

BathNES Cabinet meeting 7th Feb 2018: Parking Strategy

Statement by Sian James (resident)

We have been eagerly waiting for the new Parking Strategy for what 18 months now, the original consultation was over 12 months ago, but now we have a Strategy that is openly being 'rushed through' as an 'URGENT item' for budget reasons.

We understand that you have budget issues and need to increase revenue ASAP, but as the work with DEFRA on the Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) is obviously incomplete, you must recognise that parking is part of the AQAP solution and therefore any changes you make now are by definition temporary - so you should not be spending money on anything that cannot be easily unraveled/amended.

Talking of budgets - what are the assumptions behind the numbers? They are not stated in any of the cabinet papers that I can see, which is surprising...

How many cars are assumed to

- a) switch to P&R
- b) switch to public transport
- c) switch to walk/bike
- d) switch to parking in residential streets
- e) stop visiting bath
- f) switch to or from season tickets... (and how on earth are season-tickets only going up by 10%???)
- g) or is there zero modal shift taking place and the additional income is simply the increase in parking charges?

And what is the risk to the budget of these numbers not being delivered?

What is the cost of having to amend the proposal in say 3/6 months when you complete the AQAP work with DEFRA?

I note that the cost of implementation is estimated as £150k, and the additional income is £662.7k in 2018/9.

Does that mean it will cost another £150k to amend once the DEFRA work is complete?

What is the forecast cost of the 10% reduction given to BANES residents, and how much will this residents programme cost to set up and maintain?

All of these assumptions should be clearly stated, so that you, and residents, understand the forecasted impact of this parking proposal.

In summary - yes you need to increase revenue, but you also need to manage the cost of implementation and you MUST reduce air pollution ASAP..... and if you are converting long stay into short stay, thereby increasing the traffic churn, this may well not be helping air pollution at all. As always, the devil is in the detail – which is why I suspect that your strategy will change once you have worked through the ANPR detail with DEFRA.

Finally - just which residents are you putting first? The ones that live in Bath itself, in the bowl, where air pollution is greatest – or the ones that live on the outskirts that want to get in their cars to ‘pop into town’?

Please think about the answers to these questions – before you make a decision on parking charges & discounts.