

SCRUTINY PANEL: How effective are the Borough Council's arrangements for providing car parking in Charnwood?

**THURSDAY, 13TH NOVEMBER 2014 AT 6.00PM
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, SOUTHFIELDS, LOUGHBOROUGH**

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES
2. SCOPE DOCUMENT AND ACTION NOTES

The Panel's scope document is attached for the information of the Panel at page 3.

The notes of the actions agreed by the Panel at its meeting held on 29th September 2014 are attached at page 7.

3. PANEL DRAFT REPORT

This item has been included on the agenda to consider the Panel's draft report, circulated as a separate document to members of the Panel.

4. TIMETABLE FOR REVIEW

No further meetings of the Panel are currently programmed.

Panel Membership:

Councillors Sharp (Chair) Campsall, Jones, Pacey, Paling, Parton, Poland, Sansome, Seaton and Smidowicz

REVIEW TITLE: How effective are the Borough Council's arrangements for providing car parking in Charnwood?

SCOPE OF ITEM / TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Panel will:

- Identify the objectives that the provision of parking and the charging regime are seeking to achieve
- Review the criteria for determining car parking charges
- Review the criteria for measuring performance
- Consider ways to promote parking facilities in Loughborough and elsewhere in the Borough e.g. including the outcome of 'Free Sunday Parking' in December 2013 and the introduction of pay on exit operation.

REASON FOR SCRUTINY

To review the effectiveness of the Council's arrangements for providing car parking for the community and the Council and ensure transparency in respect of decision making for car parking charges.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE GROUP

Councillor Robert Sharp (Chair) Councillors: Campsall, Jones, Pacey, Paling, Parton, Poland, Sansome, Seaton and Smidowicz

WHAT WILL BE INCLUDED

The Panel will:

- Consider the Council's arrangements for providing car parking across the Borough. Car Parking within Loughborough Town Centre was last reviewed by the Loughborough Town Centre Parking Strategy, produced by White Young Green Consulting Engineers in 2007 and covered the period to 2021
- Consider policies and charges appropriate to encouraging the use of public transport
- Consider the use of 'season' parking tickets in Council run car parks.

WHAT WILL BE EXCLUDED

The Panel will not consider the provision of public transport and other alternatives to use of private cars more widely or areas of work undertaken by the University Entrances and Parking Scrutiny Panel.

KEY TASKS * * including consideration of efficiency savings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence collection process – including considering work undertaken by Blaby District Council scrutiny panel in respect of car parking charges • Identify the roles undertaken by the Borough Council and the County Council – including consider the work of / funding for the Street Wardens. 	
STAKEHOLDERS, OUTSIDE AGENCIES, OTHER ORGANISATIONS *	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leicestershire County Council • Parish and Town Councils • Loughborough Business Improvement District • Environmental and other interest groups, e.g. Transition Loughborough, Action for a Better Charnwood and cycling groups • Car park users • Charnwood Borough Council Officers: A. Twells – Head of Regulatory Services S. Wright – Head of Leisure and Culture 	
EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS	
Is an impact needs assessment required? – to be considered at the Panel's penultimate meeting	
LINKS/OVERLAPS TO OTHER REVIEWS	
RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS	
REPORT REQUIREMENTS (Officer information)	
REVIEW COMMENCEMENT DATE	COMPLETION DATE FOR DRAFT REPORT
3rd April 2014	

* Key tasks and stakeholders may be subject to change as the review progresses.

PROGRESS OF PANEL WORK

MEETING DATE	PROGRESS TO DATE
3rd April 2014	<p>The Head of Regulatory Services attended the meeting and provided information in respect of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline of the current operation of car parking across the Borough. • Outline of regulatory controls involved in the operation of car parking. • Information and guidance applicable to the provision of car parking. <p>Two Main Categories of Car Parking within Charnwood: On Street – Managed and controlled by Leicestershire County Council. Off Street – Details provided of the public car parks currently managed by the Borough Council's Street Management Team.</p>

	<p>The main Loughborough car parks had been awarded the Park Mark Award for safety and security, recognising safety, lighting, surveillance and clean facilities.</p>
30th April 2014	<p>To receive information from the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services - to consider:</p> <p>Planning for capacity – an understanding of capacity and how it is managed</p> <p>Policy – car parking within the core strategy</p> <p>Section 106 funding</p> <p>Sustainability – the use of cars</p> <p>and the Head of Financial and Property Services – to consider reinvestment costs from car parking.</p> <p>The Panel consider how to undertake a car park users survey and in which car parks and receive details of recent surveys undertaken in Anstey and Quorn.</p>
2nd June 2014	<p>Received information from representatives of the Loughborough BID and the Head of Leisure and Culture.</p>
1st July 2014	<p>Received information from a representative of Action for a Better Charnwood, Transition Loughborough and the Council's Sustainability officer.</p> <p>Received responses to Town and Parish Council questionnaires (Deadline for responses 16th June 2014).</p> <p>Received responses from Resident Groups questionnaires (Deadline for responses 16th June 2014).</p> <p>Received responses from public questionnaire (Deadline for responses 30th June 2014).</p> <p>Received outcomes of the Anstey and Quorn car parking surveys conducted in 2013 and considered by the Panel on 30th April 2014.</p>
4th August 2014	<p>Reviewed the evidence received to date and agreed no further witnesses were required. Considered areas for recommendations.</p> <p>The Chair agreed to meet with officers to review the proposed recommendation areas agreed at the meeting, identify any gaps and invite relevant officers to the meeting.</p> <p>The agenda for that meeting to also include consideration of recommendations for inclusion in the Panel's report.</p>

29th September 2014	<p>Considered draft recommendations for the Panel's report in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for Increased Capacity Pay on Exit Parking Solutions for Town Centre Employees Market Trader Permits Scheme Car Parking Promotions S106 Funding Use of Public Transport Car Sharing Schemes Support for Cyclists Items Officers Currently Addressing Items Agreed at Previous Meetings .
13th November 2014	To receive a draft report for comment prior to submission to the Scrutiny Management Board.

REPORT SUBMITTED TO SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

CAR PARKING SCRUTINY PANEL - ACTION NOTES

MEETING 6: 29th September 2014

ATTENDED BY: Councillors: Sharp (Chair), Jones, Pacey, Parton, Poland, Seaton and Smidowicz

APOLOGY: Councillors Paling and Sansome

Officers: L. Aspray, R. Bennett, M. Hopkins, A. Twells, S. Wright and F. Whittington

CONSIDERED AT THIS MEETING:

DOCUMENT OR MATTER	ACTIONS AGREED
Scope document	Noted
Action Notes 4th August 2014	Noted
PANEL DRAFT REPORT	
<u>Need for Increased Capacity</u>	
PROPOSED DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. While acknowledging financial constraints and the objective of encouraging alternative modes of transport to car use, a report be commissioned to identify in more detail the nature of car parking provision, both in Loughborough and other areas of the Borough, with specific reference to Sileby, Syston, Rothley and Woodhouse Eaves and evaluate the options for addressing any shortages;2. While acknowledging the work of the Limehurst Depot Scrutiny Panel 2011/12, further consideration be given to using the site as a car park for the north side of Loughborough.3. That further work be undertaken to promote the availability of the Southfields Offices car park on Saturdays and Sundays to shoppers and other visitors.	
<u>Reasons</u>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Panel had received sufficient evidence of need for further car parking facilities, in areas across the Borough, with demand exceeding supply. <p>To enable the options for delivering the objective set out in the Town Centre Parking Strategy (TCPS) and the Core Strategy (CS) of further car parking in Loughborough to be explored. <i>(Evidence be included as</i></p>	

an appendix to the final report)

2. To further enhance the long term parking capacity in Loughborough, by using land that would not be immediately utilised once current staff were transferred to the Southfields site.
3. To enable better use to be made of existing car parking facilities.

Pay on Exit

PROPOSED DRAFT CONCLUSIONS:

1. The Panel was not minded to recommend any further conversion of existing car parks to pay on exit.
2. Southfields Extension Car Park – no recommendation was required in respect of difficulties with overnight parking.

Reasons

1. Evidence shows that it would not be feasible to introduce pay on exit car parks at the Southfields or Southfields extension car parks, due to the size of the car parks it would not be financially viable.

The Browns Lane car park was predominately for those using the Leisure Centre and a pay on exit scheme would have no benefit to those customers. The tariffs at the car park were such as to discourage long term shopper parking.

2. The issues had been addressed, with new software being installed at the beginning of October 2014.

Parking Solutions for Town Centre Employees

PROPOSED DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Officers work with the BID to develop a 12 month scheme, for approximately 20 to 30 spaces, to enable town centre employees to park at a daily rate, equivalent to half the current daily car park charge.
2. Sites such as Browns Lane extension and Limehurst Depot be considered, among others, for the proposed pilot scheme referred to in 1. above.

Reason

There was significant evidence of need from the BID, with further evidence of on street parking concerns from local residents. A trial of this nature would not appear to have a negative impact on the availability of parking for shoppers, other visitors and users of the leisure centre and could also be used to assess

the impact of the scheme on encouraging staff parking, whilst determining the impact on other car park users.

Market Trader Permits Scheme

PROPOSED DRAFT CONCLUSION: The Panel has no further comments to make on the scheme.

Reasons

While there was little take up of the scheme, the Panel was satisfied that officers continued to promote it through regular meetings with the Market Traders Federation and wider traders, and details were included in letters and newsletters circulated during the year. Details of the scheme were also provided to all new traders.

Officers considered:

- (i) The traders preferred to make use of the car parks in closer proximity to the Market, which were out of the control of the Council.
- (ii) Many chose not to participate in the scheme because they had to pay for a 10 week block, even though officers had arranged for credits for periods of sickness/holidays.

Car Parking Promotions

PROPOSED DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Car parking fees overall were considered to be a fair rate and the Panel had no recommendations in respect of pricing.
2. Working with the Loughborough Business Improvement District (BID), a 12 month trial be introduced for Free Sunday Parking, at a cost of c.£30,000 which could be shared with the BID, with a review at the end of the 12 month period.
3. In respect of providing discounted parking tickets for local shops to issue to their customers, while supporting such a scheme, the Panel recognised that this service was already available for local businesses and felt that the BID should work with their members to encourage take up of the scheme and that the Council assist in facilitating this.

Reasons

1. The Panel had no evidence of pricing being a barrier for use.
2. While acknowledging there was no evidence that price was a barrier, such a promotion could be used as a more effective marketing tool than current promotions, to encourage more footfall into the town on a

Sunday, and may displace some traffic from Saturday to Sunday.

It would be possible to monitor uptake in the pay and display car parks and provide data evidence for future promotions and use in conjunction with BID data in respect of footfall.

3. To enable specific shops to provide discounts and reimburse the customer. Street Management has investigated possible methods to achieve this with minimum costs to the retailer. These options have been presented to the BID and are available for them to take advantage of.

S106 Funding

PROPOSED DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS:

That in order to ensure that there are appropriate mechanisms in place to respond to those circumstances where the lack of sufficient car parking provision to enable local services to be used detrimentally affects the sustainability of a proposed development or the viability of a town or village centre the following actions be taken:

- (i) That the report to be commissioned, (referred to in recommendation 1 – need for increased capacity above), be based on evidence and an assessment of the capacity of existing car parking provision, to accommodate additional demand generated by future housing developments and the point at which that capacity has been or would be exceeded.
- (ii) That consideration is given to planning policies being introduced to ensure that car parking capacity and its effect on the sustainability of proposed developments forms part of the decision-making process for determining planning applications.
- (iii) That those policies include the need to undertake a proportionate car parking capacity assessment where such information does not already exist.
- (iv) That those policies include the possibility of securing developer contributions for increasing car parking facilities where this is an appropriate means of mitigating the impact of a particular development.
- (v) That those policies include the ability to consider the cumulative impact of a number of smaller developments as well as that of a single large one.
- (vi) That work be done with Leicestershire County Council, parish and town councils and other stakeholders to ensure that representations about planning issues are encouraged and responded to as part of

the process for determining planning applications.

- (vii) That work continue to be done with developers, Leicestershire County Council, parish and town councils and other stakeholders to identify means to mitigate the impact of new developments on local car parks.

Reason

While acknowledging improvements to bus, cycle and walking routes as part of new developments, the Panel was strongly of the opinion, from evidence received, that developments impacted on car parking facilities in service centres within the Borough, exceeding capacity and making the centre non-sustainable. By using the tests, the areas would be assessed as part of a planning application, with evidence used to inform S106 funding where appropriate.

Use of Public Transport

PROPOSED DRAFT RECOMMENDATION:

1. That officers work with Leicestershire County Council to develop a Charnwood specific hub of information on alternative transport options to the car, promoted by the Borough and County Councils, for example bus timetables, bus stops, travel plan guidance, the work of the Quality Bus Partnership including operator promotions, to enable them to be promoted more widely and that other channels, for example Charnwood News also be used for this purpose.
2. That officers work with Leicestershire County Council to further develop mechanisms for measuring the impact of this work.

Reason

1. Witnesses with a specific interest in green travel and members of the Panel had been unaware of the schemes promoted by the councils and considered other residents were also unaware.
2. To ensure that the effectiveness of the work was known when making future decisions about these schemes.

Car Sharing Schemes

PROPOSED DRAFT RECOMMENDATION:

1. Officers work with the BID to assist other organisations to adopt schemes similar to that operated by the Borough Council;
2. Officers continue to promote the LeicesterSHARE.com scheme, currently promoted by Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council and the Department of Transport.

Reason

To help to promote car sharing schemes as a more sustainable transport option.

Support for Cyclists

PROPOSED DRAFT CONCLUSION: The Panel found no evidence that further cycling facilities were required within the town.

Reason

Despite verbal anecdotal comments, there appeared to be sufficient capacity at the current time, taking into account existing work by Leicestershire County Council.

Items Officers Currently Addressing

PROPOSED DRAFT RECOMMENDATION: Following comments submitted as part of the Panel's survey, the work being undertaken by officers in respect of signage, improvements to car parking meters, pay and display machines, and improved traffic flow at Granby Street car park be noted.

Reason

The Panel was content with the operational changes and improvements to quality of service and had no further recommendations to make.

Items Agreed at Previous Meetings

- A. Concern that planning applications are granted with garages that are not large enough for a family car, which results in cars being parked on pavements/roads.
- B. Issues relating to on street parking - The teething problems identified by local resident groups in respect of on street parking administration in Loughborough be fed back to Leicestershire County Council.
(The resident's preferential parking scheme in the Storer Road area is not logical. It should be from 8.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m. to prevent multi-parking by students after 5.00 p.m. (one hour allowed with a 6.00 p.m. limit). The Storer area does not cover June – September, when there are still lots of cars parking. June is particularly difficult as all the student cars are here and can park without control).
- C. Arnold Smith House and Beresford Court, Shepshed - It was proposed that details from Shepshed Town Council in respect of car parking considered to be in a dangerous state of repair at Arnold Smith House and Beresford Court Shepshed be forwarded to Housing Services.
- D. Ring fence income from car parking – not supported by the Panel.

<p>Arrangements for the next meeting of the Panel</p> <p>(13th November 2014)</p> <p>6.00pm</p>	<p>To receive a draft report for comment prior to submission to the Scrutiny Management Board.</p>
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