

Parking impacts: UNISON survey

After the last Chief Exec/UNISON meeting UNISON made arrangements to survey its members who were:

- Working in Chichester or Horsham
- Not categorised as priority users
- Likely to experience a negative impact due to lack of viable alternatives

The survey went out on 20th February with a reminder email sent on 1st March. Members were invited to self-select and complete the survey if they felt the above criteria applied to them.

Results

128 Responses

102 from WSCC

21 from Capita

5 from 'Other' (e.g. 1 respondent completed the survey for both her and her husband; 2 respondents were from Hants CC Audit function)

Themes

It is worth disaggregating the responses because there is a clear difference between the impacts which will be felt at Horsham as opposed to Chichester.

Capita staff in Horsham:

12 responses

- 6 would find it 'impossible' to pay parking charges
- 6 would find it 'very hard' to pay parking charges

(as opposed to 'hard', 'easy', 'very easy' – 0 responses)

Highest scoring alternative option for this group:

1. Find a new job with a new employer (or retire / resign)

75% wanted the ability to access subsidised car parking charges. This is lower than the overall response, probably denoting that some Capita staff do not feel able to pay charges even with a discount.

WSCC staff in Horsham

27 responses

- 12 would find it 'impossible' to pay parking charges (44%)
- 7 would find it 'very hard' to pay parking charges

(as opposed to 'hard' 6, 'easy' 2, 'very easy' 0 responses)

Highest scoring alternative options for this group:

1. Park in residential areas
2. Find a new job with a new employer (or retire / resign)

Number of WSCC staff putting 'find a new job' as #1 response was 26%.

93% wanted the ability to access subsidised car parking charges.

WSCC staff in Chichester

75 responses

- 10 would find it 'impossible' to pay parking charges (13%)
- 20 would find it 'very hard' to pay parking charges

(as opposed to 'hard' 30, 'easy' 12, 'very easy' 3 responses)

Highest scoring alternative options for this group, in order:

1. Park in residential parking areas
2. Pay commercial parking charges
3. Try to work from home more often (and I think my employer will permit this)
4. Move to public transport
5. Find a new job with a new employer (or retire / resign)

85% wanted the ability to access subsidised car parking charges.

Capita staff in Chichester:

9 responses

- 2 would find it 'impossible' to pay parking charges
- 3 would find it 'very hard' to pay parking charges

(as opposed to 'hard' 3, 'easy' 1, 'very easy' 0 responses)

Highest scoring alternative option for this group:

1. Park in residential parking areas
2. Find a new job with a new employer (or retire / resign)

100% wanted the ability to access subsidised car parking charges.

Conclusion

1. Chichester-based WSCC staff are not as price-sensitive as other groups of staff completing the questionnaire. Finding a new job, or bringing forward early retirement decisions, was the least popular choice.
2. Moving their parking onto residential streets will have some impacts on local communities and DC/BCs. This was the highest ranked alternative chosen when looking at the results as a whole. Sadly, the lowest ranked alternative (5th) when looking at the results as a whole was to move to public transport options.

This may reflect the lack of viable and reliable public transport options, as well as personal circumstances.

3. You have to break down the survey responses to really see where alternative parking options will be most keenly appreciated. Horsham-based staff are hit hardest, with Capita-employed staff being more impacted than WSCC-employed staff.
4. In Horsham the proportions of staff saying they will look for other work (or resign/retire) rather than pay commercial parking charges are significant.
5. The cost of staff turnover increasing (in terms of recruitment, training and service quality costs whilst new recruits get up-to-speed) is likely to outweigh the cost of supporting alternatives to commercial parking charges, such as subsidising discounted parking and developing park and ride options. It could also help to mitigate the transfer of staff to residential street parking.
6. Capita should be invited to assist in solving this problem with a financial contribution. They are currently consulting with staff on the removal of free parking options.
7. We believe the survey demonstrates there is an evidenced and practical need to consider these staff's travel and parking needs, and not only those of priority users. The survey provides a snapshot of UNISON member views over a fortnight. Further research could be done if necessary.

Daniel Sartin
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