**Rother District Council**

**Changes to Cash Payments in our Car Parks - Consultation Questionnaire**

Thank you for taking part in this consultation. This survey closes 12 noon, 17 January 2024

We would like your views as a car park user on our proposal to relocate cash payments from Rother District Council owned car park machines to PayPoints. We propose to stop our ticket machines from taking cash. They will continue to take both contactless and credit/debit card payments. Instead, people using our car parks could pay in cash at nearby PayPoints, which are located in local shops and businesses.

We take payment in coins in 17 of our car parks. We accept payment by credit/debit card, RingGo app on mobile phones and RingGo automated phoneline. Using PayPoints to pay for parking is already an option for car park users.

Every year, fewer and fewer people pay by cash. Our breakdown was 40% by RingGo, 30% in cash and 30% by credit or debit cards. However, in the first quarter of 2023/24 cash payments fell by 25% on the same period in 2022/23.

This is the right time to consider changing all cash payments to PayPoint locations. The Council pays £30,000 a year to collect cash from the ticket machines. The contract to collect the cash ends in 2024 and a new contract is likely to cost significantly more.

The Council needs to save money. It has a £3.8 million funding gap in the 2024/25 budget. We are considering every possible saving.

We considered three options. The council’s preference is for option one. There is more detail on the Council’s website at www.rother.gov.uk/consultations.

**Option One**

Relocate all cash payments to local PayPoints for all pay and display machines in all car parks.

All car parks are within 0.2 miles of a PayPoint. Camber car parks are within 0.4 miles but only 2% of payments are made in cash.

There is a grace period given to motorists to enable them to pay to park. Motorists do not have to return to their vehicle or the car park once they have paid at a PayPoint.

Some Blue Badge holders (for disabled drivers and passengers) can apply for permits to park in any of our car parks in any bay without a fee. They are eligible if in receipt of higher rate mobility allowance of the Personal Independent Payment, or they are registered blind or are in receipt of a war pension. Therefore, these customers will not be affected. Other drivers with mobility problems might be affected.

The Council is setting up more flexible, short term parking permits as a cost-effective alternative.

**The advantages are:**

* Carbon emissions will reduce by 5 to 6 tonnes a year if we remove the cash collections..
* £30,000 annual saving to the Council’s budget.
* More local businesses offering PayPoint facilities and increased business through car park customers using PayPoints.

**The disadvantages are:**

* All car park users choosing to pay by cash would have to go to a nearby PayPoint to pay their car parking tariff.
* We have identified that some vulnerable customers may be negatively impacted including those technologically excluded, without a mobile phone or credit or debit cards and residents with mobility problems, as recognised by our Equalities Impact Assessment.

**Option Two**

The same as option one except to keep cash payments at the De La Warr Pavilion car park in Bexhill, the Mount Street car park in Battle and the Upper Market car park in Battle.

These three car parks have between 27% (DLWP) and 41% (Mount St) of payments in cash. Again, the use of cash is falling year on year. The remaining car parks would be card-only machines with cash payments by PayPoint.

Mount Street and Upper Market car parks (Battle) are the only charged-for car parks where a one-hour stay is the most popular tariff. The most popular tariff at the De La Warr Pavilion car park is one to two hours stay. Short stays are more likely to be paid by cash.

**The advantages are:**

* Customers could still pay in cash at the three car parks that account for half of the cash payments in council owned car parks. There would be less impact on vulnerable customers but only at these locations.
* Some reduction in costs to the council.
* A reduction in CO2 emissions.
* Some use of local businesses for PayPoint

**The disadvantages are:**

* A reduction in the advantages listed for option one.
* Most of the costs are fixed costs. Reducing the service, like removing some sites or collecting less often, would not necessarily result in significant savings. We also might get less interest from businesses because the cash collection contract would be much smaller.

**Option Three**

No change. Renew the cash collection contract in 2024 as scheduled and in similar terms.

**The advantages of this option are:**

* No adverse impact on customers who want to pay in cash.
* A new contract may give us an opportunity to negotiate a reduction in carbon emissions.

**The disadvantages are:**

* The council makes no savings, costs increase, and the council would not meet the financial stability programme. This means a reduction in another part of the service or different service in order to provide a balanced budget.
* We expect an increase in costs to the contract from 10% to 15%. This is due to the normal uplift in costs in new contracts and the rise in inflation.
* The current contract is in partnership with Eastbourne Borough Council and Hastings Borough Council. This partnership allowed the contract to be the best value for money. If either or both councils do not renew it would increase the cost of the new contract beyond 15%.
* We could include environmental impacts as part of the procurement process, but the Council can’t achieve the same carbon savings with this option.

**PayPoint Locations**

Maps are available on our website. Staff at our Help Points can help you see them.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Car Park** | **Postcode** | **Nearest PayPoint** | **Postcode** | **Distance** |
| **Battle**Lower Market  | TN333 OSB | Jempsons | TN33 0XB | Less than 0.1 mile |
| Mount Street  | TN33 0EG | Jempsons | TN33 OXB | 0.08 mile |
| Upper Market | TN33 OXB | Jempsons | TN33 OXB | Less than 0.1 mile |
| **Bexhill-on-Sea**de la Warr Pavilion | TN40 1DP | Co-op, Devonshire Road | TN40 1AS | 0.14 mile |
| Eversley Road | TN40 1HE | Co-op | TN40 1AS | 0.05 mile |
| Little Common | TN39 3TG | Finest Mini-Mart | TN39 4PE | 0.17 mile |
| Manor Barn & Gardens | TN40 2JA | Manor News (shop) | TN40 2HE | 0.15 mile |
| **Camber**Camber Central | TN31 7RH | BJs on the Beach | TN31 7RJ | 0.09 mile |
| Camber Western | TN31 7RB | BJs on the Beach | TN31 7RJ | 0.36 mile |
| **Rye**Bedford Place | TN31 7LP | Costcutter | TN31 7LP | Less than 0.1 mile |
| Cinque Ports Street | TN31 7AN | Jempsons Budgeons  | TN31 7AB | 0.09 mile |
| Gibbet Marsh | TN31 7DT | Premier | TN31 7BH | 0.16 mile |
| Lucknow Place | TN31 7LP | Costcutter | TN31 7LP | Less than 0.1 mile |
| Rye Sports Centre | TN31 7ND | Jempsons Budgeons  | TN31 7AB | 0.15 miile |
| The Strand | TN31 7DB | Jempsons Budgeons  | TN31 7AB | 0.18 mile |

**Thinking about the last two years, which of our car parks have you used for parking?**

**(Please tick all that apply.)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Battle** |  |  **Camber** |  |
| Lower Market |  | Central |  |
| Mount Street |  | Western |  |
| Upper Market |  |  **Rye** |  |
| **Bexhill** |  | Bedford Place |  |
| De La Warr Pavilion |  | Cinque Ports Street |  |
| Eversley Road |  | Gibbets Marsh |  |
| Little Common |  | Lucknow Place |  |
| Manor Barn & Gardens |  | Rye Sports Centre |  |
|  |  | The Strand |  |

**Which car park is the one you use the most frequently, or most regularly. (Please select only one answer.)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Battle** |  |  **Camber** |  |
| Lower Market |  | Central |  |
| Mount Street |  | Western |  |
| Upper Market |  |  **Rye** |  |
| **Bexhill** |  | Bedford Place |  |
| De La Warr Pavilion |  | Cinque Ports Street |  |
| Eversley Road |  | Gibbets Marsh |  |
| Little Common |  | Lucknow Place |  |
| Manor Barn & Gardens |  | Rye Sports Centre |  |
|  |  | The Strand |  |

Thinking about the last 12 months….

**Which payment method to you mainly or most frequently use to pay for parking in Rother District Council car parks. (Please tick only one answer.)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Cash |  |  PayPoint |  |
| Card (credit or debit) |  |  Permit |  |
| RingGo App |  |  |  |
| RingGo phoneline |  |  |  |

**What other payment method have you used in the last 12 months? (Please tick all that apply.)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Cash |  |  PayPoint |  |
| Card (credit or debit) |  |  Permit |  |
| RingGo App |  |  |  |
| RingGo phoneline |  |  |  |

**Are you disabled or have mobility related problems that would affect you going to the PayPoint? (Please tick one answer only.)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Disabled but not with mobility problems |  |  Not disabled and no mobility problems |  |
| Disabled with mobility problems  |  |  Don’t know or not sure |  |
| Not disabled but some mobility problems |  |  |  |
|  |

Please do not answer the next question if you are not disabled and have no mobility problems.

We would like to understand about which disabilities might be impacted by this proposal and which would not be impacted. We are not asking for details or anything you are not comfortable sharing. You do not have to answer this question.

**Please tell us about your disability/disabilities or mobility problems? (Please write in.)**

**How would you be impacted on moving cash payments from car park pay and display machines to PayPoints in local shops? (Please tick one answer only.)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A big negative impact |  |  Some positive impact |  |
| Some negative impact |  |  A big positive impact |  |
| No impact |  |  Don’t know or not sure |  |

We would like to understand what would deter or even stop people from paying in cash at PayPoints in local shops.

We would be interested to know why customers wouldn't or couldn't use another payment method to cash.

We would like to know if there are any opportunities or advantages in making cash payments at a PayPoint instead of in the car park.

**What barrriers or opportunities would you experience if cash payments could only be made at PayPoints? (Please write in below.)**

We have car park permits. These are paid in advance and displayed in the vehicle when parking.

A permit means someone parking regularly in a car park does not have to pay in the car park each time that they park.

Permits often save the customer money, especially if they frequently use a car park.

There is also a permit for some disabled people that meet certain conditions. This allows them to park in any car park and in any bay for free, even if they are not the driver.

**What impact would it have on you if customers could buy a permit to park at the car park, instead of paying at the car park? (Please write in below.)**

**What sort of permits would suit your needs? (Please tick all applicable answers.)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Weekly |  | 6 monthly |  |
| Monthly |  | Annual |  |
| Quarterly (3 months) |  | A permit would not be suitable |  |
| Other (please specify |  |

**Grace period**

The council gives a 10-minute grace period, which will give customers time to go to the nearest PayPoint to pay. There is a PayPoint within 0.2 miles of each of these car parks, except Camber Western where the nearest PayPoint is within 0.4 miles. **Customers do not need to return to their vehicle or the car park to display a ticket after paying by PayPoint.**

**Thinking of the main car park that you use, what do you think of the 10-minute grace period?**  (Please select one answer only.)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| More than enough time |  |
| Enough time in most circumstances |  |
| Not enough time |  |
| Don’t know or not sure |  |

**Is there another car park that you currently use where 10 minutes would not be long enough to find and use a PayPoint?** (Please select all answers that apply.)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Battle** |  |  **Camber** |  |
| Lower Market |  | Central |  |
| Mount Street |  | Western |  |
| Upper Market |  |  **Rye** |  |
| **Bexhill** |  | Bedford Place |  |
| De La Warr Pavilion |  | Cinque Ports Street |  |
| Eversley Road |  | Gibbets Marsh |  |
| Little Common |  | Lucknow Place |  |
| Manor Barn & Gardens |  | Rye Sports Centre |  |
|  |  | The Strand |  |

**What could the council do to reduce barriers to you regarding paying for car parking or paying by cash at PayPoints?** (Please write in below.)

**Final comments**

This is your opportunity to tell us about anything else you want the council to take into account regarding cash payments for car parks.

It might be something you expected to be asked and we didn't ask. it might be additional information or evidence you want the council to consider. Taking everything you have learned into account, which of the three options would you prefer?

**Please give us any other comments on these proposals, not previously given.**

**How easy of difficult was it for you to take part in this consultation?**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Very easy |  | A bit difficult |  |
| Easy |  | Difficult |  |
| A bit easy |  | Very difficult |  |

**Is there anything that we could have done to make it easier for you to take part in this consultation?**

**Thank you for taking part in this consultation.**

This consultation closes at 12 noon on **17 January 2024**.

Please return this questionnaire before the consultation closes. Late responses are at risk of not being included.

This survey should be returned to Bexhill Town Hall or posted to

Car Park Cash Payments Consultation, Rother District Council

Town Hall, Bexhill-on-Sea, TN39 3JX

Staff at our Customer Help Points can help you see car park maps and other information.

You can do this survey online at www.rother.gov.uk/consultations