

Amended speech concerning parking meters Stephens Road, South Brisbane

Madam Chair, I rise to debate item C which is a petition from parents of students attending Somerville House School seeking two hour free parking in Stephens Road, South Brisbane. Council's response to the petition states in paragraph 31 five free parking spaces have been installed outside Somerville House in Stephens Road. The response continues in paragraph 33 with a sense of 'I-told-you-so' saying that there always was going to be free parking spaces in Stephens Road for Somerville House parents.

That is all very good but it is not what the petitioners asked for. They requested not to have to pay the parking meters within a hundred metres of the school when collecting their daughters. There are a number of streets in that vicinity to which this request would apply.

I acknowledge Councillor McLachlan's (Chair of City Business) point that there has been, as a result of this petition, some changes. There are meter spaces where the meters do not operate before 9 am and neither between 2:30 and 4:30pm. It is not possible to pay the meter so people understand they can not park during these times. This is using the design capacity of the meters to respond to local situations. It provides the school community the opportunity of free parking.

But the issue why I did not support this petition response is that it doesn't acknowledge that free parking spaces around the school have been severely curtailed by all the other parking meters. In the past there was free parking without any restrictions from the corner of Stephens Street and Vulture Street through to the corner of Brook Street and Stephens Street.

That kerbside space now has parking meters with the exception of the ones I have already mentioned. The remainder of parking meters are operational in school hours. Those parking meters are interfering with the pickup of the students from the school. The fact that those parking meters remain unchanged indicates this response to the petition falls short of what was requested. This process to provide input from the community has led to an undesirable outcome.

The school community of Somerville House has much reduced parking than they had previously as a result of works on the new Queensland Children's Hospital. They are feeling the impact acutely. This response does not properly represent the impact of the parking meters on the school community. It still fails to meet their needs and therefore I do not support it.