

St Margaret's Parish Council has obtained a copy of the report REVIEW OF ON AND OFF-STREET PARKING CHARGES to be presented to Cabinet on January 15th.

It is dismayed to see a proposal to introduce charges to park in the Reach Road car park in St Margarets. There has been no consultation with the Parish Council and although a consultation period is mentioned in the report it would appear to follow approval requested in the report and therefore be a token exercise.

St Margaret's Parish Council has not raised any serious issues with parking practice in this car park and does not believe that charging is necessary.

St Margaret's Parish Council is very concerned that introduction of charges would lead to more on road parking in the village and exacerbate current problems with parking and congestion in Reach Road and nearby roads. Such is the local concern with these problems that a community group called Gridlock St Margarets has been set up to address serious parking, traffic and road safety issues in the village. The Parish Council has commissioned and will pay for a traffic survey of Reach Road which will take place in the Spring. It would regard changes to the car park as very unhelpful at this time.

St Margaret's Parish Council requests that changes to the Reach Road car park are not approved at the present time and consideration postponed until a proper evaluation of the operation of the car park is undertaken and a meaningful consultation with the local community instituted.

St Margaret's Parish Council currently pays up to £9000 a year to maintain the facilities in the Reach Road car park. If charges were to be introduced it would expect these costs to be met in future from the revenue generated by the charges.