

## **NOTICE OF MOTION**

### **COUNCIL MEETING – 14<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2024**

**Proposed by: Councillor Mike Prendergast**

**Seconded by: Councillor Mike Morris**

#### **Supporting Southport Town Centre Businesses**

As a town, Southport is one of the economic engines of Sefton with a vibrant tourism and hospitality sector attracting around 9 million visitors per year, generating £550 million to the local economy. Nearly 7,000 jobs depend on this sector alone.

Southport also has a well developed retail and service sector with many local people working in these sectors in and around Southport Town centre.

However, many Southport town centre businesses, across all sectors, are struggling, with many reporting drops in footfall of between 70-75% over the last few months.

One of the factors, which can be addressed by this Council, impacting local businesses is town centre car parking. This Council recognises the impact that parking charges, and previous increases in those charges, has had on local businesses and resolves to explore a range of options to address this issue.

Council hereby resolves:

- To prepare a feasibility report in order investigate the potential benefits of introducing a free parking scheme in Southport town centre and for this report to be considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) . This could, for example, include free parking during off peak times (October – March) for a set number of hours (for example 2/3 hours free).
- To engage with town centre businesses on the issue of town centre parking and the impact it has on them when competing with online retailers, retail parks and other nearby towns that offer free parking for set periods or at certain times of year.
- To recognise that successive increases in parking charges in Southport Town Centre have impacted town centre businesses.
- To work with local businesses to address parking and other issues with a coherent strategy for Southport Town Centre and our local economy.