

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter:	Strategic Review of Parking – Project Overview
Meeting/Date:	Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economy and Growth) – 6th April 2017
Executive Portfolio:	Councillor Jim White, Executive Councillor for Operations
Report by:	Neil Sloper, Head of Operations
Wards affected:	All

Executive Summary:

This report and its accompanying appendices provide a background to the requirements for a Strategic Review of Parking, a summary of the approach to reach the defined targets, and a clear recommendation.

Recommendation:

That the project be given approval to proceed by Overview and Scrutiny.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To propose the scoping, membership and objectives of the Council's Task and Finish in establishing a Car parking Strategy.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Star Chamber Zero Based Budgeting process required a review of car park fees and charges in 2016. This review led to the abandonment of any changes to fees and charges in favour of undertaking a strategic review of parking.

2.2 The Problem

- No agreed vision for the role of car park management and operation.
- No agreed strategic priorities for car park management or operation.
- No clear evidence base of user requirements, preference or need.
- Future fees and charges need to be developed using an evidence base.
- Future investment and enhancements to car parks and their operation must be based on an evidence based vision and strategy.

2.3 The Solution

Strategic review of car parking that gathers evidence, establishes an agreed vision and then an agreed strategy.

3. REPORT

A four stage approach is proposed

3.1 Stage 1: Information (3 months, April – June 2017)

Before any discussion takes place with interested parties, information gathering and analysis is required so that fact and opinion can be understood as a background for both vision and then strategy development:

- Customer Review
 - Customer profiling to understand the user groups for each car park.
 - Customer requirements (needs / wants) from HDC car parks.
- Car Park Review
 - To understand the occupancy of all HDC car parks
 - To understand the turnover / dwell / stay within all HDC car parks
 - To understand "peak" times for all HDC car parks
 - The placement of car parks/resources against any current plans for development

Following a review of the information gathered as part of the above, a shortlist/summary of this can be taken to interested parties. As part of the discussion with interested parties we would expect to see agreement of requirements.

3.2 Stage 2: Vision (2 months, July – August 2017)

Once the requirements and expectations for each area are known, this information can be brought to the elected members for review and creation of a vision. This will not include any operational/management or strategic references, we would consider this stage crucial to the development of these.

3.3 Stage 3: Strategy (3 Months, August – November 2017)

Once the vision is approved, HDC can look to develop a Parking Strategy which will look at a high level policy position and strategy objectives setting out how the Council will achieve its vision:

- Consideration of the decriminalisation of on-street parking and its impact on the parking strategy of this Council;
- Specific local needs by town or village;
- Car park provision/rationalisation;
- Car park operation;
- Car Park Designation (part to play in town infrastructure);
- The setting of car park charges (not the charges themselves as this is a separate project after the strategy is approved);
- Car park standards and maintenance programme (capital & revenue spend), and
- Safety, mobility and disability parking policy.

3.4 Stage 4: Delivery (January 2018 onwards)

Once the vision is set with its strategic objectives project proposals will then be brought forward to deliver them. This will include by is not limited to:

- Parking technology used for enforcement
- Technology used to support operation of car parks
- The role of Parking Service Officers
- Management plan for the car park estate
- Fees and charges review

3.5 The Benefits

- Role and goal of car parking within the District clearly defined
- The strategy is evidence based allowing conflicting demands to be better managed.
- The strategic principles will enable focussed development of any future changes to fees and charges.
- Pro-active investment in and management of car parking to achieve the agreed vision.
- Investment options may be considered against the strategy.

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

4.1 On receiving the report a Member commented that they believe that it is a much better way forward than the approach taken by the Review of Fees and Charges – Car Parks report submitted to the Panel in October 2016.

4.2 It was expressed by a Member that they believe it was important to review car parks in other neighbouring authorities and retail parks as these can and do attract retail customers away from Huntingdonshire. In response the Executive Councillor for Operations assured Members that the Task and Finish Group will review this as a part

of the project. In addition the Panel were informed that it was important to also review the relationship of the Council's car parks with car parks owned by other parties within the District.

- 4.3 The Panel recognised that the work will be difficult and one particular Member expressed concern that the timescale is too tight considering the amount of work the Task and Finish Group have planned to do. In response the Executive Councillor for Operations conceded that the timescale was ambitious however the Panel will receive regular updates and Members will be informed of any changes in the timescale of the project.
- 4.4 A Member expressed appreciation that the Task and Finish Group will consider all options including the Member's own personal opinion of making car parks free for the motorist. The Panel were informed that it is important to consider all options and to obtain the best option for the residents of Huntingdonshire.
- 4.5 A Member commented that the origins of the project may have started with a report on car park charges however there is now a good opportunity for Members to look at car parks in a holistic way. The Member added that there is more to car parking than charging, there is also the environment and accessibility.

5. KEY IMPACTS/RISKS

- 5.1 The availability of the Parking manager to progress support for the Task and Finish Group is critical and acting up arrangements funded from existing budgets will be put in place to achieve this.
- 5.2 Consultation amongst all stakeholders will be critical to enable the Task and Finish group to review and consider the sometimes conflicting demands of residents, motorists, visitors, workers and businesses in relation to car parking.

6. TIMETABLE

- 6.1 Please see attached Appendix 1 Task and Finish Scoping Document.

7. LINKS TO STRATEGIC PRIORITIES/CORPORATE PLAN

- 7.1 Establishing a clear Car Parking Strategy upon which to base the future fees and charges and operation of car parks will support the Council in:
- Delivering Sustainable Growth
 - Becoming a More Efficient and Effective Council

- 7.2 The Corporate Strategic Plan identifies the delivery of a car parking strategy that is supportive of residents, visitors and local businesses as a key action under delivering Sustainable Growth.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Stakeholder consultation will be part of the information gathering to support the Task and Finish Group and will be part of the final approval processes for the Car Parking Strategy.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 This Council operates its off-street parking places under Parking Places Orders within the powers of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Any future changes to fees & charges or car park designation will require amendments to these orders and statutory consultation stages.

9.2 This council is directly engaged by Cambridgeshire County Council under the Highways Agreement as an agent to:

Enforce on-street paid for bays in:

- Market Square (*St Neots*)
- Market Hill (*St Ives*)
- High Street (*Huntingdon*)

Administer on-street resident's permits under given criteria for:

- Huntingdon Zone A
- Huntingdon Zone B
- St Neots Zone A
- St Neots Zone B

NB: Under this agreement HDC does not currently enforce these resident paid for bays. The enforcement of these resides with CCC.

9.3 This Council currently has no power to enforce on-street traffic restrictions commonly referred to as on-street restrictions highlighted by signs and lines. This responsibility currently resides with the Police as Cambridgeshire County Council has not yet adopted decriminalised parking enforcement for Huntingdonshire District.

10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

External resources required for customer survey work	£10,000
HDC Parking Services staff (acting up arrangements)	£7,000
HDC Planning input	N/A
External Condition survey	£3,000
Portfolio Holder	N/A
Scrutiny Panel	N/A
Cabinet	N/A
Decriminalisation work	£6,000

11. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

11.1 The report and accompanying appendices set out an approach to reach a defined target.

LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1: Overview and Scrutiny Panel Task and Finish Scoping Document

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Review of Car Park Fees and Charges](#) – 20th October 2016

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