is essential that we continue to communicate regularly with the EA. When we identified erosion to the west of the Medmerry rock arm (between Medmerry and Bracklesham) the council began more specific engagement with the EA over the past couple of years, and remain abreast of their monitoring, thinking and proposals. The focus for our coastal service is to ensure flood & coastal erosion risk is effectively managed, and to ascertain the potential impact any decision or works will have on adjacent frontages.

These interactions have unsurprisingly intensified with the recent flooding, and the EA have begun re-profiling the beach which should lead to a reduction of the risk of a recurrence of the recent flooding.

Question 2 from Simon Oakley:

Noting the importance of Car Park income to CDC's finances, could you advise as to what loss of car parking income has arisen from unauthorised occupations of CDC Car Parks by groups of Caravans and attendant vehicles during FY23/4, including any estimate of loss of income due to other vehicles being deterred from using affected car parks during such unauthorised occupations? Were any Penalty Charge Notices issued in relation to these unauthorised occupations? If PCNs were issued, how many were issued, how many have been paid and if any have not has subsequent action been taken to obtain payment?

Response from Cllr Moss to question 2:

Thank you for your question. We do not hold any evidence of customers advising the parking services that they have been unable to park in a particular car park and have decided not to visit Chichester, generally if a car park is unavailable or full then customers will look for alternative parking at a nearby car park. Due to this reason, it is not possible to ascertain if there has been an impact on income. Typically people will find a car park that is not full.

With regard to PCN's all users must adhere to the same requirements in terms of payments, and where safe to do so if there has been a parking contravention a PCN will be issued. Where Penalty Charge Notices remain unpaid, we would follow the process as set out through the Traffic Management Act to recover the debt. We do not, however, record the number of Penalty Charge Notices issued to a particular group of individuals.

Question from Les Payne:

Question on behalf of Manhood Classics Car club.

The new proposed policy regarding the hire of CDC land for 'events' which is to be discussed today poses many questions for our group.

We have always maintained that we have met in the East Beach car park to get refreshments and meet like minded friends at the Beach Kiosk, paying car parking fees when the charges applied. Some people would also look at each others cars which of course, encouraged the general public to do so as well and enjoyment was had by all. We do not consider this to be an 'event'.

The proposed policy seems to indicate that we MUST now make this into an event instead of just parking our cars. The "Event" appears to suggest to us, that as a not for profit but charitable group, although not a registered charity, we will be subject, according to what size our 'EVENT' is deemed to be, to a charge of hundreds of £'s for each 2.5 hour meet up once a month. With admin fees, hire fees and set up fees, this appears to be that we are expected to pay approximately £330 minimum for each time we park our cars?

Despite the lengthy and detailed discussions we have had over the last 4 months, it still seems that we are talking on crossed purposes.

Such charges would make our visit to East Beach car park and refreshment kiosk totally unviable for us to the disappointment of us and many hundreds of people who have expressed their concern over the last four months.

We feel that an annual charge reflecting what we actually do in the car park would be fairer in our case.

Could the council please explain to us in more detail how they expect this to work.

We also note that there are suggested percentages of car park areas allocated for such '**events**'. Whilst the East Beach car park has been allocated between 20 and 50% depending on the time of year, some car parks allocation suggests that an event in their car parks would consist of 4 car parking spaces?! Is this really classed as an **event**?!

It has been suggested that in the summer months that people park on the nearby roads because they could not get in the car park. This is definitely not correct. Many drivers park in such places and choose not to pay the parking fees and this will always be the case.

I would ask the cabinet to clarify what they deem to be summer months and if a larger percentage for these months could be considered.

Response from Cllr Brown-Fuller

Thank you for your question Mr Payne. Members you will be aware that the consideration of a new policy is on the agenda at item 9 and once the policy is agreed and adopted then organisations can apply and I am glad you can be with us today Mr Payne.

The Policy will seek to clarify our position was there was no Policy in place beforehand to allow events in our car parks.

The intended and main aim of car parks is to provide parking for visitors, residents and businesses, which will always remain the priority. The use of car parks for anything other than parking would be classed as an event or activity.

The council must be consistent with its actions and ensure that capacity can be maintained, along with delivering its duties relating to health and safety. Events or activities will normally only be considered by organisations which are incorporated, this enables the organisation to be responsible for its obligations rather than these falling to the council.

The policy provides detail for requests and considerations for the hire of land and sits alongside the wider hire of land events policy with the associated application forms. Where a percentage has been indicated for car parks this is to cover both events and activities and there are examples of these shown in the policy.

To answer your question regarding the summer months within car parks are considered to be from 1st April to 31st October in line with our fees and charges linked to seasonality in our car parks and the percentage allocation for the months which might be deemed appropriate reflects the anticipated demand on the car park to ensure that car parking can be provided.

There are costs associated with the use of car parks and within the policy the expectation is that these are covered by the event or activity organiser. Where an event or activity is approved on a recurring basis the expectation would be that the application will reflect this and there would not need to be a separate application each time. However, an upper limit to the number of events would be applied to this

(which would be generally one year), to enable ongoing confirmation of insurance documents and other requirements.

Costs associated will be calculated once the application is received to consider issues such as the income, the time and resource to ensure that the site is clear and ready for the event to take place (including signage beforehand) and also costs associated once the event has taken place.