

AGENDA ITEM 11: Free Parking Permit Policy Matter - National Lobster Hatchery Charity Vehicle

1. Overview

- 1.1 The National Lobster Hatchery have asked for a Padstow Town Council free parking permit for their charity vehicle. Council's decision is welcome in this regard as it falls outside of the Free Parking Policy.
- 1.2 The Free Parking Policy has been in place for a number of years to voluntary organisations/charities to support them in the good work they do for our community. These permits are solely for volunteers (unpaid) who carry out work for the organisation/charity on a volunteering basis.
- 1.3 Permits are issued for volunteer parking at specific times or, where times vary, for parking related to a specific purpose and those issued have been predominately for groups which meet/operate on PTC car parks.
- 1.4 The application form was updated to be specific about the conditions of use and the applicant must confirm the following in a signed declaration:
 - That the work I carry out for the organisation/charity, detailed in this form is unpaid and that I am a volunteer.
 - That I acknowledge and understand if I am no longer a volunteer or become a paid member of staff for the organisation/charity, detailed in this form, then the free parking permit will become VOID and free parking will no longer apply.
 - In the event of bullet point 2 above, I will return the free parking permit.

2. Application

- 2.1 The initial application was for 4 free parking permits 24/7, this was a change from the previous year's application which specified a shorter timeframe of use. This therefore gave rise to query the request. There seemed to be confusion as to the rationale of these permits. The Council's Facilities Officer provided clarification in this regard.
- 2.2 Following clarification, the application was reduced to 1 permit for the charity's own vehicle. This did give rise as to where the charity's own vehicle sat in this regard. Therefore, the Town Clerk thought it fair to take this matter to Council for consideration as it does sit outside of the Policy but it is a vehicle directly linked to the charity with the request being 24/7.

3. Further information

- 3.1 The HRT Committee when reviewing the policy in 2019 outlined that permits can only be issued to volunteers but that 1 permit could be issued specifically to the National Lobster Hatchery for its "sign written charity vehicle". No change was made to the policy and the decision was effectively made outside of the policy for that year.
- 3.2 In subsequent years, the charity vehicle was not referred to in applications for a free parking permit. The applications listed vehicle registrations and through the application forms, which have been firmed up over time, indicated that the permit holders met the voluntary conditions of the policy.

- 3.3 Conversations this year have highlighted that the charity vehicle has been continuing to receive a free parking permit, being 1 of the vehicle registrations included in previous applications. As outlined above, it is thought that the charity vehicle is outside of the policy and Council's thoughts are now sought. It should be noted that there is no implication that the National Lobster Hatchery has been misleading, rather that there has been confusion over the policy following changes in their personnel. The Town Clerk has provided a temporary parking permit for their charity vehicle whilst this is considered by Council.
- 3.4 The Council Facilities Officer has also advised the National Lobster Hatchery about the Council's annual parking permits and application form, which is a permit for a tenant or person travelling to/from work. Cost being £480.00 which is far more cost effectively than paying daily. This Policy allows for a maximum of 15 permits to be sold. As of 15.4.24, 13 have been sold with 2 remaining.

4. Considerations

- 4.1 It's considered that the request for the charity vehicle does not fit within the Council's Free Parking Policy. Therefore, Council's consideration of this request is welcomed.
- a) Does Committee agree this request sits outside of the Free Parking Policy? [*If not, then a Permit will be issued.*]
 - b) If it does agree with a) above,
 - i) does Council wish to make an exception and provide a permit for free parking 24/7 (not via the Free Parking Policy) as the vehicle is directly linked to the Charity. If so, does Council wish to review this annually? or
 - ii) Decline the request advising that it is outside of the Free Parking Policy and instead provide details of the Annual Parking Permit (referred to in 3.4 above).
 - c) Do Council wish to recommend any changes to the Free Parking Policy for consideration at a future date by the HRT Committee?