



**OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE  
(ELMBRIDGE)**

**ANNEX A to Item 21  
2010 ANNUAL PARKING REVIEW – COBHAM  
CONSULTATION**

**21 JUNE 2010**

## ANNEX A – COBHAM CONSULTATION

**1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 This Annex should be read in conjunction with the main report and outlines the results of the community engagement exercise undertaken in Cobham.
- 1.2 The Local Committee on 1 March 2010 asked the county's parking team to undertake a consultation over the proposals to introduce pay and display parking bays in the High Street and Church Street, Cobham.
- 1.3 Section 2 of this annex provides an overview of the methods and summary of the number of responses, Section 3 of this annex outlines the results of the questionnaire and Section 4 the results of all 'free format' comments made by respondents either by way of email, survey or in correspondence. Finally the Officers recommendations have been included in Section 5.

**2 ANALYSIS**

- 2.1 The following methods were used in order to reach as many of those that are likely to be impacted by the proposals:-
- A letter drop to all those residents and businesses in High Street, Church Street and nearby roads
  - Street notices along the High Street and Church Street
  - A large copy of the plans and questionnaires available at the library in Cedar Road
  - A page on the county's website along with an on-line survey
- 2.2 In addition to the following methods some of the businesses of Cobham have also displayed notices, which has also helped increase awareness of the consultation.
- 2.3 The consultation period opened on 7 May 2010 and closed on 24 May 2010 and the Table 1 below outlines the number of responses.

<b>Response Type</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>
Online Survey	62
Library questionnaire	13
Emails	17
Letters	9

- 2.4 There were also two petitions received with 373 & 803 signatures. One petition was received via a business and states that the signatures are from customers who shop in Cobham and are against pay and display parking. The full addresses were not provided on the returned forms and there is not a statement declaring the grounds or aims of the petition at the top of each page (as you would usually find with a petition). The

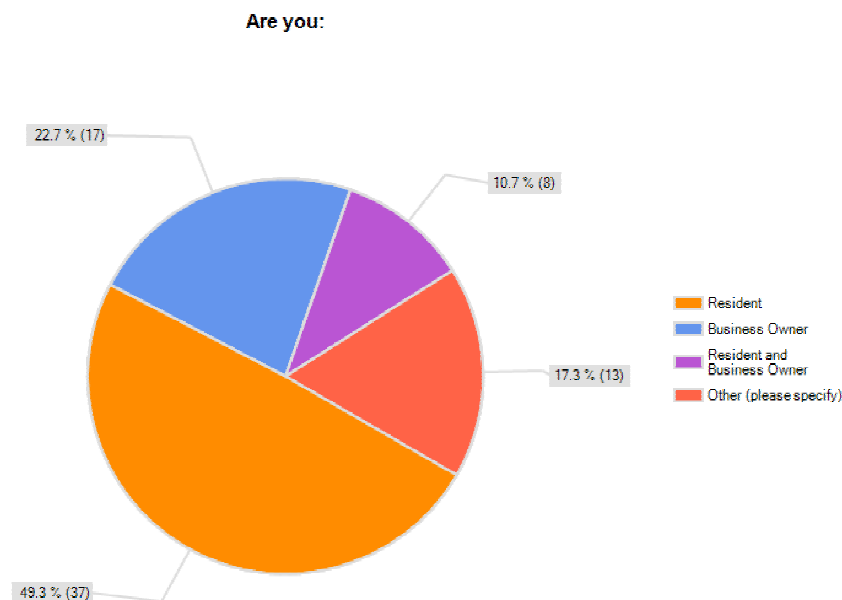
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only text at the top of the majority of signed pages is - 'Cobham Carparking Petition 2010'. The second petition with 803 signatures was received via Cobham Chamber of Commerce and a cover letter states that the basis of the petition *is to request appropriate liaison between the county and borough councils with regard to parking and to establish a uniform policy of limited free parking across the car parks and the available on street spaces*. The signatures are signed on similar headed paper to the first, which only states 'Cobham Carparking Petition 2010'.

- 2.5 It is not clear from the petitions received what is the exact nature of the request made by the signatories, who are likely to be customers to some of the local businesses. From the covering letters, it is fair to assume that the signatories are against the element of on-street charging. Whether they are against any other elements of the proposals is not clear.

### 3 RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

- 3.1 There was a wide cross-section of different stakeholders that responded to the questionnaire, indicating that the results reflect a cross-section of the different road-users in the town. The following table summarises the proportions of people responding to the questionnaire. The 'Others' consisted of a mixture of customers to the shops and workers employed by local businesses.



**Figure 1 - Cross-section of respondents**

- 3.2 Respondents were first asked if they would support the idea of pay and display. The majority of respondents were against the idea of pay and

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display, however there were a number of respondents in favour of the idea. The responses from those that supported the proposal often recognised that it was needed to reduce the amount of long-term parking on street. They also told us that they were concerned about displacement of long-term parking away from the centre of the town.

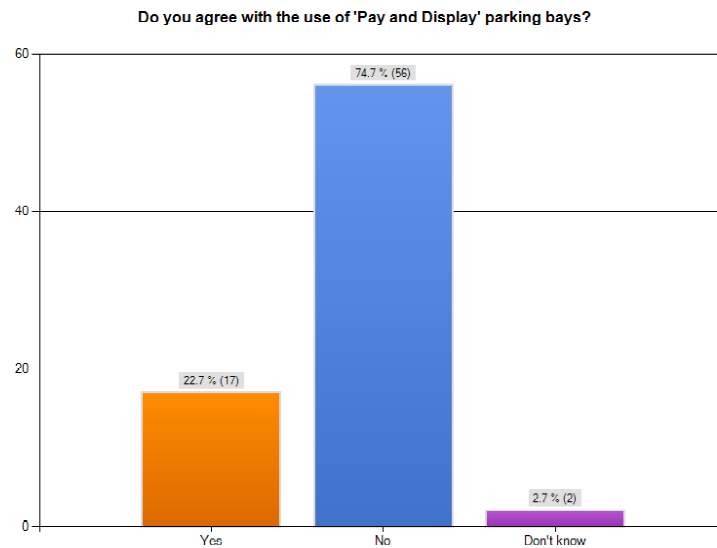


Figure 2

3.3 Those that are against pay and display bays were then asked if they were for or against any parking controls. The results indicate that there is clear support for parking controls (please see Figure 3 below). Taking also into account those respondents in favour of pay and display there is 71% support for parking controls.

Please describe what form of parking control you would rather see instead of the proposed 'Pay & Display' parking bays.

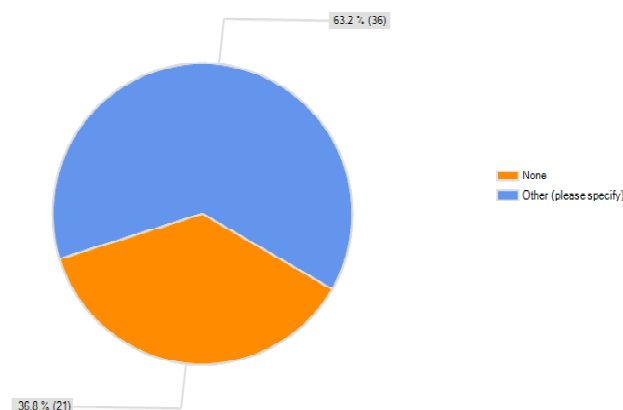


Figure 3

3.4 A section of the survey was dedicated to discovering what operational times have the most support. There were many different suggestions

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made by respondents, however, Monday to Saturday remains the most popular days out of all the different suggestions. Similarly, respondents made a large range of other suggestions on the operational period, although the most supported times remained 8.30am to 6.30pm.

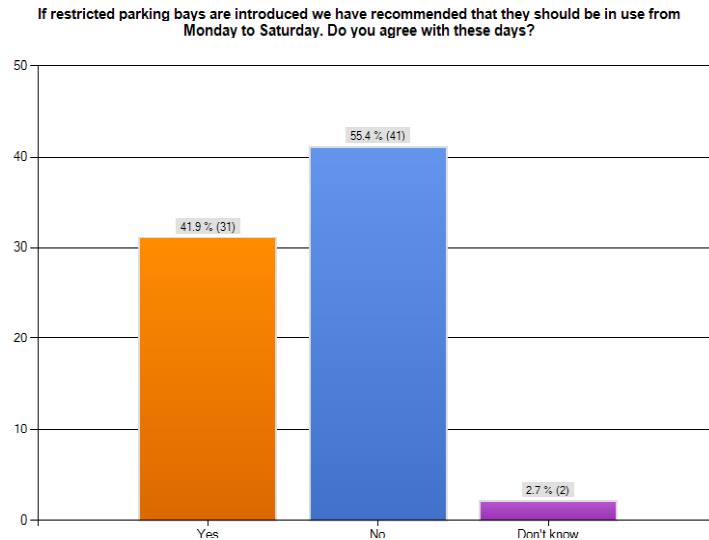


Figure 4

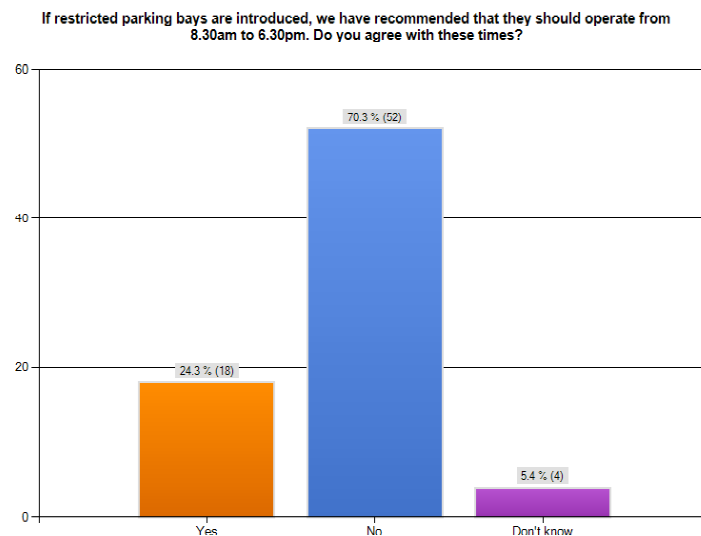


Figure 5

- 3.5 Figure 6 provides details of the time of the typical visit to the shops. The majority of visits were 2 hours or less.

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How long do you (or if you are a business owner, your customers) usually park when visiting the shops in Cobham?

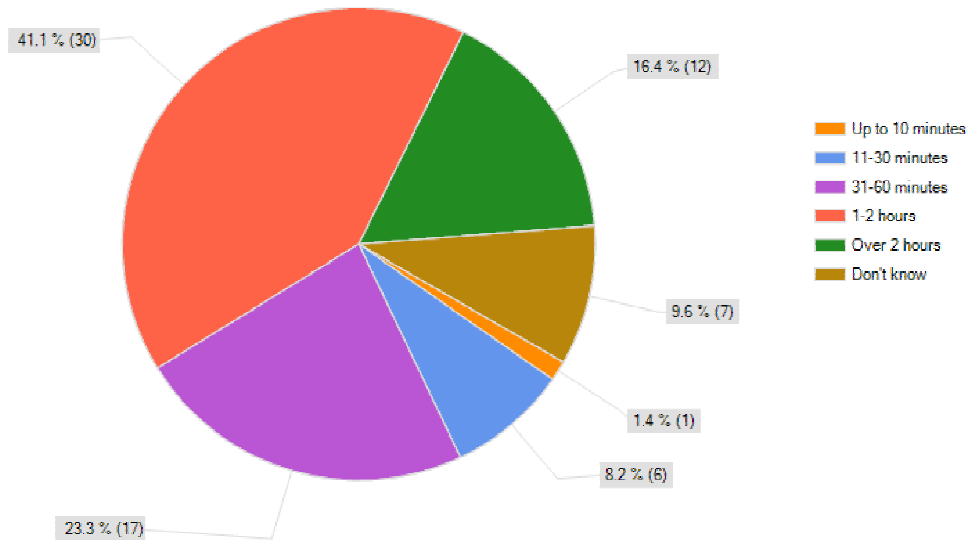


Figure 6

- 3.6 Respondents were given the opportunity to provide other comments in addition to the structured questionnaire. There were a large range of different comments, however, the main concerns raised were about the effect new parking controls may have on businesses.

#### 4 OTHER FEEDBACK

- 4.1 There were 17 emails and 9 letters received from a total of 20 respondents (many respondents sending an email and a letter). There were a large range of different comments, however, the biggest concern was regarding the pay and display proposals and the effect on businesses. 85% of the respondents are against pay and display, while 10% of respondents were fully in favour of the proposals.

#### 5 OFFICER COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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- 5.1 The borough council introduced charging into the off street car parks some years ago. The consultation undertaken by the borough council was more modest (consisting of just notices in the off-street car parks). There were 95 respondents, all but one of which opposed the introduction of charging. The charges were nonetheless introduced which has resulted in the undesirable situation that parking is cheaper and less restricted in the prime locations outside shops than it is off street in the car park away from the shops.
- 5.2 The results of this latest consultation indicate that the majority of respondents are in favour of some form of parking control.
- 5.3 The question of whether to implement charges for on-street parking arises when demand exceeds supply. It has been proposed to manage the on-street supply effectively and to increase the turnover of vehicles and hopefully customers to the shops. It is widely known that charging will create more turnover of vehicles than a free bay with a fixed time limit.
- 5.4 Some respondents have raised a concern that customers will stop patronising their business and instead visit another town or supermarket. The current parking situation means that there is long-term parking during the day which restricts parking for customers. Introducing a small charge in the premium parking spaces, directly outside the local businesses, means that there will be a greater turnover of the available parking space. This should prove an attraction for customers, as they will be aware that they are more likely to find a parking space, where they want to park.
- 5.5 Introducing on-street charging for the first time always raises concerns from those that it directly impacts. The proposals have been developed to be proportionate (not all on-street kerb space is being regulated or charged for), and to coordinate with the charges for off-street parking. It is recognised from the two petitions received that it may not be initially popular with customers, but experience from on-street charging in other towns suggests that it is likely to be accepted and can prove popular with businesses and customers after introduction.
- 5.6 A number of respondents, including the Cobham Chamber of Commerce were concerned about the Council's financial case to introduce a charging regime. There has been a broad financial analysis, and even with a conservative occupancy rate, the initial investment in pay and display machines will be recouped within 6 months. Pay and display charging regimes reduce the work of enforcement as the civil enforcement officers (formerly known as parking attendants) do not have to make copious notes, often in vain, and can make fewer visits than a free limited waiting bay. Taking these factors into account there is a sound business case for introducing pay and display. The business

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case is even more compelling when the alternative is considered. The introduction of free limited waiting parking bays would have no payback, have a total burden on the council's limited finances and would be more labour intensive and so more costly to enforce. It is also worth noting that by law all revenue raised through on-street charging must be spent on either contributing towards the enforcement operation, transport related activities or environment schemes that mitigate the effects of motoring on the environment.

- 5.7 The Cobham Chamber of Commerce has raised very similar concerns to those they raised several years ago when the borough council proposed to introduce off-street charging. The proposals are consistent with the off-street charging policy and have been developed in consultation with the borough council.
- 5.8 For the reasons outlined above, **it is recommended that pay and display is introduced into the 29 parking bays in the High Street and Church Street shown on drawing number 13112. The consultation responses indicate that the maximum period should be set at 2 hours (no return within 1 hour). It is also recommended that in response to the consultation that the tariff is amended to a simple, convenient tariff at the rate of 10 pence per 10 minutes. The operational period should be 8.30am to 6.30pm Monday to Saturday.**