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What is the proposal? What outcomes/benefits are you hoping to achieve?

As part of the Council's work to seek sustainable futures for its cultural assets, it is proposed to implement car parking charges at the borough council's country parks.

Swindon has a range of country parks of different scope and size and this initial phase of work proposes implementing car park charging policies at Lydiard House and Park, and at Coate Water Country Park. The car visitor numbers at a number of smaller country parks will be monitored so that the effectiveness of a charging regime can be assessed, including Barbury Castle, Moulden Hill and Stanton Park.

This DIA therefore focuses on the implementation of car park charging at Lydiard and Coate.

This project is part of the Cultural and Community Based Assets Programme which has the overarching objective of the review of Cultural assets is to ensure they are well positioned to enjoy a sustainable future.

In 2014/15 the council subsidy for Lydiard was £458,000 and for Coate was approximately £100,000. These subsidies support the staffing and maintenance of each site and enable the facilities to be maintained at a standard enjoyed by the public.

Given the scale of demands on the council's resources from demand led services, particularly to support the most vulnerable, seeking a sustainable future for cultural assets, including country parks, means removing the council subsidy for these facilities.

The expectation is that through the implementation of car parking charges and other schemes at various country parks Swindon Borough Council will greatly reduce the current subsidy and help secure the future of the country parks to ensure they remain sustainable

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Who's it for?

The country parks owned and managed by Swindon Borough Council offer a wide variety of activities and therefore attract a diverse group of visitors with specific activities in each park attracting particular groups of visitors. There are a range of formal groups and informal users to access both Lydiard and Coate and their facilities. It is also recognised that a proportion of the visitors to the parks are not residents to the Borough.

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How will this proposal meet the equality duties?

The proposal will meet the equality duties by:

1. Swindon Borough Council will eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation by setting the charge as a maximum price across all parks with time bands, the option of season tickets will be available for sites where charging has been introduced. Other features to support this will be:

- a. Making good of car parks that are currently recognised as being of a poor standard or that flood in bad weather.
  - b. Both Coate and Lydiard have access to good public transport links at the site entrances are on good public transport links.
  - c. The charges will be in keeping with similar sites i.e. National Trust & Forestry Commission
2. To advance equality of opportunity by providing disabled parking bays at all sites.
  3. Foster good relations by
    - a. Keeping park users informed of any proposals and allowing for feedback on the proposal and the charging model.
    - b. Discussing issues that arise over the first 6 months of implementation especially with residents that live locally to the parks to review the impacts on them and any mitigation measures which could be implemented.

What are the barriers to meeting this potential?

The barriers to meeting this potential are:

- That any implementation of parking charges may have an adverse effect on parts of the community that use country parks in relation to their Financial Economic Status.
- The implementation of charging may result in some users choosing not to park in the designated car parks

## 2 Who's using it?

Refer to equality groups

What data/evidence do you have about who is or could be affected (e.g. equality monitoring, customer feedback, current service use, national/regional/local trends)?

Between the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February and the 29<sup>th</sup> of April 2016 the council consulted with users of both Lydiard and Coate about the introduction of car parking charging, seeking views of users on the different levels of charging. The results of this consultation are presented in a separate report as an appendix to the June 2016 Cabinet paper.

There is limited data on who currently uses the country parks, but some information was gathered during the consultation which is summarised below for each park.

The consultation received 976 valid responses for Lydiard and 603 for Coate Water. For Lydiard 72% of the responders indicated that they were a resident of Swindon with 80% indicating that they use the park. This confirms the assumption that the park is used by non-residents of the Borough with some respondents from Wiltshire, Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire with some from further afield. The age range of responders shows that the park is used by all ages of the population with 61% of respondents being female.

There was a high proportion of responders classing their ethnicity as white (97%) with very few from other ethnic backgrounds in proportion to the population breakdown of the Borough as a whole. 93% indicated that they felt they had no disability with 8% indicating that they visit with a blue badge holder or they have a blue badge themselves. Over half of the responders indicated that they were in work (full or part time) or self-employed with 24% being retired and only 1% unemployed and 2% permanently sick or unable to work.

It is noted that those individuals who responded that they have or visit with someone who has a blue badge are slightly more accepting of the principle for charging.

For Coate Water 87% of responders indicated that they were residents of the Borough with 78%

saying that they visited the park. As with Lydiard there are some respondents from Wiltshire, Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire with some from further afield. Many of the responders are concentrated in the south east of the Borough. There is a wide spread of age range in the responders with 57% being Female.

There was a high proportion of responders classing their ethnicity as white (98%) with very few from other ethnic backgrounds in proportion to the population breakdown of the Borough as a whole. 10% of responders classed themselves as having a disability with 13% saying they have or visit with someone who has a blue badge. There was no noticeable difference to the accepting of the principle of paying for car parking between those who indicated they have a disability and those who did not.

Over half of the responders indicated that they were in work (full or part time) or self-employed with 37% being retired and only 2% unemployed and 2% permanently sick or unable to work.

#### Lydiard Park

- There are also several groups or organisations that are known to use the park at present:
  - St Margaret's Church
  - Park run
  - Charteridge
  - Jungle Parc
  - Youth Football

#### Coate Water

- There are also several groups or organisations that are known to use the park at present:
  - Anglers
  - Café operator
  - Miniature Railway Society
  - Shin Splints
  - Nature Reserve Permit Holders
  - Richard Jefferies Museum
  - Model Boat club
  - Sailing Trust
  - Swindon Canoe Club
  - Rowing Club

During the engagement about car parking charging, all known user groups of both Coate and Lydiard were contacted and encouraged to take part in the consultation.

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How can you involve your customers in developing the proposal?

During the November 2015 the council led an engagement process with users of Lydiard House and Park and a key theme which emerged through the engagement was an acknowledgement that the site needs to generate additional income to remain sustainable and a general acceptance of the introduction of car parking charges as part of this.

Between the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February and the 29<sup>th</sup> of April 2016 the council consulted with users of both Lydiard and Coate about the introduction of car parking charging, seeking views of users on the different levels of charging. The results of this consultation are presented in a separate report as an appendix to the June 2016 Cabinet paper.

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The feedback from the consultation has helped shaped the charging proposals – both in terms of the charging model and in capturing the views of users about the ways that charging could be implemented, monitored and enforced.

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Who is missing? Do you need to fill any gaps in your data? (pause DIA if necessary)

Through the consultation process all known formal user groups of both Lydiard and Coate have been contacted and encouraged to take part in the consultation, both as a group and encouraging their users to provide feedback.

Feedback has also been gathered from a range of informal users of the parks too by holding consultation events on site 20<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2016 and through press releases and information in the council tax booklet and Swindon News which are delivered to every household in the borough, awareness has been raised with both regular and ad hoc users to encourage participation in the consultation activities.

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### 3 Impact

Refer to dimensions of equality and equality groups

Show consideration of: age, disability, sex, transgender, marriage/civil partnership, maternity/pregnancy, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation and if appropriate: financial economic status, homelessness, political view

Using the information in parts 1 & 2:

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**a)** Does the proposal create an adverse impact which may affect some groups or individuals? Is it clear what this is? How can this be mitigated or justified?

The council does not consider that the proposal to implement car parking charging at country parks will have an adverse impact on groups with protected characteristics but may be considered a barrier by some groups based on their financial economic status. It is also recognised that some equality groups are more likely to be dependent on income related benefits than the wider population, for example disabled or older people.

Feedback from the consultation has shown that for both Lydiard Coate, there was concern from respondents that the implementation of charging would result in dispersal of some parking into the neighbouring residential or other areas.

There are options for how the dispersement of parking could be mitigated by implementation of various parking restrictions. Any restrictions in local residential areas may have an impact on people living in those areas, so a timetable has been developed for reviewing the impact of the charging implementation within residential areas and to discuss any mitigating actions that can be considered.

There would be no reduction in parking charges for Blue Badge holders. Swindon Borough Council's reasonable adjustments for Blue Badge Holders will be that we ensure that there are adequate blue badge spaces close to facilities and access routes that are well maintained and that associated payment machines are accessible for all users. It is noted that those individuals who responded that they have or visit with someone who has a blue badge are slightly more accepting of the principle for charging. There will also be options to pay by phone.

Although not a statutory protected equality characteristic, Swindon Borough Council is mindful that financial exclusion could be created by the introduction of parking charges; the proposed charging

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rates reflect this concern and are pitched at a lower rate than similar Local Authority parking charges and in line with town centre parking charges.

Season tickets will be available to purchase. At this stage this will be a single payment annually and the review timeline will consider if the council is able to offer a system of payment for season tickets in instalments to enable costs to be spread

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What can be done to change this impact?

Proposed parking charges are set out in the June 2016 Cabinet paper. The following pricing model is proposed for implementation from the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016:

<b>Lydiard</b>	<b>Coate</b>
£2 for up to 2 hours	£1 for up to 2 hours
£4 all day	£2 all day
£45 annual season ticket	£30 annual season ticket
[£30 for 1/7/16 – 31/3/17]	[£20 for 1/7/16 – 31/3/17]
£60 annual season ticket for both sites	
[£40 for 1/7/16 – 31/3/17]	

This will enable park users to spend a period at the park at a small cost for activities such as dog walking etc. or to have an extended day at the park paying a slightly higher charge. Season tickets will also be available for specific parks as well as to cover all parks which work out at less than a visit per week for individual parks

The 2 larger parks (Coate Water and Lydiard) are both on bus routes served from the Town Centre as shown below:

- Coate Water – 12, 13, 14 & 16.
- Lydiard Park – 1 & 1A.

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**b)** Does the proposal create benefit for a particular group? Is it clear what this is? Can you maximise the benefits for other groups?

There is no expected benefit for any particular group.

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Does further consultation need to be done? How will assumptions made in this assessment be tested?

A consultation period has taken place.

Whilst there is no formal consultation planned at present, residents will have mechanisms for feeding back any issues that they feel have been caused by the implementation of parking charges. Each case will then be investigated and discussed with Lead Member and Ward Members as required.

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#### **4 So what?**

[Link to business planning process](#)

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What changes have you made in the course of this DIA?

The pricing structure has taken consideration of the feedback received via the consultation period that took place in 2016

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What will you do now and what will be included in future planning?

At present this proposal only impacts Coate Water and Lydiard Park. If parking charges are considered for other park areas, a further DIA will be undertaken.

A programme of works to the car park surfaces is to be carried out prior to charging being implemented.

There will be review points to assess any impact on the use of the parks and the surrounding areas, the first of these will be October 16

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When will this be reviewed?

The impacts of the charging will be reviewed from its implementation through the autumn and a further report is proposed to be brought to Cabinet in December following a review of practical issues arising, to highlight any lessons learnt for future arrangements;

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How will success be measured?

Success of the car parking charging implementation is proposed to be measured through feedback from users and local residents, take up and level of income achieved against the target. This will be reviewed in the autumn by the council.

<b>For the record</b>	
Name of person leading this DIA Jim Catton	Date completed 01/06/16
Names of people involved in consideration of impact Rachel Watts, Nick Stephenson, Mark Pritchard	
Name of manager signing DIA Stuart McKellar	Date signed

# Diversity Impact Assessment – an inclusive business planning tool

## 1. What's it about? refer to equality duties

- What is the proposal? What outcomes/benefits are you hoping to achieve
- Who's it for?
- How will this proposal meet the equality duties?
- What are the barriers to meeting this potential?

## 2. Who's using it? consider all equality groups

- What data/evidence do you have about who is or could be affected? (e.g. equality monitoring, customer feedback, current service use, national/regional/local trends)?
- How can you involve your customers in developing the proposal?
- Who is missing? Do you need to fill any gaps in your data?

## 3. Impact consider dimensions and equality groups

Using information in parts 1 & 2:

- a) Does the proposal create an adverse impact which may affect some groups or individuals? How can this be mitigated or justified?  
> What can be done to change this impact?
- b) Does the proposal create benefit for particular groups or individuals. Is it clear what this is? Can you maximise the benefits for other groups?
  - Does further consultation need to be done? How will assumptions made in this assessment be tested?

## 4. So what?

- What changes have made in the course of this DIA?
- What will you do now and what will be included in future planning?
- When will this be reviewed?
- How will success be measured?

## Considerations

### Our equality duties

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
2. Advance equality of opportunity
3. Foster good relations

### Equality groups

For the following equality groups: age, disability, sex, transgender, marriage/civil partnership, maternity/pregnancy, race, religion/belief and sexual orientation.

Extended by SBC policy to include: financial economic status, homelessness, political view.

## Dimensions of equality

How will the proposal affect Human Rights and life chances of different groups? Consider how the proposal affects

1. Longevity.
2. Physical security.
3. Health.
4. Education.
5. Standard of living.
6. Productive and valued activities.
7. Individual, family and social life.
8. Participation, influence and voice.
9. Identity, expression and self-respect.
10. Legal security.