

Appendix 1: Conversion of free to paid parking in Harpenden:

Free Text and Email responses

- This appendix contains the consultation responses received in the feedback text portion of the public consultation for changes relating to Harpenden between 25/07/24 and 22/08/24, as well as emails received by the council in response to the proposed changes within this period.
- Sensitive data has been redacted to protect the privacy of respondents, however some traceable information may still present. Please review this content with discretion and ensure compliance with confidentiality guidelines.

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Table 1: Consultation feedback responses:

Feedback Text
<p>I support the high street and i use it for meals, coffes and stopping to buy food. This proposal is awful and 20 minutes is not enough time to buy a coffee or get a few items, with queues you need at a least an 1 hour.</p>
<p>This appears to be a badly thought out proposal that is a money spinner for the council and will be the death of our High Street, which will then see less business rates, a worse high street and will actually see less money coming into the council, thyis needs a serious rethink.</p>
<p>I'm extremely concerned that the charging for parking will lead to people not browsing the high street, and loss of small independent shops. People will use the 20 minutes to quickly pick up a child from school or dash into a supermarket, but people will not be happy to pay £2.50 just so they can have a coffee, or browse all the charity shops. The high street could potentially be decimated by this policy. Also, there is likely to be lots of parking issues in residential areas which are currently free to park</p>
<p>On street parking is already restricted to 2hrs if you charge for this as well it will kill the high street and community. It should remain free.</p>
<p>The proposal will make it difficult and expensive for visits to the doctors and dentist</p>

I write to notify you of my objections to your proposed introduction of parking charges in Harpenden town centre. My family and I cycle most of the time, however there are occasions when needing to carry more than is safe on a bicycle, or insufficient time between family and school commitments, it is necessary to use a vehicle. The part of the proposal relating to St. Albans I will leave to those residents for comment, however I note St Albans centre has multi-storey car parks, a far bigger area and many more national businesses (for example M&S, Hotel Chocolat).

The primary objective of your proposals is obviously a revenue generating scheme. However, it will actually lower your income due to the closure of small business, and possibly large ones, in Harpenden town centre. This will in turn convert the area into a generic high street full of national chain shops who can afford the lower incomes caused by reduced footfall. I appreciate St. Albans council has more councillors representing St. Albans so may not be aware of the makeup and nature of Harpenden shops.

Reduced income is because the current one hour free parking allows for visits to multiple retailers. You acknowledge that school transport is a reason residents will drive and park in the centre. You have ignored that prior or after dropping or collecting children, carers may then combine this trip with their shopping, a short coffee meeting or other business. By legislating against this opportunity you are actually encouraging more trips into the centre, increasing the environmental impact and congestion. Afterschool there may be the need for an opticians appointment, library visit or uniform purchase, a visit which is not practical by walking or cycling if you have a push chair for other children or live beyond walking distance for a busy family.

There are many people who cannot walk or cycle into town because of age or infirmity who do not qualify for use of blue badge spaces. These people will not be able to complete their business within 20 minutes. If they are pensioners they will not be able to afford the parking cost and driving out of town will cost them less in fuel than your proposed charges. This is another reason for reduced income from business, closure of local businesses and degradation of town centre ethos.

There is insufficient extra off-street parking capacity in Harpenden to accommodate the demand met by the current one hour limit. For example, I have attempted to park in Bowers Way car park on many occasions and found it full. Therefore your claim that this proposal will encourage the use of cheaper off-street parking is shown to be flawed as you know there is no alternative to the higher revenue stream of the proposal.

The net result will be people will travel out of town to free parking. This will increase environmental impact. Areas within easy reach by car are Woodhall Farm Sainsbury's and the retail area in Luton offering an Aldi and Sainsbury's next to each other. I travel to Hemel Hempstead fairly often and I follow plenty of vehicles all the way from Harpenden who turn into Aldi in Redbourn Road, so it is clear people are willing to make the short journey out of the St. Albans revenue district for perceived shopping savings.

To deal with the other reasons in your statement, which I accept are merely potential fallout from your principal revenue aim: Encourage Active Travel – as stated above the reasons for vehicle use go far beyond laziness. If you wish to encourage more cycling or walking then provide additional secure bike parking, introduce a 20mph limit and widen pavements.

Increased enforcement – if you were genuinely concerned about fairness and street safety you would fund increased enforcement from other streams and could do so anyway.

Greater turnover of premium spaces– people who are prepared to pay £2.50 are prepared to pay £5, so will spend longer at the coffee shop/pub thus reducing turnover of these spaces. As laid out above most business cannot be conducted in 20 minutes, so people will be encouraged to stay a full hour if they have paid for it rather than moving on after for example 40 minutes.

20-minute free sessions – this is simply not long enough. You could relocate blue badge bays without introducing charges if you see a need for this. If you were genuinely concerned for individuals with vulnerabilities, such as financial or physical, you would retain the one hour. It takes longer than 20 minutes to park, wait for your doctor's appointment and then return to your vehicle.

I urge all councillors to reject these proposals on economic, environmental, and ethos grounds. Councillors representing Harpenden wards in particular should consider if they really think they are in the best long-term interest of our town centre.

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“ “ .. and discouraging people from parking on the street longer than they need. “ “.

Currently the one hour free parking enables everyone to get done what needs to be done and what they want to do in that hour – you find parking but restriction to 20mins free with the clock ticking is just incomprehensible to completing one business transaction let alone the several that most visitors to the High Street and environs need to make – it’s simply not practical for any type of appointment, business or social.

The third point raised by the Harpenden Society – ‘the efficient policing of the current parking policy’ were it

aided by markings designating a car’s parking space

would I believe encourage civic responsibility towards self regulating parking and the continuation of a healthy town centre for each and every business that continues to struggle with the financial stricture’s that business rates and costs impose – Yes, I believe it’s really that simple – clear markings and efficient and consistent policing of parking (which would produce income – question: were the workings for the departmental shortfall of £1.5million over 4yrs made public ??)

Attempting to meet the current Council debt and the continuing calls on the public purse is a hard square to round but I believe the proposals being forwarded will have a severe detrimental effect on Harpenden Town centre if implemented.

£2.50 per hour would stop me coming to Harpenden. First hour free?

£5 charge for 2 hours parking will severely damage local business. 20 minutes free time would not offset this. In principle I am not opposed to some controlled parking but feel the free time must be extended and the chargeable rates much reduced.

1. One of the advantages of living in Harpenden is the ability to make a quick trip to the shops without the hassle and expense of dealing with parking meters. 20 minutes is far too short for a quick trip to the shops .
2. You have not provided any information on how payments will be made. Card or cash? If the latter you are imposing the annoying necessity of finding the coins needed. This is becoming more and more difficult with the declining use of cash.
3. Unless you live on the 321 route, public transport is too infrequent and unreliable to afford a feasible alternative.
4. Meters will not increase turnover of use over that which is already achieved by waiting time limits and the threat of a fine.
5. The majority of council services are not charged for directly and do not have to break even. For example, I do not pay every time my bins are emptied. To single out parking for direct charging is unnecessary and unfair.

To summarise, this proposal will fail to realise the benefits claimed. It is clearly a means to raise money and represents an unashamed attack on the motorist. any additional revenue required should be raised through council tax so that everybody has to pay their share.

1. Again I question whether this consultation has been properly administered as the first I found out about it was from a neighbour. After searching on the street I found 1 notice in small print on white background, cable tied to a post which could easily be missed.
2. There is another live parking consultation underway - why are there 2 consultations with no references to the other?
3. How is this proposal going to encourage active travel? Visitors to St. Albans won't be walking or cycling. Residents from other parts of St. Albans will either drive and park in public car parks such as the Maltings, Drovers Way or already be committed to walking or cycling.
4. How will this increase turnover of premium parking places - the proposal doubles the amount of time people are allowed to park so this halves the availability. This will be the detriment of the local businesses.
5. This proposal benefits nobody but the council who want to increase revenue.
6. If greater monitoring of the situation requires more staff then will there really be an increase in revenue.
7. The council continues to view Victoria Street as a commercial street in the city centre, however, the truth is that Victoria Street is now mostly residential with the council continuing to approve change of use from business to residential whenever a business decides to sell.
8. The proposal does not consider any of the residents - how do we get workmen in, unload shopping, load our cars, etc. The other proposal looks to get rid of parking on my side of the street. If I need to park near my house for an hour - now I have to pay? What if services need to come out - I have to pay for them now? If I need an electrician - I have to pay for them? It is very hard to get workmen as it is to come to our homes but you are making it harder. Why? There are about 12 businesses in my section of the street (Alma Road to Lattimore Road) and around a hundred+ residents. How about working with us? Helping us?

1. Again I question whether this consultation has been properly administered as the first I knew of it was through a neighbour. After searching on the street I found one notice in small print on a white background cable tied to a post which could easily be missed. How is this informing residents or other users of the parking bays
2. There is another live parking consultation underway currently. Why are there two with no inter-references.
3. How will this proposal encourage active travel? Visitors to St Albans will not be walking or cycling. Residents from other parts of St Albans will either drive & park somewhere like the Maltings or already be committed to walking or biking.
4. How will this increase turnover of premium parking spaces? The proposal doubles the amount of time people can park so surely this halves the availability of the parking places. This will be to the detriment of the local businesses
5. Realistically this proposal benefits nobody but the council who hope it will increase revenue. However, if greater monitoring of the situation requires more staff will there truly be an overall increase in revenue.
6. The council continues to view Victoria Street as a commercial street in the city centre. The truth is Victoria is now mostly residential with the council continuing to approve change of use from business to residential whenever a business decides to sell up and move.
7. As a resident in Victoria Street it is already difficult to get workman in to do maintenance work on my property. This is because of the existing restrictions. The proposal will make this worse. With the other consultation in play at the moment I will also have difficulty loading and unloading my car when shopping or taking rubbish to the tip. The council is again failing to consider proposals from the viewpoint of a resident.
8. The proposal addresses none of the parking issues in St Albans. Neither does it help to achieve the council objectives as laid out in the parking policies. Building a park and ride is still the best option to sort out the traffic and parking problems in St Albans

1. The proposed parking restrictions and charges in Harpenden should not go ahead because they are purely a fund raising mechanism for the St Albans District Council, are contrary to the interests and wishes of Harpenden residents and businesses, will be detrimental to the town and punish elderly people especially given the total absence of public transport. In addition, they compound existing poorly thought out resident parking restrictions on certain streets, which are for too long periods each day, rather than specific one or two hour periods – these have resulted in no parking at all during most of every day on these streets, residents who may park only need these to be available nearby or in evening. (Just take a look at the road I mention below).
2. Our family has lived in Harpenden, just on the outskirts of the centre of Harpenden, for over 30 years. It is now too far for us to walk in , as it is for many people, especially the elderly, and there is no suitable public transport and never will be any. Parking in the (limited) car parks already incurs a charge or is difficult due to capacity. Parking for a short visit will be expensive and inconvenient. You will have to police the restrictions very closely if you intend to enforce them and this will be costly.
3. The arrangements in place at the moment are helpful to residents who wish to shop or meet in Harpenden – your charges will stop people, including us, visiting the centre and be detrimental to businesses, more will close. No doubt the District Council will use public money to take on expensive leases and become a landlord, spending the money elsewhere or trying to plug gaps as its spending escalates..
4. The proposals need to be viewed in the context of the existing restrictions for Residents' Parking which are unnecessarily restrictive for those who wish to visit the town. There is one other detail which I have pointed out to the District Council in the past and it has been totally ignored. You should review the Residents' Parking arrangements in Harpenden which you have introduced over many years. Instead of having specific short periods when only residents can park (eg 10–11am or similar), which would , for example, deter commuters or long term parking, you have in several locations introduced blanket "all day" (8am to 6pm etc) and Saturday restrictions when only residents can park. This has resulted in entire streets being totally empty of any parking at all (no exaggeration) for most of the day, every day. An example is on Leyton Road between Rothamsted Research and the Silver Cup. I sent photographs to yourselves on two occasions a few years ago, but my questions on why the timings were so long, were ignored. As a result the parking which used to help Harpenden residents, people visiting the town from the edges of town, has disappeared and now you intend to charge for the (limited) parking on

street. Another example of a total lack of joined up thinking. Adjust the resident parking times so that other Harpenden residents can park for free outside the restricted times on streets which are currently totally empty of parking.

1. There is absolutely no IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IA) associated with the proposed changes! What impact on business rates collection when shops fold? What impact on the type of unique local shops available to residents if only big chains can afford to continue? What impact on the elderly...etc etc? Any decisions made could be considered to be negligent without an IA if the proposed plans to charge for parking have a disastrous long term impact on the type of shops and services available in Harpenden and may ruin the community and town. A benchmark is needed. All councillors should be DEMANDING an impact assessment before making any decisions.
 2. It should be noted by SADC that, due to protests by local retailers and residents, Dacorum Council went back to the drawing board and full consultation about its proposed plan to roll out parking charges in Berkhamsted.
 3. On a specific detail of the proposal, 20 mins free parking is simply not long enough to carry out any meaningful activity in the town, like casual shopping, for example if you have also picked up your children from school, or are browsing shops with friends, whereas 1-2 hours free may not impact on trade.
- 1.I believe the current high street is dying and this would represent a nail in the coffin.
 2. If you want to raise parking funds try just implementing current parking restrictions. This would undoubtedly raise finance and in most cases of parking on double yellow lines it will improve safety. One blatant breach is consistently outside

junior/infant schools at the end of the school day. If the council claim to be concerned with safety then this could be easily tackled but isn't.

1/The current proposal will have a huge and detrimental impact on many older citizens who struggle with the technology and issues around paying for parking. So far there has been no evidence the council wishes to review the system of how this will work

2/ the high street had been in decline with growing cost of living crisis etc but the harpenden community has hung on in but the tipping point is close and the shops will suffer. This has a knock on effect to health and wellbeing as loneliness /access to parks/community etc is diminished and the highstreet becomes a dismal place

3/ the cost of visiting the GP/pharmacies/community hubs like libraries etc will all compromise health & wellbeing of the poorest citizens in our community..

4/ there must be another way of income generating which is all this scheme is about.

20 min parking is not enough time to do anything. The £2:50 an hour is a ridiculously high fee . This is going to help kill an already dying high street

20 mins free parking is unacceptable. this is just a way for the council to take cash from local residents. It will stop people using local shops and impact local businesses.

20 mins free parking is ample for most residents – town centre parking is just plainly abused by the majority of drivers.

20 mins free parking may not be long enough to walk to the shops, do the shopping and get back to the car, especially for older folks. And you may not know how long it's going to take to do your shopping when you set off. You might get held up in a queue or have some other delay and thus risk a fine. I think 45 mins would be more reasonable

20 mins is too short if you have to get a ticket and if you have to get out a buggy or cannot walk fast, It needs to be 30 mins free parking. £ 2.50 and £5.00 is too much as only wealthy people can afford this, thereby giving parking spaces to the rich. A much fairer and more just policy would be to charge £1.00 and to limit parking to an hour. This will provide an income to the council and allow a larger number of people to park. The car parks can be used for people staying more than an hour. I really want to protect the shops especially the independent ones but I would not park for £2.50 as that would be too high a percentage of my shopping cost. Radlett street and car parking works well and that would be a good model for Harpenden.

20 mins is too short to do much . If you are elderly or disabled you walk slower. Should allow an hour minimum.

20 minutes free is not long enough. I agree that you should only park for a limited time and have to move your car. People from out of Harpenden drive in to use the shops. The current arrangements work fine. If you are going for a longer period of time I go to a car park, and if I am just popping in I will park on the street if possible. Why are you changing this? Where can I find the justification?

20 minutes free parking is clearly impractical and not enough time to attend either a doctors/dentist appointment, pick up a prescription or do the smallest of shops, or pick up a child in Harpenden. In practice there will be no free parking if this badly thought out proposal goes ahead.

A big attraction of Harpenden is the strong community.

With residents facing being charged £2.50 for one hour or £5.00 for two hours for parking they will visit Harpenden less and feel more isolated. Let's say the average resident goes into town 3-5 times a week, that could easily be £15 per week, equating to approx £780 a year just for parking. Outrageous.

As a resident I would seek other towns, shopping centres to shop.

With online shopping already having impacted town centres, this proposal from the council strikes me as a massive error of judgement, exacerbated by an apparent unwillingness to listen to the concerns of residents or local businesses.

From the north side of town, getting into town on buses not viable (service not frequent enough), cycling into town undermined by lack off bike racks (other than at station) and safe cycle lanes. Walking into town 30 minutes each way then carrying shopping home not a viable.

To any reasonable person, this proposal is ill thought out and extortionate.

As a resident if I have to pay £2.50 every time to park in town I will shop in town less.

A big attraction of Harpenden is the sense of community, which this proposal will damage.

Paying £2.50 for an hour is

20 minutes is not enough time to do anything in town now! Putting this in place will make the whole high street less accessible for the elderly or people with disabilities . Proper parking control would be much better!

20 minutes is not long enough to shop or have a coffee. Local businesses will suffer, and there will be more empty shops. Local residents will vote with their feet, and shop elsewhere. I am already losing my parking permit, so for me it is a double whammy .

20 minutes is too short for many “transient” visits and it would be better to keep a 1hr limit. Encouraging people to use alternatives will certainly be encouraged but walking/cycling/bus is not an option for all. Ideally the plan should include the provision of usable cycle lanes and secure bike racks on Harpenden High Street.

Pay by phone is unpopular with many, especially the older generation. The need to download multiple apps is particularly frustrating and QR code scams on the increase. I would hope the option of pay by card will be available to ensure inclusivity of all.

20min is pretty ridiculous. I am not sure I see the reasoning for needing more enforcement in the first place but 1 hr would be a much more reasonable time to allow people to shop etc. being able to pop into the high st is a really good thing about Harpenden, let's not ruin it...

A one hour free parking is required as a minimum, so that residents still go and visit the high street. You would raise more income by fining people who stay longer than the allowed waiting time currently and those who park on double yellow lines and in disabled bays without a badge.

A study by Deloitte “reinventing role of high street” clearly shows parking charges are terrible for local high street businesses. Various studies including ones done by BDO have shown a general decline in the high street resulting from parking charges. Our high streets are already suffering. For some like us we cannot walk to the high street we have to drive and when we can't find parking we go to business parks where parking is free. Councils who a got rid of parking charges showed an increase in high street spend. To introduce parking charges is a terrible idea.

A vibrant high street is critical to Harpenden and charging for parking in this way will reduce the number of people popping into shops as they pass, and increase the number of people using Amazon instead.

Abolishing free parking will have a detrimental affect on people shopping in town, visiting the library, sharing coffees with friends. This reduction in footfall will jeopardise the financial viability of these businesses and force closure. The increasing rents are also a problem. The charges are excessive and will cause hardship for those on low incomes.

Given the increase in population in Harpenden over recent years there are more and more people wanting to park in town . The limits on parking are not enough to quell this demand, Plus Parking wardens are needed in numbers to monitor the situation.

Absolutely ridiculous idea. I've have had no problem finding a space for a quick trip to the shops. 20mins is not long enough. Why change the 1 or 2 hour free. You will kill the High Street. Adding £2.50- £5.00 to a shop or a stop for coffee will put off many from using Harpenden High Street me included. Other shops with parking and home delivery services will flourish. We pay a high amount of Council Tax and that should give us something! Please reconsider.

Adding parking charge is simply taking money from people with no real benefit. We shall not pay for council's financial mismanagement.

Adding parking charges in Harpenden high street will seriously harm the business and atmosphere of the town.

High Street businesses are struggling to survive and there are challenges in getting people to come to the high street. Introducing yet another reason to not go to the town center is completely counterproductive. Sainsbury's and Waitrose will be ok as they have they're own parking but any of the other business are going to suffer as a result of this. It doesn't seem like a decision made in the interests of residents or businesses.

Please please don't take the decision to add parking charges. There are enough challenges without this!

Against this proposal

All Harpenden residents that I have spoken to are horrified at all the 'Harpenden Parking Changes' in this proposal. It is clearly aimed at a costly money-raising venture to the detriment of Harpenden and its residents.

The current system is fine as it stands and has run very smoothly for the last many years, and we are all happy with it as it stands.

HARPENDEN RESIDENTS DO NOT WANT THIS.

I am not commenting on the St Albans changes.

Although it does just about work, parking is a challenge at the best of times, additional stress and pressure to individuals and local businesses will only speed the decline of the high street. 20 minutes is far too low as well, have you seen how fast a toddler/young child walks? And that's when they actually get let out of school on time!?

Although my current address is town centre I have experience of living elsewhere in Harpenden over 1 mile distant. The proposal is totally unacceptable, ill thought through and should be abandoned. I write as an older resident who has difficulty with technology, even parking meters.

Harpenden Town Centre and its economy depends on local spend by its 31000 residents, including above average older people, most of whom live beyond walking distance to the shops, personal care outlets, restaurants, take-aways, coffee shops and services such as post office, banking, library, 7 day opening church facilities such as High Street Methodist Church and Salvation Army.

Unlike Luton and St. Albans it is not a 'destination town' and so the inconvenience, and cost of parking meters will impact heavily on its residents. 20 minutes free parking, however recorded and policed, is totally insufficient for the type of visit to the town centre currently enjoyed where turnover of vehicles within existing time limits works well and does not require 'managing'. For longer intended stays the car parks at Bowers Way, Amenbury Lane and Lydekker are readily available and reasonable levels of fee are willingly paid.

The Town Council is currently behind the very strong local endeavours to get a full in-person Banking Hub for the town centre to substitute for the 6 banks which have closed and regain retail footfall and spend which was lost on closure of the banks but SADC's parking charges proposal is in direct conflict with the objectives of this work and will drive existing retail footfall and spend away with potentially very damaging results. The new government is very supportive of all efforts to revitalise our high streets and Liberal Democrat councils should be backing this not sabotaging it.

Although well intentioned this proposal is likely to cause greater car usage as people decide to shop elsewhere. It seems local businesses will inevitably lose custom.

Another nail in the coffin for local Harpenden shops. I wil, go to Hatfield or St albans adding more emissions as I go. Shocking if charges are applied.

Any retired person living in Harpenden who relies on a car to visit the town centre cannot be expected to complete more than one simple task in the proposed 20 minute free period. As a result those who need to visit the town centre to socialise, support local businesses, queue in WHSmith to use the Post Office, call in at the library, visit a doctors surgery, collect medication will be charged £2.50 an hour. This becomes a tax on supporting our own High Street, and is in my view ageist in its application.

It is claimed that the current arrangements are being abused but I have seen no evidence for this.

However laudable it may be to encourage walking and cycling, I don't think policy makers have thought over much about the people who have for decades popped down to the High Street without jeopardising the flow of traffic or overstated the permitted time periods.

It is either about raising cash for the Council, or a naive gesture about the environment.

It is not community led, and does not support local business. Who exactly in Harpenden has asked for this change to be imposed on our town?

Appalling for so many reasons.

Appalling to suggest doing this which will hit local businesses, elderly and parents of young children very hard during a cost of living crisis. If this comes into place, me and my family will not visit Harpenden town as frequently, or spend as much money in the local businesses. It will change the entire character of the town

Are you mad? This will destroy the small business in the high street. Surely with every high street struggling in the UK even you would spare the sword on one of the few doing well.

Aren't the parking wardens/double yellow lines enough considering the lack of parking that already exists?

Not to mention how this will impact local business?

1hr free parking is perfectly acceptable

As a resident I am completely opposed to the imposition of on street parking charges in Harpenden. My objections are based on several grounds:

- (1) The existing system of free parking for a limit time (1 or 2 hours) attracts visitors and residents and helps to make Harpenden the vibrant place that it is. Most people observe the rules and hasten back to their cars when time is up.
- (2) The proposed charges will deter residents who live more than a short walk / cycle ride to the town centre. 20 minutes free parking is not nearly enough to do anything useful and the proposed charges are grossly excessive. Reduction in footfall in the high street will be detrimental to trade and may well drive out some business altogether.
- (3) The 20 minutes "free" parking is deceptive as it only applies if you stay that time and no longer. If you want to stay longer it will cost £2.50 or £5.00 and your 20 minutes free parking will be forfeited. This is very underhand.
- (4) The overall effect will be a degradation in the quality of life for residents. A visit to the library, for example, will take more than 20 minutes to return one's books and select some others, especially if that person is elderly and it takes perhaps 5 minutes or more to get from where they have parked and the same length of time to get back to the car before time runs out!

As residents my wife and I are totally opposed to the imposition of on street parking charges in Harpenden. We object on several grounds:

- (1) The existing system of free parking for a limit time (1 or 2 hours) attracts visitors and residents and helps to make Harpenden the vibrant place that it is. Most people observe the rules and hasten back to their cars when time is up.
- (2) The proposed charges will deter residents who live more than a short walk / cycle ride to the town centre. 20 minutes free parking is not nearly enough to do anything useful and the proposed charges are grossly excessive. Reduction in footfall in the high street will be detrimental to trade and may well drive out some business altogether.
- (3) The 20 minutes "free" parking is deceptive as it only applies if you stay that time and no longer. If you want to stay longer it will cost £2.50 or £5.00 and your 20 minutes free parking will be forfeited. This is very underhand.
- (4) The overall effect will be a degradation in the quality of life for residents. A visit to the library, for example, will take more than 20 minutes to return one's books and select some others, especially if that person is elderly and it takes perhaps 5 minutes or more to get from where they have parked and the same length of time to get back to the car before time runs out!

As a former Harpenden resident I frequently need to come back to visit my family. I also like to support Harpenden's local business community, charging for parking that is currently free will mean I will definitely reduce my visits to and support of Harpenden's local businesses. Instead I will be more likely to go to St Albans/ Hemel / online for my goods and services.

As a local business I wholly disagree with the new parking proposal for Harpenden high street. It will have a detrimental affect on business and we will see even more small businesses closing at what is already a difficult time financially. Please do what you said you would and support this community!

As a local business owner this would greatly impact my customers and also my own flexibility.

As a local business, we are deeply saddened and concerned at the proposed parking charges. On some days we can support up to 40 small businesses in our coworking office space and for many, these parking charges would just be crippling. These proposals will just kill local businesses and our lovely, community based town which is what makes Harpenden so unique.

The charges themselves are outrageous. This will have a huge impact on locals decision to come into the town or seek online alternatives. So disappointing and undoubtedly the effect on our town will be felt by everyone which is just devastating.

As a local family with young kids the proposed changes would see us visiting Harpenden centre less often and would make visiting local dentists, opticians, pharmacies and shops more difficult and expensive.

With two young children 20 minutes is not enough of a grace period to be useful.

As a local resident I make a lot of use of the 1 hour free parking, as it allows me to pop in, complete a few errands (eg go to the post office or pick up a prescription). Often at the same time I will grab a coffee, do a bit of shopping or otherwise support the local businesses / economy. However reducing the time to 20 minutes doesn't really give enough time to complete a single errand - often you have to wait half an hour for a prescription to be made up, and the post office queue can also be this long on its own. In summary I completely object due to the negative impact this will have on the economy of the town centre.

As a local resident in Harpenden, I object to the consultation on implementation of parking charges in Harpenden high street. Free parking in the high street is incredibly important to maintaining the local economy. This extends to not only the small businesses who rely on the car parking to facilitate customer footfall but also the volunteers who are relied upon to run the many charity shops that are based around Harpenden. At a time when local businesses are competing with online market places (e.g. Amazon) it is disappointing to have a consultation which will materially impact the rejuvenation of the highstreet (not only for Harpenden but as well as St Albans).

As a long term resident of Harpenden I completely reject this proposal. Paid parking at the rate you have indicated will drive trade out of Harpenden to out of town retail parks and shopping centres. The business rates in Harpenden are already at an elevated level and businesses are on a knife edge already. A 10% drop (minimum) in trade will see many shops and businesses going out of businesses and as the high street is already reduced due to Covid and on line shopping this will be the final straw.

Why don't you look to support businesses and wealth creators rather than trying to squeeze them further with schemes such as these.

As a pensioner AL5 resident I often drive to central Harpenden to shop. Adding cumulative amounts of £2.50 to my bill will become prohibitive. If I choose to travel elsewhere (e.g. Welwyn Garden City where fees can be offset by expenditure) then Harpenden retailers are likely to suffer. I vehemently oppose the proposal.

As a pensioner with worsening mobility issues, I find the imposition of a 20min free parking period absolutely inadequate. By the time a shop has been entered it will be time pay or get a penalty notice. It would seem that SAD Council is more interested in raising revenues than serving the community. Have the council even considered the effect on the local businesses? Or is it that they want to close all of the shops, so the they can be turned into "affordable" housing?

As a regular shopper in harpenden I fear the small shops will suffer and the big supermarkets with their car parks will increase their profits no end!

Little shops will close and we will see boarded up shops -even the many coffee shops will suffer! With out the charm of the little shops Harpenden will become boring and I personally will shop elsewhere now that even Emilio coffee van which added so much charm to the high street had been moved on

As a resident and local business owner, I frequently go to the town in between meetings and paid parking will likely cause me to go elsewhere.

The changes to Harpenden have in my opinion already been negative both visually and from a community aspect. Please don't allow the town to become like St Albans high street. Unattractive and empty.

As a resident I object to paying for on street parking in Harpenden. It will have a detrimental effect to the businesses on the High Street and will affect the well being of vulnerable members of our community who have low income and rely on the high street for social interaction. The High Street is already very much diminished from what it was a few years ago, mainly reliant on cafes and restaurants with few independent businesses due to the extortionate rents and business rates in the area. The parking charges will further reduce footfall making the High Street untenable for small business. These charges will NOT encourage people to walk, rather encourage people to drive to other locations to do their shopping, any suggestion otherwise is a distraction. This is another stealth tax being introduced which will affect the most vulnerable members of our community, the elderly and low income families, not just financially, but will have long term implications for their well being, restricting their access to the local community.

As a resident in one of the villages neighbouring Harpenden I frequently visit the town. Whilst I personally don't use the on-street parking those who do will swamp the car parks if these changes go ahead. I am also concerned at the high price of parking. If this is how much it's going to cost to park in Harpenden I and many others will choose to use large supermarkets and shopping areas with free parking which will be catastrophic for Harpenden businesses.

As a resident of a nearby village, I wholeheartedly disagree with this proposition. Local businesses, particularly independent ones, will be hugely impacted by this decision as people choose to go to larger towns and retail parks for their shopping. It won't feel as easy or convenient to pop into Harpenden to pick up something up on the way through to work or secondary school run. Quickly shops will be impacted and won't be making the profit they were and Harpenden will end up with a soulless high street full of half empty shops.

As a resident of Harpenden, living in Southdown, it means that my weekly shop requires me to drive into town, park and complete my shop.

If the parking charges were to be implemented, I and the vast majority would be forced to shop at supermarkets with free parking available which would take us out of the St Albans district.

As a resident on Salisbury Avenue there is already significant spillover parking into these residential roads. The proposals for town centre paid parking will add street clutter (parking machines, signage) not in keeping with the area, would appear very costly to administer (if 20 mins increments), and will only encourage people to 'make the most' of their hour or more paid-for-parking rather than shorter durations. It will also encourage people to park for free in residential streets nearby which are already significantly congested. If this is a revenue raising exercise then I recommend the Council instead considers a subscription scheme similar to the garden waste scheme. I would far prefer to pay a small sum for a resident permit for town parking than have the town cluttered with parking machines and the hassle of finding change/buying a ticket etc. and have others experience the same and simply park on nearby residential roads.

As a resident that lives a 30 minute walk from harpenden town centre, I wholly object to the proposal to introduce fees for short stay parking. I walk to town as much as I can but very often just need to 'nip' to town to visit Threads, or have a coffee in one of the independent coffee shops. If this is in my work lunch hour I simply don't have the time to add an hour to this by walking there and back.

If parking charges are introduced then I just won't go, and the businesses that we value in Harpenden will suffer greatly.

There are enough empty shops since the pandemic without losing more.

If there were better parking options on the outskirts of town that would help, but there is none.

Please reconsider this- it is not wanted by residents or businesses

As a resident who lives on the outskirts of town it takes 30 mins to walk into town. Having to pay for parking will discourage me from using it unless I have time to walk. Instead it will encourage me to find alternative more convenient and cheaper places to purchase what I need. This will be the death of our beautiful town which I fear is already fading. Please do not impose parking charges.

As a resident who understands the financial constraints of councils across the UK I completely see the need to raise revenue in this way. It will also stop abuse of the bays by overstaying and should in theory make short term parking outside the shops more accessible.

I am also keen to discourage car use on climatic and environmental grounds where at all possible

However, how is this to be administered? Thought needs to be given as to how payment is to be made. Many of the elderly drivers who use the bays out of necessity not choice do not own smart phones and are baffled by apps, payment machines have been designed to be more and more complicated with the requirements to enter reg numbers etc and multiple buttons.

We are at risk of excluding more vulnerable groups in society from the simple every day interactions provided by an hour at the shops.

This is also why they fear the withdrawal of the annual permit. Life in youth and middle age is very different from being very elderly or having a disability.

Please give due consideration to EASE OF USE for those who cannot keep up with the tech required for simplicity of use

Thank you

As a senior citizen I rely on my car not being able to walk very far any longer. It means any visit to Harpenden no matter how brief will entail a £2.50 charge. 20 mins. free parking is scarcely long enough to pick up a prescription. But I am also concerned that after partially recovering from "lockddown" the High Street and its shops and restaurants will suffer badly. As has been proved elsewhere people will take their custom elsewhere where they can park. Having to pay £5 to do my weekly shop will only encourage me to go to Aldi. There is very little wrong with the current arrangements. Personally I would rather pay more council tax than impose this parking levy which will have such a detrimental affect on our town centre.

As a single mum on low income I will now have to limit my ability to go to Harpenden if these fees are brought in.

As a small business in Harpenden we are very concerned about the impact this scheme will have on our business. Clients use the free hour to pop in, the charge of £2.50 is going to be a consideration when coming into town.

As a teacher at St Nicholas Primary school in the heart of the town directly on Church Green, I am worried about where our parents will safely park to drop off and pick up their children. Due to it being in the centre of town, many of our parents cannot live near enough the school so many drive. I am worried about the effect on the cohesiveness of our school community as, instead of the children and their parents lingering to socialise, they will need to rush back to their cars to avoid fines. Additionally, many of our school social events and clubs will be brought down by parents having to pay to park even if just coming to volunteer. We already are a school with no proper car park due to our location and I am worried these plans will damage our little school irreparably, making it a much less desirable school to parents as it will become inaccessible except for those who live close by or are willing to pay parking fees twice a day. This is one of the most damaging proposals to our lovely school I can think of and I am entirely against it.

As an employee working within a store on one of the roads that will be affected, I strongly object as I feel that this will discourage customers from coming into Harpenden.

1. How it will affect our customers

Many of our customers like to browse our ranges, and as we offer consultations, these can last hours. Many of our customers are elderly and do not have the ability or the tech savvy to use app's on smart phones, for parking. If we would like the residents of Harpenden to shop local and support small businesses, I feel that we are discouraging them to do you.

2. How it will affect our business

We offer home deliveries of furniture and curtains. This will be very difficult for us to offload and load items on to our vehicles for deliveries as we do this continuously throughout the day. This will be impossible to do with these restrictions in place. Customers will go elsewhere, where they pay the same parking costs and have a wider selection of retailers to shop from.

As harpenden has already lost its banks meaning less of reason to go for some, this removal of 1hr free parking should not go ahead as its killing the high street of smaller shops.

As one of the many minimum wage employees commuting to and working in Harpenden, a lot of us use the free parking and then move our cars at 10:30 to alternative free parking. I think I can safely say that none of us can afford to lose this kind of money on a daily basis, even if it's only for the first 2 hours – that's £25/week for a full time employee! Would you not consider some kind of concession for people working in the town? Otherwise no one is going to be able to afford to work here.

As pensioners, my wife and I currently use the car parks in Harpenden with our Senior Citizen Parking Permit. This is being withdrawn from us in November as we are not on benefits. This, in itself is a disappointment, because not all pensioners, that are not on benefits, have a great deal of free income.

The new proposed restrictions mean that we will not shop in Harpenden. I do not spend a lot of time shopping, unless “forced to”, but my wife enjoys a weekly couple of hours. She also attends a “French conversation session” every Wednesday, which will now have to be moved to someone’s home. I do go in at least once every three weeks for a haircut – which, as I have very little hair. Will now be done from home!

I am therefore concerned about:-

1. The impact on us. We have a nice house, but not a massive amount of “free money” to spend on parking I have taken a straw poll of neighbours and other friends – all feel that they are being forced to avoid Harpenden and quite a lot of social activity. The yuppies may be able to afford £2.50 an hour, but most ordinary pensioners can’t!
2. 20 minutes is a joke! Who can do any shopping in 20 minutes? You can probably visit one store, but if you need to go to WH Smith’s to send a parcel, you have to be very lucky not to exhaust your 20 minutes queuing! If the Council insist on going ahead with this appalling proposal, then the 20 minutes needs to be extended!
2. Town centres are already under threat across the U.K., so why is the Council piling more risk to independent shops. What, if any consultation has been held with Stakeholders, like The Chamber of Commerce. More small businesses will be forced out of Harpenden.

As senior citizens we totally object to your proposals. It will have an extremely detrimental impact on the shops and shopping in Harpenden. At the moment there is 2 hours free parking so you can actually do some shopping and use the facilities. These proposals would mean people like us would no longer come to Harpenden to shop. It would prove too expensive. You have also taken away senior Citizen's parking permits so there is no flexibility for older people to shop. £5.00 for 2 hours is a lot for people on pensions. Also apart from Waitrose you cannot park in any other supermarket car park. Taking away the 2 hour free parking will mean people will go elsewhere.

Also for people needing to go to the doctors and dentists in Harpenden there is no flexibility in what you are proposing. Our dentist is in Harpenden and these proposals will make it really difficult for us. Your proposals will kill the town. You should be looking at ways to regenerate the town rather than kill off all the businesses by your proposals.

P

As someone who regularly pops into Harpenden shops on my way through, this proposal will stop me from using shopping in the town centre. Surely a more sensible approach will be to make the existing multi-storey car parks 30 minutes free parking so that shops don't lose trade from those passing through or popping in. Whilst at the same time allowing the much-needed funds to be raised?

At a time when everyone is financially struggling, and town centres and high streets are dying across the country, is it fair to impose another money grab on people which will no doubt result in less customers for local businesses and less foot traffic through town. The attack on motorists both practically and financially needs to stop. If council finances are not managed properly to the point they need to impose these new taxes on people then maybe look in house at what can be improved with the ever increasing council taxes and how they are spent. More money for worse services across the country. Harpenden TC is always a busy bustling little place and has been so for my 37 years growing up in and around Harpenden and there is overwhelming opposition to these ludicrous proposals. For once do the right thing and listen to the will of the people instead of making a mockery of 'democracy'.

At least one of your 'justifications' for the policy is spurious. You say that your parking arrangements are running at an unaffordable loss. In fact free parking in Harpenden currently costs you nothing. There is an occasional visit by a traffic warden, but he/she does not manage to discourage a lot of very bad and illegal parking under the current arrangements. If you move to charge for parking you will need to employ more enforcers, as well as paying a high capital cost for the

payment machines.

Secondly, the High Street has for some years seen a loss of occupancy and of useful shops. This would be worsened further by parking charges discouraging visitors. The 20 minute free concession is not long enough to help – probably not even long enough for parents to pick up from school.

At present Harpenden Town centre is a lively centre, we are fortunate that most shops are occupied. Whether this will remain once parking charges come in remains to be seen – who will pay £2.50 to park just for a coffee or visit the LIBRARY, trying to get a DOCTORS APPOINTMENT or just the teabags forgotten in the weekly SHOP?

One assumes whoever thought children could always easily be dropped off in 20 minutes has rarely, if ever, been asked to do that. Often there could be problems, teachers to be consulted, children to be reassured etc. Will there be fines for overstaying in these cases, leading to much upset and resentment.

I feel this will change our present lively and busy town centre and so many shops will lose business and possibly lead to closure as in other town centres nowadays as people make more use of out of town retail parks.

At present I drop my wife off at Harpenden Station around 0800 several mornings a week. I then often park on local streets close to the High Street shops and do essential shopping for instance in Sainsburys, Boots and other stores. I might be able to do this in 20 minutes but it would be a rush. If I am therefore obliged to pay £2.50 I would most likely not bother. At present the situation is a win win for myself and family, local retailers and the environment (one car trip, less congestion, lower C footprint etc.)I hope you will consider these factors as part of the bigger picture.

At this time parking is already at a premium in the town centre. To consider closing of the 1 hour free spaces will negatively affect both the retail and business in the town and in uni particularly the elderly who in many cases need short-term close access to shops and medical libraries.

If

There should be full

Exanationas to the reasons for this badly thought through plan

Before changing rules and conditions to increase revenue to the parking/transport budget, it would be appropriate to investigate the current enforcement regime throughout the district. Because changing the rules without any proper

enforcement is a waste of rate payers money please publish the current enforcement rates for the district especially Harpenden. How often are enforcement officers monitoring the streets of Harpenden.

Being able to park in the centre on Harpenden is a privilege that I've been able to have my entire life, to have that stripped away now would be entirely unreasonable. Parking for free is what makes the town centre so accessible to residents and to start charging for parking would ruin the footfall of people on the streets going shopping. Therefore I object to this proposal.

Car parking charges will have an undue negative effect on the smaller retailers in Harpenden, and reduce the variety of outlets available in the High Street – we will be left with just the chains stores and coffee & charity shops.

Charging an extortionate rate to park in our local town to use our local shops will result in people, myself and family included not using the local shops due to the cost and hassle of having to pay. It will drive out already struggling small businesses that rely on people's ability to pop into town. I completely object to the entire proposal

Charging for all parking will have serious unintended consequences and is likely to damage the local economy. If parking is chargeable after one hour, this should allow customer parking for most local shops.

Charging for parking in harpenden is a ludicrous idea. It will stop so many people popping in to visit the shops. I for one will go to Welwyn now as there is plenty of free parking. I think this will affect the local businesses really adversely. Please re think this proposal

Charging for parking in Harpenden will have a huge financial impact on all the businesses in the local area.

Charging for parking of less than 1hour, serves no purpose to our community at all.

Charging for parking will be bad for all businesses in the town centre and for the residents of Harpenden and visitors to Harpenden who will feel pressured to leave within 20 minutes. All generations, older people who can't walk or cycle in, parents with children to contend with, people who simply have too much to carry will all start driving to other places that don't charge such as the retail parks nearby. More people will resort to shopping online due to the convenience and savings of free deliveries and returns. The high street is already suffering with many shops having closed down. Adding hefty parking fees will chase away customers and visitors to Harpenden town.

Charging for street parking will discourage me from choosing to shop in Harpenden; the car park charges recently increased by 200% (£1.35 for 2 hours became £4.05)

Charging people to park will kill the high street.

Many residents will struggle with this financially and many older residents will struggle to navigate the parking app (many don't even have smart phones).

I will no longer 'pop' into town if I have to pay for parking.

I find if I nip in to town for something then 9 times out of 10 I visit other shops and spend money. I would say this is the case for most people. If people have to pay such an extortionate amount for just 1 hour then it is unlikely they will want to pay more to stop to visit a coffee shop or have lunch.

I'd rather go to Southdown where parking is free and visit the supermarket and coffee shops there. Or visit the out of town centres such as Gypsy Lane.

I believe we will see more shops close down as footfall will drop once charges come in to effect. The tent/rates are forcing shopkeepers out already without increasing parking charges.

Considering the current cost of living crisis I think this proposal is outrageous , totally unacceptable for residents and will cripple business trade in the high street!!!!

Council costs go up too quickly as it is. If you stop spending. Money on councillors you wouldn't need to add another level of taxation.

Currently there is an incorrect hierarchy of parking charges, as off street parking is more expensive than that closest to the town centre. We should be encouraging people who need to drive in during the day to park in one of the 4 car parks that are close to the town centre. 3 are no more than a 2 minute walk to some part of the High Street.

Damage to local businesses
No problem with current arrangements
Charges are outrageous

Dear Cllr Helen Campbell. I have read your proposals and studied the planned new parking zones and learned about the proposed charges. I add to the many voices with my concerns that the new parking restrictions/charges will not only significantly impact trade in Harpenden but will also add unnecessary stress to the daily lives of Harpenden residents. I wrote to Cllr John Galvin shortly before the local elections this year expressing my concerns and received a visit from him. We had a wide ranging discussion during which it became clear that the parking plans are already written into your budget, a fait accompli, and will be going ahead regardless of the number of objections you receive from residents – so your consultation I believe is a fine tuning exercise as to how you will implement the scheme you have already decided upon. With that in mind I will limit my comment to this. Firstly – the two 20 minute ‘free’ stays for parents dropping off children and people popping into the shops should ideally be extended to 30 minutes. 20 minutes is too short a time for a parent to find a parking space, walk to the school collect and walk back again – please don’t add to the everyday stress of doing this with a parking ticket if the child is late out or the teacher wants a quick word. Same goes for elderly people – many don’t move too quickly! What happens if they want to pop in to the Post Office or the pharmacy for a vital prescription and there’s a massive queue? A 30 minute grace period would be much kinder. Secondly I think the charges are a bit steep! Couldn’t you graduate this in – I would never pay £5 to park in Harpenden for 2 hours to shop. I and many of my friends and family would drive further afield – to London Colney for example- where the parking is free and there isn’t the stress of negotiating meters. You mentioned in your press release that you want to discourage people from parking ‘for longer than they need to’ – not sure what you mean by this? If you mean people need to get in and out of Harpenden quick smart – do what they need and be off – surely, besides being a bit autocratic, it will discourage people from browsing in some of the lovely shops we currently have in Harpenden. I’m resigned to you imposing these restrictions but am worried how it will alter the community and feel of the town. Finally, I still find it difficult to believe that savings can not be made in other areas so that the implementation of your parking

plans can be avoided. I did point out to Cllr Galvin, that offering all 400+ St Albans Council Employees a generous free annual parking permit was not particularly good optics – especially whilst at the same time taking away free parking from residents!

Dear sir,

As a keen cyclist and walker, I am no supporter of our car-dependent culture. Indeed, I would like to see towns like Harpenden and St Albans liberated from the traffic that fills them everyday and makes them less pleasant places to be.

However, even I am struggling to understand the thinking behind the parking proposals for Harpenden town centre. I shall address my objections against each of the four reasons that you have put forward for making the order.

1. Encourage Active Travel – I see no indication why these proposals would encourage active travel in Harpenden. I “consider” alternative means of transport to and from the town centre all the time, but almost always reject them. My walk to the town centre is a good 35 minutes and includes a substantial hill. The cycle ride is quicker, but there is no quiet route to take, and I consider the heavy traffic too unpleasant and dangerous to tackle on the bike. And even if I do cycle to the town centre, the provision of secure cycling parking spaces is entirely inadequate. There is also the question of trying to bring shopping home on foot or by bike. So for obvious reasons (and despite choosing to cycle and walk hundreds of kilometres a month), I almost never use those means to visit the town centre. The suggestion that I might use public transport to reach the town centre, meanwhile, is laughable to the point of insulting. As anyone who has tried to use the once-per-hour bus from Batford to the town centre, it is so infrequent and so unreliable as to be a non-event.
2. Increased Enforcement – I disagree that this is an end in itself. Parking enforcement exists to support other social and economic goals and does not exist for its own sake. It should, in my opinion, be removed from this list. Though while we’re talking enforcement, it has been my observation that there effectively isn’t any in Harpenden. How often do the wardens drive over to Harpenden for a morning – once per month? Less?
3. Greater turnover of places – possibly reducing the free stay period from 60 minutes to 20 will increase the turnover of places. However, given the prosperity of Harpenden, it is more likely that people will just pay to enjoy the maximum stay and we’ll be back to square one.
4. 20-minute free sessions – again, this isn’t a reason in itself. Possible you mean that the changes will create more disabled spaces closer to shops and businesses? If you mean that people will still be able to carry out tasks in the town within 20

minutes, then I'm afraid it is just wishful thinking. In reality, 20 minutes is too short to complete all but the most simple task - indeed, the queue in Harpenden post office can take the full 20 minutes all by itself. Setting the free stay at 20 minutes guarantees that shoppers will complete only the most essential activity and leave everything else for a trip to a larger town. At least 60 minutes gives visitors the chance to complete essential tasks, perhaps do some browsing, perhaps stop for a coffee, some things that help the town stay alive.

More widely, I think the main failing of the report is that it takes no account of the nature of Harpenden as a leisure destination. Unlike the many larger towns within a 20 minute drive (St Albans, Luton, Hemel, Stevenage, Hitchin), the shopping and leisure opportunities in Harpenden are very limited, so the convenience of parking for free in the town centre has, I think, being one of the best ways that it has continued to compete. Take away that convenience, or make it financially unappealing, and there's not much to keep that footfall in the town. It should be just as easy to drive to Luton or St Albans and have ten times the range of businesses to choose from. It is sad to see a growing number of empty premises in the town centre and I suspect that these plans can only exacerbate the situation.

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a resident of (REDACTED)

I am mostly in favour of measures to reduce car usage and I would like to see less vehicular traffic in Central Harpenden which can be very congested at times

However if you introduce paid parking I will not have a place to park my car

Will you be introducing parking permits for residents

Regards

(REDACTED)

Dear St Albans Council,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed introduction of parking charges. As a resident of Harpenden, I rely heavily on the use of public parking facilities for a variety of reasons, and the implementation of such charges would have a significant negative impact on my family and our community.

Our household includes two children who participate in tennis - twice a week, and swimming - once a week during the week, straight after the school. These activities are crucial for their physical and mental well-being, and they provide essential opportunities for social interaction and skill development. The proposed parking charges would add an additional £20 to our weekly expenses, amounting to a substantial £900 per year.

Furthermore, our children also attend library sessions and theater rehearsals on Saturdays. These activities are essential for their educational and cultural development. The introduction of parking charges would make it significantly more difficult for us to continue to support their involvement in these enriching activities.

I believe that parking charges would disproportionately affect families and individuals who rely on public parking. It would also deter people from visiting local businesses and attending community events, negatively impacting the local economy. I urge you to reconsider the proposed parking charges and explore alternative revenue-generating options that do not place an undue burden on residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(REDACTED)

(REDACTED)

Disabled Blue Badge holders should be exempt from these charges. There are only about 3 designated disabled parking spaces in Harpenden which are usually occupied. It takes much longer when disabled or dealing with a disabled person. Also 20 minutes is not enough time in general, why not make it 30 minutes?

Disgraceful proposal to charge for Parking in Harpenden streets as this will seriously affect shops/traders as customers will tend to go elsewhere e.g. out-of-town Supermarkets, Garden Centres etc. Also this will encourage more on-line shopping which will destroy the small businesses in Harpenden - and what about Restaurants and Coffee Houses?

Disgraceful. At £5 for 2 hours will cost me £1500 per year as not on benefits for seniors permit. Shops and cafes lose revenue and I coming up to 80 isolate at home. Hardly the Libs community inclusivity. Reckon they have shot themselves in both feet and will be ditched the next time we have a chance to vote. Rethinks needed. Proposed access permit at £190 per year may help but will not please those only just above the benefit cusp. Used to be £40. Add in TV licences and some not in benefits will be worse off than those that are. Crazy. Please arrogant Libs consider we oldies who go into town everyday and keep Harpenden thriving.

Do not agree that this will be a benefit to harpenden. Love the fact there is free parking for people (personally I don't often drive in given where I live) but this change will mean more people parking at waitrose when they are not shopping there or other places eg Salvation Army when they shouldn't be. Understandably small independent shops that make harpenden great are concerned about this proposal. It will definitely be detrimental to the high street.

Do not agree with this at all. The elderly will not be able to park and shop in town. This will kill local businesses. Btw your app is rubbish too.

Do not do this!

do not get rid of the free parking

Do not support this in anyway. I can't afford to pay to park every time I want to go to the town I live in and also pay one of the highest rates of council tax for the privilege. Just because we live in Harpenden, doesn't mean we are all rolling around in spare cash. Quite the opposite. It will 100% limit the amount I go to town and into the shops. I walk where I can anyway but it's not always practical or feasible. Another ill conceived idea which will tip the high street over the edge. Maybe try looking at where you want money every year. I'm sure there must be somewhere. This was one of the reasons I would not vote Lib Dem. Shame for the high street and all the retailers. Must be a worrying time for them.

Don't kill our high street even more than you have done so already (removing the food trucks) by introducing nonsense parking costs. We will not pay to park and business will suffer. It is a self defeating policy.

Don't try to fix something that isn't broken. If anything you are going to 'break' many things. Everyone enjoys the fact that you can easily pop to town, park for an hour or two and visit the local shops. Adding paid parking will prevent people from wanting to do this and therefore our local shops, restaurants, cafes etc will suffer. This will also be a problem for the elderly or residents that live a little further out who aren't able to do their shopping and walk back with it .

Stop trying to rinse hard working people of their money and happiness. Harpenden is a lovely community and you will be ruining it by making us pay for parking. Focus on that more important things.

Entirely unnecessary money making scheme (or scam). You could simply enforce existing parking restrictions. Never had an issue finding a parking spot in harpenden centre in the 5 yrs I live here. This will kill local shops and penalise residents. Is this the intention of SADC?

Excellent idea. Thanks for having the strength to push this through.

Fantastic measure to effectively kill the local high street and destroy business if that is the intended result. If you are looking to raise revenue, how about simply targeting the scores of people that park illegally already throughout the area on jagged and double yellow lines that do so without any consequences? This is an ill-conceived measure that has no benefit to the actual community. It will adversely affect businesses and local residents alike as in conversation with my neighbours, where we will often pop to the high street for a shop when it isn't busy or to quickly grab something, we will instead just order it online from the likes of Amazon, who of course seem to pay no taxes and provide zero benefit to the local community... which certainly suits the tone and character of this nonsensical proposal. If the issue comes down to revenue, instead of destroying the high street, take a different approach and set up a scheme whereby residents can provide photographic evidence date/time stamped of illegally parked vehicles and for those ticketed receive a commission of 10-20% as they've done in New York. This has not only increased revenue significantly, but also improved enforcement while at the same time cutting costs to do so. These issues need to be approached intelligently, which this proposal does not reflect.

Financially and socially negative impact on the town

Firstly, please continue with the Seniors' Parking Permits which provide access for shopping, pharmacies etc.

The Proposed Parking Meter charges are extremely expensive.

If they are being introduced purely as a money generator for the Council, I would request that another source is found to replace it.

For several years I have purchased a Senior Parking Pass enabling me to park at no charge in various Harpenden car parks. This year I discovered I am no longer eligible for this option since I don't benefit from the necessary tax credits. So on-street parking is the only free option available to me. Now it's proposed to cancel that option! I don't expect my protest will have any impact on the outcome since I understand actions are already ongoing to activate the scheme. However, rest assured I SHALL NEVER VOTE LIB DEM AGAIN!

For years shoppers have had the privilege of being able to park for 1hr free around St Albans city centre outer streets for the purpose of just popping into one shop

If the council are allowed to change this to paid parking it will be to the detriment of local businesses who are already suffering

from loss of trade and may end up being the end totally for some

It's not a cost cutting exercise it's a money making exercise we will still have wardens the council will have to pay for new signs, lines, change in traffic orders and pay machines

It will eventually drive shoppers out of St Albans

Forcing people to pay for on street parking will be the final nail in the coffin for Harpenden high street. Surely the council should be looking to encourage people to spend their money in local businesses and not drive to out of town shopping centres with free parking.

Free parking is almost non existent in Harpenden as it is. Waitrose will be about the only option available and that's madness (especially in a cost of living crisis).

Free parking is crucial to the high street and economy of Harpenden. It is a spread out town and not practical for people to walk from the limits of the town. The high street is long, thus making a twenty minute parking period a useless period of time in which to complete even short tasks.

This will lead to the further decay of the high street, continuing the trend since removing the fantastic coffee truck in the town centre, allowing two Costa coffee shops on adjoining streets, and the continued delay in the Rothamsted Park cricket pavilion construction . The council seem set on decision making which is detrimental to best interests of Harpenden and the high street.

Free parking should be increased to 30 minutes from 20 minutes, provided that a parking attendant patrols the sites to prevent illegal parking on pavements and double-yellow lines (which happens currently).

Free short term parking is essential but 20 minutes is an unrealistic period even for the suggested 'dash' to the shops. Many elderly people and others may not be officially disabled but can suffer from mobility issues. Consider the time to leave a car , get to a shop or pharmacy e.g. to collect a prescription or medication, and the attendant waiting or queuing time to be

served followed by the return to the vehicle. Even a healthy person would be under pressure to hit this time period, and others may risk harming themselves in their haste. With this in mind SADC should either change their list of scenarios for which 20 mins is deemed a reasonable time period so that the review criteria is appropriate, or increase this to 30 mins which I believe is a more established, reasonable and fair restriction.

Fully disagree with this proposal. Why change something that works?

Further to my previous response:

- 20 minutes free parking is insufficient for quick visits any time one encounters a significant queue in a supermarket just to top up a couple of items, the Post Office where queues are often long, or a chemists, where dispensing a prescription can take 10 or 15 minutes quite apart from any queue. The school drop-off/pick-up case applies to very few people as there are only 2 small schools in the town centre and that only applies to two brief periods a day. 30 minutes would be more reasonable.

- It seems grossly unfair that Harpenden is being clobbered for St Albans' failure to balance the parking books.

Generally supportive of the proposals but given the availability of more Disabled spaces there needs to be stronger restrictions on Blue Badge Holders parking in dangerous areas and also causing both traffic hazards and pedestrian problems - eg on DOUBLE YELLOW lines (eg outside Sainsbury's Harpenden and corner of Victoria Road/Station Road) and on pavements (eg Arden Grove).

A far more radical solution is needed to see Lower High Street PEDESTRIANISED with deliveries before 8am and after 6.30pm.

Getting rid of the free parking will kill the high street and it needs all the help it can get for the small businesses and coffee shops

Given the observed decline in high streets nationally since the 1970s, when local authorities started approving out of town shopping, I believe the proposed action in isolation has the potential to lessen the attraction of Harpenden town centre. Harpenden remains a vibrant shopping and social space, albeit the profile has changed notably (e.g. closure of bank branches) in a relatively short period. Studies suggest the need for a combined approach to improve high street appeal, such as additional greening, to attract and retain those who've travelled in by alternative means to cars, and so the proposals in isolation look to be an incomplete solution. You cite "turnover" in several guises as offering potential

improvements but I fear the increase in turnover (i.e. income) for the Council could be the only one without more considered plans/solutions.

Good proposal

Harpenden currently has a variety of shops and is thriving. There are rarely any empty shops and the high street is always busy. The plan to introduce parking charges is simply a money making exercise and will result in loss of business for the shop owners and possible closures. The parking arrangement should be left alone.

Harpenden centre is clogged with cars parked/trying to park. this proposal could/should help alleviate the congestion and make it easier to pop into town and, for a fee, to have reasonable length of time in town. The unsubstantiated scaremongering from retailers doesn't sway my view – there is no "proof" that it will substantially affect trade. Furthermore, the town centre is not all about shopping – many of the shops are of little use to me (and it seems to many others!)

I also believe that we have many more important services we need to fund

Harpenden does not have a parking or traffic problems that require further on road parking controls in order to to mitigate these. This is purely a money making exercise. Moneytising something which is currently controlled to fairly share the access to parking but free. Twenty minutes is not enough time to park, walk to the shop, shop, and walk back to the car. It would be totally insufficient to go to an opticians, dentists, barbers, hairdressers, Nationwide or Church. Additionally a large number of businesses are coffee shops, public houses and other eateries. Again, parking for any of these would accrue an additional cost for the motorist.

The impact on businesses will be lower footfall just when they are recovering from lockdown and the cost of living crisis. This will cause businesses to close, reduce business rates, is short sighted and will eventually reduce the attractiveness of shopping locally in Harpenden. There will also be the additional cost of enforcing these new parking restrictions which will reduce the impact of fees received.

Harpenden has a big problem with cars and antisocial driving and parking so I support the principle of charging for more spaces. What I would say is the proposed charging level is too high and the drop off period is too short. Should be 45 minutes or 1 hour free and a charging ceiling of 1.50 an hour. I also think there needs to be increased patrols and fines for illegally parked vehicles.

Harpenden High Street has many small independent businesses and I believe that introducing these parking charges will deter people from visiting Harpenden, whether it's to shop or visit the cafes/restaurants. They will simply go to retail parks with free, easy parking resulting in loss of trade for local business. The idea of introducing 20 minutes free parking before charges apply is ludicrous- the less mobile or elderly will not be able to shop for whatever they need in 20 minutes, forcing them to go elsewhere (i.e. retail parks with free, easy parking). If SADC insist on introducing charges, then at least have a minimum of 1 hour free parking - and with some parking spaces offering 2 hours free parking - before starting to charge for on-street parking.

Harpenden High Street is struggling to retain retailers due to the excessively high rents and poor general access (parking). Adding another barrier to residents shopping in the form of fees will further kill off the High Street and drive more people to burn carbon to shop in places such as Welwyn.

Furthermore, is it not the responsibility of Herts to maintain and operate the High Street? Do St Albans have powers to impose this charge?

Harpenden High Street is successful due to the fact that residents can pop into town for up to an hour and use the local facilities, shops etc. If parking restrictions are brought in it would be most detrimental to the local shops as people wouldn't want to add £2.50 onto their loaf of bread or coffee, but instead would be forced out to other places/retail parks.

Harpenden High Street thrives in part due to its accessibility to all residents to visit for their shopping needs.

This proposal will discourage visits to the town and disproportionately affect the elder members of the town.

I am sure that there are many other ways for the council to cut expenditure to make up for their inability to manage their budgets effectively.

Harpenden is a small town and businesses are already struggling. There are several places in Harpenden to pay for parking and the on street parking bays should remain free otherwise people will choose to do online shopping instead which will kill local businesses. A smaller town such as Harpenden should be supporting local businesses not driving their customers away

Harpenden is a thriving and busy High Street pulling in residents and visitors from a wide area. Having free parking with easy access to shops and restaurants is a huge contributor keeping Harpenden busy. We recently moved from St Albans for one of these very reasons as St Albans is now almost impossible to park and visit without huge expense and inconvenience. I appreciate we all want a greener environment and I walk and cycle as frequently as possible but the free and easy parking keeps Harpenden thriving and busy and to stop this will be massively detrimental to our High Street and the shop owners. For these reasons I wholly object to this proposal.

Harpenden is a very small town and where we want to shop locally. The proposed payment for parking will kill our High Street as people will start to move to shopping centres. Keep our town as it is. Please don't take this away from the residents as we want our local shops to thrive. It is already difficult for businesses and this will just make the High St a ghost street.

Harpenden is already limited on parking and will be even more so with new plans. I myself do not drive but know that people enjoy being able to 'pop in' to Harpenden either to shop or grab a coffee. With paid parking people will not come in. Many come in for the supermarkets, but they just drive elsewhere to out of town supermarkets and the high street won't benefit from those people that come in for shopping and then pick up other pieces or stop at a bar, restaurant, cafe for food. It is short sighted. Harpenden has lovely independent shops that can struggle, restricting business by making it harder for people to easily park for free will make them suffer. We're already seeing some shops empty, I'd hate to see the decline of Harpenden. For someone like me who doesn't drive, having a vibrant town filled with useful shops is important. My son also goes to Harpenden Academy in the town centre. Many families live outside of Harpenden and cannot walk to the school. When they come in they often stay a bit longer to do things in Harpenden. With some on restricted budgets they just won't stay.

Harpenden is currently a thriving small town with a unique character and a good range of shops. However, common with many small shops in most towns, many are struggling to be profitable due to the cost of living crisis. With the current flexible parking customer are able to flexibly carry out their shopping and exploit the range of shops. I believe that this huge change will deter people from shopping as frequently, or at all, in the high street due to the proposed parking cost. Also, even more people will probably move on-line for their shopping. This will be a particular problem for the older Harpenden residents due to the need to park near the shops due to their cost and sometimes mobility issues. I will think twice about shopping in Harpenden when I can shop for free somewhere out of town. In a time where there is a need to reduce the carbon footprint this is a backward step, disrupting a community which working well.

Also, in my experience there is no significant parking issue in the town for shopping so no burning need to reduce demand by introducing a charging approach, thus reducing the demand for parking.

I have been a supporter of the Liberal Democrat for many years so am shocked and disappointed with the party due to its support for this proposal. Obviously it will generate additional revenue for the council but I see no benefit for the Harpenden residents.

Harpenden is fortunate to still have a thriving town centre. Residents continue to use local shops and cafes because parking is convenient. The proposed charges are likely significantly to reduce footfall as much for the inconvenience of paying as for the cost. I object to the proposal because it will damage the local economy and discourage me from shopping in Harpenden. I'll just do more on line.

Harpenden is my local shopping venue and we go a couple of times a week. I wish to support the range of shops in the High Street. I am also registered at the doctors surgery which is shared with Wheathampstead and do get given appointments in Harpenden. I think it is totally unreasonable to expect people to constantly pay for up to an hour's parking. Just add a small amount to the council tax to maintain free parking which will in turn keep Harpenden High St the vibrant place it is.

Harpenden is unique in that it continues to enjoy a vibrant, healthy high street which is at the heart of the community, adorned with independent shops run by and employing local people.

I have repeatedly seen high streets die across the country when their customers are unable to access them conveniently. I believe this will be the fate for Harpenden should the parking change. Simply people will go to nearby supermarkets.

The businesses which will suffer are those local independent businesses run by and support local families. Without income these families will no longer be able to continue to live and be a part of life in Harpenden.

Harpenden is unique with its breadth of independent traders. Nationwide, this is becoming rarer.

Your parking proposal for Harpenden will jeopardise this and is a step in the wrong direction. Lost businesses and empty shops will start the decline of a delightful town.

If it's not broken, don't fix it.

I am a resident and do not own a local business.

Harpenden On Street Parking.

The introduction of charges will make me think very hard about visiting the town centre in the daytime. I would usually pop in to the shops, for a haircut to visit the library with the children etc.. all of this will become more difficult.

It will also make it harder to visit the village surgery as I can usually find a free parking space at the moment.

Whilst there will be some positive financial gain to the council there will be detriment to residents, businesses and the community as the town centre sees visitors reducing at a time when it really needs support.

Harpenden town centre remains a thriving area unlike many nearby towns. Removal of short term free parking would be the first part of a decline to this thriving hub. Whereas now people are happy to fully use the town, the instigation of parking fees would drive many people out of town to where they can access free parking. The current range of local shops both independent and chain would undoubtedly suffer as a result, potentially leading to shops closing due to lack of business. The income generated from this proposal would not compensate for the long term loss to the town. This is a short sighted proposal which will gain minimal income for maximum disruption to this wonderful town.

Harpenden was a great place to live until the Lib Dems turned up. We don't just do quick shops, we meet friends for coffee and lunch. 3hours parking would add £7.50 to our essential socialising. Old people are advised to keep socialising to keep sane and not add more stress on the overworked Social Services.

We also struggle with new fangled parking meters. We were recently charged £32 for 3 hours in the evening in St.Albans. There are many societies in the town and many require members to park for longer than two hours.

The High Street is built along the bottom of a valley. Many houses are built up the hillsides with steep climbs. The aging population cannot cope with climbing up these hills especially at night.

Goodness knows what use a 20min parking can be used for. My friend tried to dash into the Surgery, talk to a Secretary wait for response and it took 30mins.

Have you thought of introducing a "dashboard parking clock" for all vehicles (not just Blue Badge holders) that wish to park in designated parking spots. At the moment, I cannot see how it is possible for a traffic warden to know how long a car has been parked, so it is possible to park in a 1 hour spot for longer than the hour with quite low risk of a fine. A parking clock would make the time parked much more transparent, thereby enabling much more effective enforcement.

There is another benefit of the dashboard parking clock too (assuming that the motivation is to squeeze some more revenue out of residents!) The physical act of using an phone app. or keying in a reg. number to obtain a ticket is tedious and, for older folk, difficult. Much better that residents can purchase a special St Albans District Council Dashboard Parking Clock at say £75 per annum ... much like we pay for a compost bin sticker. Politically cleaner too - plucking the turkey a little every week is remembered, one major plucking once a year is annoying, but soon forgotten.

Enforcement is the key to keeping vehicles arriving and leaving promptly, thereby freeing up parking spaces continuously and reducing "the musical chairs circling" which drivers currently do.

If the parking charge was activated only for parking over 1 hour, then this would be much closer to the current situation and therefore much less contentious.

On the parking charge itself, the current proposal seems to *increase* the amount of time someone is permitted to park on the High St from 1 hour to 2 hours. The logic of the current parking is clear: if you want to dash into the chemists to collect a prescription, there is a 30 mins slot (no more). If you need an hour (no more) to do a small amount of shopping, then the High St is available. If you wish to spend longer on the High St, then you need to park further out to get 2 hours. This facilitates the turnover of people, keeping the High St and its businesses vibrant.

With the new proposal, a driver can clog up the High St for longer, depriving retailers of new potential customers and residents of a place to park for a short time.

Having a business in Harpenden I am always dropping keys or picking up keys from various estate agents and now I will have to pay to park to do this, having free parking has worked all these years, the only reason I can see the benefit is to make money, I think this will really have an impact of local businesses who rely on customers being able to park for free, you are encouraging people to shop more online, which is so sad

Having also recently lost the right to a £40 Senior Citizens parking permit, I consider this a highly regressive step. At 77 years of age, walking a mile to the town centre with any shopping is increasingly an effort and I wouldn't feel safe cycling. This is NOT what I voted LibDem in the General Election for.

Also, I believe this will negatively impact the High Street, making fewer and fewer local businesses viable.

Having been a Harpenden resident for over 70 years I am astonished that St Albans District Council are suddenly proposing to levy parking charges in our beautiful town.

Why is this being done? Money of course.

It is pity that local residents, welcome visitors and ultimately our retailers in the town are expected to foot the bill for Council incompetence.

I wont elaborate further as it would be stating the obvious, but it can only be hoped that the Lib Dems see sense and retain the status quo instaed of flying fully in the face of overwhelming local opinion.

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Having lived in Harpenden all my life and on a regular basis shop in my local area i will choose to go to an out of town retail park if charges will apply

Having lived in Harpenden for almost 45 years I am absolutely horrified by the proposed parking charges which would have such a detrimental effect on the High Street as people take their trade elsewhere. Just what are people meant to be able to accomplish in their free 20 minutes parking? Certainly not a medical appointment or library/ post office visit. When it comes to payment, not everyone has access to a smartphone or can even use a phone. Please reconsider.

Having no free parking in the town centre will be detrimental to using local businesses which I very much support. 20 min free parking is the minimum that should be allowed, the existing 1-2 hours is far more reasonable and allows proper shopping/ having a meal/drink etc, and wanting to spend time and money in our local community

Having paid for a senior citizen car parking permit I have been able to park in car parks in St Albans and Harpenden for 3 hours. This was recently reduced to 2 hours but was still helpful for shopping and meeting with friends, going to church and other community based activities.. It seems that the council do not want people to mix together unless they have paid further money to the council for parking,, on top of an already high council tax. I cannot see how this will help to reduce the cost of living for pensioners when we will have to pay to do a weekly shop or to meet up with other people. Twenty minutes free is very restrictive and can be the time some elderly people take to get out of a car and back in again, let alone walking to a shop or to meet a friend for a chat. Free on street parking is useful for popping into a local shop but if limited to 20 minutes will mean people will shop elsewhere for free parking. I do not like the plans and find that I am already worrying about where the best place is to park now I don't have a paid for parking permit. The ticket machines do not always work and my mobile phone cannot support a parking app. I am very disappointed that the Lib Dems on the council have seen fit to take this action which particularly targets older people.

Having previously been a retailer with a shop in station road paid street parking will without any doubt impact local businesses.

Having resided in Harpenden all my life, attending school in the 70's and then working and raising a family since, with only a brief 10 year stint in St Albans between 97-07. Having looked at all the details of these proposals, I can assure you that they are the wrong move. Harpenden has and is, more or less unique compared with its neighbours, in that parking for an hour is free and that completely changes the nature of the community.

Many before you have tried similar, including pedestrianisation and I very much hope, like them you will fail. The move, should it proceed will be a massive inconvenience to all who visit the town today and completely deter many like me, and

drive the use of on-line even further. In the years to come the council will then be complaining that there is insufficient rates revenue because the high street has died.

I could not express it stronger, do not do this, leave Harpenden alone and if you really, really need more revenue, then have the strength to be judged and raise council tax, rather than inconvenience everyone who lives here and kill the high street.

Having to pay to park will significantly reduce shopping footfall in the town having a negative impact on the businesses in the town centre. This will move shopping and dining activities out of town to shopping centres having a significant impact on the local community.

Having to pay to shop in Harpenden will deter many people from visiting. They are more likely to shop elsewhere which will kill the village atmosphere that exists currently. We often pop down to the shops for bits and pieces but would definitely think twice if we had to pay for parking. More shops will close and the vibrant nature of the centre will almost certainly change. This is a terrible plan.

Hello

I understand you are intent on removing all free parking in Harpenden town centre, apart from short 20 minute stays.

I wonder if you people have ever owned a business in a town centre because I would doubt that you have. Town centres throughout the country are struggling to compete with online retailers so do you think the way to combat this is to reduce the number of people visiting the town? This can be the only result of such a punitive charge.

For the past few years we have been doing our weekly supermarket shop in Tesco at Hatfield where parking is free. We used to shop at Sainsbury in Harpenden until you started charging and then made things worse by charging after 6.30 at night.

I cannot recall any councillor, when standing for election, indicating that they would increase the level of car parking charges in the town. If you did, can you point that out to me please? If you didn't then at the next election you should point out that you pushed for parking charges in Harpenden and that you proudly stand on your record.

Harpenden is losing too many shops so if you want to increase that number and make it a more vibrant town, I suggest you stop this proposal dead in its tracks.

Regards

(REDACTED)

Hello,

I wish to object in the strongest terms to some of the parking proposals for Harpenden. I live at (REDACTED). I have lived at this property for 14 years.

When I moved in we had a parking permit that allowed us to park on Carlton Road and the surrounding streets on the other side of the railway bridge. This was rescinded a few years later (around 2012). Despite the council admitting that the zones for the parking permits had been redrawn to include our property back in 2009, we were told this had not been enforced yet and so we would be without a valid parking pass for a temporary period. This was never enacted and so since this time we have had no parking permit.

We park primarily on Victoria Road, and sometimes on Carlton Road and other surrounding streets, abiding by the restrictions. Myself and my partner are both local Firefighters in town and we require our vehicle to respond to calls. When we moved into our property, we had a parking permit. Our vehicle is an absolute necessity.

The proposals to charge for some of the parking near to us will have a disastrous impact on our lives, as well as our neighbours and local businesses. This appears to be purely a profiteering exercise and in our immediate area at least, penalises local businesses and residents only.

Please could you advise if there are any remedial actions proposed for local residents such as ourselves? Without at least a valid parking permit, myself and my partner are faced with either leaving our home and/or quitting our local jobs in the community.

Many thanks
(REDACTED)

Hello, As a resident above one of the shops on Harpenden high street, what provision will you make for my parking, visitors, services and deliveries? Outside my house is currently 1h parking 8am–6pm Mon–Sat, so I can park overnight from 5pm, and leave again by 9am. I'm obviously upset that you would be lengthening the no parking window. (Also I can park outside anytime on Sundays, although at weekends I choose to walk further and mostly use Lydekker.) When I work from home, my car lives 40min walk away on a family driveway or in Rothamsted Research. The season tickets for Bowers Way or the Station car park etc do not guarantee ticket holders a space, so are not suitable options. The spaces outside my home are clearly important during the week for shoppers, but outside that time, could you consider a residents parking permit, and at all times, provision for visitors/workmen. I would appreciate a reply and request specific legal notices of this consultation for all residents like myself. I'd also like to see significant expansion of car charging facilities in the town, so residents like me can make greener choices. Good wishes, (REDACTED)

Hello,

In response to the proposed parking changes proposed by the SADC Order 202 (amendment no. Currently missing), I confirm that I wholly object to the proposals for the following reasons:

No impact assessment on local businesses and residents has been provided in the consultation . The effect of collecting relatively small amounts could be substantially disproportionate to the effect of footfall loss on local businesses and the ability of residents to access necessary services

Harpenden is a ribbon conurbation almost 4 miles long with limited public transport and there are therefore a disproportionate number of residents, particularly with young families who are unable to reach the town centre without a car

There is no evidence provided of an assessment of current parking space turnover and what would be most appropriate for the currently vibrant High Street business community

The fact that the parking service has made a loss for many years is a clear indication that the council has not worked hard to

increase efficiency (that is generally how losses are eradicated) and the costs are therefore too high for what is a limited input requirement from SADC under the current parking restrictions in Harpenden.

(REDACTED)

Here are the reasons why I am against free parking spaces being converted into fee-paying spaces:

Lack of Consultation:

The decision to convert free parking spaces into paid ones lacked proper consultation with local residents and businesses. This lack of transparency has led to frustration and dissatisfaction among those directly affected.

Consultation is essential to understand the needs and concerns of the community.

Impact on the Harpenden High Street:

Free parking spaces play a crucial role in supporting local businesses, especially in the town center. When these spaces are converted into fee-paying ones, it will deter shoppers and reduce footfall.

A thriving high street relies on accessibility. If parking becomes expensive or inconvenient, people may choose to shop elsewhere or turn to online retailers.

Inadequate Monitoring:

Currently, many free parking spaces are not adequately monitored. When they become fee-paying, how will enforcement improve.

Without proper monitoring, some drivers may still occupy spaces without paying, leading to revenue loss and I will certainly be frustrated pay a fee.

Freedom to Access Without a Fee:

Free parking provides a sense of freedom and accessibility. It allows people to visit local amenities, libraries, and shops without worrying about additional costs.

When free spaces disappear, it restricts this freedom and will discourage people from using local services.

Impact on Access to Harpenden Library:

Libraries are essential community resources. Free parking near libraries encourages people to visit, borrow books, attend events, and engage with educational content.

If parking becomes paid, it could limit access to the library, especially for those who rely on them for learning, research, and community activities. Children that have limited access to books at home may not be able to afford the parking prices.

Effect on Surrounding Villages:

Changes to parking policies in towns can have ripple effects on nearby villages. People from surrounding areas rely on town

centres for shopping, services, and leisure.

If parking fees are added, villagers may avoid visiting Harpenden, affecting local businesses and community interactions.

Parking Fees are Too High

The current cost of parking in Harpenden is too high. If you compare the price to other local areas.

In summary, while I understand the financial pressures faced by local authorities, it's essential to strike a balance between revenue generation and maintaining accessible, vibrant town centers. Collaborative efforts between councils, businesses, and residents would help find solutions that benefit everyone

High Street businesses already struggle to maintain their business in the current environment. Impacting access of residents will be catastrophic for these business owners and in turn the residents of Harpenden who have paid inflated prices for housing which in part is based on access to a thriving/busy high street. Turn over of business is already a problem and this will exacerbate the issue.

Historically, it has been possible to park for free and to now impose charges will devastate the trade for a businesses that rely on residents ability to just “pop” to the shops. Human nature being what it is, it will not encourage people to make alternative travel arrangements to come to town, it will just mean that they won’t bother and will go to other places to conduct their business rather than pay for parking, further increasing their carbon footprint. Also, the idea of increased policing of this policy will only add to increasing costs that won’t be recouped from the fee being proposed. The Council needs to look internally to cut costs rather than imposing charges that I already pay for through my council tax. It is no surprise to me that the Council are pursuing a policy similar to the additional green bin tax, again something I already pay for through my council tax.

Huge impact on local businesses

Against the parking charge proposed

Huge parking costs for the local in Harpenden – are you crazy. What about the small businesses.

NO to parking charges on the high street.

I use the one hour and two hour parking bays all The time, and I do not know any local traders Who are happy about these changes, and this will affect the way I vote in future.

I absolutely feel that users of a leisure centre should not be charged to park there in addition to the cost of using the centre. The nation is unfit and unhealthy and every effort must be made to encourage activity & exercise, not make it more difficult & expensive for residents. In addition the 20 mins free parking window is not sufficient. This should be at least 2 hour & the subsequent charges should not be so exorbitant. Without doubt this will damage local trade and our high street.

I agree with the reasons set out in this proposal. I believe limiting free parking to 20 mins will have a positive impact on traffic flow and parking space availability. Noted that parking is not being removed but just changing to paid for after 20 mins.

I am 100% against this proposal. It’ll ruin the high street and the community. I will certainly be shopping online. No longer doing weekly Sainsburys shopping, coming in for coffees, lunches or hair appointments. Local trade will cease. This is a really poorly considered policy. Please rethink it!

I am 52 and have lived in Harpenden my whole life. I have worked in central Harpenden for the past 24 years. I currently work for a small independent business opposite Waitrose, Lister Interiors. These parking restrictions will absolutely ruin Harpenden, and the business I work for.

1. Local residents will refuse to pay this charge. Less footfall, less business, shops will inevitably not survive.
 2. Shop local initiative – this is a contradiction. Shop local encourages people to visit Harpenden for their shopping, support local businesses, and use the local facilities. Parking restrictions will curtail this without doubt.
 3. Our customers often pop in to collect paint, furniture, etc and should not be penalised to park nearby.
 4. We are also delivering to customers and need spaces to load and unload goods, without being penalised.
 5. I worry that this will turn our lovely village in to a ghost town, businesses will fail, and true locals will suffer. The current restrictions are well adhered to, and suit businesses and residents.
 6. Not everyone has a smart phone to pay the charges.
 7. The charge is not even reasonable. £2.50 for 1 hour!
- Please reconsider this proposal. This will without doubt have detrimental effect on the town centre, businesses and residents.

I am a business owner and local resident who is so disappointed in the St Albans Council for their latest tax on locals. This move will stop trade in an already turbulent time cause issues to parents and elder residents and make it unaffordable for workers in shops who do not live in Harpenden. 20 minutes a day is not enough time for free. It's a tax on the people who need it most. We are already seeing empty shops and the start of parking charges will only cause more damage. Business rates in Harpenden were also increased from an already unaffordable amount in 2022 by 20%. This council needs to start listening to locals who have widely opposed the parking charges. St Albans Council start protecting the small businesses, stop hindering our survival. The "money tree" of local residents and business can only withstand so much.

I am a local resident and I object strongly to fees being introduced to park in the town centre. I frequently pop into town for short visits and often spend time in the shops and local businesses. If parking fees were introduced, I would visit town less frequently and not, therefore, spend money in local businesses. This would have a negative impact on local retailers.

I am a pensioner and my parking permit has been withdrawn. I cannot park or shop without it. Please help me

I am a pensioner living in Harpenden. I object to the proposals as 20 minute free parking will not be enough time for me to “dash” to the shops. I am too old to “dash”! I have trouble using a smartphone so won’t be able to use the parking app. This is very disadvantageous for the elderly who cannot carry heavy shopping without a car. I will start to add my shop to my daughter’s online shop as it will not be financially viable for me to pay £2.50 (plus any fee for using a parking app - I understand apps charge an admin fee on top). Harpenden retailers will suffer as a result of this proposal. It is very badly thought out and need to be withdrawn

I am a resident and also run a business in town centre. 20 minutes is too short a time for free parking to encourage people to stop and shop in town. I don’t see a problem with the current 1 hour or 2 hour timing slots which give people sufficient time to spend money in local shops without the pain of parking charges.

I am against SADC's proposed removal of free car parking across the district. This will mean the end of one and two hour free parking bays in Harpenden town centre. This proposal reaches a new height of stupidity and just proves that the Liberal Democrats cannot be trusted when they claim that they are "A party for business". When all retailers across the country, let alone Harpenden, are facing increased costs and lower sales due to the economic climate, it is another kick in the teeth for the retailers, restaurants and commercial properties who rely on footfall to sustain their business. Yet, the Chief Executive of SADC knows better than the 5,000+ residents and shopkeepers of Harpenden who signed the petition opposing it. Forcing people to pay to park will simply drive yet more footfall to the commercial zones where the very same authority has approved retail parks with free parking. The life blood of any community are the small independent businesses, who bring variety, personal service and vibrancy to an increasingly faceless, internationally-branded high street. This proposal is simply another way for SADC to hide their mismanagement, who simply want to raise funds to pay for their inept and inefficient operations, past and present, but they will continue to roll out the easy answer to "blame the Tories", yet they wasted £800,000 on consultancy fees for aborted purchases in Harpenden! Can SADC prove they have cut out waste and inefficiencies and vanity projects within its operations? If it is the objective of SADC to drive away independent businesses from our town environment they will without question succeed to the detriment of the communities and citizens these public officials are appointed to serve.

Can SADC explain why there is a shortfall in the car parking budget, and how much? Can the SADC also explain why they are not collecting the lost revenue there already that is being missed, from people parking for longer than the allowed periods? Best to do it now and look at the revenue over a long period, say, until the end of the financial year, March 2025.

I was under the impression that councils cannot use parking charges as a means of revenue, only to maintain parking facilities. This needs to be assessed by a competent, independent law firm, and a public report issued.

The Extraordinary Meeting held by the Harpenden Town Council on the 22nd July showed the strength of public feeling against the parking charges, in a packed to overflowing Park Hall, plus over 5,000 signatures on the petition against the proposal.

In addition, I hope that the SADC will reverse their perverse and pernicious decision to make the Seniors Parking Permit means-tested. This is completely unfair and biased against Harpenden residents, and why is it always the pensioners who are punished when the money runs out? There seems to be some political brain-fog that assumes that all pensioners are

well-off, especially in Harpenden – "Oh, they can afford it!" Maybe our homes (where we live, remember, not an "asset" – we have to live somewhere) have increased in value, but it does not follow that we are all cash-rich. The convenience of not having to queue to try and work out the confusing parking ticket machines was a major benefit, especially when it is raining and when some of us are not so mobile. Many people have told me that their trips will be reduced, which will have a detrimental effect on local businesses, shops, restaurants, theatres, etc. I understand that SADC say that they cannot reverse the decision on seniors' permits "because the Conservative Government so squeezed local council finances that to not take action would endanger the financial stability of the council which would be to every residents' detriment." "Cannot" means "Will not". SADC must have really messed up their finances if the seniors' permit is a make-or-break for them! The usual excuse of "blame the Tories" for everything is a broken record and SADC's financial mismanagement hits us pensioners. They go on to say that they cannot find any example anywhere else of such a permit being offered, as if it is a bad thing and depriving the community, when it should be lauded, championed, and held up as a great example of supporting local businesses and also the well-being of pensioners. They claim that the actual cost (in terms of lost revenue) is nowhere near to an extra £10 per annum, and has been calculated as about 10 times as much. How is that worked out? Again, where are the figures and the evidence to back that up? Is there a camera in each car park and at each pay-station checking on who pays for parking, checking on those who are pensioners? The sizeable increase in parking charges in general will make a difference in any event. But what are the additional costs to shops, restaurants, cafes, theatres, etc. because less people visit? Has that been evaluated with the same level of precision? I think not. Remember, senior citizens are prepared to spend their money and often go out during the day and midweek, when restaurants, shops, cafes, etc. are quiet. The Liberal Democrats website states: "Private enterprise is the principal engine of growth and prosperity in the UK. We will support it by creating a stable business environment with smart regulation and investing in skills, infrastructure, research and innovation. In return, we expect businesses to commit to promote skills, equality and good governance, and to support their local communities." Prove it by restoring the seniors' parking permits and cancel the proposal to impose car park charges in Harpenden. Otherwise, you are a sham!!

I am against the introduction of parking charges after 20 mins free parking. 20 minutes is not enough time to anything useful. £2.50 per hour is very high. If charges come in, I will stop coming into Harpenden as frequently to shop and eat during the

day. I will order on groceries online and avoid restaurants/cafes by ordering delivery instead. My elderly parents are also very worried by the charges. They use the bus but sometimes need to drive as the shopping is too heavy to carry on the bus. They will end up going out less and this will impact their mental and physical health

I am against this proposal because of its effects on residents and businesses. Having been involved in business in Harpenden for over 20 years it has been clear that whenever people are prevented from parking freely takings of retail shops go down. By charging for parking there will be a disincentive for people to visit the town especially to do a weekly shop when there are free parking alternatives nearby (Tesco, Aldi etc.) and online shopping is so easy (why pay for parking when you can just go online and order). We should be encouraging people to visit Harpenden and spend money especially at a time when shops are struggling and we already have a number of empty premises. I understand not wanting people to 'overstay' but 20 minutes free is hardly overstaying and if people are keeping the shops busy surely that is a good thing. Additionally, there are likely to be many residents whose age prevents them from 'a dash to the shops' and require longer than 20 minutes. A minimum of 1 hour free seems sensible. I assume this proposal will require additional traffic wardens to police the new rules which will be additional cost

I am aged 63 and have lived in Harpenden since birth. These ill thought out parking proposals threaten the vitality of the town (known to many residents as the Village) . Harpenden residents have enjoyed free on street parking in the Village Centre . If this were to be changed as proposed would have an immediate and catastrophic impact . Residents would not pay a parking fee where it had previously been free . Elderly residents, like my mother , who don't have smart phones wouldn't be able to pay on-line so wouldn't be able to park close to the shops.

Footfall to local shops would drop, within a short period shops would start to close and the vitality of the Village would be lost.

It's a completely nonsensical proposal that should be dropped immediately . What are Councilors thinking about ? I doubt a single resident would support the proposal.

The consultation does not appear to have been widely publicized , smacks of being secretly held over the summer
The consultation should be sent to all residents – No-one would be in support, not a single person

It's an outrageous proposal that , if implemented , would be reversed by popular support. (Like the ill-fated St.Albans one way system)

Please reconsider and don't take this proposal forward – it does not make any sense and will waste money that could be better spent on those in need

Why break something that work's well ?

I am appalled at these proposals which are purely an additional tax to help pay for the years of financial mismanagement at St Albans District Council. You do not solve a problem by throwing more money at it. I have no confidence whatsoever that the Council would be able to implement this properly anyway it will be another waste of money and will also drastically affect the shop keepers in the town and businesses will close and we will just end up with another load of charity shops or boarded up windows. The council can't even manage the continual illegal parking on the pedestrian crossings on Station Road which totally blocks the street to all vehicles including emergency vehicles. This proposal is an absolute no go. I suggest Harpenden should devolve from SADC and manage its own affairs.

I am aware that the District Council has a budget deficit it wishes to cover; however, I do not believe that the current proposal to levy parking charges in Harpenden town centre will bring in the significant revenue the council is anticipating. Providing 20 minutes free parking is not sufficiently long to allow residents to pop to the shops to do anything significant. It's probably sufficient if you just want to buy some bread or some milk. For me and other residents – we will go out of our way not to incur any charges and hence deprive the Council of its hoped for income. I simply will not pay the charges for on-street parking and by this I mean – if I need to spend longer at the shops – I will go somewhere else. This will have a negative effect on local businesses – some of which may have to close, thus depriving the council of business rates income. This

scheme is ill-thought-through and very short-sighted and does not take into account what local residents and businesses want. This was not discussed in local manifestos before the local elections. For local democracy, the Council should listen to what local people and businesses actually want and not steam-roller something through against everyone's wishes. My suggestion to the Council is to increase the free parking period to the first 60 minutes of a stay; thereafter charges can apply. This will have the effect of being a deterrent for those people over-staying in a car-parking space. This seems a reasonable compromise to me and will allow local people to go the shops unimpeded for an hour. Anything longer, then the car-parks are available.

I am concerned about the effect of these restrictions on the businesses on our high street. We need to make it as easy as possible for people to use the shops rather than go elsewhere/online.

I am concerned about the effect on local businesses

I am concerned about the lack of free parking available in Harpenden generally. I feel it will have an impact on footfall if people have to pay to park. This will have an impact on our shops, which are already suffering from high rates/rents.

I am content for a charge to be made but up to a max of 50p per hour

I am horrified by this plan and strongly object. Daily user of high street, sometimes twice a day. This will cost an extra £15 per week at least, will take time to pay and what is a pleasant short trip to a local high street now will cost and become a headache. It will most certainly deter my use of the local high street and affect small local businesses adversely such as the coffee shops, the charity shops, library and the smaller independent businesses which I use frequently. It is going to push people to park on the other outer roads increasing traffic here which I use to avoid the high street traffic to do school drop offs and go to work. Overall this is an extremely ill thought out idea with no consideration for what is beneficial for local residents or small businesses and will most certainly kill our lovely high street. I cannot see how this will be helpful to us. We are already having to pay to park outside our own house (a free permit for residents would be much more thoughtful but instead money is made from residents for a basic need). I am most concerned about the smaller independent businesses who make our high street special and will not survive. So many have already closed. Please consider the opinion of local residents and their increasing costs for basic things and local businesses who will suffer. Thank you

I am in favour of this change, especially with the proposed 20 min grace period. Please also consider street parking restrictions on roads such as ours ((REDACTED), harpenden). People who work in harpenden use our road to leave their cars all day, it's extremely congested, reduces access to drive ways and creates accessibility issues on the pavements. This will get worse if paid parking is introduced on the high street.

I am not completely against charging for parking but it should be introduced as part of coordinated strategic plan of what we want our district to be in the coming years and decades and with eyes wide open to the risks. There are already more empty units in Harpenden than I have seen over the last decade and we have already removed the vibrant food vans from the centre that delivered a charming look and feel. It is really important that charges are introduced in a coordinated way. I would urge the council to consider case studies of other areas in forming their opinions on how to take this forward. What does a modern St Albans district look like? How can people be aided to use the facilities? How can the parks be made safer and more widely useable etc etc

I am interested to understand what research has been carried out. How many times a week/month/year do people park in town? What is the average duration of their stay? What is the purpose of their visit? Etc etc

I moved to St Albans district in 2011 from Chester. Chester was once a vibrant Roman city with many independent shops, a wonderful look and feel etc etc but by 2011 it was deteriorating. Shops were boarded up, the centre was not as smart etc etc. I cannot be sure of the reason why but one factor was the introduction of parking charges.

The vicious circle. Out of town shopping springs up.

A couple of shops close, loss of business rate income, recover it by introducing parking charges ("this is an affluent area - people can pay"), locals stop visiting, more shops close, further loss of business rates, increase parking charges, visitors stop coming. Etc etc

The cycle has continued. No happy ending for Chester. Apart from the odd Roman remain (like St Albans) and it's iconic clock, there is little to commend it these days.

Conversely, my in laws live in a small town north of Manchester called rawtenstall. When I first visited 20 years ago it was fairly grim. But. They have taken down the old shopping centre, installed a strong volunteer army in the civic trust who manage flowers and niceties, they have free parking (on a disk - max 2 hours) have cobbled the Main Street reducing the number of cars that use it and the speed at which they drive if they do. Improved public transport. It is a really vibrant place to visit now.

When I moved here, I was struck by how vibrant St Albans and Harpenden were. No boarded shops. Independent businesses etc.

I could easily find 2 hours free or very cheap parking, on street, in leisure centre car parks, in city based supermarket car parks etc.

I was convinced that this free parking was key to the success of local businesses and the look and feel of the district. A symbiotic relationship.

Notwithstanding that leisure centre parking was intended for users of the facility only, I am certain that many visitors to local businesses also used these car parks for free until the introduction of recent changes. There is already a correlation between the loss of this free parking and the closure of some local businesses (if not causality)

If charges are to be introduced, they MUST be SIMPLE to use. There should be no stealth parking tax leaking to an app provider. And the money raised should be directly invested in improving local public transport, local cycle provision etc I would be willing to buy an annual parking permit that enables me to park for 2 hours free a day. I would not be willing to pay £1825 for this permit.

Don't do this without more research. It has the propensity to do more harm than good!

I am objecting on the following grounds:

That this is an ableism policy. By that I mean I am a disabled neuro diverse person in my 40s and need to drive into town and I need more than 20 minutes. I am not sure if it's an environmental reason. It is JUST NOT possible to walk into town.

Also I believe that there have not been ample consultation and there was not adequate publication of proposals so everyone could comment if needed.

I am also objecting on financial and human rights grounds. The proposed charges are exorbitant (£5 for 2 hours) and will drive those who cannot afford to live here away. So it is once again it is the disabled and poorer members of society, those who desperately need the social aspect of being able to come into town and the elderly who will suffer. The most wealthy who are able to survive these changes are the least likely ones to truly need the free existing parking spaces and able to carry on living in Harpenden.

I would like to ask St Albans District Council a number of important questions. What is the rationale behind this process. We need at least a referendum for this ludicrous scheme so that ALL the voices can be heard not just those enfranchised enough to make their objections. There are plenty of residents who are not capable/ able to do so. I would like to ask if we can have Harpenden residents parking permits too.

I would urge you to consider and please LISTEN to US residents and retailers who are DIRECTLY affected. I notice also that you did not agree to working with a task force from Harpenden town council. This seems to make no sense as it affects Harpenden.

Thank you for your consideration of my objection.
(REDACTED) Harpenden resident and born here.

I am objecting to the current proposal to alter the parking in Harpenden. I am a senior citizen with an existing senior permit which I have paid for. I use the car parks in Harpenden and St Albans particularly as we have a vulnerable 27 year old daughter with special needs and she needs to be transported in a Motability car. The cost will be astronomical given that we have to park close as she is unable to negotiate roads on her own. Your council have never replied to her application for a blue badge despite taking her money.

Secondly your comment in the proposal saying residents can walk or cycle. This is discrimination. There are many elderly residents that cannot. I have a heart condition and unable to walk into Harpenden and back and carry shopping particularly as there is always a Hill. This is appalling telling residents to do this. We need to have a choice.

No where does anyone mention there are churches in central Harpenden. There are services in all the churches during the week as well as open access.. Again discrimination, you are deliberately stopping the choice of attending church and making residents pay for the visit. In High street Methodist church there is Wesleys a coffee shop a vital community meeting place. This will be at risk as residents will stop attending. You have ignored that there is a Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church at 6pm on a Saturday. by making the hours until 6pm.

You have ignored the current lack of enforcement. You would be able to recoup most of your 'hole' that you are trying to plug just by doing that and then no need to impact on the residents and retailers. Residents will just shop elsewhere. It will be easier to go to Hatfield where Marks and Spencer will be as well as Tesco to shop, London Colney and Stevenage for other shopping. We have lived here for over 40 years, children attended schools, and I have worked here. This makes me very sad as I have always advocated buying and supporting locally but if you continue with your proposals will not any longer as will not be able to afford the parking. And finally, due to the difficulty in accessing this consultation there are many elderly residents in Harpenden that cannot make their response, To hold a consultation in prime Summer time also when many are away is deliberately being awkward so residents do not respond. I know of a number that will not come to Harpenden , a vital community as they will not be able to access a parking app and cost.

I feel sorry for the local retailers. Just imagine how worried they are that their business will not survive as customers will not be shopping locally.

Please consider the views of your residents who are strongly against your proposals.

I am opposed to these plans as they will have a detrimental effect on Harpenden's shops, which are already suffering as is apparent from the considerable number of vacant commercial premises on the High Street.

I am submitting my email trail – first email (at bottom) is the email I sent to Victoria Collins, she directed me to Paul De Kort – I forwarded him the email I sent to Victoria Collins, my reply to him is the email at the top (didn't have enough space in this box to include his initial reply to me. I believe my email to Victoria and reply to Paul highlight the majority of my concerns.

Paul,

As you say, there are 850 charges for bays already for longer stay parking. Therefore there is no reason to implement charging on the 250 free short stay bays, apart from money making and cost saving reasons.

I do not believe that there is significant support for the charging implementation based on all the Facebook and what's app threads posted within the community. I cannot recall having seen any comments favouring the proposal, and I strongly feel that the negative impact is not being overstated – the impact will have a significant and irreparable impact on the high street.

You are certainly right when you say parking is a hugely significant factor in people's visiting behaviour. The option of the current choice of paid or a decent length of time in free bays is what is keeping the high street alive and vibrant.

There may well be no reduction in the number of parking places, but the implementation of charging in these 250 bays will significantly reduce the number of people utilising the town centre and significantly reduce the amount spent in the high street shops.

There is no major difficulty currently in accessing parking in these 250 free bays. Those wanting to stay longer, either park further out of town and walk the last part, or use the paid bays. Those intending on a shorter visit use the free bays. I have lived in Harpenden for 7 years, and it has never taken me longer than 5 maybe 10 minutes at a maximum to get a space in a free bay – and this includes all times of the day and all days of the week.

The impact of visitors knowing they will need to pay, in order to get anything productive done in town, will stop the majority of people bothering to use the highstreet. 20 minutes wouldn't even, in all likelihood enable you to post a parcel in the post office (if you live in Harpenden and use the post office, you will totally understand that this is the case!) The hassle of completing telephone / online payment, ensuring you have coins, not wanting to waste money on parking will put a huge number of people off, and the impact on the highstreet will be irreversible. It certainly will NOT 'get the greater turnover' you have stated. As you say, motorists who want to stay longer 'can already use the four off street car parks nearby', so there is no need to implement charging in these free bays. As I have already stated, from experience, it had never taken me longer than 5-10 minutes at worst, to get a free parking bay space, as there are 250 and for the majority of these the maximum length of stay is 1h, so mathematically, at roughly 4 cars will be leaving every minute.

The possibility of the registration of cars parking is something that the council hasn't made locals aware of, and will be hugely opposed. The system at the train station regularly causes incorrect fines being issued, with the ability to successfully appeal frequently failing. So many residents visit the leisure centre, in particular, many times a day – for their own exercise and then to drop and collect children for multiple clubs that run from there. Uses should not have to be ensuring they have additional ways to prove their visits and length of stays due to incorrect car registration systems that fail so frequently, in order to appeal incorrectly issued fines. Businesses know the free bays are only free for 1 or 2 hours, so if staff are using these for longer periods that is because the parking attendants are failing in their role (as they must not be walking these areas frequently enough for staff to get parking tickets, which would stop them from parking and exceeding the 1 / 2 hour limit). This even more strongly suggests that the implementation of parking charges is a money making, and cost saving exercise, as the council will likely hugely reduce the frequency of parking attendants visits to these areas, of charges are introduced.

I did indeed mention about mobility, and yes, there are several (certainly not too many within the free parking) disabled bays. However, only those with the most significant mobility challenges will have disabled badges. There are a huge number of people who are elderly, or have difficulty with mobility, who do not qualify for a disabled badge, and for whom having free parking bays right in the high street provides them the ability to access the shops easily – this is the group of people who would find it most difficult to complete any small errand within a 20 minute time frame. I have no problem with

the current number of disabled bays within the free area, I do have an issue with the fact that the implementation of parking charges will significantly affect the elderly, less mobile and those with young children, who do not qualify for a disability badge.

As I stated earlier, I regularly park in the free bays at different times of the day, and on different days of the week, and have never failed to get a free parking bay when needing one. The maximum time taken to get one, at worst is 5-10 minutes. Therefore I believe your view point that the introduction of charges will be a significant benefit to those dropping off / collecting frequently, being incorrect, especially when taking into account all the points I have already mentioned above.

I feel very disappointed with your reply to my email, as it seems as if your opinion is already made up, and that you are unwilling to seriously consider any of the points I and other locals have made, as having any value or accuracy.

If the council insists on not taking these opinions into consideration, and goes ahead with the implementation, the longer term impact on the town centre will be hugely detrimental to both the local people, local businesses and as a result also for the council.

I would like my email to be submitted at any council meeting so all those involved in making final decisions read it beforehand. Please could confirm this will be the case.
(REDACTED)

To Victoria,

I don't know if it is correct or not, but I have heard on the grapevine that there is the possibility of parking charges being introduced in Harpenden town centre, in areas where it is currently free.

I wanted to message just to highlight how strongly I would oppose this. Free parking is a key factor to the high street maintaining its strength. The parking time is limited, so it already ensures spaces are not taken for long periods. It encourages people to stop on the high street, when otherwise they may well save the 'odd jobs / picking up of small items' until they can be done in bulk, potentially in a large supermarket outside of Harpenden.

The availability of free parking in Harpenden was a huge positive when we moved to the area - it makes the town feel welcoming, encourages impromptu stops in town that benefits the shops. It also makes the town feel as if it is helping to support the elderly / those mobility issues / those with young children, ensuring they can access facilities without financial implications.

Parking fees have already been extended in the leisure centre car park - it has pushed parking out onto the residential streets in the surrounding area, to avoid parking charges. It creates an unnecessary, money making feel to the town, which is short sighted as the effect on the local economy by the decrease in throughput and spending in the town will have a huge negative impact.

Kind regards,
(REDACTED)

I am totally against removing the free parking and charging for parking in Harpenden.

I am totally against this proposal. It seems as though this is being pushed through without the full knowledge of the circumstances behind the proposal, namely to cover the debt that has been incurred over the last 5 years by the Liberal Democrat led Council. I do not believe the introduction of Parking Fees should be used to cover existing debt and other ways should be considered and consulted on. The proposal is to encourage people to walk or to cycle to town. Harpenden High Street is in a valley, how many people of pensionable age will be able to walk or cycle that far. The proposed cost of £5 for 2 hours will prohibit people on lower incomes from coming to the High Street to shop, or to meet friends at coffee shops, to go to the Post Office, to collect prescriptions from the chemists, to get haircuts, to attend church during the week. I know there is a proposal to allow 20 minutes of free parking, twice a day, provided you have registered, but this isn't enough time to get food from Sainsburys, pay a paper bill, queue at the Post Office to buy stamps or send a parcel. How parents will cope dropping children off at school I do not know. The uncaring nature of this proposal will affect people enormously, it will lead to people not leaving their homes to meet friend because they have to decide if they can afford and justify the £5 spend. They will have to do their shopping after 6 o'clock, or learn to do online delivery at a cost and missing any social interaction at the shops. And what about the businesses that rely of the people of Harpenden, who go to the shops and coffee houses during the day, how long will they survive if no one can afford £5 to park in the High Street. If these proposals go through, I will miss going to Wesley's, seeing (REDACTED) in the paper shop, getting Fish and Chips from Godfreys, getting advice from (REDACTED) at Topkins Chemist, I certainly can't afford to spend around £300 per year to do essential trips to Town, It was bad enough that you took away my Seniors Parking Permit, but to squeeze further money from my pension, is appalling, inconsiderate to all residents, especially discriminatory against the elderly, who will rarely see the High Street again.

I am totally opposed to this proposal due to the serious detrimental affect it will have on independent shops in Harpenden which rely on the local population having the access that the free parking bays provide, As well as for shopping, 20 minutes of free parking is a totally inadequate amount of time for parents to drop off and collect children from the town's schools and certainly would not be enough time to use the Post Office given the woeful amount of staffing usually provided. To have to add £2.50 per hour to each shopping bill will mean that people will not use the town, but go to other retail areas where there is free parking. Also what about elderly people who are not able to walk far and need affordable access? It is a ridiculous idea!

I am very concerned about this proposal going to:

- discriminate against elderly people who go to town for company and social reasons not just for shopping.
- discriminate against small businesses vs large ones (who have car parks already provided for or built in e.g., Waitrose)
- not do anything for exercise because people who drive will simply go somewhere else (e.g., the new retail park near the M1 junction in Luton)
- become a tax on going to the GP or to the pharmacy all activities that take more than 20' not enough to have such a short free time
- overall drive people away from the town centre. We already have shops closing due to high rents this move will only make things worse and reduce footfall in town.
- cause tremendous congestions at the entrance of the Waitrose car park the only free car park left in town. This will cause delays and pollution in the town centre.
- for the north side of town likely see small shoppers go to Tesco Metro near Roundwood which is a traffic black spot.

In conclusion I don't see how this move could provide any benefit whatsoever to Harpenden and its residents.

I am very concerned that the proposals will have significant detrimental impact on the town and its local businesses. The proposed charges will have a detrimental impact on older residents and will result in a loss of community.

I am wholly against the new parking proposals.

I feel it would ruin the buzz of Harpenden with the charges with shoppers staying away from the high street causing businesses to close and the town to become soulless and unloved.

Your proposals of 20 mins is useless there is nothing that can be achieved in that time.

To say your scheme will encourage active travel encouraging people to cycle or walk ...they will not they will just go to another shopping hub where they can access free parking.

I feel the decision has been already made and the fact that you have ignored all petitions put forward by local residents and business there is a clear agenda on the council part ...even though you are voted in by the residents of Harpenden.

I am wholly against the proposed on street parking charges in Harpenden. This will have a detrimental effect upon local businesses and deter residents from visiting the town. Many people rely on their cars to access local facilities and enjoy the sense of community that this brings. Just another expense to already financially stretched families and OAP's during these difficult economic times. This is an ill thought out policy and needs to be revoked.

I am writing to express my profound objection to the proposed changes in parking regulations within Harpenden, which include the transition from free parking to a system offering 20 minutes free followed by a charge of £2.50 per hour.

As a resident of Harpenden, I am particularly concerned about the negative impact that these changes will have on our community and my quality of life. The proposed parking charges are not only exorbitant but also counterproductive to the vitality of the town. As a tax payer and long term resident of Harpenden I can confirm that the current system works just fine and does not need to change.

Firstly, the introduction of such high parking fees will undoubtedly make me economically worse off, deter visitors and shoppers from coming to Harpenden. Small businesses, which are already struggling in the current economic climate, will suffer a significant decline in footfall. The retail sector in Harpenden, known for its unique and independent shops, relies heavily on the accessibility and convenience of free parking. Implementing these charges could lead to a reduction in local commerce, driving customers to nearby towns with more favorable parking conditions or online. Just look at ST Albans City. Parking charges have crippled the city and it is hard to park anywhere.

Secondly, the 20-minute free parking period is wholly insufficient. It barely allows enough time for a quick errand, let alone a meaningful visit to local businesses or amenities. This restriction will discourage short but important visits, such as those to doctors, pharmacies, and other essential services. The inconvenience caused will be detrimental to residents like myself who rely on these short trips for their daily needs.

Furthermore, this proposal will disproportionately affect elderly residents and those with mobility issues. These individuals often require more time to complete their activities and may find the new charges to be an insurmountable burden. The

social isolation and financial strain caused by these changes could have serious implications for their wellbeing and quality of life.

Finally, the environmental argument for discouraging car use through increased parking charges does not hold up in this context. Public transportation options in Harpenden and the surrounding areas are not always practical or accessible, especially for families and those carrying heavy shopping. Instead of reducing car use, these charges are more likely to push residents to travel to other towns with free parking, thus merely shifting the problem rather than solving it.

In conclusion, the proposed parking charges of £2.50 per hour after a mere 20 minutes of free parking are both unreasonable and detrimental to the community of Harpenden and its surrounding areas. I urge St Albans District Council to reconsider this proposal in favor of a solution that supports businesses, respects the needs of residents like myself, and maintains the vibrancy of our town.

I am writing to express my strong objection to the proposed introduction of parking charges in Harpenden.

This will have a negative impact on the High Street, at a time when it needs all the help it can get. We should be looking to encourage a more diverse range of businesses to central Harpenden not introducing measures to reduce footfall and discourage new shops and businesses to open.

From a purely financial perspective this cannot make sense, after including the lost rates from business closures and the cost of installing and maintaining the parking meters, signs, and cameras, as well as hiring and training the wardens and

processing the fines the net income will be minimal if anything.

I urge the council to reconsider and not kill off our currently thriving town centre. Don't start a downward spiral of business closures and reducing footfall, once it starts it will be impossible to pull it back.

I am writing to express my strong objection to the proposed introduction of parking charges on Harpenden High Street. This submission presents our concerns about the negative impacts of these charges on local businesses, customers, and the overall community. I urge the council to reconsider these proposals and explore alternative solutions that support the economic vitality of Harpenden's High Street.

Key Objections to the Proposed Parking Charges

1. Impact on Everyday Lives

o Impact on Families, in particular parents of young children: Many parents with young children use the High Street during the course of dropping off or picking up young children. The proposed 20 minute free period is wholly inadequate for the real life lived experience of parents. For example, parking, parents typically have to persuade young children (often tired and grumpy) to climb out of the car, unpack a buggy from the, get the children into the buggy and get to from and from school or other activities. Once at the destination, let's say a school, the teachers may need time with the parents to discuss school matters. The parent may bump into other parents and wish to take some time to talk socially and make social arrangements for them and or their children. And then, on the way back to the car, parent may need to run a couple of quick errands such as buying a pint of mil and a loaf of bread. After this, it isn't too much to expect to be able to buy a coffee without being stressed and "dashing" back to the car within 20 minutes.

o Impact on older and retired people: Many customers shopping on Harpenden High Street are on tight budgets and fixed incomes. Introducing parking charges will add an extra financial burden, making it difficult for them to justify short visits to the High Street for essential items.

o Community Wellbeing: The High Street serves as a social hub for the community, particularly for the elderly and those with limited mobility. Free parking enables them to access essential services, socialize, and maintain their independence. Parking charges will create barriers, leading to increased isolation and reduced community engagement.

2. Impact on the High Street

o Threat to the economic viability of Harpenden High Street: Our retailers already face challenges from online shopping,

garden centres and other out-of-town shopping centres that offer free parking. Introducing parking charges will push more customers away from our High Street.

- o Discouragement of Short Visits: Free short-term parking encourages high turnover and quick visits, which are essential for businesses relying on impulse purchases and small transactions. Charging for parking will deter these short visits, leading to reduced footfall and sales.

- o Impact on charity shops: Our charity shops, which have become a destination shop due to their high quality stock and low pricing model, will be adversely affected. Many customers visit specifically for our low-priced items, and the additional cost of parking will discourage these visits. Parking charges will discourage people from dropping off donations, affecting our inventory and our ability to support the hospice.

- o Street furniture clutter: Ticket machines will clutter the High Street, reducing space for shoppers, including parents and those with limited mobility.

3. Impact on Retailers' Suppliers and Staff

- o Supplier Access: Efficient loading and delivery are crucial for business operations. The introduction of parking charges, without adequate provisions for loading bays, will disrupt supply chains and delivery schedules.

- o Staff Parking: Many retail staff cannot afford to live in Harpenden and rely on affordable parking. Current issues with finding affordable parking will be exacerbated by the new charges, making it harder to recruit and retain staff. Staff may need to move their cars frequently to avoid charges, disrupting their work.

Potential Improvements for Parking Management

1. Improve Enforcement: Currently the SADC enforcement of their existing parking regulations is wholly inadequate. Non-compliance is rampant due to lack of visible and consistent presence of traffic wardens. Many SADC tickets (e.g. Sun Lane) are broken or not accepting cash.

2. Retain Free Short-Term Parking: Maintain free short-term parking bays to support quick, high-turnover visits. This approach encourages foot traffic and supports local businesses.

3. Designated Parking for Retail Workers: Implement a discounted permit scheme for part-time and voluntary retail workers

to ensure they have affordable parking options, reducing the financial burden on low-paid and volunteer staff.

4. Enhanced Signage and Information: Improve visibility and information regarding existing parking options and permits to ensure both customers and staff are aware of available facilities.

5. Loading Bays: Establish designated loading bays outside key shops to facilitate smooth delivery and supply operations.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed parking charges on Harpenden High Street will have significant negative impacts on local businesses, customers, and the community. Maintaining free one-hour short-term parking, providing affordable options for retail workers, and enhancing parking management through targeted policies are essential to sustaining the vibrancy of Harpenden High Street. I urge SADC to reconsider these proposals and engage in more detailed discussions with local stakeholders, including Harpenden Town Council to develop a balanced and supportive parking strategy.

(REDACTED)

Harpenden Town Councillor

(REDACTED)

I am writing to object to the proposed parking charges for Harpenden town centre. There are already paid areas for parking to provide councils with revenue, but if you convert the free spaces to charged areas, this will drive business away and deter new businesses from setting up in what is a small town in Harpenden. Council tax is also very expensive and goes up every year. Surely cost savings can be found within the council to offset these punitive additional proposed parking fees.

I appose parking restrictions which will be detrimental to businesses in Harpenden, elderly people, mothers with young children who rely on parking to shop, attend appointments etc. It is not legal. Will money raised if applied repair local roads or go to pay off St Albans debt?

I attended the EGM of HTC on 22.07.24 to learn more about these parking proposals and how they will affect Harpenden. I am very concerned that the on street parking bays which are currently free for 1 or 2 hours are to become paid for spaces with only 20 minutes free.

The cost of £2.50 per hour for a maximum of 2 hours is prohibitive. I believe that residents and regular visitors to Harpenden town centre will choose to go elsewhere to shop or socialise.

Parents will struggle to get their young children into the 3 town centre schools on time – 20 minutes free parking simply will not be enough and to expect them to pay at least £5 per day to drop off & pick up their children each day is a huge extra cost and one many will not be able to afford. nor should they have to when children attending non-town centre schools do not have to!

Harpenden does not have any big name shops, or indeed any banks, to make paying for parking at those rates worthwhile. The two small supermarkets rely on people popping in for a few items with an occasional bigger shop when they park in the supermarket car parks. If we have to pay to park every visit it will simply be unaffordable.

The suggestion that people can walk or cycle to the town centre is only workable if one is not going to be buying anything to carry home! I live 2 miles north of the town centre and this is simply not possible! I am a fit and active retired person and I do walk into town reasonably often but I need to bring my car into town to do any shopping.

Part of Harpenden's charm is the range of independent retail outlets on offer, good quality charity shops and a wide range of pleasant coffee houses and eating places but these will suffer loss of custom and many may have to close if these parking proposals go ahead. Indeed, volunteers who largely man the Charity shops may reluctantly decide that they can no longer afford to do so.

The Senior Citizens Parking Permit was mentioned at the EGM. Currently my husband and I have a Senior Citizens Parking Permit but when this expires in September we will no longer be able to renew it as it has now been restricted to those receiving benefits. We both volunteer locally and this involves several trips a week into town each – it will make our volunteering more difficult if we have to pay to park every time! In addition many older people come into town to attend coffee mornings & social activities at local churches and Salvation Army or Harpenden Trust – many will not be able to afford to, or will find the payment apps or parking machines too difficult to manage. Arthritic fingers and failing eyesight do not make these things any easier. Why should they be discriminated against in this way?

A suggestion from HTC regarding this was that people born in 1954 or before should be able to apply for a permit at a higher rate. When this rather arbitrary cut off date was queried we were told that this is because people born after 1954 are more likely to be computer literate. Whilst this may be true, this misses a lot of points. If anyone of State Pension age is allowed to apply for a senior Citizen Parking permit that would make a lot more sense. It was a poor decision to restrict Parking Permits to people on benefits as many of the retired population could afford to pay more for it, perhaps £100 a year, thus guaranteeing parking income from this source. People on benefits could still apply for one at a reduced rate. This way it would bring in more income to SADC and support local businesses and the well-being of many older people who need to come into town to find company and support. We shall all continue getting older, even those of us born after 1954.

Another point to make is that car parks in the town are currently very poorly monitored and maintained. The lower levels on Bowers Way car park near Sainsbury's are filthy, with litter left for months on end. Also, cars park illegally all over town and there seldom seems to be anyone to enforce the current parking rules. If this was monitored efficiently it would generate much of the income SADC needs.

If parking bays need to be paid for, it should be at a more affordable rate, perhaps £1.00 per hour but with many of the bays allowing 30 mins free parking first.

I look forward to hearing of sensible solutions to these parking issues in the near future, thank you.

I believe charging for parking will destroy Harpenden town as embers of the public will revert more to online retail and it will receive less visitors from surrounding town. It currently states it's being subsidised by council tax – but I doubt this will be reduced as a result of this scheme. Our children go to school in Harpenden and have 1 car. This means we can take them to school or pick them up for free – we have to pay at least once under the plan.

All this will do is create more issues for residence around the town as their roads get clogged up with parking.

All in all a bad deal – we will continue to be charged in council tax, and again charged on the streets.

I believe charging for street parking in Harpenden will harm local shopkeepers, drive shoppers away from the town centre and have a detrimental effect on our thriving town centre.

Countless towns across the UK have been permanently damaged by the loss of local shopping. With the headwinds of e-commerce and high rates, the loss of footfall that would result from parking charges will lead to closures, loss of amenity, community and ultimately revenue for the council and wider area.

I believe it is unnecessary and effects the poorest in magnitude. Unless parking will be means tested

I believe reduction of free parking spaces will reduce the the viability of the town.

I believe that imposing on street parking charges in Harpenden Town centre will have a detrimental impact on the town centre businesses, activity & access of residents to local services. Whilst I understand the financial pressures on the council, if it leads to business closures, empty shops (consequent vandalism), diminished business rates income, negative impact on the wellbeing of residents then overall it's not a good solution to the funding issue.

As a parent with three complex needs children, we value being able to pop into town briefly. We use the doctors and the library in the town centre.

As long term Harpenden residents (18 years) we try to support local businesses in the town centre. Imposing parking charges will inevitably affect how frequently and/or casually we come into town and therefore reduce our spending in the local economy.

I believe that introducing on-street parking charges is short-sighted and will further reduce the number of visitors visiting our already challenged high street. We need to make it as easy and as cheap as possible to encourage MORE customers to

frequent the businesses in Harpenden; charging for parking can only have the exact opposite effect and will inevitably lead to fewer customers which will ultimately lead to more businesses closing, more empty shops and less income for the council. Please think of the long-term future of our town.

I believe that paid parking will damage local businesses in Harpenden.

I believe that the proposed 20 free mins is insufficient to allow for commerce and imposing a parking tariff after 20 minutes would have a material negative impact on the businesses of Harpenden. I would urge the council to consider a gratis period of one hour and a maximum permitted parking period of 3 hours on the high street. Effectively creating a short term parking zone, to be complimented by long term parking offered in the existing Bowers Way car parks.

I believe that the proposed changes to parking will have a detrimental effect on shops and other businesses in Harpenden. Shops are already struggling. It will also make life difficult for elderly people, particularly if you have to use an App at a parking meter. This is a bad idea.

I believe that this change will severely affect the number of visitors to our town and cause a lot of trouble for businesses. I frequently stop for an hour or so when I'm on my way through the town, buy a coffee and a few things from the supermarket, but after these changes I will probably always drive straight through.

I would like to add that I walk or cycle to town whenever I can but it is not always possible for me to do that due to time constraints or needing to go further afield in the same trip or transporting children.

I also appreciate that I am lucky to be fit enough to have a choice and many other residents have to use a car.

We need to encourage local businesses so that residents have the opportunity to work and shop locally, therefore reducing car usage. I do not believe that these changes will do anything except discourage local businesses from operating here. Once businesses have moved away the income from these charges will fall. There must be a better way to raise money.

I believe the free parking should be 45 mins as 20 mins is not enough time for example to pick up a Prescription or cue in the post office to use thier services.

Happy to pay a charge thereafter but feel £2.50 per hour is too high

I believe the changes will not benefit the community as it will make it harder to pickup perscriptions, shopping, etc and also run the risk of getting a fine due parking app errors, scams,etc. I feel it will also be detrimental to the character of Harpenden. Overall a bad idea.

I believe the paid-for parking proposal would discourage people from visiting Harpenden high street, and as a result have a real, detrimental impact on the many independent shops and restaurants in the town, who are already struggling with high rents and business rates. I would be far more inclined to buy things online rather than go to the high street if I had to deal with the inconvenience and cost of paying to park (I currently shop in town approx 2-3 times a week, and live a little too far to walk in every time). We should be encouraging people to shop and spend their leisure time in the town, rather than putting up barriers to access.

I believe these proposals will cause the general demise of local shops and businesses in both Harpenden and St Albans. Like most local residents I can park and shop in Hemel and / or Hatfield for free and for a considerable period and have a very wide range of shops and facilities to choose from.

I think these proposals would be a blunder of considerable prportions for both towns and once lost it may prove impossible to regain the footfall, followed by yet another dead town centre.

I believe this to be wholly unfair on the population of Harpenden and will make the viability of the town centre worse rather than better.

It can often take 20 minutes to get my children from the car just to where I need to go so what convenience is the 20 minute free going to achieve for parents of young children?

Any initiatives for Harpenden Town should be focused on attracting young families, not putting them at an inconvenience and out of pocket.

By charging for parking, this will put a stop to coffee meet ups for young mums which directly saves the lives of mothers who are lonely, suffering with post natal depression and desperate for companionship in other mums. Other events that will be affected are such as –

Stay and plays which are vital for children's development.

Rhyme time at the library.

Both of which are crucial for children to learn how to communicate. Are you aware that due to the changes in lifestyle that we have adapted, children are not speaking or reading until much further down the expected trajectory that they have previously. Classes such as rhyme time and stay and plays help reverse this and show children and young babies how to communicate.

Not to mention the small independent businesses such as Baby Sensory, Monkey Music, Tiny Ballerinas. All of which are reliant on convenience and cost effective parking.

There are no improvements on local bus services and no room on the buses for prams and wheelchairs, so this is an unviable option for parents of young children.

I find this a wholly discriminatory approach to the councils financial situation, putting it on the residents of Harpenden to suffer and not looking at whatever root cause it is that has put them in a position where they are desperate to raise funds.

I believe this will discourage people from using local businesses. In principle I understand the need to control traffic in the town but not always feasible to walk/ cycle and 20 min is too short a time for a typical errand

I believe this will discourage people from visiting the businesses in town. The high street is already suffering and this could contribute to further closures and impact from both a financial but also community standpoint.

I believe this will impact the number of people using shops in Harpenden. Paying for parking on a Sunday is bad enough. We almost decided not to come one day but parked in Lydekker which was free instead.

I believe this will impact upon the vitality of the town. I think it is unfair on the poorer section of society who can't afford the increase. I believe there is not adequate vision to bring people into the town by bus or cycle to those not within walking distance. It penalises parents using schools in the town.

I believe this will impact upon the vitality of the town. I think it is unfair on the poorer section of society who can't afford the increase. I believe there is not adequate vision to bring people into the town by bus or cycle to those not within walking distance. It penalises parents using schools in the town.

I believe this will significantly impact small retailers in Harpenden and is unnecessary.

I work locally and regularly pop into Harpenden to the shops. Introducing parking charges will invent me to go to Redbourn as an alternative.

There will not be a major parking issue in Harpenden and what problem there is would be solved by more strictly enforcing the current restrictions.

I strongly object to this proposal.

I believe we already pay enough in Council Tax to cover the parking. By changing you will just make local roads more congested as people drive around trying to find free parking. Support local shops who already pay high rents to allow their customers to park for free for an hour.

I believe you haven't taken into account the extra revenue that will be generated from the new parking structure in the Amenbury Car Park, far more motorists now pay for parking rather than get the free 2 hour parking for using the Sports Centre. The high street will die if you charge £5 for 2 hours parking, I will just get more on line instead of supporting local businesses. You've already compromised restaurants by now charging for nighttime parking. You mention active travel do you realise how difficult it is to carry a full week's food shopping on your own and get it home before it defrosts, especially in the summer. The hopper bus doesn't venture to where I live.

I both walk into town and drive depending on the purpose of my trip. I am concerned that 20 minutes free parking is not sufficient for those times I need to pop to town. This is often when I am short of time or need to pick up a few things that would be too heavy to carry back. I also pick things up, including prescriptions, for my elderly parents who live the other end of Harpenden so I drive through town on the way. Given these proposals I have been more conscious as to how long I spend in town and found that 20 mins would rarely be sufficient as I will often pop to two or three shops in one go. It also adds unnecessary stress to have to work out how to pay for parking and presumably get another app (which in general I find glitchy) adds time to the journey and will put me off using town for anything more than a quick dash for one item. This is such a shame as I think Harpenden has become really vibrant during and post the pandemic as more people are working in a hybrid fashion and not commuting every single day (me included) which means I have come to use town much more. Anything less than 30 minutes would not be sufficient and ideally an hour would be permitted with the option of paying for another hour for people who need an extended stay. It may also create a system whereby those who can pay will routinely spend max time parked (because they have paid!) and actually mean there is less turnover of spaces so no spots even for shorter trips and those who can't afford it will use the town centre less. It isn't clear to me what studies have actually been done to show the impact on the town and also the potential revenue that would be made. It appears short sighted and unlikely to actually serve the intended purpose.

I can not see how this will support the Harpenden Town Council's Strategic Objective to "Promote the economic and commercial viability of small businesses, including the High Street.....". It is more likely to destroy those which currently exist as customers desert the town centre for traders offering free parking.

If the intention is to generate income, as seems likely, the potential financial gain has not been demonstrated and must be highly doubtful.

Overall, this is an ill-conceived and poorly researched proposal which must not proceed.

I can understand the knee-jerk reaction to the proposal, but upon reading it myself and the reasoning behind it, it sounds like a sensible solution. It would also help reduce the number of unnecessary car journeys into town and encourage people to make use of the bus service, cycle or walk. Those saying that it will kill the high street because people who would park for a few hours and shop around Harpenden would now have to pay, as far as I'm aware the time limit on the existing free parking doesn't allow for that either so it's not like it's a sudden change.

I can understand why improvements to the parking arrangements in the centre of Harpenden are necessary and are under review. Parking spaces are a resource that should be used to best effect and they have not always been well managed in the centre of the town. I agree that there should be a limit to the amount of time that a parking space in the centre of the town is available. People need to access shops and services and some free parking helps with this. The time limit proposed for free parking is insufficient. 20 minutes (albeit twice a day) is too short a time to allow people to quickly visit a shop or the post office and carry out essential tasks. Around 30 minutes is a minimum that should be allowed and then over that limit the charging mechanisms should be easy to access and use taking into account the age profile of a very large portion of the population of Harpenden and its surrounding area (ie elderly). Smart technology may be wonderful but whatever charging systems used must be readily accessible and usable by everyone regardless of age and ability. Normally, I would be very supportive of non car based solutions to travelling around a local area but Harpenden is unusual in that whilst it has some public transport along the main road corridors the vast majority of the population lives some distance away from having accessible public transport and the commendable town hoppla is a very limited service. To a lot of residents (given age factors especially) car parking in the town centre is essential to carry out essential tasks and there should be sufficient free parking time allowed in any scheme hence a minimum of 30 minutes. For the car parks which are spread around the town and are chargeable the signage, payment systems and layouts all should be co-ordinated to ensure maximum effective use. It should be possible to integrate both privately own council owned car parks into any scheme. At the end of the day schemes for transport and parking management should not be about making money but to make best use of the space available, encourage people to use all the facilities of their area and create a vibrant community both economically and socially. Can we have everything properly co-ordinated for once?

I can't remember if I have submitted my comments to this petition, so am sending this again just in case. I often have to come to town in the day, for things i need, sometimes my household is unpredictable and i need to get things at short notice. If I have to pay every time i park (20 mins is not enough to park and get to the shop and then back) i will have to choose to drive further afield and i think many people will just avoid the town shops. We have a blue badge, but can only use when the holder is in the car, and often i am shopping for them but they are at home so i can't use it and in a way, the charges penalise them because it will take me longer to get the things i need. I think to totally disregard a whole town and make a monetary decision from another city is really undemocratic. It is not the fault if the residents that you need to make more

money in st Alban's and it doesn't apply evenly. Those that can walk to town are in a better position and those that need to drive are being disadvantaged. This affects a lot of people and feels quite unfair and will exclude lots of people. The lovely local retailers will be forced to up their prices to cover the lower sales and this means residents will shop elsewhere or online and it will leave a husk of a town with just mainstream brands and no variety. You should listen to local opinion and reconsider.

I can't see any evidence for the need to start charging for parking, other than the rumoured black holes in council funding. We already have a number of Pay To Park car parks. It is not necessary to make all parking chargeable.

I often venture into town to do my weekly shop. Should parking charges come into force I will move my shopping to out of town centres where parking is free, and I doubt I'll be the only one.

I also assume any payment machines will be app based which is a barrier for the older generation.

Living in Southdown, we constantly have problems with parking on yellow lines, yet nothing is done about it, there is no enforcement. I don't understand how new parking charges will be enforced given the inability to deal with the current parking situations.

I cannot believe that anyone who cares about Harpenden has even suggested this. This is a quick and sure fire way to lead to the demise of the high street, and with it local businesses (and the jobs they support), and in turn one of the biggest elements that make Harpenden what it is. Without a thriving High Street, Harpenden will not be the same.

This is a money grabbing exercise, rather than something that will improve the fabric of the town. Pop to Threads to pick up a birthday card? Nope - it will be cheaper to get it delivered by Amazon. Pop to the Silver Palate to buy something for lunch? Not when it's £2.50 more expensive.

In my opinion this is the single biggest issue affecting Harpenden at the moment, and at the next elections I will support ANY party who promises to revoke this situation.

I cannot express how strongly I object to these proposals. The parking process in the centre of Harpenden is working fine. One hour free is enough for most peoples shopping needs and encourages residents to support the businesses in the town centre. To change it to 20 minutes free is a joke, By the time a parking space has been found and you get to the shop you want it is time to turn around and go back to the car without even entering the shop! How stupid is that.

Very few elderly drivers qualify for a blue badge (rightly so) and many of them cannot walk and carry goods longer distances so have to park near the shops. The huge increase in the residents parking permit costs is astounding totally unjustifiable.

So many of the businesses, and supermarkets absolutely rely on these customers. As for the many coffee shops and small restaurants having to pay a minimum of £2.50 to park and get a sandwich and coffee or £5.00 to stop for a meal will result in the loss of a huge number of potential customers and no doubt lead to the closure of many businesses and a ghost town of empty premises along what is now a flourishing High Street. It will encourage Harpenden residents to go to one of the nearby 'out of town' centres where there is free parking where they can shop, eat, drink and relax without worrying about a parking ticket employee waiting enthusiastically for the car to creep over the 20 minute time limit so that he/she can slap a sticky yellow notice on the windscreen.

This proposal is NOTHING to do with supporting the local businesses and residents, it is only a money grabbing enterprise for Harpenden Town Council and St Albans District Council. Shame on you all.

I cannot see how this benefits anyone except those collecting the money.

Bad for shops and businesses, bad for residents who need to drive, and the newly erected posts are bad for the look of the town centre.

I cannot see how this proposal can support the Harpenden Town Council's Strategic Objective to "Promote the economic and commercial viability

I cannot think of a single reason why this might be a good idea and have not spoken to a single resident who supports it.

Clearly this will have a negative impact on residents since we will now have to pay to park in our own town. It reduces any option to simply pop to the shops (e.g. why would someone go to sainsburys and pay to park when you could go out of town to easily park for free at a bigger store). I am shocked that anyone could possibly think this will benefit harpenden residents in anyway.

Additionally, these changes will only have a negative impact on local businesses who already have to deal with increasing rent. They will now have to contend with less business since we are deterring people from going into the town center, or at the very least deterring them from spending much time there. How will local independent coffee shops remain afloat now that people are being discouraged from staying in town for too long?

What feels abundantly clear is that the only reason for this decision is that the council are trying to raise funds and have decided to do so through milking the residents of Harpenden. This is utterly unethical and a frankly corrupt way of viewing the citizens of a town you are supposing to be serving.

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I cannot understand why SADC should want to bring in these changes. Why has £1.5 million been spent over the last 4 years? Is this the marking out of parking bays? Some marking will still be necessary although in Harpenden this is minimal now and certainly not in need of improvement.

Harpenden town centre is thriving and part of this is the easy availability of street parking. Contrast this to St Albans where the high street is a desolate eye sore. I cannot help thinking that SADC want to destroy Harpenden's panache, and are simply envious of Harpenden's fantastic community spirit.

Leave the charges alone. By all means increase monitoring and control but don't destroy Harpenden (as you have done in St Albans) by imposing unneeded parking charges.

I come over to Harpenden to do my shopping every week as Harpenden is easier to get to and park. I love how thriving Harpenden is with people and families visiting the coffee shops, taking time to catch up with friends. Although some people will continue to come if parking charges are introduced, however a lot won't including myself. The charges proposed are astronomical and will have a detrimental affect on businesses in and around the high street. Once a high street is decimated, it's very hard for it to come back and with shops competing day to day against the online world why try and make it harder for the shops in Harpenden by introducing fees that both the public and store owners don't want.

I completely disagree with the proposals based mainly on the safety risk associated with these plans. It is already extremely difficult to park around the town centre and to introduce pay zones will clog up the surrounding residential roads with people looking for parking spaces, creating an increased risk to pedestrians.

The shop owners on the high street already have a torrid time with huge rent increases over the last 48 months, too add a risk of reduced business from charges that will most likely drive people to out of town shopping is commercial suicide.

I can only see one reason for this planned action, to further line the pockets of the local councils only for that to be reinvested into schemes that no one really wants!

I completely disagree with the proposed changes and charges to parking, and do think it will add another nail in the coffin for Harpenden businesses – adding to the continually rising business rates, and the difficulties our local businesses are still struggling through since Covid, etc.

There are other options which it doesn't feel like the Council has tried – such as using occasional traffic wardens more to discourage rogue parking which is often seen – people staying longer than the 1 or 2 hours permitted, and as an example certain cars and vans which seem to have secret/invisible permits to park all day across the several 'keep clear' sections of Leyton Road without displaying any permit or notice indicating they have permission to do so (even Google Maps Street view shows people parked on almost all of them!).

I hardly ever see parking wardens anymore and have heard the same from friends who work in the centre of Harpenden, and wardens that do come seem to completely ignore certain vehicles – which park all day on 'keep clear' areas (which not only is against regulations but blocks pedestrians and vehicles passing) or who park all day in one- or two-hour spaces without ever being asked to move or getting a ticket. By reducing those rogue drivers, parking would be altogether more possible and more pleasant in Harpenden.

Surely having a warden come and check vehicles and ticket overstayers (especially those parking on keep clear or time restricted areas) will get vehicles moving more, stop certain vehicles blocking the roads, and allow more people to come and park for the currently permitted time and use the local businesses and facilities.

A couple of weeks ago I went to the pharmacy and then to a local shop to pick up a couple of items. Due to queues in both, it took close to an hour meaning that in future should these restrictions be applied, I would have to restrict this type of trip to solely going to the pharmacy. That being said, there have been several times when my trip to the pharmacy alone has taken more than 20 minutes due to their volume of work and therefore queues in the pharmacy.

I generally come into Harpenden (from Batford) to shop in local shops, go to local eateries and pubs, and pick up

prescriptions in between other things and with limited time and cash. With my health condition/injury, I would be unable to walk or cycle into Harpenden particularly if in a rush, so I would have to reconsider whether to drive into Harpenden or go somewhere without the added hassle and expense.

I find it incredulous that the parking machines suggested would not take cash / card and that a smart phone with relevant apps or a trip into a local business would be the only way to pay for parking. This will have such a knock on detrimental impact on the local businesses and on residents. I can only take from the decision to propose these changes that St Albans District Council must want to completely minimise the ability for people to be able to park and use Harpenden services, especially older or disabled people.

PPB/01

I completely disagree with this proposal- it will have a detrimental effect on our town and its businesses and is purely a moneymaking scheme for the council. Any argument that it will prevent traffic or is for environmental reasons is false as people will likely travel farther out of town to shop instead.

I completely object to the new pricing of parking in Harpenden high street. This will kill the high street and put parking issues on the surrounding area. At £2.50 it is overpriced and disgusting that the council is charging that much. At 20 mins free parking how are slower residents able to do their shopping? It should be 1 hr free. It's a disgrace and I hope the council

rethink their pricing plan and are more considerate to the residents that can't walk into their own town. I completely reject this proposal

I completely object to this proposal due the the destructive and disproportionate impact on retail in Harpenden and the financial impact on those who have no option but to use cars in their day to day life. Retailers in Harpenden are already finding it hard and there are lots of closed shops. Twenty minutes is a very short amount of time to do any meaningful activity and make it very stressful.

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I could not feel more strongly about this dreadful parking proposal. I grew up in Harpenden and am now raising my own family (3 children) in Harpenden. Prior to moving back to Harpenden 5 years ago, we lived in central St Albans for 12 years. Harpenden is a very special place to live and the town centre functions completely differently to the large city centre in St Albans; it is wholly inappropriate to treat them the same. People (including myself) visit St Albans city centre for a whole morning or day; you don't just pop in for one or two things. When visiting a large, city centre you are having a more leisurely visit and paying for parking feels proportionate and much less of an inconvenience. I live within walking distance of Harpenden town centre but rarely have the time or opportunity to walk into town. I visit the town centre most days, sometimes more than once, and spend a significant amount of money there, but am always stopping off while passing through from A to B dropping off or collecting children, or killing time while I wait for them to finish a dance class etc. I am always in a rush to park quickly, run into two or three shops to grab eg a birthday gift, prescription, dry cleaning, a food tech ingredient for school, a fresh loaf of bread etc and then head on my way. A typical visit would be about 45-60 minutes. I absolutely love the current ease of parking in Harpenden – it's one of the main differences to living in central St Albans. It helps to make a short shopping experience an attractive and simple prospect. The compact nature of the town makes it possible to visit numerous shops in an hour. I would much rather an increase to council tax than the hassle and inconvenience of having to pay to park for each visit. I would also consider an annual resident's parking permit if it meant not needing to pay for each visit (a similar opt-in scheme to green bins). The hassle factor of having to log in to park and/or clock watch trying to stay under 20 mins (despite, say, a ridiculous post office queue), all make it a much less appealing prospect. I know I will be much more inclined to make do with a card and bottle of wine from the Tesco local or flowers from the M&S garage, rather than 'popping' into Threads or Serena Hart or The Home Edit for a nicer, more unique gift. I wish that weren't the case but that is an inevitable consequence of adding hassle factor to something which has been wonderfully easy for as long as I can remember. I fear for the local shops and our lovely town centre. The introduction of parking charges can only have a negative impact on our local businesses who are already struggling. Do we really want to live in another dead town with even more empty units? It is the council's duty and, I believe, pledge, to support our town centre and maintain Harpenden as a thriving centre where people want to spend time. I am mortified that my vote for the Liberal Democrats has paved the way for this and I feel extremely betrayed by their handling of this fiasco. Harpenden will not forget who was responsible for this damaging policy; I urge you to reconsider, for your sakes and mine.

I disagree with the proposal to remove free parking on High Street. This will reduce much needed footfall for our lovely independent shops who are struggling with high rents etc as it is and could potentially lead to even more shops closing. We need to do everything we can to keep the high street vibrant and busy

I disagree with the idea and it will not work we cannot afford for our parking and that we visit very very often. This is just an anti-car and it will not work. And don't tell me that the money raised from this will improve the bus services because you know very well it will not it never has and it never will. We are very disappointed with this, to be some sort of liberal party idea which is very anti-car we shall not be voting for you again. If you want to save money look no further than the police commissioner who sits in the offices at the old Harpenden police station with all his cronies is doing basically nothing we do not need him get rid of him and save the money that way.

Yours a very disappointed resident.

(REDACTED)

I do not accept that 20 minutes is a suitable or realistic minimum period for users of local shops and businesses – 30 minutes feels more reasonable if it is expected that this is for users who need to be able to park adjacent to the local shops. By definition those who are not "blue badge holders" will have some limited mobility, and so expecting them to be able to achieve their visit within 20 minutes seems unrealistic. I would like to see signage clearly advising that the parking is principally for loading from the shops where carrying goods to the car parks is too difficult / for those with reduced mobility to discourage those of us who can walk from blocking these spaces.

I do worry that introducing parking charges will adversely impact the footfall in Harpenden. Dunstable has for years suffered from low footfall from visitors who will travel into Luton if they have to pay to park – actually driving up travel & pollution due to the greater distance covered. By introducing more metered / charged parking in Harpenden there is the risk of visitors being pushed either into St Albans or Luton (for the greater range of shops) if they know they will have to pay to park. Harpenden does very well as a small town / large village on the periphery of Luton & St Albans – it would be a shame to see it adversely impacted by loss of local business. Harpenden has managed to maintain near total occupancy of the shops – which will be assisted by the free local parking, and a reduction in this "passing trade" will inevitably see shops close & a loss of income for the council from business rates. As Dunstable has shown, once shops start to close then others follow as it becomes less of a "destination" and the commercial heart becomes to die.

MY final concern with the proposal relates to the idea of the parking becoming self funding.

- i) This will be reliant on sufficient people choosing to pay to park, rather than either pushing out into domestic roads adjacent to the centre where parking is free. Inevitably this will cause disruption to the local community, conflict and a requirement to roll out further "residents only parking" through Harpenden. This is never popular, and is always the result of poorly thought out / expensive introduction of local paid on-street parking charges. Basically you will cause a larger problem in the centre of Harpenden by introducing paid parking where it is currently free, while not receiving the expected income from the parking.
- ii) People will drive to other local areas to shop – increasing pressure on parking at these locations, increasing journeys, etc.
- iii) the parking meters must be funded by someone – and the cost for these will need to be recovered (by the council or whoever the parking is out-sourced to). A lower than expected up-take of the parking will inevitably result in an increase in parking costs to recoup the initial outlay – generating a spiral of increase in cost and decrease in income & usage.

iv) Parking meters are increasingly operated by "phone apps" rather than cash. This means that the more elderly users (who would be most in need of local parking) are more likely to struggle to utilise the facility – again driving down uptake of this "option". IF they have to be installed, then there MUST be an obligation to support all normal means of payment – Cash, Touch & go contactless card payment & web app.

v) there is currently limited parking options in the centre of Harpenden already. Waitrose & Sainsbury are the two main car parks, both of which are small, particularly in light of modern cars being larger than they used to be. So there is not a lot of spare space that could be used for parking other than that currently available – unless parking spills into local streets.

Overall – The arguments against introducing this measure seem to significantly outlay the proposed reasons for introduction. There is not currently a problem with parking in the centre of Harpenden, other than a loss of potential income for the Council – which it seems is the main reason for looking to introduce this. And for that to have a net benefit it would need a very carefully explained business case – detailing the cost of introduction, the potential and expected income from metered parking (profit after operating & set-up costs have been recouped) the likely impact on local shop occupancy & business rate incomes etc. And I can't see any of that detail in this proposal.

For these reasons I object to the introduction of this plan.

I do not agree with parking charges in my town

I do not agree with the introduction of parking fees on the streets of Harpenden. This will stop Harpenden residents using the shops in Harpenden and then shops will close. Residents will drive to supermarkets etc that are off site with no charges. I am in my 70's and no way could I carry my weekly shopping from the store to a car park. Also the 20 minute free parking is ridiculous. How are seniors supposed to put a prescription into a chemist, get their prescription and get back to their car in 20 minutes. Also parents with children/babies in the car can not be expected to safely get them out of the car, to school and back in 20 minutes. Charity shop workers who volunteer and park in Harpenden will no longer be able to work in the many charity shops we have in Harpenden. You cannot expect to introduce parking charges because St Albans have them. St Albans is a hub for tourists, many go to visit the Cathedral. Harpenden is a totally different experience when visiting. Also making the senior parking permits for only people on benefits was unfair as many pensioners are probably on the cusp and will now miss out on a trip to St Albans.

I was at the meeting at the Town Hall and many residents are very angry about these parking fees to be introduced.

I do not agree with the parking proposal for Harpenden. The ability to park for free is what brings life to our town and community. Introducing a charge will alienate residents from going to the shops in the high street. We have some fantastic independent shops and this will have a huge negative effect on their business. Charging to park is also not fair on the local residents who can not afford the charges. There are many residents who need to go to the high street for the doctors, dentist, pharmacy, grocery shopping etc, but also for their mental health and well being to see friends and family. Introducing a charge will make this impossible for many residents, especially the elderly. It is just wrong!!

If the council needs money there are other ways to do this rather than penalising the community and destroying the local businesses!!!

I do not support being charged to visit the high street at a time when local businesses are already struggling and Harpenden is now littered with empty shop fronts. This is not supporting local. This is not supporting small businesses.

I do not support the parking fee proposal in Harpenden

I DO NOT support this proposal at all.

Damaging to local business. Deter people from shopping locally. People will use their cars more driving further to places with free parking which is bad for environment.

Residents already pay large amounts of council tax, why should we have to pay to park for trips into our nearest town for groceries, doctors, dentist, school drop off and pick up.

20 minutes free is not enough. You can barely do anything in 20 minutes. Often appointments with gp's etc run late.

The proposed parking charges are expensive. Not everyone with a Harpenden postcode is made of money.

I was born in Harpenden and have lived here all my life yet it is becoming increasingly hard to be able to afford to stay and live here.

I believe these proposed charges will isolate sectors of the local community, particularly older people that may not be able to afford to park regularly and do not have smart phones etc for parking apps.

Another way for St Albans council to extort money out of Harpenden residents.

I do not support this. To have to pay for parking even for a short visit into town will be very bad for local business.

I do not understand why we would be plunged into restrictive parking when local business are working so hard to build and maintain a vibrant local economy and community. I object to this proposal. This will have a hugely detrimental impact on my business. I am in favour of promoting and attracting businesses to Harpenden. If visitors cannot park easily this will deter them from coming to our town. We only have to look at the terrible decline of the St Albans High street, empty retail and offices at every corner. Not only do the workers need to be able to park, but those who visit and frequent our businesses, must be able to do so without difficulty. I don't see that there is a parking problem in Harpenden currently, compared to other local towns. I do not understand why we would be plunged into restrictive parking when local business are working so hard to build and maintain a vibrant local community.

I do not understand why you would wish to impose these charges. As far as I understand retail businesses are sold with the price reflected in the level of footfall. While it is good to have 20 minutes free so that people can park and run into a shop, the businesses will lose those purchases that happen as something 'catches the eye' and when memory is jogged when passing a shop. Popping into town for a coffee with friends becomes much more expensive. I strongly believe that this will adversely affect the businesses in Harpenden and definitely where I might choose to do my shopping. These prices are expensive and do not reflect the choices of shops that are available in Harpenden. Sainsbury's in St Albans which is much larger and has free parking is now very much more attractive. Shopping centres with much more variety are also now much more attractive. I feel saddened for our small town and the impact I feel certain these policies will bring about. Looking in the plan. It seems there are very few spaces for the disabled which seems to me to be very discriminatory. I understand the need for the council to raise extra money but I wonder how much this scheme will cost in terms of parking machines and associated personnel plus the personnel required to police it.

I wonder whether it might be possible to charge an annual fee as in the current senior citizens parking scheme? This would not require expensive parking machine, would be more convenient for people and helpful for those folk, especially the elderly who are not necessarily happy /competent to use parking apps. The cost of the permit could be increased if necessary in order to increase council income. This type of system seems to work well for Amazon and actually encourages people to make more purchases as they've already paid for postage. In the same way if people have already paid for parking, they might be invited to shop in Harpenden more frequently.

I really hope you hear the voices of the people of Harpenden

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I really hope you hear the voices of the people of Harpenden

I don't think that there should be charges in Harpenden centre for parking. It will impact the business' trade & is frankly just another tax on people.

I don't want the hassle. I don't want ugly parking meters in my attractive town.

I don't see a problem with the current parking. We have both free and paid options in the town centre and I feel this gives a good balance for both residents and small businesses.

I don't see the reason to charge for parking. This will severely affect local businesses. In addition, I have already paid a lot for resident parking permit. It is unreasonable to have a resident to spend so much on parking for necessities!

I don't think short term free parking should be removed. This will have a huge impact on the high street shops and general feel of the town

I fail to understand how this proposal will improve the parking in Harpenden as there are already time limits on, on street parking, its primary purpose seems to be purely to generate income from residents and visitors to Harpenden Town centre, penalising those who wish to use the facilities / doctors / shops / churches / socialise within the existing 30 minutes and 1 Hr bays.

All I can see happening is that this will hasten the demise of local shopping as residents and visitors take their trade elsewhere, primarily to the 'out of town' shopping centres that exist in neighbouring towns as the effective cost of driving to those locations is less than the proposed charge of £2.50 /Hr and the parking more convenient. This can already be seen in the low take up in the existing chargeable car parks operated by SADC.

This will mean that the remaining users (who use the wholly inadequate public transport system) or are entitled to free parking will bring insufficient purchasing power to enable the remaining shops to survive. I do not see how anyone can consider that it is viable to perform the 'weekly' shop for a family then transport it by foot, bicycle or public transport. The consultation / councillor statements make much that this proposal only affect the 'high usage bays', but the plan shows all the parking in the centre of Harpenden up to residents parking zones as becoming chargeable, so it should be more accurately expressed as 'all parking bays'.

Finally, though not stated it appears that users will be forced to use and pay via a phone parking app which will surcharge the user putting up the effective price and penalising those who are not smartphone savvy.

When taken with restriction in recent years on the Senior parking scheme, increased chargeable hours in council car parks and the creation of reserved spaces for those holding (non chargeable perk / work) car park passes this looks very much like a scheme to benefit one small group at the expense of Harpenden residents and others.

I fear that this proposed policy will increase illegal parking, will be a disincentive to local residents unable to walk far who will put off by the charges, will have an adverse effect on local businesses and will give rise to a general feeling of discontent with the local authority at a time when social cohesion is so important.

I fear you will destroy the peaceful nature of our high street by imposing parking fees, it will be the start of its destruction just like many high streets before.

People that need to visit Harpenden that cannot afford to pay parking fees or find them excessive will simply park in streets that do not have parking restrictions simply pushing cars further into residential areas where children STILL play outside instead of sitting in front of a screen getting no benefit from the outdoors, until of course the residential areas also become part of a parking fee scheme!! Then you'll get residents paving over their front garden to avoid parking charges causing a water waste problem, where does it stop, why can't it be left as it is??? is it that lucrative??? I don't want this scheme, I feel it's a slippery slope that once started we'll never get out of!!!!

I feel that by charging for more than 20minutes parking in Harpenden then it will be the death of the high street. It will affect all business and charge the feel of Harpenden

I feel they should ensure you get a ticket a ticket for 1 or 2 hour free parking then pay if you want longer. If this is monitored by traffic wardens this will raise money without affecting local businesses.

I feel that the proposed parking restrictions will be detrimental to the Harpenden high street - which will have enormous impact to the shops trading. Already the majority of banks have disappeared and some of these properties are still vacant as well as other properties which remain as vacant premises - how many more empty shops will this proposal lead to and end in a dead town instead of the vibrant place it is now.

The proposed free time will not allow anyone to do anything in 20 mins and is therefore a pointless proposal which will lead to people spending less time browsing in the shops and spending less as well as increasing the anxiety of shoppers . Not all people are nimble nor do they have a disabled badge therefore you are forcing people to pay at least £2.50 minimum as the free time will be useless for this group.

Then to charge £2.50 for the first hour is an astronomical amount.

Although I am not a disabled badge holder there does not appear to be many areas for such parking.

I cannot see any reference to the method of payment but I presume there would be meters accepting either cash or cards.

After all the ability to scam people using apps such as Ringo is well researched and reported on.

This proposal will transform the Harpenden town centre as a lovely place to shop with lots of independent shops to hang out

to a place where people will not want to shop.

Currently it is also a highly recommended place to live – good school and a commuter town as reported in several newspapers but this reduction in shopping trade and the impact of parking restrictions will result in houses not being sold and prices reduced. All this could change overnight if parking prices are introduced.

I feel that this proposal will result in a significant decline in footfall to the High Street in Harpenden at a time when the independent shops we have are already under considerable pressure. We are losing national chain businesses too. 20 minutes is not long enough to drop/pick up primary school age children. & two visits a day does not allow for the drop off/pick up from any after school clubs/activities

The less able bodied (not the Blue Badge holding Disabled) will not find 20 minutes long enough to do their shopping.

Anyone who wants to use the Post Office requires more than 20 minutes.

The pressure on any free / less restricted parking (Waitrose/Avenue St Nicholas residential streets beyond the charged areas) will increase.

The proposal will require intensive oversight by ‘traffic wardens’ or are all restricted areas going to be covered by some form of automated camera system? However these are monitored it will COST!

We already have issues in Harpenden car parks with scam Q codes being put on the parking machines. I believe this too will become an issue.

Anyone driving in to take part in any of the many sports/creative classes in the church halls will be adversely affected as a 1 hour class will require £5 payment for 2 hours parking. This reducing the viability of such regular activities.

I don't see it improving safety of pedestrians (more street furniture) or improving traffic flow. I think it will create an even more stressful traffic situation. When the local car park charges were extended into the evening people parked on the

streets rather than in the car parks. I believe the proposed parking restrictions will just mean people won't bother to come into Harpenden any more.

I urge the Council to reconsider their short sighted proposals.

I feel the current parking arrangements supports local businesses and supports the need of the local community and no change is needed. This current proposal of £2.50/hr is daylight robbery. 20 mins free, down from 1hr or 2hrs free. Great decision. Overstay 20 mins and then be walloped with a £70.00 PCN by a warden who needs to meet their daily target of PCN's issued. Having recently visited Pinner in Harrow on street parking is £1.40/hr. Why does it need to be so extortionately high? It's Harpenden, they can afford to pay! Are the proposers of this scheme against local independent businesses and local residents. Do they not support a vibrant high street? Or are they in support of on-line shopping?

I feel this proposal is going to be detrimental to retailers at a time when they need our support. I also believe this is also going to negatively impact shoppers, in particular older residents who are unable to walk even a modest distance.

That said, I also think we do need some restrictions, to stop people from parking for long periods clogging up the town centre (inc people who work in the centre of town who leave their cars all day, without parking enforcement officers being active).

Personally, I would have a 2 hour parking limit. Sufficient for people to, say, have lunch, go shopping, have a beauty, dentist etc etc.

If it is purely a financial issue, I would modestly increase council tax to cover the shortfall.

We really don't want to harm local retailers or the local community.

I feel this proposal will be detrimental to both retailers and residents of Harpenden and the current 1 hour free parking option should remain. 20 minutes of free parking is not enough time for shoppers to complete their shopping or for people to attend appointments in town. Please reconsider this proposal.

I fully oppose these changes.

The high street of Harpenden is already struggling - asking people to pay to park for any longer than 20 mins will only further deter people from coming to do shopping and use the cafes/restaurants etc. The town is too large to not allow decent usage of the high street to wider residents without any reasonable public transport, which of course isn't even a viable option for some.

Why would you actively deter income for local businesses. There is no upside.

I go to a Pilates class in town in my lunch hour and this would add £5 to the cost of the class!!! Which I definitely couldn't afford. I could cycle or walk there as I'm doing it in my lunch break and wouldn't have time. So I'll be less healthy, and a small business will lose revenue, and no parking fee will be paid. Seems like a bad idea all round!

I grew up in Harpenden and my family still live there. Parking charges would be terrible for the High St, businesses and residents.

I have attached my response in a word document. This will also be sent to parking.development@stalbans.gov.uk quoting map reference PPB/01 by August 15 2024.

I have been a resident in Harpenden for over 20 years and I am very proud of our town and I support the high street and I use it for meals, coffees and stopping to buy food. This proposal is awful and 20 minutes is not enough time to buy a coffee or get a few items, with queues you need at least an hour.

This appears to be a badly thought out proposal that is a money spinner for the council and will be the death of our High Street, which will then see less business rates, a worse high street and will actually see less money coming into the council, this needs a serious rethink.

I have lived in Harpenden for 20 years and I find the current parking system wholly adequate. I do not understand why SADC want to change the system, which would greatly affect the businesses and users of the town, unless it was an exercise to raise more financial income. I am wholly against the scheme to revise the parking system.

I have lived in Harpenden for 30 years and raised my family here. I am outraged by the proposed parking restrictions in the town centre. There is no justification for it; and hiding behind the notion that it will encourage people 'to walk or use the bus' is ridiculous. It will encourage people not to go into Harpenden town, that is all. At a time when all High Streets are under threat from online shopping on every level, you are putting yet another barrier for us to come in and visit shops/cafes/restaurants/hairdressers etc. Harpenden high street is already a shadow of its former self, with empty units (not helped by the mess in the planning application dept) and this proposal will worsen the situation hugely. I wholeheartedly oppose it.

I have lived in Harpenden for 35 years. I shop and visit the high street on a daily basis. Where possible I try to walk the 30 minutes into town but when shopping or in a rush I drive and use the limited street parking on a daily basis. I try very hard to buy locally but the parking changes will definitely push me to shopping and visiting St. Albans now rather than Harpenden. I wonder how financially worse off Harpenden high street will be with these new parking measures. The money you raise will be totally a drop in the ocean compared to what Harpenden loses. There are not enough car park spaces at present to remove decent street parking. A totally ludicrous idea which will negatively impact Harpenden.

I have lived in Harpenden for 38 years and have valued the free parking to visit the shops, church and facilities. We live in a time where the high street is vanishing in many towns as online shopping increases. Being able to pop into town for shopping and park free is such a bonus and encourages the use of our high street. I feel to impose charges is unnecessary,

greedy and will impact on the use of the high street. Harpenden already has restrictions which rightly impact on long term parking but benefits those of us parking for short periods.

I have lived in Harpenden for twelve years. I regularly visit the High Street, and I travel there from the outskirts of the town by a mixture of car and foot depending on the circumstances.

I frequently visit the High Street for a short stop (eg to do a top-up shop, to make a collection / delivery). I periodically visit for longer (eg for an appointment or for a meal).

My main concern with the status quo is that finding a free parking space is unreliable at best. I am frequently unable to park legally in a free bay for lack of spaces.

The proposals seem sensible to me. This change will provide for more reliable access to free spaces (because turnover will be faster), and consistency for the occasions when a longer duration stay is needed.

I have lived in Harpenden since 1962 when it was considered a village. I have seen it grow and accept changes happen. However, I object to all of the proposed changes to parking within Harpenden with the introduction of restricted times and charging for parking on the streets. This will reduce the footfall for retail/businesses and thereby cause businesses to close. The heart of Harpenden is the ability to park for free in the town centre for residents and visitors.

I would draw to the attention of the Council that Harpenden is not St Albans and do not want to have a centre like St Albans, which is soulless, dirty, deserted from early evening because they stopped or restricted parking in St Peter's Street.

With the proposed closure of parking behind Waitrose. I object to any proposed development of this car park that reduces parking in this area.

I also object to the closure of the car park at Harpenden Station, as again it reduces car parking and will push commuter parking out into residential areas.

Any payments for parking received from charging cannot be used to fill the funds of the Council due to their mismanagement of funds. The proposed development of The Public Hall in Harpenden is a prime example of mismanagement, after spending millions of pounds is not now going ahead. Money raised for street parking cannot be used to fill these deficits it has to be used only and solely for parking contra to what the Council believes.

If the Council believe that charging for street parking will allow more vehicles to be parked I would strongly suggest parking wardens are utilised to monitor that car users are adhering to the specified parking restrictions already sign posted.

Another objection is the withdrawal of the Senior Citizens Parking Permit for anyone who doesn't qualify under the new scheme. I have a permit now but will not qualify next year. I now pay for my permit so this is not free parking but money the council has regardless of whether I use a car park or not. Now under their proposals I will have to pay to park in the centre of the town as I am not able or willing to carry my shopping onto public transport and then walk to my home.

They say they are for the community but are they? These proposals will kill Harpenden and it will be a centre with empty business units.

I have lived in Harpenden since 1967 (apart from a few years 1984–1987). The centre of Harpenden is a thriving high street with people ‘popping into the village’ to both shop and meet friends. Whilst the nature of the high street has changed (less banks) there are more coffee shops, restaurants and independent stores than I recollect.

I can also say I have supported the Liberal Democrat council all this time. My father was a Lib Dem county councillor for many years and I know he too would have objected to this policy if he were still alive. We discussed the matter of preserving the nature of Harpenden and even specifically parking restrictions on several occasions.

I do not wish to comment on the proposals for St Albans – it is for the residents there to have their say, but as a resident of Harpenden

I strongly object to imposing parking restrictions in central Harpenden for the following reasons:

1. The centre of Harpenden is what often attracts people to the town and the ease of being able to make use of it is part of this. It provides a social hub for both old and young and paying for parking would reduce people going into town for a short visit.
2. There are insufficient cycle paths or safe access routes for those who are able to avoid using a car. These should be put in place in order to reduce the traffic as opposed to punitive parking charges.
3. My children went to school at St Nicholas and I had to do two school pick ups a day. At the time this was too far to walk. Parking fees would cause detriment to those at the central schools.
4. The impact on the already struggling retailers (many of whom have suffered from high rates) will lead to closures of stores and irrecoverable damage to the high street. We do not want it to become a ghost town.
5. As an older Harpenden resident I still refer to it as ‘the village’. Whilst it is clearly a town, the look and feel of the high street will be undermined if parking charges are imposed.
6. The infrastructure, signage etc required will be a blot of the landscape. I would also like to see the cost benefit analysis of the scheme. The sums being proposed do not seem likely to generate a high income so I can’t help but wonder what the purpose is.
7. Paid for parking in Harpenden centre will to some degree push the traffic and parking into the surrounding residential

streets.

8. The current situation is not broken. Yes, I have had to drive around the block to wait for a parking space before now, but this is part of what makes Harpenden special. Also people who can already walk into town so I can no see any benefit.

I urge you to reconsider this. Whilst I know the Council is St Albans and District, so it covers both places, Harpenden is very different from St Albans and does not deserve to have such a policy imposed. Parking charges will harm what makes Harpenden such a special place to live.

I have previously lived in Dunstable where in the 80s car parking was free both in car parks and on the street. After the Council introduced car parking charges Dunstable town centre, which had previously enjoyed a thriving shopping centre, simply died. Visit Dunstable now and see what the town centre looks like. Charging for parking in Harpenden will destroy the remains of the struggling independent shops in Harpenden. After all, why shop in Harpenden when for the same money I can park in St.Albans to visit a wider range of shops and businesses. Perhaps this is why St.Albans Council wants to charge for parking in Harpenden?

I have significant concerns about the proposal to introduce paid parking in the town centre. It will be a huge inconvenience to local residents and is likely to damage the business in the centre of town which are already suffering from high rents and the increased move towards online shopping. 20 minutes is unlikely to be long enough to run errands (the queue in the Post

Office is often longer than this) so it will drive people away from the High Street to the detriment of the community and local business.

I am writing to express my objection to the recent decision to impose parking charges in the previously free limited waiting bays in Harpenden town centre. As a resident and frequent visitor to the town, I believe this change will have significant negative consequences for both local residents and businesses.

Firstly, the introduction of a £2.50 charge for short visits will discourage many people from making quick trips to the town. This increased cost is particularly burdensome for those who simply need to run a few errands or support local shops with a brief visit. The high street is already facing challenges in attracting customers, and this additional financial deterrent could exacerbate the situation, leading to decreased footfall and further financial strain on local businesses.

Furthermore, the decision seems counterproductive to efforts aimed at revitalizing our town centre and supporting small businesses. Many residents and visitors choose Harpenden for its convenience and accessibility, and removing the incentive of free short-term parking could drive potential customers to shop elsewhere where parking is more affordable or free.

In addition, this change disproportionately affects those who rely on quick access to the town centre, including elderly residents and parents with young children, who may find the increased cost a significant obstacle. It also contributes to a perception that Harpenden is less welcoming and accessible, potentially diminishing its appeal as a vibrant community hub.

I urge the council to reconsider this decision and explore alternative solutions that balance the needs of the town's economy with fair and accessible parking arrangements. Possible alternatives could include offering the first hour of parking for free or implementing a more gradual pricing structure that encourages longer visits without penalizing brief trips.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I hope that the council will take into account the potential impact on our community and work towards a solution that supports both local businesses and residents.

Thank you,

(REDACTED)

I like to visit the town centre at the weekend and non work day, during this time I support local independent businesses to buy gifts and essentials and support independent cafes when meeting with friends. I also visit the parks for dogwalks, I wouldn't be able to do this if parking charges are implemented. To walk to and from town takes 1hr in total, add this to a 1hr enrichment walk in the park is too much physically for me.

There would be a detrimental effect on my mental health if I were unable to park close to Town. The cost of parking would be more than the cost of a coffee in a cafe and I would prefer to support a local business than pay to park. Many businesses will be forced to close without the support of their loyal customers.

Many people don't have access to data for a smartphone when away from their home WiFi and would be unable to pay via app.

Council run car parks are already full to bursting and cannot accommodate any additional customers.

Harpenden high street will suffer and shops will fail if all shoppers are forced to pay for parking...instead they will be forced to visit out of town retail parks where there are no charges. Harpenden will be coming a rundown drive through rather than the flourishing High Street it currently is.

I live 40 minutes walk from central Harpenden. Part of this journey is on a road with no pavement. As such, I end up driving in to Harpenden regularly. The 1 hour free parking bays that line the High Street give me a good amount of time to visit multiple shops: the butcher, the post office, the supermarket and the independent stores. Reducing the free parking time to 20 minutes will prevent me doing this. £2.50 for 1 hour is such an expensive, punitive charge. For example, in Luton town centre the charge is 80p for 1 hour. At a much more reasonable rate, I would feel less outrage, but £2.50 per hour will just make me travel to other towns instead - a ridiculous outcome given that I live in rural Harpenden and want to use Harpenden for shopping. This proposed fee is far out of step with local parking charges in St Alban's, and its reach extends far beyond the High Street itself. I'm deeply unhappy about these proposed changes.

I live in a nearby village. There is no public transport from here, other than one bus in the morning, so we are obliged to drive to reach Harpenden, which is our nearest centre for shopping, library and things like the optician and hairdresser. These parking charges therefore represent an unavoidable charge on essential services with no environmental benefit resulting as there are no alternatives available. I strongly feel that the town will suffer – if people have to pay to park in Harpenden, they will be less inclined to visit the town. The free parking is part of the draw of coming to Harpenden; there is little you can do in 20 minutes so if you have to pay so much for just an hour, you may as well either drive a bit further and go to St Albans, where you already have to pay for parking but there are more facilities and more errands you can fulfil for your money, or go to Welwyn Garden City where there are still free parking spaces or go to out of town centres where the parking is always free. Those who need buses will already be going to St Albans or Welwyn (on the rare bus services we have from here) so it is car drivers who go to Harpenden. It is incredibly sad to see so many of our town centres declining and it is utterly irresponsible of the SADC to create such a potential problem for Harpenden. Not everyone who visits there is well-off and those who live outside the town cannot walk or cycle! If you want to say that these changes are for environmental reasons, rather than simply to fill an understandable hole in the council budgets, and you want car use to decline in rural areas, put on more regular bus services before charging those of us who have to drive!

I live in (REDACTED) which is one of the closest roads to the town centre which is outside the proposed charging zone. Residents of the bottom of the road already suffer from inconsiderate parking. The problem will be significantly exacerbated when people are looking to avoid the parking charges in the town centre.

I live in (REDACTED) and have family visiting throughout the day. On most days they can park for free for up to two hours. Imposing a charge makes it very uncomfortable for them to stay over the 20 min allowance as specified in the changes planned.

I also know that many, many shopworkers use the free parking in Harpenden to help them keep their costs down.

I am seriously worried that there will be less footfall to the shops in Harpenden with the inevitable result of shops closing and the town centre deteriorating..

All in all a terrible suggestion.

I live on the outskirts of Harpenden in (REDACTED). My wife and I are both 78 and have no other means of getting to the town centre other than by car. We travel into town regularly, but rarely for more than 1 hour. With no parking charges Harpenden town centre is vibrant with small businesses flourishing. Compare this with St Albans where parking charges have affected town centre trade irreparably. Indeed, we never go into St Albans because of the parking charges, preferring instead Welwyn Garden City.. My main reason therefore for opposing this proposed parking charge is the damage it will inevitably bring with it to our thriving town centre – St Albans providing irrefutable proof.

We also object in the strongest possible terms to having to deal with yet another i-phone App in order to pay for the parking. They are the scourge of society for people our age and we avoid them like the plague. We have eyes that can't see the screen and fingers that can't push the buttons – even assuming we have an i-phone in the first place. Sorry SADC but no parking charge for us thank you.

I live outside of Harpenden but travel in daily for train and at least once at the weekend with my family for eating and shopping. My wife is a local business owner. The joy of Harpenden is the high street and particularly the small businesses. If you charge for parking you will dissuade custom and/or push people out to out of town options which will hurt small businesses and ultimately a huge negative effect for the community

I m shocked and appalled by the council's plans to replace free limited waiting bays in Harpenden Town Centre and replace them with bays costing £2.50 per hour. It is absurd that the Lib Dems say the changes will benefit the community..... the reality is that they will inflict harm on the community and the retailers. Are the councillors completely out of touch with the community here? The community is perfectly happy with the current situation, as are the retailers in the High Street. If I have to pay up to £5 for a visit to town I will probably go elsewhere to do my supermarket (and other) shopping, where i can park for free. Harpenden High Street will suffer further decline. The council's justification that the changes will promote active travel is nonsense, it is much too far for many people, including myself, to walk home with heavy shopping bags. If the council must find more money I would prefer that council tax is raised slightly instead.

Whatever hare-brained scheme is the council going to dream up next? Words fail me.

Everyone I know in Harpenden is dead against these changes. If these changes go ahead I think the Lib Dems will see a reaction against them in the next council election.

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I object - this is unnecessary

I object all notion of introducing a parking charge! There are enough council owned car parks for you to earn money. For the hour or so I need to park to pop into town with two young children, ease of parking in a must close to small independent shops that relay on that "popping into town" trade.

I object as I don't feel that 20 minutes is enough time to be able to complete a shopping trip, in particular for those either with toddlers and babies in tow or the elderly population with a slower pace. Even the post office queue is often longer than 20 minutes. Residents will not be able to enjoy their local amenities such as the park and the library without paying a parking fee to do so. It will also discourage people from supporting local businesses, as there is not enough time to visit cafes and eateries in the proposed free 20 minutes. Please consider retracting this proposal.

I object in the strongest possible terms to the plans to make parking payable in the centre of Harpenden, as described, on the grounds that:-

- (1) it will make the centre of Harpenden inaccessible for residents, particularly those who live on the outskirts, or have any needs or circumstances that would make it difficult to access the centre except by car (including some of the most vulnerable in our community) ;
 - (b) it will have a serious and negative impact on the viability of town centre businesses and if they close down we will all lose out as a community;
 - (c) it will drive parking further into the residential areas of Harpenden, with consequent loss of amenity for those residents affected;
 - (d) it will alter the nature and character of the town centre for the worse;
 - (e) moreover, app based parking is inaccessible for many older and more vulnerable residents.
 - (f) I am not aware of local residents requesting changes in the current town centre parking arrangements, so I assume that the idea has arisen because of the money-making potential that it has for St Albans District Council, rather than because it is for the benefit of Harpenden residents - which, surely, should be the proper starting point for a change of this kind?
- I therefore add my objection to the many being written and voiced in Harpenden.

I object most strongly to the plans to impose greater parking restrictions in the centre of Harpenden. This will cause a decrease in shopping and leisure activities taking place within the town. We will end up with more empty shops and less useful facilities for Harpenden residents. It will ruin the town. The current restrictions should be fully enforced especially stopping motorists parking on pavements and making it more dangerous for disabled vehicles and pushchairs etc who are being forced on to roads to pass them.

I object this proposal. Our high street is full of chain shops, some of which are already having to close down as they can't pay the extortionate Harpenden business rates. Removing our free parking will reduce footfall to our shops even further. It already puts me off coming to Harpenden as the parking is so expensive even for a quick trip so I choose to go elsewhere where there is a better selection of shops and free parking. I have to drive into town as I have two small children and live 1.5 miles away so it's too difficult to walk

I object to a fee to park in harpenden. It's too big a jump from free to £2.50

I object to having to pay for street parking in Harpenden town centre as often I have to use it to drop one of my children off at an activity and I might only be using it for 10-15 mins or to pop into a shop or restaurant to pick an item/ takeaway up. This would stop me from doing that which will impact the livelihood of the local shops and restaurants

I object to most of this proposal which has not been made in a very transparent way and comes months after the decision was made to introduce these parking charges earlier in the year. I believe that the consultation was originally cancelled and then held back due to SADC and then national elections which I find completely inappropriate.

I believe that removing the current 1 hour free parking in the centre of Harpenden will be detrimental to the character of the town centre and to the viability of the commercial and retail facilities located in the centre and will make the centre more alienated and less enjoyable to visit (as we can see in the very hostile parking arrangements in St Albans and in so many other places).

Originally the proposals included Redbourne, I believe, which has now been lucky enough to escape these parking charges which up until now (and through various different administrations), Harpenden has also been able to avoid.

There is nothing beneficial to the residents of Harpenden about having to fight with machines or a complicated App each time they visit the centre to run a quick errand, get their hair cut, buy a school bag, post something, get a coffee or buy some groceries and these proposals will remove the friendly, unique and semi-rural feel of Harpenden town centre, taking away what has been a unique and enjoyable trip to the town centre.

I believe a better and more creative solution needs to be found to balance the Councils budget.

Harpenden Town Council are looking to meet with St Albans to find a real solution to this problem with the aim of retaining 1 hour free parking in the centre (1 hour max stay no return in 2 hour for example). This would work and through better enforcement (which is currently almost non existent) and a partnership between St Albans and Harpenden would address the needs of residents and retailers in the centre.

A free period of 20 minutes is not sufficient to run most errands (even with a grace period of 10 minutes) and then the real trouble starts:

Having to find a way to pay after 20 minutes will be cumbersome and troublesome for residents and will create unnecessary stress. It will discourage shoppers and residents from going to the centre.

Where max stay is currently 1 hour, it will now be 2 hours – this will mean that there are less parking spaces available in the centre than the current situation – even with more enforcement!

I believe there should be an added incentive for electric cars which should benefit from free or reduced parking charges in the centre and in the various car parks in order to work towards the Council's declared net zero targets.

In summary what is needed is:

1 hr free next to the shops – 1 hour max stay with no return for 2 or 4 hours

1 hr free away from shops (or potentially 40 minutes and then a charge) – max stay 2 hours – no return for 2 or 4 hours and chargeable after the initial free period.

Surely there is a better and less destructive way to balance the 150k or so of missing budget!

I personally would be happy to pay £5 per year (or probably significantly less with proper enforcement of the free periods) on my Council tax to avoid having to struggle with Apps and machines each time I visit the centre.

What about an annual daily 1 hour free parking subscription service be available for £10 per year per car or household in order to avoid the hassle of having to deal with machines – AND FREE FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLES!

Come on the current administration of SADC – let's be a bit more pro-active, pragmatic and creative!

Thank you!

I object to on street parking charges in Harpenden.

I object to paid parking in Harpenden High st

I object to parking charges in Harpenden as it will completely destroy our high street. Independent shops are already struggling in Harpenden due to high rent but with less footfall then these will close completely and what will be left of our high street.

Also lots of people park near the common to access the amazing open spaces in Harpenden- by forcing people to pay for parking then this will affect the health and well being of residents and could ultimately cost more.

Please find an alternative way to raise funds and not destroy the bustling high street in harpenden

I object to parking in Harpenden town centre to be charged for. It will discourage shoppers and devalue bushinesses.

I object to the charging for parking in Harpenden town centre.

I believe it will adversely affect the independent shopkeepers and contribute towards the ongoing degradation of the high street, as evidenced by the increasing number of empty shops.

This will be detrimental to our community especially the elderly and those on low incomes.

I object to the financial imposition of parking charges which have up until now have been free. The charges will be of financial detriment to both the motoring public and local traders whose customers these charges will deter visting, In due course these proposed intial charges will (as with all parking charges) inventively increase in charge and time coverage.

I object to the Harpenden plans for parking. The proposed 20 minutes of free parking is wholly insufficient time to do anything. There should be free parking for an hour and it should be enforced. £5 for two hours of parking is also outrageous. Additionally, the introduction of any charges for parking on the roads is likely to have a detrimental effect on surrounding residential streets and this should be considered, as should the potential reduction in the number of shoppers and the effect on retail outlet revenue.

Nobody wants to see empty retail outlets on the High Street.

I object to the imposition of paid parking in Harpenden High Street.

My objection is that currently this parking is predominantly used by disabled people, carers or parents with young children who need to use it to pop into shops for small errands. It is unfair for them to be disadvantaged by charging.

Harpenden High Street is already becoming crowded by coffee shops and barbers and taking away free parking will further

degrade the quality of the High Street. I know that the ruling party at SADC want to reduce cars but frankly many people have to drive as they have alternative to get into town.

Finally I object to the Chairman of SADC Councils statement along the lines of "tough we need the money so we are going to charge for parking" pre ordaining a result before consultation. We are not living in an authoritarian state yet.

I object to the increase in parking fees and restriction of 20min bays. The parking costs in Harpenden are already exceptionally high (compare, for example, with Hemel town centre). I think this will be detrimental to the town and its businesses. We live in Southdown, a 20 minute walk away. We walk to town whenever possible, but I have a health condition that often prevents it. I also have small children, so need to come into town. However, the parking is already so expensive that I would be better off going elsewhere.

I object to the introduction of charges to our high street. This will create such a problem for the elderly and less able who may not be able to walk from further out of the area or afford to pay the fees. The knock on issues will be congestion on surrounding residential roads and more blue badge parking in inappropriate/dangerous places. If there is to be no free parking for the high street I wonder for small businesses. I have seen such a change over the last 50 years to our shops, loosing our small independent shops. If I have to pay to park I will be more likely to go further afield instead. Please reconsider other methods of income generation such as events in our parks/common.

I object to the introduction of new parking charges in Harpenden. The current free of charge spaces help our community and support local businesses. New charges will impact independent traders and our high street will end up with just more national chains and charity shops. Please note my firm objection to this change. Thank you.

I object to the paid parking on and around Harpenden town centre.

I object to the plan to introduce charging for kerbside parking in and around Harpenden High Street for a number of reasons:

1. I am concerned at the impact on local traders. The plan could cause significant damage to a vibrant high street, given the problems that the traders already face with high costs. It is likely to encourage people to go to 'out of town shopping centres' which enjoy free parking.
2. Your aim to 'encourage active travel' seeks to encourage alternative methods of travel but appears to ignore the benefits of the car for those with limited mobility or when there is a need to carry heavy loads. Despite the desire for 'sustainability' the motor vehicle, either ICE, or electric, will remain an essential method of transport for many.
3. I agree with the need for increased enforcement but this applies equally to the existing arrangement.
4. I agree that the introduction of charging might result in a greater turnover of premium spaces, However, this small advantage does not outweigh the significant disadvantages of the proposed scheme.
5. While a 20 minute free period might be adequate for school pick up/drop off and the occasional shopping, it is not long enough for the majority of activities. This should remain at 1 hour for the majority of spaces impacted by the proposed scheme. To encourage the use of the car parks, those areas currently with 2 hours free could be reduced to one hour.
6. While the scheme improves parking for Blue Badge holders, it ignores those of us with reduced mobility who don't qualify for a Blue Badge.
7. I believe that efficiencies and cost reductions can and should be made to try to ensure that parking services are self funding. However, I cannot agree with the statement that parking services must become cost neutral. We pay a significant amount in Council Tax and I see no reason why parking services should not continue to enjoy a share of council revenue.
8. The council appears keen to encourage the use of the council run car parks, rather than kerbside parking. In my experience, it can be difficult to find car park spaces at some peak times. Have the council considered the impact of increased demand?

I object to the principle of charging for parking in Harpenden High Street and believe it has a detrimental effect on businesses and charities in the area as well as those working in the retail businesses.

I object to the proposal as I am concerned about the impact on older residents and local businesses

I object to the proposal for the following reasons:

- It will destroy local businesses
- It will kill the cafe culture
- It will penalise those who can't walk or cycle to the shops
- It is being rushed through without proper consultation
- It is illegally proposed to use these parking funds for other projects
- The process is not transparent
- 6000 local residents have already objected to it.

Is that enough reasons?

I object to the proposal of introducing paid parking into Harpenden for periods of up to one hour.

Reasons :

1. There is no or poor public transport from many rural areas so residents in the villages have to use cars.
2. The introduction of charges for parking of more than 20 minutes will make it impossible to go shopping in the village without paying
3. This will negatively impact small shops in Harpenden. I certainly won't be shopping in Harpenden again if I cannot get free parking for a quick visit.

Many elderly people cannot use apps or parking machines to pay, because of poor eyesight and cognitive decline so they will avoid coming to town. This is ageist and prejudicial to the less able.

I object to the proposal of removing free parking bays and don't agree with any of the reasons behind it. Just seems to be about making some money. The proposed parking costs are excessively high and it will encourage people to park further out in residential areas and just walk a little further or go elsewhere. I can't see how it's going to help the small businesses on High Street either I believe it will make it very hard for them to survive. People will go elsewhere, shop online or not go at all.

I object to the proposal principally because of the likely effect on local businesses. Paying for parking is likely to result in many residents shopping on line instead of locally and that could have a detrimental effect on the high street. Already, compared to other towns like Berkhamstead, which have far more variety of independent businesses, Harpenden is already seeing a plethora of coffee shops and charity shops – this new measure could accelerate the slow decline of the high street. Additionally, having such a short free parking period of 20 minutes will not facilitate a quick shop. By the time you have found a parking space and walked to the relevant shop you will only have about 5 minutes in the store before you have to start to walk back to the car. Think what it will be like for parents and young children or elderly residents. There needs to be a minimum of 1 hour of free parking to make it practically sensible. I can only tell you the likely effect of the new restrictions on my shopping habits. I think it will increase further my shopping online and probably mean I will food shop less regularly and go to a larger supermarket in either Luton, St Albans or Welwyn which will have free parking. Although Waitrose will still have parking I suspect this will become super congested as so many more people will try and park there. It is already a mess as it is.

I object to the proposal to charge for parking on Harpenden town Streets. Although the proposal is not clear, I suspect that you will ask people to use a mobile phone or an app, which I find difficult. The parking charges will deter people from shopping in Harpenden as they can go to other places with free parking such as the Co-op in Southdown, Aldi in Hemel etc. I like to use the local butcher and shops such as Threads but paying for parking will mean I will go elsewhere (especially if Waitrose loses its car park – Waitrose in Welwyn has a large free car park). The town will eventually end up with charity shops and closed-up shops (with the loss of business rates). Is it the policy of the Lib-Dems to 'level down'? 20 mins free parking is useless because you cannot shop in that time. Have you tried to queue in Boots for a prescription or the Post Office to send a parcel? – impossible in 20 mins! I cannot believe that you would obtain sufficient money from car parking to even pay for this scheme. A better solution would be to offer a lot more free 2 hour parking which would increase the number of people using the town and encourage more shops in the town and therefore more money from business rates. After all, internet shopping for food and goods is easy and doesn't require any parking. Many towns and cities are already empty shells because of the rise of the internet. Please encourage local shoppers rather than deter them! I would hate for the majority of our unique local shops to go out of business and be replaced by charity shops, betting shops etc. Oh and we

could really use a high street Bank – please encourage a mainstream bank (Nationwide is not one!) to site themselves in Harpenden.

I object to the proposal to get rid of free parking in harpenden for the following reasons

20 minutes is not long enough to do anything

the high street is already suffering with high rent/rates and this proposal will deter people from coming into town which will have a knock on effect on the shops and businesses on which we all rely.

i suppose there will be pay machines which will probably not work, wont accept cash and can only be used on an app which will be very inconvenient for older people who will then feel that coming into town is not an option...further reducing footfall.

the whole proposal is short sighted and in my view a money grabbing exercise to garner more cash for the council.

this is not a public service it is making it harder for the public and we already pay enough council tax to live here.

I object to the proposal. The duration of free parking proposed is inadequate to undertake normal activities in the local shops.

Motorists all ready pay large amounts of tax to support the Government and local authorities and further increases are to me unacceptable.

I have all ready stopped going to St Albans for shopping and the market because of the cost of parking and if implemented this change will force me into going to out of town centres or to the internet instead of supporting the High St.

Local bus services from Wheathampstead are inadequate to replace me driving into Harpenden and it is too far for me to walk or cycle.

The proposals do not show any business case for this implementation detailing the up front costs and future revenues expected so it impossible to evaluate the proposal financially.

The proposals do not detail the impact on the high street of the infrastructure required to collect the proposed fees.

The proposals do not detail the methods to be used to collect the proposed charges for example if the intention is only to allow payment by phone I consider this to be discrimination against people who do not wish to use apps of this nature. Again I do not pay for parking by this method out of principle.

Therefore this consultation does not give me the required information to adequately assess it from all aspects.

I consider this to be a pure revenue raising change by the Council which I did not vote for.

Parking charges across the Council area have been raised by above inflation levels over the past few years and therefore demonstrate inadequate cost control otherwise putting in additional charges wouldd not be necessary.

I object to the proposals for the following reasons

It will detrimentally affect the shops and businesses in the centre of the town. I haven't shopped in St Albans since the introduction of on street parking fees. I shop elsewhere for items I can't buy in Harpenden.

The proposed charges are higher than the car park fees ostensibly to encourage use of the cheaper car parks. Already the car parks are full during the daytime. Where will all these proposed cars park? £5 to park for 2 hours on the street is totally unreasonable .

Pensioners who now cannot have senior car park season tickets will find it very difficult to use the shops without having to pay exorbitant fees. We are not going to start cycling /walking to the shops.

The cost of installing and maintaining parking meters and parking attendants will be far greater than at present. For the past 4 years parking attendants have hardly been seen in Harpenden.

I object to the proposals for the following reasons:-

1. The council could raise the money if they employed more traffic wardens to impose the existing system as per a previous consultation document in 2019. Can we see the data for the last 5 years of Harpenden parking fines and traffic wardens employed specifically for the Harpenden Area and number of days worked in the Harpenden Area?

2. The Liberal Democratic Party have previously said they want to encourage a community feel and busy high street. The proposed changes will have a significant impact on businesses on the High Street as customers, particularly older people will not pay these expensive charges for meeting friends for coffee, hair appointments or worship at local churches Monday to Saturday. How is this significant increase in parking charges encouraging customers to use the local high street and creating a community feel if you are excluding people in the area who may need these facilities.

3. This is a very short term policy to raise funds and not thought through. In the last 12 months in Harpenden High Street there is already an increased number of vacant shops. Has anyone completed an assessment on the impact on local businesses and the loss of income to council from business rates when local shops close down?

Finally there are so many areas around the U.K. where there are abandoned high streets with shops vacant please do not make Harpenden another one of these casualties for the sake of excessive high street parking charges.

I object to the proposals to charge for on street parking. This will have a seriously adverse effect on local shops and businesses. I will change my behaviour and not come into the town as much which is bad for business and the general town. This will also lead to parking on non- controlled streets to the detriment of residents

I object to the proposals to introduce parking fees, as this would discourage visitors to Harpenden, put off shoppers and would be the death of the High Street.

I object to the propose parking charges. This I will only have a negative impact on the town centre that is only just hanging on with the greed of landlords. Now the council is following suit.

Personally it will stop me from coming into town. I have small children and 20mins wouldn't let me get out the car let alone do any shopping.

But it will be elderly drivers and the not so affluent that it will affect the most.

I object to the proposed changes on a number of grounds:

Given the ongoing economic situation, a charge of £5 will deter people from using the shops and businesses in the environs of Harpenden High Street, there will be less inclination to visit more than one business, on a visit to the town. The number of independent businesses could fall further without the current levels of footfall.

If the parking will be charged using an app it will cause further isolation of older people and others who do not have smart phones.

Harpenden is currently a thriving town and community and it must remain so, the current High Street where people bump into friends and neighbours will find themselves deterred from chatting by the cost. It is proven that social interaction is important for wellbeing.

I object to the proposed parking charges in Harpenden. They will create greater pollution by encouraging people to travel away from the town to do their shopping, rather than being able to park along the Harpenden Roads. They will also place greater stress upon high street traders and it is obvious how many of these we have been losing over recent years. The planned 20 minute free time is irrelevant as it is too short for the great majority of purposes for which we park. I believe that the sole (real) reason for these charges is to raise money.

I object to the proposed parking charges in Harpenden.

It is not a good idea and without doubt would inflict

hardship on local shops and residents/ visitors to Harpenden.. It's bad enough The Lib Dem's have withdrawn our annual parking ticket. This is the last straw.

I object to the SADC parking charges proposals. I strongly believe they are a danger to our high street and they will act against many of my trips to pick up st on the high street. Why not actually enforce current restrictions? Or allow residents of Harpenden to buy an annual pass if you are that desperate for money?

In addition the way SADC is implementing this is a disgrace. The consultation appears to be a sham; the decision to impossible charge seems to have been made. I am frankly disgusted that the SADC is ramming this through and refusing to work with HTC on other solution to deal with budgetary issues. And I say this as a paid up and active lib dem.

I object to these charges. My mother is nearly eighty and despite living close to town is not always able to walk down. She relies on being able to park and shouldn't have to pay. She also gets stressed by using apps or card machines and would prefer cash. The elderly will be disproportionately affected by this move. Also the proposed charges are very high – seemingly much higher than in towns such as Hitchin. Those on lower incomes will take their business elsewhere where there is free parking or risk becoming isolated – again impacting the elderly. Finally, Harpenden High Street's businesses will be affected. The council should be developing and supporting vibrant, diverse and busy community centres. Yes we should be encouraging walking but you also need to support those who need to drive in simply and cheaply.

I object to these planned charges as it will detrimentally affect the businesses in Harpenden – making it expensive to pop in and use the high street will stop me from going there so often and I think it's vital to shop locally and keep the heart of Harpenden going.

I object to this and have already voiced my objection in a petition which was signed by over 6000 people. Why is the Council not listening to the petition responses and requiring more admin on this. Charging for parking will have a detrimental effect on the businesses and residents who use central Harpenden and many people I've spoken to feel the same way so please record my objection.

I object to this as many towns over the past couple of decades have done this and managed to kill off the town centre. My feeling is that this will have a detrimental impact on the town centre and its businesses and therefore should not go ahead.

I object to this for a number of reasons. Everything has gone up in price a ridiculous amount in the past few years and this is just yet another thing that has been free that we're now expected to pay for. Station parking is already ludicrously high so another parking charge is just too much. The price is set extremely high. I envisage many people, myself included, will just stop popping into town. I already barely visit St Albans because the parking charges are such a rip off. Compare your proposed cost of £2.50 an hour to Berkhamsted which I visit often – free on street parking or 80p an hour in the car park! The High Street will suffer as it will just put people off going or if they do go, they will just cut back a lot.

I object to this parking restriction in Harpenden which has been pushed through with no real consultation until residents complained loudly. Car parking is already an issue in certain days and this will only add to the chaos as people seek to park

in surrounding roads. The partial closure of the station car park has not been properly considered nor has the impact on those unable to walk and carry shopping

I object to this pay to park on the basis that we already get a large number of drivers parking two wheels on the pavement where there are double yellow lines. If we have payment parking there will be more of this happening. Also there are many cars parked on the single yellow line on Bowes parade. Admittedly some are disabled which is allowed but 4 out of 5 are not. If you walk around the High St all day you will always see this happening and most of the drivers think, "I'm only going to be a few minutes" when in the mean time pedestrians have to walk in the road. Quite often one see Disabled slots used by others as well. If we had a permanent warden they would make a lot of money from those who illegally park plus those others that park for more than the stated time.

I object to this proposal as I feel it would destroy the heart of Harpenden Town centre. I think the cost of implementing it far outweighs the income that would be raised particularly as measures to police it must be put in place. We refuse to use parking apps which I presume you are going to use as we had a bad experience using one sometime ago. I also object to you not allowing us senior citizens to have a parking permit - at least an affordable one!

I object to this proposal in it's entirety due to the enormously unfair impact on local residents & businesses. Families are struggling enough with the cost of living crisis as it is!!!!

I object to this proposal as it does not reflect the way that local residents use local businesses. There are many journeys which cannot be easily walked or cycled but which require more than 20 minutes in town but far less than one hour - levying a £2.50 charge is wholly excessive. Many purchases in town are modest in value and adding £2.50 adds a significant levy. Local businesses are deeply concerned about this change. The suggestion that there will be greater enforcement of parking restrictions does not ring true - there is an epidemic of people parking on double yellow lines and even zebra crossing zig zags, but no effective enforcement. I have read the submission from The Harpenden Society and it is a sensible analysis.

I object to this proposal as it prohibits short trips into Harpenden town centre for postal services, building society services and shorter shopping trips thereby negatively impacting the quality of life for local residents. The limit of free parking for 20 minutes is not enough time when you take into consideration queuing and service time. Free parking should be either one hour or two hours, to allow parents to take children to clubs and classes and to allow elderly residents to have the time to

access local shops. By imposing charges you will take business away from the town centre and you will negatively impact shops and businesses in the town.

I object to this proposal as it will adversely affect local businesses and be a deterrent to residents visiting the town.

I object to this proposal as it will be detrimental to the town reducing footfall and will have significant impact on businesses.

I object to this proposal as it will no doubt encourage local shoppers to drive to the retail parks and large supermarkets where parking is free and further starve our town of customers. We see empty shops and horrific rent increases already making it hard for businesses and this decrease in footfall will make it worse. Although I often walk, many cannot do so because of mobility, time or other restrictions. Please take this into consideration.

I object to this proposal because it will further damage the High Street of Harpenden and harm the local businesses which rely on footfall. This has happened in many other small towns in England where the policy seems to be to reduce cars in town centres. This is particularly bad given that more cars are turning electric so the arguments of reducing pollution are not valid. I think it is also a clear sign of poor financial management on the part of the Council.

I object to this proposal for a number of reasons.

1) Charging visitors to park in Harpenden will not support active travel for a number of reasons:

Public transport is expensive (it costs almost as much for an unsubsidised adult fare to take a bus from Southdown to Harpenden, the bus route (321) only covers the main thoroughfare and therefore many areas of the town are not covered by frequent services that go near to their home. There are no other public transport options. Cycling is not an option for many who either do not own bikes or cannot store bikes, the cycle routes from Southdown and Roundwood / Wood End in particular are not safe cycle routes with hazards especially around the junctions, mini roundabouts and other intersections. By making the cost of parking in Harpenden equal to that of St Albans, then it will encourage more car use of Harpenden residents shopping at the larger city shops and parking in the many multi storey car parks close to shops in St Albans. this will impact the businesses of Harpenden.

By managing the kerb side set out in the proposal, we will make significant improvements. Walking is viable for people who have time to make what would be an hour long round trip. If you have a job, you cannot make that commitment in travel to get to the shops in the daytime.

and provide benefits as outlined:

The turnover of parking spaces will occur at the expense of shoppers and diners coming to the town to browse and purchase goods and services. This will negatively impact the town economy.

Off street parking in Harpenden is not convenient and often car parks get very busy at weekends - especially the Amesbury Lane car park which is used for Football, tennis, swimming pool users and events at EMC as well as other local amenities.

There is not always room for shoppers to park.

It is disingenuous to suggest that tax payers who do not use cars fund parking in the district. Healthy people subsidise sick people in the NHS, childless people subsidise those with children in schools. This is a nonsensical argument. The local economy is supported by business rates collected from shops and businesses in Harpenden, if these businesses are forced to close, or leave the town, then the business rate tax collection is also going to fall considerably. This calculation does not appear to feature in any of the proposal documents.

The District should be seeking ways to support and encourage visits to Harpenden. and to encourage businesses to succeed through easy access, great parking and the ability to stay a long time without additional costs.

I object to this proposal it will badly affect the high street shopping and I do not want to pay to park in my local town. Happy for an increase in parking wardens of which is rare but not to start paying.

I object to this proposal on the grounds that you are actually encouraging people NOT to use the shops, cafes and other facilities in Harpenden. The charges proposed are too high. I have already lost my over 60s 2 hours free concession in car parks which has changed my behaviour. I simply don't hang around in town to visit smaller retailers or cafes anymore. People who use the on street parking are also less likely to extend their visits into Harpenden to use shops, restaurants etc. There is no ADEQUATE public transport i.e. frequent from where I live into town two miles away and as someone with mobility problems but not disabled, like many senior citizens the notion that we are going to start cycling into town on roads congested with through traffic is frankly ludicrous. The idea that by charging these fees it will encourage people onto INADEQUATE public transport or bikes is a fantasy. It will encourage people to drive to out of town retail parks where they can park for free. So much for making our High Street an appealing destination.

I am very disappointed that my Council which likes to trumpet transparency managed to provide such an appalling map for this consultation. Furthermore we only found out about this consultation second hand even though I am on the my St Albans App. Were you hoping no one would notice until it was all done and dusted ?? Why wasn't this PROMINENTLY highlighted on your App given that it is a major change?

I object to this proposal, as do the vast majority of residents in Harpenden, which is being forced upon us without any fair consultation with the Town Council or the residents and business owners of the town. This will have a negative environment impact, harm local businesses and the essence of the town itself.

To be fair, I am not against paying for parking in the town; neither do I think there isn't a need for change. But the current proposals seem to be focused on revenue generation and not on the practicalities.

The negative impacts will be:

- More traffic and people make more frequent and shorter trips to Harpenden
- Local business staff will have to pay £16.25 a day to park in the town making it unviable for many
- Negative long term financial impact on the Council as revenues move away from our shops and move online
- Older people who need to drive will be forced away from the town
- Greater demand for the free Waitrose car park will cause even more traffic congestion around that area
- Parking will move out to other residential streets which will create more road safety risks

If we truly want to consider this to be an opportunity to benefit the town and create an environmental benefit, we have an option now to take a more sensible approach.

- We could create greater restrictions or put a greater cost on the convenience of parking on the streets.
- Enhance the car parks around the town and make them free for the first two hours – this will encourage their use, reduce congestion of people driving round and round looking for spaces and encourage people to spend time in the town. If necessary, and because we know this is really about the Council raising taxes on local people, charge local residents for a permit for their free 2 hours.
- Provide free parking for local businesses to support their continued prosperity and that of the town
- Reduce some of the on-street parking (which should be required less) and regenerate the centre with more pedestrian areas where tables and chairs can be placed for local cafes and restaurants (for example the Lower High Street and around Leyton Green).

I, like many, don't object to the general principle behind what is proposed. It is the fact that it has been poorly planned, is short sighted and won't achieve any of the objectives which it seeks to achieve. As proposed, the new tax will harm the town

and harm the residents. A long-term plan in consultation with local residents and businesses could generate revenues (both in the short term and long term), enhance the character of the town and create a positive environmental impact.

I object to this proposal. I have lived in Harpenden all my life and was born in The Red House. Parking meters will kill the town's shopping and put even more strain on the unique independent businesses in particular. It will also look ugly.

I object to this proposal. Initially, I was forced to sign a petition as no consultation was proposed. The implication is that the council was anxious to sneak this proposal through because it knew it was chancing its arm. Statements from the council imply that the residents of Harpenden are too indolent and this needs to be discouraged. There is a lack of cycle ways and when the County Council has made proposals to remedy this the local council has apposed them. In the lack of an appropriate local transport arrangements then these proposals merely serve as a further tax on the residents of St Albans. I understand parking fines can only be used to improve local parking arrangements. The council does not say how it will make

these improvements with these fines. Further, these proposals will make life even more difficult for blue badge holders and the elderly, of whom there are many.

I object to this proposal. It will lead to further parking pressure on other roads in Harpenden, will affect the shops on the High St which are already suffering, and in any event without any parking endorsement is utterly pointless as a revenue generating basis.

I object to this proposal. The charges are so high that it will start to price out people visiting the town centre which in turn will be detrimental to the viability of the businesses in the High Street. I am fortunate to live in Harpenden and my children are older so I try to walk into Town. People who either live further away or have younger children do not have this option so they will now have an incentive to go to other shopping areas (like Luton – perhaps new area by J10). Your own local plan saw the High Street as a thriving area for shopping and leisure so you need to hold to that plan and ensure the High Street is thriving and does not become an area with boarded up shops. If there is a problem with people parking longer at present then employ traffic wardens, rather than killing off the High Street. Many towns similar to Harpenden have a thriving independent retail sector and building this up should be your focus rather than a short term, greedy move

I object to this proposed change to the parking arrangements in Harpenden town centre, specifically the charges to be levied when there were none before.

Why has the Lib Dem Council decided to change the current arrangements to the detriment of motorists, the local population and retailers?

Money of course, nothing more, nothing less.

I was born in Harpenden, at the Red House, and love my home town, but if Council don't listen to the huge response against this proposed change I for one (and I suspect others) will stop using the high street and go elsewhere

I object to this. Bad for business and residents.

I object very strongly to the proposed introduction of parking charges in the streets of Harpenden:

- 1) This will destroy the shops and businesses in Harpenden, people will simply not visit Harpenden but go elsewhere and buy even more things on line. The council will therefore have less income from Business rates and be in a worse situation than they are now.
- 2) Elderly people will not be able to get into the town to meet friends and have coffee or meals and socialise .
- 3) People who volunteer will be reluctant to if they have to pay more than £5 to park their car for the privilege of helping.
- 4) It is unrealistic to expect people to use a bus to come into Harpenden to do odd jobs in the town, eg visit the Building Society, go to the doctor, optician, dentist, library,
- 5) It is impossible to do a weekly shop in the supermarket and carry it all back to a bus stop and go home by bus. I am a fit person but would not be able to do this so I do not know how I will do my food shopping.
- 6) I am extremely concerned that Harpenden town will be destroyed.

The council needs to review how it spends its money and make adjustments like all families and individuals have to when money is short. They will not gain by putting these charges into operation as the money will simply go in the installation and maintenance of the parking machines and traffic warden wages, the income cannot be used to fund any of budget due to previous legislation.

I often stop off in Harpenden town to pop into a shop on my way home. This will deter me from doing so. I feel the proposed changes will substantially affect the businesses in Harpenden as many will avoid the town due to cost. This has further implications on those that aren't able to walk into town.

I oppose the proposed charging for parking in Harpenden town centre. High streets are struggling to survive and this charge will deter people from using our local shops.

I pop into Harpenden all the time, using the free spaces, picking up various things for me, taking my elderly Mum. I walk or cycle when I can but often need the car as items are too heavy to carry, or my Mum can't do the walk from my home. I also donate lots to the charity shops, which I will now just take to the tip, these won't be items that can be sold from the tip but the council will now have more recycling to pay for, rather than it going for reusing.

I tend to combine the car trips of drop off & pick up stuff, so 20 minutes isn't long enough but combining makes it efficient & better for the environment.

This paid for parking will completely stop this. I'll just get in my car & drive further afield, where parking is free. It'll add to pollution locally, damage the roads as I drive through, clog up traffic & damage the local business trade, plus no charity shop drops.

Lib Dems will not be getting another vote from me if this goes through. I know the budget needs to be balanced but this is incredibly shortsighted. It will not generate the money expected, add further costs to the budget to install & additional maintenance & undoubtedly result in more empty shops, will lower resultant council tax.

Please listen to local residents

Harpenden is a town. St Albans is a city. The council should recognise this and adapt its approach to fit accordingly

I pop into Harpenden for an exercise class and a some shopping several times a week. I will absolutely NOT be paying an extra £5.00. I'll go to Southdown and Wheathampstead. There be no shops to go anyway if this happens.

I pteviously lived in Harpenden and continue to frequently shop there. But this new proposal to withdraw free short term parking will kill the shopping in Harpenden. It's bad enough that every bank in Harpenden has now closed but this will new move will be detrimental to local businesses and the community as a whole.

I regularly stop in Harpenden to use many of the shops, namely Marks and Spencer , Brad and Dills Silver Palate and Boots to pick up lunch, grab a coffee, have a quick breakfast with my son before school, . I run errands in the shops Harpenden has and a parking charge would direct affect my decision to be able to shop at the above mentioned shops. There is already a quick turn around in the town with car parking and cars are often able to get a space without much fuss. It enable those who cannot afford parking to visit the town for a short stay and fee parking helps an already dying high street.

I regularly visit Harpenden for shopping and to attend the hairdressers. Parking has been so good but this new proposal is wrong. It will kill off the high street and be detrimental to local businesses. SADC should be doing what they can to support high street businesses not destroy them.

I regularly visit Harpenden to collect food from the wonderful businesses there including Simmons, The Pudding Stop, and Chef Peking, but if I had to pay extra £2.50 to park my car for 5 mins I will look for another branch somewhere else and/or stop coming and find other places to shop.

I see no reason for the increased costs to be incurred by people using Harpendens shops or services, as we are trying to keep a vibrant town centre.

I strenuously object to the proposal to introduce parking charges in Harpenden. I have been resident in Harpenden for 45 years and am a retired pensioner dependent upon my car for shopping and health related services. There is absolutely no need, locally, to restrict parking beyond the current regulations. This proposal will drive trade away from businesses in Harpenden to other locations where parking is free. This proposal provides absolutely no benefit to the residents and businesses in Harpenden and can only be seen as an additional tax that is imposed against local wishes to benefit St. Albans at the expense of Harpenden residents. Given the strength of local feeling, I ask whether the democratic will of the Harpenden community will be respected by St. Albans District Council.

I strongly object to a £5 cost for 2 hours parking. Im not totally against introducing some form of payment to raise money but £5 will definitely put people off coming into town. Harpenden has a lively and thriving centre and I would not like to see this affected by the introduction of high parking charges. I also object to the comments that this will encourage more active forms of transport. Not everyone (myself included) is able to walk into town or get on a bike. More consideration should be given to the impact of these proposals on business and more vulnerable groups in Harpenden.

I strongly believe this proposal will be discriminatory to older people who can't walk long distances and ruinous to local retailers

I strongly disagree with this proposal to charge for parking in Harpenden

I strongly object to parking charges being imposed in Harpenden as I feel this will completely kill the high street and be bad for local independent businesses, which is part of the charm of Harpenden and if imposed will just see a surge of empty buildings and a soulless high street.

I strongly object to the proposed change in parking in Harpenden Town centre.

The current system of 1 or 2 hrs and no return provided adequate length for residents and visitors to the town, twenty minutes does not. Every town should have a reasonable element of free parking to encourage shoppers and passing trade for local businesses, which is so important for a town to thrive. Please don't do this, find another way to get the money in. I already resent having to pay £2.25 to park in the NCP under Sainsburys if I need to park and can't get a space on the high street – it used to be reasonable but shot up overnight and now even parking for ten mins will cost you the same as an hour £2.25. People are really struggling financially at the moment and we want to keep our town a busy and vibrant place that's successful for small businesses. You are essentially creating a barrier to use, and once again penalising those who are less well off, as they will choose to go elsewhere to shop etc.

I strongly object to the changes recommended. Our high streets need to have systems in place to encourage the footfall for retailers. These parking restrictions will do the exact opposite. We will end up with the high streets being a shell and the council will find they have less retailers to pay their business rates. We have already lost many shops and our high has reinvented itself, fortunately by having restaurants in lieu. Increasing the parking to 10.00pm which previously was 6.00pm will have a detrimental effect on these. We need a prosperous high street and it is very short sighted of this council to put this in place. I would like to know how much of the costs relate to the organisations who monitor the car parks. Car parking on out of town retail parks are free and convenient, this action will drive everyone to out of town services.

I strongly object to the move to paid-for parking spaces in this proposal. The nature of the town of Harpenden and the Common is that many residents are outside of walking distance for short visits to local shops, cafes and restaurants.

We have a young family and the ability to pop into town to get breakfast in Silver Palate or take childrens books out at the library is predicated on there being somewhere to park for just over an hour. Having to pay £5 to park for 2 hours simply means that it will be cheaper to buy books from Amazon and we will go out of town to a retail park where parking is free and easy. This will be the death of the small independent shops, restaurants and cafes which originally attracted us when we moved to Harpenden 2 years ago.

There is ample parking in Harpenden due to the car parks at Bowers way and Amensbury, so if you are trying to get cars out of the busy centre, then it would be far better to give a 20 minute free parking in those car parks rather than having to pay £2.20 so people don't have to fight over the free parking on the street. For the sake of our amazing town I would strongly urge the council to reconsider this proposal.

I strongly object to the proposal to introduce charging to those areas currently free in Harpenden town centre. Free parking in Harpenden benefits businesses and customers alike and contributes to the existing vibrant town centre. Charging will likely drive shoppers away to the out of town centres where parking is free.

I strongly object to the proposals, as a parent of 3 under 3 year olds, including twins. It would significantly limit my access to facilities within the town as I am unable to walk with all of my children for health reasons. These proposals will increase my isolation as a parent and worsen my mental health. I rely on easy and free parking to attend events and use local amenities. The proposals would be prohibitively expensive for me.

I strongly object to the proposed changes and parking in Harpenden Town

I strongly object to the proposed introduction of parking charges outside the shops on Harpenden High St. I moved to Harpenden because it had the feel of a village, and the ability to park directly outside the shops and do a quick shop was an integral part of creating this atmosphere. The introduction of parking charges will add to the hassle of parking here and negatively impact the whole shopping experience. The reduction in parking convenience will also negatively impact the

businesses in this in this area. It is vital that we support these businesses so that we don't end up with a series of empty shops creating a ghost town as has happened in other town centres.

I strongly object to the proposed parking charges as they will mean the end of Harpenden as we know it. 20 minutes free parking is not long enough for anyone to walk round the shops, drop or collect children from school, or attend a doctor or dentist appointment. And I'm not sure that people will be prepared to spend an extra £5 to have coffee or a meal with friends. If I am going to have to pay to park it won't be in Harpenden, it will be in a nearby town with a wider variety of shopping experinces available. Harpenden is too far for me to walk and the bus is not regular enough. There is no way that this will benefit the community as you state. It will cause a lot of businesses to close, and there will be no volunteers for the many charity shops. Perhaps more time should be spent on fining people who currently park illegally.

I strongly object to the proposed parking charges in Harpenden. Older residents already find the parking meters difficult to use.. Many can't/won't use 'paybyphone', Senior citizens who previously had parking permits will reconsider continuing volunteering in charity shops etc. Library usage will fall. Societies will lose members. Shops will lose business. Older residents will stay at home. Street parking will move further into residential roads .

I strongly object to this proposal as it will deter shoppers from visiting the town centre shops and will likely increase parking in the roads leading to the town centre.

Parents who drop off children at St Nicholas primary school need longer than 20 minutes to park as they need to stay with their children outside school until the teachers are ready. Currently many parents chat with each and do some shopping, have coffees etc, and this ill-considered proposal would destroy these beneficial social and commercial interactions. The first justification you site, "Encourage Active Travel", is fatuous. Some parents may be close enough to walk with their children but many do that already. Very few could change to cycling and none could use public transport as an alternative. "Greater turnover of premuium spaces" is also fatuous as very few people will be able to conclude their business in town within 20 minutes. It may reduce the number staying for 2 hours but the most recent changes in parking restrictions increased the time allowed from one hour to two hours, in order to give visitors the time needed to do all their shopping. So this proposal flies in the face of experience.

The proposal is not backed by any traffic surveys so it is clear that it is motivated purely by the desire to put money into the

coffers of the local council, even if this reduces income to local shops and threatens their survival. The reference to encouraging active travel is pure greenwash to try and gloss over the severe harm this proposal will cause to the local shops.

I strongly object to this proposal it will significantly impact local independent smalls businesses who struggle as things are already. It's difficult enough to park in harpenden without having to pay to park. There is no justification for this that I a see other than for someone to make money that benefits no one.

I strongly object to this proposal. This is very poorly thought out and will have huge impact on local residents and businesses. It will mean that people will use less of the high street and have very detrimental effect on local businesses.

I also understand that a large petition signed by over 6,000 local residents objecting to it is being ignored which I find astonishing given that is over 20% of the local population.

The Council should not go forward with this proposal as this is not what local residents want or voted or.

I strongly object to this proposal to levy parking charges in Harpenden town centre where none applied before. It is obviously a ploy to raise additional funds for the council by once again penalising the motorist and the various retail outlets in the town.

I strongly object to the proposed parking charges in central Harpenden. This will cause many issues to retailers who are already struggling in the high street. It will also cause issues for people with health conditions and disabilities. The proposed charges must not be implemented.

I strongly oppose the idea of charging for parking.

I strongly oppose the introduction of any parking charges to Harpenden town centre. It's very clear to me that there is nothing wrong with parking in the town centre as it currently stands. This is a solution for a problem which doesn't actually exist!

It is apparent that SADC are simply using the introduction of parking charges as a revenue raising opportunity to plug a hole in their finances, which is wholly due to their incompetence and poor financial management. The council leader, Paul de Kort, has been quoted in the local press as saying this is purely a revenue raising measure and that it is definitely going ahead, which makes the consultation process a shameful sham. Despite council suggesting otherwise, I feel it is quite clear that the introduction of parking charges for the purposes of revenue raising is simply not lawful; there is legal precedent on this matter. Will SADC share its legal advice on this matter, as part of the consultation? I feel that it must.

The impact on local businesses cannot be under-estimated. I personally know of one High Street business which is in the process of closing at this point in time – partly as a result of high rents and extortionate business rates but the proposed parking charges were seen as the final straw. The final nail in the coffin, as it were. Personally, I was in the initial stages of exploring a High St position to open a showroom for my A/C and heat pump business, which would be a fantastic addition to the town and to the community, in my opinion, but any change to the parking structure in the High St will simply kill that idea stone dead – the impact on browsers and people who'd like to 'pop in' will be nothing short of disastrous. Universally, retailers are extremely worried about the impact on their business – many of us in the business community are still recovering from the economic effects of Covid, reduced footfall from online and out-of-town shopping, sky high business rates and rent. Parking charges will change the dynamic of shopper behaviour very significantly – it will be nothing short of disastrous! Surely SADC should be championing our fragile High St economies – once damaged, they're lost, never to return. Shameful!

Furthermore, I believe SADC has not sufficiently explored other revenue raising opportunities either which makes the implementation of parking charges not only unnecessary but a tragedy.

SADC has failed to raise a Local Development Framework in recent years and as result has no Housing Plan nor does it have a Community Infrastructure Levy. This means the council has forfeited millions of pounds of revenue over the last few years, which absolutely dwarfs the paltry revenue which may be generated by parking charges in Harpenden. SADC has only council rates available to it to raise revenue from housing developments currently and this is clearly a rather severe case of financial negligence. Can SADC say why it has failed to raise a LDF, a CIL and a HP? Would it accept that if it was more competent with their LDF and CIL then there would be no need to introduce what is obviously a simple money grabbing exercise? Does it not think the two issues are interlinked? Would it accept that with revenues raised from a CIL then parking charges in Harpenden would not be necessary?

Not only is the SADC incompetent with the above, it has been incompetent and negligent in managing its existing revenue raising assets. I speak specifically of their garages stock which I understand now have a vacancy rate of 30%. Can the council advise how much revenue - at circa £65 a month, per garage - it has squandered by not using these garages more effectively? With so many residents on waiting lists for a garage does the council believe this is acceptable? Surely residents deserve better?

Not only has SADC failed to rent out its garages, it has failed to adequately consider commercial approaches to buy its currently unoccupied garages. Even the sale of just one row of garages would obliterate the current council deficit. I know this for fact because I have, personally, approached the council about the purchase of the garages in Beeching Close. Some of these garages have been boarded up and abandoned for at least 7 years that I'm aware of. The council has refused to not only consider my approach, but to its shame, it has not even had the courtesy to return my calls to discuss the idea. If the council was so flush with money it didn't need to consider an approach of this nature I could understand it but that's not the case, is it?

Furthermore there is the appallingly managed sale of the Public Halls in Harpenden. This building has laid empty for 5 years and still the council has not sold it. I have been told by someone involved in the tendering process that SADC has, to date, spent over £800,000 and this is largely due to its delusions of trying to be a property developer. I understand that, typically, a

council should expect to incur costs of circa £100,000 in the process of a sale of this nature. How has the council failed in this matter so spectacularly? Where has the £700,000 gone, what has it been spent on? Does the council accept this has been a poor use of funds and had this been better managed then it need not look for further revenue from parking charges in Harpenden?

Does the council not think it owes the residents of Harpenden an explanation of the above cases of financial mismanagement BEFORE it tries to dip its hands in our collective pockets, by forcing through a poorly thought out parking proposal, which, by its own figures, would seem to cost a very large chunk of the revenue each year it is hoped it will raise?

Will SADC accept this is a poorly thought out and possibly not lawful proposal, with no merit whatsoever and which is universally hated by the residents and retailers of Harpenden, and, given the options I give above for alternative revenue raising opportunities, does it not also accept that it should pursue these other revenue streams and abandon the proposed changes to parking in Harpenden? It strikes me that this would be the decent thing to do.

I am available to discuss further any of the above points if the council so wishes or feels appropriate. In the event the council chooses to continue with its proposal I will consider referring this to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, or any other appropriate department as deemed necessary, as I believe this matter needs serious investigation and further oversight.

I strongly oppose the new parking charges proposed in Harpenden

I strongly oppose the plan to introduce parking charges in Harpenden town centre.

It will destroy our high street. Footfall will decrease and all businesses will be hit hard including the library, charity shops, coffee shops and restaurants. All these rely on visitors spending time in the town centre. Adding £2.50-£5 on each of these visits will deter many residents and visitors from popping into town. These visits can, for many, be the only time they see people in a day and this will isolate many sectors of the community.

I am lucky enough to be fit & healthy and live close enough to be able to walk into the town centre; but I know plenty of people (and not all elderly) who aren't able to make the trip into town as easily or quickly as me.

These charges will affect how many times people visit the town centre and how long they stay; which will have a detrimental impact to all businesses.

You may need to fill a hole in your budget but please don't do it at the expense of our high street; don't kill off everything that Harpenden has to offer and that it thrives upon.

Harpenden town centre should not be just for those who can afford to live near the town centre and can walk in, or for those that are wealthy enough to afford these charges. Our town should be available and easily accessible for all its residents!!!

I strongly oppose this idea. Introducing these changes and charges will have a disastrous effect on our town centre much to the detriment of the shop-keepers.

If you had regularly (i.e. daily and permanently) enforced the existing regulations the cost of the warden would have been covered by the fines.

I strongly oppose this proposal of introducing parking fee in Harpenden high street. If brought in, Harpenden would be a no go for me

I strongly reject any proposal to pay for parking around the streets of Harpenden town Centre. Are you trying to 'hollow out' the town and get rid of all the independent shops? For that will be the result of your proposal. Have you done a full cost benefit analysis of charging for street parking? If so has it taken into account the loss of business rates on closed businesses or conversion to charity shops? Where is this data published? Do you realise that 'mature' town citizens either do not own a smart phone for paying for parking or feel it is too difficult to pay by phone or via an app. Indeed I know many people who no longer use the Station carpark because of this. They get a lift to the station and a taxi home (it's cheaper too!). If the Lib Dems want to grow businesses and create a more vibrant town centre then you should do away with street parking charges

entirely and provide 2 hour free parking on all town centre streets. You need to encourage people to shop in Harpenden not deter them. Most of us can live without the butcher, fish van lady, hairdressers, clothes shops etc by going on-line (for all supermarkets) or travelling to Welwyn (plenty of free parking there and they have a Waitrose AND John Lewis stores). It will be sad to lose Threads but there is Etsy on-line and plenty of catalogue companies offering similar stuff. Do we need to visit the town centre? probably not except maybe for the doctor and dentist – neither of which can be done in 20mins free parking. Probably the school kids will still want to visit the cafes, so probably they will survive. Make Harpenden even greater with free 2 hour street parking! Incidentally love the new pedestrian tunnel murals and history board!

I strongly reject the, frankly, stupid decision to introduce parking charges as outlined. I have been a resident in Harpenden for over 8 years. There is no congestion or safety issues in the town centre. There are already numerous places to pay and display places to park. The decision to impose these parking charges will not improve the climate/emissions in the area. They will not increase congestion in the area. All they will do is disincentivise residents from popping into town which will in turn severely damage and impact trade for shops and retailers, who are already suffering from excessive rents and business rates. If you wish to hasten the demise of vibrant, attractive town centres and put out of business struggling small/local traders, then this suggested charge will achieve your objective. I strongly suggest you desist from imposing this charge, which residents and local traders have not asked for, nor wish to see.

I support council efforts to balance budgets but question if there are no alternative options at all for revenue generation. Reports circulating online about unused assets such as garages or assets that could be disposed of, CIL, etc, suggest there are alternatives and I don't know how these concerns are addressed (or if they will be addressed, nor indeed if they are valid points). The parking charges proposed are very high.

I support paid parking in Harpenden as there are too many cars, and in the interests of sustainability and safety, it would be good to encourage walking, cycling and public transport. If the bus service was improved, that would be helpful.

I support the introduction of parking charges in Harpenden High street.

I support the proposal to charge harpenden residents for on street parking the same as st albans. This will reduce congestion and pollution

I support the proposal. We need to ensure that facilities used are paid for. It's also beneficial to discourage driving. The free 20 minutes proposal deals with people just stopping briefly for a specific purpose. Preventing all day parking will help with churn, finding a space, supporting local business and preventing people clogging up spaces all day.

It would be good to ensure adequate lower cost parking a little away from Harpenden town centre to enable people working in town to park at a reasonable cost nearby but this doesn't need to be on street parking on the high road and adjacent.

I support this change, but would expect the council to make more provisions for electric car charging in the town centre.

I think free parking is instrumental to the town.

Parking fees would discourage shoppers to local area and visitors. I know it affects my choices of where to shop. I feel for business such as threads who all ready have high rents and rates. There are already enough empty shops in Harpenden - please don't encourage more.

I think it will have a negative impact on the high street. People will not stop for coffee, browse shops and pop in for 'extras' if they have to pay for parking every time. More purchases will go to out of town or online. We already have empty shops we should be doing everything we can to promote footfall in the high street not deterring people. I appreciate funds are needed but this is not the way to get them - in long term it will do more damage.

I think parking charges generally as proposed across Harpenden town centre will reduce business in the town centre and be detrimental to the prosperity of those same businesses.

20 mins free parking does not allow time to achieve much in the town centre. A visit to the WH Smith Post Office cannot be achieved in the time and as there will be more disabled parking in the main areas shoppers wanting to make a quick stop will not be able to park in those bays – meaning their 'quick trip' won't be 20 mins as they will have to park too far away. The consultation document suggests that 20 minutes allows motorists to make quick visits to the town centre, but 20 minutes isn't long enough. The cynic in me sees this as a way of increasing revenue as parking fines will be issued to those going over the 20 mins.

The charges are very expensive. The consultation document says they are "set at £2.50 per hour in line with current on street pricing". WHERE is the on street pricing referred to? Not in Harpenden. This is not an extension of charges currently found in Harpenden streets. A fee of £5 for two hours may deter many from on street parking but there will be insufficient spaces in the existing car parks if all who need more than an hour want to park in them. Nearby residential streets, beyond the shopping area will find they have more on street parking as a result. In some Harpenden streets the residents already complain when people park there! Despite motorists having every right to do so.

More moderate fees would help to make shopping in Harpenden still be affordable for those who have to park in town. Not everyone who lives here has a big disposable income and the idea that "more monitoring and enforcement supports fairness" needs to include those who have less money to spend – but need to park and shop/go to the dentist/Post Office?bank, etc.

Enforcement of parking rules NOW does not seem to be a priority. There are constantly vehicles parked on double yellow lines and part on the pavement – without being ticketed – whilst drivers make their "quick visits" – and often not so quick visits – to the town. Parking officers are few and far between in Harpenden, a revenue stream the council has certainly lost out on in recent years. Those of us who stick to the parking rules object to the unfairness of motorists who park where they like and

get away with it as there is no enforcement.

So, does the £2.50 charge for one hour start AFTER the free 20 minutes? Or is it a £2.50 charge for the hour, effectively 20 minutes free and £2.50 for 40 minutes? (I visit a town where the first hour is free and subsequent hours are paid for. It works well. The town seems to be busy and the car parks too. Henley on Thames)

Of course, just as I became of an age when I could apply for a senior parking permit the rules change and I do not qualify. Disappointing after living here for over 40 years and thinking I had made a contribution through my council taxes all these years.

Overall I think the charges will be damaging to town prosperity. Those who can afford it will pay to park. Those who can least afford it have to put up with a further squeeze on their income when times are already tough. Those who think they can get away with it will continue to do so – and probably get away with it.

I think that charging for parking is not in the interest of local people or local businesses. I am a mother of two young children (3 years old and 5 weeks old) and live two miles from the station. It will put me off coming to the high street. At the moment a 2 hours space can mean that I can do a few errands or have a coffee/meal and do it in a leisurely way so I'm spending my money on the high street and not just clock watching.

I grew up here and my parents are now retired here- we're the two main groups of users on week days surely. I will not be paying £5 for two hours. If we have to pay anyway, we might go elsewhere.

The 20 minute exception is not long enough. By the time I've got everyone and the buggy out of the car the time pressure is really on. The pharmacy with prescriptions taking 15 min to fill or the post office with the big queue. I will take my business elsewhere

I think that if the council goes through with their proposals they will kill off the High Street in Harpenden. The High Street is one of Harpenden's biggest assets, and the council will be in danger of turning it into a ghost town, It still has a variety of shops and many wonderful restaurants which people will be unable or unwilling to use because of the price of parking to use them. I am still unable to find one person who supports this proposal.

I think that the current situation is fine - I work in the high street and am well aware that the traffic wardens rarely police the current parking measures

I think that the proposed parking scheme will deter people from using local shops and facilities.

I think the 20 minute free limit proposed in Harpenden, is too short. I think it should be more like 60 minutes. If people want to park for longer, there are other car parks available such as Bowers Way. The ability to just pop into Harpenden and do some quick shopping without the hassle of going to a machine is very important. My objection is not that it will be a financial burden, it is more that it will be inconvenient for people parking and they may just not bother. The requirement to have to get a ticket and return to the car to put the ticket on the dashboard is too much faff for people that are short of time but not necessarily short of money. Instead of visiting one of the Harpenden High Street shops, they might just go on the internet instead. If the car parking budget is always in a loss then an alternative could be to top it up by increasing the council tax. Harpenden is so fortunate to have a vibrant High Street when many other towns in England have a declining retail sector and we do not want to kill the Goose that lays the Golden Egg. I know that other towns have done similar things and have regretted it. Be wary of unintended consequences.

If car parking makes a loss then perhaps find ways to have better enforcement using smarter technology. For example, look how effective the new car parking unit in the leisure centre is at preventing abuse of the two hour free- parking allowance. That has worked, what other technology is available using sensors and AI?

I think the 20 minutes free parking twice in a day is unworkable, is overly complicated and is bound to cause timing problems. It also does little to assist local businesses. How much business/ shopping can a person or persons do in 20 minutes without having to hurry unnecessarily. It will be particularly difficult for older people and young families. A free period of 1 hour, once a day, would be preferable to be able to plan visits to the town centre.

I think the charges are ridiculous & it is those of a lower income & the businesses that will be hit the hardest – you say that you're going this to encourage wellbeing & exercise, however as someone who is a member of the local gym & Pilates & like to attend daily & sometimes twice a day this would cost me in region £100/£150+ purely on parking to utilise the local facilities – this is only going to drive people to stop using the town centre & focus more on delivered & at home based activities, which ultimately will lead to the demise of small businesses & the high street – driving people out of Harpenden as everything that make Harpenden, will cease to exist.

Very short sighted & terrible sad that your ruining a lovely town due to poor fiscal management

I think the idea is ridiculous and will kill local businesses

I think the proposal to do away with the one hour free parking in Harpenden risks killing the high street, particularly the independent shops. If people are expected to pay £2.50 to park, they will not just pop into town and this will really impact the smaller stores and kill the vibrant town centre

I think this is a terrible idea and runs the risk of seriously impacting local businesses that are already struggling to survive with rent, business rates and utilities increases.

I think this is a terrible idea. Money making disguised as net zero. I hope you will listen to the people who voted for you and who you represent.

I think this is completely unnecessary and an absolute rip off. We use the parking for picking up kids from school and then having half hour to grab things from town. Also use when St Nicholas school have a short assembly, or piano recital, it will make parents at the schools life a lot harder / more expensive. The impact of this is going to be negative to local businesses as people will not think "I could just do a bit of local shopping" when we have to pay £2.50 for the privilege. I am shocked that St Albans are suggesting setting such ridiculous fees for simply parking at the side of a road. The other advantage at the

moment is that commuters don't just park all day and so there is movement in cars – currently it enables a good turnover of cars and that many people have the opportunity to shop. This proposal is just negative in so many ways – it is just a stealth tax which will lead to less use of local business.

I think this proposal for paid parking spaces in Harpenden Town centre will be an absolute disaster for the SHOPS and the residence. The shops are struggling already with less footfall due to people shopping online, and these proposed parking charges will be an absolute disaster for the shops and I think a lot of them will close down. This will be the end to Harpenden Town centre!

I think this proposal is a poor fit. It does not work well for charity shops nor the primary schools in the town centre. It will increase the traffic going through the avenues and cause more traffic jams at school start and stop times, and increase the likelihood of blocked driveways. I think the 20 minute window is discriminatory as it disproportionately disadvantages those people that need longer to park, enter/exit their vehicle, and travel to/from their destination; this includes disabled people (both physically and mentally), but is not limited to them. I live near the town centre and I can't even buy milk in under 20 minutes, so the time frame proposed is absolutely unacceptable and has not been thought out.

I think this proposal will cause hardship to businesses and customers alike, at a very difficult time financially for everyone. 20 minutes is not long enough for any sort of appointment eg Dr, Hairdresser, Dentist etc as well as shopping. Madness!

I think this will act as a deterrent and impact on the attractiveness of shopping in the local high street.

I believe that this will change the overall “village” feel of the high street. The 20 minute free limit is very restrictive given the queues associated with coffee shops and stores during peak hours, and I am concerned that this will lead to an increase in the number of people getting parking accidental tickets.

I think this will be a terrible idea for people popping into local shops on Victoria Street and Lattamore Road small businesses need to survive. This will heavily affect them.

I thoroughly object to the proposed parking changes that are planned for Harpenden. As a small business owner in the town since 1978 I am totally shocked by the callous disregard shown by SADC for the survival of the small businesses themselves,

but ultimately also the long term survival of the town itself. It seems a very shortsighted plan in order to gain some quick revenue for SADC and I cannot possibly see any advantage to Harpenden in return.

I totally disagree with the parking proposals on the following grounds.

- 1) If you remove or restrict some of the current free parking you will create a switch where people cannot easily find free parking. In that case people will give up looking for free parking and will not try anymore. Hence they will not come into Harpenden and the shops on the High Street will close.
- 2) The current parking charges are far too high and much higher than those in any neighbouring towns such as Welwyn Garden City. The high cost in Harpenden encourages everyone to go to other towns or locations.
- 3) If parking for two hours is going to cost £5.00 I will meet friends for a coffee in a garden centre and just travel further.
- 4) You will be taxing the sick who have to park to see a doctor.
- 5) Finally, can the costs of running parking be benchmarked against other councils which charge far less for parking? Before charging Harpenden Residents more the costs should be reviewed and other solutions found, one solution being to manage the finances so that additional costs are not required.

I totally disagree with the proposed charges even though I do not drive! The impact on local shops and businesses will far outway the money SADC wants to recoup due to years of overspending by introducing this scheme. The council just wants more and more money from residents already paying their Council Tax, like the green waste bin collection fee. I have never seen a traffic warden in the town, so why not increase current checks on parking over the agreed time that penalising everyone.

I totally disagree with this proposal. It will result in businesses on the high street closing down as people avoid parking charges. This will kill the high street which already has too many empty premises.

I totally object to the proposal to replace the current free parking to paid parking in Harpenden. The existing parking is totally mismanaged allowing the current free parking bays to be abused. If the existing free parking was policed correctly, funds would be raised by issuance of PCN, therefore a budget hole as cited by SADC would not exist. Making punitive charges will destroy the town as residents and visitors will not visit the town as frequently and retail shops will undoubtedly close as footfall and revenue drops. This is a short sighted policy by SADC and those elected officials implementing the proposal will be ejected from office at the first opportunity.

I totally object to the proposed imposition of parking charges in Harpenden town centre. I also object to the smokescreen of a 'consultation' when it is clear the decision has already been made and there is no intention to overturn it which is so disingenuous

I totally object to the scheme of charging to park in Harpenden high st. Apart from the huge detrimental affect this will have on the brilliant independent business Harpenden is lucky to have it will also have a major impact on people who need to access the doctors or pharmacy for urgent medical needs. This clearly is an attempt by the council to raise funds to balance the books. Why should residents and visitors pay the price (literally) for the local council/s incompetence.

This will have a major impact on the town and not for the better. Parking is already becoming way too expensive as it is.

I totally object to this proposal, it is nothing more than a money grab, just like the green bin charge.

Nothing good will come from it, it will punish local people who already pay a lot of council tax for less services, and the small independent traders who have shops here.

Charging for parking will only push people to other places where parking is free.

NO ONE WANTS THIS

I totally oppose the parking proposal for Harpenden. It is unnecessary and unrealistic. Current parking restrictions work. The traffic moves, rotates around Harpenden. It has a vibrant centre currently. Introducing paid parking to contribute to the council budget shortfall is unrealistic. If you want to raise money add £1 to all green bin users. Harpenden has more electric cars than most towns so is probably more environmentally friendly than most towns. Solve the problem of budget shortfall

do not introduce another problem by causing more traffic chaos and effecting local retailers. You will end up losing more in property rental/rates than you will make from ticketing and enforcing ticketing. Over 5000 people in Harpenden are opposed to this proposal and signed a petition against it. Please accept this as 5000 objection to your proposal.

I totally OPPOSE the proposed introduction of parking charges in Harpenden.

This is a tax by stealth. We pay more and more in council tax for less and less services.

It will be detrimental to the independent traders in particular. Do you want successful businesses that pay tax or another 'ghost town' high street?

Where is the evidence this is necessary?

I travel to Harpenden daily as my children are at school there. I park on the high street to do my grocery shopping. If payment for parking were to be put in place I would 100% head to a bigger out of town supermarket and retail parks where the parking is free. I often park for 10-15 minutes whilst I pop into local shops and I would definitely have to stop doing this if I had the added expense of parking. If I'm staying for longer than an hour, I happily pay to park in one of the car parks. There is already a good balance of free and paid for parking.

Harpenden is a bustling town and I believe this will change hugely if restrictions are put in place.

I used to also run a business on the High Street and the convenience of free on street parking was a draw for my clients. My business would 100% of been impacted if paying for 1 hour parking was put in place.

Businesses and people are already under extreme financial pressure and adding to this whilst taking away convenience would be a crying shame.

I understand and support SADC's need to raise revenue from on-street parking. BUT these proposals take no account of fact Harpenden is different to St. Albans. Parking policy in Harpenden is currently complex and confusing having evolved over time, but it does offer a range of necessary options for visitors to High St. This range of options is critical as our retailers/service providers meet differing types of customer needs. Harpenden, unlike St. Albans, is not a tourist attraction; it depends for its economic survival, on its retail and service providers, some of whom require a higher turnover of customers than others. The one size approach proposed will not meet these needs.

The 20 mins x2 free parking offered is insufficient for vast majority of visitors. It is impossible for a motorist encumbered by young children/elderly passengers, to park, unload said passengers, walk to destination, make purchase, get back to car etc. within this timeframe. Ditto elderly motorists who do not meet requirements of blue badge, but nonetheless walk slowly. Minimum free parking must be 1hr. Given the number of bays in Harpenden impacted by proposed changes, (225) one approach (proposed by HTC officials,who know how Harpenden works) could be to make 107 bays subject to new paid parking policy and 100 kept as 1hr free parking in key locations (high street outside chemists/library/post office/opticians etc). HTC calculations show this option would only need 107 bays to each achieve c£4.50 income per day to meet SADC's required £150K additional income from Harpenden from on street parking. This compromise both meets SADC's income needs and addresses concerns of many retailers and residents. I am both a district and town councillor, I work closely with HTC officials who have drawn up these calculations. I respectfully urge SADC to consider these options carefully, explore further in discussion with Town Clerk, specifically the retention of 1hr free parking as outlined above. Please also visit Harpenden and see the street scene first hand and discuss with our Town Clerk.

Another KEY issue is ENFORCEMENT. If new parking proposals are to have any credibility there must be EFFECTIVE enforcement from day 1. Currently there isn't., motorists get away with murder. This rightly enrages residents/retailers, enforcement is critical if sufficient income is to be raised by these measures and SADC has any hope of securing residents' understanding, if not approval of these proposed changes.

I also draw your attention to contribution to this consultation made by Harpenden Society, specifically noting that parking policy in Harpenden must be subject to a fundamental review at an early stage after this consultation. Simply bolting on changes without looking at wider implications will not deliver in the long term particularly taking local plan and Government's new housing policies into consideration which raise new challenges.

Whilst I do not share the extreme opinions voiced by some Harpenden residents and its retailers over these parking proposals, I do recognise the legitimate anxieties and concerns raised by many. There must be some compromise between what is currently proposed and what is achievable/acceptable. If this and future consultations are to have any credibility, residents must believe their concerns have been heard. For the future I very much want there to be good working relationships between HTC and SADC given the challenges we will face together with implementation of local plan/new housing policies. Key to getting to that position will be the intelligent and effective management of this current consultation.

I understand why this is being implemented however as people are abusing the parking spaces in Harpenden due primarily to commuters.

However this will have an astronomically negative impact on local shops on the high street

I used to use an OAP annual parking badge to park in central Harpenden which you have discontinued. You are now going to severely restrict the 1 hour parking. The net effect of this for me, is that will use Harpenden High Street retailers even less, due to the both the inconvenience and cost of parking. I already use Luton Retail Park, which has free parking, for much of my shopping. This can only increase with your proposals, to the detriment of Harpenden High street.

I think the Council should be working hard to ensure the High Street retains some vibrancy, These proposals can only have a negative effect on the vibrancy of the High Street.

I visit Harpenden centre several times a week, normally by walking as I live nearby but I also sometimes stop off for short periods when driving in/out of town to visit shops.

The key issue with this proposal is the impact of the proposed charges which will reduce the the volume of casual visitors to central Harpenden shops and services. This will reduce the profitability of businesses trading in Harpenden and in some cases this will impact their viability, particularly for local independent businesses which bring much character to the town centre.

A further impact of this is to increase the cost of short visits to the town which are equally likely to be for social reasons as well as purchasing goods/services. This will impact on the social welfare of Harpenden's residents, particularly the less wealthy who are most likely to change their behaviour and simply decide to stay at home.

Put simply, this proposal is anti-growth and anti-social. It is also contrary to the three key council strategic objectives of supporting a thriving community, making the district a great place to live and supporting a vibrant economy.

I would add the 20 minute free period is useless for most casual visits to Harpenden. A visit to the post office typically takes longer than that, and 20 mins is insufficient for a typical casual shopping visit which may involve popping into 2 or 3 different stores. One hour should be the minimum free period.

I also have a serious concern that the financial situation relating to parking services has been misrepresented by the Council within this consultation. The general public would understand "parking services" to encompass both on and off road parking provision by the council. But the financial situation presented in this consultation is entirely based on the on-road element of parking services which has run a deficit in recent years, but is surely offset by the substantial net revenue generated by off-street parking. The council's argument about making parking pay for itself is therefore nonsense – it already does pay for itself, so the council is in reality just seeking to drive up total revenues even further. To pretend otherwise is dishonest and will erode residents' trust in the council's ability to manage its budget in a fair and transparent way.

I visit Harpenden daily and this proposal would significantly deter me from going there

I visit Harpenden regularly on my way home from work. I often stop to visit the local independent shops and chains. This proposal will totally change my daily drop off to do my shopping. This will be a real shame.

I volunteer in harpenden and recently been hit by the significant price increases in harpenden, this proposal would make this worse for volunteers and other people who have no option but to drive into town.

20 mins is not a proposal I could back and presents a safety risk. People will now hover why they wait for people to avoid paying thus causing further congestion.

I can sympathise with the goal of reducing cars in harpenden but this won't happen until other measures are introduced, safer cycling routes, zip cars, cheaper taxis and better public transport.

Finally, can the council confirm the views of the independent shops who bring so much value to our town? These views must be taken into account.

I wanted to message just to highlight how strongly I would oppose this. Free parking is a key factor to the high street maintaining its strength. The parking time is limited, so it already ensures spaces are not taken for long periods. It encourages people to stop on the high street, when otherwise they may well save the 'odd jobs / picking up of small items' until they can be done in bulk, potentially in a large supermarket outside of Harpenden.

The availability of free parking in Harpenden was a huge positive when we moved to the area - it makes the town feel welcoming, encourages impromptu stops in town that benefits the shops. It also makes the town feel as if it is helping to support the elderly / those mobility issues / those with young children, ensuring they can access facilities without financial implications.

Parking fees have already been extended in the leisure centre car park - it has pushed parking out onto the residential streets in the surrounding area, to avoid parking charges. It creates an unnecessary, money making feel to the town, which is short sighted as the effect on the local economy by the decrease in throughput and spending in the town will have a huge negative impact.

I wholeheartedly object to these proposals.

They are short sighted with wider ranging negative consequences. I do not believe you have considered the negative environmental, financial or social unintended consequences.

Financial- as a local resident who walks wherever possible it is not possible when doing your weekly shop or using amenities like the post office. Adding this cost on a weekly basis is just not a possibility- I am not rich, I have to budget every month where my money goes. Residents will spend more on fuel to get to out of town shops. The cost to local trade is not one I believe you have taken seriously enough. We need to be encouraging local people to spend in local shops.

Environmental- resident will use cars to travel further.

Social- you are putting people off meeting in town to use one of the very many coffee shops- why would anyone spend double the cost on a coffee- you then lose footfall from local shops.

What I think is ok is people having 2 hours no return parking and those that want to park all day pay and use the car parks already in place.

I wholeheartedly support an increase of parking charges in Harpenden, both in terms of increased and in terms of charging fees in more locations.

Harpenden's infrastructure is not able to support the number of cars on the street, and any measure that discourages the use of cars helps.

I would encourage the council to invest more resources into enforcement. I worry that, if not backed by solid enforcement, the changes will have much less effect than hoped for.

I wholly disagree with this proposal which I believe will seriously diminish the amount of business small local enterprises receive. This would be very much to their detriment for no valid, apparent purpose.

I wholly do not accept the current proposal to charge for Parking on The roads on and surrounding Harpenden High Street. This consultation seems underhand in its timing and totally unnessessary and a lack of creative thinking by the council in how to solve the shortfall in funds. Parking is not an issue in Harpenden, traffic flows and moves regularly due to the current parking parameter's. The issue is a shortfall in funds. Do not create another issue, solve the original issue of shorfall in funds. It's a council tax issue put a £1 extra on green bin collection, sell more advertising in flower beds and roundabouts. Be more creative, you have spent it be more creative in paying for it. Not only will it decrease footfall for the high street, how long will it be before you extend the parking charges until 10pm as you have done in St Albans. You cannot do a school drop off in 20minutes, it is impossible to park walk to the school as the chances of getting a space is limited, wait for the child to come out, normally late and then get back to the car. No chance of popping to a shop to grab dinner for a snack. The churches have day services that will be longer than 20mins. A doctors/dentist/orthordontic appointment is longer than 20mins. My understanding is that you cannot use parking funds to pay for council tax shortfall??? If so why are you introducing funds. Think again. Harpenden is not St Albans traffic flows freely through the high street, You will drive out thriving businesses and create a need for a retail park and what land would that go on?? We are a thriving town don't ruin us.

I wholly object

I wholly object

I wholly object - it will KILL the high street when business rates are already doing that hence why we have lost 4 shops already this year in Harpenden. It serves NO purpose whatsoever. The residents are wholly against it and SURELY the council's job is to serve the residents. It wont, in reality, raise significant revenues compared to the cost and current revenue (ie through the current system of fines). It will also mean that parking them permeates over a wider catchment. It will also be a thorough inconvenience to the older generation - who are the life blood of harpeneden.

I wholly object due to the impact on high street shops, the school and the church and also on local residential roads

I wholly object on the basis of the economy of the town. Small local businesses relay on the local community and parking charges are going to have an adverse affect on them. I and I'm sure many others are not going to pay £2.50 to park and will find other out of town businesses.

I wholly object this idea. I love the Harpenden High St. I hugely support the shops and restaurants. I like to walk in and fortunately I am close enough to and able to. But I know that's not everyone. Sometimes I'm in a rush or driving through and if I can't park for free then I know I won't bother. If I have to pay then I'll just buy online. I pay a very high council tax to support my area and the council should support our local businesses.

I wholly object to the 20 min free parking then charge.

I wholly object to the new parking proposals

I wholly object to the planned parking charges in Harpenden. The council is unable to provide traffic wardens to Harpenden as it is, having spoken to the council on multiple occasions about the use of the bays on Station Road and Lower high street constantly being filled with vans. They could easily have made money 10 times over in the last 2 weeks from the fact that the bays are only 30 minute and half an hour, yet I spend 8 hours of my day staring at the same vehicle parked outside the pharmacy! Also looking at the plans, I cannot see any loading bays. We receive twice daily deliveries along with the other pharmacies in the town who need to be able to make deliveries! It's simply not workable. People in Harpenden will drive round for half an hour to find a free bay, there are 3 paid for car parks in the town centre and they are very rarely used by anyone other than commuters! Please fix your current system before entirely killing of Harpenden High street for the benefit of St Albans.

I wholly object to the policy of charging Harpenden residents fees to park in and around the High Street as suggested by this proposal. The argument that it will increase turnover of traffic compared to the current policy is fallacious.

I wholly object to the proposal for the sake of every age resident in Harpenden and the surrounding areas. I mostly use local parking to pick up vital medical prescriptions for myself so will encouraged to change to a pharmacy further where there is free parking

I wholly object to the proposal of imposing parking charges in Harpenden.

I wholly object to the proposal of introducing payment for parking along Harpenden high street and surrounding roads. To introduce payment would have a significant, detrimental impact on the local businesses within Harpenden. I have two small children and there are often times I need to pop into town, being able to park for an hour means I can complete my jobs, quickly and locally ensuring I continue to support local businesses. However, should this proposal be successful I would no longer do this, it would be just as easy to go to a local super market or retail park where parking would be free.

I do not understand the reason for introducing payment, this appears it would only benefit the council gaining further funds and what would then happen with this money? Will it benefit and support the local businesses? All of whom would be at risk of closure due to lack of footfall should this proposal go ahead.

I wholly object to the proposal to charge for parking in harpenden. It will limit the number of shoppers and probably lead to shops closing because they lose business

I wholly object to the proposal to pay for parking in harpenden

I wholly object to the proposed parking charges in Harpenden town centre.

I have lived in Harpenden for 25 years and the current parking arrangements are fine.

I am concerned about the detrimental impact the charges will have on small independent businesses which give Harpenden its unique character.

Also how they will impact on parking in the surrounding streets. On days when the centre of town is closed or on Farmers Market days parking spills up Rothamsted Avenue and up to Maple Avenue. It is practically impossible for traffic to flow because the road is single file. Further the bend at the top of Rothamsted Avenue becomes a blind single file corner which will result in a crash one day.

There appears to have been no proper analysis done of the impact of the proposed charges which is surely a breach of local government law.

I have yet to speak to a single person in Harpenden who thinks this is a good idea. This is electoral suicide. The Liberal Democrats voters will not forgive such blatant ignoring of their views.

I wholly object to these proposals, which will have a significantly detrimental impact on the vibrant high street and likely also impact on local residential streets, where people will park instead. In addition there will now be no parking for St Nicholas School or church

I wholly object to this

I wholly object to this proposal because it is being put forward as a way to manage parking parking in Harpenden (and St Albans) more efficiently, fairly and effectively when it is clear from the February 2024 Full Council Budget meeting that its sole purpose is to cover a £250,000 shortfall in Council funding. This shortfall is District-wide; it is not restricted solely to the areas where these parking restrictions are being introduced. Why then is SADC expecting to raise 60% (£150,000) from Harpenden on-street parking charges when only 20% of the District's residents (30,000 out of 150,000) live there? This is blatantly unfair and points to the obvious conclusion that SADC sees Harpenden as an affluent cash-cow that can be milked at will. If the expected revenue matched the population proportion the revenue expected from Harpenden should be £50,000. Surely this would be achievable by strict parking enforcement? Anybody who lives in Harpenden knows that people continuously flout the current parking restrictions because they know that enforcement ranges from patchy to non-existent.

An obvious question arises. Who came up with this idea? It is equally obvious that whoever it was has paid no attention to how the Harpenden High Street operates. It has limited off-street parking and yet manages to support an active and diverse commercial and business environment through many of its customers being able to park in the centre for short periods in the on-street spaces. Yet again, the availability of these spaces would be enormously augmented by rigorous enforcement. I don't wholly agree with the independent retailers that on-street parking charges would be catastrophic for their revenue but it also seems obvious that it is unlikely to have a positive effect. Many businesses (including the major chains) are clinging on by their fingertips. Are we really so indifferent to their plight that we are prepared to sacrifice them in the pursuit of some revenue? It is the diversity of the Harpenden High Street that makes it attractive to residents and visitors alike. Do we really want to see it with nothing but boarded-up vacant retail units? And the idea that two 20-minute free parking slots per day would be adequate for anyone's needs is laughable. I invite the relevant SADC officials and Councillors to come to Harpenden and try it out. I doubt they would be able to do anything in the time available. What then of those who need to visit, say, a chemist for a prescription only to be told to come back in 20 minutes (a common experience for me) or those encumbered by small children? Do we just ignore them? No. 20 minutes is inadequate. The minimum needed is 1 hour.

Coming back to the £250,000 shortfall which I said earlier is District-wide. There are 150,000 residents in the District. Assume at least half of them pay Council Tax. the average extra per tax-paying resident needed across the District would be £3.33 a

year, or 28p a week, or 6.5p a week, or 1p a day. Why didn't SADC simply ask residents to pay this tiny extra amount? (And, yes, I do know that this would require a referendum but the many people I know in Harpenden all agree that this would have been an obvious and simple solution.)

And, finally, why didn't SADC consult Harpenden Residents before coming up with this proposal? I know turkeys don't vote for Christmas but if SADC could have been bothered to explain lucidly its financial pressures to its residents a better solution would have been reached.

I wholly object to this proposal

I wholly object to this proposal as it will have both a large adverse impact on the Town's local businesses and increase the cost of shopping for essentials for residents of Harpenden and surrounding villages, who will turn to shop at out-of-town supermarkets resulting in a negative environmental impact from longer car journeys. It also unfairly impacts Harpenden residents over other District residents in the Council's objective to close the deficit in its budget.

The introduction of on-street parking charges has been made to help plug a hole in the St Albans District budget, due in no small way to mismanagement of the finances, such as spending around £750,000 on an ill thought-out and futile attempt for the Council to play property-developer and redevelop the Harpenden Halls Site by itself. The burden of funding to fix this mistake should not fall on the residents and businesses of Harpenden, but on the whole population within the St Albans District, because the proceeds from the sale of the Harpenden Halls site will inevitably be applied to benefit the whole population of the St Albans District and not to solely of Harpenden residents.

I wholly object to this proposal because it has been presented a proposal to manage on-street parking in Harpenden (and St Albans) more effectively, fairly and efficiently when it is clear from the February 2024 SADC Full Council Budget meeting that its sole purpose was to raise revenue to cover a £250,000 shortfall in District funds. This shortfall is District-wide and is not restricted solely to those areas where these charges are to be imposed. It is the intention to raise £150,000 from the on-street parking charges in Harpenden. This is manifestly unfair. £150,000 is 60% of the shortfall whereas only 20% of the District's residents (30,000 out of 150,000) live here. So, Harpenden's share should be £50,000 which would be easily achieved through rigorous enforcement of current parking restrictions. Anyone who lives, works or visits Harpenden is well aware that people regularly flout parking restrictions because they know they can get away with it since enforcement is either patchy or non-existent.

Imposing 60% of the shortfall on Harpenden points to the obvious conclusion that SADC considers Harpenden to be an affluent cash-cow which can be milked at will. How is that fair? As the shortfall is District-wide, its collection should be likewise. If we conservatively estimate 50% of the 150,000 residents pay Council Tax, the average sum required to cover the shortfall would be £3.33 per year or 28p a month or 6.5p a week or 1p a day. Why didn't SADC asks its Residents to pay this tiny amount? (Yes, I know this would have required a referendum but every one of the very many people I know in Harpenden agree this would have been the simplest, easiest and least controversial solution.)

Who came up with this proposal? It seems that whoever did gave no consideration to how the Harpenden High Street operates. There is limited off-street parking in Harpenden yet it manages to support a diverse range of retail and other businesses because many customers are able to make use of the current on-street parking. The diversity of the High Street is a major reason why Harpenden is attractive to both residents and visitors alike. I am not convinced that the introduction of on-street parking charges will be the catastrophe the shopkeepers are predicting but the charges are unlikely to increase the businesses' revenue. Many of the retailers (including those with a national presence) are clinging on by their fingertips. Are we so indifferent to their plight we are prepared to sacrifice them for the sake of raising some revenue? Do we really want to see a High Street of boarded-up vacant retail units?

20 minutes free parking twice a day is laughable. I invite relevant SADC officials and councillors to park in Harpenden and do anything meaningful in 20 minutes. Given the way things work even something as seemingly simple as picking up a prescription regularly takes longer than 20 minutes; likewise dropping off children at school if buggies and toddlers are involved. If only to be fair and reasonable to our residents 60 minutes is far more appropriate.

Why weren't Harpenden residents consulted before these proposals were tabled? I know turkeys don't vote for Christmas but SADC needed to explain lucidly to all its residents what financial pressures it was facing instead of burying them in the MyStAlbans website. If it had got the messaging out there a far better solution would have been reached without the acrimony, ill-feeling and bitterness that this proposal has provoked.

(By the way, my understanding is a consultation is something you do BEFORE making a decision; not afterwards.)

I wholly object to this proposal. Harpenden High Street is a thriving community with a great mixture of independent and national shops. By introducing paid for parking this would decimate the High Street in my opinion. I believe people would no longer pop to the High Street to pick a few things up, or to go out for coffee or to do their weekly shop. They will just stop going. As a resident of 19 years, and having had 2 children go through their schooling here it would be a dreadful thing to see the decline of our High street.

As a council you should be doing everything you can to keep the High Street alive rather than brining in in charges which will destroy it.

I wholly object to this proposal. I believe it will ultimately result in increased hardship for local residents and businesses. The proposed changes will negatively affect the local community. They will not help to improve the lives of residents nor increase the footfall for local businesses, instead driving more people away from the town to shop online and use out of town facilities such as hairdressers, beauty salons, restaurants, dentists and coffee shops where parking is free. This proposal to introduce parking charges will eventually kill the high street and spell the end of the vibrant community feel of Harpenden. I join my neighbours in asking you to please reconsider these proposals. At the very least please look at options for a short period of free parking in town (half hour) before charges apply so residents can continue to 'pop' into town to pick up extra groceries, grab a coffee, buy a gift or card, get cash from the ATM, visit charity shops, meet friends for a chat etc without having to worry about paying for parking. Please consider retaining some free parking further out of town so people have the option of parking nearby and walking the final part into town. The current proposals seem to only be in the interests of gathering funds for the council rather than improving services for the local community.

I wholly object to this proposal. I drive into Harpenden centre to get my weekly shopping and meet up with friends for a coffee or a meal. If I get charged £2.50 for 1 hour parking, I may as well go to another town and do my shopping and spend my money.

The council has so far no clarified EXACTLY why they need to do this. As they can see and hear, NO ONE wants this. Also, as the council is a public body whose employers are the public (That is all residents in Harpenden). We, being your employer, say no to this.

From what I can see, it is just to fill the council coffers for possibly bad management.

I wholly object to this proposal. The current parking situation is far from Ideal, however these proposals will cause significant impact to the local economy. We live in an outlying village around Harpenden and travel in by car to use the local businesses and shops. The parking currently although not ideal, suits a small trip or time for a 'quick bite'. If Harpenden had a monopoly in the area I would understand the council's desire to maximise revenue from people like ourselves, however Loyalty to local businesses alone is not enough and they do not have a monopoly, take Hitchin, Luton, Hemel, Stevenage & Hatfield - All in competition with Harpenden. I feel like this is a short sighted 'Cash Grab' by the local council which will impact further on lost revenue for the local businesses, and therefore less money for the council in the long term. Surely it would be

more beneficial to try encourage people into the town and not try and fleece them to park?

Finally, Adding to the incoming curtailing of station parking, It seems as though the local council will actually be faced with a much larger issue unless there is in fact an increase in suitable parking.

I wholly object to what is simply a stealth tax being introduced that in no way improves the management and provision for town parking. Harpenden requires additional parking to cope with the planned increased house building (approx 500 further houses going on the L&G site opposite the Old Bell Pub). Any proposal that curtails parking further is not aligned to the needs of the community. The focus of any efforts in parking and town access should be to increase further the provision of free parking spaces. Specifically free parking for the first hour of a stay.

I would suggest free parking at the existing Lydekker and the Swimming Pool car park are required. Also the council should consider a multi story parking solution at the swimming pool site.

I wholly object. This is not required and will greatly, detrimentally impact the current town with massively impacted footfall.

I wholly support the introduction of parking fees. Harpenden residents can afford it, the Council needs the money, and it may help reduce congestion.

I wholly support the introduction of reasonable charges to balance the local budgets. I would however like to see the free period extended to 30 minutes.

I will not be shopping in Harpenden if u are going to start charging for parking and it would not be good as others would follow suit and if wpuod effect the shops and people who work there and make the high street die as shops would shut

I wish to object to the recent withdrawal of the Senior Citizens Parking Permit by the SADC.

The Lib Dems have made it clear that the withdrawal of the Senior Citizens Parking Permit has been necessary to balance the SADC budget yet this permit has been an extremely useful benefit to retired townsfolk for the following reasons:

1. elderly citizens do find it difficult to navigate their way round the parking ticket machines in Harpenden car parks and the associated Apps in order to purchase a parking ticket. It should be noted that a 'U turn' was sensibly issued that rail stations must provide ticket offices to assist those passengers who found it difficult to master ticket machines.
2. the convenience factor for retired citizens is not to be underestimated who either may not have sufficient coins or who do not use contactless or CHIP and PIN technology.
3. Lib Dems assert that some local councils have either withdrawn senior citizens parking permits or never introduced such a scheme for their senior residents. There is no reason why our Lib Dem controlled SADC should not continue to be bold on ideas and differentiate from other authorities.
4. The large increase in the cost of car parking charges in Harpenden in 2024 makes it a financial burden for those who use Harpenden's car parks regularly. A solution therefore is to reinstate the Senior Citizens Permit but to increase the annual charge by say 50% or more to help with any SADC budget pressures related to the cost of maintenance and administering SADC car parks.

I wish to strongly object to the proposed introduction of parking charges to the current free limited waiting bays in Harpenden. I believe this is an absolutely ridiculous idea. It will have a really negative impact on the vitality of Harpenden High Street, impacting shops, coffee shops and all local businesses. If people are forced to pay a parking charges it will turn people away and stop using the town centre. As a long term resident of Harpenden, it is obvious to see the benefits of the free parking bays, for people to easily pop into town. The introduction of parking charges will be very detrimental. At a time when there is so much concern of high streets struggling and local shops closing and local communities being negatively impacted, the introduction of parking charges will only exacerbate these concerns and trends. A lot of people are unable to walk into town and will be discouraged by the parking charges. This parking scheme should be stopped immediately.

I wish to submit my strong opposition to the proposed changes to parking in Harpenden. My main concern is the detrimental effect that this would have on local shops and businesses as I feel that the excessively high charges will deter people from

using local shops. I believe that free parking for the first hour between 8.00 am and 6.00 pm on weekdays and Saturday should be free of charge. The proposed 20 minutes of free parking is an insufficient amount of time for most visits. I am happy with the free parking proposals in the evening after 6.00 pm and on Sundays .

I work at Harpenden Acadamey and all staff are paid not enough of an annual income to cover the parking fee in Bowers Way car park. This ruling will have a significant impact to staff at the school. I don't know how we will afford to keep our jobs.

I work in Harpenden and there is no free parking , we spend the day dodging traffic warden , please leave us somewhere to park !!!

I work in Harpenden and travel into town at least once a week to shop, pay bills etc.

I think 20 minutes free is not enough.

I don't mind being charged for over 1 hour but only 20 minutes is too short a time to run errands

I work in Harpenden town centre (I show residents and visitors around properties that are for sale or rent). I need access to the office to get information, keys and details on a regular basis throughout the day. Without free parking I would have to resign from my job as I'd be paying so much in parking charges per day it would take 10-20% of my take home pay. Please reconsider this proposal!

I work in retail in a shop on the High Street and am very concerned about the impact these changes will have on our footfall and consequently my livelihood. I know from personal experience that even a small charge can change shopping behaviour. I no longer shop in Sainsburys in Harpenden on a Sunday since parking charges were introduced. I now do the shop online instead and the supermarket in Harpenden is deprived of that income.

Although I personally walk to work, many of our customers make use of the free parking available in Harpenden. A great proportion of these are older residents, who do not qualify for blue badges, but are no longer able to walk as far or as quickly as before. They would not be able to collect a prescription, visit the library or pop into a shop in 20 mins. Many of these customers have spoken to me about their concerns and have said it will affect how many times they can afford to come into Harpenden. As they have said, every £2.50 spent on parking is money they cannot spend in the shops or cafes.

Similarly, parents dropping off or collecting children from school often add a visit to our shop or café to their school run. This obviously benefits the local economy. They too would not be able to do this if they are using a free 20 min space.

The council states that these changes are aimed at making the “car parking service fairer and more equitable.” In what way? How is it more equitable to penalise pensioners, some of whom rely on coming into town for any social connection they have. It does not make it fairer for young families who will have to rush to drop off and collect children with no opportunity to make friends with other parents, a vital network for them when many live far away from their families.

The proposed changes do not include any concrete details of the “£1.5 million loss” or details of how much it will cost to put in meters and any other infrastructure. How much will it cost to enforce? I have been told that the payment system will be app-based. What about elderly residents who do not have smart phones or are not tech-savvy.

I fail to see how adding more cost to people's day-to-day lives will make anything fairer or more equitable or provide support to the businesses operating in Harpenden. There are enough empty units already, we do not want to see any more.

I would encourage St Albans District Council to amend its parking policy and reverse the decision to charge for on-street parking in Harpenden Town centre. The Council should allow for a mixture of one hour and two-hour on-street free parking in Harpenden Town centre in certain spaces as it does now.

The council's parking strategy documents fail to properly or sufficiently consider the impact on the Harpenden economy, local shops or residents. I believe the decision will be damaging to the local economy and will directly and adversely affect the residents and their decision to shop locally. I currently use free parking spaces when I attend my Pilates classes but will

think twice about continuing those classes if I need to pay for parking. I will also think twice about popping into town to pick up eg a last-minute birthday card or present if I have to pay for parking. This will impact shops such as Threads. Given the amount of opposition to the proposals, I would urge the Council to rethink its plans and work with Harpenden Town Council on alternative plans that see the current mix of free spaces and paid-for spaces retained. It is bad enough that residents currently have to pay to park to shop in Sainsbury's and that shops along the high street are already disappearing. These proposals will make the situation worse. Please reconsider.

I would like the council to consider making all car parks "Pay on exit" instead of "Pay and display", as is currently the case. This would have two effects.

Firstly, it would mean that users would no longer have to "guess" how long their visit is going to take, avoid them rushing their visit to avoid a penalty charge notice and would allow them to perhaps spend more time and money with our town and city traders.

This could help traders and the council avoid yet another empty shop unit.

Secondly, Civil Enforcement Officers or Parking Attendants would no longer have to patrol these areas, freeing them to patrol the new "Paid For on Street Parking areas" and other parking contraventions more thoroughly, instead of hanging around car parks, waiting for the easy hanging fruit of tickets to expire, to issue PCN's.

I would like to object to the parking becoming paid parking in Harpenden town centre. Making this a paid area will have no effect on the amount of cars coming in to the town as it will still be busy but it will mean more illegal parking on side roads, blocking dropped curbs, on peoples driveways etc., so they can avoid paying. It will also mean less revenue for the high street shops that are VITAL to the local area and already have enough trouble paying high rent rates. It doesn't bring residents, shop owners, visitors any benefit at all. It will also increase the number of cars circling round town trying to find an empty/ free space as they can't go to their usual parking places. If we drive our local and (also some are independent) shop owners away from the town we all lose out! There is a large elderly community in Harpenden who are reliant upon these local shops (like Threads and hair salons etc) and if they lose trade and move away from the town then that would be a disaster. Harpenden town residents pay a huge amount of tax and council tax surely a few free parking spaces to encourage local business should be supported. Listen to what residents want. You have a thriving town enjoyed by many, don't ruin it! High streets are dying across the UK, don't make Harpenden another example of this!

I would like to see the District considering the following option:

- 1 hr free parking on the High Street only
- All roads around the High Street to be paid for from the moment the parking starts.

One hr free parking allows the residents who need to run some errands (post office, pharmacy, dry cleaners, news agencies) to spend more time on the High Street and be subject to what retailers want: impulse purchase. It also allows time for parents who drop off and collect their children from the 3 primary schools in the centre of town to walk to the schools and back and to have a chat with the teachers and others, if necessary.

One hr parking would automatically exclude all the other residents who would travel to the High Street to have a coffee, lunch, go to the doctors, hairdressers and dentist and who would have to choose to pay for parking mostly for 2 hrs. Another advantage of this clear cut separation in terms of free and paid is that the enforcement would be easier and cheaper.

I would limit my visits to Harpenden if you start to charge for parking - this will impact local businesses and hospitality units as usually I visit 3/4 times per week. I would simply order my requirements online! Ridiculous to charge for parking.

I would rather a) pay the annual fee rather as we do for green waste collection or b) pay higher council tax. This will ruin Harpenden high street. 20 minutes is insufficient and I foresee some small shops closing. Have you considered loss of business rates when they close as residents buy 'on-line'. The off road parking you quote is totally insufficient. Only Sainsbury ever has spaces as people won't pay the exorbitant fees. You have already removed the senior parking passes. The rail car park is usually full and has less places (since some were converted into larger spaces bought by individuals for the year) soon to have fewer. I am appalled.

I write to object to the proposed changes in parking arrangements in central Harpenden. The town has been a vibrant shopping area for decades due to the free parking rules (2 & 1 hour free parking) and the changes proposed by SACDC will erode this for residents & local businesses. SACDC needs to learn from other councils throughout England who have killed their town centres by ill thought out parking restrictions - with lots of empty shops paying little council tax or business rates. SACDC should provide their analysis of the financial pros / cons for their proposals. This should include an assessment of a drop in use of parking spaces due to the parking charges - it is basic economics that the consumer has choices and many will change their demand pattern away from the local shops to online, they will not shift to walking or other forms of

transport. This is called price driven demand elasticity. SACDC should also show the cost of implementing the parking restrictions (infrastructure and enforcement) and how much paid usage of the parking bays will be needed to break even. Lastly the financial assessment should include the loss of council tax & business rates from shops closing due to loss of business.

I would suggest that SACDC should withdraw their plans until the above assessment is completed / published or they could face legal challenge. They should also consider increasing the free parking time from 20 minutes to at least 45 minutes or 1 hour.

I write with regard to the proposed parking charges in Harpenden Town Centre, which I am strongly opposed to – do you want to completely kill the High Street, which is already struggling?

The reason to visit the town centre, as a rule, is to spend money, whether it be a birthday card from Threads or a weekly shop in one of the supermarkets, perhaps a coffee with friends or a lunch all of these helps to support local businesses and keep a vibrant High Street. I could be spending hundreds of pounds a month supporting these local businesses, and already pay council tax and for a parking permit, therefore why would I, or should I, pay even more? It feels like being penalised for trying to do the right thing. I appreciate we should all walk, and I often do when time allows, but have you tried carrying a weekly food shop, or fitting this in around a full-time job!

Instead of spending my hard-earned cash in the High Street, which is my preference, I will meet friends in a local garden centre for coffee, go to one of the retail parks such as London Colney where I can park for free, do a weekly shop, visit Boots, fill up the car and for everything else just order from Amazon with free next day delivery.

As a council you should be encouraging people to shop local not give them excuses to go elsewhere and what about the volunteers who work in the charity shops, they work for free but will have to pay to park the car. What about those who are on a tight budget and money spent on parking is money not spent to put food on the table or pay energy bills.

I completely agree that on-street parking should be limited to a maximum of 2 hours and if you want to park for longer use one of the car parks, but to penalise those who like to shop locally is so short sighted.

Perhaps if you are looking for more revenue you should ticket more of the illegally parked cars that seem to think it is ok to sit on double yellow lines.

I really hope the council reconsiders this proposal for the sake of every resident and retailer in Harpenden who wants to keep our High Street a good place to visit.

I'm concerned about the impact on my business and other small businesses in the town ,

I'm concerned in particular over lack of parking availability during school drop off and pick up times, especially for the central schools. Most households have both parents that work and in order to be able to take their kids to school and pick up on time, whilst juggling starting and leaving work on time they rely on being able to drive to fit everything in. The reduced number of available free parking could result in even more recklessness than we currently see. Parents do not have time to queue / fetch tickets on top of everything else and 20min free parking at certain times isn't really enough as schools may release kids late or at times open the gates late. I feel that at least 30min free parking would be required around the key roads of Harpenden Academy and St Dominic at drop off and pick up times.

I'm not prepared to pay £2.50 to park in the town I've lived in for 34 years. You'll lose money going to local businesses who won't venture out to pick up the odd treat/take away when they have to pay a fee just to park your car!?! This isn't London? I'm a working class citizen and pay enough council tax and road tax to be able to park my car freely when picking up a prescription or passing through to stop off and grab something from the shops or even to just use the cash machine? You'll have to pay money to withdraw money? Doesn't make sense to me and you'll enrage a lot of people in doing so!

I'm very concerned about the likely introduction of automatic number plate recognition at the sports centre car park, as I don't trust its ability to recognise the multiple comings and goings for drop-offs and pick ups in one evening as short, individual visits, and not lump them together with a massive charge. And my swimmers are so unreliable with how long it takes to get changed and come out so it will be too easy to overstay a short (eg 5-10 mins) grace period before charges kick in. Not to mention how hard it is to find a space and how long you can spend driving round before even getting parked

If charging for On Street Parking is introduced this will harm the local shops and businesses as people will go elsewhere. The only reason I can see for introducing this proposal is to bring in more money for the Council. However, this may prove counter productive when the Council has empty premises and reduced business rates revenue.

If it's not broke, don't try and fix it!

If the council does enact this proposal then it must consider displacement into town centre residential streets. Many shoppers will simply park in residential areas rather than pay charges. The upper part of Rothamsted Avenue (west of Salisbury Avenue) is not wide enough for parking on both sides and emergency vehicle access can be blocked when cars are parked there.

If the Lim Dem council can waste money on putting up posts to hang Christmas lights then they need to get their priorities straight.

We all know well known brands are going into administration at the moment so surely we should be protecting and supporting our high street retailers not pushing people to out of town retail parks that offer 4 hour free parking.

If this is introduced businesses will suffer. I understand the council needs to cut costs but this going to lead to Harpenden becoming a poor place to shop... May I suggest that the paper clock system be considered for a time of arrival..

If you charge for parking on Harpenden High Street, it will be the death of so many small businesses. There is nowhere near enough parking in Harpenden, and by removing the free spaces in town, people who can't afford the hefty fees at the car parks - usually full anyway - will have nowhere to park to do their shopping. The businesses in Harpenden also do not want this, as it will drastically decrease foot fall in town. It is already dying, why make it worse? It's a crazy idea. Is the council so desperate for money they are prepared to kill off the High Street?!

If you charge for parking on Harpenden High Street, it will be the death of so many small businesses. There is nowhere near enough parking in Harpenden, and by removing the free spaces in town, people who can't afford the hefty fees at the car parks - usually full anyway - will have nowhere to park to do their shopping. The businesses in Harpenden also do not want this, as it will drastically decrease foot fall in town. It is already dying, why make it worse? It's a crazy idea. Is the council so desperate for money they are prepared to kill off the High Street?!

If you only go into town once or twice a week you may be able to absorb the disgusting cost. But we oldies go in every day and socialise and spend money in shops and cafes. Without a reasonably priced seniors permit that will stop. At £5 for two hours that is upwards of £1500 a year for me. You are having a laugh. Shops will lose revenue and I at nearly 80 start to isolate. Well done Libs. Two own goals. And I cant do technical apps anyway. Our town will die if there is not a rethink.

Ill conceived proposal. Cost of monitoring, admin etc. could outweigh net income. But the damage to business with lower footfall will dwarf that. It will cause traffic pinch points with drivers looking to avoid the hassle and better value for money. Increased traffic in roads less able to cope will be an increased road safety risk. But you've thought of that and know where they are i'm sure.

I'm a big supporter of all the independent shops in Harpenden and this proposal will have a big detrimental effect on all those businesses. Surely the best option is the first hour free then a larger charge could be made for anybody staying longer.

I'm wholly opposed to the proposed parking fees in Harpenden ... it is going to kill the town and local businesses.

Imposing Parking Charges in Harpenden City centre is a bad idea. In my opinion it will have a miniscule effect on incentivising the use of Active Travel to the Town Centre but will have a very detrimental effect on the businesses that people parking in the Twon Centre support. Introducing Charges to increase the enforcement of restrictions is not a justifiable argument. As a regular user of parking spaces in the High street, my obervation is that there is already a high turnover of

vehicles leaving parking spaces hourly. This suggests that the present restrictions are working sufficiently well not to require greater enforcement. That point effectively rebuts the third reason for the making of the Order set out in the consultation documents. Giving 20 minute free sessions is in fact taking away the freedoms that already exist and therefore can't be argued as a justification for imposing the proposed Order. The cost of enforcing the present parking restrictions should be met from the funds paid for using the 800 car park spaces which are paid for so there is no unfairness to Council Taxpayers. For the reasons above this is not a justifiable proposal and it should not be implemented.

Imposing parking charges will discourage residents including myself from shopping in Harpenden. Local businesses are sufficiently challenged without adding this threat to their business. The inconvenience and cost of having to pay a parking charge no doubt via an app, I regard as an imposition that I do not need. It also discriminates against the technologically challenged. There are already large number of vacant retail premises. This will make things worse. The "quick" trip into town will no longer be possible. Shopping will be increasingly online as it is now with banks and look what happened to them in Harpenden. The council should be looking to make savings to balance its budget, cutting out unnecessary spending rather than seeking to raise additional revenue in this way, penalising Local residents. We already pay too much council tax for poor service. I also find it interesting in the underhand way this consultation is being carried out in the summer months when many residents are away on holidays.

Imposing parking costs is unnecessary and will damage the thriving high street.

Imposing parking restrictions in the centre of Harpenden Town will substantially detrimentally affect the commercial success of the town. Also Harpenden, with an ageing population profile should not be creating more barriers to mobility to the older residents

In 1995 two hours parking in Harpenden cost 40p, today in 2024 a suggested charge of £5.00 to park for 2 hours is simply obscene and nothing more than a "cash grab" designed to deter vehicles so that SADC can be seen to be meeting their net zero targets.

Surely such an increase from 40p to £5.00 in 19 years is significantly above the rate of inflation?

"Active Travel" eg cycling/walking is simply not an option for many people. The elderly, disabled and infirm are not able to

walk or cycle into town, especially considering that the high street is in a valley. 20 min free parking is not long enough to do anything especially if the shop/post office has a long queue. No longer any time to stop and exchange pleasantries with an acquaintance. Our lives will be the poorer if this dreadful scheme is enacted and not just financially.

In my capacity as a small business owner, I have observed the transformation of the high street over the years. In my professional opinion, the implementation of a paid parking system could potentially have a detrimental impact on the vitality of the high street. As an alternative solution, I propose increasing the number of traffic wardens to effectively monitor and enforce parking regulations, particularly focusing on vehicles that occupy yellow lines for extended periods. This approach could generate sufficient revenue while minimizing the negative consequences associated with paid parking.

In my opinion, this would ruin the vibrant town centre, as people will simply go elsewhere. The current parking allocations work well.

Introducing parking charges will be damaging to businesses in Harpenden, generate relatively insignificant revenue for SADC and disproportionately impact the vulnerable / elderly. I do not support any change to the status quo, it is unnecessary and unwanted in this community.

Introducing parking charges will make the high street less popular. It will put financial strain on the independent businesses that give the town character. If people have to pay to park it makes them far less likely to use the local shops and more likely to order online. It also means that there is no free parking for the library.

Introducing these charges will inhibit people from visiting the town centre and consequently damage the businesses that depend on them.

Is this a money making machine for the bankrupt St Albans council if so there are better ways than ruining a town!

It is not clear from the information here whether the Blue Badge parking places apply the £2.50 per hour charge or are free. Whilst I don't agree that the council should be charging anyone for parking, I don't see why Blue Badge holders should be able to park at a different cost to anyone else. (The vast majority of those who hold a Blue Badge do so because of mobility

issues related to old age. It has nothing to do with poverty.) Of course, if the council does wish to subsidise pensioners, then this should include all pensioners, not just those who happen to have a Blue Badge.

It is not good for small local business or residents

It is not viable to do any meaningful shopping in the 20 minute free period. £2.50 p/hour makes shopping or other leisure activity in Harpenden uneconomic. It spells economic destruction of the high street business model with the knock on impact of businesses closing. There are many older residents who are dependent on their high street visits to achieve and maintain their independence, they do not all have a blue badge. These residents will be disproportionately affected by these changes.

It is so convenient to pop down to Harpenden and park. It helps trade and promotes a nice community feeling. Meters are unsightly and spoil the village atmosphere. The charges are very high too. 20 minutes is no time at all to do anything and just causes extra stress especially for the elderly who can't run round.

It is stated in the supporting document that currently parking services are making a loss. It is inferred, but not stated, that with the proposed charges parking services would no longer make a loss. However, no description of the magnitude of the losses is provided nor is any analysis showing the impact on those losses of the proposed charges nor any justification of the selected charges or the 20 minutes free period. No information is provided on how the charges would be collected or enforced and no information is provided on the associated infrastructure costs.

At present my wife and I mostly walk to the town centre to do shopping but once per week we take our car and park for free in the area that it is proposed to introduce charges for in order to do a main weekly shop. If parking charges of the the magnitude proposed are introduced we will drive to a large out of town supermarket with free parking to perform our main weekly shop. As a result our expenditure in the Harpenden town centre Sainsburys and Waitrose will see a reduction in our spend of about 60%.

In conclusion the proposal is inadequately presented with insufficient supporting information and analysis. Without proper information and analysis justifying the selected charges and the claimed benefits I am unable to agree to the proposed parking charges.

It seems crazy to me that these premium parking spaces in Harpenden are actually free! There are so many cars driving round and round trying to find a free space close to the shops. People could park in one of the main car parks instead but are incentivised to add to congestion and pollution by the availability of free bays. If we feel that some people are priced out by the parking then maybe make the very back row at Bowers Way free, or something like that. They never seem to be used anyway. If I'm going to plonk a ton of metal in someone's town centre then I expect to pay for the privilege, the free 20 minutes is a generous compromise for quick shops.

It seems to me that SADC are only interested in taking Harpenden's residents money and not interested in listening to their views on THEIR town. The proposed on street parking charges will have a big impact on local businesses and will result in more empty shops as footfall will inevitably decrease significantly. Harpenden is a secondary shopping area and we should not be subjected to the exorbitant parking charges that are imposed in St.Albans. It is interesting to note that this topic was not on the agenda before the council elections.....I wonder why???

It will destroy the sense of community and freedom of Harpenden, when every trip to town becomes a pressurised rush against the clock. It will also destroy human interactions and passing trade for local business as everyone will be rushing back to their cars unable to afford the time for a conversation or to buy a coffee in addition to their single errand as permitted by the 20 minute timer. The current time limits are already stringent enough.

It will deter people from using the High Street and affect parents at the schools.

Have the implications been fully thought out and costed?

What about people who do not have phones to pay or if there is a poor signal. People will just give up and go elsewhere.

It will change the whole character of Harpenden.

It will really affect the footfall on the high street. Which will have a knock on effect to local businesses. It's a wonderful benefit to Harpenden free parking and really encourages local shopping and community.

It would definitely stop me popping to my local shops if I have to pay for parking. I & would be more likely to go to an out of town shop where you don't need to pay for parking.

It's bad enough I have to pay to park my car outside of my own house. Now HTC and SAC want to charge me to support local community business when I go shopping. They have not demonstrated any benefits and as such this is a money grab scheme that I cannot support. It will kill the high street at a time when they need our support the most.

It's hard enough for businesses to survive without this kind of added burden on shoppers – a lot of people use Harpenden for short trips to collect things, grab a coffee, buy a birthday card or stock up on a few basics – they will be more likely to wait and shop in St Albans at the large out of town stores where parking is free rather than incur a charge two or three times a week for 10-20 minute trips – it's not true that most people live within walking distance or that a 1 hour round trip on foot (which it would be for us) would make sense 2-3 times a week

It's ridiculous to charge £2.50 for a high street parking in order to access local shops, sporting activities, take the children to the library, shopping for food takes a while but have the elderly and vulnerable been considered as their shopping is slower? The £2.50 per hour will draw them into debt in the long run.

This move will kill the high street shops, restaurants, the library (as people go there to study for hours) the charity shops raising money to help the public with grants via their shop sales etc.

The impact of the charge needs to be considered and not just charging £2.50 on the thoughts that Harpenden is an affluent area.

Free parking for 1 hour and £1 for additional hours seems more reasonable.

Free 20 minutes does not work and it places people at risk of getting parking tickets for overstaying.

It's a travesty, to essentially apply outrageous charges to visit our hometown facilities. There's no justification compared with the existing situation which supports the community and attempt to derive funds for unspecified purposes at the expense of businesses and social groups that you should be supporting. The High Street will surely die. You're seriously letting us all down! The header quotes "after a meeting". Your resident constituents were aware of none! In any event, the presentation is inadequate – the map doesn't print more than halfway!

It's crazy what the Lib Dems want to do to Harpenden high street. NO to parking charges!!

It's hard to know where to start, they are so many things wrong with this proposal, but here's a list of what I see are the key problems

1. It's an unfair tax on residents
2. It unfairly penalises residents who don't live within easy walking distance of the town centre or those that need to drive because they find walking too difficult like many of the older residents of the town
3. It's likely to have a very negative impact on retailers in the town, and could easily destroy many businesses. It's hard enough for many to them, already dealing with high inflation and cost of living increases
4. One of the best things about living in Harpenden is the free parking in town, it helps keep the town vibrant and alive - We are not St Albans
5. The public transport system is woeful and for many people driving is the only option
6. It will drive customers away from the town centre
7. You should have consulted the public FIRST, long before it got to this stage
8. The residents of Harpenden do NOT want this.
9. The council's job is to serve the residents not penalise them
10. It will stop people 'popping into town' and damage the whole 'feel' of Harpenden

It's a very bad idea

It's my expectation that this will speed up the demise of town centre businesses already fighting to maintain profitability, whilst risking of the future of other local businesses that may be doing better. Harpenden has been able to broadly retain a vibrant high street through the pandemic and beyond, but as has been seen with a number of recent business closures, success remains uncertain.

I presume that the only aim here income generation, given how well the current system already works, with a great mix of free parking spaces that offer just long enough for local shopping. Should this 'gamble' accelerate the demise of the town centre then there will be limited income from the parking fees anyway.

The proposed pricing I know from plenty of recent experience, is 'out of line' with the range of shopping, leisure and hospitality options that Harpenden has to offer. I would expect to pay £2.50 for an hour in a location such as Cambridge or Canterbury, with their extensive range of facilities and attractions.

I'd say something similar about St Albans, which of course is where many more Harpenden shoppers might logically go, more often, when asked to pay this much to park. Thus adding more traffic to a location already easily chocked up by cars in peak shopping hours, whilst risking the heartbeat of our local Town.

In conclusion, for me this is very much a gamble and should any of the above turn out to be the result, then the damage will have been done.

It's shocking the Lib Dems can do this to small businesses. You will kill the high street!!

It's the faff and aggro in paying the charge that's the problem. Just put £50 on my council tax – so much simpler.

Last year my senior parking permit was reduced from 3 hours to 2 hours and this year our wonderful council has banned it. With limited mobility, but not disabled I regularly visit Harpenden library to read the national newspapers and to charge £5 to park to do this I find outrageous. (REDACTED).

Lib Dem Parking Lead's claim that the new parking charges in Harpenden will discourage people from parking on the streets and 'promote active travel' is disingenuous twaddle. The parking spaces will still be fully used as he/she knows full well and the only and intended consequence will be to extort money from Harpenden residents/ visitors

Limiting the free parking time to 20 minutes in Harpenden and charging £2.50 per hour will kill the vibrant High Street we have in Harpenden. Shops in Harpenden High Street and environs are successful as residents can park for an hour (or 2) which gives time to pop in to get a prescription, grab some food for tea, pop to the library, and then even have a quick coffee. Limiting the free parking time to 20 minutes will stop people from browsing the high street shops, socializing and getting a drink in a cafe. Trying to raise revenue in this way will backfire as shops/cafes will suffer and will no longer be able to pay business rates.

Charging £2.50 per hour will also push cars out to park in nearby residential areas.

Parking meters are unsightly and will block up room on already overcrowded pavements.

Literally no-one I know supports this plan to reduce access to businesses in Harpenden. Current arrangements are fine.

Local business will lose custom.

People won't use harpenden.

Ridiculous.

Residential areas will get busy when people part outside of zones.

Local business will not be supported as people will just stop going into the high street. Council tax is high, we already pay a premium to live here.

Local businesses should be supported and encouraged by

1. the council: a vibrant and bustling Harpenden with a good range of national and independent shops/cafes/restaurants/beauty parlours etc can only benefit the district. Imposing parking charges neither supports nor encourages local business because they will discourage custom at a time when spending is squeezed. Why pay to shop/eat etc in Harpenden when you can shop online or park for free in an out of town supermarket?

2. residents/visitors: not everyone lives near enough to Harpenden (or is mobile enough) to be able to walk/cycle to the centre of Harpenden to spend money there. It will be impossible to do anything other than a light shop – so on line/out of town retailers will benefit.

Imposing parking charges is a deterrent to car ownership and parking, pure and simple. If that is what the LibDems are about, be honest about it. But be prepared for the consequences of businesses closing/moving and the consequent fall in revenue to the council through business rates and the like.

I wonder how many LibDem councillors own cars, use them on council business and whether they can reclaim parking charges through expenses?

Local villages rely on being able to pop in and use Harpenden's shops. By implementing these parking charges people who regularly pop in to Harpenden to buy things etc will no longer do so and will create a large decrease in the footfall of visitors to your town. The shops on the High Street will notice this detrimental change. 20minutes is not enough time to carry out any transaction . Half an hour would be better before charges are started if they had to be introduced at all. The bus services to local villages in inadequate to encourage people to use buses instead of bringing cars in. If you take away free parking for them to be able to nip in and out instead you will discourage them from coming at all.

Losing the option the 'nip' into town to pick up something quickly from the high street without paying will deter people from doing so, and therefore impact the town's vibrance, conveniences and the local businesses.

Loss of free parking will reduce the viability of the town.

Making all the central Harpenden parking paid for will substantially damage the "High Street" of Harpenden, because residents who currently come in to meet friends or for quick shopping would be far more likely to meet/shop elsewhere where they do not have the hassle and cost of paid parking.

I also object to the withdrawal of the Senior parking pass. In order to keep the convenience of being able to come into Harpenden and St Albans I would, reluctantly, be prepared to pay more for the annual pass, but absent that I am far more likely to shop/eat elsewhere.

Without a healthy High Street you do not have a healthy community and nor do you have the same level of taxes to fund your expenditure.

Finally, as a voter, I strongly object to any council that goes out to a consultation and then says "We are going to do it anyway". That is a surefire way of ensuring I use my vote against them.

Many of the health services are in the town centre. This makes a visit by those less mobile and reliant on others for transport more costly and stressful, as many appointments can run late. If it were an issue of congestion or pollution there may be less resistance to the introduction of charges, but as it appears to be a blatant money generating strategy with no other considerations or benefits, I have to wholeheartedly object to its implementation.

Many towns are trying to rejuvenate their high streets, this would depress activity in Harpenden high street and cannot be good for businesses or residents.

Most residents can't practically walk or cycle to the high street and many will be inclined to make longer journeys, eg to out of town centres, where they can park more easily and cheaply.

This will generate additional, longer car journeys adding to pollution.

There is no problem that needs solving here – it's just politicians looking for a new source of tax revenue.

My concern is that this will increase inconsiderate parking in Salisbury Avenue where parking is free. This is already a problem during the week making it dangerous for residents to exit driveways. I do not support parking charges in Salisbury Ave as some residents do not have off street parking but I would ask for yellow lines across driveways (wider than the

dropped curb to allow for sensible parking) to be implemented during the week as part of a road safety concern. (Example attached).

My elderly mother lives in Harpenden and currently drives to town once a week to do her Sainsbury's shop and pick up any other bits she needs from town. She is very cost conscious so now due to the parking charges she will rush around town trying to do things in the 20 minutes free parking, and also make multiple trips a week. Therefore the new charges will be terrible for the environment and also put my mums health at risk and add stress to her trips into town.

I think lots of people, especially elderly people, will be negatively impacted by the parking charges and it could affect their health e.g. if they bump into a friend in town they can currently stop to have a chat but they won't be able to if they are rushing back to their car, so it will have an impact on social society as well.

Parents with young children sometimes can't get their children to move quickly or they need the toilet half way through a nursery drop off or shopping trip - which might unexpectedly take them longer than the 20 minutes if they haven't paid for longer.

My mothers doctors surgery is in the centre of town too. Sometimes she goes to appointments and doesn't know exactly how long they'll take, then has to pick up a prescription and there might be a queue. Under the proposed parking charges she will be stressing about getting a parking ticket if she has not paid for enough parking, and would probably skip picking up her prescription and leave it for another day.

The health, social and environmental impacts of the proposed changes are hugely negative and have clearly not been considered in the 'Statement of Reasons' document.

I see no evidence of traffic surveys, resident surveys etc that justify the need for 'greater turnover of premium places'.

There are other ways the council could encourage active travel, and I've seen no effort from the council to do that.

It seems that the only reason that these changes are proposed is for additional revenue for the council.

My family and I object to all the proposed parking restrictions in Harpenden High Street and surrounding roads. As long time residents of Harpenden (30 years plus), we believe that the proposed parking restrictions will have a negative impact on all Harpenden residents as well as the local retailers. It will undoubtedly seriously affect the footfall on the High Street and surrounding roads. The system currently in place is a very useful, practical and well used facility. Having free parking on these roads allows everyone easy access to the local shops and facilities, which is a huge benefit for all the community.

Imposing paid-for parking places will be a step in the wrong direction; we need to keep Harpenden High Street "alive". As a family, we feel very strongly that this is not the way for the Local Council to increase their revenues.

My husband and I both work in the public sector and both have seen our salaries significantly reduce in real terms over the last 10-15 years. As such we have less disposable income. We already pay our council tax and it feels unfair and unethical to now be asked to pay to visit our local shops. This proposal will encourage us to avoid shopping locally.

My objection is the hourly rate of £2.50 per hour. In my opinion this is too much! Paying £5 for 65 minutes is exorbitant! This will affect service providers in the town such as hairdressers and opticians due to the length of their appointments.

Just because Harpenden is a "rich" town doesn't mean that the residents are foolish with their money!

In Berkhamsted, the on street parking rates range from 20 pence (12 minutes) to £1 for an hour. This is much more reasonable.

I suggest you look at the Dacorum Borough Council website for how they charge for parking!

My objection relates to the proposed parking restrictions for Harpenden.

- 1) The democratic response would be for Harpenden people or Harpenden Town Council to decide
- 2) Over the years this proposal has reared its head and the local people have always rejected it.
- 3) Changing the parking from Free to Paid will drive people away from shopping in Harpenden. This will be bad for the shops and bad for the residents.
- 4) Footfall is critical for the shop mix we have in the High Street and any reduction in the footfall will affect the mix of shops we have in the future. Making the town less attractive.

My objection relates to the time set aside for free parking (20 minutes). Although I support the reduction from 2 hours in order to facilitate turnover of spaces (i.e. increase availability), a limit of 20 minutes is too short to enable an effective short visit. My assessment is that 30 minutes would achieve a better balance.

My strong view is that the existing parking restrictions and rules for Harpenden centre are perfectly adequate and appropriate. The proposed changes in the document are flawed for these reasons:

1. "These proposed changes relate to bays located in St Albans and Harpenden."

St Albans and Harpenden are quite different places, economically, in scale, parking facilities, population, visitor numbers, amenities, uniqueness, social culture. Applying one approach to both might be 'neat' for the council but inappropriate 'one size fits all'.

2. "It is proposed to allow two 20-minute sessions per day, per vehicle registration. This will allow motorists to continue to make quick visits to the town centre, e.g., to drop off children at school without charge. Use beyond these periods will be chargeable."

Dropping off children at school is not the main use of parking spaces in the zones impacted by the proposal. The schools are not in those roads. The main use of the spaces is for other purposes, which require over 20 minutes. The existing 30 minutes, 1 hour and 2 hours free parking and no return within two hours are appropriate and work well for the public. This is proved by the few spaces available at any time and the high 'churn' of spaces. 20 minutes is a ridiculous free-parking time as evidenced by the just-one example given as the "eg" which is not relevant anyway!

3. "Encourage Active Travel – payment for parking is an incentive for customers to consider alternative transportation options e.g., walking, cycling, public transport etc"

I am actively in favour of active, green travel, but this is nonsense! We sometimes walk into town and sometimes drive. The choice is what makes most sense, what we need to take with us, where we are going, how long, age of our child etc. The option to choose is one of the huge attractions of Harpenden. My wife's neurological condition (she is not 'disabled' so that option does not apply) has meant that throughout the life of our five year old we have needed to rely on my car to make trips into town. Yes, we sometimes walk, yes we use public transport to go to London and other places but not trips into Harpenden. The existing restricted free parking hours already impacts our choice to be 'green'.

4. "Increased enforcement – more monitoring and enforcement of restrictions supports fairness and street safety."

Charging money in more places will enable you to pay for more traffic wardens... to result in more "fairness and street safety"?

What unfairness is there currently? What lack of street safety? I've witnessed none and question what evidence the council has gathered to make such a bold statement.

5. "Greater turnover of premium places – parking charges encourage turnover of parking spaces, improving availability of spaces for motorists who need to park closest to businesses."

What evidence? Restricted hours combined with random checks by wardens achieves turnover of spaces. What sort of businesses need customers who will pop in for under 10 minutes (5 minutes to walk there and 5 minutes to walk back). The current mix of 30 mins, 1 hour and 2 hours encourages turnover of parking spaces. Charges themselves don't encourage that, the current restrictions with the randomness of the few wardens does encourage that. The availability of free spaces around various parts of the high street are what encourage people to come to the town centre, to visit local businesses and shops, cafes and restaurants, the local market each Friday. None of those activities can be done in 20 minutes.

6. "The cost of providing parking services should be met from the income received from fees and charges, including permitting schemes for parking on street and the issue of Penalty Charge Notices. This historically has not been the case and for many years the parking service has made a loss which has had to be covered from other service areas. This is unfair to Council Taxpayers, given that part of the cost for parking services has, in the past, been subsidised by non-parking related income.

Providing free parking in city and town centres is no longer financially feasible. Parking charges already exist across most of St Albans City Centre and the surrounding area, and Harpenden Town Centre (where overall, charges for over eight hundred car park spaces are already in place)."

Perhaps it has historically "not been the case" – but perhaps that tells us that it was for a sound reason – and the town has thrived historically.

Why is it "unfair to Council Taxpayers"? Have Council Taxpayers been asked "are you happy paying £X of your annual council tax to provide good, efficient access to local shops, amenities and restaurants?". I'm sure most would say yes. Stating it is "unfair" isn't enough. Unfairness is in the eye of the taxpayer. Surely the cost is not a significant percentage of total council tax.

"Financially feasible" is a phrase to cover a multitude of things. Why should a town not subsidise parking? That cross-subsidy leads to a thriving town centre which is of benefit to all its residents. Insisting that each element of council spend is cost-neutral is crazy economics. There is considerable overlap between policy areas. I can think of so many services where that is the case.

7. "This proposal will encourage the use of off-street parking – where charges are lower – for longer visits and manage the demand for kerbside space by encouraging higher turnover there through the setting of charges beyond the 20 minutes drop off/collection period outlined."

Basically this is saying free parking in the town centre is to be banned other than 20 minutes, which is of use to virtually no-one other than imaginary parents dropping imaginary children off at imaginary schools on the high street, or pensioner sprinting to the library to grab a random book, or a mum grabbing a takeaway coffee for a dangerous drive home.

My main objections:

1. The range of free parking (30 mins, 1 hour and 2 hours), combined with the range of paid parking in the open air car parks in Harpenden, works well to give residents and visitors a brilliant range of choice. They work well to impact behaviour and meet individual needs. Removing all but a 20 minute free option kills free parking. Leave it as 30 mins, 1 hour and 2 hours in different places. That encourages good behaviours.

2. Paying for longer term parking in the car parks around the town is something we happily do but not for every visit. This will lead us not to visit the town centre as often as we do. It would not lead us to walk. That will impact local retailers who are already struggling with footfall.

3. It is clear from the dismay of local retailers that they are fearful of this proposal. They believe it will decrease footfall. I agree with that. It certainly won't increase it by making Harpenden town centre a place to visit. So is the council happy for a bit of damage? What studies have the Council done to understand the impact on footfall and the current habits of visitors? I suspect none as I've never seen any consultation, surveys, and nothing has been published.

4. St Albans and Harpenden are quite different places as I set out above. One basic policy does not "fit all".

5. There are so many examples around town where ticket machines have been installed for parking that do not work for months, years. Many examples where online/app payments do not work reliably, are inaccessible to many, and inaccessible due to signal fails. All-paying parking is a damaging step.

In short, my own experience living here over the past near 20 years, walking, driving, as a single man, father of a young child, husband of a wife going through medical treatment, tells me this proposal will have a detrimental impact on the vibrancy of the town. It will hit local retailers hard. It will damage Harpenden and sadly make it like so many others that have gone down this route. Please keep Harpenden special.

My wife and I have several deep concerns regarding these proposals.

1. We are pensioners and do not have a significant amount of disposable income. The Council, have already stopped us from using car parks with our annual Senior Citizens Parking Permit. We are not on benefit, but simply cannot afford to spend money on car parks. My wife has a weekly Mahjong and also a weekly French Conversation Class. Both are put at risk by these proposals.

These new proposals will mean that we will not be able to afford to shop in Harpenden. The place will only be frequented by the rich and the yuppies!

2. The cocept of a free 20 minutes is, I am afraid, very poorly thought out. You can once you have walked form where you have parked (very slowly in our case) very little time to visit a store. There is now no Post Office in Harpenden so we all now have to W H Smiths. There is rarely not a queue, if you have to go there, you will, more than likely, run out of time!

3. I thought Councils were trying to encourage town centres to remain a "go to" place. These proposals will stop many from visiting Harpenden shops and independent store will be put at risk. It is already a place for charity shops, cafes and barbers, but even they will be put at risk with these proposals!

My wife and I strongly disagree with the District Council's proposal to introduce street parking charges in Harpenden town centre. When enlightened Councils are seeking to encourage visits to local high streets - as reported in the media - St Albans DC is heading in the opposite direction, by limiting free parking. The proposal discriminates against the less able and the elderly and will drive business from the town. This reflects very poorly on Councillors' appreciation of community dynamics and especially on Lib Dem politics. The financial benefits have not been adequately explained and a cost/benefit analysis should be communicated properly to voters. The moratorium suggested by the Town Council to allow adequate consideration and decision making by residents is a 'must'.

N/a

No

No clear outcomes have been outlined. Historic mismanagement of parking funds is not a worthy excuse for an introduction of charges. Small independent companies are already struggling in Harpenden with the introduction of these fees people will spend less time browsing around our lovely high street.

No justification for charging for on street parking other than a money making exercise for council.
High street is dying with shops closing all of the time need to ensure footfall is maintained not pushed further on line.

No need for this new fee, there are no parking spaces anywhere, charging for parking is not going to solve this issue. FOI g this consultation in august when so many residents are away in holidays is not a good move by the Council. This is a disguised way to raise taxes.

No parking fees for Harpenden!

No reasonable requirement to introduce further parking charges apart from remedying mismanaged Council finances through further penalisation of residents and local businesses. This is another nail in the coffin for harpenden Town centre.

Not enough free parking for shopping in Harpenden. This will take away more free parking meaning we have to pay every time I go shopping or pop to town.

Not content with forcing environmental actions on residents such as paying additionally for green bin collection and mandatory recycling you now want to kill the car and high street ensuring that elderly people or those with young children cannot go about their daily lives without paying for it. This will push more online shopping and out of town supermarket visits which just push the profits and carbon emissions to another borough

O think this is purely a money making scheme for the council, adding to the already stressful cost of living increases. Charging for parking in Harpenden will be the end of our local business, affecting the economy in our town. Many including myself will be shopping outside of Harpenden using free to park spaces (if all parking spaces were to become chargeable). Popping into town for coffee or lunch and having to pay parking for the privilege, will drive away custom (look at what's happened to St Albans).

Ironic, as this will increase carbon footprint. I absolutely object to paying for parking in our small town, terrible idea.

Object to any parking restrictions as they will have an adverse impact on local businesses

Object to controlled parking in town centre

Object to parking restrictions in Harpenden, it will seriously impact our lovely town and result in reduced footfall and no doubt increase shop closures.

Object to the cost and financial implications of this proposal affecting business that brings jobs and income into harpenden

It may affect my decision to keep my business in Harpenden

Objection to introducing on street parking fees in Harpenden.

Objection to parking charges in Harpenden and withdrawal of senior parking permits

Objection to proposal.

Objection to the Introduction of Parking Charges

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed introduction of parking charges in Harpenden. This proposal raises several significant concerns that I believe have not been adequately addressed.

1. Flawed Consultation Process

The consultation process was conducted during the school holidays, a time when many residents are away and less likely to participate. This timing undermines the democratic process by reducing the number of responses and does not reflect the true sentiment of the community. Furthermore, there has been no council vote on this matter, which is a fundamental aspect of democratic decision-making.

2. Pre-emptive Actions

It is evident that the council has already purchased the necessary software and begun installing the infrastructure for the new parking system. This suggests a predetermined decision, disregarding the consultation outcomes and the voices of Harpenden residents.

3. Impact on Local Businesses

The introduction of parking charges will have a detrimental effect on independent businesses in Harpenden's high street. A 20-minute free parking limit is insufficient for most shopping needs, especially when considering potential queues. This restriction will discourage shoppers from visiting multiple stores, thereby reducing foot traffic and sales for local businesses.

4. Disadvantage to People with Mobility Issues

The proposed parking charges disproportionately affect individuals with mobility issues who are not eligible for disabled parking permits. As someone who has experienced mobility challenges, I know that 20 minutes is often not enough time to complete essential tasks, such as collecting prescriptions. This policy effectively penalizes those with mobility issues, imposing an unfair financial burden on them.

5. Unjustified High Charges

The proposed parking fees are excessively high compared to other towns in the UK.

(<https://new.calderdale.gov.uk/parking/car-parks-and-street-parking/brighthouse-town-centre-street-parking>). It appears that these charges are intended to cover the cost of the already purchased software. This raises the question of why residents should bear the financial burden of these decisions. Additionally, the reliance on mobile apps for payment introduces further costs due to administrative fees charged by the software company.

6. Economic Impact on the High Street

Harpenden's high street is still recovering from the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, with several properties remaining vacant. Introducing high parking charges will further hinder the recovery of local businesses and make it more challenging to attract new tenants. This policy risks exacerbating the decline of our high street, which is vital to the community's economic health.

Conclusion

The residents of Harpenden do not support this proposal. The lack of a democratic process, the negative impact on local businesses, and the unfair burden on individuals with mobility issues are all compelling reasons to reconsider the introduction of parking charges. I urge the council to listen to the community and explore alternative solutions that do not harm our town's vitality.

Objection:

The current parking is not an issue for the Residents of Harpenden. Today I went to town and was able to get my son's haircut, do grocery shopping, grab a coffee and pick up other bits all in the allotted 1 hour of free parking.

£2.50 per hour is purely a money grabbing action by the SADC. Why not £1 per hour to at least generate some revenue without making the cost prohibitive after 1 hour of free parking? Not everyone in Harpenden is rich and have money to burn for Parking whilst getting on with their lives.

Enforcement – after paying Enforcers how much money will the Council actually make? Has there been any monitoring done to validate that this will 'free up spaces' in the town as from what I have experienced there is regular turnaround already. How much will it cost to maintain the machines – do you expect parkers to wander over town to find a machine that works?

As a Parent I often do drive with my young children particularly in winter – we are the lifeblood of this town and the Council should be looking at ways to encourage us to the High Street more often rather than adding barriers.

SADC already charge me extortionately for other services i.e. green bin is £65 but for a second bin i have to pay an additional £100. The bin men are coming to my house anyway. The extra charge is purely a money grab by SADC. At what point does the Council have to start coming up with alternative solutions rather than bleeding the residents of every single penny. Will I go into town less often – at £2.50 a pop of course I will. Multiply that by the 40k residents thats a lot of potential lost revenue from local businesses

Its disgraceful that the Council took the decision then started a consultation – it seems that dictatorship politics is the norm now. Paul de Kort's general attitude that he lives near town so walks anyway and then couldn't even be bothered to attend the Extraordinary Meeting speaks volumes to his integrity and accountability on this matter. The Lib Dem Councillors can hide themselves away as much as they would like but it is only 18 months until the next local elections. Recent elections were a protest vote against the Tories not always a vote for the Lib Dems. You are our elected representatives. Hard decisions have to be made all the time but this needs to be balanced with the will of the population. It is so disappointing that the Lib Dems have started the post election period in this manner.

No-one disputes financially times are hard – this goes for businesses, individuals as well as Councils. This Proposal needs more thought rather than being rushed in and a more balanced solution. Paid parking – Ok but why only 20 mins free (it can take longer than that to pick-up a child from Nursery/School if you have something to discuss (you are accepting penalising

them)) Why not an hour? then after this paid but at a reasonable level such as £1 for every hour thereafter. This keeps revenue being generated but the public don't feel victimised.
Come on SADC do the right thing!!

One hour free parking is a must for a quick nip into town. It doesn't need to be any longer than that. There's nothing there to spend any longer on.

One of the beauties of living in the town of Harpenden is its bustling, thriving High Street, with its mixture of chain stores and independent s, including restaurants and coffee houses. Within a visit of 2 hours, one can stop for a bite to eat, do some grocery shopping and a number of other things, while taking advantage of free parking.

Your proposal to make a charge of £5 for this privilege will, I believe, cause a great many people to reconsider where we carry out these activities, with a significant financial impact on the shops of Harpenden. I know that I will not be visiting every week 2 or 3 times as I do currently, which may well have an impact on my mental health, often these visits are my only human contact.

I am sure that you would not wish to be the cause of the death of the thriving town of Harpenden, but I fear that is what you will be.

One of the main reasons I use Harpenden town centre so much as it is relatively easy to pop in and find a parking space and use multiple shops. I would always think twice if you had to pay to park after 20 minutes. I think the current set up works fine and adding paid parking will be the start of a decline of Harpenden centre as a destination.

Only allowing 20 minutes of free parking in Harpenden is quite ridiculous. Parents will have to pay to collect their children from schools and nurseries daily. Those of us who collect prescriptions for elderly neighbours will need to pay. You will need to pay to visit the library or to nip into an individual shop. This will cause the closure of businesses and put an end to a vibrant town centre. The elderly who do not own or are not proficient on a smart phone will have no idea how to pay by phone and will simply not visit the town leading to isolation and depression. The cost of an hours parking is far too high. Anyone wishing for a longer visit such as a hair appointment or meet up with friends will need to pay an extortionate £5. People will simply stop using the town centre or will park on already overcrowded residential areas such as Hatching green which is already used by commuters as a free car park, causing problems for residents.

There will not be one resident of Harpenden who would be in favour of this outrageous money making proposal.

Paid parking in Harpenden has failed before and was removed. This will fail again and you will be voted out. The shops will suffer financially and people will spend more time shopping on the internet rather than in town. Many people will shop elsewhere and park in surrounding streets which will become blocked. 20 minutes of free parking is not long enough to do anything full stop this is quite ridiculous. I am 88 years old and will not be able to use a parking app. Do you expect my daughter to pay £2.50 to collect a prescription for me?

Parking charges are a cheap way to annoy local residents and destroy local businesses. People will not use the local shops in the same way and you will destroy the high street and the community that uses it. Try harder to find a way to raise finances – this is a terrible idea .

Parking charges are massively over priced. Paying to park in town is proven to kill the high street. And I'm pretty sure this is an illegal way to get St Albans district council out of debt

Parking charges on the Harpenden high street – are you crazy. It's tough to run a business and now you want to add more stress.

Parking charges will destroy the smaller shops and kill the highstreet

If you want to make money put regular traffic warden in and fine people for overstaying the free time and parking like complete selfish morons taking up more than 1 space

Parking charges won't be beneficial to local independent businesses

Parking charges would destroy Harpenden high street and local businesses. It would strongly discourage people popping into town to make purchases, visit cafes etc,. Harpenden is currently a thriving community with a lovely variety of independent shops. It makes no sense at all to make unnecessary changes that will ruin a fabulous town.

Parking had always been free for a limited time I.

Charging will have an impact on the local shops and put people off therefore impacting the economy of harpenden. People will go to shops with free parking out of town.

Parking in Harpenden is an issue but the impact of only 20 mins free parking to local businesses will I believe be overall negative and damage the high street. It also impacts the elderly who are less mobile and may fall foul of fines by exceeding the 20 min free allowance. I would support 45 mins free parking as that enables people to visit several shops, queue at the Post Office etc and still achieve parking space turnover.

Parking in Harpenden is currently very stretched and I think this proposal will encourage residents to think about greater use of active travel. I think it would be helpful to provide some confidence over the period to fee review. There will, naturally, be a nervousness over the removal of the 20 minute grace period, which might be addressed through an SADC commitment to maintain for a minimum period.

Parking in Harpenden is self-regulating and although an occasional frustration, a generally 'family friendly' scheme.

Making 'free' parking minimal and imposing hefty parking fees is another blatant move to raise taxes on families and degrade the area. I see the 'Lib Dem Parking Lead' commented that it would 'promote active travel'! It certainly will -- to other shopping areas where parking is still free and will halve trade in the local Harpenden area. The town centre needs 'promoting' and making more attractive to shoppers and businesses. The Council are moving to 'kill' the town!!

All councils are struggling to make ends meet, but targeting motorists yet again should not be attempted! Surely an 'extra penny' on council tax would raise additional funds to cover area services and spread the 'pain' across all the borough and

not penalise the already heavily taxed 'few'.

Those proposing these charges obviously have no comprehension of 'cause and effect' of such measures and seem determined to deliver the fatal blow to businesses in the area!

Parking in Harpenden town centre roads should remain free. Your proposals will kill the high street, and penalise residents and the community.

Parking in the city centre is a choice. People choose to visit by car or they live in the city centre and choose to have a car.

Ideally there'd be no parking on the roads at all in the centre, the roads would be narrowed and verges planted so there's more greenery. This would be a great improvement to London Road

Dwellings that have parking places cost more so people who are not prepared to pay for a parking space in the purchase price or have more than what they are permitted should not be able to park on the street for free.

Parking Services should run at a small surplus and the surplus invested in the parking facilities and parking management. It's staggering that this service runs at a loss.

Parking in this area has always been free and does not need to change. More people will be parking in residential areas to avoid payment and walk into town. Then residents parking spaces will be taken up. There is enough free spaces and paid spaces and it works fine

Parking is already an issue in Harpenden. People who work in the town struggle and cannot afford to pay parking fees. This is anti business and will greatly negatively impact our beautiful town.

Parking needs to be controlled and the scheme does that, should provide better availability and raise essential funds

Parking response:

I no longer go to St Albans due to the removal of the free on-street parking and that at Westminster Lodge. So I no longer frequent the shops there either and now go online or further afield - using more fuel & putting another car on the road. I am lucky I can walk to my hairdresser, dentist etc - but if I could not I would stop using those services in Harpenden and look elsewhere. I have a smart phone and am used to using Apply Pay - but how will those who do not cope? There seems little point in the consultation as the decision has clearly been made - but I believe it is a big mistake, goes against the so-called vision of the council and will result in empty shops, a lack of goodwill and trust from residents and ultimately not produce the expected revenue uplift. Popping in to town for a coffee will not just happen and the towns service sector will suffer. I know many people who have said they will not pay the charges so it seems the only thing that will increase is your cost of parking wardens and policing this crazy scheme. Has that been factored in? I look forward to the backlash which you will be responsible for, along with the demise of a once varied and much enjoyed high street and the accompanied gap in your coffers from empty shops and lower rates. An own goal - well done! And what is the point of this consultation - clearly just a tick-box exercise because you have to - and more jobs for the boys. Shame on you.

Parking restrictions proposed will stop me dropping into town on my way home from work as I do now to get a 'few bits, coffee etc' and as likely to be the same for others this change will impact business in a negative way. Encourage an active high street and stop doing things that negatively impact it. We go much less since the removal of the street food vans and this is just another reason to shop elsewhere. Council doesn't even enforce the car parks it has effectively.

Parking situations in Harpenden are not intelligently thought through. For example, we are parents of children using the leisure centre sometimes several times in one day or needing to wait for pick ups in different places multiple times in one day alone. It feels that your decisions are money centred and not thought through practically for the majority of users.

People need to walk. Pedestrianise as much as possible.

People will stop shopping at the local shops and go to the retail parks where there is free parking. This will close down Harpenden high street. We already have overflow car parks, that people pay to use if they stay in Harpenden longer than the free 1 hour, 2 hour slots. It's a shortsighted idea that will ruin a lovely small town.

Please do not introduce additional parking charges in Harpenden. Local services and businesses need good footfall and any additional restriction on access will consequently damage the life of the town

Please do not introduce further parking charges in Harpenden town centre. It will unnecessarily add to the cost of living for individuals, as well as discourage shopping in the High Street and disrupt local and small businesses as a consequence. Harpenden is one of the few towns with a vibrant high street remaining in the UK. It would be a travesty to threaten this status by introducing such parking charges.

Please do not put any parking restrictions in Harpenden, if you want to kill the high street or have a flourishing high st where you can charge good business rates, please, please keep parking free for the 2 hours. Harpenden is not like st albans and needs to be treated well. If you are struggling with managing harpenden and surrounding villages well. I very much suggest that Harpenden should go back to being its own council. Hope that makes sense.

Please dont put in fees, a thriving high street needs access and to be user friendly. You cant need any more money as everyone pays their council tax in harpenden.

Please make the free parking for a min. Or 60mins. By the time one has parked the car and dealt no doubt with payment for the free 20mins (no doubt we will have to either get a ticket or use a parking app) but we will have used time, leaving less time for the quick walk around a shop or supermarket, which if there are queues we will no doubt tip into the paid period ie. +20mins and the council will I'll no doubt allow no grace on the time

Please retain the £40 senior citizen's parking permit for all seniors at designated parking locations in Harpenden.

As a regular church attendee and steward on Friday evenings and Sundays I park a minimum of 104 times per year and often many more for special occasions. For permits to be means tested it will not support churchgoing in the a high Street.

Proposals to introduce parking charges (for stays beyond 20 minutes) in Harpenden town centre are short-sighted and misguided. There is a considerable risk that the proposals will have a significant negative impact on Harpenden shops and other local businesses., possibly leading to closures, which may more than offset any revenue gains from this scheme. Harpenden has few empty shops at present, but empty shops are contagious and the risk of blighting the town and long-term negative impact on revenue is too great to be made for a possible small increase in short-term revenue. The idea that visitors will use alternative means of travel or other parking places is fanciful. I invariably walk to Harpenden

town centre when I go, but sometimes I drive (for example if I plan to buy something heavy); but parking charges would probably mean I would drive elsewhere, increasing rather than reducing the negative effects of car travel.

Putting car parking charges on the streets around central Harpenden is a local residents tax to those you who use the high street shops on a regular basis. It will stop those who have no choice but to drive (children, elderly parents, live miles out of town (furthest AL5 postcodes) coming in as often. Or totally change how they shop.

It is already very expensive to use the car parks when shopping at Sainsbury's. Also there's no option for 30 mins on the app. The cheapest rate is £2.75 for 1 hour!!! Even if you're there for 10 mins on a quick errand such as posting a letter or grabbing some milk.

We need free parking to encourage residents to use our high street to keep it active and as void local shops from closing down.

Chose another way to get money out of residents!

Putting in parking charges will make me shop online more or in other places where parking is free. 20 mins free is not enough and why should residents who have to visit town several times a day have to bail out council spend? It is not equitable and will greatly affect local retailers.

Re: map reference PPB/01

We protest and object in the strongest possible terms to the proposals put forward by St Albans City and District Council to convert free limited waiting parking spaces in Harpenden to paid parking places with 20-minute free parking and disabled persons parking places, thereafter £2.50 up to 1 hour and £5 up to 2 hours. Said parking places would be paid 2-hour maximum stay with no return within 2-hours.

SADC states that “the proposed charges are necessary to effectively manage the control and turnover of limited waiting parking places.”

Nonsense!

SADC's Parking Lead Cllr Helen Campbell has been quoted as saying "I believe the changes will benefit the community as a whole by promoting active travel and discouraging people from parking on the street longer than they need."

Exactly what is “active travel”? More nonsense!

The existing on-street car parking arrangements in Harpenden are adequate. The problem is lack of enforcement. Parking enforcement personnel are a very rare sight in Harpenden, which is why the existing parking regulations and restrictions are subject to abuse. If you fail to enforce the rules then car drivers will be tempted to ignore them.

Presumably the implementation of SADC's new proposals would require the installation of some type of metering hardware in multiple locations plus the employment of additional parking enforcement personnel. The cost of installing and maintaining the new parking meters plus the cost of employing additional enforcement personnel is likely to exceed any additional revenue generated.

Harpenden already suffers from an insufficiency of car parking spaces, which has been exacerbated by SADC's ludicrous decision to allocate a large number of prime parking spaces within Amenbury Lane car park for exclusive use by employees

of Harpenden Leisure Centre.

Meanwhile property developers are proposing a new residential development within Harpenden Station's east side car park, and freely admit that this will result in the loss of existing station car parking spaces.

SADC has meanwhile unilaterally and unreasonably determined that the existing arrangement for Senior Citizen Car Parking Permits should become means-tested.

Harpenden enjoys a thriving choice of retail outlets which will inevitably suffer from a significant loss of trade if SADC's new parking restrictions are implemented (i.e. imposed).

Whoever dreamed up the idea of a maximum 20 minute free stay has obviously never attempted to collect hot food from e.g. Godfreys or one of the many other takeaway outlets within the town. At busy times it is not unusual to have to wait for >20 minutes just to collect the food. Do you seriously think that customers of these outlets would be willing to pay a £2.50 parking fee in addition to the cost of their meal?

Elderly and/or infirm residents would likely struggle to complete a visit to e.g. the Post Office or bank, or opticians or pharmacy within the proposed 20 minute limit, and could quite possibly not be able to afford the extortionate parking fees proposed.

If SADC's new parking proposals were to be implemented it would undeniably result in a significant loss of trade from Harpenden Town Centre. Residents of Harpenden would effectively be denied access to their own community's resources and forced to travel at additional expense to out of town locations such as Gypsy Lane or London Colney. This will inevitably lead to further Harpenden businesses failing and a slow decline in the currently bustling and popular town centre.

The proposals smack loudly of a barely concealed attempt by SADC to squeeze additional revenue from residents of Harpenden and from visitors to Harpenden. The only people to benefit would be SADC's budget holders, who would be better

employed focussing on ways and means of reducing their own departments' overheads through improved efficiencies. This should include more effective enforcement of the existing regulations and restrictions applicable to Harpenden's free limited waiting parking places.

We condemn these proposals as being ill-conceived and unjustified. They should be reviewed and cancelled.

Finally, what is the reason/justification for removing the part-time evening taxi parking outside No. 10 High Street, Harpenden? This facility does not appear to cause any nuisance and is currently well supported in the evenings – the nearest alternative taxi rank being Harpenden Station forecourt. The No. 10 High Street taxi stand should be retained.

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SADC's Parking Lead Cllr Helen Campbell has been quoted as saying "I believe the changes will benefit the community as a whole by promoting active travel and discouraging people from parking on the street longer than they need."

Exactly what is “active travel”? More nonsense!

The existing on-street car parking arrangements in Harpenden are adequate. The problem is lack of enforcement. Parking enforcement personnel are a very rare sight in Harpenden, which is why the existing parking regulations and restrictions are subject to abuse. If you fail to enforce the rules then car drivers will be tempted to ignore them.

Presumably the implementation of SADC's new proposals would require the installation of some type of metering hardware in multiple locations plus the employment of additional parking enforcement personnel. The cost of installing and maintaining the new parking meters plus the cost of employing additional enforcement personnel is likely to exceed any additional revenue generated.

Harpenden already suffers from an insufficiency of car parking spaces, which has been exacerbated by SADC's ludicrous decision to allocate a large number of prime parking spaces within Amenbury Lane car park for exclusive use by employees

of Harpenden Leisure Centre.

Meanwhile property developers are proposing a new residential development within Harpenden Station's east side car park, and freely admit that this will result in the loss of existing station car parking spaces.

SADC has meanwhile unilaterally and unreasonably determined that the existing arrangement for Senior Citizen Car Parking Permits should become means-tested.

Harpenden enjoys a thriving choice of retail outlets which will inevitably suffer from a significant loss of trade if SADC's new parking restrictions are implemented (i.e. imposed).

Whoever dreamed up the idea of a maximum 20 minute free stay has obviously never attempted to collect hot food from e.g. Godfreys or one of the many other takeaway outlets within the town. At busy times it is not unusual to have to wait for >20 minutes just to collect the food. Do you seriously think that customers of these outlets would be willing to pay a £2.50 parking fee in addition to the cost of their meal?

Elderly and/or infirm residents would likely struggle to complete a visit to e.g. the Post Office or bank, or opticians or pharmacy within the proposed 20 minute limit, and could quite possibly not be able to afford the extortionate parking fees proposed.

If SADC's new parking proposals were to be implemented it would undeniably result in a significant loss of trade from Harpenden Town Centre. Residents of Harpenden would effectively be denied access to their own community's resources and forced to travel at additional expense to out of town locations such as Gypsy Lane or London Colney. This will inevitably lead to further Harpenden businesses failing and a slow decline in the currently bustling and popular town centre.

The proposals smack loudly of a barely concealed attempt by SADC to squeeze additional revenue from residents of Harpenden and from visitors to Harpenden. The only people to benefit would be SADC's budget holders, who would be better

employed focussing on ways and means of reducing their own departments' overheads through improved efficiencies. This should include more effective enforcement of the existing regulations and restrictions applicable to Harpenden's free limited waiting parking places.

We condemn these proposals as being ill-conceived and unjustified. They should be reviewed and cancelled.

Finally, what is the reason/justification for removing the part-time evening taxi parking outside No. 10 High Street, Harpenden? This facility does not appear to cause any nuisance and is currently well supported in the evenings – the nearest alternative taxi rank being Harpenden Station forecourt. The No. 10 High Street taxi stand should be retained.

Removal of 1 hours free parking zones in St albans and harpenden . Totally oppose removal. These measures are

1. Mean spirited and counter productive affecting both citizens/residents and businesses already hit by inflation and higher business rates.

Currently it is possible to call at local shops. Parking fees are already high , 20 mins a token gesture and footfall to local shops will be discouraged , effedtively strangling small shop cuty trade and favouring out of town and amazon.

2. These moves based on a rush toward camera and mobile phone app technology which is digitally exclusive and simply unfair . SADC Parking is a public service, should be open and accessible to all. Payment methods should retain cash an credit card payment machine options on street.

3. True consultation should mean SADC writes individually to Council tax payers rather than these exclusive on line only methods which on past recent experience seem to be token gestures and public responses ignored anyway. Eg effective removal of senior citizens paid annual paid parking passes by making them means tested and going ahead with increased charges despite large opposition to the small sample. A way to increase trade is to offer an initial hours free parking in all council car parks rather than treating parking as a cash cow and making it income exclusive.

Removing free one hour parking will have a detrimental affect on Harpenden shops and other retail businesses. The proposals are unlikely to result in more active travel – it is unrealistic to suggest that it will. It is more likely to just result in a reduction in visits to Harpenden town centre.

Families with young children and older people will not be able to use walking or cycling options as an alternative.

There are very few cycle racks in Harpenden town centre and bicycle theft is a constant problem.

The car parks for the two supermarkets in central Harpenden are already full to capacity at peak times and weekends.

The 20 minute free parking will lead to more traffic and congestion as cars are moved more frequently to stay within the 20 minute time period.

A period of 20 minutes will be insufficient for many short visits – for example you could not be sure that a visit to the Post Office would take less than 20 minutes because of the queues there.

The new parking charges in the centre could just push parking into nearby residential streets.

It is not clear that the result of the changes would be any greater revenue for the Council. Revenue could decrease if many residents and visitors are unwilling to pay the parking fee (with a consequential impact on the viability of shops and so business rate income). Internet shopping will provide a cheaper option if there is a charge for on street parking.

The consultation does not include any information about how the new on-street parking fees will be paid. This is a vital piece of information that should be included in the consultation. If the proposal is to have payment solely by App or by phone this will be a concern and will create concern and difficulties, particularly for elderly people.

Removing free parking from areas of Harpenden, particularly the High Street, is nothing short of a misguided folly. The paid for car parks in the area are often empty due to extortionate parking fees. Along with many of my fellow residents the only answer will be to shop at major retail outlets where parking is free which sadly will inevitably result in less footfall for popular local businesses. Should they be forced out of business it will be down to the shortsightedness of the dimwits on St Albans Council.

Removing free parking in Harpenden own centre is completely unnecessary and would be detrimental to business, residents and the environment.

It would destroy the character of what is one of the country's relatively few high streets that is still doing well.

People will be much less likely to shop in Harpenden town centre, as they cannot simply nip to the shops.

The reality is that as much as walking or cycling is promoted, people use their cars to do this. There is no viable public transport option to get there as and when you need to. And people need to bring shopping home with them.

And I say the above as someone who cycles everyday.

A 20 minute free period is not long enough to shop. People need an hour to feel comfortable – they will opt to go elsewhere.

People will choose not to use Harpenden's shops and drive to out of town locations or supermarkets instead.

Businesses will lose business and chose to relocate and new ones will not open. Harpenden's shopkeepers are overwhelmingly against this proposal. Listen to what they are telling you.

Residents will be harmed by not being able to shop in their town. The proposals are also regressive, as £2.50 to park is very expensive and while the rich residents of Harpenden will be able to afford it, the poorer residents are less likely to be able to do so. The proposals create a 'Range Rover driver's charter'. Many residents are overwhelmingly against this, again listen to what they are telling you.

It will be bad for the environment, as to avoid paying people will drive around looking for free parking bays on surrounding roads, thus creating more pollution. This is a reason for making parking in the car parks free too.

I understand that council funding is an issue – and a national problem. The council tax system needs overhauling but wrecking a high street with parking charges is not the answer. It is likely to be self defeating, as the council will lose business rates revenue.

Support our high street and town centre, don't destroy it.

Removing free parking will deter shoppers and drastically reduce support for local businesses. Coffee shops, cafes, bookshops, gift shops, all shops which depend on casual browsing customers will leave our high street.

Removing the free parking will make it much less attractive to go into town and use the shops.

Residents of Harpenden who pay Council Tax and blue badge holders should be issued with free parking permits. Non residents could be charged providing a degree of additional income.

Retailers and hospitality in Harpenden are already hit with exorbitant business rates and exorbitant rents. Businesses are also being pushed out by competition from the internet. It's significant that the High Street is gradually becoming over populated by coffee shops, eateries, nail bars, hairdressers and barbers: businesses which don't compete with the internet. Now you want to knock another nail in the coffin of Harpenden High Street with exorbitant parking charges. Are you actively trying to kill off the High Street? We've seen what's happened to other High Streets. Empty, boarded up shops and homeless people sleeping in doorways. Please don't let it happen to Harpenden.

Review of high-demand car parking bays with limited waiting times.

This consultation and proposals are severely flawed, as they contain insufficient information for anyone to consider the practicality or financial benefit, based on the sketchy justification put forward by SADC. Although it is claimed that the car parking service has been running at a loss over several years, there is no financial information provided within the proposal. It is claimed that the proposals will allow the service to break even, but where is the financial analysis to support this claim? Implementing a paid for parking system on this scale will incur major capital outlay, in terms of signage, recruitment and training of enforcement officers and payment systems, plus significant ongoing costs, including salaries. The method of enforcement has not been stated, so the practicality can only be guessed at, but how can the council possibly police the system in relation to the proposed free 20 minute time slots, given the large number of parking bays involved? It seems likely that either the enforcement will be ineffective, or huge numbers of enforcement officers will be required, at very high cost. The proposed parking changes would be highly detrimental to the town centre, by discouraging visitors and reducing the trade of local shopkeepers. Although I am fortunate to live close enough to the town centre to walk there, the majority of residents in Harpenden are not. A 20 minute free parking period is insufficient for most visits (even a 'quick' visit to the post office can result in queueing for longer than that). The proposals claim to 'encourage active travel such as cycling and walking'. However, there is very little provision in the town for bike parking (not to mention no cycle lanes or priority for cyclists), so many will be unwilling to bike in, because it's too dangerous. It is also claimed that parking spaces will be freed up, but the local car parks are already full most days, so most drivers will be forced to stay in the bays and pay. The payment system, which again is not mentioned in the proposals, will presumably use a phone app or text based system, which will

cause anxiety for many elderly people, who may not have a suitable phone, or are unfamiliar with such systems. In conclusion, I strongly object to the parking proposals in their current form. At the very least, free parking for at least 1 hour, should continue to be available, and the council should offer paid annual parking permits to all residents and local businesses.

Ridiculous decision will penalise residents who live further away from the town centre who cannot therefore walk. This is a war on motorists. 20 minutes is not long enough to park up and do anything like popping into a shop or two. Will have a negative effect on footfall into the town and be the deathknell for many businesses which are already struggling with high rents and rates. How will employees who work there but don't live in Harpenden manage these extra charges? Short sighted , money grabbing , inconsiderate , this would be a disasterous decision for the long term prospects of the many valued and essential businesses and services needed to support the community.

Ridiculous scheme which will harm trade in the currently just surviving town centre.

Will cause additional signage etc. Which will be detrimental to the conservation area.

Just stop wasting money on nonsense, then you would need less nonsense like this to raise money.

Wankers!

Sadly, I believe the overall proposal will prove to be negative for Harpenden due to being a tax/inconvenience upon shoppers that will impact the independent businesses in the town. But on the basis that St Albans council needs to fill a budget hole and there is no other option then I think modifications are required to the current proposal to mitigate the negative impacts as much as possible. I agree with the overall principle of the charging structure but I think it should be changed in the following ways: (1) 20 mins is insufficient to pop into the shop if met by a queue or delay or the need to walk up/down the street from your park. This should be 30m or more. (2) Stays up to an hour need to be charged at a more 'negligible rate' to minimise impact on business and encourage people to pay the rate when they might exceed the free amount; I think it could be £1 for the first hour. (3) the widespread ability to stay for 2h is being introduced by this proposal as presently just a tiny proportion of the spaces permit a 2h stay. Charging more for the 2nd hour e.g. £3 or £4 will act to provide for yet discourage excessive 'long-term' stayers and encourage use of the central car parks (e.g. lydder/sainsburys/leisure).

Seems like further attempt to promote out of town shopping.

Example: park car in London Rd and try to get haircut within 20mins. Might just be possible if no queue at barbers. Certainly no time for a quick coffee afterwards (implications for local business).

Since we already have empty shops I feel this will discourage customers which will lead to the closure of yet more shops - which will then lead to less businesses wanting to open up here. At the moment Harpenden has a nice busy vibe which I feel will be lost as will no longer be a 'let's pop down the shops - buy something, have a coffee etc.

As a pensioner I object strongly to a £2.50 levy every time I need to go shopping, visit the library, go to the dentist, hairdresser etc.

Sirs

I have read your proposals for parking changes in Harpenden Town centre and the comments made by Councillor Helen Campbell, Chair of the Council's Public Realm Committee and Lead for Parking. I find that the current proposals are ill conceived and not suitable for our community.

Our local retailers will suffer harm as car parking charges will inevitably deter local shopping and the lack of diversification in our high street, witnessed over the past decade, will be extended. This will encourage more out of town shopping and not as Ms Cambell asserts more active travel.

The proposed 20 minutes free parking is inadequate. When we already have a struggling high street, where service provision i.e. shop staff is at a premium, there is virtually no in-person transaction that can be conducted face to face in less than 15 minutes (to allow for travel time between car and establishment and queuing, waiting for assistance).

I believe that the proposals are ageist in that they will penalise the elderly residents of Harpenden the most. Many are dependent on their cars and use their high street many times a week for shopping and social purposes.

One understands that there is a genuine need for SADC to increase income. However to charge the motorist for this is unethical even if legal, although The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1994 may still come to bear if the intention primarily is a fiscal measure in order to make a surplus for other purposes.

Therefore I call for transparency: more clarity on the financial necessity of the proposals is required to expand upon and explain the need as expressed by councillor Cambell "to make parking self-sufficient". In addition a detailed justification that "the interests, not just of residents who use the bays, but also of those who do not, such as non-motorists or those choosing active travel options" warrant such a scheme. A full parking review should precede any long-term decisions to determine why we should have to pay for parking.

Yours faithfully

(REDACTED)

Harpenden Resident for 43 years

Sirs,

Taking away the free parking in Harpenden is scandalous! I love our High Street because we have some unique shops. How will they survive without the footfall the free parking allows.

Small town that depends on customers for retail. We will struggle even more if this is introduced. I will certainly be dissuaded. The only people who are using the free short stay parking are people who are using town centre retail and leisure outlets. Don't make it worse. Our town centre is struggling as it is.

So many cars park outside the main high street around Harpenden making our streets unsafe. The proposal only adds pressure to this and more cars will put pressure outside the high street. As a Mum of young children parking quickly in town is vital, otherwise I will just buy more online and go to town less often. We want our village feel to stay and thrive and I see only benefits for the council in the proposal not the residents or our way of life

Some people can't walk to town

Going for a coffee is a life line for some people

Businesses are worried about lack of customers

St Albans and Harpenden already has much higher parking charges than almost all surrounding towns and introduced evening parking. The free spaces are useful for short shopping visits or trips into the town where you will be staying less than an hour.

Whilst it is meant to deter people using cars it will disproportionately affect those in the parts of town that are too far to walk, or villages that use Harpenden for shopping.

Strongly against charging for parking in Harpenden high street.

Strongly object. This is nothing but a money making scheme with no thought to the impact on retailers and residents.

Such draconian measures and costs will prevent many people such as myself (a senior citizen who now no longer has the parking pass) from regularly meeting friends and shopping in town. This will also adversely impact on the town traders. The town will lose it's vibrancy and it's heart.

Suggestions I have had from residents include:

- reinstating the senior parking permit and charging more for it
- prove how this plan will be able to raise funds before implementing it
- charging households with additional cars a fee for parking in the street
- set up a business of NGO to manage free parking in Harpenden where car users pay an annual fee and then still get access to 1hr free parking with no return on 2 hours for a reasonable annual price (£10 or £20 per year would more than cover the budget deficit) and running costs of this organisation
- 20 minutes too short for elderly people, and mums with toddlers and babies who need to get to chemists and food shops.
- The Liberal Democrats have done a fantastic job over the last 4 years to build trust in Harpenden and I feel with a move to charge for parking they will lose all this goodwill in one fell swoop. If I could advise the council, please reverse this proposition and maintain the goodwill that you have built. I fear, if they press ahead with charging for parking in Harpenden, they will be booted out of office....
- Its lovely to go to the town centre to do errands not having to bother about parking fees, machines, apps, phones....all that nuisance.

Other themes in the 5000+ objections are:

- In their 2024-2029 Plan, SADC's own Vision is a 'happy, inclusive and sustainable community' with 1 of their 5 priorities to 'support our local economy'
- How can Victoria Collins expect to be viewed as genuine when she says "Times are tough right now, and the Government just isn't acting on the big issues. For too long, they've taken communities like ours for granted." - Charging for street parking will make times tougher and will destroy retail which is an integral part of the community.
- I think it will be difficult for esp older people manipulating bags, glasses phone and payment card.
- Charging for car parking will kill our High Street which is struggling anyway
- it's lovely to go to the town centre to do errands not having to bother about parking fees, machines, apps, phones....all that

nuisance.

- I care about Harpenden high street. Free parking makes it easy to stop and shop.
- I want to support local businesses but won't be 'popping' into town for anything if I have to pay to park for less than an hour. Or worse, pay to park to go to the surgery, or dentist or pharmacy. I won't arrange to meet friends in the town any more either, there are plenty of pubs and cafes elsewhere to meet.
- I believe the decision has already been made NO MATTER what the public think....its another attack on the car user.
- St Albans is an absolute nightmare to park in hence I barely go there now and I'm sure many people also avoid it now. We don't want Harpenden to be affected in the same way. An hour free parking is not much to ask for!

I believe that the best way forward to protect residents and business would be to divide up D into D1 and D2 (see attached map)

D1: - 1hr free - max stay 1 hour no return in 2-4 hours

D2: - 1hr free - max stay 1 hour no return in 2-4 hours

Perhaps a 1 hr free parking pass could be sold to residents that would allow them to park free on the street in the centre of Harpenden:

Eg £10 per car per year to park 1 hr free per day

£15 per car to park for 2 periods of 1 hour (no return for 2 hours between)

£20 per car per year for 3 periods of 1 hour free per day (no return 2 hours between)

This would help to balance the budget and continue to provide the access and amenity to the centre currently enjoyed by the residents.

Suggestions I have had from residents include:

- reinstating the senior parking permit and charging more for it
- prove how this plan will be able to raise funds before implementing it
- charging households with additional cars a fee for parking in the street
- set up a business of NGO to manage free parking in Harpenden where car users pay an annual fee and then still get access to 1hr free parking with no return on 2 hours for a reasonable annual price (£10 or £20 per year would more than cover the budget deficit) and running costs of this organisation
- Minimum free period of 1 hour, maximum stay 1 hour next to shops in order to permit time to adequately run errands in the centre. 1 hr free, 1 hour chargeable for parking away from the shops. Max stay 2 hours. Increased enforcement of existing street parking and car parks
- raise Harpenden council tax by a very small amount and get a contribution from business rates to subsidise this free parking

Comments and common themes from a petition signed by 5000+ residents include:

- 20 minutes too short for elderly people, and mums with toddlers and babies who need to get to chemists and food shops.
- The Liberal Democrats have done a fantastic job over the last 4 years to build trust in Harpenden and I feel with a move to charge for parking they will lose all this goodwill in one fell swoop. If I could advise the council, please reverse this proposition and maintain the goodwill that you have built. I fear, if they press ahead with charging for parking in Harpenden, they will be booted out of office....
- Its lovely to go to the town centre to do errands not having to bother about parking fees, machines, apps, phones....all that nuisance.

Other themes in the 5000+ objections at change.org are:

<https://www.change.org/p/object-to-the-planned-introduction-of-on-street-parking-charges-in-harpenden/c>

- In their 2024-2029 Plan, SADC's own Vision is a 'happy, inclusive and sustainable community' with 1 of their 5 priorities to 'support our local economy'
- How can Victoria Collins expect to be viewed as genuine when she says "Times are tough right now, and the Government just isn't acting on the big issues. For too long, they've taken communities like ours for granted." - Charging for street parking will make times tougher and will destroy retail which is an integral part of the community.
- I think it will be difficult for esp older people manipulating bags, glasses phone and payment card.
- Charging for car parking will kill our High Street which is struggling anyway
- it's lovely to go to the town centre to do errands not having to bother about parking fees, machines, apps, phones....all that nuisance.
- I care about Harpenden high street. Free parking makes it easy to stop and shop.
- I want to support local businesses but won't be 'popping' into town for anything if I have to pay to park for less than an hour. Or worse, pay to park to go to the surgery, or dentist or pharmacy. I won't arrange to meet friends in the town any more either, there are plenty of pubs and cafes elsewhere to meet.
- I believe the decision has already been made NO MATTER what the public think....its another attack on the car user.
- St Albans is an absolute nightmare to park in hence I barely go there now and I'm sure many people also avoid it now. We don't want Harpenden to be affected in the same way. An hour free parking is not much to ask for!

Support the proposals. All parking should be charged and this is a step in that direction.

Terrible impact on residents and businesses

The ability to park for a reasonable period of time for free in town is invaluable to make it attractive to people to shop in the high street and support local businesses. Without this incentive and such high proposed charges, many people will simply shop elsewhere and the sense of community will be lost.

The beauty of shopping in Harpenden is that one can invariably find a parking space free of charge, spend maybe 30 mins to an hour and then leave to free up the space for others...hence the thriving retail scene in Harp. Just how the council thinks 20 mins is sufficient to get anywhere...unless you are lucky enough to park immediately outside the shop you want is beyond me any any rational analysis.

This is a terrible proposal which can only lead to a negative impact on the health of the high street.

The beauty of this vibrant town is its openness to visitors with free and accessible on street parking to support our thriving small businesses and community. To implement paid parking/charges in whatever form (first 20mins free is just another way of pushing us to pay for the 1 hour parking), is abhorrent. Parking charges should not be applied at all to these currently and always has been FREE on street parking.

The businesses in Harpenden rely on the local residents for their custom, not only that but I visit the town often to pop into the shops, if there is a charge myself and many other local residents will stop this. Myself and others cannot afford to pay for parking each time we want to pop into town and provide businesses with our custom. It is a ridiculous proposal.

The charge will increase citizen's cost of living and inconvenience.

The charges will drive custom away from the local businesses. As a resident of Harpenden and regular visitor to the shops, I wouldn't pay the parking charges to simply pick up a few items and would instead rely more on online orders or alternatively use the petrol station, Tesco Express or Co-op where I could park for free.

The consultation documents seem to be designed to illicit a minimum of feedback. How on earth do you expect residents to read, analyse and comment on the proposals?!

Maybe I am mistaken in my impression of what appears to be the degree of complexity but I can't work out how to review and comment on anything and I am not being deliberately negative because I would like to make some constructive comments.

Surely this could have been presented as a simple yes/no set of questions?

It's beyond me to provide any feedback, therefore I object to any changes because I haven't got a clue what they are.

The council doesn't seem to have considered what the residents want in this proposal, they simply look to be trying to generate money. The main issue with parking in the Harpenden town centre is that there is little to no checks in place, I very rarely see a parking warden in town, this is well known, so people ignore the current parking restrictions, and overstay. Surely it would be better to employ more parking wardens, whose wages can be covered by the fines paid. This will reduce people overstaying in existing parking and reduce congestion.

The council have expressed that running parking costs £1.5m a year, although not provided any detail as to how and why or what the 5yr projected impact will be on Commercial property rates revenue from a lower high street footfall. Which I suspect will be many many times larger. Also running parking through an app isn't convenient for anyone and causes particular trouble for elderly residents. The council ought to be encouraging footfall rather than essentially imposing a tax on accessing the town centre. There is no need to charge for parking in Harpenden.

The current free parking in this area allows the local community to support local businesses in the area and provides quick access to these local shops if needed.

There is plenty of paid parking in the station car park and two car parks within the vicinity of Sainsbury's which people can use for parking for longer periods.

Going ahead with this proposal would mean that local businesses could be negatively affected with less footfall. It's really important that we continue to support local businesses and the local community to use them.

The current parking arrangements work very well. Changing to a pay scheme is a retrograde step.

The current parking provision is equitable and fair in that all residents have access to 1 hour of local parking enabling access to local shops and essential services. It is suggested in the Statement of Reason that these proposed changes will ensure 'fair and safe' parking across the District – however, the changes will actually mean that those people with disabilities or elderly will have to pay to have the same access to local shops and essential services as the 20mins free limit is categorically not sufficient. Currently those parking can not stay any longer than 1 hour, ensuring spaces become free regularly, whereas under the new plans those who are financially better off will be able to occupy a space for 2hours, thereby actually reducing the access to spaces overall and negatively impacting those economically less well off. This does not seem to be a scheme to benefit or improve the parking for local residents but simply a cash generating scheme for the local authority.

The following constitutes The Harpenden Society's response to SADC's parking proposals for central Harpenden

Fundamentally, the Society believe that the current proposals are not fit for purpose.

Local retailers argue that the imposition of the proposed charges "will be damaging to the local economy and will directly and adversely affect the residents and their decision to shop locally" where trading conditions are already challenging as a result of changes in consumer behaviour and the cost of living crisis. We fully recognise this is a significant risk.

Furthermore, the provision of 20 minutes free parking meets no one's needs as the enforcement will prove to be extremely difficult. The consequence is that residents will ignore the time limits, much as they do now.

The result is likely to be more chaos and potential damage to the Town Council's strategic objective of supporting a vibrant High Street, an objective we fully support.

Nevertheless, we do accept that there are legitimate issues to be addressed, both in terms of the need for SADC to secure additional income to fund its budget deficit, a real need for standardisation of parking time limits and charges, and the dire need for a substantial improvement to central Harpenden's chronic traffic and parking problems.

As regards SADC's income requirements, we believe there needs to be more transparency. From our analysis, the parking proposals (which include changes other than the imposition of on-street parking charges) appear, at face value, to raise far more than that needed to cover the costs of the district's parking services.

If this is the case, there is a legal obligation firstly to apply any such surpluses to improving such services, before funds are available to meet the Council's budget deficit.

HTC's own view is that no permanent changes should be made until a thorough review of parking has been undertaken. We

support this but also recognise that SADC may well have to press ahead with some parking charge changes to meet their budget deficit for 2024/25.

If SADC do press ahead, we believe that for a limited time only (to end March 2025 – by which time a proper review of parking in Harpenden should have been undertaken), the following changes should be considered:-

- One hour's free parking in all town centre parking bays should be allowed (both the retailers and HTC have said this should be the minimum allowance).
- One further hour in the above bays should be available at a cost of £2.50, thereby extracting a premium over the equivalent car park charge for 2 hours. This should encourage the use of car parks for such longer stays, with an added benefit of delivering a greater turnover of on-street parking.
- Parking permits, for which a modest annual charge can be made, should be offered to all residents, not just senior citizens, allowing a maximum of up to 3 hours free parking in the car parks, as is the case in many other parts of the country.
- Finally, SADC should start to invest in technology and additional Community Enforcement Officers across the town centre streets and car parks and be seen to be visibly adopting a 'zero tolerance' approach to illegal parking – particularly parking on double yellow lines and on pavements.

Our hope is that, even at this stage, SADC recognise that parking is a complex matter with a host of issues yet to be resolved, and will defer any permanent changes until a full review has taken place.

As members of HTC's transport forum, the Society is more than happy to be involved with both SADC and HTC in this review.

(REDACTED)

(REDACTED)

The free parking period should be longer. Minimum 40 minutes, preferably 60. Otherwise town centre trade will be adversely affected. The new parking charges are also too high

The free time has to extend beyond 20mins and to at least an hr. There should also be a consideration to how you will enable more access to free parking in the nearby car parks.

The health of the high street should be protected. Parking fees discourage residents including the old and infirm from doing their shopping on the high street and just encourages more online shopping. The proposals are short sighted in that regard and should not go ahead.

The high street has had years of challenges with rising bills, rent, salary's, gas, impacting many independent shops. The high street has therefore seen many stores converted into vape, nails and charity shops. As a local, 20 mins for those with children, or disabilities or indeed the ability to browse and charges from there on will simply limit the options and trade will be taken to areas which offer flexibility and no fees. Equally experiences where by car parks are charged, often the machines are out of order, lack card payment processing which in the end deters more from using the high street. I therefore object to the proposal

The High Street is already in decline, adding parking payments will cause a severe decrease in High Street and surrounding areas trade, businesses will cease trading thus reducing the rates payable to the council, who will no doubt then increase household rates to offset the difference.

The high street is already under pressure, with the loss of shops like JoJo Maman Bebe happening already. There is clearly a need for more free parking, not less.

This short term view to raise cash (and not much cash at that!) will end up costing businesses footfall. That is going to end up costing the council more in the long term due to a devaluation of the high street (especially when considering the impact on the valuation of the hundreds of new homes that are being proposed to be built in Harpenden that are not in walking distance of the high street) and will hurt residents due to the inevitable loss of good shops as a result of these plans. Having recently asked for our vote for a Harpenden MP and no doubt asking for our vote for re-election, councillors should take the opportunity to actually serve the residents of Harpenden, increase the availability of free parking, and find another way to balance the books.

The impact on local businesses will be considerable as shoppers will reject the high street. We should be actively supporting small local businesses otherwise Harpenden will lose its attraction if full of boarded up shops

The inconvenience and expense of paying to park in Harpenden Town Centre will gratefully deter residents from popping in to the local shops and instead will force residents further out of town to retail parks with free, unlimited parking. This will lead to further decline of the high street, local business and shops. To be able to pop quickly into town without the need to worry about parking fees is the only draw for us as a family to shop locally.

The introduction of parking charges at the Haseldine Road car park in London Colney will decimate the local shops. Personally I regularly use the car park for quick stops at the co-op and for when I attend the local church, and the vets. I don't want to park in the local residential roads as this is unfair on the residents of those roads. If this goes ahead I will be left no choice but to go to the Sainsbury's instead.

Please think very carefully before implementing parking charges here.

The introduction of parking charges will deter people (including me) from going into central Harpenden during the operational hours. The proposed charges are very high. 20 mins is not long enough to park, walk and pop into a shop or pick up a prescription. The proposed charges will add £2.50 to the cost of any shopping trip or to a dr or dentist appointment, and £5 to a cafe visit. This will impact the local businesses and the community feel of Harpenden town centre.

The lifeblood of any large village/small town without a retail park is its High Street. As a former resident of Harpenden it shocks me to hear the plans to introduce charges to park for more than 20 mins. Naturally, people will simply choose to order online rather than supporting local businesses if they can't visit the centre and spend time browsing what's available. Simply visiting a dentist or doctors would probably incur charges, and you would struggle to do a few errands... especially if you had to queue for anything like the post office.

Where is the information for the impact on businesses, both positive and negative for this proposal?

The loss of free on road parking will be detrimental to all Harpenden residents and the local retailers. There is a large elderly population who need to drive into town to shop and spend only a short time in spaces and need to park as close to the

shops as possible . The elderly will be unfairly affected financially by this policy which in effect is ageism in action. The council should be ashamed of this proposal.

Currently the main problem in Harpenden is the illegal road parking on single and double yellow lines and the absence of traffic wardens to deter this.

The new plans are ridiculous and will have a huge negative impact on the residents of Harpenden and the environment. My mother in law goes into town once a week and will now have to make multiple journeys, which wont be good for the environment. This is not an effective way to increase active travel, particularly in winter. People will just drive around looking for a new 20 minute space or make multiple trips.

There are loads of things in town where you might unexpectedly end up taking longer than planned e.g. dropping kids at nursery, doctors, dentist, post office. Introducing pay and display is unnecessary and will make all of those difficult and stressful.

The centre of town is currently busy but there is generally a good turnover of people parking so spaces are usually available. Local businesses will suffer from the plans, so more of our high street shops will suffer and lose out to internet shopping and out-of-town retail. The plans will kill the high street.

The plans are not very inclusive or considerate of elderly people who need time to be able to walk from their car to the shop or amenity they need to use.

The reasons set out in the 'Statement of Reason' document' have no evidence and I think are hugely outweighed by the negative impacts noted above.

The parking arrangements should remain as they are. It will be a detriment to local businesses to charge after 20 mins. People should be encouraged to come and support local services. Those that can walk or bus, do, others that can't need cars nearby, especially those many families with little children for whom 20 mins does not suffice. I do not see that the benefit outweighs the negative implications. I object.

The parking bays along Drovers Way are currently free for 30 minutes, you're proposing to reduce the free time to 20 minutes and then charge. That's a cynical money making ploy.

The parking charge will reduce the number of customers shopping locally, dining and using services of local businesses. This will negatively impact the high street and reduce the range of shops available to residents because fewer customers will result in more shop closures who are struggling to generate enough revenue to stay open. Customers will now have to factor in the price of parking to their purchase. It makes it easier to justify buying online from a business located out of the area, as you can justify the delivery costs now with the money you'd have spent on parking instead. Or driving to an out of town shopping centre or business park with free parking.

I think the existing parking restrictions of 1 hour free or 2 hours free parking in places encourages residents to go into the centre and shop. Taking this away will damage the local economy, with fewer businesses to pay business tax rates and also reduce employment for local residents working in those shops and services.

The parking charges will be incredibly unfair for any independent shops on the High Street and it will end up with businesses closing. I know only too well that the council needs to raise funds. Maybe increase price of current paid spaces. Increase surveillance and pick up people who don't respect the time limits. The High Street is already losing its character- let's not make life any harder for small businesses.

The parking in Harpenden works perfectly, there is no need to charge for spots. This is a shameless money grabbing exercise.

The parking is used by local people and the price of £5 for 2 h is very expensive

The parking proposals are not fit for purpose. 20 minutes isn't enough time to park, sort out a "ticket", get to the shop you want to go to (and return), find the item you want and pay for it, unless you're alone, super fit and single-minded. Anything less than an hour is completely unworkable. 20 minutes will also be virtually impossible to police by CEOs therefore limits will continue to be abused, as they are now. Chaos will reign but residents will become increasingly angry with an administration that seems hell bent on punishing motorists for the temerity of wanting to shop locally and ensure the survival of a diverse and largely welcoming high street. Furthermore, the currently proposed charges, after 20 minutes, are likely to be another factor in residents' drifting away from the high street, with the result that more shops will remain empty for longer and the eventual replacements, being clones of existing shops, will have low survival rates, resulting in a constant merry go round until shops are permanently boarded up.

A "thriving high street" will no longer exist and, what's worse, there won't be anything to replace it and it'll become a "no go"

desolate landscape at night. Harpenden's character and desirability as a place to live will be lost.

What's needed first is a vision for what Harpenden's high street could look like in the future, buy-in from residents, and a strategy to deliver it, not this mad scheme to fleece Harpenden residents further (parking charges were increased significantly last year). It will result in long term damage to the high street and, ultimately, a greater loss of revenue to SADC than they anticipate the charges being levied will raise.

The plans will hugely affect the businesses on the high street. I, and many others, wouldn't be able to carry heavy shopping back to my house which would mean that I would visit the high street less often. In addition, the proposed parking charges are outrageously high. £5 for 2 hours is scandalous. It seems to be a money making scheme for the council and I hope it doesn't go ahead

The prices are extreme. It will be cheaper to drive and drop in At Albans.

The proposal for Victoria road and London road does not fit in with the types of business that I would visit quickly. You can't go to the dentist for 20 minutes so I'd have to pay to park to attend my dentist appointments. There would be no more lunches at local establishments if this comes into effect as I can't do that in 20 minutes either.

The proposal has not been thought through or costed properly. The council estimate of £200,000 that can be raised from the new parking charges are merely a figure plucked from the air to balance the books. The outcome of the 20 minutes will create mayhem with extra traffic movements. No thought has been given to the fact that there are three churches, a doctors surgery, several chemists, or backlash on retailers lost revenue (who have not been consulted)but, most of all a school that needs more than 20 minutes to drop off and pick up the children. So I guess this is a sinister calculation to ensure the £2.50 for one hour (£25.00 a week for a parent) is unavoidable.

When hundreds of new homes are to built in Harpenden, with potential for more commuters needing parking ,suggestion by the developer of the station car park that they were sure they would find alternative parking during the construction stage,

coupled with the reduction of existing car parking and the obvious local householders objecting to the remaining unrestricted parking (more yellow lines and parking restrictions) surely we can conclude this is just another lack of forward thinking and the proposal binned.

The proposal seems solely to raise revenue for St Albans Council. There is no commitment to use this money for the benefit of Harpenden residents (who are likely to form the greatest volume of paying parking costs). The roads in Harpenden are in dire need of repair and this money could be used for that purpose rather than going into a bucket to be used by SADC for anything.

My main objection is rather broader than stated above. Having to pay for parking disadvantages both businesses (less footfall) and residents. We know that there are empty shops in the high Street. This proposal will exacerbate this. Have SADC calculated the effect of the parking proposal in the light of its effect on residents and business. If so, please supply.

The proposal to charge for street parking in Harpenden and St Albans will be a negative one for businesses as it will make customers go elsewhere to shop or do business. I am against the proposal as it will also increase pollution with people driving out of the area to shop. We need to support local businesses not take revenue away from them.

The proposal to introduce a significantly high parking charge for the Harpenden high street will have a disproportionate negative impact on our town and high street in comparison to any perceived benefit. As a resident who has grown up here, I truly value the varied shops our high street has to offer. With the parking charges this would deter shoppers such as myself from popping to town on lunch breaks or for a quick visit when I don't have time to walk in. I am sure I'm not alone in this and this will only cause a reduction in footfall for our shops. With this and the soaring rental prices, I can't see how our unique high street can continue. Only chain stores would be able to stay afloat (although even they are unable to remain in business in some cases). The unique high street, accessibility for all and inviting center (shops, restaurants, green spaces etc) all rely on residents from easily accessing them. Introducing these charges would push visitors further in to residential streets and cause residents even more frustration. I can only see negative consequences from this scheme and implore SADC to reverse its decision on the matter.

The proposal to introduce on-street parking charges in Harpenden is perhaps a move too-far for the following reasons :

- a) it will be contentious for the Harpenden community, particularly the local shopkeepers who will notice a marked reduction in foot-fall for what has been a thriving high street for many years.
- b) we should encourage local shopping as a way of bolstering a strong Harpenden community.
- c) an on-street parking charge may well force local car drivers and shop employees to find alternative parking arrangements and it is already a fact that Harpenden car parks are already inadequate at peak times.
- d) the cost of installing parking meters and the monitoring of on-street parking charge compliance may well offset the full benefit to SADC of introducing such a charge.

The proposal to introduce paid parking in Harpenden will be a boon for parking officers and for revenue but ultimately will reduce rate income as shops will suffer. Threads will more than likely close its doors along with the remaining smaller shops that have so far survived. The proposal appears purely to be to help plug the council budget deficit.

The proposal to reduce parking availability, and to charge for parking, beyond the occasional 'free for 20 minutes' parking slots, is going to kill the high street of Harpenden. There are already several closed down premises; more shops will struggle, restaurants and bars will fail to be able to entice diners or drinkers if they have to park; and the suggestion that the populace of Harpenden should start to walk or cycle into town more is not viable. We have a high number of seniors in the town – they are not going to be able to revert to cycling or walking to do their shopping – and so more will end up doing more and more online shopping, leading to the closure even of supermarkets, due to lack of custom.

The proposals will lead directly to an increase in online shopping at the expense of Harpenden retailers. They will lose income and so will pay less rates to SADC. Thus SADC will not gain increased income through these proposals but will lose it. The idea of a 20 minute free park may be OK for school runs but when I do the weekly shopping it takes over an hour.

An increase in online shopping will mean a faster increase in van deliveries which are already clogging up the streets and damaging road surfaces.

The proposals will seriously impact footfall for retail businesses in the centre of Harpenden. 20 minutes is insufficient to do any amount of shopping and people will shop online or elsewhere when they have to do more than the briefest of tasks rather than pay for parking. I am also concerned about accessibility to services for those, particularly the elderly, who rely on the car. Shopping appears to be an issue with many relying on being able to park adjacent to shops to mitigate their lack of mobility. These are people who cannot do a 20 shop minute and make many trips per week. Expecting them to foot parking charges is an strongly adverse distributional impact. Also, there are those with similar mobility who use the impacted area of central for their social contact e.g. church, meeting friends. Again, imposing parking charges on this group is a strongly adverse distributional impact. Overall, these proposals don't not consider the use of the area and are extremely poor in terms of place-making and social and economic distributional impacts.

The proposed parking charges for Harpenden are wholly unjustified as it would discourage people from using the town centre to shop or visit.

The proposed changes to incorporate charging for parking in Harpenden will have a detrimental effect on local small businesses by causing their customers additional cost when shopping for goods and services in Harpenden.

The proposed changes to the free to park arrangements in Harpenden will have a significantly negative impact not only on the local economy, but also prove disruptive and expensive to residents.

My main objections to the proposed policy are as follows:

1. Economic impact – by applying such a shift, you will deter drop in shoppers who want to visit local retailers/suppliers and spend longer than the free 20/30 minutes which you are suggesting. These consumers – the mums popping in after school drop offs, the elderly meeting up with friends, the mates catching up for a chat – are the very lifeblood on which all types of retailers depend. However, through your actions, you will divert this footfall away from the precious high street and into the arms of Amazon or people just deciding to stay at home and invite people round instead. Furthermore, the trips to the dentists, doctors, hairdressers, opticians etc which act as a catalyst and opportunity to attract people into the town, and spend, will be lost. The simple fact is that by your approach, you will motivate people to dash in and dash out, forgoing the discretionary ancillary spending which currently accrues.

For example, if you affect say 200 visitors a day, spending £20 each through your policy and they avoid Harpenden, this will reduce spending in the town by over a £1m pa, just on weekdays. Is that a prudent and sensible strategy to pursue, when the long term consequences are likely to be more empty shops on the high street with the attendant reduction in rates and taxes?

2. Social impacts – Many elderly people rely on the services in the town centre as a community hub and use the free parking to facilitate their ongoing contact with friends and relatives. These are not necessarily those who have blue badges, and are not people who are comfortable using the buses, but rather couples and individuals whose only ongoing connections may be through the different groups and organisations which meet, such as churches and other outreach groups. There are of course many other, similar constituents, such as mums and toddlers, book clubs, the Harpenden Society, the Flower Society, Rotary, The Lions Club, Probus etc etc. Most of these clubs and societies undertake incredibly worthwhile activities on behalf of the wider Harpenden community, predominantly on a voluntary basis. One of the potential consequences of your proposal will be to move these meetings away from the town centre and onto Zoom/Teams meetings, removing the face to face contact which is so valuable and which achieves so much. Instead of cultivating a vibrant, collaborative community spirit, are you not more likely to create more of an isolated, lonely and disconnected society?

3. Environmental impact – much of Councillor Helen Campbell's comments on the issue seem to centre on the fact that by

implementing such a policy, Harpenden residents will be motivated to take the bus, ride a bike, walk or use the car less often, thereby improving the Harpenden carbon footprint. I don't know how much time Councillor Campbell spends in Harpenden to inform this opinion but I believe that her conclusions may not be accurate. The counter observation would be that there is already a very high proportion of electric/hybrid vehicles in Harpenden, so the population has already commenced the shift away from internal combustion engines. In addition, the age of the population is skewed towards the over 60s, and one would suspect that this population are unlikely to migrate to buses and/or bikes – they are more likely to withdraw completely. Finally, are there not other opportunities to improve the Harpenden environmental performance rather than just focus on travel? For example, have you and Councillor Campbell undertaken a comprehensive environmental audit and investigated all potential solutions for reducing the carbon footprint, together with the relevant costs and benefits?

In addition to the three areas covered above, there are a number of existing flaws to the current approach which St Albans District Council applies to Harpenden parking. The parking bays are badly marked and inconsistently signposted, leading to understandable confusion amongst residents, visitors and workers in the town. Enforcement is infrequent and haphazard, which results in lost revenue to the Council, but this has not been identified as a shortcoming by the Council or quantified. There appears to be dated technology in use which is often out of action or just ineffective – again leading to lost revenue. Overall, taking all of the above points into account, the proposed change significantly jeopardises the social and economic well-being of the town, and has the potential to cause long term, structural damage to the community. I would urge you to reconsider alternative options and not to proceed with this policy where it is also likely to result in many unknown, unintended additional consequences.

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The proposed changes will increase pressure on the already congested residential streets close to the town centre. Unless enforcement is significantly increased, those that pay to park will be concerned by the apparent current lack of application of parking restrictions to commercial vehicles and single yellow line parking.

The proposed charges are so high for a very small town centre with limited shops. I drive into Harpenden several times a week in my lunch hour to buy a coffee and pop into a couple of shops. An extra £2.50 cost would be prohibitive.

I also drop my brother at his 45 min tennis lessons and wander round the shops or go to a cafe while he plays. If I had to pay £2.50 I would go home instead, therefore making 2 journeys instead of just 1 which would be less environmentally friendly.

The proposed cost and limitations of parking will have an enormous detrimental effect to the shops and other businesses in Harpenden town centre. If these proposals were to be implemented there would eventually be no "town centre" – just a series of empty shops and business premises.

The proposed parking charge will have significant detrimental impact on the local community. It will take a lot of trade away from the high street at a time when so many local businesses are already struggling to compete. It will also cause a lot of hassle and extra costs for local employees such as those working in schools and other organisations whose premises are in area affected.

The proposed parking charges are completely unacceptable.

The proposed parking charges will impact Harpenden town centre as people will not shop in the small amount of shops available and the charges with the ridiculously short free time suggested will also deter people from meeting friends for a coffee in the numerous coffee shop outlets in the town .

Police the parking properly so that people do not park all day on the streets which happens at present .

The proposed parking fees (any payment amount I object to however the actually suggested fee is ludicrous) will destroy local business trade and deter visitors from coming into the local area.

It's also very frustrating to have another stealth tax imposed on us. We pay enough tax already.

It's also unclear how the money generated from this will need invested. If Harpenden will generate this revenue, will we have oversight on budgetary spend?

The proposed parking fees will not create better access for residents to shops and business about town. It will ensure that people who don't have bicycles, or don't want their bicycle stolen, or who have prams, or young children, or mobility issues, will use their cars to drive out of town to retail parks, or further shop on line. Rather than come up with spurious reasons why parking fees will make Harpenden a better place for residents, just be honest that you need the funds.

The proposed parking measures will do nothing to ease congestion and improve accessibility for residents. The main issue is a lack of suitable parking and charging for what is available will do very little to address the root problem. Charges may put some off but most people are there with their cars because they need to be as the current congestion is already enough to put people off going into town with a car unnecessarily. The few that are put off by the parking charges will just park in the surrounding free streets creating further misery for residents.

Furthermore, these measures will be isolating for those residents who need their car to get around as they have some level of physical impairment that prevents them from undertaking active travel but is not enough to qualify for a blue badge. In addition, active travel, whilst it should be encouraged, is not a practical solution for many residents needing to access town services with their cars for specific reasons (e.g. a large supermarket shop / large or bulky items to bring home, going into town from the furthest out neighbourhoods with small children, etc.). Some essential activities (such as supermarket shopping) take more than the free 20 minutes being proposed so to say, as I have heard some councillors suggest, that residents will not be penalised for "popping out to the shops" is disingenuous as well.

If the council was serious about resolving the parking issues then there are much better ways to achieve this. For example, on weekdays the Bowers Way car parks and Lydekker car park should charge the same as the day rate at the station car park for anyone arriving before 10am, and then be free for anyone arriving after 10am. This will stop commuters parking there so that these spaces are kept available for those using town services. At weekends, all three car parks should be free as Lydekker is now. Currently, all three car parks are basically empty during periods when parking charges are enforced which is a waste of a vital community resource.

If the council insists that parking charges must be implemented, then at a minimum, all residents should be offered free parking permits to allow them to go about their business unhindered. The charges would then apply to visitors who are using the resources but not contributing via Harpenden Town Council taxes.

The proposed plans are not fit for purpose. They are short minded, naive and detrimental to the local community. If the local council wants to encourage the use of local shops they should make the shops accessible. If you introduce parking charges,

the local shops will not be accessible. Personally, I will no-longer shop in-person in Harpenden. I would shop elsewhere, including online and that is not beneficial to the community.

The range of shops in Harpenden (outside of shops with their own car park such as Waitrose) is limited and therefore quite often I will do quick stops to pick something up. Therefore, charging me everytime I do that would make me think again about going into Harpenden. There are already charging car parks (leisure centre, sainsburys and the station) and so having the facility to just do quick free visits is so helpful. The high street is struggling enough, this sort of decision is what will kill it off even further. Please think bigger picture.

The reasons given for the proposals are totally inadequate. Time restrictions already apply to these streets so the argument that the scheme will increase turnover of spaces is fallacious. The notion that the current situation is unfair to residents who have to subsidise parking services would be more acceptable if a proportionate reduction of our rates was included. Most residents already walk into the centre for leisure pursuits, but active travel is hopeless for bringing heavy shopping back home. The bus service is inadequate. The proposals will harm local businesses as people just won't bother to come in to use them; they will go to the big Savecentres instead.

This is purely a revenue generation initiative. It's not helping residents in any way.

The proposals do not lay out exactly how payment will be made. What provision will there be for people who do not have, or are unable to use smartphone apps for payment? There has to be alternative means of making payment otherwise the elderly and poor will be disenfranchised. Will you provide machines for making payment by cash and card? Will you guarantee to ensure that there is sufficient network coverage to enable mobile payments to be made? The proposals contain absolutely no information whatsoever to cover these important questions.

One of the nice things about living in Harpenden is free parking in the centre. When this is removed, people will just move out into near-by residential areas to park in, which will create annoyance to the residents impacted. There are a number of residents who are not disabled, but will struggle to walk a mile plus into town and back again; what provision is being made for them?

The removal of free on street parking will have a negative impact on local businesses and residents

The removal of free parking within the town centre is wholly unnecessary and restrictive on members of our community who rely on driving. As a new father it is difficult to do anything under 20 minutes with my daughter and the £2.50 fee is punishing for other families where this would be expensive. There is already a limited amount of free parking and removing the final places is embarrassing for the town.

The removal of the free parking for 1 hour will have a detrimental effect upon the Harpenden High Street shopping experience which will encourage shoppers to go elsewhere. Many people use Sainsburys and Marks and Spencers for food shops and make use of the free parking areas. Likewise for people coming into town from further reaches of Harpenden and outside of Harpenden for the small independent shops such as Cook, Timpsons, Hairdressers, cafes etc... If the ease and lack of expense disappears from coming into Harpenden many people will go elsewhere. Being a Harpenden resident I find I use Sainsburys in Harpenden a great deal but find occasionally when I need something not stocked in this smaller store, like eastern spices, I will cheerfully travel to Sainsburys in St. Albans or Luton where there is also free and easy parking. It would be very easy for me to switch to using these external stores if I now found I had to either keep a close eye on the time or pay £2.50 on a fiddly app or parking meter. Harpenden's shops do not have a great differentiator to draw people in to the Town apart from the ease of parking. Most of the shops can be found elsewhere in cheaper areas not so far away. This new policy could destroy the businesses in Town and leave many stores empty.

The scheme does not appear to have been properly thought through but seems like a 'finger in the air guess' to generate income.

If income is the driving issue, revenue could quickly be created by simply enforcing the current arrangements as one regularly sees vehicles parked for durations well in excess of the limits. I was appalled to be told by Councillors that they are aware it is happening and can understand the parking offenders choosing to pay a very rare fine as it is easier and much cheaper than complying!

The suggested increase for non-benefit receiving Seniors' Permits is outrageous and methods of justifying such an increase provided by Councillors have been based on totally unreasonable usage figures, I have not received any factual information regarding usage upon which the projections were made despite requesting same.

I believe that the suggestion that introduction of the scheme will reduce traffic and pollution caused by traffic circulating

looking for parking spaces as suggested by Councillors will not occur and indeed could be increased.
I therefore urge that the scheme be shelved and a full and proper assessment undertaken to determine a better way forward.

The scheme will hurt local traders and businesses and drive customers away from the town centre, it will be good for companies like Amazon that don't need additional revenue.

The running costs and implementation of the proposed parking scheme are money that would be taken away from the local population as an inefficient tax.

If the proposal goes ahead it will be so sad to see the decline of the town, please do not allow this, most people in Harpenden clearly do not want this proposal to go ahead and I haven't met anyone who wants it.

The scheme will drive people out of the Town Centre as it is unaffordable for people to make frequent short trips as they do now. It will severely impact the elderly (who have already had their parking passes removed) who will find it unaffordable and may find it difficult to use technology to pay. It will disadvantage parents of small children who rely on easy access to the shops. It will make Harpenden unaffordable for many people on small incomes. Usage patterns on the High St will change, with a decline in footfall which will seriously impact local businesses, particularly small independent retailers. Many local charities and societies will struggle as people cannot afford to continue to support or visit them, especially as it is likely to cost £5/visit to help them.

This proposal will negatively impact the old, the disadvantaged, parents of young children, local retailers (particularly independents), local charities and societies. It will contribute to the decline of Harpenden High St.

Harpenden is composed of two river valleys with hills on either side. The expected modal shift will be small, particularly as a large proportion of the population is over 65 and would struggle to cycle or climb hills.

It will not help the Council's budget gaps as money from parking cannot be used for other purposes. It will be costly to implement and enforce. It is unlikely to increase revenues substantially as there are many other local options to shop and people will drive further afield to escape the high costs.

This is a poorly thought through scheme. It is disappointing that alternative options for raising money have not been considered and different cost/benefit cases brought forward.

It is also disappointing that the Council has totally failed in its duty to inform the people of Harpenden of this significant change to how we live in the Town and use the Town Centre, and given such a short consultation period.

I do not think this scheme should be implemented.

The shops and businesses in Harpenden are already struggling with JoJo Baby being the latest to close , so it will just hairdressers and coffee shops soon especially if parking meters appear on the streets. We should be actively encouraging shoppers not penalising them with parking charges The council maybe short of money but introducing meters will only lead to a downward spiral of the town and less revenue flowing in .

The town is already full of car parks where we have to pay. There should be far more restricted free parking (Max 2 hours which allows people, especially older people/pensioners to do their business/shopping/etc.

This new measure will just put more pressure on roads like Holly Bush lane , Ambrose Lane, Douglas Road, etc as people will refuse to pay. I suspect strongly that smaller businesses will be affected by the decrease in footfall as a result of increased parking charges, I for one will now use Amazon to make purchases as they deliver for free and I will not have to go into town to collect from M&S or Waitrose where I will have to pay for parking. Not very good for business.

I'm sure you can think of better ways to raise money for council. This is just another example of you going for low hanging fruit and hoping to get away with it.

Disgraceful proposal!

The village centre is ruined now. A parking charge will end any business that relies on the short term visitor. Also why should you pay to pick up a prescription.it's unbelievable that anyone can think this is a good idea.

There are many empty shops in Harpenden. Small businesses will be severely disadvantaged if parking charges come in. I do not see the benefit it will create.

There are many reasons to oppose this scheme.

I wish to speak on behalf of the less mobile, those WITHOUT blue badges, (which includes many elderly residents) who require the use of their cars to enable them to get into town both for its facilities and their wellbeing; it will add expense and a considerable amount of hassle. Since the ability to be able to purchase a Senior Parking Permit was removed this additional cost WILL force many of them to stay at home more often, which is detrimental to their health and wellbeing and will have consequences as a result. For others who either cannot afford the cost, or on principle will not pay, it will mean shopping in places where the parking is free - this is not what anyone wants for either them or the town.

It feels like an ill-thought-out plan and a quick fix to help the Council's budget.

There is a danger of killing Harpenden High Street. I understand that finance is a major problem. However, I do not believe that this plan will raise funds. It will result in the closure of a number of shops in Harpenden and reduce the income from business rates. I have tried to find details of the proposed cost of installing machines, running the payment facility and staffing the wardens required. Please can you direct me to it?

Another way of raising money could be to reinstate the senior parking permit but charge more for it. Many of my friends can no longer renew their permits but would be happy to pay more. This would increase the footfall for local shops in Harpenden and St Albans rather than driving to out of town malls.

There are far too many cars in Harpenden. Perhaps we should consider charging any household that has more than 2 cars an additional fee for parking on the road

There is a large percentage of seniors living in Harpenden who have limited mobility and rely on their cars. Due to changes in technology, parking charges (along with other initiatives) require the use of smartphones and apps. A free 2 hour period for street parking would allow them to shop, eat and do errands (although, sadly, not banking). The high street needs footfall to help our local businesses survive.

There is a need to address parking however, the measures proposed are too extreme. There is clearly wriggle room to:

- ~Reduce the areas that need to have parking meters to Station Road and the High Street
- ~Cut the hours that the charges apply and exclude Sunday
- ~ Reduce the cost of the hourly parking rate
- ~ Increase the free waiting time

This is an issue that concerns many local residents, many of whom may stop voting Lib Dem, if changes and compromises are not considered

There is far too much traffic in the small town centre. I think reducing this would have a fantastic impact on both the environment but also the experience of going into town. Anyone who is just popping in is still able to park for free but the charge will hopefully stop people using their car for no reason.

There is little enough business for Harpenden High Street. Free parking allows people to access the shops easily and as an ageing resident I do not want to have more difficulties shopping in my older years. Sure limit the time spent but to charge fees will only lead to more charity shops and empty stores on the high street

There is no benefit to us nor our tenants to changing the existing car charging arrangements

There is no need for additional paid parking in Harpenden. By making the high street paid parking it will impact the high street shops by reducing footfall. Most outlets are against this proposal and it is totally unclear what the perceived benefits will be except as a revenue raising exercise. But if the impact is to reduce footfall then this will have a negative impact on business rates and so will have the opposite effect.

There is no need for change. The current parking restrictions work fine and provide balance between making the town centre accessible to people who need to drive into town and to enable local businesses to survive, while limiting the amount of time that people can park to a reasonable one - which allows them to do their shop and (in two hour spaces) to go to a restaurant. These proposals simply destroy that and are a clear money grab by the council, who seem not to care about the wants and needs of the people who live in Harpenden. These changes are simply unnecessary and have not been justified.

The town already lacks adequate parking and the council are apparently also planning to remove the Waitrose car park further limiting the available spaces. The council should be required fully to explain and justify its wider plans for Harpenden to demonstrate what long term consideration has been given to the needs of the people who live and work there for adequate amenities instead of more houses and trying to take more money from them. This is just an indirect tax.

There is no parking issue in Harpenden town centre. This is a money making racket by the council and should be stopped immediately. Please stop this nonsense.

There is no rationale to support this. Retail outlets need to be supported - as has been widely demonstrated additional parking charges are detrimental to this. Furthermore, there are no issues with regard to congestion or traffic flow, so no need to materially reduce vehicular access and parking.

There is no such thing as free parking - someone pays and many will be non-car owners. Currently it is very hard to find a parking on the street, therefore usage needs to be rationed. Research suggests there is little correlation between parking charges and spend with local retailers, as long as the level of charges is commensurate with the quality of the retail offering. It is people that need to be prioritised and the centre of Harpenden is not particularly welcoming to pedestrian or cyclists - there are constant streams of cars circling round and little space for people to walk. It was so much better when the access road was pedestrianised, I used to hang out more in town, meet friends, have a coffee, sit outside, browse. Since it was reopened to cars, quickly followed by getting rid of the food vans, the centre has been handed back over to motorists. We need to encourage people to leave their cars at home for environmental and health grounds. This may be the push needed. I also accept that the council needs to raise money - would this cover the parking attendants? I rarely see any these days which means people stay over the one hour limit.

However, it needs to be easy to use and easy for people who are not smart phone savvy. There needs to be one scheme covering all spaces. The station car park company is a nightmare - I've had nasty letters when I had proof of payment and you have to type in your details every time.

There is not enough social , health and educational infrastructure to support this development. In addition, the impact on already crowded area, and over priced housing is not in line with affordable housing.

There is nothing wrong with the existing arrangements. You are not solving a problem but merely raising money. I pay enough council tax to be able to park free in town if I so desire.

There is nothing wrong with the status quo, however reducing the permitted period of parking in certain locations to allow people to pop to the shops while retaining the longer term chargeable parking in the existing car parks might be a solution.

There is so little free parking in towns and local businesses suffer for it. People are more inclined to shop in free parking areas. I certainly visit Harpenden regularly as it's hassle free and cheap to park. Parking charges will adversely effect the local economy.

These changes will have a huge detrimental impact on the overall usability of our town, and destroy the independent businesses currently supported by the people of Harpenden.

These changes will not help struggling retailers and will only serve to off people calling into the town centre.

These charges are outrageous and will have a detrimental effect on our lovely high street shops. The local businesses depend on footfall though the town and it will affect everyone's decision to come to the high street rather than use online alternatives. As a council you should be supporting local businesses rather than trying to destroy them. It's so sad for our lovely community town.

These parking charges will kill the town which is already suffering from high rents for shopowners. It will send people out of town to retail parks with free parking or to more online shopping. The elderly, those who can't walk far and those with small children will be hugely penalised for wanting accessible short term parking to nip to the shops. It will mean spaces get hogged by those who can afford it or don't care about getting a ticket and those who really need the access and can't afford it will loose out. Turn some of the one hour spaces into 30 minutes fine, that will actually increase visits, but introducing charges will kill businesses - those who pop into the independent shops will stop coming because it isn't worth it, and it will disadvantage those who need it most. Hugely discriminatory and widening inequalities.

These proposals are disingenuous and will seriously damage the economic and social activity in Harpenden by imposing draconian parking charges. The 20 minutes free parking twice a day is completely unrealistic and shows not the slightest understanding of consumer behaviours. Glib statements about 'active travel' make no sense in the real world for a majority

of young or old, summer or winter. Harpenden CP charges are already excessively expensive money making schemes. Nothing but a political and money grabbing proposal.

These proposals are unnecessary. They will ruin the town, the shops will suffer as people will literally rush in to town get their shopping and leave. Particularly the small private shops will suffer and hospitalities. It will ruin the town and it will become a ghost town. It will be particularly difficult for older people and people who are struggling as it is with the cost of living. Apart from that what is the huge cost of implementing the ticket machines and everything else that goes with it. It will ruin our town centre.

These proposals will cause considerable harm to the High Street.

These proposed changes will discriminate against the less well-off, who may need to make more regular short visits to the shops. They will result in more free unrestricted street parking wherever this remains possible, affecting local traffic and safety, and, most importantly, they will reduce the trade of local shops in Harpenden, especially for the smaller outlets. People will be deterred from meeting and chatting with others by adding a half-hour visit to a local coffee shop or pub. This will increase isolation, and reduce community spirit. The nuisance of having to pay by mobile 'phone will deter me, as I do not have a smart phone capable of doing this. I will almost rearrange my shopping and take the bulk of my custom to Luton where there is ample free parking at Gipsy Lane and elsewhere outside the major shops. The recent introduction of the evening parking charge at the Bowers Way and Sainsbury car parks has, unsurprisingly, led to their remaining empty, while unrestricted yellow-line parking now clogs up the local roads. Harpenden has lost far too many shops and businesses already. Do we really need to reduce its attractiveness to business still further?

This act will impact local business and all residents. It is unfair we are charged for public parking.

This change will detract from the high street, hurting small local businesses who are already impacted by high rents and rates.

This change will kill our high street in Harpenden and as a retired person who enjoys shopping each day in person I cannot afford £5 per day. I will no longer be able to enjoy the ambiance of the shopping community so will resort to shopping online from an out of town store . The local shop keepers have enough competition as it is and this fee is extortionate.

At £5 for two hours it would cost £1300 a year to park to shop Mon- Fri so obviously foot fall in the high street is going to be significantly diminished. This plan is badly thought through at best. The long term outcome will mean the eventual demise of the high street which will have a detrimental impact on long term finance.

I strongly oppose this scheme.

This charge going to kill the town as we won't be able to do our daily shopping or even walk through the town as we do due to this charge and will start go shopping in other towns where parking is free. This suggestion will destroy harpenden shops

This charge is extortionate, grossly unjustified and unfair. Many of us are struggling with cost of living , mortgages etc and cannot afford these fees. Very unfair on those who live on the cheaper outskirts who have to drive to town more often. Also unfair on pensioners who cannot walk and have limited means. Terrible for local businesses. Such a bad idea.

This does nothing for the local shops. It is driving people away.

This feels like a wholly unnecessary introduction which will impact many people's day to day lives.

There are limited supermarkets / shops nearby and the need to pop into town and pick up items is there. This will put off people from shopping local and encourage even more to switch to online and high street deterioration.

This will particularly impact the elderly and parents with young children who need to drive rather than walk to town and will lose the convenience of pulling up outside of the shop / cafe with the financial barrier.

If funds are desperately needed then increase council tax.

This idea is completely ridiculous. This will be the kiss of death to the High Street, and turn Harpenden into another ghost town. So many high streets are full of charity shops, and empty premises, and this is a sure fire way to do the same in Harpenden. Many people come to Harpenden because we are one of the few towns which have some independent shops, and that is a rare thing. Introducing these parking charges will stop people visiting the High Street, and be a nail in the coffin of the businesses who are no doubt already struggling with high rent etc. This will result in businesses closing and people shopping online. It will also stop people popping down to pick up something from the local shops. There is not one aspect of

this which is a good idea, just another example of greed. Perhaps the council could turn their attention to the state of the roads, and the ridiculous over development of Harpenden.

This is a detriment to residents and businesses, particularly as no additional service is actually being provided, so this is a tax pure and simple

This is a direct attack upon the small, vital community shops and services in Harpenden. I have seen no problems with parking in the town even though I have lived here for more than 40 years and seen much change. People are already increasingly using home delivery and one now sees it at large stores like Waitrose. This is not viable for the Mahayana outlets such as hairdressers and gift stores and the last two surviving tobacconists and sweet shops. I believe that it will irretrievably change the town for the worse. Reduced shopping closures of outlets and the grim boarded shops @to let". This is a massive mistake and I can see and I have heard no financial justification for it other than the DC needs more money. This will in the medium and long term reduce income as businesses close and no business rates are paid. So short sighted and short termist!

This is a disgrace and outrage to the local businesses and residents of Harpenden and the surrounding areas. We should not have to pay to enjoy and use the high street and support all of our local businesses. The price of £2.50 is incredibly high and unjustifiable.

This is a disturbing development. We have just had 14 years of Tory austerity and cruelty, we've had Covid, and we've had a horrendous cost of living crisis with food bank use at an all time high. This adds yet another cost to residents trying to use local shops, cafes and amenities and will drive shoppers elsewhere.

How is it the issues with parking will once again fall to the consumer/residents. Why aren't the companies who control the local parking being told to reduce costs or provide better facilities (the station should have multistorey parking on at least one side). No, again it's the citizen footing the bill for the problem. Many of the parking issues in and around the town are caused by commuters who can't afford extortionate fees at the station, so use streets.

This plan will see less footfall in the town and cause local businesses to struggle and close. Currently we have an influx of clone high street shops alongside Turkish barbers (money laundering), hairdressers and coffee shops. That's not even mentioning the multiple units empty because small start ups can't afford the rates!!

Not content with killing Harpenden with poor development, large houses with poor parking and no affordable housing, you are now looking at a plan that will drive people away from our High Street and make starting/owning/running a local business even harder than you've already made it

The Lib Dems are meant to be better than Tories, this is a cash grab straight out of a Thatcher playbook and you should be ashamed. Personally, as someone who has always supported the Lib Dems, I'm disgusted. You are going to damage this town and turn it into a place where only chain shops exist which are used by the rich. This plays right into Tory hands.

Why don't you address the issue by providing better affordable parking rather than attack the pockets of the people.

This is a double whammy for senior citizens who have also recently lost the right to a paid parking permit.

It will not promote sustainable transport as my husband would have to make 2 trips, to drop me off then to pick me up. As a senior citizen, walking and cycling are not an option carrying shopping, and there is no public transport option.

I believe it will negatively impact our thriving Harpenden town centre as it will reduce footfall and make smaller businesses unviable.

This is a dreadful decision with little regard as to how this will impact the town, retailers and those of us who enjoy using out town. There are already plenty of empty units and more chains than independents and we do not want to the town to be further hampered by further parking charges. It is already extortionate to park (and some Of us have to use our cars) and this just makes it worse. This is a total money grab and short sighted. Support the businesses in the town instead

This is a gimmick to raise coffers as opposed to any environmental impact. If the Council were truly concerned with road usage, they would tackle the issue of the town being used as a main thoroughfare for commuters. No regard to economic impact has been made to the high Street and independents alike. Given that residents pay one of the highest council tax rates in the country it is astounding that families and those with young children will face further penalisation and become burdened by another tax hike. The solution is simple residents will go elsewhere and the town will diminish.

This is a good, balanced and fair offer to residents who may need a quick visit to the town centers and might be put off by a parking charge, while not overwhelming the area.

This is a ludicrous and objectionable proposal. It will have a severe adverse effect on local businesses. Moreover, it is highly regressive, since it will most severely affect those in the community who are already struggling to make ends meet. The bus services in Harpenden are sparse and unreliable, and so these parking charges, if put into effect, will exclude many residents from visiting the affected areas.

This is a ridiculous idea, The max time allowed is currently 1 hour, which is a reasonable amount of time to carry out your needs, Charging £2.50 for an hour for parking is extortionate, By the time you have found somewhere to park, & walk to the shop, get

the item you want, then back to your car is near on impossible, especially for the older generation with walking difficulties. It will have a big impact on the high street.

Rather than charge for these spaces, make the car parks cheaper to encourage longer stays & free on a Sunday

This is a terrible idea. If it reduces the demand for parking it will only do so by deterring people from using local shops- why go to the high street and pay a £2.50 surcharge and the hassle of paying (installing an app, finding change, queueing at a ticket machine), when most things can be bought online delivered next day for free? This is a VERY BAD idea.

This is a terrible idea. With two young children it will reduce how often we will go down to the town centre and reduce the amount of money we will spend locally. Seems very short sighted, especially given how much businesses are already charged through business rates and with cost pressures etc.

This is a terrible proposal with the outcome being that virtually no one will shop or go into Harpenden.

I walk as much as possible but sometimes I need to bring back heavy shopping or similar so need to drive and park. It will be cheaper to go to an out of town shop.

Many people are unable to walk into town due to mobility, time constraints or distance. Harpenden covers a large area and those at the outskirts cannot be expected to walk and they will be unfairly penalised.

Businesses in Harpenden will obviously suffer as there will be lower footfall and they struggle as it is with exorbitant rents. It will particularly hit the smaller independent shops that benefit from passing trade as this will decrease.

This will so obviously kill Harpenden- I cannot think of any benefit to the population. There will NOT be less traffic as everyone will be in a car driving through to get to a shop etc with free parking. Additionally people will switch to more online ordering with items being posted to them rather than collecting from local pick up shops / locations and this will also generate more delivery vans and more traffic.

My children were at school in the high street and we occasionally had to drive to collect them and we then socialised by going for coffee etc after school- this sort of spontaneous activity will not happen as people will be clock watching all the time which is not good for the mental health of children or adults.

I volunteer in a local community coffee shop and we have a lot of older people who rely on their visits to the cafe as a way of socialising and meeting with others. They need to drive as cannot walk far but do not qualify for blue badges. They cannot afford the additional cost of parking fees let alone alternative taxi fares. This proposal would have a profound effect on the

mental health of these people (of which there is an increasing number).

the proposal states you are only allowing 20 mins free which is not long enough for anything – I regularly queue in the post office for longer than that.

People who do drive will still look for free spaces by parking further out in the residential areas which will bring chaos to roads outside the centre.

I imagine the cost of employing traffic wardens to enforce the parking will also be considerable which is a poor spend of council money.

This is a poorly thought through proposal with complete disregard for the local population and businesses. It brings no tangible benefit and I suspect is driven purely by a wish to raise money in the short term. I wholly object to it.

This is a terrible short sighted idea. In theory it may increase income in the short term for SACDC but not the people and businesses in and around Harpenden High Street. If you want to destroy the businesses and massively increase the number of empty buildings this is an excellent way to do it. There will be a loss of business rates and a subsequent loss of income for SACDC. The vibrant High Street will gradually die. The residents, those coming into the town to shop and socialise, and passing trade will have to go elsewhere.

I assume there will be more unsightly street furniture and signage which will detract from the pleasant nature of the town.

I am totally opposed to this proposal.

This is a thoroughly ill advised policy that will slowly (or perhaps quite quickly) kill off our vibrant Harpenden High Street. Motorists will simply shop elsewhere, causing local traders to close down thus reducing revenue for the Council. Totally self defeating.

This is a very poorly thought through plan. 20 minutes shopping trips are not realistic and discriminate against elderly residents who would find that time frame very difficult to meet. It is likely to put intense pressure on car park spaces which are already very limited with little spare capacity. This plan is likely to cause major problems for retailers who are under intense pressure to survive. As for active travel you need bus services and for many shopping trips you need a car boot to take home heavy shopping.

This is a wholly misguided proposal. It will result in additional congestion, noise and pollution as drivers seek the limited amount of free parking and will result in the inconveniencing of residents in nearby residential streets as vehicles which were previously parked in a commercial area are driven to residential areas instead. It will damage the viability of commercial premises on and adjacent to the High Street. I question whether it will even achieve the objective of raising additional funding, given the difficulty in enforcing 20 minute parking windows.

Elderly and handicapped residents and those without smart phones would be discriminated against in the event that app-based payments are used.

Claiming that this policy will encourage greater use of cycling and walking is entirely disingenuous. The district has an exceptionally high rate of cycle theft and a large proportion of the population are not able to use bicycles or walk long distances. They will continue to use their cars and will either park in residential areas or, even worse, rely on internet shopping and out of town shopping centres.

Finally, I question the legality of this consultation process given the public comments made by the Leader of the Council to the effect that the proposed changes will be made, notwithstanding the consultation.

This is an appalling proposal which will lead to the death of an amazing High Street. I simply won't be able to afford to pop into town. You will ruin this town.

This is an awful idea seeming only to benefit the coffers of the Council. And, after the expense of setting up and running the scheme, likely to benefit them very little at the expense of others:

Firstly, it will kill the high street. Many businesses will suffer and the lively vibe and character of the town will become more subdued.

Secondly, raising money for the council will be at the expense of the residents it is meant to serve. And much of that cost to residents will be lost to those running the scheme, with only a proportion being available for council spending. It is an inefficient way to raise funds.

Thirdly, the amenities of Harpenden will be lost to those that cannot afford the parking fees.

Fourthly, the already stretched parking capacity will be lost because some that can afford it will park for two hours rather than just one.

Fifthly, parking will just move to streets close to the town centre – North, South, East and West. And, for example, pick up time at St Dom's, already a dangerous event, will become chaotic.

This is an idiotic idea and I have not been able to find the reason it is being proposed. I have read in the HertsAd that these charges 'will benefit the community as a whole by promoting active travel and discouraging people from parking on the street longer than they need' (A quote from Cllr Helen Campbell). I assume she doesn't live in Harpenden. I don't know what is meant by 'active travel' but I assume it means the council sees its role as nudging the residents of Harpenden to walk and cycle more. Conversely, I see the council's role as actually providing services to the residents and businesses. These charges will obviously impact the revenue of the retail businesses along the High Street. I wonder if the councillors have any idea how hard it is to run a small business. I suspect not. The effect of the charges will be to make it highly difficult for residents who don't live within a comfortable walking distance of the High Street (I am one) to pop in to the High Street shops.

Twenty minutes is not long enough, for example, to pop in to Threads, Boots & WH Smith, and there are not enough parking places in the existing car parks to compensate for the loss of the High Street spaces. Unlike many small towns, Harpenden still has a heart and a thriving community. The effect of these charges on the High Street shops will inevitably reduce that feeling of community. At the moment, things work. The St Albans council seem bent on ruining that. One can only assume that this is a council income raising measure. I have no idea whether the administration of the scheme will enable a profit to be made. If income forecasts have been made based on the current usage of the High Street parking places, then they should be heavily reduced based on a realistic assessment of the future heavily reduced usage with these charges in place. It is also not apparent how the charges will be raised. Will it be by an app only for example? That would exclude large numbers of older people, of whom there are many in Harpenden. Will people have to queue up to use a machine which takes card payments? I haven't met a single resident who thinks this is a good idea. It looks like it's councillors imposing their own views.

This is an ill conceived, and unresearched knee jerk reaction to provide revenue at the expense of the people of Harpenden. It is aimed yet again at the older generation and mirrors the scrapping of the senior citizen parking permit. The simple fact is that older people need support in accessing services in the town in which they live. Many of us have age related mobility issues that prevent us from long walks or cycles to town. The whole atmosphere of the town/village will change when one can no longer "pop into town" to pick up some shopping, visit the library, the chemist, the doctor or the dentist – things which older people do more of – without paying a tax to park – because that is what this proposal is. The 20 minute free period is in no way adequate for those of us with some mobility issues that are not severe enough to qualify for a Blue disabled badge. These proposals will destroy the social fabric of our town. The lines on the map do not superficially seem very extensive but are entirely disingenuous because they do not cover all the parking zones already in place where parking is already prohibited for most residents. It is clear that without a steady footfall of customers many shops in the High Street are likely to close. I would think it likely that even the bigger stores like Sainsburys or Boots are in danger of closure as older shoppers are more likely to drive to out of town stores rather than pay £5.00 to park from between 1 and 2 hours. It is also older people who will struggle with pay by phone systems that will no doubt be used to collect the tax. Several Councilors have spoken about the current system being unsustainable – but frankly I cannot see why that is the case and they present no evidence to

explain why they think so. It is likely that the new Labour administration will lift the cap on council tax and most people would I am sure pay a little more on that bill to retain the current parking regime.

This is clearly a revenue raising proposal. Local businesses will clearly suffer as they have loudly and clearly said but whose views have been ignored. 20 minutes free parking seems entirely arbitrary . The increase to £2.50 per hour is too much and will significantly impact the bustling and enjoyable centre of Harpenden. Some locals do go to town more than once a day. Dropping children at school and doing a shop or having a haircut or meeting up with friends for a coffee. All of these events will end to the detriment of the locality and I believe will simply mean a decline in a thriving town centre. The irony being that the council will ultimately lose income by losing business rates as shops and other outlets close. Bear in mind the recent bank closures and the number of other properties to let and thus will only get worse.

This is commercially and morally wrong, the Harpenden high street is struggling more and more, stand alone business is being forced out we rely on "passing " and "pop in" trade these parking restrictions kill this. The less able residents need non restrictive parking why should there be any charges? An election canvasser blamed everyone but the council stating that we are almost bankrupt which is not acceptable if you are not competent enough to control the budget you should not be in charge of it. We will now be trying to park in the already full car parks or more likely you will see the migration of people who have to visit or work in Harpenden to the residential streets out of the "robbery zone" congesting these streets. In a democratic society where we elect our councillors how can such a fundamental decision be taken and applied (using our funds) without any consultation with the people that it will affect?

This is going to make life more difficult and expensive and will damage local businesses.

This is just another nail in the coffin for the town centre.

This is not a good strategy for local residents and businesses.

This is purely a 'money grab' by the council. Introducing parking charges in any or all of these locations will dissuade people from shopping at the local shops and push them to out of town retail areas where there are no charges. Why change the present system when it 'ain't broke'!! People complain about the number of cars and lack of parking spaces, but underlying, it is basically self regulating. If the residents, businesses and council want to keep and encourage the local town facilities, parking should not place a further (big) strain on residents daily expenditure. Furthermore, the introduction of parking charges will only push more parking into quiet residential streets degrading the neighbourhoods. If you want to deter unsocial 'just for a minute' parking you should be looking at making more of the present parking 'free'. I don't think that those making this proposal actually live in the real world, but where the money from the parking scheme magically brings great amounts into the council coffers, but, oh dear, we seem to have decimated and killed off the towns!!

I totally object to these proposals!!

This is the most ludicrous proposal, which will have such a huge negative effect on our town. I have lived in Harpenden my whole life and the accessibility of the high street is SO important for all residents of all ages and needs.

Charges for parking will stop people just popping into town to go to the shops, post a letter, grab a coffee, pick up the daily news paper, get a take away, go to the pharmacy, opticians, doctors, dentists bank.....basically visit all the local businesses which make our town so great and are essential for daily life.

It will also have a more significant effect on the elderly community who need to drive, as they can not walk into town. Who go to town to socialise, get out the house (for their mental health) and buy their daily essentials. If they can not afford to park this will have a huge detrimental effect on people's lives. And MANY residents can NOT afford to park!!!!

Finally if this proposal goes ahead it will kill the local businesses which make our town so special as it will make all visits to town more costly and inconvenient with the hassle of having to pay for parking. Charges will push residents to find another solution than visiting town and supporting the local area and businesses!

This is utter madness. I don't use Sainsbury's in Harpenden now because of the parking charge and will not use any where they are introduced. You will just ruin vibrant Harpenden.

Clearly our Liberal councillors don't want to do the job for much longer

This is very harmful proposal for the local economy

This parking action in Harpenden will kill the local shops. 20 mins free is not sufficient to 'pop' into shops, so an extra tax (£2.50 is not a trivial amount) is being added to every visit which will discourage people from visiting. Many people (the old, the infirm, people with young children) have no option but to drive into town – if they can't park they will go elsewhere. The town will die and the hoped for revenues will not accrue because the council are being greedy,

This plan will discourage people from shopping in Harpenden. As a resident from a neighbouring village you will be more likely to shop somewhere with free parking.

It will also naturally mean people wanting to park for free will use the closest free spaces – which I am sure local residents are not pleased about.

Seems the only reason to bring in this policy is as a way to generate revenue.

This plan will have a detrimental effect on the town.

If people want to support local businesses and run their errands, they will need more than 20 minutes free parking to do so. The Post Office queue itself can be time consuming.

Parking is hard enough as it is without these additional constraints.

The community will not benefit in anyway.

Our shops and businesses struggle to balance high rents etc, reducing footfall will be another blow that you have to power to stop.

This proposal breaches the local authority public duty of the Equality Act 2010 by discriminating on grounds of age (older people who are more reliant on parking in the town centre), those with disabilities but without blue badges which are notoriously difficult to obtain, women who are primary care givers for small children who need to attend extra curricular activities in the town centre.

This proposal does not make sense – and the purported money that needs to be raised is far lower than the scheme would raise – IF residents comply with it (many I know do not intend to) and IF it is policed properly (what is the cost of doing this – more jobs for the boys?!) The figures do not make sense and clearly SADC is not being honest or transparent in its proposals. Businesses will not survive – employees will not be able to park and residents will shop elsewhere – as many already do – me included who used to, but no longer visit St Albans. Harpenden will also not attract visitors from outside either. The charge is far too high – and an hour is not long enough for older ladies to park / visit their hair dresser (of which there happen to be quite a few in Harpenden – some of which will now be at risk of closure) and get back to their car. It is a pea brained scheme – using a cooker cutter approach – that will initiate the end of the high street / retail sector in Harpenden, put more traffic on the road to out of town areas and alienate many who are unable to use a smart phone. What due diligence has been done to study how the high street is currently used – and by whom? And finally, if the scheme does go ahead, how will you justify the free parking spaces in Amenbury Lane for leisure centre staff – when retail sector staff, on minimum wage will have to pay over £100 per week just to go to work – which will be simply unaffordable for many. If SADC is to have any credibility, rules have to be fair and consistent.

This proposal has no benefits at all.

1. It will reduce trade for the local shops because people will be less likely to visit and park.
2. It will be a further cost and inconvenience to residents.
3. It will cause a loss to the Harpenden shops, business and residents.

This proposal is atrocious, our high street will become a ghost town and all the shops will close

This proposal is disgraceful. The council have not considered that oldies go into Harpenden every day. At £5 for two hours parking that is £30 per week. ,£1500 per year. And no seniors permit if not on benefits. It is we not on benefits who spend money in the shops and cafes. Implement this crazy policy and we go in less. Shops and cafes suffer in revenue loss and we oldies over 80 isolate in our houses. Well done Libs. Your community inclusivity causes a hollow laugh as you shoot yourselves in both feet. Only consolation is that at the next election you will be kicked out. The proposed access permit at £190 may assuage me but will not help those just above the benefit cusp who have this and TV licences to pay meaning some not on benefits will be worse off than those that are. For heavens sake rethink this stupid policy.

This proposal is so detrimental to the shops and businesses in central Harpenden. The High Street is struggling as it is – this proposal will only exacerbate their problems by putting people off coming to shop in central Harpenden.

This proposal makes visits to Harpenden prohibitively expensive for many, which will in turn have an impact on retailers.

This proposal spells disaster for Harpenden High Street. I for one will surely reduce my use of Harpenden businesses if the proposed parking charges are implemented. Shopping can be done online, Gypsy Lane, London Colney etc. I operate on a tight budget, and genuinely believe that these charges will see me shop elsewhere. I already often find parking in streets away from the centre when the town is busy. The charges will push more people to park in those streets, until available parking is too far away to be practical. Residents will be campaigning for yellow lines in their streets, and you will be swapping one problem for another.

I already use a bicycle at times. I do not use it if I will have to leave it for any length of time due to the very real risk of theft. A friend had her padlocked bicycle stolen from opposite the library, in the middle of the day!!

I often shop in town, or meet a friend for coffee, before travelling to visit my mother in a nursing home in Hemel. Onward journeys must be common. Use of a bicycle, or walking, is not practical in such circumstances.

I grew up in Harpenden, and returned to Harpenden after ten years away. This proposal makes me fear for its future.

One further point, or more accurately an observation, is that the proposal is far from equitable, as it penalises the less well-off, whose homes are generally further from the centre and for whom walking into town is time-consuming/impractical. It also penalises the elderly, the disabled, those with small children and the sick. Our beautiful town will lose its character, its thriving centre, it's "buzz." It will cease to be a wonderful place to live for all residents.

Please save the character of our town by withdrawing this proposal.

This proposal will be devastating for Harpenden. Old people with no smart phone will not be able to pay. 20 minutes is totally inadequate for them or anyone else to do anything as the elderly walk slowly. Volunteers in the charity shops and cafes will stop their work, and we already pay in the car parks an amount more than any other town I know. Money collected from car parking can not be used for just anything the council likes – court precedent. The council will kill this town if their parking plans go ahead and they will be worse off because the shops will close as very few will want to pay.

This proposal will cost more than it will bring in revenue and will ruin the appearance of the streets, cause restriction of pavements and kill off the high street for good. Just look at the half empty car park at Sainsbury's in Harpenden since you increased fees, and at Waitrose car park that is free but always packed. You will already lose a fortune by stopping the Senior Parking scheme as they will not pay for parking, and will go to out of town to supermarkets instead such as Tesco in Hatfield. Co-op in Southdown must be delighted with their free parking. The very fact that you are losing £1.5 million just shows that you need to reevaluate your parking strategy and welcome back people to the High Street rather than try to get money out of them. You have already lost the seniors.

This proposal will deter people from going to Harpenden and damage local businesses.

It is pure insanity to even contemplate such a moronic policy.

But given that the Lib Dem's already tax children playing football at Harpenden colts this does not surprise me. St Albans council seems determined to destroy Harpenden, they've already targeted children and they are after local businesses. They clearly have no shame.

This proposal will discourage residents from visiting the town centre and spend money. It will therefore have a fundamental and detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre. There are already a number of vacant shops in the town centre, so it obvious that this proposal will make matters worse. However, it is clear the Council does not care about local business and the viability of the town centre for some very strange reason.

This proposal will eventually kill off Harpenden shops.

This proposal will have a disastrous effect on residents and businesses living in Harpenden and the surrounding areas. It will discourage many people (including myself) from going into Harpenden for shopping and leisure activities as 20 minutes is ridiculously short length of time to do anything at all. It is prohibitive and will undoubtedly result in further local businesses leaving the town as they are already crippled by excessive rents so any decline in customers will have a hugely negative if not fatal effect. There are already paying sufficient pay carparks for long term parking and it is vital to preserve sufficient free short term parking spaces on Harpenden's roads. The minimum length of time should be 1 hour or preferably 2 hours as currently so that people are not discouraged from coming to Harpenden!

This proposal will have a HUGE detrimental effect on the High Street in general and my business.

My customers have told me personally that they will drive to retail parks and garden centres to have coffee and socialise rather than being forced to pay for parking.

This decrease in footfall will cause an inevitable decrease in revenue to myself and all the other retailers in Harpenden which will in turn result in more closures and therefore empty units. Harpenden Village, as it currently stands, will be destroyed.

This proposal will have detrimental affect on Harpenden shops and effect people attending doctors or other medical practitioners..This is a poorly thought out proposal and seems a fair accompli without adequate prior consultation

This proposal will kill Harpenden as a shopping centre. I personally when my senior Citizens 2 hour parking permit expires next March will go elsewhere such as Welwyn Garden City where John Lewis is situated and the car park charges far more reasonable than what you are proposing. I'm sure the actual car parks in Harpenden and St Albans will also increase in line way above inflation as they have done in the past few years. I feel very sorry for both the Harpenden and St Albans shop keepers if this proposal does go ahead.

This proposal will kill the High Street which used to be thriving, lead to more empty shops and restaurants. I am reliant on my daughter for errands and shopping, if she has to pay for parking she will go elsewhere where parking is free. What about going to the doctors, this cannot be done in 20mins, therefore this will also be a tax on those of us who are at a surgery without parking. Waiting for a prescription takes longer than 20mins, these parking charges are also a tax on those with medical needs. The only parking that will be free in Harpenden will be Waitrose which is constantly at capacity, this will only get worse and cause long queues in the area, causing chaos and more pollution from idyling vehicles. This is a tax on Harpenden residents which will mean the closure of the few independent businesses we have left changing the character of the town forever. Those with money already don't shop in the town this will affect the vulnerable members of our community who are reliant on local services the most.

This proposal will ruin the town. You have taken away the senior citizens parking pass, as if that wasn't enough, you have more than doubled the cost of car parks which makes shopping, visiting the doctor or dentist etc very expensive. Many volunteers help in Charity shops, Church coffee shops, toddler groups, the library etc., how can they afford to do this in the future. Not to mention the elderly who can't drag heavy shopping back up the hills. Now you want to charge for what little onstreet parking there is. People will shop elsewhere and the town will be ruined. Is this what you want??

This proposal will seriously damage the levels of activity in Harpenden. For many residents living away from the centre, active travel arrangements are just not practical if going food shopping 2-3 times per week. The current parking arrangement allows a little time to meet others for coffee etc and to browse in other outlets; all will suffer if free parking is limited to 20 mins. Furthermore there will be added cost of enforcement. In reality, this proposal will do little to support a green agenda, will damage the productivity and social amenity of Harpenden and will create additional cost if properly enforced.

This proposal will stop me from using Harpenden town centre for my shopping needs. I regularly (at least 3 times a week) stop in Harpenden town centre to visit numerous shops/service outlets. If your proposal is accepted I will stop at other locations on my way home. I am strongly opposed to what I see as a money generating scheme. It is not something that will benefit residents!

I voted Lib Dem but will certainly not in future if this goes through

This proposed change to charged parking will absolutely kill off the retail opportunities in Harpenden which will thereon have a negative impact on the community. It will also increase car usage as there will be an increase in people getting dropped off to do their shopping whilst the driver circles round Harpenden until the shopping is complete to avoid paying proposed parking fees. This will have a negative impact on the environment.

This proposed measure will severely damage the shops, restaurants and other businesses in the town, which are likely to close and lead to a reduced business income from the town. Many people who live in the villages will not bother to use Harpenden for shopping. I know of at least one person who volunteers in a charity shop in the town, who would not be willing to pay to park; this is likely to be a view shared by many others. It takes no account of the high proportion of the town's population who are older and are not suddenly going to be able to walk, or bicycle to the shops or carry home heavy shopping. Older people are already confused with parking metres which often do not work. There would be an extra impact on the elderly, especially those not having smart phones to pay with, or who are unhappy to have payment information programmed into their smart phone. I am a retired barrister, do not forget the reported case of *Attfield v London Borough of Barnet*, where a High Court judge ruled that a council cannot use its powers to charge local residents for parking in order to raise surplus revenue for other purposes. 20 minutes free parking is simply not good enough, have you tried waiting in a queue in the post office or in the one remaining bank in the high street! Over 6000 people have already signed the petition

against this proposal. If the matter proceeds, rest assured the Liberal Democrats will lose their jobs and no doubt will be engaged more productively as parking attendants!

This scheme is totally misconceived and will hurt everyone in Harpenden.

Firstly it will hurt the residents, particularly the old and infirm who cannot "hop on their bikes" or walk into town - not all old people have blue badges! The cost is prohibitive - not everyone who lives in Harpenden is rich!

Secondly it will hurt the retailers - for all the reasons above. Is it the aim of the district council to kill off Harpenden town centre?

On the political front, Harpenden voted in a Lib Dem town council. If the proposals go through you will lose many seats on both the town and district councils next May - is this really what you want?

This scheme will deter me from visiting local shops and I will inevitably resort to shopping online. It will be a shame to see the high street suffer as a result of local independent businesses closing down.

This seems like an poorly thought-through money-grab, which will affect those who need it most and can afford it least - the elderly, those with mobility issues, and those with young children, especially those who live furthest from town and have no choice but to drive and park. I am unable to find any documents detailing the proposed scheme other than the details of the charges listed on this website. How much will it cost to change all the signage, pay a 3rd party to run the payment scheme and employ enough parking attendants to actually enforce it compared to how much it is expected to make? Is that why the charges are so ridiculously high, at £5 for 2 hours? Will pay and display machine be installed or will this be pay by phone? If the latter, what provisions will be in place for those with accessibility issues, I know older people who don't own a mobile phone and don't have the internet at home. Perhaps the idea is that more people will use the car parks there's no free 20-mins in the car parks why not?) and in reality it will end up pushing more cars into the surrounding residential streets where parking is still free - carlton road, Stewart Road, Rothamsted Ave, St Nicholas Ave, Southdown road etc. making these streets even busier and more difficult to navigate. Or people will choose to drive elsewhere out of town to shop, or shop

online more, impacting a high street already battling with extortionate rents and business rates. You only have to look at the units that have been sitting empty for months to see things are not good. It will also affect local businesses that run classes and groups in the various halls in town. Adding an additional £5 pounds to the weekly cost of a group or class could make the cost unviable for many, but for those with very young children at home these groups can be a lifeline.

This seems to be merely a money making grab. Local businesses will suffer as a result. Please rethink this

This should be rejected because the premise that overall income will be increased in future with this change is faulty. Initially income will be increased but in the long term this will cause the closure of shops and businesses with the loss of rents and tax. This will not benefit anyone but will cause the further decline of the high street which is already visibly declining.

The cost of the existing parking is somewhat arbitrary because the street spaces already exist and money cannot be generated by using the space for other, charged, purposes. Most of the cost of parking is then because of the regulation of time. A case can be made for relaxing the regulation and monitoring of the parking times as this will reduce costs.

The result of the changes proposed is going to be an increase in the cost of parking all of which is borne by the motorist. This does not decrease the tax burden to the individual.

This utterly outrageous to charge this for people who help and support the local school and the business community. You should be ashamed of yourselves – profiteering to waste money elsewhere.

This whole proposal is shortsighted and will damage the financial viability of the high street shops which we should be supporting not creating impediments for us to shop at. Please be more mindful of the community. There are a large number of residents who very strongly disagree with the spirit and the substance of this proposal.

This will accelerate the demise of the high street as people will go to out of town centres where they can park for free. This will increase car use, not reduce it.

This will be a massive deterrent to stop using the local shops and therefore disrupt the town's amenities.

This will be damaging for local businesses and really affect quality of life for residents. It is a major bonus to the town currently that St Albans does not have and so keeps people staying local. It feels greedy to charge when there are so many other ways to collect money for local council use.

This will be damaging to the high street shops in Harpenden and parking restrictions are not required. It's a money grabbing exercise by the lib dems in st albans council

This will be detrimental to my use of local businesses. The ability to park freely on the high street and use local shops means I do the majority of my shopping Harpenden. If I have to pay to pop to the shops then I would probably use a shop elsewhere. Harpenden has a vibrant high street that is ann asset to Harpenden.

This will cause problems as we have school pick up in town and often visit the town centre, so would think twice about going if we are now charged for basic parking. I believe me it will impact shops business too as this causes people to stay away

This will damage local businesses where retailers are already struggling. Lots of shops have closed in last few years. Please consider at least 1 hour free as 20 minutes does not allow for enough time to food shop in particular.

This will damage the economy of the shops in Harpenden there are many small businesses and shopping local will be affected

This will definitely put people like me off visiting the local shops.

This will destroy our high street by deterring many people from using the shops and amenities there. 20 minutes free dues not give enough time for many people to get essentials, definitely no time to browse. Even picking up from school can take longer than 20 mins meaning parents will need to pay daily to collect from the two central schools. It is very disappointing that so little consideration is being given to the businesses in the centre of town who rely on people popping in and who maybe cannot afford to spend that amount of money on parking every time. They will just end up travelling out of town meaning our lovely high street community will be destroyed.

This will destroy the wonderful culture of town. Having easy access makes everyone much more likely to come in and enjoy a coffee or a meal. This is a terrible idea for both local businesses and resident.

This will deter people from visiting Harpenden, affect profitiability of shops, blight the street landscape in conservation areas with yet more signs/machines, and disproportionally affect the poor and elderly.

This will devastate local businesses. It's a big part of living here; being able to nip to the shops and help keep our high street alive by spending locally. Won't this also push parking issues further out of town into the residential areas? Concerns too about the extra street furniture. Wrong on all levels.

This will directly impact the Harpenden economy, discouraging the easy use of the local shops and amenities. That would then adversely affect the residents and the town itself. I also don't remember seeing any public consultation?

This will discourage people visiting the high street, thereby reducing the business for the shops and leading to more closures. People will either go elsewhere where there is free parking – such as Southdown or Gipsy Lane, or they will shop more online. There are also a lot of elderly residents in Harpenden that won't be able to walk the distance to the shops.

This will further decimate the town centres. We should be embracing visitors. Other areas have first 30mins / 1 hour free. I recently had to go to London, parked my car in a Harpenden car park, because I wasn't sure I could be back within 6 hours, it cost me over £16 for parking!!! That's shocking!! I'm avoiding shopping in the supermarkets in Harpenden now, and choose to go where the parking is free or associated with using the shop I'm using. If you don't want to create a ghost town, please stop this now. I'd rather have my council taxes increased. Shops are struggling, you will decrease their trade through this severe policy. Try 1 hour free for 6 months, then charge after that and see how that works out. Where's the research for this? Have you done street side interviews to find out the strength of feeling? I know finances are stretched, but this is not the answer if you want a healthy high street employing staff and bringing business into the town.

This will further result in the decline of the high street

This will have a detrimental effect on local shops, businesses, hospitality, doctors surgeries, schools and the general feel of our vibrant High Street. 20 mins 2 x per day is a bad idea as this will further encourage people to park up, rush to supermarket or school pick up and not be able to potter to other local shops and businesses. It will produce chaos at busy times. Also with parents rushing off instead of conversing with other parents or teachers. This will be a big consideration for schools in town centre when parents will reconsider choice of school and feel it's easier to go further out of town. 20 mins is not even long enough to go to the doctors, pick up a prescription, change a library book. Older residents in our town will find this very difficult to deal with Apps on phone to pay and will really discourage them. Such a shame as many of our older residents come into Harpenden to enjoy meeting up with friends.

Of course, like myself who is lucky to live near to the High street, people should be encouraged to walk to the shops and children to walk to school. But the reality is that lots of people who drive to the supermarket and then go to other shops, will just not do that anymore. People who can walk with their shopping already do so.

SADC know about the negative impact parking charges have had in St Albans. Harpenden should not be ruined at the expense of their budget.

Having been born, raised and educated in Harpenden I am incredibly worried about the impact of this proposal on our lovely town

This will have a detrimental impact on the small businesses on the high street, which in turn will have a detrimental impact on the wider community.

This will have a detrimental impact on your council finances. People will shop elsewhere and the 'High Street' will suffer lower footfall. Consequently, shops will struggle and may fail. Business Rates Revenue will suffer with empty/unleased buildings of which there are already a few.

The Council should be encouraging local business. Free parking facilitates this. Paid for Parking will discourage people from shopping locally and send them to Retail Parks and the like with Free Parking.

Short sighted and unnecessary. Not wanted.

The council serves it's voters. Listen to them.

This will have a detrimental impact to an already fragile retail high street. Many of the parking bays are free for 1 hour allowing for good turnover if potential buyers.

Harpenden is still a village, this is simply a money grab that will be detrimental to its residents- who ultimately you serve.

This will have a devastating impact on local businesses. I will use the Harpenden shops and businesses far less as a result of this. A better plan to raise money would be to issue parking fines to cars parked in haphazard ways, usually on Sundays on yellow lines, in Harpenden. The Sunday parking causes a dangerous hazard.

This will have a huge detrimental impact on the local community and economy (notably independent retailers). Many local residents are unable to walk or cycle to the town. This includes disabled, young parents, elderly. There are already (expensive) parking slots. If one is attending a medical/dental appointment, 20 minutes free parking is inadequate and so will make attending essential health appointments prohibitive to many.

This will have a hugely detrimental effect on local businesses and will deter people from supporting Harpenden's local shops, or it will push motorists into residential streets to park. It would be better to properly enforce existing parking restrictions.

This will have a negative effect on all businesses in Harpenden High Street with loss of trade and footfall. People will elect to drive further afield with free and easy parking. A very short sighted plan with no regard for local residents and businesses.

We never go to St Albans as the parking is so bad – are you trying to do the same whitewash with Harpenden with a couldn't care less attitude to the residents and businesses?

This will have a negative effect on our community hurting business and shopping options for older people. There has never been a problem in the past from a resident of 54 years who has seen the expansion of Harpenden. I am at a loss to understand your reasoning.

This will have a negative impact on the town businesses and residents

This will have a severely detrimental effect on local businesses. You can't get anything done in 20 minutes – so people will go elsewhere where they can get free/cheaper parking. It's clearly a money making scheme for the council but one that will put people out of business.

This will have a very detrimental affect on Harpenden where we have lived for more than 40 years. There has already been a reduction in the number of senior citizens in the town centre since the senior parking licences (paid for) were removed. I have spoken to a number of seniors who are restricting their visits. This has long term social disadvantages. Making all residents pay for parking will just replicate this with the rest of the community. It is a knee jerk reaction ill thought out. People will shop elsewhere not in the town centre. Is this how the local Lib Dem's support their local high streets? A Salvation Army collector in the town said she had met older residents who now have to walk to town for food shopping and finding it very difficult. I fully support these unfortunate senior citizens and will stand with them against these proposals.

This will hurt businesses that are already fragile. People will no longer pop into town to shop and will move further online. The beauty of Harpenden is the ability to quickly pop into the local shops and support them. It will also push traffic on to the busy avenues and cause further congestion up rothamsted Avenue and surrounding roads which already suffer from pot holes and erodable top surfaces. Further traffic will cause further and more frequent deterioration of the roads.

This will impact businesses negatively and the very nature of the high street in Harpenden. I avoid St Albans due to expensive car parking bills and prefer to shop in Welwyn or Harpenden where road parking is currently free. The spend involved in installing parking meters could be better used elsewhere and the eyesore of the parking meters on the beautiful Harpenden streets is unnecessary. I really hope the voice of the residents of Harpenden is heard.

This will impact the businesses in Harpenden. These are mostly independent businesses

This will kill Harpenden High Street. I am not going to pay £2.50/hour to pick up a prescription, get a haircut, pay the paper bill, etc. And no-one else will either. We will go elsewhere. Southdown for starters. You can't force the Co-Op to start charging for their car park. Nor the out of town businesses that let you park for free while you use them and other services. The businesses on and around the High Street will close due to lack of custom and you will end up with less income than before. Unless you start charging the charity shops.

This will kill our vibrant town centre, be more imaginative with raising funds. Lazy feckless mongers!

This will kill the centre of Harpenden. We regularly take short trips in to the centre of Harpenden to purchase items and to use services from the local small businesses in the area. I would not do this if I had to pay for parking.

The high street is already under significant pressure, this move will kill it off.

This will kill the high street- £2.50 per hour is far too much- people will just stop popping in to the high street.

This will kill the small businesses in town who are already struggling. too many empty premises, high rents and rates. I refuse to pay £5 to park for 2 hours, a ludicrous amount of money!! I already pay high council tax, parking permit to park outside my own house, pay on top of council tax to have garden waste collected. If this goes through you will see a failing town that once prospered. You should be supporting local businesses not destroying them, please look elsewhere to gain the funds you need. I only ever go into town to spend money and I will spend it elsewhere where I do not have to pay to park. A very unfair plan, the elderly will suffer too as parking machines and apps are too tricky for them. Please rethink this before you destroy the town you should be protecting!!

This will kill the town as people just won't bother "popping to" town any more. Those who want to, and are able to, already cycle or walk, when feasible. This will also push parking into the surrounding roads, where there is no charge, causing further issues for local residents.

This will kill what little is left of the High Street. There are very few useful shops left, this proposal will kill these off and we will be left with Estate Agents and Coffee shops.

This will lead to Harpenden becoming a ghost town as residents will seek to shop elsewhere. The elderly who have lived in Harpenden most of their lives will suffer. This is a cash incentive scheme not for the benefit of Harpenden community but for the coffers of the District Council

This will limit visitors to already struggling high street shops threatening independent retailers and encouraging people to further shop online. This will exacerbate the difficulties facing the high street.

This will negatively impact on the high street. Removing free parking will harm local shops.

This will push parking out to residential areas. I am concerned this will be a safety issues where my/neighbor kids are crossing roads or cycling on their way to school/playing.

Surely local Business in Town centre already have enough pressures without this effecting affecting their business.

This is a money grab that will a negative effect on Harpenden and is resendents. Stop treating Harpenden as a cash cow please. You seem intent on killing your perceived golden goose.

I voted Lib-Dem for the first time in local and general elections, if this is the the way things are going I will not be voting for them again.

This will ruin businesses in Harpenden as people will shop elsewhere

This will ruin the high street as people will not want to pay £2.50 an hour to park and will go elsewhere

This will severely impact Harpenden town centre as local businesses will lose most of their passing trade. Residents will stay away from town to avoid the extortionate £2.50 / hour parking fee. (20 minutes is not long enough to even walk to the pharmacy and pick up a prescription). The proposal discriminates those residents who don't live within walking distance of the town centre - they have to resort to private cars because there is very limited local transport.

This will stop many people from "popping to the village" and the shops will have less foot fall as people will have to rush off as the hour was nearly up and they didn't want to pay another £2.50 for an extra hour so they leave.

This will stop people just popping into town for a few items or meeting friends for coffee/ lunch.

Also reduced footfall for local shops

This will unfairly penalise parents taking/ collecting children from school, people wanting to attend the churches for a moment of prayer or even mental health issues. People with children or mobility issues will be forced to use the outer car parks and may find difficulty with then accessing the shops easily, when all you want to do is buy a loaf of bread, or collect a prescription. It will push people out of Harpenden to do their shopping and therefore greatly affect local business and trade if as residents we are not able to support our high street by popping into high street shops . An hour free on the high street is essential for the continued well being and success of Harpenden high street and surrounding area .

This would be a travesty to our high street. The older community come into town to pick up their shopping and need to use a car to avoid carrying heavy bags, charging £2.50 for an hour is daylight robbery! It will ruin the buzz of the high street and more shops will close down. There are already a number of unused retail shops, you can see the desperation when Wenzels and Specsavers appear on the high street! Maintain a good quality high street with free parking and visitors will continue to visit.

This would be detrimental to the residents of the town and small businesses on our high street who are already struggling to compete with the online market and bigger retailers

This would be very bad for businesses and residents. I object to this proposal.

This would have a hugely detrimental impact on people's day to day life and visits to harpenden. 20 mins is not long enough to pop to the shop and for people with disabilities who cannot get a bus this will mean additional costs so is adversely detrimental to them.

This would turn Harpenden town into a business wasteland and shops would start to shut down just like St Albans.

This proposal will kill the most valuable thing about Harpenden which is a vibrant town. This is because people want to and do use everything in the town, they want to do this because they want to live in a vibrant place and be part of the community. The proposal is regressive not progressive as it is detrimental to women in particular and to working families. It is of great benefit to the old rich people who live on the avenues who have money and time. It is detrimental to everyone else. I walk to town and cycle frequently I also drive frequently. I cannot carry all my shopping home, it needs to be taken by car. I work so I cannot do this at quiet times. Every woman with younger children knows that a 15 min walk with young children is like a trek across the arctic impossible most of the time. You are penalising mothers and young children for their needs. It takes more than 20 mins to get 3 young children out the car. You are imposing excessive charges on people, £5 to go to church, £5 to attend your child's brownie meeting, £5 to do to the chiropractor, etc etc. I raised my objections to these proposals to a Lib dem door knocked who told me some lies about how this was the only option to raise money. This is a false narrative and we are so stupid to believe it. We all know there are many other ways money can be raised, they just do not suit the Council's agenda. Do not insult us by saying this nonsense. This is an agenda by the council.

The council should be encouraging people to use the town's facilities, to use the park, to attend the leisure centre but these proposals are designed to discourage people from exercising. A wholly reprehensible act by a public authority.

There are many studies which have shown how parking charges have destroyed towns centres. I note that the head of the council has arrogantly decided to ignore all of these studies with some bland and mistaken comments that such a thing won't happen to Harpenden. It will, it has to many places who are now offering free parking to try to get back what has been lost.

These are arrogant, high handed proposals which are opposed within the town. You are supposed to represent us and you are failing to do so.

The proposals must be abandoned in their entirety.

To charge for car parking on the high street would add an extra deterrent for local residents to use the high street. There should be 1 hour free parking and after that it would be fair to charge, please consider parents having to stop on school children, doing a food shop or adhoc shop, etc. this scheme would certainly impact on the local shops if residents are deterred from shopping on the high street. The charges are also very high – 2.50 for an hour is extortionate and unaffordable. I will just start using online shopping facilities if this proposal is passed.

To introduce parking charges as outlined will cause the town centre to become vacant and the local businesses to suffer a loss of income. £2.50 an hour to park to run some errands, pick up some essentials or visit the doctor or dentist is not acceptable and will drive people out of the town.

To Whom it may Concern

Parking fees in the Harpenden High St area will further destroy the viability of the already struggling sole trader stores. Harpenden is losing identity to large enterprise retailers & food outlets. This further loss of business will push the financial viability of small businesses into greater uncertainty. This will result in more boarded up shops & restaurants

Please reconsider, I don't recall seeing this on any manifesto but remember for future voting

To whom it my concern,

As a local business resident and (REDACTED) at (REDACTED), I object in full to the current proposals. I would suggest that at first the local authority enforce the current regulations that are in place in an effort to generate any shortfall in revenue that is required to administer the public parking framework within Harpenden. Only once the current the regulations are enforced can you have the complete picture on the financial situation.

As a small business we talk about and administer small measures into our practices frequently, these have enabled our business to enjoy the current growth we have seen this past four years in Harpenden and to help us to keep moving ahead of our competition. You cannot underestimate the impact of perceived small measures for the good and for the bad in business. Free of charge parking is one such small measure. You don't have to look too far for common sense operations which show you the way on how to strike a balance on parking in consumer areas. Brent Cross shopping centre is free of charge at all times, out of town retail parks are free of charge for over two hours generally, supermarkets are free of charge for the same period. These are businesses that would certainly charge for parking if they felt consumers would absorb the cost without hurting the economic impact instore. In fact, in the main where parking charges are present you will find they are present in local authority control or businesses in the car parking market. It's quite evident that parking charges in consumer areas are bad for business, parking charges are a deterrent. The proposed framework seeks to place a deterrent to visit at a time when we should doing all we can to create footfall to High Streets, before we see more of them reduced to semi commercial areas with no locally identifiable soul.

So, to come to the proposed parking charges. 20 minutes free of charge parking is not sufficient to visit more than one location on the High Street, for any meaningful interaction. With the current 1 hour period, it's possible to visit at least 2-4 businesses and run errands or just browse the many independent businesses in Harpenden. To reduce to 20 mins will therefore put a barrier in the way of 2-3 visits on the High Street that are currently being enjoyed free of charge. A number of residents or visitors will be put off of visiting the High Street due to these charges, even without this drop in footfall the majority of people with only a small errand to run will just take the 20mins and head out of town, foregoing the extra dwell

time that is currently allowed where they may have popped into a new hair salon to ask a question or browsed a clothing or wine shop and made an instant purchase. That type of business or opportunity will be gone.

I'd like to highlight something that may be missed at local authority level and certainly seems to be missed by any person advocated these proposals. The High Street in its current form is not primarily a commercial area. With the eradication of the banks, post offices and other services you had to visit the High Street to access, it's now a choice to come into town. If you place barriers in the way of that visit you will push people to visit areas that don't levy these barriers, garden centres, retail parks etc... We that trade on the High Street understand this and give away certain parts of our service free of charge, for my business it's our High Street space, personal knowledge, expertise and refreshments. For a clothing retailer it's the same and try before you buy, for personal service businesses it's their knowledge and guidance before a purchase. We understand consumers need an incentive to visit us not a barrier. An hour of free parking is the minimum you should be allowing to strike that balance of revenue generation and keeping the High Street vibrant. I ask the powers that be to get onboard with the retailers and give something meaningful away in an effort to build the economy on the local High Street, which leads to higher footfall, occupancy rates of commercial units and more revenue all around.

Totally against this. It will be the final straw for a lot of local businesses and will kill off the town centre. The cost of installing parking metres and monitoring will surely mean there will be minimal financial gain for the council

Totally detrimental to the high street of Harpenden and yet another money grabbing scheme cloaked under the guise on improving the environment!

Totally disagree with this proposal. Local businesses (many of them being independent) will suffer as a result of imposing parking charges, as it will discourage footfall from locals and visitors.

Totally object to the proposal. If it goes ahead people will likely go to an out of town retail park with free parking, which will of course mean more global warming, pollution, etc. and also diminish local independent businesses

Town centres are dying across the country. Implementing parking charges will stop people visiting shops in Harpenden and will instead visit out of town stores with free parking. I do all my food shopping, as well as other shopping, in Harpenden. I always park on street. If I had to pay for parking, I would go to Aldi in Gypsy Lane. You will kill the already struggling High Street businesses if you make people pay to park.

Typical LibDem nonsense! You've hidden the Consultation response. I couldn't find it without guidance from Conservatives. Libdems threw our money away on a pointless plan to redevelop the hall. They should be hauled up in front of a judge for fraud and corruption. It will devastate our local shops. Don't do it!!!!

Unlike many towns, Harpenden has managed to maintain a thriving high St. Harpenden itself has grown in size over the 20 years I have d here, with many residents not able to walk or cycle from their homes to the centre. The proposal to start implementing charges after just 20 minutes, coupled with the fact that public car parks are already heavily utilised (and likely to get worse when the station car park closes) will put many people off shopping in the town and may well kill off many of the remaining independent shops that give the town centre it's personality. This feels like a short sighted policy that will have a negative effect on both retailers and the people of Harpenden.

Unlike St Albans Harpenden is a small town with a character of its own , It does not need or require require fees for on street parking. This will harm local businesses, thereby reducing the income from rates . As I presume the intention of the council is to gain income from these charges , it will loose money. The whole scheme including paying for a consultation is a waste our money ie the local residents council tax.

Until end June I held an annual Senior Parking Permit that allowed me to park without the worry of having to find and use a parking meter or attempt to use paybyphone. SADC could recoup some of its losses by reintroducing the Parking Permit and charging a realistic annual fee.

Used to be a resident. Kids still at school in Harpenden and I'm there every day. The prices are insanely high! I stroll around most days and support local, but at those prices, I won't be staying much ever! Businesses will lose out massively. How can this even be proposed- it's ludicrous!

We are a young family living a 5 minute drive or a 40 minute walk from the High Street. We would be significantly discouraged from using the High Street if the new, extremely high, parking charges come into force. Alternative modes of transport aren't really feasible with toddlers and while 20 minutes might be fine to do the odd errand, we would stop frequenting the coffee shops and restaurants in the way we do today, damaging the High Street which remains vibrant compared to many others around the country. The parking charges would lead to the demise of the High Street like many others.

We are currently Redbourn residents (who lived in Harpenden for 30 years) but still use Harpenden a great deal for more comprehensive shopping, appointments etc. We totally object to this removal of a limited parking concession in the town, not least because of the effect it will surely have on all local businesses and further inconvenience to the ordinary residents and visitors. Is it the continuing mission of SADC that Harpenden (and potentially the surrounding villages?) should not be allowed to prosper?

We are deeply opposed to the SADC proposals for a new on-street parking regime in Harpenden.

We have lived in Harpenden (Wood End) for over 30 years and enjoy the vitality of the town centre. Our household generates between one and two short trips into the town every day.

We have set out below a number of comments and some suggestions for alternative approaches

1 Reduction of Amenity for Harpenden Residents

The current provision of limited time, but free, on-street spaces helps to support a vibrant town centre, and enable residents to 'pop into town' for all sorts of amenities without facing the cost and inconvenience of parking payment systems. The introduction of the proposed paid spaces will inevitably have an adverse impact on the local economy as residents such as us reduce visits into our town or go elsewhere.

The requirement to make daily small transactions using P&D machines would bring additional inconvenience and would require unsightly street furniture to be installed in our relatively uncluttered High Street.

Many of our trips are short duration but the proposed free period of 20 minutes is inadequate.

2 Parking Strategy

It is apparent that the primary objective of the SADC proposals is to offset the current loss made by parking services. The HTC Report To Council 'SADC Parking proposals – Limited Waiting Bays' of 22 July 2024, section 4.5 indicates that 'SADC anticipate generating at least £150k additional income per year'.

The proposals in effect act as an additional tax on the economic activity of Harpenden residents and thus an obvious

conclusion would be to raise this relatively small sum though an increase in Council Tax: it would be simple to administrate, less unpalatable for the electorate, and would protect the vitality of our town centre.

Alternatively we would urge SADC and HTC to consider converting all the proposed paid spaces to a "Residents and P&D" zone, with all Harpenden households being eligible to purchase permits.

According to the 2021 census data there are 12048 households in Harpenden. If, for example, only 20% purchased a town centre residents parking permit, then the entire £150k target could be raised at a price of about £60pa - with any income derived from on-street systems being surplus.

I believe such a regime would be seen as fair, as only those seeking to visit their town centre frequently would wish to purchase a permit, whilst infrequent users and visitors from outside the community would pay using the on-street system.

3 Disabled Spaces

The Blue Badge scheme provides an important service for those who need it. However, the provision of free disabled spaces alongside paid spaces will increase the incentive for abuse and could adversely affect the availability of spaces for the very people who need it most.

Disabled people need ACCESS, not SUBSIDY. They are eligible for various grants and allowances and do not need to be indirectly subsidised further through the parking budget.

4 Payment Systems – On-Street Equipment

I avoid any 'app' that involves my credit card and personal data being held on-line and thus do not use parking apps. In

addition my wife does not use a smartphone. Thus any on-street payment system must be able to accept payment by coins or card, otherwise we are excluded from the opportunity to park at all.

We are such a small village and the high street is already struggling – you can't ask people to pay to park in such a small location. It may impact the neighbouring roads too as some people will start parking out and walk in... our high street needs to be saved not have less footfall!

We definitely need 1h free parking in the town. 20mins is not long enough....and I cannot really afford to pay everytime for £2.5 to do small shopping and this would really means although I'd prefer to shop in the town, I may need to go to the larger shops which offers free parking.

We do not need high street parking fees

We need to continue to encourage people to have free access to the high street. To promote business and usage. It is outrageous to levy more charges at this time when there are already challenges across all social economic groups. The Harpenden High street is critical to multiple social groups and restricting usage by charging seems to only favour the better off parts of the community.

We recently moved to the property and were attracted in particular to this property due to the free parking outside the house – we have older children that are frequent visitors aswell as my elderly parents who are able to visit due to this and find easy and safe parking.. in addition, introducing parking here outside residences only encourages more people to pave over their driveways or not reintroduce the green areas – I completely disagree with this action.

It also makes it less likely that you will pop to the hughstreet for services and shops – our last village had this and it made it very inconvenient for local shop holders – at a time when the high street needs support this is an irresponsible action to take and should merit serious consideration

We should not be charging in Harpenden high street as it will have a detrimental impact on the town and it's shops.

We wholly object to the parking charges and restrictions, as we run an independent local business community and coworking space at the heart of Harpenden.

We have grave concerns with the proposal to restrict access to the town centre, these concerns are both for our business, The Harpenden Collective, and concerns for the wider business community in Harpenden.

The whole purpose of our business is to attract businesses and individuals into Harpenden to connect, collaborate and engage with other businesses and individuals within our town. We do this to benefit our local community and economy. We also recognise that this is in-line with the local business plan: "To promote economic and commercial vitality of small businesses in Harpenden" (Harpenden Town Council)

Over the last 8 years we have seen over 400 local businesses through our doors, and on average we connect with c 60 different businesses per week. We achieve this by physically bringing people together through coworking, regular business and social events & well-being events. All fostering collaboration and connection.

Our community is built of members and the wider community. People living in Harpenden, St Albans, Redbourn, Kimpton, Slid End, Caddington, Markyate, Dunstable, Letchworth and Welwyn all chose to use our facilities and attend our events on a regular basis. One of our unique propositions is that we can offer our services at an affordable and accessible rate for small businesses and individuals.

Our grave concern with the parking proposal is that the cost of using our facilities and services then dramatically increases, what is currently an affordable and accessible needed service. For example for a small business using a fixed desk, pays £15 per day + VAT. Under the proposed charges, for that person to park on one of the surrounding roads would have to pay £40 in parking charges + having to move their car every 2 hours and hope to find a spot. Under such circumstances businesses will no longer chose to work from The Harpenden Collective, and instead would return to isolated working from home. This is of benefit to no-one.

We have spent 8 years encouraging businesses and individuals to come out of their homes and engage with other local

businesses and onto the high street. Parking charges and restrictions will undo all the work that has been achieved to date and will only be detrimental to the Harpenden business community.

There needs to be an alternative solution for businesses like The Harpenden Collective, that operate from central Harpenden. We are at the heart of Harpenden and we want to stay that way.

There needs to be a solution that continues to encourage people and businesses that service the community, such as The Harpenden Collective.

The parking proposals will be the end of accessibility on the high street and small business collaboration.

Should the proposal go forward there must be ample provision of free parking for The Harpenden Collective, designated free bays in existing car parks i.e Sports Centre, station car park, Bowers Way car park, Rothampstead, empty car park behind Park Hall.

May I make this clear, we are not asking for parking for THC staff, but suitable arrangements for the businesses that chose to run their businesses from The Harpenden Collective , due to the services and facilities we provide.

As a business we have survived the government imposed costs 1) covid and 2) increased cost of living and now we are being faced with the proposed parking restrictions and associated costs. Another cost we just cannot absorb at the same time as delivering this proven essential service.

What a truly dreadful prospect for our town especially if the high street is blighted by parking meters. I can find no information about the cost of implementing the scheme, the cost of maintaining it i.e. payment of parking attendants and administration etc, and estimated gross and net profit from the scheme all of which MUST be made available to the public at large BEFORE implementation.

The cost for parking for one hour @£2.50 and 2 hours for £5 is iniquitous and the 20 minute "free" parking will not give anyone time to visit the local lavatories should the need arise.

The net result is that we shall shop via Amazon which will further harm high street businesses.

You should cancel this money grabbing scheme and allow us to enjoy the status quo.

What an outrageous policy that is absolutely unfair to those who are not living closely to High Street, and who quite rely on driving to buy the daily stuff every day. The policy is directly affecting our daily life, and raising our cost of living!

What will all the extra money pay for? Will all the parking charges go directly to Harpenden council or will St. Albans council take the money? Why can't we have a much more reasonable charge whereby the first hour is free and then the remaining hour is chargeable.

When I chose to move to Harpenden, the high street was a huge factor, and with two small children – it is now key to our sense of belonging. To have no free parking will be a travesty. I will no longer have any reason to use the high street for ad hoc items (which often then lead to me spending a lot more in the small boutiques, cafes and shops), rather I will go to Luton retail parks which are free. Indeed, this is particularly discriminatory to the large population of people with young children or those in their older years, whereby walking to and from town with bags of shopping just isn't realistic. You will isolate these vulnerable people and take away our independence and sense of community. I feel utterly let down by this proposal and will

be gutted to see us lose even more businesses as a result.

You will be ruining a wonderful hub and town, and making us all feel unwelcome in the process.

While I understand the need for the council to raise additional funds, I really do not believe that this is the way to do it. Not only does will it affect the obvious businesses on the high street, but those who run classes etc in town centre venues like playgroups, ballet, theatre etc.

As a life long local, now married with 2 young children, I visit the town centre on a near daily basis – sometimes 2/3 times. Although I walk when I can, this is not always possible and parking in town is a necessity. To attend a playgroup in the centre of the town which usually costs £1.50, will all of a sudden become financially unviable as it starts too quickly after the school run to walk, and last more than 20 mins/1 hr. Eventually this would cause those sessions to close as people look to find other places with easier parking options.

For other things we do, it's not necessarily the cost I would object to, but the sheer hassle of sorting out parking fees. I would seriously look to shop, socialise and attend classes etc if this was implemented.

If I can't park easily in this amazing town bearing in mind how much I use it, should we look for somewhere else to live?

What a shame for all those who fight so hard daily to keep their businesses alive.

Feel disappointed that this is even being considered.

Happy to discuss with the powers at be if required.

Whilst I appreciate, reducing traffic in the town centre is important. This has a couple of negative effects for me, 1. Taking my elderly father into the village becomes more difficult and expensive, (he is 92) . 2. I work from home about a mile from the village. The option of free or cheap parking means on the odd day were I may come to the town for a lunch meeting there is another added expense.. if there was more cheaper parking within a 5 minute walk and more designated or free parking on street for disabled / Elderly. I could see the advantage of this. But it seems to put a barrier into coming into the village.

Whilst I see that limiting the free parking time available in Harpenden will have some benefits in terms of turnover, I consider that 20 minutes is far too short a time. Given the length of the High Street and locations of parking bays, families with young children and older people who are less mobile (but do not warrant a Blue Badge) will be significantly disadvantaged. Parking in one location and allowing time to walk there and back to a given location which could be much further away would not allow time to transact the necessary business (and I personally have queued/waited for more than 20 minutes on some occasions to access vital services such as the post office or obtain a prescription from the pharmacy). 40/45 minutes may be acceptable. Limiting the time to 20 minutes will have a real negative impact on those who have the need to access local services and are least able to travel further, and who may be on a more limited budget. I can also only see that this will lead to reduced footfall in the town centre as access to free parking removed. People coming in for 'one job' would no longer be able to look into another business on such a short time, leading to reduced business overall. This cannot be good for the local businesses around the town centre and risks (given the current difficult climate) driving some out of business, losing business rates likely in excess of parking fees gained.

I would also ask the council to consider the impact on the surrounding streets a short distance from the town centre. Many people who do not mind the walk are likely to park in those streets further away where parking restrictions are limited - I used to live in such a street in Harpenden and it was only a 20 minute walk into town. Those streets are likely to become more cluttered with cars, making it more difficult for local residents to park themselves and increasing the risks for pedestrians/other cars using those roads. We can see that this has happened in the centre of town where the introduction of late evening charges has led to streets being filled with cars such that traffic cannot flow easily and pedestrians have much more obscured views of the roads when crossing. This will be particularly bad for children on those residential streets who will

have their safe access to the areas outside the houses impacted, and at a time when we are supposed to be encouraging them to spend more time active and outside.

Whilst this is proposed under the climate and sustainable policies, it is in reality just another revenue opportunity, that will alter the fabric of village life in Harpenden. Charging £2.50 per hour won't move people to foot or bikes - Harpenden is an aging Population and many can't change their mode of transport readily. The high street is already impacted by shop closures so increasing cost and creating difficulty to an already unstable high street will not help.

You need to look to ideas to support local business not detract from it.

I already pay for a parking permit on (REDACTED), you're now effectively taxing me, each time I leave the street to shop locally.

Having had a back injury this year and slow recovery, I would be lost without the ability to park close to shops- please don't make it harder

Wholly object to a lack of free parking in Harpenden. 20/30 mins is simply not enough to necessarily do what you need to do (all it would really take is more than 1 thing and you'd be pushed for time). So many businesses will suffer - it's well known rates are extremely high on high street and with less footfall due to no time to browse will mean loss of revenues. Also means people who do manage to park will be rushing around to get things done which could result in more accidents. People simple will not pay extortionate rates to park in town. Instead people will simply go elsewhere. There is already a lack of decent parking in harpenden. Having to pay for it will only dissuade people from visiting the high street at all.

Wholly object to the plans to change of parking fees in Harpenden

Wholly object to the proposed parking charges.

Harpenden needs more FREE parking spaces, not chargeable ones, in order to keep the High Street and adjacent shopping streets alive. As a former resident and now regular visitor nothing would discourage me more to visit the Town centre than having to pay to park. The proposal should be scrapped.

Wholly oppose these proposals as a resident of Southdown which is too far to walk into town as an alternative (especially if visiting of lunch hour)

The bus service as an alternative is not frequent enough so driving is the only option.

These proposals will not only adversely affect me as a visitor to the town. I can often pop into town 2 or 3 times a day for different things, but would not do so if I had to pay to park. This will also adversely affect all of the businesses in town and is in danger of making the town centre a ghost town. Please don't do this, it will lead to empty shops as businesses move away or can not afford to stay in business. The council should be encouraging people to visit the town centre so it can prosper.

Why incur more spend n parking machines and monitoring for residents to not only fund the gap, but also fund the additional cost. The gap per household in the district is a few pounds a year – put a £5 extra charge he per house and be done with it. Less monitoring, less wastage.

Also you need someone working a randomised 1 day a week to check and fine people. At the moment workers know it is cheaper to pay 3 parking tickets per year than pay to park everyday and just park on the street. By having a person 1 day a week people will use car parks for longer stays and this in turn will increase revenue for the council.

Ticket machines /apps just don't work for elderly people which Harpenden has a disproportionate level.

Why on earth anyone would want to impose these ridiculous fees in a small place like Harpenden I can't imagine.

I think the scheme is outrageous and should never have even been considered. – It's yet another hairbrained scheme, which we seem to get regularly, simply not thought through.

Why on earth are the proposed charges so high?

This is a small town where people park to go to the doctors, dentists, library, park, drop their kids at schools and clubs, grab a coffee....its not a city or shopping centre.

Making no sense at all, If you'd proposed less ludicrous tariffs, the whole town probably wouldn't be up in arms, hating the Lib Dem's and regretting their vote.

Will destroy the town

Will have detrimental effect on trade in the High Street, already suffering from high rents, high Business Rates, internet shopping, difficulty parking and competition from large stores with free parking eg Sainsbury's at St Albans and WGC and Tesco at Hatfield. I suggest:

- A minimum of one hour free parking being maintained at all parking bays.
- Parking permits to be offered to all residents - not just the elderly.
- An investment in the enforcement of current parking regulations

I also support the resolution passed at the July 22 meeting of Harpenden Town Council, calling for a full review and delay to any changes until at least 2025.

Will impact local businesses as will reduce footfall

Will kill town centre and High Street business people will go out of town where parking is free and plenty of it.

Will ruin local businesses and make shopping for elderly residents impossible

With a school permit I feel 20 mins free twice a week is fine, however the hourly charge should be reduced especially for parents of the school since on occasion we may need to discuss matters with the school. £2.50 for 1 hour is on the expensive side.

With Harpenden already being a very expensive location to live and increases in council tax, what will the monies from this incentive be used for? What will be improved? What is the expected revenue Vs what will be reinvested into the town centre? This is not transparent hence the whole objection.

With the £2.50 charge to park people will avoid the parking fee by parking in residential roads. We live in (REDACTED) where commuters used to park until the day time restrictions were introduced. This stopped the commuter parking but (REDACTED)

will once again be a free for all for people visiting the shops outside the parking restrictions times. This scheme has obviously not been thought about in adequate detail and we question the safety for residents of (REDACTED).

You will kill off the high street and the businesses by going through with this proposal.

You've taken away my Senior Parking Permit and now choose to cut off my regular Harpenden town strolls, browsing independent and charity shops that offer casual human contact with kindness.

The proposal is a disgrace to this town and to all those whose offerings and actions have helped create and sustain Harpenden town's admirable ethos throughout many past decades. An ethos that is reliant on dedicated elected leadership who strive to maintain THIS town's success not heartless dissociated dominance.

To those who support this proposed action, you are shameful.

You've already killed the high Street now you want to extend further restrictions to impact the sport played at Clarence Park and put off families from using the outside space. You spend public money poorly so want to leach even more off of residents despite offering nothing for the constantly increasing council tax costs, parking permit costs and additional charges. I used to be proud to be born and bred in St Albans but now I'm embarrassed as the decisions the council make are a disgrace aimed to hurt residents just to line your own pockets.

Table 2: Email responses

Email Messages

Having examined the full details of the proposals, consulted various councillors, been to meeting at Park Hall, and spoken with many local residents and traders I have no doubt that they , like me, find these proposals deeply flawed and undemocratic . If SADC has fallen into debt through its own lack of financial control and wasteful use of the public funds,why should Harpenden be used to pay for this by charging for car parking, on street? SADC has completely failed to use its workforce to enforce the on street parking violations and offences in Harpenden for many years.Does SADC know how much revenue has been lost/wasted due to this negligence.The view of many people in Harpenden is one of anger and dismay.Older people will find these intended charges unreasonable,most independant traders know of the damage it will cause the town centre overall.I suggest that your concerns about the 'night economy' are misplaced if you put those above the general needs of the 'day economy' and the townspeople who should be your priority. I wonder how many people only discovered the plans outlined, at the last minute and suspected it would pass unnoticed.I do not know how parking charges are to be made.If the council intends to require the public to use a smart phone this is would indicate yet another major obstacle to those of us who did not need nor want such a device.I oppose SADC plans and believe the quality of life and extra costs involved will diminish Harpenden.

The proposals to install parking meters in Harpenden will kill off the High Street, which is already struggling with 10 empty retail units currently empty.

1. No one knows the local business economy better than those who work in it. Instead of straining every sinew to support our High Street, and encourage business growth, the Council is doing the exact opposite – hence the opposition from local retailers, Harpenden Town Council and local residents.
2. To over rule our local town council, is arrogant beyond belief. Just because SADC can technically do so, does not mean it should.
3. SADC have ignored the large geographical area of Harpenden.
4. SADC have already hurt our Seniors by not understanding that the annual subscription was such a benefit because it was easy to use. Age and infirmity affect all incomes, and the parking apps are not easy to use especially when they require dual verification. Now, if Seniors want to come into town for whatever reason, they will be faced with a plethora of these meters. I have helped many seniors in recent years manage these apps and parking meters – and sometimes they just drive off in embarrassment. Keeping Seniors active and engaged in local activities, helps maintain their independence – a concept clearly not considered by SADC – and they have the time to shop in the town, and use the coffee shops. Seniors are also more vulnerable to crime and bag snatches – one of my friends who is in their mid-70s, had their card snatched from their hand as they were trying to use a parking meter.
5. The 20 minutes of so -called free time is completely risible. Has any councillor taken the time to see how some people through age or medication, struggle to get in and out of their cars and walk slowly? Has anyone thought of parents with children in car seats and push chairs in and out of the cars? What happens if you get stuck in a queue?
6. What consideration has been given to those parents who arrive to park safely to see their children on and off school buses morning and mid-afternoon?
7. What consideration has been given to those parents taking children to St Nicholas School, and collecting them?
8. Local nurseries charge parents £100 a day for childcare – what though has been given to parents taking in children morning and afternoon, and having time to settle them or talk to staff?
9. What thought has been given to those of us who live on the outer edges of the town? Why should we be penalised

because it is too far for us to walk? Or we are not fit enough?

10. What thought has been given to those on tight budgets?

11. What cost-benefit analysis has been undertaken?

12. We already have insufficient parking (other than in August). These meters will mean people will park in other residential streets.

13. SADC should note that every time another business shuts its doors – the fault will be laid with SADC and those Councillors who brought the parking meters in.

SADC should not be deciding this issue on party lines. SADC should be doing what is in the best interests of Harpenden, its residents – and probably most important of all – its local economy. With grace and humility, SADC should admit it has got it very wrong, show it can listen and learn. Stop these proposals now.

Dear Sirs,

I have lived in Harpenden for over 30 years and have always appreciated what a special place this is. In part this is due to the ability to 'pop into town' with relative ease whether to do some shopping, catch up with friends, go to an exercise class or have a walk in the park. Harpenden town centre serves the community with supermarkets, independent shops, charity shops, coffee shops, pubs, restaurants, the library and many meeting places. Bringing in these proposed parking charges will deter local people from visiting their town centre and thereby make their lives less rich. As an obvious knock on effect to this local businesses will suffer and I know that many are very concerned for their livelihoods.

Please listen to the local residents and business owners. I have spoken to no one who supports these plans.

Please reassess your parking changes and instead police what is already here.

I am 28, I own my own business on the high street. I worked hard to be here and am living my dream as a cafe owner/baker. I am very social in the community and this would kill the social lives of many community members. They look forward to their high street trips and this would ruin it.

Please reconsider

I am devastated to learn of your intentions to scrap our existing one or two free parking areas in central Harpenden for the following reasons:

This will kill our beautiful high street and many businesses will sadly go (already there are too many empty premises) making Harpenden yet another town which will disappear and under duress surrender its heritage.

Many people value our town for its community feel – walking down the street people acknowledge one another and have time for a few words. This is so important for the general well being of many, particularly the elderly, new parents/ young families and those who live alone. Once charges come in people will be rushing around to obtain everything in one stop and making two trips or more daily would be unaffordable.

Also it is not fair that people visiting the local churches for mass etc must now pay.

For shopping the supermarkets will suffer heavily as people will just head to Tesco in Hatfield or Sainsburys and M & S at London Conley Fields as each have free parking.

Many people cannot afford to pay daily parking charges of £2.50 per hour – £17.50 per week if needing only one hour daily.

Please reconsider – five years ago I moved to Harpenden from north London where my high street disappeared and only has charity shops, fast food outlets etc and the whole area has declined to somewhere I can no longer recognise. Please don't let this happen here as I am so happy living in this vibrant beautiful town.

Thank you.

We wish to object strongly to the proposed new parking charges in the centre of Harpenden.

These changes are likely to result in reduced footfall in Harpenden High Street. Reduced footfall will have a deleterious effect on the businesses in the centre of Harpenden.

We have decided that we will not be paying these charges. Therefore, with the increase in car park charges, if these on street parking charges are enacted we plan to shop outside of Harpenden and St Albans. We cannot be the only ones thinking in this way.

It is clear that the LibDems on SADC do not wish to engage in local democracy as you have refused to engage with Harpenden Town Council, our local elected representatives. This does not bode well for the future.

Hello,

I wish to object in the strongest terms to some of the parking proposals for Harpenden. I live at (REDACTED), Harpenden. I have lived at this property for 14 years.

When I moved in we had a parking permit that allowed us to park on Carlton Road and the surrounding streets on the other side of the railway bridge. This was rescinded a few years later (around 2012). Despite the council admitting that the zones for the parking permits had been redrawn to include our property back in 2009, we were told this had not been enforced yet and so we would be without a valid parking pass for a temporary period. This was never enacted and so since this time we have had no parking permit.

We park primarily on Victoria Road, and sometimes on Carlton Road and other surrounding streets, abiding by the restrictions. Myself and my partner are both local Firefighters in town and we require our vehicle to respond to calls. When we moved into our property, we had a parking permit. Our vehicle is an absolute necessity.

The proposals to charge for some of the parking near to us will have a disastrous impact on our lives, as well as our neighbours and local businesses. This appears to be purely a profiteering exercise and in our immediate area at least, penalises local businesses and residents only.

Please could you advise if there are any remedial actions proposed for local residents such as ourselves? Without at least a valid parking permit, myself and my partner are faced with either leaving our home and/or quitting our local jobs in the community.

retail – acquisition of goods and services
functional – administrative activities, such as banking, postal and medical services
social – gathering and meeting with other people
experiential – leisure, recreation and entertainment activities.

Trajectory local government states that in self-contained smaller towns local government most pressing issues are to work with business to improve high streets.

A quote from gov.uk healthy high street: Improved local high street environments also directly influence mental health and wellbeing by increasing levels of social contact and integration, civic pride and community trust. In response I can categorically say our customers come in not only to buy our goods but also for a friendly listening ear and a cup of tea, we help our customers to feel part of the community and we genuinely care for their health and wellbeing. Some of our customers have no family or lack of friends, particularly the elderly; we often say we need a 99 club as we have quite a few 99-year-old customers!

Sandi Rowley, Head of Marketing at takepayments Limited said,

“Cost friendly parking has always played an integral part in people’s commuting and leisure decisions. It now plays a crucial part in helping businesses survive their toughest Christmas yet. Council parking has offered reasonable prices whilst private

parking owners operate at an elevated cost in most cases.

Businesses still need further support from councils to help reinvigorate the high street and parking incentives should be a priority, according to the businesses that are suffering from the effects of two national lockdowns.

A cost cutting scheme is needed to help these businesses survive what should have been their busiest time for trading. When you look at the top three reasons that are causing a quiet high street – working from home, access to online shopping and expensive car parking – the parking is one that we can most easily address whilst still following Government guidelines and keeping people safe during the pandemic.”

Quote from Parking Perspectives: What is perhaps key for the business community is to recognise these structural changes and pressures as the principal drivers behind the diminishing viability of their traditional retail centres. This is pertinent to parking within the town as often it is perceived that the parking offer, and in particular parking charges, are fundamental and responsible for the decline occurring.

Staff parking is not working at present: staff parking permits are not allowed to be used by owners (most independents the owner works full time) and then they have part time staff. The permits are only per car not company and cannot be transferred so therefore doesn't work unless you work full time Monday to Friday. In retail most workers have a day off in the week and work weekends.

I strongly believe that the parking is not policed by Traffic Enforcement Officers at the moment and residents overstay and park recklessly sometimes and that if this was policed correctly this would give you a substantial amount of money. Please be aware that many of our customers who voted the Lib Dems in and have said they will not vote for the Lib Dems again if the parking charges are bought in/senior parking permits taken away. It feels like the changes have been bought in through the back door, no consultation for whether or not to bring in the charges just one to say how to/you can't use the parking charges to fill the deficit – you could say both have been illegal and we should not be in this scenario at all. It is totally unacceptable!

As a retailer with nearly 40 years' experience and a resident in Harpenden since mid-80s, I am calling for council to listen to the residents and retailers to keep Harpenden a very special place to live and shop – don't take away the village vibe!

Please confirm receipt of this email.

I am in full support of the Harpenden Society's comments as follows:

Fundamentally, the Society believe that the current proposals are not fit for purpose.

Local retailers argue that the imposition of the proposed charges “will be damaging to the local economy and will directly and adversely affect the residents and their decision to shop locally” where trading conditions are already challenging as a result of changes in consumer behaviour and the cost of living crisis. We fully recognise this is a significant risk.

Furthermore, the provision of 20 minutes free parking meets no one's needs as the enforcement will prove to be extremely difficult. The consequence is that residents will ignore the time limits, much as they do now.

The result is likely to be more chaos and potential damage to the Town Council's strategic objective of supporting a vibrant High Street, an objective we fully support.

Nevertheless, we do accept that there are legitimate issues to be addressed, both in terms of the need for SADC to secure additional income to fund its budget deficit, a real need for standardisation of parking time limits and charges, and the dire need for a substantial improvement to central Harpenden's chronic traffic and parking problems.

As regards SADC's income requirements, we believe there needs to be more transparency. From our analysis, the parking proposals (which include changes other than the imposition of on-street parking charges) appear, at face value, to raise far more than that needed to cover the costs of the district's parking services.

If this is the case, there is a legal obligation firstly to apply any such surpluses to improving such services, before funds are available to meet the Council's budget deficit.

HTC's own view is that no permanent changes should be made until a thorough review of parking has been undertaken. We

support this but also recognise that SADC may well have to press ahead with some parking charge changes to meet their budget deficit for 2024/25.

If SADC do press ahead, we believe that for a limited time only (to end March 2025 – by which time a proper review of parking in Harpenden should have been undertaken), the following changes should be considered:-

One hour's free parking in all town centre parking bays should be allowed (both the retailers and HTC have said this should be the minimum allowance).

One further hour in the above bays should be available at a cost of £2.50, thereby extracting a premium over the equivalent car park charge for 2 hours. This should encourage the use of car parks for such longer stays, with an added benefit of delivering a greater turnover of on-street parking.

Parking permits, for which a modest annual charge can be made, should be offered to all residents, not just senior citizens, allowing a maximum of up to 3 hours free parking in the car parks, as is the case in many other parts of the country.

Finally, SADC should start to invest in technology and additional Community Enforcement Officers across the town centre streets and car parks and be seen to be visibly adopting a 'zero tolerance' approach to illegal parking – particularly parking on double yellow lines and on pavements.

Our hope is that, even at this stage, SADC recognise that parking is a complex matter with a host of issues yet to be resolved, and will defer any permanent changes until a full review has taken place.

I would add that the parking permits hitherto limited to older residents are a sensible way of encouraging the use of off-street parking as well as supporting continued mobility and independence. Given that they are a 'charged for' provision they contribute to the authorities income.

The proposed changes to the parking arrangements in Harpenden will simply drive people to use the Waitrose carpark, which is at present not manned. Shoppers will not be able to access the Waitrose carpark for the purpose of shopping because those who previously had parked on the streets without charge will now take the genuine shoppers' spots. This is the worst of all possible worlds.

I totally disagree with the parking proposals on the following grounds.

- 1) If you remove or restrict some of the current free parking you will create a switch where people cannot easily find free parking. In that case people will give up looking for free parking and will not try anymore. Hence they will not come into Harpenden and the shops on the High Street will close.
- 2) The current parking charges are far too high and much higher than those in any neighbouring towns such as Welwyn Garden City. The high cost in Harpenden encourages everyone to go to other towns or locations.
- 3) If parking for two hours is going to cost £5.00 I will meet friends for a coffee in a garden centre and just travel further.
- 4) You will be taxing the sick who have to park to see a doctor.
- 5) Finally, can the costs of running parking be benchmarked against other councils which charge far less for parking? Before charging Harpenden Residents more the costs should be reviewed and other solutions found, one solution being to manage the finances so that additional costs are not required.

I am writing to formally express my strong opposition to the proposed changes regarding parking charges in Harpenden. It is abundantly clear that this move is nothing more than a thinly veiled attempt by the council to extract additional revenue from residents, with no consideration for the adverse effects it will have on our community.

Free parking is a crucial element that supports local shopping and sustains the vibrancy of Harpenden's town center.

Introducing parking charges will deter visitors, harm local businesses, and diminish the quality of life for residents. Moreover, the suggestion that 20 minutes of free parking is adequate is utterly insufficient. If the council insists on implementing paid parking, the minimum allowance should be increased to at least one hour, giving people enough time to shop, run errands, and support our local economy without feeling rushed.

These proposed changes are not in the best interest of the Harpenden community, and I urge the council to reconsider this decision before it irreparably harms our town.

Dear council

I very much do not support your proposals to introduce parking charges in Harpenden further more the consultation stage is too short and cynically timed to cover the holiday period when most residents are away.

I have lives in Harpenden for 25 years and there has been no significant change to availability of parking on street and this is very much a solution looking for a problem that does not exist. My objections are as follows:

1. Your proposals will add additional costs to residents when driving to into town to shop at local businesses.
2. Residents will be less likely to shop locally and will drive further afield to avoid parking charges, adding to road congestion and pollution.
3. Local independent shops will suffer from a reduction in trade.
4. Local independent shops will close, leaving a high street of charity shops and large chains.
5. Residential roads on the outskirts of town will become congested, adding to pollution.
6. Congestion will increase as people drive around more and more looking for charge-free spaces.
7. Your proposal to allow paid for parking for over one hour is counter to your intent to create free spaces. Currently you can only park for one hour, if you permit those who can afford to pay to park longer you will ensure less spaces for those unable to pay.

Whilst I am not a fan of the car, it has become very much part of people's lives and livelihoods and to make these changes with so little consultation will reflect badly on politicians and officers alike.

Dear Sir/ Madam

The point of these proposals is to raise money. I note that there is no costing of these measures. How much will it cost to install all the street furniture, to pay for the monitoring of the system, to pay for administration of the fines and how is it going to be administered? Are you creating a new department or outsourcing and how much will this cost? I can't see that this is a fair consultation if this information is not transparent.

Please could you explain why the charges start in Harpenden at 8am and St Albans at 8.30? It would seem to be much fairer to start at 8.30 in Harpenden as well, as this would give mums dropping off to schools and playschools in town a bit more time.

I have lived in Harpenden since 1978 and I strongly object to these proposals for the following reasons:

It isn't necessary. Yes there is high demand for the spaces but it is usually possible to find one.

20 minutes is not long enough to get an elderly or slow-moving person out of a car to pick up something from a shop. I used to take my late husband who had Alzheimers into town for a break and he could certainly could not move fast. Not all people with mental or physical problems qualify for a Disabled badge

20 minutes is not long enough to drop off a child to school if you have younger children who need helping out of the car and strapping into a pushchair which has to be assembled

because people can currently only park for an hour spaces are regularly freed up for other customers. Your suggestion would mean that those who can afford to pay can hog a space for longer meaning there will be less spaces for those who can't afford to pay and fewer customers for the high street shops

people will just drive down twice a day for the free 20 minutes which is not good for global warming which I thought you would be concerned about.

I think it would lead to the closure of many of our little shops who are already struggling with high rents and rates. If

Harpenden ends up with only coffee shops, estate agents, beauty shops and hairdressers then we are going to have to drive further afield for many everyday requirements – again not good for the environment.

This mail adds another voice to those asking you to listen to and act on the views of local shopkeepers and to engage genuinely with The Harpenden Society and Harpenden Town Council in seeking better solutions than the one currently out for consultation.

As a non-driver I am neutral concerning the interests of drivers parking in Harpenden High Street and the restrictions being proposed on them by SADC. But as a resident of Harpenden I do care deeply about the health of the High Street and the viability of the shops located there.

It seems to me that the success of Harpenden High Street is totally dependent on access by shoppers' vehicles in a manner that is conducive to attracting people wishing to shop there. The SADC proposal to restrict this to a ten minute 'free' period seems to be both impractical and self-defeating.

No shopper is going to be encouraged to park and to shop within such a limited restriction, and it would also have the inevitable effect of forcing drivers to seek out less 'conventional' parking opportunities within the Town. As vehicle access declines, inevitably so will the number of shops. Surely this cannot be the SADC objective.

I support the proposal to make the time restriction a minimum period of one hour on each occasion. This will at least protect to a reasonable degree visits by both local shoppers and any passing trade.

As a Harpenden resident (REDACTED), please take account of our objections to the proposed changes. We think that they will:

- > adversely affect local businesses by making them more difficult & expensive for customers to access them
- > discriminate against those who are unable to walk or cycle into town
- > create more problems for cyclists due to lack of sufficient secure cycle parking spaces

Dear Sir/Madam

I have reviewed the consultation documentation and wish to register my strong opposition to the proposed charges for parking on the High Street Harpenden.

I think there should continue to be free one hour parking spots.

If charges need to be made at all (it is a terrible shame to see funds are so depleted that this has to be considered at all), my view is it should only be for parking over one hour. With two hours for the elderly like on the old annual payment non-means tested scheme.

Not even a young, able-bodied person can do anything with 20 mins free parking. Unless it is right outside the shop a person wants to pop into, which is highly unlikely. I found the 30 min parking spots a few years ago v stressful and to be avoided at all costs. Even bumping into a friend and having a chat on the street was too stressful in case I went over the half hour.

I also feel worried about payment methods at the machines. My elderly parents (87 and 86) really struggle with entering their car details and making payment at the whole variety of parking machines with different settings of buttons and small display screens. Particularly without a smartphone.

I feel that the High Street and independent shops in particular are already under great strain and this will be the final nail in the coffin for some. I think it will seriously affect businesses benefitting from people visiting a few shops, and stopping

perhaps for a chat or coffee. It will zap the life and community out of the high street.

OBJECTION TO THE PROPOSAL TO COMMENCE KERBSIDE PAY TO PARK IN HARPENDEN

Dear Sir or Madam

Does the Lib Dem SADC want to kilt off Harpenden High Street shopping and hospitality . It would seem so with the proposal to introduce kerbside pay to park in Harpenden.

The High Street is struggling at the moment, with several empty shops, some empty for quite some time.

I am strongly opposed to the introduction of any kerbside parking charges on the following grounds;

"We" are trying to keep local high streets viable and flourishing and this can only happen if shoppers and visitors actually come into the town centre to basically spend money in the shops cafes etc. I believe additional parking charges wilt actively deter shoppers and visitors. It would certainty put me off and I would then go elsewhere, probably to large retail parks where there are no parking charges. Or visits will be kept to a minimum. The town centre will die away. There already are a number of pay to stay car parks in Harpenden so there is an income stream from them.

Parking meters wilt just take away from the "village" atmosphere Harpenden has historically always enjoyed. One of the pleasures of living in Harpenden is that it is possible to park on the road, particularly for shorter visits. The current parking restrictions on time work well and keep the flow of traffic to shops etc moving and are fair. We are a small town with a small High Street and I cannot see that huge amounts of revenue will be raised by the installation of parking meters. I cannot see how the running costs of the scheme will benefit anybody.

Many friends and neighbours in Harpenden feel the same as me and petitions are starting to circulate, which I have signed.

I have written also to my local councillor and MP and have tried to navigate the SADC website, but frankly I find it a nightmare. I am concerned my voice will just get lost in the crowd.

I hope you can help me get my voice heard.
NO to kerbside parking charges.

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

To the Parking Development Team, I am writing to register my objection to the St Albans City and District Council making any alteration to the current parking arrangements in Harpenden. Your proposal has failed to provide a genuine reason why the proposed conversion of free limited

To the Parking Development Team,

I am writing to register my objection to the St Albans City and District Council making any alteration to the current parking arrangements in Harpenden.

Your proposal has failed to provide a genuine reason why the proposed conversion of free limited waiting parking places to paid 2-hour maximum is necessary, other than to raise income from motorist to help to balance the Council Budget that the current Council has thus far failed to do.

Within your reasons for making the order you quote to 'encourage active travel', e.g. walking, cycling, public transport etc. It is not the responsibility of the Council to 'encourage active travel', and although active travel is to be encouraged it is not for you to use it as a moral argument to justify introducing parking charges.

You have also quoted 'Increased Enforcement' to monitor and enforce restrictions. This in turn, you quote will result in a

greater turnover of premium places for motorists who need to park closest to businesses.

If this is true and that is what you believe, then this can be achieved now, without the introduction of parking charges, by monitoring and enforcing the current restrictions that are in place.

Simply put, there is no need for St Albans and City District Council to introduce proposals to convert free limited parking places in Harpenden to paid parking places to improve the availability of spaces for motorists who need to park closest to businesses, all that is needed to achieve this is to increase enforcement.

This possibility has been available to you over the years but you have failed to manage it properly.

I have recently voted Liberal Democrats but if this ridiculous abuse of your position is used to introduce this proposed conversion of parking in Harpenden you will lose my vote and those of my friends who feel the same.

Take notice and scrap this ill conceived idea, think smarter and re-introduce parking enforcement officers (traffic wardens).

Problem solved, voters satisfied.

Kind regards ... Harpenden resident

Dear (REDACTED) and Parking Development Team,

As requested I am sending this email outlining the need for extra resident parking for cottages (REDACTED).

As you are aware we currently have 5 resident parking spaces for 8 cottages.

We have been asking for over 2 years now for our situation to be considered and each time this has been postponed.

The current resident parking only allows us to have exclusive use from Mon – Sat 8.30 am to 6.30 pm. Despite this, spaces are frequently used within these times by non permit holders so we have to drive around trying to park elsewhere.

Sundays / evenings are equally difficult for us to get spaces when people are able to park in our spaces to access pubs, restaurants, sports centre, farmers market etc. to avoid paying the car park charges.

We are all paying for annual parking permits (and many of us visitor permits) but also bearing the cost of having to pay to park in the Amenbury Lane car park when there are no spaces available elsewhere.

This has impacted us further since the price increases at Amenbury Lane car park – I recently had to pay £4.50 to park for 3 hours until I could park on nearby St Nicholas Avenue at 10,30am.

There has been a high turnover of tenants / owners and a major factor given by neighbours I have spoken to moving out is their frustration with the parking issue and constantly having to find alternative parking.

A simple couple of trips to the dump is impossible as you can guarantee the space will have been taken on return.

Additionally, any contractors that are working at the house – plumbers, electricians etc. I am having to pay for them to park in the car park as there is no space available in the visitor permit I am paying for.

I acknowledge that we do currently have parking on Leyton Road near the silver cup but this is a 5 minute walk to get there

(and certainly not ideal if you have been shopping or are loading / unloading the car etc. or with a young child, have limited mobility etc.)

Can we be assured however that this will still remain in place with the new parking proposals?

The plan to install double yellow lines opposite our cottages will also have impact as we can currently park there overnight and reclaim a resident space the following morning. In my opinion it also slows down the traffic and avoids cars squeezing through both ways. Several of us have had damage to our cars as a result of cars doing this.

While I welcome any proposals suggested I think the previous suggestion to take the 2 disabled spaces from the Village Surgery is not in my opinion viable. I regularly see patients struggle to manage the short distance from the current disabled space to the surgery. Additionally these spaces also used on occasion by paramedics.

I would welcome the opportunity proposed for us to have resident bays on Leyton Green however my concern with the proposal for this site would be opposition from the nearby surgery, dentist, chemist and Salvation Army etc – many of their visitors have limited mobility and need to access these local services easily.

We have made several proposals other than Leyton Green which so far do not appear to have been considered.:

1. 3 parking spaces further up Amenbury Lane (just beyond the car park entrance and below the tennis club entrance) . There are approximately 12 spaces which are currently restricted before 10.30 am, We are Amenbury Lane residents so it makes sense to me to have parking in our road. This would not impact the residents of Amenbury Lane further up as they already have drive ways / garages.
2. 3 spaces could be allocated on Avenue St Nicholas (currently restricted before 10.30 am)
3. 3 spaces could be allocated in Amenbury Lane car park. There have been been approximately 30 spaces that have been

recently designated for Leisure centre staff and I have yet to see these fully utilised.

4. There is space to have at least one extra parking space between my house and the office next door.

I / we would welcome representatives from the parking development team to visit in person to see the situation and discuss the viability of the above suggestions, or help propose any other additional alternatives.

I'm receiving a number of calls regarding the forest of black poles that have been erected around Church Green. Everyone is assuming this is your Parking Charge scheme.

How can this installation be well underway when the final date for returning the public questioner on parking charges does not end until next week and another Full public consultation is supposed to be planned?

Is this your idea of democracy. Was there a Public Notice posted about this ridiculous forest of black poles? It totally ruins the look and feel of Church Green. Is this how Harpenden residents want the look of the town to be enhanced, I don't think so. I expect the Council think this is in keeping with the feel and nature of Harpenden, well you have totally misjudged how people think and want to preserve the town.

By the time this scheme is finished, with the forest of black poles all around the Town, Harpenden's heritage will be totally destroyed.

From a legal point of view, it very much looks like you have jumped the gun on this or never intended to consult the residents. I suspect it was the latter.

Harpenden people will never forgive you and your LibDem colleagues for defacing our beautiful town.

Dear Parking Team, I hope you are ready for the fury that's building up in Harpenden. If this goes ahead the LibDems will NEVER control the local Council again.

Dear Parking Team,

I hope you are ready for the fury that's building up in Harpenden. If this goes ahead the LibDems will NEVER control the local Council again.

(REDACTED).

(REDACTED)

You are rightly keen to ensure the St Albans Council budget is balanced but ending free street parking only provides a drop in the ocean compared to the annoyance it will cause.

Hertfordshire and St Albans Councils waste tens of millions every year by poor contract tendering and contract management. It appears nobody in the Council monitors contract compliance or standards.

This is an area that should be reviewed as an area of substantial potential savings before removing free parking.

Another major unresolved issue is the redevelopment of the Harpenden Halls. When Harpenden's new sports facility and EMC were proposed by Annie Brewster, funds from the redevelopment were essential to balance the building budget.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, how was the budget for this project balanced and is the total annual running self funding?

I look forward to your considered response.

Harpenden will not forgive the LibDems when voting comes round again.

Good Afternoon,

I would like to oppose to these parking proposals and ask for some common sense to be had.

Brad and Dills, as a hospitality business in Harpenden, we need footfall and we need our customers to be able to park nearby. These charges will put the general public off visiting our shops and other shops, it will become a risk and an effort to come for their coffee or their lunch, as it could quite easily turn into an expensive trip.

We already have issues with the lack of loading areas for our deliveries and internal company deliveries, these restrictions will cause more issues and stresses on our business.

Our staff can not afford to pay for parking in this current climate, some need free parking to survive and work, this could risk us losing staff members due to parking costs and also cause unrest within our working environment.

The only winner in these proposals is the councils pocket but unfortunately if this goes ahead you will end up having backlash from businesses, local workers, residents and visitors.

This town thrives as it is, there is a nice relaxed environment, unlike St Albans where parking is unfair, the wardens are like vultures creating tension between the council and general public. If you add restrictions in town people will park in the nearby roads where there are no restrictions, this is where residents park and need their peace and quiet. It will only cause more issues down the line.

Kind regards

(REDACTED)

Dear (REDACTED) and who it may concern in the St Albans council offices.

I have now seen the proposed parking changes for in and around station road in Harpenden.

I am very upset and disappointed that working disabled people have not been considered.

I have a degenerative spinal condition, arthritis and an autoimmune disease called Lupus (SLE). This means there is no cure and I'm only getting worse over time. However, even with all of this I do my best to go to work every day as this keeps me going physically and mentally. By being able to park near the shop where I work (as the store does not have parking due to being on the right-hand side as you go up station road) is the only way I can go to work and maintain my attendance for my job. My Employers are doing all they can to help me to do my job taking in to account all my issues and we find ways to make it work for both me and the business.

You are proposing that disabled spaces are now only going to be for 3 hrs and no return within 2 hours means I cannot now work the hours I am employed for.

Can you please explain to me and any other disabled people who work in Harpenden how I keep my job.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

We have a provisional overnight closures of:

A1081 London Road Tuesday 27th August to Friday 30th August (I think this will affect only Warwick House in London Road with access to Marlborough Road via Victoria Street, but I will confirm this with the construction manager).

Upper Marlborough Road Monday 2nd September 2024 – Wednesday 4th September 2024.

Marlborough Road Thursday 5 September to Friday 6 September.

Vehicles may not be able to access properties between 7pm and 2am and may not be able to move their vehicles that evening/night.

Is there anything we can arrange so residents can use either the Keyfield Terrace or London Road car park (or Bricket Road/Civic Centre for Upper Marlborough Road) if they arrive back late or need to use their vehicle during the road closure times?

These dates have not been confirmed yet and may well change, but I'm keen to examine any options at an early date.

Regards

(REDACTED)

Dear Sir or Madam

Is the Lib Dem St Albans council trying to kill off Harpenden High Street shopping and hospitality altogether?

I strongly object to the proposal to introduce any kerbside parking charges in Harpenden.

The shops and hospitality venues rely on footfall which will seriously reduce with the introduction of kerbside pay to park. Already there are a number of empty shops with some having been empty for quite some time. The town centre is already struggling. It needs positive help; not out and out hinderance, to thrive.

The costs entailed with introducing then operating a kerbside pay to park will outway any financial benefit.

Please see my email below outlining my objections

I have tried to lodge my comments on the link provided below with no success. It is very confusing.

I would be happy to discuss this with anyone at SADC.

Please ensure my voice is heard.

Kind regards

Dear Sir / Madam.

I am writing to object to parking charges in the current free limited bays in Harpenden Town Centre. Key reasons.

1. Will undoubtedly hurt businesses in the town centre as people will seek alternative areas to shop. Without question some shops will be forced out of business and be clear you will be held to account for that.
2. The 20 minute gratis time proposed does not allow enough time for most town centre visits particularly to Doctors and Dentists or ant realistic appointment.
3. There is nothing wrong with the current 1 hour limitation which allows for reasonable visiting time and ensures a regular flow of shoppers (I am sure that it is why it was introduced in the first place.
4. If the council cannot live within its means it needs to find ways to spend less or increase Council tax accordingly rather than imposing stealth taxes.

Please confirm receipt of this email.

Thank you

To whom it may concern.

As a Harpenden resident please can you note my strong objection to the proposed changes to on street parking in Harpenden ref PPB/01.

I have a number of points to make including;

Detrimental impact on businesses in the High Street, Harpenden area. Leading to, fewer customers, and in turn more empty premises and less income from business rates.

Less passing trade.

Diverting trade to other towns where parking is more freely available or to out of town shopping parks.

Charging will impact greatest on those on lower or fixed incomes.

Make it more difficult to access essential services and amenities whether, the library or chemists.

Increased congestion further away from the High Street area as drivers circle looking for available free parking.

Cost of installing and maintaining any ticket machines.

Disenfranchising those without smart phones and older drivers who are not "tech" proficient.

Noted increase in scams using QR codes on ticket machines as frequently mentioned by Trading Standards.

Adversely affecting the current "feel" of the town as a friendly welcoming place to live and work.

Enforcement will be more costly and resource-intensive.

20 minutes "free" is of no use to anyone as you can spend that trying to find a working ticket machine or even queuing the

Post Office.

The argument that the proposed changes are to “effectively manage the control and turnover of limited waiting parking spaces” is obviously a smoke screen to raise funds from parking for other purposes. My understanding that this is not allowed under current legislation?

The impact these proposed changes would make can already been seen in roads adjacent to the High Street after 6.30PM when parking in car parks became chargeable in the evening. Now cars are parked on single yellow lines restricting traffic flow and a danger to pedestrians rather than using the car parks whilst at a local pub or restaurant, doing late night shopping and collecting commuters from the station.

Whilst writing this note may I also mention the mean and spiteful change in withdrawing the senior citizens parking permit. This was a well-used and appreciated service and whilst nowhere near as generous as free public transport for London residents generated business and income for local traders as well as facilitating visits to Doctors, Dentist etc without the hassle of using an app (see point above) or locating scarcer loose change. It also helped those with lower mobility in enabling them to park nearer the High Street without additional worry. I would be surprised if the loss in income from selling annual permits has resulted in greater takings from the chargeable car parks whilst inconveniencing the very people who bring life and income to the town during the day. I was not a beneficiary myself but know from friends who did have the permit what a sad loss the withdrawal was. I do hope the council can re-consider the senior citizens parking permit even if at a higher cost than before as I'm sure local businesses would benefit even at the lower time limit of 2 hours rather than the original 3 hours.

I am writing as a Harpenden town resident to register my strong objection to the proposed changes to on street parking in Harpenden – ref PPB/01

I have a number of objections:

This would reduce both Harpenden resident's easy access to the town centre and the scale of proposed parking fees would also deter visitors. It would impact badly on businesses in the High Street Harpenden area. It would divert trade to other towns where parking is more freely available or to out of town shopping parks. Fewer customers would lead to business closures. These are businesses already challenged with high business rates and rent, fuel costs and the growth of on line shopping. Business closures and empty premises leads to a less vibrant town leads to more business closures – a vicious circle – isolated residents and zero community spirit.

We already have to pay higher parking costs in our car parks compared to other areas. This would be an additional cost to residents and would be detrimental to the town centre.

In what way does this proposal support a "Vibrant High Street" and "Thriving businesses" both of which the Council claim are their objectives?

Has this been considered in the whole? If businesses suffer, which undoubtedly they will, and have to close this will lead to more empty premises and a reduction in income from business rates.

The Council hopes that this proposal will "promote active travel". A not insignificant number of the town's population are elderly and have mobility issues. They need easy access to Harpenden's centre and its facilities. They cannot walk a few miles into town and back – or ride a bicycle!

The concept of parking ticket machines will be a deterrent to many of the elderly who do not have smartphones and are not "tech savvy"

20 minutes of free parking is not enough to achieve even a short task. This would not be sufficient to either queue at the Post Office or Pharmacy , pop into the supermarket for a quick top-up shop or select a book at the library. A minimum of 1 hour free parking on all parking bays is essential.

Charging to park for anything above 20 minutes would impact greatest on those on lower and fixed incomes, the less well off.

If you believe that there are some who are abusing the current system then why not police it properly?

This would increase congestion further away from the High Street as drivers circle looking for available free parking.

Please listen to what the local community and traders want and not what the councillors think is good for us.

Further to this I would like to register a further objection:

The withdrawal of the senior citizens parking permit seems a mean spirited gesture which will undoubtedly have an adverse effect for both the seniors and the town.

The elderly need social contact with others. As part of their socialising many seniors go regularly into Harpenden and spend money in shops and cafes. The prohibitive parking costs will lead to fewer visits. The High Street loses revenue, the seniors lose their social contact.

Many do not have smartphones and many more are not confident to use parking Apps. The frequent warnings from Trading Standards re scams using QR codes on ticket machines have scared them.

Many seniors do voluntary work, either in charity shops or for other organisations. Until now they have been able to buy a parking permit which has allowed them cheaper parking whilst volunteering. Some will find the parking costs are too much for them to continue their volunteering. A loss to both the charities and to the seniors.

This was a well-used and appreciated service and nowhere near as generous as free public transport for London residents. I do hope that the Council can reconsider the senior citizens parking permit for all, even if it is at a slightly higher cost than before.

Dear (REDACTED),

I am writing to you as SADC's parking lead in response to the proposals for on street parking charges for Harpenden.

I believe that the charges as proposed will have a hugely detrimental effect on both Harpenden town centre as a commercial and social centre and also on the people of the town. People will simply take their trade elsewhere and traders will suffer.

To only allow 20 minutes free parking is insufficient for most people's needs. To charge £2.50 per hour up to £5.00 for two hours is extortionate and is going to deter many residents including myself from parking in the town.

Current charges for Sainsbury's car park are £2.10 for one hour, £3.70 for two hours are already excessive so I do not park there. Previously 30 minutes cost only 70p.

To suggest that, "the changes will benefit the community by promoting active travel and discouraging people from parking on the street longer than they need" is simply not correct. Essential food shopping has to be done by car for most people.

Can I suggest that the introduction of on street parking charges be delayed for further consideration.

Personally I would recommend a continuation of one hour free parking.

Failing that, a minimum of 30 minutes free parking and much lower charges thereafter.

Finally, I wonder if you can advise me where I can find information on the costings for the proposed scheme, and expected payback timescale as presumably there will need to be substantial investment in a monitoring system.

Perhaps you would consider this a freedom of information request:

Details of the cost/ benefit analysis which presumably has been carried out: comparing the anticipated revenues for SADC against the costs of the scheme and the costs to the traders and people of Harpenden.

- 2 Details of any contracts for which SADC has invited tenders and any contracts placed.

Thank you for your kind understanding. I look forward to hearing from you.

Dear Sirs: I am at a loss to understand the thinking behind the proposal by St Albans Council to take away the free on street parking in Harpenden High Street. I cannot see any benefit in doing this as it will massively inconvenience shoppers who spend money in the shops and cafes, businesses and shops trying to do business (the cost of parking will of course have to be taken into account on top of the cost of any goods/services customers wish to purchase), resulting in them going elsewhere. I believe you say that the changes will benefit the community as a whole “by promoting active travel” – what does that mean? To me “active travel” means no one will stop in Harpenden, they will travel straight through!! They probably will and that is no good to anyone and if brought in it certainly will discourage people from parking in the street.

While on the subject of parking, for many years I enjoyed the 3 hours “free” parking for Senior Citizens such as me where one paid around £40 per annum for the permit. Your council reduced the three hours to two (I did write to you about this but received no reply!) which was no good to me at all! I am 80 and am rather slow these days so by the time I had gone to St Albans/Harpenden, parked in one of the Council car parks and walked to the shops and made a few purchases I had no time to have a coffee or lunch as I would have to walk (slowly) back to the car park. Therefore I was not able to visit St Albans at all last year. Now I understand this permit is to be means tested and only those on Pension Credit or similar will be able to have it. Of course that means I now do not qualify for this permit as I have savings and wonder whether those on Pension Credit will be able to afford a car anyway. Public transport is pretty dismal and I for one would struggle to get on and off!! There are few “perks” for pensioners these days and at least the original 3 hours parking permit was very useful and gave enough time to shop AND have a quick coffee/lunch.

(I do have concerns also about parking APPs! Some of us find these very difficult to deal with – hopefully there will be a cash option to pay?)

Perhaps your decision makers are young and active – and good luck to them – but please remember some of us who have worked all our lives, paid our taxes, including Council Tax of course, do need a little something to make life more interesting as one gets older.

I would ask you to please reconsider your parking decisions and to take into account the needs of everyone, including the older generation – we are forgotten or disregarded by many these days please do not add to our problems!

Dear (REDACTED)

I have been a resident of Harpenden for nearly 40 years and never before had I felt the need to write to a Councillor regarding an issue that I believe could fundamentally destroy the town I love.

The proposed removal of free parking spaces in Harpenden town centre in favour of parking meters seems to me to show a complete misunderstanding of the community that supports the town's retailers, cafés, restaurants and community services. I am one of many retired people who regularly shop in the town and meet friends for coffee and a chat. Personally I visit the town practically every day, sometime twice a day if I am involved in activities in the evenings. If I am expected to pay for parking every time I come into town I may have to seriously reconsider my current lifestyle.

But setting my personal circumstances aside, there are two serious issues that the council really need to consider carefully:

Many of the most regular users of the town and its services, in particular the elderly and disabled, are not willing or perhaps capable of operating a mobile phone app, which I understand is the proposed method of payment for the car parks and parking meters. This could seriously impact the lives of the older members of the community who rely on visiting the town centre to maintain their health and wellbeing.

There are a considerable number of charity shops and other services, e.g. the Library and the new museum, that rely on volunteers to keep them operational. If these proposals go ahead, those volunteers will almost certainly find parking in the town prohibitively expensive and may decide to volunteer their services elsewhere. The result could be catastrophic for

charities that already have issues with recruiting volunteers.

My concern is that a set of proposals predicated on raising funds for the council could virtually destroy Harpenden Town Centre as we know it. If people decide to boycott the town because of the parking charges, the various businesses, already working to tight profit margins, will simply close. The town will be desolated and by the time the council realise their mistake it will be too late to save it. It has happened in other places and it will happen here if these ideas are not reconsidered.

Re: Parking Charges plans

I am a resident of Harpenden of over 40 years, I am really against your proposal of parking charges on the High St. Only allowing 20 mins free. As a pensioner I feel we pay enough. Is this a money making scheme to boost your finances? and who can do a shop or have a coffee in 20 mins!! What your going to allow.

I and many others would have trouble paying these charges by phone. People will simply NOT come, which will affect our businesses. How will this improve our village and community. I'm really unhappy about this.

Leave our High St parking alone

Dear (REDACTED),

I am writing to protest about the proposed parking charges in Harpenden.

I find it amazing that the Council have even thought of such an idea, when regularly the National Press highlights the problems in towns and cities across the UK that because of parking charges, footfall drops, and in many cases, shops close because of falling income.

Many shops in Harpenden are already paying rents of £60,000 and more for homes sales. Because of a reduction in shoppers could be the end for them.

The present system of free limited time on car seems to work and your comments in the Herts Advertiser that the proposed system would discourage people staying longer than they need is not really valid as we have Traffic Wardens to catch out such actions.

I feel sure the Council has more important matters to consider at this time e.g., How often are streets in swept. The growth of trees in the recent years has become a danger in many areas and the council grossly cutting back which this year has been very good for some, and no doubt "to do with going around trees and roots left unmet so there is now none with a strimmer to support the lawnmower system.

I ask that you think again and carefully about the proposal. The cost must be high and you should think - would I do this if I was using my own money.

The S.A.D.C. are already 4-6 years behind in getting their Local Plan agreed and I am sure there is a black hole in Council budgets due to their error of judgment with the old Harpenden Public Hall.

To conclude I feel that the parking fee proposal is unjust and wrong.

I have lived in Harpenden for 48 years and do not wish it to deteriorate further.

Dear Sirs,

I wish to record my strong objection, before the closure of public consultation on 14th August, to the charging proposals put forward for consultation by the District Council.

I am a resident of Harpenden for over 41 years and a former High Street retailer operating shops at various times in both Harpenden High Street and in Southdown.

I will try and summarise my points :

- 1) Whoever thought that 20 minutes free parking was adequate has obviously never experienced the frequent delays in pharmacies when delivering and collecting prescriptions etc. In the most central parts of the town some parking near to such pharmacies has been limited to 30 minutes. Why shorten it and where is the evidence that a reduction of 10 minutes is still a sufficient amount of time to make these essential short trips? The imposition of a 20 minutes free parking smacks of opportunism on SADC's part to collect more revenue through fines for overstaying the minimal time limit. I hope that this is not the case.
- 2) Where are the Council's proposals to improve local bus services so that more people, including the elderly and less able (other than blue badge holders) can easily get into town in this way from ALL parts of Harpenden rather than using a car? This has not even been considered or is guaranteed to my knowledge.
- 3) Why has the current enforcement of time limited free parking not been adequate? Could better enforcement by SADC be deployed which does not need parking charges to be implemented.
- 4) Why is SADC contemplating parking charges at a time of a cost of living crisis?

- 5) Why is SADC not listening to the views of the traders, especially some of the independent retailers who will obviously lose trade by the imposition of parking charges as experienced and evidenced in many other town centres. Do we really need increased vacancies in the town?
- 6) Safety is being used as an excuse for introducing charging. What are the concerns and where is the evidence of such? Surely whether parking is free or not has little if any bearing on safety. If there are safety issues, then the Council should tell us what they are and how they might be addressed by means other than introducing charges.
- 7) The introduction of more street furniture (payment machines) will not improve the aesthetics and environment of the town centre.
- 8) Payment systems which do not work for the elderly (ie, phone or internet payments) provide the town with an unwelcoming feel and are discriminatory towards the elderly and less able/phone or computer literate.

As a long standing Harpenden resident I feel that the introduction of parking charges on our streets will diminish the 'friendly feel' to the town and its attractiveness to many people who use and admire the town centre.

The public, local residents and traders deserve a better understanding of the Council's motives in introducing a regime which is unwelcome and unnecessary.

We suspect, however, that as usual the views of the many will be totally disregarded when it comes to acting upon the results of this so-called consultation.

Please would you kindly acknowledge this email.

We are totally against your Parking Policy in Harpenden regarding introducing charging for car parking. Life is tough enough as it is. I have never known how costly everything is, particularly since the Liberal Party has been in control of Harpenden and St Albans.

Pest Control used to be a free service by the Council. Now this service is no longer available. The Green waste bin was included in the Council tax but the Liberal Councillors now make it chargeable. Starting at £42 and increased now to £63.

Now we have this new idea of making a charge for car parking. This is nothing but a disgraceful and money grabbing scheme. The charge of £2.50 an hour is terrible. For your information in Hemel Hempstead we can park for £4 for a day.

What we can't understand is that in the many leaflets we have had put through our letter box no mention was made of you charging for car parking in Harpenden. Is this our reward for voting 'Liberal'. I call it nothing short of a kick in the teeth to voters. I only hope that next time elections come about that people show how strongly they feel by voting you out of office.

We note with interest the 20 minute free parking allowance!! You obviously have not thought of the elderly because this does not allow for enough time to cross the road. I don't know how old you are but at our age this does not allow enough time to go into a shop let alone buy a few bits of shopping. Why are you so hell bent on making people's lives so very difficult. You shock us at your inconsiderate thinking.

We hope you will not go through with this policy and will stop wasting money.

Finally, if this does go ahead we should like your confirmation that you and members of your Staff will also be paying for

private and business car parking
fees and will not be charging it to expenses.

Finally, we will not forget this idea at the next election and feel many people will feel the same.

I have tried to fill in the consultation online as I vehemently disagree with St Albans District Council's plans regarding charging for parking in Harpenden. The online link does not appear to work and I would like to register my disapproval for this proposed scheme.

I will not use the High Street shops to the same extent - especially as SADC have withdrawn senior citizens parking permits - for which I paid annually.

Dear Sirs,

We strongly object to paid parking being introduced in the High Street Harpenden and in front of Marks and Spencer in Leyton Road. The current system works well with restrictions on the time cars can be left parked.

Our town is struggling with shops closing due to high rents and high business rates. Jo Jo Bebe Maman has just closed and we understand that Thompson's Art Gallery will be closing for the same reasons. As it is the town is short of real shops. Only charity shops, estate agents and cafes seem to be able to survive.

It is important that people can visit shops in the High Street without payment. The plans to introduce payment for anything over 20 mins will push parking up into the Avenues and other residential areas near the High Street. Living in (REDACTED) we already have cars parked Monday to Friday by people working in the town and commuters. It will exacerbate this

Firstly Harpenden is a rural town not part of the ever expanding suburban sprawl. It is outrageous that local council tax payers are expected to pay £2.50 per hour parking.

The 20 minute free parking is simply not long enough for parents to drop off and pick up their children. Several children in a family could have staggered

pick-up times quite apart from the need to pick up items required at home, speak to teachers or other parents. Such pick-ups/drop-offs could require the parent to take another small child out of the car which means that a pushchair has to be taken from the car and erected.

Paying £2.50 per hour will have a detrimental effect on the town's economy. This charge will discourage small independent enterprises from opening and doing sufficient business to stay open. Currently the town has facilities for cards, stationery, books, wrapping paper and gifts. It could take considerably longer to choose a gift and the price of a card would be prohibitive with £2.50 added.

Residents should not expect to pay to collect prescriptions from the chemists, or to make an appointment with a doctor, or to pay a paper bill. These may seem like small needs but 20 minutes does not account for the time being taken up.

incidentally when there is a queue at the shop or surgery being visited.

On a social and community level, businesses like coffee shops, restaurants and wine bars do not enjoy historical attractions like the Abbey, or the benefits of a weekly market in St Albans all these things contribute to economic survival.. Harpenden residents are not going to add £2.50 to their cup of coffee each time they go into the town centre. There are many people who go out purely to have social contact and for older people to be able to park their cars and have the exercise of walking a short distance contributes to their mental and physical health.

ACTIVE TRAVEL

Do not use the encouragement of Active Travel, it's patronising.

People who live in rural areas looked after by St Albans district Council are not necessarily able to engage in active travel for a number of reasons;

- a) During the Winter the roads are not adequately lit. It gets dark early in the Winter and the weather conditions are poor for walking and cycling,
- b) There is not a bus service near enough to where people live in order that people could carry even modest amounts of shopping from the drop off points. This also assumes a very consistent and reliable bus service. Such a service cannot be relied on in keeping appointments with the doctor, the dentist, the hairdresser.
- b) The standard of the road surfaces is poor in many areas, this adds to the dangers of cycling along roads which are not suitable for large vehicles.

MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT OF RESTRICTIONS

The installation of unsightly parking meters in a rural town could be counter balanced by traffic wardens. Are we set to loose the human community element completely.

Traffic enforcements could be achieved by the employment of traffic wardens to work in the area. You have gone ahead with these proposals absolutely no regard for the value of community life

write to strongly oppose the charging proposal.

If introduced these charges will not cause a problem for those who can afford to pay.

It will have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of those who depend on short trips to Harpenden for some shopping or appointments or just to get out and be physically active. Penalising these people who are most likely the longer term residents of the town is very short sighted and not the way to go.

I would urge for the charging proposal to shelved so that more reasonable and considered options for balancing the finances can be reviewed.

I am totally against this proposal, it will cause catastrophic damage to the towns shops.

Footfall will plummet and many local businesses will go to the wall. The heart of our town will be ripped out and the character or Harpenden will change.

I will no longer be prepared to go to local activities and be forced to pay an additional charge, I attend a seniors table tennis club and the inter generational choir, talking with members we all feel the same.

I find it incredible that the Lib Dem's would be so stupid as to push this act of vandalism through. Given the national clamour about declining town centres, which group of mis guided idiots would even consider this proposal.

I would never ever consider supporting the LD's either at local or national level.

> Dear Sirs

> I wish to object in the strongest manner to the proposed introduction of parking charges along Harpenden High St

> Firstly

> St Albans District council have recently stopped the yearly parking permits available to use in several car parks near the High St in Harpenden .This Will/ Has created more of a demand for short term free parking along the High St and adjacent areas.

>

> Secondly;Imposing expensive parking charges in the centre of Harpenden will result in driving customers away to out of town stores.

>

> Thirdly.St Albans District Council parking policy is aimed at extracting money unfairly from Residents .One such example today at St Albans Hospital Parking with Saba .No change is given from machines a £3.50 hours parking charge costs £4 if you don't have change .20 mins is free but if you want 60 mins parking you have to pay the full 60 mins charge and get no benefit from the free period .You can't leave an appointment in the middle and pay for an hours parking .

> St Albans And District should reinstate yearly parking permits and not proceed with the High St parking charges otherwise the town will suffer resulting in a reduced population long term and less income from Rates.

By charging on the high street you will:

1. Reduce shopping in Harpenden impacting the local shops.
2. Create congestion as people hunt for free spaces.
3. Increase the parking even further on the adjacent roads.

The council did a review of parking restrictions on Salisbury Avenue and other streets around it and decided not to make any changes. Putting charges on the high street will make these roads a car park 7 days a week and significantly impact the residents. If you do continue with the high street scheme, you need to add parking restrictions to the neighbouring roads otherwise you just move the issue along.

To whom it may concern

The proposed parking meter scheme is a bad idea I have spoken to shop keepers who say it will effect there trade which it will .

I am against the idea I live in Harpenden .

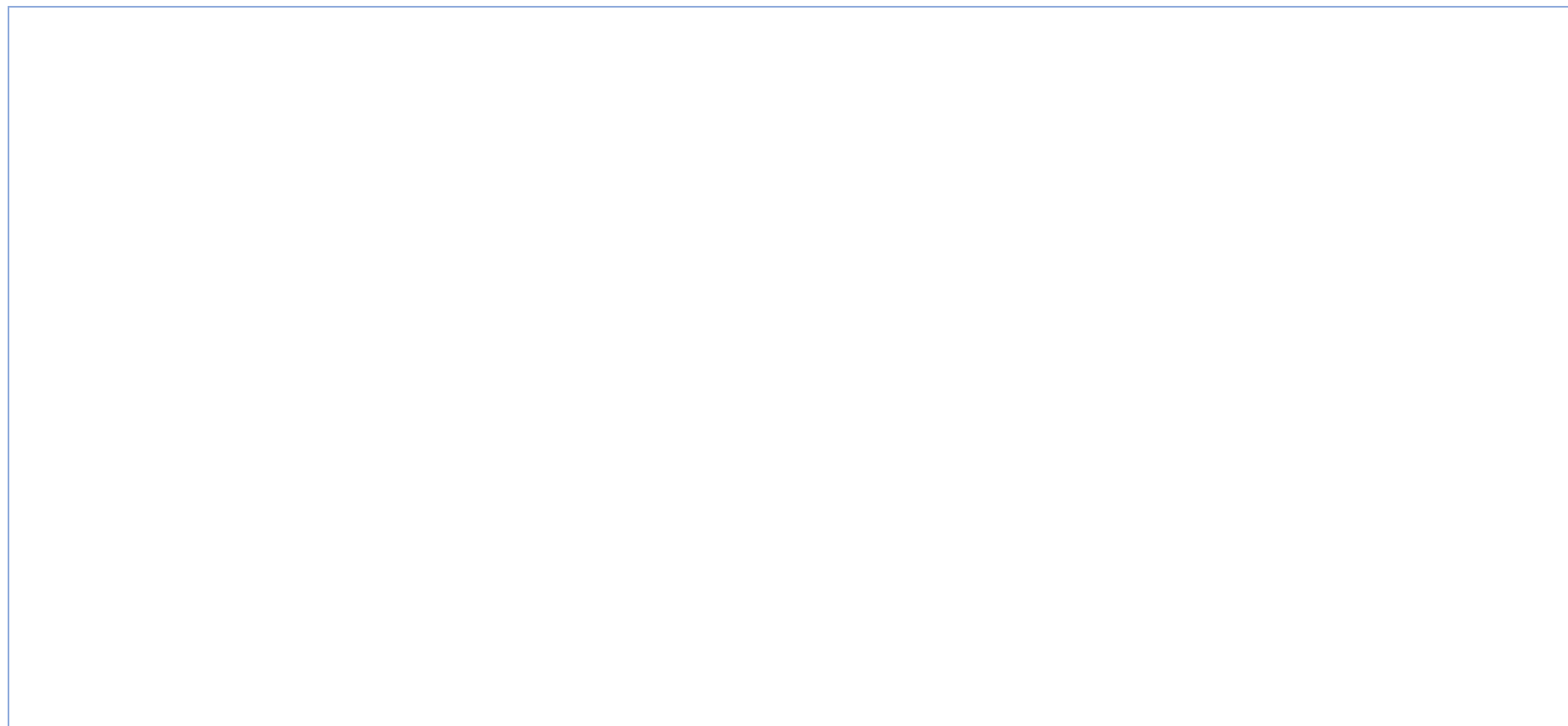
To whom it may concern

We represent the churches in and around Harpenden and wish to express the concerns of many in our church members and local residents regarding the proposed amendments to on-street parking in the town.

The current 1 hour free parking system allows people to shop and use the town's facilities without incurring a fee of any kind. It also ensures a turnover of parking spaces allowing more people to access the town.

We are concerned that the new system will have a negative impact on the town's economy, local shops, residents and those wishing to freely access our places of worship. Local businesses are likely to suffer as people are discouraged from shopping locally.

We are aware of the current consultation and a number of petitions circulating and we would ask to add our support to these asking for the council to reconsider these parking plans.



I tried following your suggestion to fill out the consultation online and got this:

Seriously, if that is this link that people are sent, you are not going to get very much feedback I am afraid!

However, I have already messaged our new MP with the message below.

Also, to emphasis my point regarding the (disjointed) parking system(s) already in place in town, let me provide you this example from my wife today.

She works as a volunteer in a local charity shop and parks and pays for 5 hour of a morning in Lydekker Car Park:

Paying by coins (or if you are lucky Contactless) = £4.40

Via an Online App = £2.80

REALLY?!

Furthermore, it should be noted that on-street parking in Welwyn Garden City is FREE for one hour!

I should start by welcoming you to Harpenden, perhaps not a town you are yet too familiar with but we are a welcoming community who appreciate fairness – note the demographic!

I understand that you may start to understand the town a little better next week with a council meeting scheduled, including this event and this item:

You are hereby summoned to the EXTRAORDINARY MEETING of the COUNCIL to be held on MONDAY 22 JULY 2024 in PARK HALL, LEYTON ROAD, HARPENDEN AL5 2LX commencing at 7.30PM.

6.1 SADC PARKING PROPOSALS – LIMITED WAITING BAYS – TO FOLLOW Report to follow on 18 July 2024.

I am not going to get into the adverse reaction of this proposal, however, if you want to make an immediate and effective impact in this town, can I suggest:

Target illegal (lazy) parking (eg outside locations such as Sainsbury's supermarket, with significant fines – if policed correctly, that would raise far more in revenue than casual (up to one hour) free parking.

Look at the car parking system in the town, it is a mess – multiple operators, parking by phone only, limited contactless metres, the need for coin payments, often “out of service” machines.

Happy to provide you with the stats but a ½ hour walk around will quickly prove the point.

I look forward to the difference you will make to the town – verges and pathways will be my next challenge for you – also a disgrace and mismanaged by the local appointed officers.

Hello,

I want to register my complaint about the on-street parking plans as part of the Harpenden parking consultation.

On-street parking charges in Harpenden are completely unreasonable especially when they are not being implemented anywhere else in the county.

It's totally unacceptable.

Dear St Albans Council

I have submitted an objection and would like to add one further point.

This consultation started at the beginning of the school holidays when many people will be away and possibly not aware of this proposal.

In view of this the consultation should be left open until the second week of September to allow as many residents as possible to become involved.

The message on the signs needs to be much clearer.

Consider sending a text to all Harpenden residents using contact details from council tax department.

I am writing to express my concern that you are considering parking fees in the streets around Harpenden High Street. The current free parking of 1 hour is not really sufficient to browse and shop but it helps when only 1 or 2 shops are visited. Should I need longer then there are ample car parks in Harpenden that charge. To introduce parking costs will result in killing the high street businesses. If I have to pay to park to do my weekly shop then I will go elsewhere where the parking is free.

This is disgusting and you need to reconsider. You will kill the High street.

Hi,

Please can you let me know how I oppose the parking changes that are being proposed in Harpenden from free to paid?

Having read the notice control of parking order 2024. I firmly believe the restrictions will kill off our town.

You would no longer park for an hour outside Boots, do your grocery , shop, pop to library, post office etc. If you do sports (other than those at the sport centre) are people willing to pay at least £4 for parking?

This scheme is going to cost money to administer, cause a lot of problems for people of low incomes and drivers who are not disabled but just not as fit as they were.

Please abandon this badly thought out plan .

I want to raise my concerns around the possible changes to parking charges in Harpenden.

I have lived in Harpenden my whole life, I am now 37 and my two children are also growing up here.

I started my own business in the area recently, a group for young families incorporating activities and knowledge from the early years curriculum. My business would not have been successful had it not been for the fact that all my customers were able to park for free, making it accessible for all. My customers stated this, having turned down other groups for lack of free and available parking.

Harpenden is not a city – St. Albans is. They should not be regarded in the same way. Harpenden has a number of local independent shops and groups which will be hugely impacted by the possible changes. These local businesses rely on people being able to pop in and out easily. I know that I would not visit the town centre as frequently if parking charges were in place.

These changes will affect livelihoods and change the town totally, forcing businesses into difficult situations and possible closure.

I don't understand why these changes are being made. I feel it is a decision based on greed without thought for how widely this will impact the community. No one I know is in favour of these changes. Please reconsider.

I would like to register a serious complaint about the lack of publicity given to the public consultation on the proposal to start charging for on-street parking in central Harpenden. The first time I became aware of the proposal and the consultation was via a leaflet about the scheme which was delivered to my house by the local Conservative Party. Unfortunately this was received too late as the consultation period of less than a month (18 July - 15 August) has just ended.

I have not received any information or notification from the council about the proposed scheme. I am surprised by this as I would have thought that the council has a duty to ensure that all local residents were made aware of the scheme and given an adequately publicised opportunity to comment on it

As this is the case, I hope it is not too late to register my objections.

I object to the scheme for the following reasons:

The proposed parking charge of £2.50 per hour is far too high and is much more expensive than charged in similar towns. This amount per hour is totally inappropriate for a small town like Harpenden. The proposed scheme and the amount to be charged per hour for parking seems to be entirely based on a desire by the district council to increase and maximise the revenue generated from parking charges.

I strongly object to the scheme including the parking spaces in Southdown Road as these are not in the town centre. These spaces are used by Harpenden residents who wish to walk on the common - and this should not cost £2.50 per hour!

This scheme is designed to raise yet more revenue for St Albans District Council by charging an extortionately high price for parking. This is totally unnecessary - particularly on Southdown Road.

I would be grateful if you can let me know if my objections to the scheme have been registered.

To whom it may concern

I would like to advise that I am unhappy with the proposal introduce parking charges in Harpenden High Street.

Have you considered using clock discs that residents could use to access free 1 hour parking? This system operates successfully in Richmond North Yorkshire, albeit the allow 2 hours and the cardboard clocks are distributed through shops, free of charge. It is an effective system which promotes local shopping and a flourishing community of businesses.

I am writing to you to express my opposition to the proposed parking charges regime for Harpenden town centre.

This is an extremely short-sighted measure which will damage High Street businesses and cause long term economic damage to the town due to the deterrence effect it will have on people who drive into town for their shopping and other leisure activities. It will simply divert business away from the town centre to the large retail facilities, such as in Luton or Dunstable and many other locations, which are within a relatively short drive of Harpenden and where there are no parking charges..

The justification, that it will "promote active travel", is spurious – those who can, like myself, walk into town already do so. Those who can't walk or cycle, particularly the elderly, will simply be charged a penalty for doing what they've always done. It might also have the effect of encouraging more online shopping, thus increasing the number of vans driving around the town.

Ultimately, this proposal will cost far more than the revenue it will generate in the short term only. I therefore ask you to re-think this proposal and leave things, which work just fine, as they are.

I wish to add my name to the thousands of Harpenden residents and retailers who oppose the above proposals.

In my opinion there is no necessity to install parking machines, create apps plus the extra administration dealing with fines etc all at major cost only to receive limited income per annum not to mention the huge impact of lost income to all the retailers in the area no doubt ultimately resulting in business closures and loss of rental income/taxes to the Council.

All that is needed is greater enforcement of the existing parking rules as we never see traffic wardens in Harpenden causing people to overstay the allotted parking time knowing that there is little chance of them receiving a ticket/fine.

If this was implemented not only would parking problems be eased as there would be less overstaying of parking times but the extra income received from those people who transgressed would add greatly to the shortfall in income being sought by SADC by the proposed parking charges.

Also , I understand that legally Councils are not allowed to use parking income as a means of bolstering income shortfalls and so this does beg the question as to whether these proposals can go ahead anyway when it has already been publicly stated by Paul de Kort that this is the reason for implementing theses parking charges. Not a good look from people who are supposed to be Liberal and Democratic !

Please please re- consider !

I wish to register my opposition to the Council's plans to introduce charges for parking on the streets in Harpenden as I believe they will unfairly disadvantage certain sections of the population, as detailed below:

The socially isolated who come into the town for a cheap coffee at the one of the many cafés to chat and interact with others otherwise they may not speak to anyone else all day. To add a parking charge of £5 each time would make this simply unaffordable for many.

Those who have limited financial resources. Not everyone in Harpenden is well-off and many won't be able to afford £5 per trip into town. The level of the charge is too high, £5 for 2 hours is unreasonable. Most people come into town multiple times during a week. For me the charge for parking would be £20 a week!

The shopkeepers will see their trade reduced as footfall will decrease. People will rush to do their essential tasks within the 20 minute or 1 hour time slots and will not linger to spend extra time perusing, ambling around the High Street for non-essential items.

Those who would struggle to walk to the town and back with shopping, most residential areas have an incline to climb on the return walk. I am a relatively fit person but live 1.5 miles away from the village centre. A 3 mile round trip carrying shopping, with a hill at the end is too much. The bus service to my area is so infrequent that it can't be relied on and costs nearly £4 for a return journey.

The elderly or infirm who still drive and are not immobile enough to have a blue badge but would struggle to walk to and from the car parks.

I understand the proposal will require payment for parking to be made using an app on a smart phone. There are many for whom this would not be possible because they don't own a smart phone or don't have the technical ability to download and use an app or who don't wish to store their financial details on a phone.

In conclusion, I don't believe this is an inclusive policy that considers the situations all residents. Those who are well-off or who live close enough to the town centre to walk won't be as adversely affected as others.

As well as disadvantaging these groups of residents, it will change the character of the town. It will become far from the welcoming, vibrant town we all desire.

These are just the groups of people who spring to my mind, I'm sure there are others, who would be severely impacted by such a plan. I urge you to reconsider the proposal in the light of these concerns.

I am emailing regarding the proposed parking charges in Harpenden, which I am very strongly against.

In a small, struggling but still fighting town like Harpenden where there are already huge business rates, I can't imagine a more anti-business proposal.

People will no longer pop into town to run a quick errand, or to pick something up in town. They will simply go online instead. It is not just the extra cost, it is also the extra time incurred in paying for parking verses parking up and running a quick 10 minute errand.

As the high street is killed off, so also will the sense of community spirit also be as people bump into each other less, talk less, help each other less, and recede into their own homes and screens more.

What a dismal prospect to be pursuing, and I think the Lib Dem's should be ashamed of themselves.

I strongly urge you to rethink and scrap this idea.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to object to the changes proposed to the currently free parking in Harpenden for two main reasons:

1. Personal experience of visitors and residents, and spend in shops. The ability to pop into town, spend money in the shops or run errands without having to spend time and money with mobile apps or parking machines to simply park, is important to me. Apps and payments are a layer of unnecessary friction which I feel would reduce footfall and spend for those shops in town.
2. Character of the town. Harpenden town centre has a village feel which is part of its charm. Having multiple parking notices on multiple poles, parking machines and many more patrolling traffic wardens everywhere would spoil some of this charm – and I reject entirely the argument that because other areas might have this situation (St Albans City, for example) then Harpenden also needs to have it.

Moving to the “Statement of Reasons” document online, let’s take each point in turn:

1. Encourage active travel. Payment for parking I feel will make people stay away, not necessarily use other modes of transport. Thus hurting the economy.
2. Increased Enforcement. Why is this listed as a reason? This is a very odd point to list here, it is not a benefit, it’s something that would be needed to enforce your new rules.
3. Greater turnover of premium spaces. There are already limits on how long you can stay in bays (1h, 2h etc.), perhaps just enforce these more as they are to achieve turnover if you feel this is a problem (I don’t think it is an issue, I can’t remember a time I could never find a space).

4. 20min free sessions. This is not enough time to do anything. A queue at the post office or coffee shop might take longer than this for example, adding to general stress for visitors to the town centre.

I believe these four “reason” statements are quite weak and ill thought through.

In summary, I object to the proposals as they are unnecessary and I feel would have a negative effect on residents, visitors, businesses, the street scene and the character of Harpenden, for little or no obvious gain. I would ask the council to reconsider, and to spend the not inconsiderable amount of money required to set this up, on something more positive, or indeed just enforce more the current time limits on bays if that is the problem you’re looking to solve.

I wish to confirm my opposition to the proposed parking charges in central Harpenden. Whilst I generally use the main car parks within the town, using my Senior Citizens Pass, I feel very strongly that the proposed changes will do severe damage to the shops, cafes, restaurants and other businesses in our town. It is well documented that High Streets throughout the country are under increasing threat so we strive to shop locally to ensure that Harpenden can remain the vibrant and varied shopping centre we currently have. For quick trips to the chemist or whatever, the on-street spaces are invaluable but the proposed free 20 minutes is not long enough for many errands. If it is not possible to find a space near to the shop or business you wish to visit, by the time you walk to your destination, do the errand with possible queuing involved (especially at the Post Office counter in W H Smiths), then walk back to your car, this is more than likely to over-run the 20 minute free parking.

I have great objections to using apps for parking and would not want to pay for parking via this method. Where payment is required I would want to pay by swipe card. I am also very distressed that the Senior Citizens Pass is being discontinued. I am 72 and unable to walk or cycle into the town centre which is several miles away from my home. I, and many others, attend a weekly one hour exercise class for older people and need to park in excess of one hour to give time to walk to and from the class, change shoes etc. If we have to pay for the class each week plus another £5 on top for parking, it is going to prohibit a lot of people from being able to attend.

I know that the majority of Harpenden residents are shocked and upset about the proposed changes and sincerely hope that our views will be taken into account. Thank you.

Imposing parking fees in a town centre can have several negative consequences that outweigh the potential benefits.

Firstly, parking fees can deter people from visiting the town centre, leading to a decline in foot traffic and, consequently, a reduction in sales for local businesses. Many small businesses rely heavily on customers who come to the area by car, and if these customers are discouraged by the additional cost of parking, they may choose to shop elsewhere, such as in out-of-town shopping centres or online, where parking is either free or not an issue. This can contribute to a decline in the vibrancy and economic health of the town centre, which can also impact property values and the overall appeal of the area.

Secondly, parking fees can disproportionately affect low-income individuals who may not be able to afford the additional costs. This can create a barrier for these individuals to access essential services and shops located in the town centre. Such a policy risks making the town centre less inclusive and accessible, reinforcing economic inequalities.

Moreover, the introduction of parking fees can lead to increased congestion in surrounding residential areas as drivers attempt to avoid the fees by parking in nearby streets, causing inconvenience to residents. This can also create safety concerns, as increased street parking can block sightlines, making it more dangerous for pedestrians, particularly children and the elderly.

Additionally, the administrative costs of implementing and enforcing parking fees, such as installing meters, managing payments, and maintaining the infrastructure, may outweigh the revenue generated. This could result in minimal financial benefit for the local government while imposing significant inconvenience and costs on both residents and visitors.

In summary, while the intention behind imposing parking fees may be to generate revenue or manage congestion, the potential negative impacts on local businesses, economic inclusivity, residential areas, and administrative efficiency suggest that this policy could do more harm than good in a town centre. A more balanced approach, such as improving public transportation or providing free short-term parking, might achieve the desired goals without the adverse effects.

Hi

In addition to the proposed parking meters, Would you please consider offering a town centre 1 or 2 hour parking permit for Harpenden residents.

- The convenience is a big factor for locals wanting to pop to the shops as I do pretty much every day.
- The price is less important than the convenience so it doesn't need to be cheap.
- I believe offering a permit for residents will enable the high street shops to maintain their footfall levels and help maintain the health of the centre which will be otherwise compromised.

Please register my strong opposition to these proposal

The consultation appears to be window dressing to a decision already made

In the recent election no LibDem literature made any reference to this

It is my clear belief the proposals will do little to raise revenue or improve parking and will do significant harm to local businesses

As the town council and population of Harpenden object it would be grossly undemocratic.

I object to the proposals on the following grounds.

1. As regards the consultation exercise, SADC is in breach of the Gunning Principles. The first of which is as follows.

Proposals are still at a formative stage. A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined, by the decision maker.

The proposals are not at a formative stage, as shown by the fact that SADC has given notice of its intention to make a TRO to introduce very specific new measures, and as evidenced by the comments of the Council Leader as reported in the St Albans Times, to the effect that there would be a consultation but the proposals would go ahead regardless. The consultation poses numerous specific questions the responses to which SADC should have given "conscientious consideration" (Gunning principle 4) before formulating specific proposals. Inviting objections in the notice is not the same as carrying out a consultation to gather information. By launching the consultation at the same time as posting notice of the intention to make the TRO, SADC has effectively conflated two stages in the process, presumably in its haste to introduce the new restrictions.

The consultation process is therefore unlawful. SADC should accordingly withdraw the notice and give proper consideration to the consultation responses before coming to a decision. If it fails to do so, it leaves itself open to an application for judicial review.

2. SADC claims the parking budget is in deficit. I have considered the Annual Parking Report 2021-2023. This does indeed show a deficit, and this is clearly where the claim comes from. However, this account relates only to the on street parking activity any surplus for which is ring fenced under s. 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The account relates to the whole of the district; there is no information as to how much of the deficit might be properly attributed to Harpenden. But perhaps more importantly, SADC takes in the income from its car parks. I contend that, whilst the income from car parks is not ring fenced, for the purpose of budgeting for SADC parking services, the income from car parks should be included. It is not legitimate for budgeting purposes to isolate the on street element.

3. Furthermore, the focus of thinking appears to be very much "St Albans". There seems to be no thought given to what is appropriate for the different communities within the district, or even any inkling of a recognition that they might have different needs. Harpenden is a very different place from St Albans. It is much more based on being a local town centre compared with the much larger St Albans. The inflexible thinking carries over into the budgeting process. Deciding what is right for Harpenden should include asking the question: what is the income and expenditure for parking services in Harpenden, including car park income? Car park income generated in Harpenden should be reinvested in Harpenden. SADC, however, seems very reluctant to part with the figures needed for this calculation.

4. In its Statement of Reasons, SADC highlights four "benefits" of the proposals.

5. Firstly, Encourage Active Travel. Is there really evidence that imposing these charges will generate the modal shift SADC claims? The public transport simply does not exist to the extent required. Do SADC really imagine people are going to walk from any distance and struggle back with their weekly shop? Instead of indulging in speculative and unproven wishful thinking, SADC should get its priorities in order and concentrate on supporting the economic health of the high street rather than damaging it, as these proposals certainly will.

6. Secondly, Increased enforcement. There is clearly a debate to be had about the amount and nature of enforcement. Anecdotally it is said that there is widespread abuse of the controls. But what is the evidence? How much is there really?

7. Thirdly, Greater turnover of premium places. The main focus of concern, understandably, has been the introduction of charges. However, there is a real question about the proposed change to the allowed period of stay (regardless of whether charged for). The proposal is to change what are currently 30 minute and one hour bays into two hour bays. I am baffled as to how allowing staying for two hours will increase turnover. Quite the opposite, surely. I do not see how parking charges encourage turnover, as SADC claims. It is the length of the permitted stay that dictates turnover.

8. The Statement of Reasons then says this.

"The cost of providing parking services should be met from the income received from fees and charges"

That is certainly a legitimate point of view, but only if

- (1) all parking income is included, not just on street income, and
- (2) the calculation is based on the community based approach outlined above.

Interestingly, the Statement of Reasons refers to the charges already levied in car parks as supporting the proposals. Why, then, does it not take the point to its logical conclusion and include that income in calculating parking income?

9. It is relevant to consider the income that would be generated by the charging regime. There would I understand be 241 paid-for bays. Controlled hours would be 10 hrs a day, 6 days a week. So:
 $241 \times £2.50 \times 10 \times 6 \times 52 = £1,879,800$.

This is a crude calculation and no doubt the actual take would be less. Nevertheless it gives a sense of the scale of what we are talking about. It looks like a pretty hefty sum, additional to the existing income. Can this be justified in parking control terms - as opposed to simply using it as a cash cow, which SADC will be aware is unlawful.

10. There is no doubt in my view that imposing charges will act as a deterrent to people coming into town and reduce footfall, to the detriment of our shopkeepers and businesses. SADC are steamrolling these proposals through without any meaningful engagement with the community and dismissing out of hand the legitimate concerns of the business community. They need to come to the table to address the issues openly and seriously.

Let me remind the Lib Dems of what they said in their election manifesto.

"We will support entrepreneurs, back small businesses ... to help our high streets."

Well, now they need to live up to that commitment, not betray it.

I am writing to express my objections to the proposed changes to payment for parking in Harpenden. Whilst I understand the rationale for the free 20 mins this does not help if people like myself want to spend more than 20 minutes shopping. I am a pensioner and live in (REDACTED) so I cannot walk into Harpenden so rely on my car. I appreciate that I can catch the bus but I will struggle with my bags of shopping (as will mums with children). This will have a dramatic effect on businesses in Harpenden as people cannot afford pay £5 in these times of financial difficulty for 2 hours parking. Please can the council rethink these poorly thought through proposals.

I would like to strongly oppose the high street parking charges. There are dozens of reasons why this should not go ahead versus zero benefits.

Good afternoon,

I write to strongly oppose the parking restrictions that have been suggested in Harpenden.

It benefits absolutely no one and destroys the charm and high street appeal. Why on earth would the council want to do that? It ruined St Albans too.

This is an insane idea.

Stop the plan to charge for parking in Harpenden. Save the high street – one of the few actually surviving in the uk.

Why do I even need to write this painfully obvious fact.

I'd be happy go into this in detail and demonstrate to you some fee generating activity for the council that would not be destructive to the town.

Get in touch.

I object to this pay to park on the basis that we already get a large number of drivers parking two wheels on the pavement where there are double yellow lines. If we have payment parking there will be more of this happening. Also there are many cars parked on the single yellow line on Bowes parade. Admittedly some are disabled which is allowed but 4 out of 5 are not. If you walk around the High St all day you will always see this happening and most of the drivers think, "I'm only going to be a few minutes" when in the mean time pedestrians have to walk in the road. Quite often one see Disabled slots used by others as well. If we had a permanent warden they would make a lot of money from those who illegally park plus those others that park for more than the stated time.

I am writing in response to the proposals for charging for on-street parking in Harpenden's town centre. I am generally not opposed to the concept of doing this as it'll help reduce congestion and improve safety for all road users, and the 20 minute free period gives enough time for school/nursery pick-ups and quick shopping trips. However, my largest concern is that this will simply drive visitors away from the town and towards out-of-town shopping centres and supermarkets instead. Time and time again across many other towns and cities, it's been shown that higher parking charges simply deter people from visiting and contribute significantly to the decline of the high street, with independent businesses closing up en masse due to the drop in footfall. Worse, these visitors simply never return, so efforts to revitalise the high street often falter. I'd hate to see the same happen to Harpenden.

I would therefore suggest an additional proposal to compensate for the loss of on-street parking - expand the off-street car parks and provide 2-3 hours free parking in these. This provides a more secure parking area for visitors, while encouraging the town centre's streets to be kept clear of parked cars, making it safer for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists alike whilst reducing congestion. This time period is long enough for a shopping trip while ensuring a good turnover of parking spaces and deterring rail commuters from using them in place of the station's car park. With this alternative in place, I am sure much of the opposition to these changes would be quickly dropped.

I hope you will be able to consider this proposal as part of your consultation.

Dear Sirs,

This proposed introduction of on street parking charges is a nonsense. It will ruin the historic high street charm that has always been Harpenden's attraction.

This scheme will, in your documents, only raise around £200K p.a. Which is a drop in the ocean compared to how St Albans Council waist money., such as the aborted redevelopment of Harpenden Halls, over £500K waisted!!!!

I know you will play the different budget finances, but what will this proposed parking scheme cost to install, monitor and maintain? More than £200k p.a. Thats for sure.

I know St Albans Council has expanded considerably over the past 10years, you should be seriously looking at slimming down the head count and wage bill before fiddling with Harpenden parking.

The other concern is how will people pay for parking if this goes ahead. Smart Phone apps discriminate against older residents and online payment takes ages to complete. Many elderly people who rely on their cars do not have or understand a smart phone.

I've never known Harpenden residents to be so up in arms about anything so much as this. If this goes ahead the LibDems will be kicked out at the next set of local elections.

I refer to the above consultation.

In my professional opinion, as a Chartered Surveyor who has been involved in the letting, sale and management of retail property for over 35 years, the proposals are illjudged, misconceived and lacking in any form of substantive research as to the impact of such car parking charges in the viability of an otherwise thriving town centre.

I would like to see what research has been undertaken on the impact of car parking charges. There is ample evidence within the retail community as to the negative impact on town centres due to car parking charges. This is the reason why out of town centre retail developments, which by and large offer free parking, are continuing to thrive at the expense of town centres.

In addition, has the council actually undertaken a study as to the lost income due to an absolute failure to manage the current car parking arrangements? Anyone working in Harpenden will know that there are cars parked all day in parking bays without ever receiving a penalty notice. The lack of car parking attendants means people are prepared to play "the game" and risk getting a penalty notice, knowing full well the chances are slim. This was evident a few weeks ago when Vaughan Road was "resurfaced". A single car was parked all day, notwithstanding the road closure, and the contractor for Herts CC resurfaced around the car without removing it and with no penalty notice in sight. Was there a parking attendant in Harpenden on that day? The loss of potential income must be huge.

In conclusion, the council should 1) undertake a detailed assessment on the impact of car parking charges on town centres and 2) ascertain what income is currently lost by not policing the current policy.

Only when these two points have been fully explored should the proposals be brought back for consultation.

The imposition of payed parking fees will be detrimental to the High Street shops most of which are struggling to stay open.

I have lived in this lovely town for 45 years and value the fact that I can pop into Harpenden Town centre to visit the local shops. I'm very worried that this will no longer be possible if the Liberal Democrat's have their way. I'm elderly and would find it impossible to do my shopping and walk a mile to the outskirts of town to where I have parked my car for free. I am also lucky enough at the moment to have an OAP parking permit which I value very highly as I do all my shopping in Sainsburys and also exercise my dog in Rothamstead Park. I would be happy to pay a small increase to retain this permit. If the parking becomes impossible in Harpenden I shall take my custom to the Luton Retail Park which has a reasonable number of useful shops and do my supermarket shopping in Aldi where I can park for free - and I don't expect I will be the only one! Harpenden High Street is doomed unless these ridiculous new proposed parking arrangements are shelved once and for all!

Hi - I'm really pleased you are considering paid parking in Harpenden town centre - the proposed 20 mins free is ample time for the needs of the majority of residents. Fully support the initiative and I think it's a very reasonable way to raise revenue from people who can easily afford it.

To whom it my concern,

As a local business resident and (REDACTED) at (REDACTED), I object in full to the current proposals. I would suggest that at first the local authority enforce the current regulations that are in place in an effort to generate any shortfall in revenue that is required to administer the public parking framework within Harpenden. Only once the current the regulations are enforced can you have the complete picture on the financial situation.

As a small business we talk about and administer small measures into our practices frequently, these have enabled our business to enjoy the current growth we have seen this past four years in Harpenden and to help us to keep moving ahead of our competition. You cannot underestimate the impact of perceived small measures for the good and for the bad in business. Free of charge parking is one such small measure. You don't have to look too far for common sense operations which show you the way on how to strike a balance on parking in consumer areas. Brent Cross shopping centre is free of charge at all times, out of town retail parks are free of charge for over two hours generally, supermarkets are free of charge for the same period. These are businesses that would certainly charge for parking if they felt consumers would absorb the cost without hurting the economic impact instore. In fact, in the main where parking charges are present you will find they are present in local authority control or businesses in the car parking market. It's quite evident that parking charges in consumer areas are bad for business, parking charges are a deterrent. The proposed framework seeks to place a deterrent to visit at a time when we should doing all we can to create footfall to High Streets, before we see more of them reduced to semi commercial areas with no locally identifiable soul.

So, to come to the proposed parking charges. 20 minutes free of charge parking is not sufficient to visit more than one location on the High Street, for any meaningful interaction. With the current 1 hour period, it's possible to visit at least 2-4 businesses and run errands or just browse the many independent businesses in Harpenden. To reduce to 20 mins will therefore put a barrier in the way of 2-3 visits on the High Street that are currently being enjoyed free of charge. A number of residents or visitors will be put off of visiting the High Street due to these charges, even without this drop in footfall the majority of people with only a small errand to run will just take the 20mins and head out of town, foregoing the extra dwell time that is currently allowed where they may have popped into a new hair salon to ask a question or browsed a clothing or wine shop and made an instant purchase. That type of business or opportunity will be gone.

I'd like to highlight something that may be missed at local authority level and certainly seems to be missed by any person advocated these proposals. The High Street in its current form is not primarily a commercial area. With the eradication of the banks, post offices and other services you had to visit the High Street to access, it's now a choice to come into town. If you place barriers in the way of that visit you will push people to visit areas that don't levy these barriers, garden centres, retail parks etc... We that trade on the High Street understand this and give away certain parts of our service free of charge, for my business it's our High Street space, personal knowledge, expertise and refreshments. For a clothing retailer it's the same and try before you buy, for personal service businesses it's their knowledge and guidance before a purchase. We understand consumers need an incentive to visit us not a barrier. An hour of free parking is the minimum you should be allowing to strike that balance of revenue generation and keeping the High Street vibrant. I ask the powers that be to get onboard with the retailers and give something meaningful away in an effort to build the economy on the local High Street, which leads to higher footfall, occupancy rates of commercial units, more revenue all around.

I was dismayed when I heard about the new parking fee proposals.

The 3 hour concession for parking was first reduced from 3 hrs to 2 hrs. As we get older we get slower and we also have to be much more careful. Bits of limbs give way. So in practical terms there was little time to do the extra things beyond shopping for food, medical needs and the post office. Spontaneous things like clothes, see friends and have a coffee stopped. We suffered, and retailers suffered with less footfall. Now this helpful, kindly concession (for which we paid £30p.a.) ends as our permit expires.

We also hear that on-street parking will incur fees. This in itself will take time; it will also mean we must decide in advance how long we will stay (as do all pre-payment methods). No more sudden enticement into a shop by an attractive shop window. I also wonder if I will have the necessary modern equipment to be able to do this. I don't have relatives nearby who can teach me what to do, or take me shopping. The retailers will suffer.

It is not just the general public and the drivers who will suffer, we will lose our shops. Outsiders will no longer be attracted to Harpenden. They will go to large shopping centres. Harpenden and St. Albans Council won't benefit. Harpenden will become a dormitory. When I cease to drive, I will be forced to buy on the internet. Harpenden will lose its character, its village feel. I wonder if the Council will benefit at all. It will prove costing to employ staff to check the payments, send out the fines, and collect them.

And lastly please ask St. Albans Council, why it is necessary to charge £105 for a second green bin. The first bin is £65 (+ £60 to have it cleaned, which is optional.) A second bin is £105, so 2 green bins £170 (+ 2 bins cleaned £120 = £290.) I have reduced to one bin this year, but I need 2.

Harpenden is a leafy area – that is why it is a nice place to live, but oh the leaves. I attach a photograph of our massive London Plane tree in (REDACTED); it shows its leaf fall on 5th July this year (AL5 2PZ). Perhaps you can imagine what it is like in the autumn? Leaves fall and tend to move eastwards. Many of us sweep up Council leaves to stop them filling our

gardens. How can the second bin cost more than the first when the vehicle is already in the Close ?

We need help to keep Harpenden alive – and of course there is the problem of having no banks in Harpenden now. We have dispensing machines, but they provide us with nothing lower than a £10 note. The post office is limited in the amount it can give out.

Machines presumably are there to serve. Do they serve – or are they the dictators of how we live today ?

I understand as a District Council you have a duty to balance the books, but by killing the town you are here to serve, you are shooting yourself in the foot. Please think of the people you serve, listen to our concerns, co-operate with our Town Council, our retailers, and our community. If you don't, the independent retailers will be gone – and so will we – to the big chains at shopping centres and the internet.

I would like to confirm my opposition to the proposed parking charges, unless you intend to provide local people with a permit for free use for a set period of 1-2 hours. This I believe would be a fairer outcome.

I write to object to the above parking proposal as it will financially affect high street business in Harpenden, as well as create challenges for elderly and vulnerable residents who need to drive into Harpenden to use the town's shops, pharmacies and other facilities.

It is no coincidence that all of the smaller retailers on Harpenden High Street are encouraging residents to object to the proposals by carrying your contact details in their shop windows.

Elderly residents may find it challenging to pay for parking on an app, if they have a smart phone in the first place. This policy could isolate those residents by creating an unnecessary obstacle to them being able to use the town.

This policy could also lead to residents choosing to use out of town retail parks where parking is easier and free and lead to the closure of businesses in the town.

In summary, this policy is anti business, anti growth, anti resident and anti Harpenden.

Hi lib Dems came around and asked us for vote for them as they would be the best now they are going to charge for parking in the high street this is not going to help the old people as they have to park to do there shopping I think this is out of order what they should do is sort out our school parking this can be more dangerous than high street parking the school near me there have been accident the reason for bad parking

Dear Sirs, I object to the proposed parking charges in Harpenden. Please review and think again before you kill off the trade and shops in Harpenden.

I am a local resident in Harpenden and I am against the new parking charges on Harpenden high street. I believe it will reduce the popularity of going into town and using the high street and supporting local establishments.

Feedback on the 'Free to Paid 20 mins Free' Consultation Map Ref PPB/01

I am emailing as the (REDACTED) of Threads which has been operating happily and successfully in Harpenden Town Centre for 23 years, and I am also a Harpenden resident.

As a business person in a challenging market who has just navigated lockdowns, I sympathise with your financial pressures and need to balance budgets but, having been extensively talking to our customers, I can only conclude that the parking proposals, in their current form, would have a significant detrimental effect on town centre businesses, including Threads, the local economy and on the quality of living in Harpenden.

The following quote from Cllr Helen Campbell suggests that SADC doesn't understand how Harpenden, and shops like mine work... "I believe the changes will benefit the community as a whole by promoting active travel and discouraging people from parking on the street longer than they need."

Who are these people who are parking on the street longer than they need? Are they the busy mums who have dropped their kids off at school and are now having a wander around the town's gift and clothes shops? Or the poorly person who has been to the GP and is now picking up a prescription? Or someone working from home who has nipped into the Post Office on their lunch break and decides to grab a bagel from Brad & Dills while in town? Or the nanny dropping their charges to ballet class and doing a bit of shopping before picking them up?

The reduction in free parking to 20 mins would indeed mean that these people would probably just complete their primary task and then go home, not staying longer than needed, but this would be to the significant detriment of the retailers that make up Harpenden High St and give our lovely town its vibrancy.

Harpenden isn't the same as St Albans, it isn't a destination shopping centre and doesn't have any tourist attractions. It has grown from being a village centre and so still operates a community hub made up of schools, GP practices, church halls

where children's and fitness activities operate, and numerous small independent restaurants and cafes. We are a co-dependent eco-system, with most of Threads customers not coming into town with the primary purpose of shopping with us.

Maybe Cllr Campbell is factually correct when implying that mooching around the town is a non-essential activity, but it is absolutely essential for shops like mine to survive.

Looking at the individual elements of the proposals:

1. 2 x 20 mins free parking periods – I understand why this has been proposed but it will kill dead a significant proportion of our trade which is made up of parents either side of the school run or whilst they wait for their children's activities to end. It will also mean additional car journeys and an increase in stress for shoppers as they feel the pressure to get back to their cars and increased abuse towards staff.

2. £2.50 for 1 hour, £5.00 for 2 hours – in Threads our average transaction (outside December) is around £10 and a third of our transactions are under £5, literally a couple of cards. Our shop works because people come in to kill time or mooch, or they come in to get a card or some haberdashery and then are tempted into buying something else. However, no one in their right mind is going to pay £2.50 to pop in with the intention of buying a £2.25 greeting card or a reel of thread.

3. Removal of the loading bay outside Threads – this bay is in almost constant use and our shop alone receives between 5-10 deliveries per day. As the road is narrow there is no option for vans to pull to the side so, without the loading bay, the vans will block the road. However, if paid parking bays are introduced all around it, I would imagine that it will be used continuously by people who don't want to pay so wouldn't be available for delivery vans in that case.

Our detailed concerns

1. The impact on footfall – about 75% of our customers say they will be affected by the parking charges, and it will reduce the time and money they spend in the High St and the number of times they visit. As you can see below, I track our footfall numbers and 2024 is currently running very similar to 2023. I anticipate a very significant drop if the current proposals are introduced so would urge you to proceed cautiously and just make small changes slowly and then we can monitor together, with other interested parties, what happens to footfall (I will happily make my data public for this purpose).

2.

3. The impact on older members of our community – our older customers are hugely concerned about the proposals but unfortunately express reluctance about commenting in the consultation as they don't feel comfortable doing things online. Their concerns include not wanting/being able to use technology to pay, not being able to work out how to pay, and not being able to afford to pay. We have a significant number of older people who come into the shop most days, they enjoy the social interaction and structure their days around visiting town to buy what they need for that day. They aren't disabled but don't have the physical fitness to use the 'active transport options' you recommend, especially if carrying shopping, and would find completing everything within a 20 min time-frame stressful and physically unfeasible.

As councillors, I would hope you feel a responsibility to not discriminate against residents based on age, and that you'd be as horrified as me at the thought of the more vulnerable members of our community becoming less independent and socially isolated.

4. The impact on the environment – I've always understood that Lib Dems want to govern in an environmentally friendly way, and this is alluded to in some of your comments around the proposals, but I can't see how this aligns in practice. For example:

a. If carers drop children at clubs and don't stay in town but go home and then come back to avoid paying for parking then that is double the number of car journeys

b. If people need things in town and instead of getting it all done in 1 one hour trip on Monday, they come in on Monday,

Tuesday, and Wednesday for three 20 mins stays to avoid parking charges, that is 3 times the car journeys

c. If parents decide to drive to a shopping centre with free parking or more shops after dropping their children off at school rather than pay £2.50 to stay in Harpenden, that is an additional car journey.

d. Or many people have said they will shop online instead, with a delivery driver making an individual, previously unnecessary journey, right to their door, and the buyer will still probably be driving into town as well for other purposes using the 20 min free parking.

Shopping locally, particularly in a multi-use community hub like Harpenden, is by far THE most environmentally way to shop and our Lib Dem council should celebrate rather than destroy it.

Questions I'd like answers to

1. What is the rationale for the charges being so high and for treating Harpenden Town Centre and St Albans City Centre the same in terms of parking ?

These tariffs are significantly higher than all other towns in Hertfordshire and nearby Berkhamsted, the attached chart shows the on-street parking charges, the size of the towns, and a bit of detail about what the towns offer to visitors comparatively. St Albans has 2 shopping centres, and 2 streets filled with chain stores, here shoppers could see the justification to pay hefty parking charges, but not in Harpenden with it's 0 shopping centres and couple of small chain stores!

2. What financial risk analysis has been carried out?

I have seen your basic cost/revenue analysis in terms of introducing the scheme but not any analysis of the risks and cost implications of a reduction in footfall. If it hasn't been done, I would suggest you run a survey to all Harpenden town centre businesses (which can be completed anonymously) of what impact a 10%,15%,20%,25%, 30%, 40%, 50% drop in footfall would

have on their viability and their financial contribution (if still trading) to the public purse in terms of VAT, Corporation Tax, Employment Taxes, etc.

Also, it should include analysis of what the impact on council finances would be if the classes that rent Park Hall relocate, because participants can't or don't want to add £2.50 or £5 (if an hour class) to their weekly fees.

3. How will the free parking periods work? I've heard it will be by App only. This would be absolutely unacceptable with so many of our community uncomfortable with using such technology. A system like St Albans City Hospital, where you get a printed ticket for the free period by just pushing one button would be much more accessible.

4. How will people upgrade from the free parking period to pay for an additional 1 or 2 hours? And will this even be possible, allowing people to stay 2hrs 20mins in the same space? As discussed, both my shop and the town as a whole, work on the basis of people popping in for one thing and then get enticed to spend time looking at other products or businesses in the town. An easy, user-friendly, age-friendly way to upgrade your parking to stay longer is therefore essential to the viability of both the town, and Threads.

I know we are just one retailer and maybe our business doesn't matter to you, but, without wanting to toot our own horn, I do think we matter to Harpenden, both to people individually – having been voted the Best Local Shop/Business every time the Mum's Guide to Harpenden have run their awards, and to the vibrancy of the town as a whole.

There must be another way, and I fully support the Harpenden Town Council's proposal to delay any action until the Spring 25, conduct a thorough analysis, and set up a working group including local business representatives. We can, and should be, all on the same side, wanting to do the best for our town and community in a financially responsible way.

I wish to object to the parking developments by St Albans District Council.

Dear Sir/Madam

I'm writing about the proposal to install parking meters in Harpenden. Please don't. This is nothing more than a tax on residents through which we will see no benefit. It will have an immediate and negative impact on local businesses on the high street by a reduction in short trips to the high street. 20 mins free parking is not enough to buy a pint of milk without worrying about being fined. 100% of local people that I have discussed this with think it's a dreadful idea that must have been dreamt up by a non-resident that is just worried about the council's budget and how to raise more money.

You will not be serving the Harpenden community properly if you proceed with this plan and residents will vote accordingly. If you are in any doubt I suggest that anyone who thinks this is a good idea come to Harpenden in person and ask residents. Maybe present the idea in public and see the reaction first hand.

Dear sir / madam

As a resident in Harpenden I am appalled by the idea that you are killing our high street with your plans to charge parking for the gain of the councils cash balance. I have not met a single resident who approves of your scheme. People will not pop into town for small or big items anymore - 20 mins free parking is not enough to visit a shop and do some shopping, charging for parking will send people to out of town stores for bigger shops. This will kill the independent shops on the high street. The vibrant "village atmosphere" of Harpenden is something to cherish and with your scheme Harpenden high street will turn into yet another town with empty shops that cannot survive.

Please do not proceed with this proposal.

I have been a local resident for 25 years and I want to object in the strongest terms to the proposed parking charges in Harpenden Town Centre.

Harpenden is an expensive place to live and with the cost of living crisis impacting hugely on all bills, this has made many people struggle to make ends meet. The recent jump in prices has also made it a lot more difficult for independent businesses to survive and both individuals and businesses will be negatively impacted by an extra local daily tax. As a retired person I come into town several times a day to shop for myself or neighbours, to exercise, and to socialise and as we live a few miles away I use the car. I always stay for longer than 20 minutes, and the extra cost for having to park there would be a

big disincentive to shop locally. As it stands, the current system works well with timed bays, and as long as there are wardens to implement the restrictions then nobody will have a major issue in parking close to where they need to be.

I really hope that this proposal is voted down for the good of our local community

The proposal by the Liberal Democrats to impose restrictive parking in Harpenden at a cost of £2.50 per hour for a maximum stay of 2 hrs is quite unbelievable. What are you trying to do to, at the moment a thriving town.

Restaurants, coffee shops, pubs and most of all the small independent shops will all suffer and we will probably have a lot of closures.

It is impossible to go out for a meal during the day with a restriction of 2 hrs. Meeting friends for coffee and then shopping will be impossible. Older folks struggling to complete general tasks in that short time. Just waiting for service at the Post Office can take more than 30 minutes.

People are struggling financially as it is but it seems you want to cause more anxiety by adding another £5 to their costs.

Harpenden is a busy and thriving town and if you go ahead with this proposal you will destroy it. Come on you know this is a foolhardy plan.....scrap it please.

Hello Parking Development Team

I am writing to strongly object and oppose the proposed introduction of Car Parking charges to Harpenden High Street and surrounding areas.

I have been a resident in Harpenden for nearly 40 years and have been shocked in recent years by the number of closures to shops in Harpenden in what was once a thriving town centre. These charges, if introduced, will be the final death knell for a number of the remaining outlets that rely on local and passing trade and will decimate the high street.

In addition clubs, societies and the library – plus the town's churches – will also be dramatically affected by these parking charges – and not forgetting a table tennis group that meets for two hours in a church hall during the day.

What is also puzzling is the contradictory reasons used by St Albans Council for these charges being introduced.....climate change and reducing car journeys has been used on one hand, and then the Notice refers to 'effectively manage and control the turnover of limited waiting parking spaces' (surely this can be done by traffic wardens?) ...two different purposes in what will be a revenue generator for the Council.

Think again please!!

For the attention of (REDACTED).

We are totally against your Parking Policy in Harpenden regarding introducing charging for car parking. Life is tough enough as it is. I have never known how costly everything is, particularly since the Liberal Party has been in control of Harpenden and St Albans.

Pest Control used to be a free service by the Council. Now this service is no longer available. The Green waste bin was included in the Council tax but the Liberal Councillors now make it chargeable. Starting at £42 and increased now to £63.

Now we have this new idea of making a charge for car parking. This is nothing but a disgraceful and money grabbing scheme. The charge of £2.50 an hour is terrible. For your information in Hemel Hempstead we can park for £4 for a day.

What we can't understand is that in the many leaflets we have had put through our letter box no mention was made of you charging for car parking in Harpenden. Is this our reward for voting 'Liberal'. I call it nothing short of a kick in the teeth to voters. I only hope that next time elections come about that people show how strongly they feel by voting you out of office.

We note with interest the 20 minute free parking allowance!! You obviously have not thought of the elderly because this does not allow for enough time to cross the road. I don't know how old you are but at our age this does not allow enough time to go into a shop let alone buy a few bits of shopping. Why are you so hell bent on making people's lives so very difficult. You shock us at your inconsiderate thinking.

We hope you will not go through with this policy and will stop wasting money.

Finally, if this does go ahead we should like your confirmation that you and members of your Staff will also be paying for private and business car parking fees and will not be charging it to expenses.

Finally, we will not forget this idea at the next election and feel many people will feel the same.

Hello

I have found out about the Council's proposal to reduce the free 2 hour parking in some areas of Harpenden and St Albans and to introduce expensive parking charges.

My name is (REDACTED)

I want to let you know that I wholly object to the proposals.

I wish to object to the proposed parking charges in Harpenden (Map ref: PPB/01).

Please take note of the following comments:

Having been a resident of Harpenden for many years, I can remember when the on-street parking arrangements in the town centre were changed from 1 hour only to some allowing 2 hours free parking. This was a great relief to me at the time, and remains so, as parking for 2 hours enabled (and still enables) me to run far more errands (such as shopping, doctor's, dentist's, optician's and library visits, hairdressing etc) in the town centre in one visit; much more convenient than when the parking was limited to 1 hour only, which meant that I had to rush around with one eye on the clock. Now I am considerably older I can no longer rush around but still find that 2 hours is usually sufficient time in which to run my errands – including food shopping and occasionally even visiting one of the many coffee shops. In short, the current car parking system has worked well for many years, with continual 'turnover' of parking spaces and there is no need to make any changes. It is a blatant attempt to raise revenue to cover shortfalls elsewhere in the SADC budget.

If town centre parking charges are introduced I shall drive to shop elsewhere, where the parking is free and also, during the day, never patronise any of the coffee shops/restaurants in the town centre due to the added proposed cost of parking at £5 for 2 hours – or more when socialising. That will be Harpenden town centre's loss and I dread to think what the overall effect would be on Harpenden's businesses and hospitality trade.

In addition I, like many other older residents, have reached the age where I can no longer cycle and yet live too far from the

town centre to walk – especially when carrying heavy shopping home, and believe me, a week's food shop is too heavy for one person to carry. Also, the bus service to many areas of Harpenden is woefully inadequate, especially for those with limited mobility.

Harpenden town centre has always been a pleasant place to visit but the proposed parking charges will inevitably turn it into a 'dead' town centre, as has happened with many other towns where empty and boarded up shops/businesses/pubs have become the norm. You only have to go as far as Dunstable to see the depressing decline of a High Street resulting from major retailers and specialist shops relocating to out-of-town retail parks offering free parking. At a time when SADC's income from business rates is falling, is that what SADC intend for Harpenden?

Objection to proposed Parking charges.

I wish to object to the Council's proposals to introduce parking charges in places in Harpenden where currently there is free parking for one or two hours.

Whilst I applaud the desire to have more parking spaces for people with a blue badge the idea of changing all the parking to paid parking, except for a 20 minute window is an ill-considered idea.

Firstly, 20 minutes is no time to do anything. It will result in people rushing to do one thing and worrying about getting back to their car in time. Elderly people will not risk using this option forcing them to pay for parking.

The fees are very high. £2.50 for one hour! And £5 for two hours is excessive. It will put people off coming into town and encourage people to drive further to out of town shopping where it is free. Local businesses will suffer as a result. I am a volunteer and make several visits into Harpenden a week, often needing to bring things in my car. I try and walk and use the bus on other occasions. But this isn't an option for everyone.

I had a senior citizens parking permit until I was unable to renew it. There was no consultation on this. I would have been willing to pay more for it as it was so convenient but this wasn't an option.

I urge you to look at this proposal again and reverse your plans which would have a devastating effect on the lively and vibrant place Harpenden is.

Sir/Madam

I am opposed to the new charges, while understanding the need to raise more revenue. As a Senior I would be prepared to pay more for the annual permit I have had enabling me to park in the SADC car parks.

Please add this to the Harpenden consultation and as a Complaint.

I strongly object to the proposal to put parking meters in the free parking bays in Harpenden.

You have made the process so complicated to deter people from responding.

Payment meters will stop older people going into Harpenden . It's too fiddly is you have glasses, have to juggle with a mobile phone and keep your purchases in tact.

Younger people will go on line,

The local shops will be affected and I can remember not so long ago when over half the shops were empty.

If something goes wrong with the meter/ phone system it will be very stressful, knowing your wardens will fine as many people as possible.

I don't have confidence that it will be set up properly. Take Zone 1 where all the phone payments meant that commuters could phone up from their London offices.

To St Albans council

The new proposed 20min free parking is entirely inadequate for my family needs. My husband is elderly and frail due to prolonged illness. It takes at least 10 – 15minutes to into and out of the car. This will leave very little to get into the chemist we often have to wait for a prescription to be prepared or to the GP practice.

I will also probably not shop on the high street if it incurs a parking charge as suggested, nor would I make visits to Southdown to incur further parking charges.

I find currently that a 2-hour space is needed but not used to ensure there is enough time to visit local shops and not have rush back to the car beyond the prescribed time

I agree with the Harpenden society that the current proposals are not fit for purpose and will damage the local economy
These proposals are not suitable for my family

What alternative modes of transport are St Albans Council offering to enable those who are reliant on private transport to continue to be self-sufficient.

In the long run is a plan in place to deal with the chronic shortage of parking spaces on the High street

We have enjoyed limited free parking in Harpenden for the time we have lived here – over 30 years and do not think it is in the best interest of the town to now charge for parking as it will make more people shop online and the high street shops will not have the benefit of someone walking in.

We are opposed to the charges proposed and believe this should be reconsidered in the best interest of Harpenden town centre and the traders.

We strongly object to the proposal for charging to park in Harpenden high street.

The shops will be badly affected by this.

Leave the parking as it is

Dear Madam/Sir

I would like to submit my objections to the proposed parking charge changes to Harpenden High Street and surrounds. Currently there is some limited one hour and two hour free parking in Harpenden and I think that proposals to change all this parking to paid parking will have a significant negative impact on our town business, schools and medical practices.

We have a wonderful high street with some independent businesses, but they are already facing difficult times with increasing rates and rents, as well as significant competition from online shopping. I think that the introduction of paid parking to the whole of Harpenden will drive shoppers out of town to places where there is free parking and will ultimately drive businesses out, destroy our high street and the village feel of our town centre. A short 20/30 minute free parking will not be sufficient for people to shop on the high street or use the Post Office, for example, where queues can often be over half an hour long.

In addition, we have a number of schools, GP medical practices and NHS dentist practices in our town centre. The introduction of these parking charges will negatively impact both the staff and families at these schools and NHS practices. The families who need these services the most are already struggling financially with the cost of living crisis, so to add parking charges every time they need to visit the doctor or dentist or take their children to school will add a significant, unfair and unreasonable financial burden to them. Furthermore, the key workers employed at these schools and practices, the teaching staff, nurses, doctors, dentists, hygienists, receptionists, secretaries and other staff, are also struggling with the impact of the cost of living crisis and adding such a significant amount to the cost of being at work is entirely unfair and unreasonable. At the very least, key workers in education and NHS medical and dental services, etc working in central Harpenden should be entitled (with proof of employment) to parking permits enabling them to park by or near to their places of work.

I do hope you take these important points in to consideration.

I object to the proposal to introduce Harpenden High Street parking charges.
Shop keepers have a hard enough time without adding a further reason not to visit the High Street.
The proposal would rip out the beating heart of our community.
What I would find more palatable is limiting free parking to 1 hour.
I don't go to St Albans unless absolutely necessary purely because of the difficulty finding / cost of parking.

As a resident of harpenden, I'm dismayed at the proposed in production of parking charges.
The local town centre is slowly dying due to many factors and the introduction of parking costs will add to this.
When I and many friends go into harpenden to pick up shopping we often decide to enjoy the buzz of the town, often seeing friends. These impromptu meetings often result in a coffee or snack or coffee, bringing income to the retailers.
Often I take my children for a drink, milkshakes etc.
I also notice people driving into harpenden to shop and the browse and similarly enjoy food and drinks.
All this will severely reduce if parking fees are introduced and reduce valued custom and income to the local retailers.
My children love me running them down to threads or the sweet shop on the spur of the moment. I will not do this if I have a parking fee.
This is the current beauty of fee parking benefitting the community young and old. Why break a business model which is not broken.
How can this be justified when you're wasting money putting poles around the green when trees will suffice for Christmas.
Who's going to benefit from these "improvements" if no one is prepared to drive into the town centre?
Most importantly I object due to the impact it has on the old and lonely who are still mobile enough to drive into town and enjoy a drink or snack/ meal with friends. Do church goers now have to pay to attend services, community events etc all hugely important in a local community
I can cite many more reasons why I object but this is a short sighted policy which needs reconsidering and rejecting

I am a lib dem voter, but I readily do not agree with the proposal of car parking charge within the Harpenden high street.

The high street has already lost a number of shops, this would be the death nail in several that remain.

The ability to park, shop and disappear quickly is an asset to the Harpenden Town and its high street, do not undermine this by adopting such a stupid and harmful proposal.

I would like to strongly object to the proposed introduction of paid parking in Harpenden. This will kill our vibrant High Street and I have not spoken to a single person in Harpenden who agrees with this money-making scheme being imposed on our town by St Albans Council.

I am a Harpenden resident and have lived in this town for over 20 years.

Rather than imposing new charges on people trying to park briefly to spend money in the town, maybe more effort should be given to enforcing the current laws. I hardly ever see a traffic warden in this town but see people constantly parking on double yellow lines and even the zig-zags next to crossings without any enforcement. Maybe that would be a better way to make some more money for St Albans Council to spend?

Dear St Albans Council

Throughout the country high streets are suffering and falling into disuse. Our High Street is thriving. Why is this? Because without cost, one can 'pop into the shops'. Should there be a hefty charge, like the proposed £2.50 an hour, the question immediately arises – why not drive a tiny bit further to a larger store with free parking?? The answer will in my case be – might as well.

It is not just the cost, it is also the inconvenience of lining up and paying.

If a journey that would have taken 5 minutes starts taking 15 minutes. it is obvious that the choice of going, for example, to the main Sainsburys in St Albans in Griffiths Way and that in London Colney, will be a draw. While one is there, why not just go to M and S, Next etc? Suddenly the point of the convenience is lost. Sainsburys gets me there, but then I pop into Majestic and the post office and. WH Smith etc... I go to Waitrose, for convenience – but then also pop into the dry cleaners etc.

Imagine, for a moment, going to fetch your dry-cleaning for £2.50 per hour? Why would you bother?

This means all that casual traffic will be lost. St Albans highstreet is rocking on a Sunday, because of the £1.50 for the day convenience: everyone says: well, why not?

The consequence to all this will, in addition, be NO REVENUE from the parking either. It will be a disaster not only for the residents, and those tempted to try out the lovely Harpenden highstreet from the surrounding towns and villages – they'll all be off to less onerous pastures.

Set against this the infrastructure cost of all the (ugly) payment facilities? Or are these going to be specially designed to tie in with the conservation area they will be invading?

How far back will the restrictions apply? Are the housing streets to be invaded by desperate shoppers, trying to evade the cost?

Killing the High Street is not a legacy the Lib Dems want to leave. This will provide a free (successful) campaign ground for the Cons, and you will be the One Hit Wonders, with a dead highstreet (or two depending on how you treat St Albans) –while making no money out of the White Elephant you have created.

Shame on you! Just don't do it. It is the wrong choice.

I wholly object to the parking charges proposed per map reference PPB/01.

Short-sighted beyond belief.

How to kill a high street in one easy lesson.

I stopped shopping in St Albans because of the parking charges

Dear Sir Madam

OBJECTION to proposed High Street parking charges in Harpenden

I'm writing to register my objection to the proposed scheme to introduce parking charges in Harpenden.

I have not met a single Harpenden resident who supports the scheme. I would welcome the opportunity to speak with any St Albans District Council member to discuss this matter.

I look forward to hearing from you.

We are writing to object to the proposed charges for on-street parking that you intend to introduce in Harpenden town centre.

You are already ending the scheme whereby senior citizen residents of St Albans and Harpenden, using a pre-paid annual permit, can park for up to two hours in council car parks.

The results of these changes will significantly reduce our visits to the shops in Harpenden and St Albans, and make life more difficult for us.

Dear SADC

I am absolutely dismayed at the council's suggestion that parking charges of £2.50/hr would be a good idea. IT IS NOT.

20 min free parking is not long enough to do anything especially if caught up in a queue. A charge of £5.00 to park for 2 hours is simply obscene.

The elderly, disabled and infirm are not able to walk or cycle into town, especially considering that the high street is in a valley – what are they going to do?

I'm sure many people, myself included, will choose to take their business elsewhere and either shop out of town or order online.

Do SADC seriously wish our historians to record that the LibDem council singlehandedly destroyed Harpenden's once vibrant and beautiful traditional-style high street through introducing extortionate parking charges?

All because SADC appear to view the residents of Harpenden and the surrounding villages as an easy “cash cow” to fund the council’s shortfalls?

Don’t do it!

I object to the parking charges planned for the centre of Harpenden.

strongly object to the introduction of parking charges:

- (a) I'm 78 years old; my husband is 85. We can't cope with parking meters and paybyphone technology.
- (b) We had senior citizen parking permits until you stopped issuing them.
- (c) What can you do in 20 minutes of free parking, apart from dropping of schoolchildren?
- (d) Senior citizens will stop using the library, volunteering in charity shops, window shopping, attending evening meetings and meeting friends if they have to pay £2.50 an hour.
- (e) Other residents will stop 'casual' window shopping in Harpenden to the detriment of local businesses.

I feel obliged to advise my opinion of the proposed parking changes in Harpenden.

20 minutes of free parking is no good to anyone and will adversely affect the businesses in the town which are already finding it difficult due to the internet. Parking in the town has become a nightmare anyway and the proposal to build apartments in the station car park, thus reducing spaces there, is ridiculous and will only increase on street parking. The station car park should be two stories as in St Albans anyway. The high street often becomes a parking lot at times due to the volume of traffic and the pollution due to this is significant.

When is something going to be done to improve the situation.

As a resident I would like to express my concern over the proposed parking charges by Liberal Democrat's I am opposing the proposal

I have read your proposals for parking changes in Harpenden Town centre and the comments made by Councillor Helen Campbell, Chair of the Council's Public Realm Committee and Lead for Parking. I find that the current proposals are ill conceived and not suitable for our community.

Our local retailers will suffer harm as car parking charges will inevitably deter local shopping and the lack of diversification in our high street, witnessed over the past decade, will be extended. This will encourage more out of town shopping and not as Ms Cambell asserts more active travel.

The proposed 20 minutes free parking is inadequate. When we already have a struggling high street, where service provision i.e. shop staff is at a premium, there is virtually no in-person transaction that can be conducted face to face in less than 15 minutes (to allow for travel time between car and establishment and queuing, waiting for assistance).

I believe that the proposals are ageist in that they will penalise the elderly residents of Harpenden the most. Many are dependent on their cars and use their high street many times a week for shopping and social purposes.

One understands that there is a genuine need for SADC to increase income. However to charge the motorist for this is unethical even if legal, although The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1994 may still come to bear if the intention primarily is a fiscal measure in order to make a surplus for other purposes.

Therefore I call for transparency: more clarity on the financial necessity of the proposals is required to expand upon and explain the need as expressed by councillor Cambell "to make parking self-sufficient". In addition a detailed justification that "the interests, not just of residents who use the bays, but also of those who do not, such as non-motorists or those choosing active travel options" warrant such a scheme. A full parking review should precede any long-term decisions to determine why we should have to pay for parking.

Unbelievable

I cannot believe how Naive some people are.

I'm sure that 99% of the population of Harpenden are against the parking charges

We already pay extortionate rates every month, and now have to pay for our green bins, only if you want to look after your garden and make the neighbourhood look nice???

I have Personally been looking at business premisses in Harpenden, to set-up a shop in the high street for myself and my daughter, we have been doing the sums now for 5 months, it is already a very difficult decision, could we make a profit or just work 7days a week to break even.

I was in Harpenden today talking to shops and businesses, ALL of them are EXTREMELY WORRIED about the Possible Parking Charges as they will ALL Lose Income and no doubt have to close down, adding to all the other empty shops in the area.

We will have to wait to see what happens. If a parking charge is implemented we will NOT BE STARTING A NEW BUSINESS and also will not be paying the HUGH RATES.

This is SO UNBELIEVABLE that we even have to discuss this situation.

Hello,

As a resident and business owner in Harpenden having lived here for over 25 years I would wholeheartedly like to OBJECT against the proposals the council are suggesting regarding the parking charges after 20mins.

I have NEVER failed to find a parking space around town when shopping and to suggest that somehow a charge will make it easier for people to park is absolute nonsense.

It's nothing more than a libdem money grab, just like the green waste tax.

NO ONE IN HARPENDEN WANTS THIS OR VOTED FOR IT. IT WILL SOLVE NO PARKING ISSUES AS NONE EXIST.

Dear Sir/ Madam,

As a long time resident of Harpenden I am dismayed that you are planning to charge for the small number of on street places.

This will have an adverse effect on all our local shops which already have large council tax bills. Being able to pop into the town for the odd item is very helpful. For we older residents this includes visits to the doctor, dentist and pharmacist. Not only is the cost an issue but the difficulty of paying at a machine or online adds to the problems we have to overcome. A lot of residents can't walk long distances and mobility is a huge problem. Your parking charges will make the elderly residents even more isolated which we all know will increase mental health problems.

I beg you to reconsider and find a way to support residents of Harpenden.

I oppose the proposed parking charges for Harpenden. They will cause grave damage to our shops and the community.

Hi.

I would like to strongly object to the proposed parking charges planned.

I am a regular visitor to Harpenden and shop at least twice a week. I like the fact I can park and have an hour to collect what I need. Forcing me to pay will result in me shopping elsewhere.

I strongly object and hope you see sense and do not proceed.

Sirs,

I understand that a parking charge of £2.80 per hour is being proposed for parking bays in Harpenden town centre.

If the scheme proceeds, it will cause harmful results to Harpenden residents, Harpenden businesses and shops, and ultimately to council revenue.

If the scheme goes ahead:

- 1) The ease of quick parking near the shop one wishes to visit will reduce shopping in the town centre;
- 2) Running a shop/ business in Harpenden town centre will become less desirable and proprietors will be discouraged and some will shut up shop;

3) Closed shops will generate less revenue for the council – rates will be pushed up.

To keep a thriving town centre, this proposal should be abandoned.

I am dismayed to hear of the Council's plans for charging in Harpenden.

Many elderly residents rely on parking close to the shops. Pensioners are struggling financially at the moment and will not be able to keep paying for parking. Many visit every day to get them out of the house and see people.

The Leisure centre car park is too far for many with mobility issues to walk to and from.

Charging to park will ruin the small businesses that we have in our high street.

I'm sure the Council can find other ways to find some money, rather than targeting the elderly

I strongly object to the proposal of parking charges in Harpenden. Shopkeepers are already struggling and this unnecessary imposition will only add to this.

Please stop this nonsense now.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am horrified by the proposed parking charges which seem to be designed to ruin Harpenden. I can't think that there is much you can do in the 20 minute free slot apart from maybe dropping someone off or picking someone up. It wouldn't even be long enough to take young children to school or nursery. I know of lots of fellow retired people, on limited pensions, who would not be able to continue to work for free at charity shops because of the cost of parking. They will lose activities which helps keep them both physically and mentally fit. No more going to meet friends for coffee or lunch or a trip to the shops or even a midweek visit to a church. Harpenden will be dead soon with shops and cafes having to close. Not quite sure what would happen after two hours anyway - a large fine I suppose.

At the moment I am lucky enough to be able to walk to the shops, but at my age that probably won't last much longer and anyway there is a limit to what I can carry.

The only gainers I can see are out of town supermarkets who will probably get more customers for their home delivery services. At the moment it seems cheaper to pay for delivery rather than park your car near the shops. Of course they will probably put their prices up too when more people are forced to use them.

Parking at present isn't particularly easy so why make it worse? More people will try to park in the nearest residential roads making it even more difficult for local residents. No wonder so many people are having to pave over their gardens to park their own cars, creating different problems related to climate change, flooding etc.

I believe it is just an operation to make money. It is probably going to cost more to set up and police than it will ever make. To me it sounds like a disaster waiting to happen.

I moved to Harpenden 4 years ago to be nearer to family in my old age. Life here is already becoming more difficult.

I am writing to strongly disagree with the Liberal Democrat's parking proposal for Harpenden.

I believe that it will impact the community and the shops in a negative way. Have you consulted businesses? What evidence do you have to support your contention that this will not be harmful to local businesses. Rather people will increasingly shop online rather than supporting the local shops as 20 minutes of free parking twice a day is not adequate for local residents. Presumably 20 minutes twice a day has been arrived at to pacify parents who need to park for dropping their children off at central schools. But it is absolutely useless to the large proportion of the community who do not have school children at central schools and who currently use the local shops on the high street. There is no way I can go to several shops, go to the post office, pick up a prescription etc. for example in 20 minutes.

I believe the 2 x 20 minutes will lead to more traffic on the roads as people will make more trips into Harpenden to spread the jobs they need to do across their free 20 minutes.

However, I am not prepared to up the frequency of my trips into Harpenden as I am not prepared to use more petrol than I currently use making a single journey into Harpenden and I certainly do not have the spare time in my working day to spend walking into Harpenden on top of my daily dog walking. Therefore, I for one will not be shopping in the local shops but will choose to shop online wherever possible.

How are you going to police the allocation of 2 x 20 minutes a day. Cameras? What is the cost of this? Personally I would see this as an infringement of my privacy to have my movements in Harpenden logged.

Please will you acknowledge this email and that my objections to your proposals have been logged as part of your consultation period. I find it odd that there is not an easily accessible form to officially log objections.

Good morning.

I wish to register my objections to the proposed introduction of parking charges in Harpenden centre.

Having grown up in Harpenden, I have seen many changes but this latest proposal will have such a negative impact on our lovely town, or village as us locals still refer to it as.

To allow a free 20 minutes parking does not give people enough time to collect prescriptions, visit the doctors, change books in the library, queue in a supermarket, go to the post office and certainly no time to go from shop to shop if wanting several items. The high street, as we know and love it, will die off as people will turn to shopping on line for ease.

Elderly people especially will be penalised financially if wanting to go to town for a coffee and meet up with friends. I understand that the permit allowing older people to park for free for 2 hours in any car park is also being changed so this potentially leads to this generation staying at home more when faced with parking charges each time they go out.

Parking meters along the high street are street furniture that surely costs the council in so many ways. The initial set up itself. Plus, even more importantly, the reduced footfall for local shops means them requesting a reduction in their rateable value on which business rates are payable. Has this even been considered?

I plead with you, on behalf of residents who don't have the ability to do online petitions and/ or write emails, to reverse this plan and keep our community as it's always been known - friendly, sociable, caring and supportive of each other. Too many town centres have been killed off because of similar schemes - don't let Harpenden become another one of these casualties.

Dear Sirs

I am writing to object to the hare-brained scheme to introduce parking charges in Harpenden town centre.

I cannot think of a better way to accelerate the total extinction of our high street, when hard-pressed retailers are already struggling against excessive business rates and the onslaught of online shopping. The number of closed outlets in the town centre, where only charity shops, cafes and Turkish barbers seem to survive, should tell you all you need to know about the folly of introducing parking charges at this time.

I object strongly to the proposed parking charges. This would have a huge impact on businesses, cafes and restaurants. If people have to add £5 onto the price of their meal they are going to go elsewhere. People won't decide to have a coffee if it's going to cost them an extra £2.50.

I saw a 20 minute free time mentioned. You couldn't even have time to post a letter in the Post Office in that time bearing in mind there is nearly always a queue.

I shop in Sainsburys all the time, going into two or three times a week but it would be more sensible for me to drive to Sainsburys in St. Albans once a week.

This is a shocking proposal and I hope it can be given more consideration.

Please do not bring in these charges. Retailers already struggle with high rent. Potential customers will be put off by these proposed charges. The High Street and its users will suffer.

A 20 minute free parking offer is a ridiculous plan to say the least. If it is felt necessary to make a charge, 40 minutes should be the minimum. Harpenden high street is suffering as it is and this plan will only make it worse. Taking away parking at the station by building there will also make the situation worse.

This idea should be reviewed!

Parking meters would destroy the busy shopping in Harpenden. The shops struggled after Covid and they are now back on track. The rates are high and the retailers will suffer.

There have been no parking wardens recently which is why people have been parking indiscriminately. Bring back parking wardens, and the problem will be solved.

I have had my senior parking permit taken away before these matters are resolved. Why??

I have responded in some detail to the Parking Consultation but wanted to record that I object to the proposals and request that they are not implemented but that a full and proper review be undertaken to ascertain the most appropriate way forward.

I object strongly to the proposed huge increase in the Permit charge for non-benefit claimant Seniors' Permits.

I wish to ensure that you register my objections to the proposed new parking charges to be imposed on Harpenden residents visiting the High Street. I regularly use the limited waiting bays without any difficulty and fail to see your reasoning for charging £2.50/£5.00 to use our shops, library, pharmacies and doctors surgeries.

I cannot as you suppose opt to walk or ride a bicycle for my regular need to come into town. It takes me 30 minutes to walk to Station Road from Roundwood Lane. I am very nearly 70.

The current system works perfectly well for short visits – but the suggested 20 minute free period is a nonsense for any practical purpose.

I do not believe that the proposal has any support in Harpenden from residents or High Street businesses. It is in particular ageist in its application.

Older people (and other isolated and less able people) need to be able to interact and socialise with others to maintain mental health – yet your suggestion will impose a daily charge on us for using our own town's facilities.

The proposal must be rethought – and properly debated at a local level. Harpenden is not St Albans – and needs a different approach.

Dear St Albans Council

I object to the proposed parking charges intended for the Harpenden High Street

Throughout the country high streets are suffering and falling into disuse. Our High Street is thriving. Why is this? Because without cost, one can 'pop into the shops'. Should there be a hefty charge, like the proposed £2.50 an hour, the question immediately arises – why not drive a tiny bit further to a larger store with free parking?? The answer will in my case be – might as well.

It is not just the cost, it is also the inconvenience of lining up and paying.

If a journey that would have taken 5 minutes starts taking 15 minutes. It is obvious that the choice of going, for example, to the main Sainsburys in St Albans in Griffiths Way and that in London Colney, will be a draw. While one is there, why not just go to M and S, Next etc? Suddenly the point of the convenience is lost. Sainsburys gets me there, but then I pop into Majestic and the post office and. WH Smith etc... I go to Waitrose, for convenience – but then also pop into the dry cleaners etc.

Imagine, for a moment, going to fetch your dry-cleaning for £2.50 per hour? Why would you bother?

This means all that casual traffic will be lost. St Albans highstreet is rocking on a Sunday, because of the £1.50 for the day convenience: everyone says: well, why not?

The consequence to all this will, in addition, be NO REVENUE from the parking either. It will be a disaster not only for the residents, and those tempted to try out the lovely Harpenden highstreet from the surrounding towns and villages – they'll all be off to less onerous pastures.

Set against this the infrastructure cost of all the (ugly) payment facilities? Or are these going to be specially designed to tie

in with the conservation area they will be invading?

How far back will the restrictions apply? Are the housing streets to be invaded by desperate shoppers, trying to evade the cost?

Killing the High Street is not a legacy the Lib Dems want to leave. This will provide a free (successful) campaign ground for the Cons, and you will be the One Hit Wonders, with a dead highstreet (or two depending on how you treat St Albans) -while making no money out of the White Elephant you have created.

Unbelievable

I cannot believe how Naive some people are.

I'm sure that 99% of the population of Harpenden are against the parking charges

We already pay extortionate rates every month, and now have to pay for our green bins, only if you want to look after your garden and make the neighbourhood look nice???

I have Personally been looking at business premisses in Harpenden, to set-up a shop in the high street for myself and my daughter, we have been doing the sums now for 5 months, it is already a very difficult decision, could we make a profit or just work 7days a week to break even.

I was in Harpenden today talking to shops and businesses, ALL of them are EXTREMELY WORRIED about the Possible Parking Charges as they will ALL Lose Income and no doubt have to close down, adding to all the other empty shops in the area.

We will have to wait to see what happens. If a parking charge is implemented we will NOT BE STARTING A NEW BUSINESS and also will not be paying the HUGH RATES.

This is SO UNBELIEVABLE that we even have to discuss this situation.

To whom it may concern,

I strongly oppose the council's plan to charge for any on-street parking in Harpenden. It would most definitely be the death of our high street. I cannot comprehend who could have come up with this idea and not realised that I regularly 'pop in to town' to buy something locally. We need our high streets to support smaller businesses and maintain our community. Shopping locally is also much more convenient. Please throw this ridiculous idea out.

I am writing to object to the proposal to bring in parking charges for Harpenden.

The High Streets need more support and having to pay £2.50 to park for 1 hour will not achieve this.

This will result in more empty units and subsequent loss of business rates paid.

Many small businesses rely on impulse buys and that will not happen if they visitors have to pay to park, people will not have time to investigate and enjoy the diversity of the High Street.

20 minutes free parking is not long enough to do anything especially by the time you have found a machine to pay at, found the coins and walked back to the car, not everyone has a smartphone

The cost and disruption to Harpenden will not bring about the proposed benefits.

More parking officers checking the parking would achieve a better result, blitz the area several days per month with attention paid to parking on double yellow lines, people will soon realise that they have to adhere to the time restrictions.

I use Harpenden for shopping every week and have never found it impossible to find a parking space even on a Saturday.

A more sensible solution, if parking charges have to be imposed, would be to allow 1 hour free and the subsequent hour to be charged for.

I also object to the notices advising of the proposal, they should make it clear that they relate to parking charges without having to read an A2 sign. A large bold heading should have been used.

Planning applications state 'This may affect you' Why was something similar not used clearly stating Proposed Parking Charges ?

It will not encourage the use of public transport if that was an objective.

Please rethink and don't kill Harpenden.

Hello

I am a lifelong resident of Harpenden and shop locally most of the time. Since my Senior Citizen's Parking Permit has expired I am tending to shop where there is free parking which is sometimes outside of Harpenden. I know one can park for free for a limited time on the roads in central Harpenden but it is usually too difficult to find a space.

Could I make a suggestion, which has probably been put forward already, that residents (possibly just Senior Citizens) could have an annual permit giving 2 or preferably 3 hours 'free' parking in the local car parks. Having spoken with many of my Senior Citizen friends, there is a general consensus that, as things stand, we will avoid paying the parking costs if at all possible by not using the car parks, but would be prepared to pay, say £150, for an annual permit. This would be far more convenient and easier for those folk who do not have smart phones to pay by phone.

Thank you for considering this option.

I am writing to object strongly to the imposition of new parking charges in the Town.

1. Firstly please note that it is apparently impossible to add any images to the form you present on the website. It says you can but you cannot.
2. Why is there a council obsession with making ever more money from the very people who still manage to keep Harpenden nearly viable? We pay so much as ratepayers yet NEVER EVER has either council conducted a zero-based budget (one performed from scratch. I submit that this is a clear indication of incompetence.
3. Harpenden as a town is dying. The town centre has lost its vibrancy and of course that and the inadequate parking and free parking make this alarming. These proposals simply bring forward the demise of the town centre. Why, even Southdown now has more vibrancy than Harpenden.
4. Those in any doubt should visit Saffron Walden – the shops were all open in February on a Sunday with streets fully occupied with browsers and shoppers. On the same date in Harpenden the town appeared dead. Why is the council so able to appear to be incompetent?
5. Below is a letter sent earlier this year to both councils – no answer has of course been received even by August. Why is this so typical of St Albans DC? When will I get a reply?
6. Harpenden is a valley town. Even those who would not describe themselves as disabled cannot do a monthly shop and take the shopping home without the help of a car. There is also a dearth of blue badge parking on the High Street
7. There is quite insufficient parking near to the town-centre as it is. We need very much more already. Only Waitrose has really made any attempt to help shoppers here yet they have been denied a second storey to their carpark and rumours suggest that their presence in the town may be short lived – is this so?
8. There is an urgent need to provide a card-clock system for on street parking free of charge along the entirety of the High Street with 30 minute slots so that roughly half the cars parked there leave every 30 minutes.
9. Where are the Council's draft plans for the conversion of the old Morecombe Hall into a multi-storey car park?
- 10 Where indeed are the longer term draft plans for underground parking under the common? The situation at Christmas shows the need for such every year.

The councils are failing their customers' needs. Can we please request that they at least start to get a grip?

(REDACTED)

Letter to SADC and HDC - no reply ever received. How come I wasn't surprised?

(REDACTED)

(REDACTED)

Like most residents of St Albans and – especially in my case – of Harpenden, I have long been concerned at the ever increasing demise of the High Street. The vibrancy of 30–40 years ago has been lost, we have coffee shops galore but new shops do not last. We now hear rumours of Waitrose planning to close because it is not permitted to expand (is this really the case?) and there is no mechanism for shop staff of the town to be able to park cheaply except in the streets. Yet it is Waitrose that is the town's salvation in terms of free parking for the town. I am sure that both of you are keen to effect solutions but sadly what is needed is simply not being provided.

Yet some other towns are thriving. On a Sunday in mid-February (no less!) I and my wife visited my son, and his family in Saffron Walden and we went to one of the pubs there for a family lunch.

Afterwards we took time out to look around the town and I was amazed that even at approximately 2:15pm on a Sunday the town was packed and thriving. Almost all shops (though not the council offices!) were lit, open and trading, the streets were filled with all age groups and with all clearly interacting. It was very exciting to say the least. Such a difference from Harpenden. The reason is clear for all to see.

Quite unlike St Albans and Harpenden, Saffron Walden has fully realised the importance of the car and has provided several key car parks on the flat (I counted five but there may be more. People can it seems always find spaces in the town square park even though the town was by then very nearly full. And this on a dull day in mid February! Clearly St Albans and Harpenden Councils have a great deal to learn.

I wonder if both of you together might be persuaded to visit Saffron Walden for yourselves, perhaps also on a Sunday, to judge for yourselves and hopefully to take decisive action?

I think that the measures you suggest will kill Harpenden. The economy is fragile, witness the number of empty shops. This will be a body blow for the shop keepers. People can't afford to pay the charges you have suggested, particularly young people with families and many people just over the cut off line. Everyone will suffer and you will make less money than now. People will not come to shop here if there is a charge, the town is too small.

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I am writing to object to the proposed application of parking charges in Harpenden Town Centre.

I am a Harpenden resident.

My address is:

(redacted)

My objections are as follows:

The threat to the High Street. Making it more expensive to visit the High Street will inevitably reduce the number of visitors to the businesses there- this has been demonstrated in countless locations across the country. Local businesses, which have a difficult enough time as it is will struggle and some will no longer be viable. A currently thriving High Street will not survive in its current form which is a tragedy for residents and the area in general.

Impact on Council revenue. This proposal is a short sighted approach which due to the impact on local businesses will result in reduced revenue to the Council. You may see an initial uptick in revenue from parking chargers and fines but long term this is not a sensible fiscal strategy.

Impact on older people. Currently, many older people are able to visit the high street relatively easily and do a quick shop. The car parking charge will inevitably put them off doing this and they will have to resort to longer more difficult journeys to supermarkets and will not be able to visit the smaller specialist shops available to them in the high street.

Political impact. I would ask you to seriously consider the political impact of such a move. I have heard a number of people criticise the Council for financial mismanagement- whether this is fair or not, this proposal is hardly likely to enhance the popularity of the current administration.

The changes to the car park charges in St Albans have had a detrimental effect on life in the town; e.g. people are discouraged from coming to town in the evening with chargers being imposed after 6.30pm

Please re-consider this ill advised proposal and protect rather than endanger Harpenden High Street which is one of the jewels in St Albans district's crown.

Harpenden High Street is already struggling with very few retail outlets left.

The proposed new parking scheme will finish Harpenden as a shopping area because there are lots of examples up and down the country where similar schemes have been introduced and the shopping areas are turning into ghost towns.

We should be taking measures to encourage new retail businesses to come to the town and people to shop locally.

If this goes through we, and many others we have spoken with, will not be voting LibDem ever again, either at Council or Parliamentary level.

Dear Sirs

I have tried but failed to access the online consultation on this matter as the site is insecure! Another Lib-Dem trick?

I wish to express my opposition to your proposals as follows:

1. This move will kill off the high street. Small businesses are struggling already with high rents and high business rates and you are now trying to cut footfall.
2. You are ceasing the senior citizens annual permit. This means that the elderly will no longer be able to get into town. There are no local buses and do you really expect the over 65's to cycle or walk miles to get into town (especially with shopping)?
3. As for your claim about needing the cash, I suggest you take a good look at your incompetent administration and the high salaries floating about.
4. Feelings are running high that on this issue you clearly do not represent the wishes of the community.

Harpenden has a thriving and bustling town centre - compare that with the soulless desert known as St Albans town centre with no parking in it.

Dear Sirs,

If your intention is to create a ghost town of Harpenden, then continue with your parking fee intentions.

It will decimate casual footfall to a town and our wonderful shops will suffer.

The fee Levi is a total deterrent.

All towns with payment parking on their high streets are deserted, shops will be boarded up, just look at St Albans its

depressing.

Please please do not kill our lovely vibrant town, I beg yo

Sir/Ma'am,

I am writing to express my dismay at the Paid Parking Proposals for Harpenden.

Harpenden is such a lovely town. One of the great things about it is that residents can nip into town to do their shopping at local businesses.

Paid parking will ruin the welcoming and homely character of the town.

Residents will shop online if these proposals come in. The effect on local businesses will be catastrophic.

I for one will not pay the exorbitant fees being proposed for the privilege of parking in my own town.

The line on the notice put up in town that proposals are 'necessary to effectively manage the control and turnover of limited waiting parking spaces,' is absolute nonsense, so please don't take us for fools. The proposals are simply a revenue raising exercise against already hard pushed tax payers and everyone knows it.

I observe as well that the notices in town went up quietly on the 18th July with a very limited chance to reply, during the holiday period when many Harpenden residents will be away.

These proposals need to be shelved immediately.

I am writing to OPPOSE in the strongest terms the new parking charges in Harpenden proposed by the Lib Dems. These will severely impact businesses in the town and will make all our lives incredibly inconvenient and expensive. This will double the cost of popping into town for a coffee with friends and have a huge impact on all the shops. It will encourage people to turn to online shopping. Charity shops will suffer – many young people eke out their budget by buying their clothes at charity shops, but they will no longer both doing this if they have to pay for parking as well.

I wish to register my dismay at the parking proposals for Harpenden.

It seems to me that these proposals are in no way designed to help the citizens of Harpenden or its visitors. The proposal is a very poorly considered method to address a fiscal shortfall that could be addressed more effectively by other means. For example, an effective enforcement policy would undoubtedly improve revenue and help release parking places as originally intended.

The current proposals would significantly affect Harpenden businesses with possible closures and consequently even less revenue overall.

It is a mess. I am very disappointed in the Lib Dem approach. So far all we have seen is, in my view, incompetence from SADC. Think again, seek collaboration with affected community leaders to achieve a solution that benefits all parties.

(REDACTED)

Harpenden

I object to the proposal for the following reasons:

- It will destroy local businesses
- It will kill the cafe culture
- It will penalise those who can't walk or cycle to the shops
- It is being rushed through without proper consultation
- It is illegally proposed to use these parking funds for other projects
- The process is not transparent
- 6000 local residents have already objected to it.

Is that enough reasons?

Broadly supportive of the proposals also given additional Disabled spaces AND inconsiderate parking on double yellow lines (eg outside Sainsbury's and corner of Victoria Road/Station) and pavement parking in Arden Grove more ENFORCEMENT required!

Also a more radical solution should be full pedestrianisation of Lower High Street. It's dangerous at the moment and deliveries permitted before 8am and after 6.30pm!

Parking proposals Harpenden, map reference PPB/01

To the "Parking Development Team", St Albans AL1

3JE

It is very disappointing that a Council based in St Albans appear to be setting out to seriously damage the shopping and business centre of the nearby delightful town of Harpenden through short sighted changes to parking arrangements.

THE RELEVANT ENVIRONMENT

Everyone is aware that town centres are at risk because of the growth of online shopping and the promotion (with Council approval) of shopping areas like London Colney and the bottom of Holywell Hill (where parking is free). You do not have to travel far to see towns like Old Harlow which are a mixture of boarded up shops and cheap scruffy takeaway outlets. This harms everybody....it makes them an unattractive place to live, it makes them an unattractive place to spend time and ultimately it reduces the income of a local Council who do not understand the need to support local businesses and a prosperous, vibrant town centre .

HARPENDEN'S EXISTING PROBLEMS

Harpenden is already sufferingevery Bank has left the Town and pleas for a a banking hub go unanswered. The range of shops has significantly deteriorated ,for example, with no shoe shops(there used to be three), few women clothes shops (certainly none like the former M&Co where one could buy ordinary items like underwear) and no hardware shop.

SADC have already demonstrated they are out of touch with Harpenden by insisting on the removal of the quirky attractive food vans which gave a buzz to our High Street and were loved by the residents.

HARPENDEN CURRENTLY

The greatest contribution to the continuing use of Harpenden for shopping is that it has been easy to stop for an hour or so to use the Post Office (often standing in its lengthy queue caused by having no local Banks), have a coffee, visit the chemists (where one is often asked to 'come back in 15 minutes' to collect one's prescription) etc. It is frankly ludicrous to say this can be done in 20 minutes....and I am sure it's not really 20 minutes as it will involve queuing at some parking machine wanting all sorts of data inputted all explained in a typeface visible only to the under 40s ...or ,even worse, a parking app unsuited to an older population like Harpenden.

DAMAGE TO THE EVENING TRADE

When SADC are not proposing to damage the shops and businesses in High Street, I presume they will also be imposing parking charges in the evening ,currently free, with the obvious result that the restaurants in the town centre will struggle to survive and customer business will transfer to country pubs with free car parks.

HARPENDEN'S POPULATION PROFILE

SADC are not taking account of the more elderly age profile of the population of Harpenden who cannot suddenly take to

walking or cycling to the shops.

This Council has already attacked many of the elderly population of Harpenden by withdrawing the senior citizens parking permits. They could have continued those and raised the price for revenue. Favouritism to the elderly it was said

but nothing about favouritism to the young and largely childless by the large sums spent on cycle lanes.

EXCESSIVE CHARGING RATE

The proposed charging rate is also far too high and discriminatory versus other thriving towns like Berkhamsted.. It is only a net increase in revenue as significant sums will need to be spent on new signage , parking machines and staff to enforce the parking rules on the ground and to undertake the enforcement of penalties in a back office. SADC say there is a deficit in parking costs but obscures the figures as to whether that deficit is largely incurred in St Albans town, and does not seem to be counting car parks and on street parking in one calculation.

SHAM CONSULTATION

Of course this consultation process is a sham undertaken at short notice during school holidays. Paul de Kort has already announced his conclusion before its even started. Signage is being erected in Harpenden ahead of the end of the consultation. This is all seriously in breach of rules applicable to local authorities.

There are also belated attempts by SADC staff to start dressing this money grab from Harpenden as some kind of environmental mission when they well know that in St Albans the zealous rolling out of parking restrictions just pushes

parking into different places. They are also trying to claim they are helping us by stopping us 'circling for free spaces'; this is not true..there is a steady churn of parking places and one can usually park; there is no pressure from within Harpenden for a change.

WHAT SADC SHOULD DO

If SADC cannot agree proposals that are acceptable to those that live and work here then they should hand responsibility for managing this issue over to the Town Council as they have done with the parks ..who I am sure can manage it without a deficit.

If SADC have budget problems, they should have managed that as part of the annual Council tax process.

If SADC really wants to help our town ,they should not grant permission for car parks ,like our Station car park, to be built on !

WE ARE ALL LOSERS IF THIS PROPOSAL GOES AHEAD

But SADC and the Liberal Democrat Council will be the biggest losers if this proposal goes ahead. ..they will reduce the value of Harpenden as a place to live and to contribute to the Councils coffers, and they will ensure that few people in Harpenden vote Liberal Democrat again.

I am writing regarding the above proposed changes to parking costs in Harpenden. I am objecting on the basis that we need to keep the high street as independent as possible and encourage local shopping. I don't always drive and often walk or cycle with my child. I don't always have time to do this or have the capacity to carry back everything I need which means I need the car. Introducing a charge will add another layer of cost and push my purchases to on line which I really want to avoid. The council are putting a further nail in the coffin of local shops if they push ahead with this. I don't mind paying if I am going to be there longer than an hour but not for less.

Please do not introduce this payment. Please listen to your stakeholders

I am not supportive of bringing in paid parking in Harpenden Town centre for the following reasons.

It will be detrimental to our High Street and kill local businesses. The current arrangement has worked perfectly well for many years and proved to be a great asset to our community and shop owners.

People of Harpenden and the Parish Council were not made aware of this proposal and it appears to have been handled in a very underhand manner and without due consultation.

There are many older people who without free parking will not be able to use the High Street. The ability to get out and meet with friends will be detrimental to their health and mental well being. The fact you can park very close to the shops is very beneficial to people with limited mobility but are not entitled to a blue badge.

This is not the right thing to do when so many households are struggling with cost of living.

I believe the scheme will increase traffic and pollution as people will drive round the block while a partner will run into a shop or sit idling rather than paying to park.

Please see below a letter written to Victoria Collins objecting to the proposed parking changes for Harpenden which We would like registered as formal objections against SADC and the proposal.

"We are long standing constituents and residents of Harpenden (address (REDACTED))

Now that you are our local MP and have been working day-in-day-out on local issues during your recent election campaign, in common with other residents, taxpayers and voters I am anticipating that you will start delivering on your promises by dealing with some important and urgent local issues.

I trust you will join the campaign against St Albans District Council's (SADC) proposed removal of free car parking across the district? This will mean the end of one and two hour free parking bays in Harpenden town centre. This proposal reaches a new height of stupidity and just proves that the Liberal Democrats cannot be trusted when they claim that they are "A party for business" and in reality are far from Liberal or Democratic. When retailers across the country, let alone Harpenden, are facing increased costs and lower sales due to the economic climate and internet shopping, it is another kick in the teeth for the retailers, restaurants and commercial properties who rely on footfall to sustain their business. Forcing people to pay to park will simply drive yet more footfall to the commercial zones where the very same authority has approved retail parks with free parking. The life blood of any community are the small independent businesses, who bring variety, personal service and vibrancy to an increasingly faceless, internationally-branded high street.

This proposal is simply another way for SADC to hide their mismanagement, who simply want to raise funds to pay for their inept and inefficient operations, past and present. Productivity in the Public Sector (in stark contrast to the private sector) is 6% below pre pandemic levels. My wife and I, who will be attending tomorrow evenings meeting at Park Hall in Harpenden personally know of local authority employees who enjoy 40+ days holiday per year, overgenerous and open to abuse “flexi-hours” that go unmonitored and unmanaged and who can be found attending fitness classes at the local leisure centre, meeting friends for coffee or looking after their elderly parents throughout the working week during normal working hours and who are seldom physically present at their place of work. It is outrageous and unacceptable to be attempting to heap more costs on locals and economic harm onto the town when this serious misuse of taxpayers money is left unaddressed.

In addition, to the criminal misuse of tax payers funds highlighted above what steps have the incompetents that run SADC taken to improve efficiency, other than constantly cutting front line services instead of their own gold plated over generous pensions or unsustainable and inefficient working practices? Rather than further picking the pockets of local tax payers by stealth and without prior consultation what steps have been taken to remove duplication of staff and functions by merging “back office” functions with neighbouring authorities for example? I would like to see a list of all roles in SADC with job titles and salaries – we are very confident that there would be a significant number of non-jobs that have little to do with improving services or delivering concrete results for the tax payers that pay these so called “public servants” salaries that if removed would save a huge amount of money without detriment to said services. I would also like to know what percentage of the staff at SADC are present in Council offices during the week but I suspect given what I already know it is pitifully low and well below the 40% in the private sector who attend five days a week or the 50%+ who attend between two and three days a week. If the Council offices are empty for the vast majority of the time why not sell off the offices to fund front line services and bolster Council funds rather than raiding the bottomless pit that is the tax payer? We all know that taxation (that’s what this is by another name) once introduced by local or national government is the thin end of a very big wedge that only increases in size and scope and never reduces.

If it is the objective of SADC to drive away independent businesses from our town environment they will without question succeed to the detriment of the communities and citizens these public officials are appointed to serve.

I was under the impression that councils cannot use parking charges as a means of revenue, only to maintain parking facilities – can you please confirm?

I understand that SADC have said that there is to be a "public consultation", but I hear that is a misrepresentation by them as the decision has already been made and it is just the prices to charge that are up for consultation – can you please confirm?

An attendant and linked issue is that of Seniors Parking Permits

I hope that one of your first actions as our local MP will be to try to reverse the perverse and pernicious decision by the St Albans District Council (SADC) to make the Seniors Parking Permit means-tested? This is completely unfair and biased against Harpenden residents, and why is it always the pensioners who are punished when the money runs out? There seems to be some political brain-fog that assumes that all pensioners are well-off! The message put out implies that the permits were free which, as you will know, they were not. The convenience of not having to queue to try and work out the confusing parking ticket machines was a major benefit, especially when it is raining and when some of us are not so mobile. Why not just increase the annual fee from £40 to, say, £50? I am sure the SADC would garner more revenue than by pursuing this route. Many people have told me that their trips will also be reduced, which will have a detrimental effect on local businesses,

shops, restaurants, theatres, etc. The SADC say that they cannot find any example anywhere else of such a permit being offered, as if it is a bad thing and depriving the community, when it should be lauded, championed, and held up as a great example of supporting local businesses and also the well-being of pensioners. The fact that it has not been done elsewhere is no reason not to do it! What are the additional costs to shops, restaurants, cafes, theatres, etc. because less people visit? Senior citizens are prepared to spend their money and often go out during the day when shops, cafes, etc. are quiet. My wife and I no longer travel into St Albans due the anti-car changes instituted by the Liberal Democrats in recent times.

Please be in no doubt if these outrageous attempts to bail out SADC at tax payers expense we for one will not be voting Lib Dem"

I am writing to register my total and outright protest to the planned introduction of on-street parking charges in Harpenden. I very much doubt if you'll take any notice of my protest however I am still entitled to make it. There is no justification for this additional tax on the residents of Harpenden. There is absolutely no practical benefit to the residents or shopkeepers of Harpenden. It will serve to close down businesses and drive customers to shop in Luton or Welwyn.

I am writing to object to this

Good afternoon.

I want to add a couple of issues to my response to the main Consultation site.

1. The charging process with meters, apps and cash payments via retail installed units seems very complicated.
AND given the size of the Harpenden High Street there will need to be lots of locations to enable residents and visitors to find them.

2. The charging level seems unfair when you compare the price with St Albans.

In Harpenden (a small town) all you get for your money are a limited number of shops/hospitality.

In St Albans, (a historic City) you get a Cathedral, a clock tower, a city museum and a roman museum.

Historic remains , a massive park and lake, plus shopping centres with major retailers, banks and hospitality.

I am writing as a Harpenden town resident to register my strong objection to the proposed changes to on street parking in Harpenden – ref PPB/01

I have a number of objections:

This would reduce both Harpenden resident's easy access to the town centre and the scale of proposed parking fees would also deter visitors. It would impact badly on businesses in the High Street Harpenden area. It would divert trade to other towns where parking is more freely available or to out of town shopping parks. Fewer customers would lead to business closures. These are businesses already challenged with high business rates and rent, fuel costs and the growth of on line shopping. Business closures and empty premises leads to a less vibrant town leads to more business closures – a vicious circle – isolated residents and zero community spirit.

We already have to pay higher parking costs in our car parks compared to other areas. This would be an additional cost to residents and would be detrimental to the town centre.

In what way does this proposal support a "Vibrant High Street" and "Thriving businesses" both of which the Council claim are their objectives?

Has this been considered in the whole? If businesses suffer, which undoubtedly they will, and have to close this will lead to more empty premises and a reduction in income from business rates.

The Council hopes that this proposal will "promote active travel". A not insignificant number of the town's population are elderly and have mobility issues. They need easy access to Harpenden's centre and its facilities. They cannot walk a few miles into town and back – or ride a bicycle!

The concept of parking ticket machines will be a deterrent to many of the elderly who do not have smartphones and are not "tech savvy"

20 minutes of free parking is not enough to achieve even a short task. This would not be sufficient to either queue at the Post Office or Pharmacy , pop into the supermarket for a quick top-up shop or select a book at the library. A minimum of 1 hour free parking on all parking bays is essential.

Charging to park for anything above 20 minutes would impact greatest on those on lower and fixed incomes, the less well off.

If you believe that there are some who are abusing the current system then why not police it properly?

This would increase congestion further away from the High Street as drivers circle looking for available free parking.

Please listen to what the local community and traders want and not what the councillors think is good for us.

Further to this I would like to register a further objection:

The withdrawal of the senior citizens parking permit seems a mean spirited gesture which will undoubtedly have an adverse effect for both the seniors and the town.

The elderly need social contact with others. As part of their socialising many seniors go regularly into Harpenden and spend money in shops and cafes. The prohibitive parking costs will lead to fewer visits. The High Street loses revenue, the seniors lose their social contact.

Many do not have smartphones and many more are not confident to use parking Apps. The frequent warnings from Trading Standards re scams using QR codes on ticket machines have scared them.

Many seniors do voluntary work, either in charity shops or for other organisations. Until now they have been able to buy a parking permit which has allowed them cheaper parking whilst volunteering. Some will find the parking costs are too much for them to continue their volunteering. A loss to both the charities and to the seniors.

This was a well-used and appreciated service and nowhere near as generous as free public transport for London residents. I do hope that the Council can reconsider the senior citizens parking permit for all, even if it is at a slightly higher cost than before.

To whom it may concern.

As a Harpenden resident please can you note my strong objection to the proposed changes to on street parking in Harpenden ref PPB/01.

I have a number of points to make including;

Detrimental impact on businesses in the High Street, Harpenden area. Leading to, fewer customers, and in turn more empty premises and less income from business rates.

Less passing trade.

Diverting trade to other towns where parking is more freely available or to out of town shopping parks.

Charging will impact greatest on those on lower or fixed incomes.

Make it more difficult to access essential services and amenities whether, the library or chemists.

Increased congestion further away from the High Street area as drivers circle looking for available free parking.

Cost of installing and maintaining any ticket machines.

Disenfranchising those without smart phones and older drivers who are not "tech" proficient.

Noted increase in scams using QR codes on ticket machines as frequently mentioned by Trading Standards.

Adversely affecting the current "feel" of the town as a friendly welcoming place to live and work.

Enforcement will be more costly and resource-intensive.

20 minutes "free" is of no use to anyone as you can spend that trying to find a working ticket machine or even queuing the

Post Office.

The argument that the proposed changes are to “effectively manage the control and turnover of limited waiting parking spaces” is obviously a smoke screen to raise funds from parking for other purposes. My understanding that this is not allowed under current legislation?

The impact these proposed changes would make can already been seen in roads adjacent to the High Street after 6.30PM when parking in car parks became chargeable in the evening. Now cars are parked on single yellow lines restricting traffic flow and a danger to pedestrians rather than using the car parks whilst at a local pub or restaurant, doing late night shopping and collecting commuters from the station.

Whilst writing this note may I also mention the mean and spiteful change in withdrawing the senior citizens parking permit. This was a well-used and appreciated service and whilst nowhere near as generous as free public transport for London residents generated business and income for local traders as well as facilitating visits to Doctors, Dentist etc without the hassle of using an app (see point above) or locating scarcer loose change. It also helped those with lower mobility in enabling them to park nearer the High Street without additional worry. I would be surprised if the loss in income from selling annual permits has resulted in greater takings from the chargeable car parks whilst inconveniencing the very people who bring life and income to the town during the day. I was not a beneficiary myself but know from friends who did have the permit what a sad loss the withdrawal was. I do hope the council can re-consider the senior citizens parking permit even if at a higher cost than before as I'm sure local businesses would benefit even at the lower time limit of 2 hours rather than the original 3 hours.

Dear sirs

Parking proposals Harpenden, map reference PPB/01

I was well represented at the Harpenden Town Council meeting of Monday evening 22 July, when there was much horror expressed at the proposals of SADC to impose parking charges on Harpenden. It is very disappointing that SADC appears to be planning to damage seriously the shopping and business centre of their smaller neighbour, along with the willingness of the town's volunteers to help run many activities, if they are forced to pay in future to park.

Already the town is struggling to keep shops open, in that rents are high, and many a business has had to give up. A recent example is Jojo Maman Bebe, closed because of high rents. It would be sad, because of expensive parking costs, to see Harpenden develop a high street of boarded up shops and cheap scruffy takeaway outlets, which makes it an unattractive place to live, an unattractive place to spend time; and it ultimately reduces the income of a local Council, who appear not to understand the need to support local businesses and a prosperous, vibrant town centre.

We have already lost all our banks (and there is no sign of the much hoped-for banking hub), the range of shops has significantly deteriorated (3 shoe shops down to none), the types of clothes shops much reduced, and the jolly atmosphere created by the last few years of parked food-selling vans on the Concourse gone, the licenses for the latter cancelled by

SADC. Empty shop premises will become more common.

In response to SADC's magnanimous offer to allow a few places still for 20 minutes of free parking, I challenge anyone to be able to undertake their intended business in that short time. Doctors' surgeries hopefully can provide adequate free parking for their patients (not always ...), but if a prescription is to be collected from a pharmacy, there is little chance of that one mission being carried out in 20 minutes (one is nearly always told to come back in 15 minutes, even for a repeat prescription requested days earlier). As for a post office visit, always with lengthy queues to be faced (partly because of the lack of banking, and even worse now as parcels are unable to be handled at our main post office at the rear of W H Smith), there is little chance of attending to that one goal in 20 minutes. That 20 minutes of free parking would most likely already be reduced with the necessity to queue for some form of slip of paper, or, worse, online confirmation of time booked in.

Harpenden has long been considered a good place to visit in an evening for its restaurants and bars. One assumes that SADS's intentions are to charge for evening parking too – which could well lead to restaurant and bar closures. We already have the once attractive building at the entrance to the town, Kingston House, boarded up, as it has been for several years, due to the planning department's decision not to allow the proposal for a restaurant roof terrace. More bars and restaurants are likely to follow, if patrons were to have to add in a parking cost to their evening out, as none has free parking to offer.

Harpenden's population profile includes an ageing population. They cannot suddenly take to walking or cycling to the shops. The senior citizen's parking permit, which could at least allow car parking at Amenbury Lane close to the town centre, has already been much reduced in time for parking, fewer spaces available, and increased in cost, and is due not to be

rebookable after each permit's expiry date. I personally have stood for several minutes attempting to work out how to use the existing meters, if needing to park for longer than my currently allotted 2 hours. I am not in the habit of coping with apps, or paying for parking by card, but would consider attempting to master an app, if such a thing were to be made available for senior citizens to use, so that we don't have to find a younger person each time we want to park to ask for help.

The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, which is 'not a fiscal measure and does not authorize a council to use its powers to charge local residents for parking in order to raise surplus revenue for other transport purposes funded by the General Fund' (legal case R (Attfield) v Barnet) was raised at the Monday 22 July meeting, but seems to have been brushed aside as of no relevance. I should be interested to hear how this can be the case, as the implication at the back of these excessive parking charges being imposed on Harpenden is that the funds raised will go towards the SADC deficit.

A major issue about the proposals, supposedly a 'consultation', is that there has been insufficient time allowed for any discussion. The fact that the meeting was booked, with next to no advance warning, and during the summer holidays, is somewhat unfair. I understand that Paul de Kort has already announced his conclusion before it has even started – surely in breach of rules applicable to local authorities?

May I make some suggestions based on my own lifestyle? I run a weekly-meeting group for the elderly, one that is 'good for us', in that it's pushing us to use our brains! I currently charge £2 per session, a paltry amount of money, which I would have proposed to increase, in that all funds go to the work of the very worthwhile Salvation Army. Most of us currently have our senior citizens' parking permits, so we can park free in Amenbury Lane car park. When they expire, we'd have to pay (I think)

over £6 for each session of parking. Members may decide they can't afford that parking cost and drop out, and there would be little chance (as I'd wished to do) that I can increase the weekly charge to go to charity.

I would feel that many senior citizens would love to have a continuation of the displayable senior parking card, and may be willing to pay up to £100 for the benefit – of being able to park without the hassle of trying to pay or register, and ideally for the 3 hours of the previous system. Is this something that SADC would consider?

I am a regular local volunteer (in particular as a Helping Hands driver and organizer of charity events), and know many of similar age to myself (75) who help in the various charity shops in the town. Many would be unwilling to continue with their voluntary contribution of time and effort, if they were to have to pay for parking, whether on the street or in Amenbury Lane car park. I accept that the presence of several charity shops in a town is not necessarily healthy – but this is how Harpenden now is. For some of them to have to close because of lack of volunteers would create yet more empty premises/boarded shop fronts..

My ultimate point is that it would be only fair if SADC would consult with Harpenden Town Council, listen to the many viable points raised by the Harpenden Society, Harpenden's outraged population members who have made the effort to write to both the District Council and town council, etc, and at least postpone any imposed restrictions for, say, six months, to have a decent consultation about SADC's parking proposals which are going to cause such damage to the town centre.

To Whom it may concern

I am writing to express my shock and disappointment at the decision to increase the price of parking in Harpenden and increase the paid parking areas.

We attend a Church in Harpenden and have been for 22 years since we lived there and find it insulting if we now have to pay to attend a weekly service. We pay enough tax throughout the year in many ways but the town is now trying to increase it even further.

It is hard for the young, old and the people working in the shops. It affects all the local businesses as you intentionally keep people away from the streets.

I would be interested to know if there is a meeting about this as the date given for any comments regarding this new plan is August 15th. This is the quietest time in Harpenden throughout the year and many residents will be away.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to protest about the proposed paid parking charges on Harpenden streets. These charges will drive potential shoppers to free parking at places such as London Colney and Marshalswick which may please St Albans retailers but will drive out small businesses in Harpenden which are already struggling with high rent and rates.

20 minutes of free parking is just not enough for a visit to the chemist or the library, let alone a coffee or lunch. And this will also seriously impact older residents who don't have smartphones or don't know how to use them.

St Albans Liberal Democrats don't seem remotely interested in Harpenden, except that they see us as a 'cash cow' and seem to covet taking over ownership of our old public hall.

I am objecting to the proposed new parking charges for Harpenden.

Firstly I object to any charges being levied as if you want a thriving high street you need to retain free on street parking.

Secondly the proposed charges are exorbitant.

You need to find other means to raise revenue rather than trying to destroy local retail businesses. Suggesting 20 minutes free is a nonsense as it takes that amount of time to unload prams and kids out of a vehicle before they can go anywhere.

I have lived in Harpenden for the last twenty five years and been able to shop locally and support local business.

Imposing greedy parking charges will force people onto online shopping and destroy the high street that people enjoy using. Total disgrace that you are so out of touch with the people who live, work and shop in Harpenden.

Dear sirs,

I'm writing to strongly oppose the recent parking restrictions in Harpenden.

As residents and supporters of the high street shops, I think this is completely unnecessary.

The people who wish to pop into town keep the high street going. And paying for parking is not only a potential deterrent, it also takes away the charm of the town and suggests it's more of a larger town-which it's not. We don't want to become a small St Albans thank you very much. Although it would appear those working for the council are constantly agreeing to various developments and restrictions to deliberately spoil Harpenden.

I have recently learnt about the proposal to change the current parking policy in Harpenden town centre by St Alban's Council.

A proposal to only allow 20 minutes of free parking from 1 or 2 hours (currently) will have a direct impact on the shops and local businesses in the centre.

The fact that the Council is calling this project – Parking Development does not fill me with confidence that, this year or any other objections will be taken into account. It feels like the Council has already decided to go ahead and just going through the motion of a consultation.

There has been no consultation with us by the council, in fact all that has been done is a splattering of posters tied to lampposts for Harpenden residents to decipher if they happen to stop and read them.

This underhanded way of introducing charges must be reviewed as this has an impact on cost of living, local businesses and will create less footfall. Our habits of frequenting our variety of shops, bars and cafes, restaurants etc. will be greatly affected. I feel the Council is trying to introduce restrictions where there are currently no issues with how local people use the parking facilities. In addition, this may be a step to generate funds for the council but the wider dis-benefits are not being considered.

However, the St Alban's Council use of stealth and complete lack of open and fair consultation and communication does not seem to take this into consideration.

I would be extremely grateful if a stop is put to these changes. I am afraid if this goes ahead our Harpenden centre will lose its current footfall and inevitably lead to a closure of local businesses.

To note, this is not the first time I am dealing with the Council on road and traffic matters as despite my views, the modal

filter near me was closed off.

I strongly oppose any implementation or changes to Parking in Harpenden town centre.

I am hoping my views are considered and adequate responses are forthcoming.

To: Whom It May Concern

I strongly oppose the council's plan to charge for any on-street parking in Harpenden.

It would most definitely be the death of our high street. I cannot comprehend who could have come up with this idea and not realised that!

I regularly 'pop in to town' to buy something locally. If charges were brought in I would stop doing this and probably have to travel further a field causing more traffic congestion and pollution in the process.

We need our high streets to support smaller businesses and maintain our community. Shopping locally is also much more convenient.

Please throw this ludicrous idea out.

As your survey is too limiting and only partially covers our situation we are resorting to communicating via email.

There is no mention of how this scheme will be enforced. We hardly see a parking warden around the town now – rules and regulations which are not enforced are useless. Unless the bays are marked out we will continue to see motorists taking up more than the required space for their car.

Under the current system in Harpenden users of the Leisure Centre can have 2 hours free parking, but if I do an activity class at the EMC I don't! Instead I have to pay for 2 hours parking to allow for changing before and after the class – this almost doubles the cost of the class.

My husband is 88 years old and I am 80 years old. We own one small vehicle and visit Harpenden town centre on average 3 to 4 times per week, together and/or separately. Our visits are usually relatively short – doctor, dentist, optician, pharmacist, library. 20 minutes free parking is hardly sufficient for any of these as elderly people need more time to cope with ticket machines (presumably we will be still be required to obtain a ticket?). They take longer to walk to and from the machines with no guarantee that there won't be a queue at the machine or a delay in the establishment they are visiting.

The mere suggestion of using Apps for parking is daunting to many of the elderly – smartphones in general – supposing you have one – can cause confusion along with a lack of understanding of how things work. By the time you've found your reading glasses (because they are not the ones you use to drive) your time is almost used up! We should be encouraged to get out and meet others rather than feeling it's easier and safer to stay home.

The environmental aims of the scheme are laudable but you can hardly expect most octogenarians to ride a bicycle and carry the weekly shopping up the hill home!! They want to remain independent for as long as possible.

There will be no time for browsing the High Street shops people will head for the out of town shopping outlets instead and meet up with friends for coffee at a garden centre.

To add insult to injury you have removed the 'universal' senior parking permit without notice and without consultation. Before the local elections in May I was assured by my local liberal democrat district councillor that a more realistically priced one would be introduced – it has gone ominously quiet! If this is a party which cares about community, it needs to prove it and reinstate it!!

I object to the proposal to introduce paid for parking under the reference above – cancelling all free parking bays in Harpenden.

I feel very strongly that the Council are proposing this as an unfair money making opportunity. The Council is withdrawing senior citizens parking permits – despite the fact that these are paid for in advance. Many residents in Harpenden are well over 70 and if the fees are to be paid for by mobile phone there are many who do not have modern phones.

I personally will not use the high street shops so much and many other residents will feel the same – resulting in lower footfall in the retail outlets.

When the Liberal Democrat's were canvassing in both the local and general elections this year they gave the impression that

they would look carefully at the free parking spaces in Harpenden and that it wasn't a 'Done Deal' – sadly they have been 'creative' in their replies.

I am very concerned about this proposal. There are already paid car parks in our town if one needs a longer visit, but as residents we have enjoyed the benefits of being able to make a quick visit to one or two shops, parking near the shops, without the inconvenience of paying for the privilege. The free 20 minutes is not sufficient to, for example, pick up a prescription and get one or two items in another shop.

Also how will this work? Are you proposing to fill our pretty High Street and side streets with more ugly street furniture, in the form of parking meters? Horrible! Or will it be a smart phone operation which is incomprehensible to older generations and even some younger ones, and is available only to those with a particularly type of mobile phone. This would be discriminatory against other or non phone users.

Everyone I speak to in the town is firmly against this proposal. It will not be good for businesses, and we have many small independent shops who could lose their livelihoods.

It will change our town forever, and not for the better. We wish to retain the character and charm of our community, and the introduction of ugly paying machines throughout the town centre would turn our town into a soulless area and could be the start of a downward spiral into decline, as people will vote with their feet and go elsewhere or buy on line.

On another matter, I would ask you to seriously reconsider keeping the annual parking permits for retired people. Again,

those I know who have one, would be willing to pay more simply for the simplicity and convenience. The thought of a smart phone payment method terrifies them and they just wouldn't use the car parks, causing them to lose their independence. Please reconsider this unfair treatment of our older residents.

I am strongly opposed to these proposals.. Although I will only be mildly inconvenienced by these proposals I fear they will have a very adverse effect on the nature and attractiveness of Harpenden high street by increasing the financial pressure the shops especially the independents rather than the large chains common to most high streets..

I am also concerned that you appear to be unwilling to work with the Harpenden Society and others that have the best interests of Harpenden at heart.

I have left it to nearly the last minute to comment as i believe that you have already made up your minds and this is really a pointless consultation.

Both my wife and I wish to object strongly to the Lib / Dems proposed introduction of new car parking charges for Harpenden Town Centre.

We write to you to object to the planning proposal affecting the street parking in the centre of Harpenden where it is proposed to charge for parking (except the first 20 minutes) on all central roads.

We also understand that payment will be by mobile phone.

We strongly object to this for the following reasons:

This will result in an enormous decrease in visitor numbers to Harpenden Town Centre and thus a severe impact on all high street businesses, who will suffer financial loss and no doubt end up closing, with the resultant death of what is currently a vibrant town centre.

Payment by mobile phone will affect the poor, vulnerable and especially the elderly who may not even possess a mobile phone and most certainly not be able to use it to pay for parking. (The elderly have already had their annual parking permits for car parks withdrawn).

Implementation of this scheme will also have financial cost, from the infrastructure to set it up, but also longterm from the inevitable increase in vacant shop premises which will reduce business rate receipts.

The loss of the major supermarkets, which will be the first to go from implementation of this scheme and whose adjacent car parks are, we understand, already currently at risk, will cost upwards of 400 jobs.

Loss of the supermarkets would mean Harpenden residents would then have to drive, if they are able, to St Albans or other local towns greatly increasing the environmental and carbon footprint impact.

The scheme would considerably affect the independent living of the elderly.

For these reasons we strongly request that you reconsider this proposal.

Hi

As a Harpenden resident ((REDACTED)), I would like to make some comments around the proposed parking changes.

The proposed changes should form part of a much wider review to be properly effective while supporting the local economy and wider sustainability goals.

The current schemes and provisions appear very heavily focused on drivers without sufficient consideration for cyclists and pedestrians.

I believe that the reopening of the high street to regular traffic following the pandemic was a massive retrograde step and has served to discourage sustainable options such as cycling and walking.

The current proposals are likely to generate significant angst and objections with little benefit to the community. I would suggest that a better approach to that currently proposed would be to make parking free away from the high street (in the various car parks a few minutes from the high street) and then implement the proposed charges (or better still, only allow

blue badge and delivery vehicles on the high street itself). This would encourage freer movement for pedestrians and cyclists, reducing the current widespread conflict with cars.

It is also vital that, as part of these proposals, proper consideration is given to key workers (healthcare in its various forms, school and nursery staff) and to store staff in order to keep the town centre alive. I can see little evidence of this in the current proposals as presented.

As an aside, there is also some significant work need to improve cycle access as many routes currently generate unnecessary conflict with other road users and pedestrian desire lines are largely ignored in the various paths.

Dear Council,

I am writing to you all on behalf of the Harpenden Helping Hand committee. We are concerned that the proposed charging for street parking in central Harpenden will have an adverse affect on our volunteer drivers willingness to take our clients to surgeries, pharmacies and clinics in the town and then wait for them to take them home again. It is not just the cost involved but even more the sheer bother of having to pay.

I want to lodge my objections in the strongest possible terms to the proposed on-street parking charges for Harpenden. You have already been made fully aware of many arguments against the proposal, to which I can only add my support. However, it is very sad that these proposals are being supported by a large majority of council members in St Albans, many of whom have possibly never even visited the town, let alone become aware of the potential negative impact it will have - not only to the residents in many ways, but also to the general welcoming aura of the town centre, with its many friendly, independent shops. Many older people and younger families on a strict budget will think twice before deciding to visit the town for some basic groceries, etc., when the extra cost of parking has to be considered. Alternative options of cycling in is a ridiculous pipe-dream when taking account of the continually increasing heavy road traffic, with no provision for cycle lanes, rendering it a huge safety risk for all: simply unacceptable for most families and impossible for many OAPs. Bus routes in are very limited, so again not a viable option for many.

The parking charges could be made somewhat more acceptable to the older members of the community if the parking permits were to be maintained - even at a higher charge - but to take away this (unless means-tested) will result in unacceptably increased costs for many pensioners who are already having to live off a tight budget.

Perhaps income could be more readily raised through proper policing of current parking in the town: by issuing appropriate fines for the many illegally parked vehicles - a better, more informed view of parking could then lead to a more considered approach to the way forward.

This is a very ill-conceived idea, taking minimal account (if any) of the impact it will have on both the residents and the businesses within what has, up until now, been a thriving and popular town.

Dear Sirs,

We write to confirm our opposition, in the strongest terms, to the Council's proposal to levy parking charges in Harpenden town centre.

There is a huge body of opinion in Harpenden that the current parking arrangements work well and that there is no need for the council to raise funds in this manner, once again penalising the motorist.

o whom it may concern

I hope you can help us find a reasonable solution to the problems with parking in the town, in the light of SADC's proposals.

I attended the EGM of HTC on 22.07.24 to learn more about these parking proposals and how they will affect Harpenden. I am very concerned that the on street parking bays which are currently free for 1 or 2 hours are to become 'paid for' spaces with only 20 minutes free. The cost thereafter of £2.50 per hour for a maximum of 2 hours is prohibitive. I believe that residents and regular visitors to Harpenden town centre will simply choose to go elsewhere to shop or socialise.

Parents will struggle to get their young children into the 3 town centre schools on time – 20 minutes free parking simply will not be enough and to expect them to pay at least £5 per day to drop off & pick up their children each day is a huge extra cost and one many will not be able to afford. nor should they have to when children attending non-town centre schools do not have to!

Harpenden does not have any big name shops, or indeed any banks, to make paying for parking at those rates worthwhile. The two small supermarkets rely on people popping in for a few items, often parking in bays which are currently free, typically with an occasional bigger shop when they park in the supermarket car parks. If we have to pay to park every visit it will simply be unaffordable. There may also then be trips to doctors etc to factor in.

The suggestion that people can walk or cycle to the town centre is only workable if one is not going to be buying anything to carry home! I live 2 miles north of the town centre and this is simply not possible! I am a fit and active retired person and I do walk into town reasonably often but I need to bring my car into town to do any shopping.

Part of Harpenden's charm is the range of independent retail outlets on offer, good quality charity shops and a wide range of pleasant coffee houses and eating places but these will suffer loss of custom and many may have to close if these parking proposals go ahead. Indeed, volunteers who largely man the Charity shops may reluctantly decide that they can no longer afford to do so.

The Senior Citizens Parking Permit was mentioned at the EGM. Currently my husband and I have a Senior Citizens Parking Permit but when this expires in September we will no longer be able to renew it, as it has now been restricted to those receiving benefits. We both volunteer locally and this involves several trips a week into town each – it will make our volunteering more difficult if we have to pay to park every time! In addition many older people come into town to attend coffee mornings & social activities at local churches and Salvation Army or Harpenden Trust – many will not be able to afford to, or will find the payment apps or parking machines too difficult to manage. Arthritic fingers and failing eyesight do not make these things any easier. Why should they be discriminated against in this way?

A suggestion from HTC regarding this was that people born in 1954 or before should be able to apply for a permit at a higher rate. When this rather arbitrary cut off date was queried we were told that this is because people born after 1954 are more likely to be computer literate. Whilst this may be true, this misses a lot of points. If anyone of State Pension age were to be allowed to apply for a Senior Citizen Parking permit that would make a lot more sense. It was a poor decision to restrict Parking Permits to people on benefits only – many of the retired population could afford to pay more for it, perhaps £100 a year, thus guaranteeing parking income from this source. People on benefits could still apply for a parking permit at a reduced rate. This way the scheme would bring in more income to SADC and support local businesses and the well-being of many older people who need to come into town to find company and support. We shall all continue getting older, even those of us born after 1954!

Another point to make is that car parks in the town are currently very poorly monitored and maintained. The lower levels on Bowers Way car park near Sainsbury's are filthy, with litter left for months on end. Also, cars park illegally all over town and there seldom seems to be anyone to enforce the current parking rules. If this was monitored efficiently it would quickly generate much of the income SADC needs.

If parking bays need to be paid for, it should be at a more affordable rate, perhaps £1.00 per hour but with many of the bays allowing 30 mins free parking first.

I do appreciate that all Councils are strapped for cash but my fear is that Harpenden town centre is going to become a ghost town if the parking proposals are implemented in their current form. It must be in everyone's best interest to protect Harpenden's thriving town centre businesses.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Dear Sirs: I am at a loss to understand the thinking behind the proposal by St Albans Council to take away the free on street parking in Harpenden High Street. I cannot see any benefit in doing this as it will massively inconvenience shoppers who spend money in the shops and cafes, businesses and shops trying to do business (the cost of parking will of course have to be taken into account on top of the cost of any goods/services customers wish to purchase), resulting in them going elsewhere. I believe you say that the changes will benefit the community as a whole “by promoting active travel” – what does that mean? To me “active travel” means no one will stop in Harpenden, they will travel straight through!! They probably will and that is no good to anyone and if brought in it certainly will discourage people from parking in the street.

While on the subject of parking, for many years I enjoyed the 3 hours “free” parking for Senior Citizens such as me where one paid around £40 per annum for the permit. Your council reduced the three hours to two (I did write to you about this but received no reply!) which was no good to me at all! I am 80 and am rather slow these days so by the time I had gone to St Albans/Harpenden, parked in one of the Council car parks and walked to the shops and made a few purchases I had no time to have a coffee or lunch as I would have to walk (slowly) back to the car park. Therefore I was not able to visit St Albans at all last year. Now I understand this permit is to be means tested and only those on Pension Credit or similar will be able to have it. Of course that means I now do not qualify for this permit as I have savings and wonder whether those on Pension Credit will be able to afford a car anyway. Public transport is pretty dismal and I for one would struggle to get on and off!! There are few “perks” for pensioners these days and at least the original 3 hours parking permit was very useful and gave enough time to shop AND have a quick coffee/lunch.

(I do have concerns also about parking APPs! Some of us find these very difficult to deal with – hopefully there will be a cash option to pay?)

Perhaps your decision makers are young and active – and good luck to them – but please remember some of us who have worked all our lives, paid our taxes, including Council Tax of course, do need a little something to make life more interesting as one gets older.

I would ask you to please reconsider your parking decisions and to take into account the needs of everyone, including the older generation – we are forgotten or disregarded by many these days please do not add to our problems!

Ny comments (same as consultation submitted):

1. The proposed parking restrictions and charges in Harpenden should not go ahead because they are purely a fund raising mechanism for the St Albans District Council, are contrary to the interests and wishes of Harpenden residents and businesses, will be detrimental to the town and punish elderly people especially given the total absence of public transport. In addition, they compound existing poorly thought out resident parking restrictions on certain streets, which are for too long periods each day, rather than specific one or two hour periods – these have resulted in no parking at all during most of every day on these streets, residents who may park only need these to be available nearby or in evening. (Just take a look at the road I mention below).
2. Our family has lived in Harpenden, just on the outskirts of the centre of Harpenden, for over 30 years. It is now too far for us to walk in , as it is for many people, especially the elderly, and there is no suitable public transport and never will be any. Parking in the (limited) car parks already incurs a charge or is difficult due to capacity. Parking for a short visit will be expensive and inconvenient. You will have to police the restrictions very closely if you intend to enforce them and this will be costly.
3. The arrangements in place at the moment are helpful to residents who wish to shop or meet in Harpenden – your charges will stop people, including us, visiting the centre and be detrimental to businesses, more will close. No doubt the District Council will use public money to take on expensive leases and become a landlord, spending the money elsewhere or trying to plug gaps as its spending escalates.

4. The proposals need to be viewed in the context of the existing restrictions for Residents' Parking which are unnecessarily restrictive for those who wish to visit the town. There is one other detail which I have pointed out to the District Council in the past and it has been totally ignored. You should review the Residents' Parking arrangements in Harpenden which you have introduced over many years. Instead of having specific short periods when only residents can park (eg 10-11am or similar), which would, for example, deter commuters or long term parking, you have in several locations introduced blanket "all day" (8am to 6pm etc) and Saturday restrictions when only residents can park. This has resulted in entire streets being totally empty of any parking at all (no exaggeration) for most of the day, every day. An example is on Leyton Road between Rothamsted Research and the Silver Cup. I sent photographs to yourselves on two occasions a few years ago, but my questions on why the timings were so long, were ignored. As a result the parking which used to help Harpenden residents, people visiting the town from the edges of town, has disappeared and now you intend to charge for the (limited) parking on street. Another example of a total lack of joined up thinking. Adjust the resident parking times so that other Harpenden residents can park for free outside the restricted times on streets which are currently totally empty of parking.

To Who It Concerns,

I wholeheartedly oppose this scheme for all the reasons many other people would have opposed it.

To suggest a few 20 minute free bays would service school or patient drop off/pick up is laughable! These things can often take longer than that. I am sure SADC will be rubbing their hands together at the revenue fines will bring in for over running this.

You only have to look at St Albans to see the derelict High Street shops and lack of business. Does the council want the same for Harpenden? Shame on you.

Leave the parking as it is. It works. For so many reasons and so many people. If you have mismanaged your books and need more revenue, look closer to home.

ish to protest strongly about the new parking measure in Harpenden that are being planned. They are completely unfair and should be reviewed immediately. As you are aware there are several petitions against these awful changes and you should listen seriously to them. If you continue with your ridiculous proposals Harpenden town will 'die' as residents and people from other areas will stop visiting. It is preposterous to charge £2.50 per hour for parking. This is downright greed. You should reinstate the seniors card for 3 hours parking. This permit is not free and you are still getting revenue from it. It is a petty way to treat the elderly who support the town. Also charging parking after 6.30pm should be reviewed. For years it has always been free parking after 6.30pm. You are penalising people who are visiting the EMC and other places I urge you to seriously rethink your strategy over parking. Do not charge for street parking, have a sensible rate in the car parks and reinstate the senior permit. This way, I believe, you will get more revenue as residents will continue to frequent the town.

Dear (REDACTED),

As I'm sure you are aware, Harpenden residents are furious with you and your LibDem team acting as if these parking charges are a done deal.

This is outrageous and if you persist in pushing this through, against the wishes of Harpenden, you and your mates will have a very short spell in control of the Council.

If you need to raise more money why don't you look at Council efficiencies? You are rightly keen to ensure the St Albans Council budget is balanced but ending free street parking only provides a drop in the ocean compared to the annoyance it will cause. Hertfordshire and St Albans Councils waste tens of millions every year by poor contract tendering and contract management. It appears nobody in the Council monitors contract compliance or standards.

This is an area that should be reviewed as an area of substantial potential savings before removing free parking. I know St Albans Council has expanded considerably over the past 10 years, you should be seriously looking at slimming down the head count and wage bill before fiddling with Harpenden parking. The other concern is how will people pay for parking if this goes ahead. Smart Phone apps discriminate against older residents and online payment takes ages to complete.

I've never known Harpenden residents to be so up in arms about anything so much as this. If this goes ahead the LibDems will be kicked out at the next set of local elections.

Dear Sir or Madam

I write this email in opposition to the introduction of parking charges in Harpenden, as well as the removal of senior citizen parking permits.

Parking charges

in my view this will severely damage the shops, restaurants and businesses in the town and ultimately the council will receive a reduced business income.

The proposed scheme will decimate the café culture that the council has been so keen to promote. Many people who live in the surrounding villages will not use Harpenden for shopping.

It takes no account of the high proportion of the town's population who are older and are not suddenly going to be able to walk or cycle to the shops or carry home heavy shopping.

I am a retired barrister, do not forget the reported case of *Attfield v London Borough of Barnet*, where a High Court judge held that a local council must not use its powers to charge local residents for parking in order to raise surplus revenue for other transport purposes.

The suggestion of 20 minutes free parking is pointless. Have you ever attempted to queue in the post office or the one remaining bank, this is simply not enough

Senior citizens car parking permit

I gather that there is a proposal to allow those born before 1954 to purchase a parking permit for the princely sum of £190 per annum. Why can this not be open to all pensioners? Like many residents of my age I do not have payment details on my smart phone and therefore cannot use that to make payments at the machine. Only the other day I took the trouble to read the instructions on how to make a credit card payment. I must confess I had considerable difficulty in understanding the instructions. I haven't lost all my marbles yet and I assume there will be many others of a similar age will have similar difficulties. I for one would be prepared to pay £190 per annum for a permit allowing 3 hours parking at a time and therefore SADC can raise considerable funds by expanding these proposed changes.

Hopefully these comments will be received with a sympathetic ear

Dear Sir

I strongly disagree with SADC's charging proposal for the roads in our town centre. These new charges will have considerable adverse effect on all the shops, causing residents to shop out of town and greatly reduce the footfall locally. It will be a very unenlightened and retrograde step to enforce charging. You must understand that the very lifeblood and character of our High Street will be harmed and gradually reduce the area to just another soulless district. Think again, and not be short sighted over this.

If you still must charge, then the first hour should be free with a nominal fee for the second hour, say £2.00.

Dear Sir/Madam

We wish to register our objection to the introduction of on street parking charges proposed for Harpenden Town Centre.

1. The proposed charges are excessive and the knock on effect for businesses and nearby residential streets will be catastrophic
2. 20 minutes free is derisory and is insufficient time to do any shopping at all
3. Local businesses will inevitably lose customers leading to closures
4. The High Street will ultimately fail and empty shops become a feature of what is currently a vibrant and thriving community
5. Parking will move further into nearby streets, which already suffer the nuisance of commuter parking on weekdays, and as a result would be inundated with cars parked at weekends too
6. Voluntary workers will not be willing to 'pay' to volunteer
7. Older people and those without smartphones would not be able to cope with the payment system
8. Harpenden will lose its appeal to visitors and the local economy will suffer

The cost to implement will no doubt be huge so why not employ a full time traffic warden to properly 'police' the town centre parking and raise revenue that way? This could at least be done for a trial period to ascertain whether or not this would be a viable long term option and would probably be cheaper. It is an affront to local democracy that the consultation was cancelled prior to the local elections in May. Had this taken place, the outcome and make up of the local council would no doubt have been very different.

We urge the council to abandon the proposals and investigate other less damaging solutions to their financial shortfall. It is blatantly obvious by the public outcry created that the people of Harpenden and the local businesses do not approve of this ill thought out proposal for very good reasons and this should be respected.

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

I write to confirm my opposition to the proposed parking charges to Harpenden. If implemented, it will be detrimental to local businesses and residents alike. It is difficult enough for businesses to survive with all the other taxes and restrictions they have to deal with.

PLEASE DO NOT IMPOSE THESE CHARGES.

I adamantly object to the proposed charges

I am in my eighties and drive into town 3-4 times a week for shopping, browsing, library and to enjoy the ambience of our lovely town.

If you impose parking charges I will no longer be able to afford to go out, as I am unable to walk there and back.

You will, in effect, be forcing me to go further afield or, become housebound.

This is not how I expect to be treated in my old age after living in Harpenden for 50 years.

I urge you to think again for me and people in my position, whose lack of custom will impact on local shops.

Perhaps, the senior parking permits could be reintroduced.

In hope

Dear Sirs

I attach a pdf letter with my comments responding to your consultation over the proposals to introduce on-street parking charges in central Harpenden.

I have also posted a hard-copy letter, which I have also copied to our MP.

Please think again. These proposals, if implemented, will punish the people of Harpenden severely, and add very substantially to our weekly food bills and severely degrade our standard of living.

This is not what we elected the council for.

Dear Sirs

I am writing on behalf of both my wife and myself in response to the consultation on "High Demand Car Parking Bays" affecting the centre of Harpenden. Let me be clear that we both unequivocally ask you to reconsider your plans to charge for parking in Harpenden town centre.

This appears to be purely a way of punishing the people in Harpenden to make up the financial shortfall from St Albans District Council.

And for the proposal to even think of charging £2.50 an hour is outrageous. No other town in our knowledge has that level of charge. It will have a substantial financial impact on every family in Harpenden, by increasing the cost of their regular shopping. It is seldom practical to find a parking place, walk to the shops, do the necessary shopping, and return to the car within an hour, so a £5 ticket will be necessary every time.

Increasing the cost of every visit to buy food is outrageous, and I am sending a copy of

this letter to our MP, asking her to make the government aware of what you are proposing.

It would also mean that anyone who wanted to attend a one hour church service would have to pay £5 for the privilege of doing so, since they need to get in before the service starts and to get out again after it is finished. Similarly attending a lecture at the EMC would mean they had to pay £5 for the privilege of doing so, as would attending the dentist or doctor's surgery, as you cannot guarantee being out within the hour, depending on possible delays with earlier patients. Has anyone involved in drawing up these proposals sat down and thought of the very substantial negative impact they will have on everyone living in Harpenden?

I also feel it is completely against community spirit and cohesion, and all the things that the council say they are seeking to engender, when people who volunteer their time to serve in the town's charity shops would have to pay between £5 and £7.50 for the privilege of volunteering, if they have to park under these new proposed charges. In fact those volunteers I have spoken to all say that they will not be able to volunteer anymore if they have to pay £7.50 a week to do so. And even to safely stay within a £5 two-hour parking limit, a two hour volunteer shift would have to be reduced to 1½ hours.

Furthermore, anyone who has small children, and has to use a pushchair or a buggy would find that a substantial amount of time taken up in removing children from the car and assembling – and consequently disassembling – and stowing the pushchair and putting children in their seats, before they could take them into school or to the dentists, so the "First 20 minutes free" idea is unworkable and fatuous.

We also feel it is completely unjust – and completely against any nice principles that the Liberal Democrats seek to proclaim and promote – to remove the senior citizens' parking permits. We have always paid for the permit, and please remember that you have already seriously eroded the permits for Harpenden's senior citizens, which used to be for 3 hours

and were spitefully reduced to 2 hours for no reason, making life appreciably more difficult and pressurised.

And at one time my wife and I were able to buy a permit each, so that we could be in town separately as we both lead socially-serving lives, but again that was curtailed to only one permit between us, making life very difficult indeed. I see this a a clear case of unacceptable social engineering, particularly when I see some cars occupying a parking bay for a whole day, preventing other people using it, and in the car parks I see some cars parked there in the same bay for days (and nights) on end without displaying any kind of permit.

Furthermore, almost all the senior citizens I know never use apps, let alone parking apps, or indeed necessarily have smart phones, and the gross convenience of seeking to find coins or to find a credit card and then key-in personal information to pay for parking is extremely inconvenient and stress-building.

At the risk of repeating myself, your parking proposals will make life appreciably more expensive, less convenient and more stress-building for everyone, young and old, and will damage the economy and viability of businesses in the town centre.

I attended the recent public meeting of The Harpenden Town Council, and heard from many of the local businesses, how charging for parking in the town centre is likely to kill the very heart of Harpenden, and I wondered whether that was exactly what you are seeking to do. This whole scheme is extremely badly thought-out (if actually thought out at all) just like the appreciable amount of money that was spent on the ill-fated one-way system for St Albans a number of years ago that did not even last for a week, and cost even more money to remove.

Certainly for ourselves, if we have to pay for central area parking, we shall not go into the town centre and spend money there as often as we currently do. And your proposed £2.50 per hour is positively self-destructive. Even £1 per hour is a major disincentive.

Furthermore, your much-vaunted idea of promoting cycling and walking and more sustainable lifestyles might be fine for younger and middle-aged people, but certainly completely impractical for people in their 70s, 80s and 90s.

I therefore urge you most seriously to re-introduce the senior citizens' parking permit in order to ease our way of life. Anything other will show that this is a completely heartless and money-grabbing scheme – seeking only to recover money from the more-vulnerable people of Harpenden.

My wife and I have just returned from a week's holiday in Stamford in Lincolnshire, where there is abundant on-street parking completely free for two hours throughout the town, and although the two hour limit it is also imposed on Sundays, the car parks are completely free of charge on Sundays. That is a town that does show great consideration for its citizens. Please therefore reconsider what you are seeking to do, and not to destroy the heart of the centre of Harpenden, and greatly inconvenience most people's lives.

If it is a matter of raising some money, issuing penalty charges against those who greatly outstay the time limit in the current free parking places, or who park illegally on yellow lines, would surely generate the revenue you are seeking, and make life easier for lawabiding citizens. Is that something you're interested in?

When you introduced a charge for parking in the town's car parks on Sundays, I wrote to you with photographs showing that in Bowers Way, the east car park was almost totally empty, but people were parking instead on the single yellow line immediately in front of the exits from Sainsbury's and the west car park behind Davenport House, in order to avoid paying. This caused new and serious traffic hazards for vehicles emerging from those two locations. I'm sure it wasn't your intention to deliberately make the roads more dangerous, but that was certainly the effect. So I am sure you will understand why we have no confidence at all that your current proposals are any better thought-through. As Liberal Democrats, you make great play about being community-minded, fair and

public spirited, but the proposals to charge for parking in Harpenden shout very loudly against all of those values, and are clearly just a money-generating scheme to help you balance your books.

We therefore urge you to drop the charging scheme entirely, and to re-introduce the three hour car park permits for senior citizens. Then you will be showing that you do live up to the principles of enhancing people's lives rather than destroying them.

Dear sir/madam,

I am writing in response to the consultation regarding proposed parking charges in Harpenden.

I am totally opposed to the introduction of these charges – as is everyone I have spoken to on this matter.

I frequently drive into Harpenden to shop and park without any difficulty on streets near the centre, so the reason given on the public notice sheet that charges are necessary to ‘effectively manage the control and turnover of limited waiting parking places’ is a nonsense.

Local shops are most certainly going to suffer and I for one will no longer choose to pop into Harpenden and then enjoy wandering round the shops. £2.50 for one hours parking is extortionate and to still charge into the evening will put many restaurants out of business.

I always do some of my shopping locally each week, but am now actively looking at alternatives. Our lovely town is going to be full of more empty shop fronts which is such a shame.

This proposal is shortsighted and must be reversed.

I would like to register my complete opposition to the proposed parking charges in Harpenden Town Centre.

I regularly take my 90 year old mother to the Village surgery doctors practice in the town centre and the visit will be generally take an hour maybe more if the doctor is running late and this would mean we will need to pay for parking for each visit to the doctor! This is simply not acceptable, I also do not think 20 mins is long enough for mothers to collect children from school.

Retailers will struggle with falling footfall. St Albans DC should be putting measures in place to help retailers not imposing parking charges. What this will do is allow the wealthy to park more easily as people on a low income will not be able to afford the parking fees.

My objections are as follows:

The threat to the High Street. Making it more expensive to visit the High Street will inevitably reduce the number of visitors to the businesses there- this has been demonstrated in countless locations across the country. Local businesses, which have a difficult enough time as it is will struggle and some will no longer be viable. A currently thriving High Street will not survive in its current form which is a tragedy for residents and the area in general.

Impact on Council revenue. This proposal is a short sighted approach which due to the impact on local businesses will result in reduced revenue to the Council. You may see an initial uptick in revenue from parking chargers and fines but long term this is not a sensible fiscal strategy.

Impact on older people. Currently, many older people are able to visit the high street relatively easily and do a quick shop. The car parking charge will inevitably put them off doing this and they will have to resort to longer more difficult journeys to supermarkets and will not be able to visit the smaller specialist shops available to them in the high street.

Political impact. I would ask you to seriously consider the political impact of such a move. I have heard a number of people criticise the Council for financial mismanagement- whether this is fair or not, this proposal is hardly likely to enhance the popularity of the current administration.

The changes to the car park charges in St Albans have had a detrimental effect on life in the town; e.g. people are discouraged from coming to town in the evening with chargers being imposed after 6.30pm

Please re-consider this ill advised proposal and protect rather than endanger Harpenden High Street which is one of the jewels in St Albans district's crown.

Dear Sirs,

As a long-term resident of Harpenden, I am horrified at the prospect of charging for on-street parking.

Apart from the very high cost of implementation and administration of the restrictions, it will result in a reduction in public use of the High Street and adjacent shops, etc.

Inevitably, this will result in a decline of the High Street and a subsequent decline in council tax revenue.

I recently visited Bridgenorth in Shropshire where there is no charge for on-street parking and the time limit is a useful 40 minutes (unlike the frankly useless 20 minutes proposed by St.ADC).

Bridgenorth has an obviously highly successful shopping centre which I firmly believe is a result of their very welcoming parking provisions.

The current proposals for Harpenden will be to the detriment of Harpenden's and subsequently to St.ADC's finances, thereby proving counter-productive.

This will inevitably cause St.ADC to be blamed for the decline of the High Street and subsequent loss of council taxation.

Regards,

Dear Sirs,

I am well aware that the following words will fall on deaf ears and that the decision to introduce further restrictions on parking in Harpenden has already been made.

However, I cannot resist adding my objection to this move as being counter-productive to the wellbeing of the town.

Parking facilities in Harpenden are difficult at the best of times but to add even further restrictions, and costs, will surely cause less footfall in the area, shoppers will go to areas where parking is often free, and therefore the plan will have a very adverse effect on local shops, possibly causing more closures, thus affecting council income.

Speaking personally, I am in my mid nineties, have limited walking ability, and am entirely reliant on the facilities that my Blue Badge gives me to enable me to get to the shops. In the details I have seen regarding this new scheme I have not seen any reference to facilities for the disabled or for disabled parking. I am desperately hoping that the present arrangements will be maintained, or even improved, and would be grateful to have your confirmation of this.

A long standing resident of Harpenden

St Albans City and District Council Parking proposals for Harpenden Town

I take this opportunity to strongly disagree with the St Albans District Council proposals for introducing parking charges in Harpenden at a huge cost for the residents and for the visitors to our town.

Harpenden is not a City like St Albans that attracts tourists.

Harpenden is a small town with a 'village' feel with independent shops, cafes, numerous charity shops hair and nail salons and the like. Visitors come to Harpenden because of these great attributes and for the village feel. I strongly believe these parking charges will strongly deter residents and visitors alike from popping into one of the many independent shops and cafes to meet up for social outings and contact.

This would especially affect older people for whom that may be the only social contact they get. For parents to wait and enjoy a coffee whilst waiting for a child/children to finish an activity. Or maybe to pop in and have their nails done, or to have a haircut. An extra £2.50 or £5 on top of the price of a cup of coffee/tea is unrealistic and will detrimentally affect these businesses as it will for other "pop in businesses/retailers" that are found in the high street

Two 20 -minute free car parking sessions providing a "complimentary" parking option. A very disingenuous use of the word "complimentary" suggesting we residents and visitors should be thankful for the council to offer free complimentary parking when it is the residents that support our shops and businesses. One-hour free parking limit should be the minimum. The Council states that it wants quicker turnover of parking spaces as one of the reasons for proposing parking charges so it will move the motorist on from the parking space and to allow other motorists to avail of the parking space. Twenty minutes is just not an adequate time to dash to the shops or for other business. Where are these free complimentary spaces/bays going to be? How will they be monitored? I and my neighbours and friends all ask, how is a 20 minute "free parking session" going to give time for residents of our town to wait for a prescription at a chemist? queue up at the one and only Post office in the town centre manned by one person? waiting in a queue to speak to a receptionist at one of the 2 Drs surgeries within the town centre? Queueing to visit our one and only Building Society in the town? To go and visit the decorators shop in Vaughen Road to have the time to choose for example paint colours and to avail of the advice and knowledge from the expert? to pop in and to browse in one of the many charity shops which are so much supported by residents, the list could go on and on.

It is very obvious to anyone who lives and works in Harpenden that over the past 4 years there have been very few (if any)

Traffic Wardens enforcing the current free time limit parking bays and enforcing the illegal parking. There is no incentive for motorists to move on after their time has lapsed if there is no strict implementation of the parking rules. Motorists will and DO take advantage of this time limit parking and illegal parking seems to be a “free for all”. I have witnessed on daily visits to Harpenden cars parked in the same position most of the day, cars parked on double yellow lines etc. I very rarely see a parking ticket on these vehicles.

If you direct the Traffic wardens to perform their duties on a regular basis then you can solve the parking problem without implementing restrictions

Regardless, the proposed parking charges are far too high and will have the opposite effect of supporting the businesses in our town. Independent retailers and businesses struggle enough as it is with ever increasing costs from business rates, employee costs with the minimum wage having increased, and with higher utility bill costs. These proposed parking charges will just exacerbate an already challenging business environment and footfall into these businesses will drop.

It appears that one of the main objectives for the City Council for introducing parking charges in Harpenden is part of recouping financial losses accumulated over the past 4 years.

Why has it taken 4 years to identify this? This has been on the Councils ‘watch’ and there has not been any consistency in enforcing the present parking restrictions thus losing revenue. The solution has always been available to you, direct Traffic wardens to work in Harpenden daily instead of what would appear as on an ‘ad hoc’ basis so that the traffic wardens can issue parking fines and enforce all parking issues, thereby making our streets safer for wheelchair users, disabled people, pedestrians and cyclists rather than wasting our money installing unnecessary and unwanted parking meters at great cost. You forget, this is our town, Councillors and the Council should be doing what we want and what is best for us, not abusing us to fill your depleted coffers.

Not all residents can afford or manipulate the smart phones that are required for parking apps with some residents getting confused at what information is required.

You state that parking charges already exist across most of St Albans, that is the main reason why I do NOT visit St Albans and pay for the extortionate charges. This will have the same effect if the proposed extortionate parking charges come into effect in Harpenden. I repeat we do not have any “tourist attractions” like St Albans City that attract visitors.

SADC should continue to provide free limited time parking to help keep our beautiful town vibrant and not let it become a

High Street of empty shops and businesses.

Another proposal the Council states is to incentivise and to encourage active travel such as cycling and walking to limit car use. This is commendable. It is clear that full consideration has not been given to the fact that our residents (the prime users of our town) are an aging population (that was one of the council's reasons for removing the requirement of a new school to be built on a new development north of Harpenden). So how would the council expect elderly or medically unfit people to cycle or walk from further afield and carry heavy shopping? It appears from this ill-thought through parking proposal for Harpenden that Councillors of St Albans City Council are unaware of the needs of Harpenden or have even visited Harpenden to recognise that Harpenden High Street is situated in a valley. This means that whereas elderly residents may be able to walk down to the town, it obviously then entails walking UP from the town. I suggest that also may not be possible with the less unable/or medically unfit in our community.

SADC should ENCOURAGE Residents and Visitors to come into the town instead of going ahead with this ludicrous proposal of introducing costly and unsightly meters, instead employ effective Enforcement Parking Officers.

I am vehemently against the proposals to restrict on street parking in Harpenden.

One of the reasons for choosing to live here 54 years ago was the availability of parking near to shops, schools, church & community centres.

Now it is even more important for us to have level access to the town centre due to decreased mobility & strength to carry heavy shopping.

Since all the banks have closed in Harpenden, we have had to go to other towns for face to face service. We choose NOT to go to St Albans because there is no free parking in the centre (apart from 30 mins behind M&S) but to WGC where it is a pleasant level walk from ample free parking to shops & banks.

Although I like the Council's encouragement of cycling, it's something we can no longer do and it's impossible to do a weeks shopping on a bike.

I strongly object to the proposed plan to charge for on street parking in Harpenden.

As a long term resident and non-driver I believe the character of Harpenden will be irretrievably damaged by this decision. The shops that we have will be affected badly and we will be left with bars , cafes , as you suggest night time economy will not be affected. If you wish to drive residents out of Harpenden for retail this will be an excellent move. My husband already takes me to Welwyn Garden City for the weekly shop since you stopped us having a senior citizens permit. At WGC we get free 3 hours parking can browse the shops have lunch and plenty of time for our weekly shop.

It's almost as if St Albans council is trying to ruin Harpenden.

Having examined the full details of the proposals, consulted various councillors, been to meeting at Park Hall, and spoken with many local residents and traders I have no doubt that they, like me, find these proposals deeply flawed and undemocratic. If SADC has fallen into debt through its own lack of financial control and wasteful use of the public funds, why should Harpenden be used to pay for this by charging for car parking, on street? SADC has completely failed to use its workforce to enforce the on street parking violations and offences in Harpenden for many years. Does SADC know how much revenue has been lost/wasted due to this negligence. The view of many people in Harpenden is one of anger and dismay. Older people will find these intended charges unreasonable, most independent traders know of the damage it will cause the town centre overall. I suggest that your concerns about the 'night economy' are misplaced if you put those above the general needs of the 'day economy' and the townspeople who should be your priority. I wonder how many people only discovered the plans outlined, at the last minute and suspected it would pass unnoticed. I do not know how parking charges are to be made. If the council intends to require the public to use a smart phone this would indicate yet another major obstacle to those of us who did not need nor want such a device. I oppose SADC plans and believe the quality of life and extra costs involved will diminish Harpenden.

I want to complain about the intention of St Albans District Council to change the parking plans for Harpenden, and the charges they intend to impose

I am writing to object to parking charges in the current free limited bays in Harpenden Town Centre. Key reasons.

Will undoubtedly hurt businesses in the town centre as people will seek alternative areas to shop. Without question some shops will be forced out of business and be clear you will be held to account for that.

The 20 minute gratis time proposed does not allow enough time for most town centre visits particularly to Doctors and Dentists or ant realistic appointment.

There is nothing wrong with the current 1 hour limitation which allows for reasonable visiting time and ensures a regular flow of shoppers (I am sure that it is why it was introduced in the first place.

If the council cannot live within its means it needs to find ways to spend less or increase Council tax accordingly rather than imposing stealth taxes.

Please confirm receipt of this email.

Thank you

To whom it may concern,

I will not be going into Harpenden if the free parking is changed to £2.50 per hour fee. That is very expensive!

Free 20mins is not long enough for me as I can no longer walk very fast due to knee injury, plus the post office wait is often longer than 20 mins to get served!

I suppose the only result will be lots of empty spaces as a lot of local people will object to paying & will not go into Harpenden.

I can also no longer walk into Harpenden & back or cycle due to my knee.

Don't get me started on the buses, we waited 1.25 hr for the X10 in to get to Parkway station to get a flight in mid May, by this time my knee was very painful after standing all that time & we had to call a taxi. We almost missed our flight due to this, despite the fact of leaving extra time 'just in case'. 3 buses were due during all that time that never arrived! No one can rely on buses!

For the cost of implementing all the 'phone' parking it cannot be justified.

I do not use phone to park car parks due to the difficulty in actually making the thing work & the huge amount of scams for parking in this way. I do not trust them. A TV programme yesterday was again hi-lighting this issue.

It also means we will have to pay to park to go to the Doctors & dentist too if the fee is introduced. Unfair!

I rarely go to St Albans now as the parking is so expensive, I tend to travel to Hitchin, Stevenage or Hemel where I can park for free or substantially cheaper, plus they have more proper shops. I also shop in Watford where 2 hours shopping is £2 for 2

hours, it also has lots of shops, something that St Albans & Harpenden are now sadly lacking. They are just full of coffee & charity shops!

I have not been to Harpenden Swimming pool since the council changed the sports centre free 2 hours parking to inside the sports centre, to a location after you have paid for a swim, it has not been working well & not accepting information required for the free parking. So when won't work & you have paid to swim what do you do? Panic, ask for your swim money back? I prefer to travel to the 50 mt pool in Luton as parking is free, no ticket needed & less of a worry. I do not want a fine in the post for something that does not work through no fault of my own.

(REDACTED)

A very angry Council tax paying resident since 1982 - 42 years

I am writing as a Harpenden town resident to register my strong objection to the proposed changes to on street parking in Harpenden – ref PPB/01

I have a number of objections:

This would reduce both Harpenden resident's easy access to the town centre and the scale of proposed parking fees would also deter visitors. It would impact badly on businesses in the High Street Harpenden area. It would divert trade to other towns where parking is more freely available or to out of town shopping parks. Fewer customers would lead to business closures. These are businesses already challenged with high business rates and rent, fuel costs and the growth of on line shopping. Business closures and empty premises leads to a less vibrant town leads to more business closures – a vicious circle – isolated residents and zero community spirit.

We already have to pay higher parking costs in our car parks compared to other areas. This would be an additional cost to residents and would be detrimental to the town centre.

In what way does this proposal support a "Vibrant High Street" and "Thriving businesses" both of which the Council claim are their objectives?

Has this been considered in the whole? If businesses suffer, which undoubtedly they will, and have to close this will lead to more empty premises and a reduction in income from business rates.

The Council hopes that this proposal will "promote active travel". A not insignificant number of the town's population are elderly and have mobility issues. They need easy access to Harpenden's centre and its facilities. They cannot walk a few miles into town and back – or ride a bicycle!

The concept of parking ticket machines will be a deterrent to many of the elderly who do not have smartphones and are not "tech savvy"

20 minutes of free parking is not enough to achieve even a short task. This would not be sufficient to either queue at the Post Office or Pharmacy, pop into the supermarket for a quick top-up shop or select a book at the library. A minimum of 1 hour free parking on all parking bays is essential.

Charging to park for anything above 20 minutes would impact greatest on those on lower and fixed incomes, the less well

off.

If you believe that there are some who are abusing the current system then why not police it properly?

This would increase congestion further away from the High Street as drivers circle looking for available free parking.

Please listen to what the local community and traders want and not what the councillors think is good for us.

Further to this I would like to register a further objection:

The withdrawal of the senior citizens parking permit seems a mean spirited gesture which will undoubtedly have an adverse effect for both the seniors and the town.

The elderly need social contact with others. As part of their socialising many seniors go regularly into Harpenden and spend money in shops and cafes. The prohibitive parking costs will lead to fewer visits. The High Street loses revenue, the seniors lose their social contact.

Many do not have smartphones and many more are not confident to use parking Apps. The frequent warnings from Trading Standards re scams using QR codes on ticket machines have scared them.

Many seniors do voluntary work, either in charity shops or for other organisations. Until now they have been able to buy a parking permit which has allowed them cheaper parking whilst volunteering. Some will find the parking costs are too much for them to continue their volunteering. A loss to both the charities and to the seniors.

This was a well-used and appreciated service and nowhere near as generous as free public transport for London residents.

I do hope that the Council can reconsider the senior citizens parking permit for all, even if it is at a slightly higher cost than before.

Dear (REDACTED), Councillors and those concerned,

I am writing to express my thoughts regarding the appalling proposal to charge for on street parking across the Harpenden district to make up for a funding shortfall due to finance mismanagement by the Lib Dem run St Albans district council.

As you will know, Harpenden was declared the number one town to live in the UK in 2024, (Daily Telegraph, which I don't read, but I'll take this accolade). A significant reason for this is it's vibrant, busy, independent shop driven high street. As acknowledged by the door step conversations I have had with Lib Dem candidates recently, this is despite the outrageous rents charged to the business owners by a very small handful of landlords. Therefore, these shops rely on a very high footfall of residents from across the district to survive. This footfall would be decimated if locals had the inconvenience of having to pay every time they quickly wanted to visit the town centre.

If this proposal goes through, the Liberal Democrats will be marked as failing to protect Harpenden's unique high street, decreasing the quality of living in the town and inconveniencing its residents. Harpenden is not an instinctive Lib Dem area. They have lent you their vote due to their abhorrence at the last 8 years of the Conservative government. You now have the opportunity to prove you can act in Harpenden's best interest and increase the quality of life here, if you fail in this act by imposing these charges, I predict your political tenures will be very short lived and the Lib Dem council will be blamed.

I'll be honest, if you have significant financial issues, then the remedy should be to raise council tax. I think you would find there would be very little reaction to a reasonable % rise. In general, residents would accept this instead of you decreasing the quality of living in the area. Or, reduce all on street parking to a maximum of one hour and have a team or wardens who can impose this - I'm sure you'll raise a significant sum.

All of this on top of proposing housing in the Station and Waitrose car parks, increasing the population and reducing the parking stock significantly.

Many thanks for taking the time to reading my thoughts, they would be shared by the vast of majority of my friends and family in the area.

I am responding to your notice to introduce charges for parking in Harpenden in excess of 20 minutes.

"Persons wishing to object or make comments to these proposals must do so by: Visiting stalbans.gov.uk/TROS where you can find all our Active Traffic Regulation Orders – On Street (Highway). Please click proposals in consultation where you can add your comments, view or upload supporting documents. Or Make representations in writing to: The Parking Development Team – St Albans City and District Council, Civic Centre, St Albans, AL1 3JE or by email to: parking.development@stalbans.gov.uk quoting map reference PPB/01 by 15th August 2024."

Whilst the desire to balance the ability to make short shopping trips with funding pressures, and encouraging other forms of transport, a 20 minute cut off for free parking is unrealistic and unreasonable.

If I want to collect a prescription for instance, I can easily spend 5 minutes walking from where I might find a space to the chemist, 10 minutes queuing for the prescription and 5 minutes walking back. To risk incurring a penalty charge or pay a disproportionately high parking fee (eg £2.50 plus whatever parking app charges are applied) to collect a prescription costing £9.90 – that is the carpark charge would be 25% of the prescription charge – places an unreasonable cost and level of stress on citizens.

The consultation notice does not explain what other funding priorities would be affected by subsidising to a lower level the carparking provision. I do not believe that the current level of subsidy is inappropriate – there are lesser priorities which should be cut first before damaging the commercial and social benefit of higher footfall in the high street.

Dear Sir

I have been a resident of (REDACTED), Harpenden since 1984.

I am wholly against imposing street car parking charges in the town of Harpenden.

The town has suffered by the closing of all the banks save The Nationwide. However, we do have a number of independent retailers, small supermarkets, service retailers (opticians, dentists, hairdressers etc), cafes, restaurants, charity shops and many more that make Harpenden a destination not only for the residents of the town but also for surrounding areas. People love to come to the town because of its character. If you impose car parking charges many of these businesses will suffer – they already pay high rents and also business rates. We will be in danger of creating a high street full of empty boarded up shops and businesses and you will face a decrease in business tax revenue. Harpenden residents will find alternative places to shop.

The idea that you can park and do some shopping – eg post a parcel at the Post Office in 20 minutes is also difficult to understand – I would suggest that your staff should trial this out at various times of the week to see how that might work (not just the Keely Hodgkinsons in the council).

I would also be interested to see the cost benefit analysis of this project – the capital costs of the scheme and the running costs against the revenue generated by this.

Yours faithfully

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am extremely outraged that you are removing the 1 hour free parking in Harpenden high street. You will be responsible for killing the high street, replacing it with 20 mins free parking is next to useless. If you need more revenue then charge for parking permits on the streets around the avenues. We have to pay to park our cars on the road out side our house why not roll that across other parts of Harpenden? Several areas are closer to town than us and still don't get charged for parking outside their house. I will not vote Liberal Democrat ever again after this fiasco.

I am now 80 years old still hale and hearty and able to drive safely and well. I currently live on (REDACTED), on the outskirts of Harpenden, no bus service. I take great pleasure in my twice or sometimes three times a week visit into Harpenden to buy groceries and occasionally visit the Library. I seldom, if ever, spend more than 1 hour and generally always find a parking space. Because of the 1 hr restriction near the shops most people tend to move on a regular basis thus freeing up spaces.

I would never need a 2 hour parking. My priority, because of my age, is to park as near to the shops as I can so that I do not have to carry shopping bags too far. If these parking restrictions and costs come into effect I certainly would have to restrict me visits to town. If I were to maintain my current visits it would cost me £7.50 per week, £30 over 4 weeks, obviously as a pensioner this is beyond my budget. I have applied, unsuccessfully, for a parking permit (£40) for the car parks but I understand that one has to be getting Pension Credits in order to get this. At one time it was available to the elderly I believe.

If charges have to be made surely a staggered cost could be applied. I believe this system is used in Berkhamstead. I really believe that this has not been thought through.

Once again, as with all price increases and costs, the pensioner is the one that is hit hardest.

In response to your consultation regarding changes to charges for car parking bays in Harpenden and St Albans, we wish to respond as follows.

This consultation and proposals are severely flawed, as they contain insufficient information for anyone to consider the practicality or financial benefit, based on the sketchy justification put forward by SADC. Although it is claimed that the car parking service has been running at a loss over several years, there is no financial information provided within the proposal. It is claimed that the proposals will allow the service to break even, but where is the financial analysis to support this claim? Implementing a paid for parking system on this scale will incur major capital outlay, in terms of signage, recruitment and training of enforcement officers and payment systems, plus significant ongoing costs, including salaries. The method of enforcement has not been stated, so the practicality can only be guessed at, but how can the council possibly police the system in relation to the proposed free 20 minute time slots, given the large number of parking bays involved? It seems likely that either the enforcement will be ineffective, or huge numbers of enforcement officers will be required, at very high cost.

The proposed parking changes would be highly detrimental to the town centre, by discouraging visitors and reducing the trade of local shopkeepers. Although we are fortunate to live close enough to the town centre to walk there, the majority of residents in Harpenden are not. A 20 minute free parking period is insufficient for most visits (even a 'quick' visit to the post office can result in queueing for longer than that). The proposals claim to 'encourage active travel such as cycling and walking'. However, there is very little provision in the town for bike parking (not to mention no cycle lanes or priority for cyclists), so many will be unwilling to bike in, because it's too dangerous. It is also claimed that parking spaces will be freed up, but the local car parks are already full most days, so most drivers will be forced to stay in the bays and pay. The payment system, which again is not mentioned in the proposals, will presumably use a phone app or text based system, which will cause anxiety for many elderly people, who may not have a suitable phone, or are unfamiliar with such systems.

In conclusion, we strongly object to the parking proposals in their current form. At the very least, free parking for at least 1 hour, should continue to be available, and the council should offer paid annual parking permits to all residents and local businesses.

To whom it may concern,

Since the District Council is undertaking a review of high demand car parking bays, please find a letter attached which outlines the concerns for staff recruitment and retention at St Nicholas Primary School.

If you require further details, please feel free to contact the school.

Kind regards,

(REDACTED)

To whom it may concern,

RE: Supporting St Nicholas School

St. Nicholas CE Primary School, we strive to provide high quality education and equal opportunities for all of our pupils and to support them as they move from childhood to adolescence to become responsible, caring citizens. We believe that as a community, we share the world we live in and that if everyone can do their part, we can all make positive changes.

While we have been making great strides in our efforts to provide the best experience for our children, there are a few areas where we would appreciate your support to keep making a difference.

Our school is very small and located in the centre of town of Harpenden, within a busy, densely populated residential area. We are lucky to have a playground area to accommodate 150 children. However, our staff is left without parking spaces, with the few places we have at the back school being shared with our neighbour, St Nicholas Church.

Currently, our staff start their day with the additional challenge of where to park and the availability of parking places. When and where to re-park due to differing time restrictions on the roads around the school buildings is adding another pressure. Due to the increase of white access protection markings used in Rosebury, Longcroft and Kirkwick Avenues, staff are currently finding it difficult to park on a daily basis. The proposed introduction of parking fees will have a detrimental effect on the operational level of the school. It will have a negative impact on teacher recruitment and retention which in turn will affect our pupils. Having this in mind, we would like you to consider the possibility of allocating three places on Rothamsted Avenue for our teachers to use. Thank you in advance for considering our school's appeal for help. If you have any questions, please, do not hesitate to contact me. I am more than happy to provide you with additional information or discuss this further.

Dear sADC

I would like to agree with the Harpenden Society's suggestions.

I believe that SADC's current proposals with regard to parking in Harpenden are grossly unfair to the people who live in, and visit, Harpenden and I strongly object to them.

The offer of just 20 minutes free parking is a ridiculously short time for shoppers and visitors to the town, allowing just one trip to one shop for one or two items (a supermarket weekly shop would be impossible in this time-frame). And how does this encourage "browsing" – surely vital to so many of Harpenden's small businesses?

Indeed, I can imagine that the majority of these small businesses, which make Harpenden so special, would be forced to close due to lack of footfall. Is this really what the council wants?

Due to mobility issues, I am unable to walk or ride a bike, into town, nor can I walk without pain to catch a bus so, yes, I drive. It is obvious to me that the council has chosen to ignore locals who have specific mobility problems, such as myself, who must drive into town and face these ridiculous proposed charges.

It begs the question – Why have I, an older resident for more than 40 years, appear to have been dismissed as unimportant regarding this proposal, except as a perceived "cash cow"?

The published proposals make no reference to the withdrawal of £40 pa Senior parking permits and there is no financial justification for this action that shows clearly the cost benefits, if any exist at all.

I object to this since many seniors use their permits to allow parking whilst assisting a variety of charities in the local communities.

strongly Oppose New Parking Charges in Harpenden

To the Parking Development Team,

I'm dismayed and upset by the proposed Parking Charges in Harpenden and strongly oppose this for the following reasons:

1. I have CFS/ME which causes extreme fatigue and I am also the sole carer for my 93 year old mother who has many health problems. Because of my fatigue, I have to use the car to go into Harpenden and do not wish to have the additional stress and exacerbated fatigue caused by having to pay for parking. I am really worried about this.
2. This will badly affect small businesses who rely on people popping into Harpenden. Many would go out of business. This would be an unbelievable loss for them personally and a great loss for Harpenden itself.
3. I have always hugely valued the relaxed 'village' atmosphere of Harpenden where, unlike St Albans, one doesn't have to find a meter or get on the phone to pay for parking. The proposed Parking Charges would hugely change the special feel of Harpenden.

Please, please can you reconsider this and find a better way obtaining money for the council,

I am objecting strongly to the new proposed charges parking.

We all benefit from a thriving high street yet independent shops are already struggling to survive and we are seeing more and more big chains – this is not the direction I want to see our high street move towards. Unreasonable parking charges may be the nail in the coffin for our well loved independent shops.

If any change was to be made it should be at least a 30 mins free period as even the shortest of errands can take up to 30 mins especially for the elderly or those with younger children.

I am disappointed that the special meeting was planned for the first week of the summer holidays when obviously many families, including myself, are away.

Please let me know how to formally object.

I do not want parking in Harpenden to be chargeable.
It must be free of charge

Hi (REDACTED)

In addition to my recent email, my neighbour (REDACTED) at (REDACTED) asked that I pass on issues with parking that affect him also.

He is not on the email trail and does not have a car however he has the same issues with visitors permits he purchases for family and contractors that visit and the extra charges he incurs to pay for them to park when no space available. He has also commented on the increased amount of traffic and speed of cars on the lane to and from the car park.