

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

Foreword by Councillor Robert Sharp, Chair of the Scrutiny Panel



This report sets out the findings and recommendations of the Car Parking Scrutiny Panel.

The Borough of Charnwood has Loughborough as its central market town and a number of smaller towns and rural villages within its area, some of which are service centres with prominent shopping areas that, together with continuing demands for new housing developments has brought a focus on to car parking provisions throughout the Borough.

The Panel was tasked with reviewing the effectiveness of the Council's arrangements for providing car parking throughout the Borough of Charnwood. Some of the key challenges the Panel was asked to consider were:

- Is there sufficient car parking provision
- Are the charges fair and reasonable
- What are the barriers to using the car parks and how can these be addressed
- Are there adequate alternate transport offerings and how well are these promoted
- Do the car parks support the needs of local communities and businesses

In forming its recommendations, the Panel obtained evidence from partner agencies involved, as well as parish and town councils and, local resident groups. In addition, many members of the public had their say via a survey conducted online and at the Councils' car parks.

The Panel recommendations provide support for the Council's approach to pricing and financial management of the car parks. They commend a number of activities undertaken to provide alternate modes of transport but seek to broaden their use.

Crucially, the recommendations set out to address a lack of supply of car parking; a failing of the current planning process to review the impacts developments have on car parking at main service centres; and propose a means of using Council car parks to promote activity in Loughborough Town Centre.

The conclusions reached by the Panel will be submitted to the Council's Cabinet for its consideration, support and implementation.

The Panel wishes to acknowledge and thank all those who acted as witnesses or provided written evidence to assist the Panel with its deliberations.

Councillor Robert Sharp
Chair of the Car Parking Scrutiny Panel

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

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its meeting on 7th January 2014, the Policy Scrutiny Group received a draft scope document for the establishment of a car parking scrutiny panel. At that meeting it was agreed that the document, including minor amendments, be submitted to the Scrutiny Management Board, for consideration at its meeting to be held on 29th January 2014, where the establishment of the panel was agreed.

Car Parking within Loughborough Town Centre was last reviewed by the Loughborough Town Centre Parking Strategy¹, produced by White Young Green Consulting Engineers in 2007 and covered the period to 2021. The Panel identified the objectives that the provision of parking and the charging regime was seeking to achieve, reviewed the criteria for determining car parking charges and measuring performance and considered ways to promote parking facilities in Loughborough and elsewhere in the Borough. From its work, the Panel identified specific areas from which recommendations are made:

- A need for increased capacity;
- Pay on Exit Car Parks;
- Parking solutions for town centre employees;
- Market Trader permits
- Car parking Promotions
- S106 Funding
- Use of public Transport
- Car Sharing Schemes
- Support for cyclists

In addition to those recommendations there are actions currently being undertaken by officers addressing some issues highlighted by the Panel and some issues which have been identified for other agencies to consider.

1.2 Panel Membership

In March 2014 Councillors were invited to put themselves forward to sit on the Panel. At the meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board, held on 19th March 2014, the Board agreed Councillor Sharp's request, as Chair of the Panel, that an exception be made to the rule that no more than seven Members may sit on a scrutiny panel, to allow the Car Parking Scrutiny Panel to have no more than eleven Members, allowing all that had expressed an interest to sit on the Panel to participate, thus representing a good cross-section of the different Wards within the Borough.

Panel membership was agreed as follows:

¹ Background Paper ? – Loughborough Town Centre Parking Study 2007

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

On 3rd April 2014 the Panel held an initial meeting and considered the scope document and background papers prepared by officers prior to the meeting, to assist the Panel with its deliberations and consideration of a way forward.

1.3 Terms of Reference and Reasons for Scrutiny

Terms of Reference and reasons for scrutiny were agreed by the Scrutiny Management Board as follows:

- 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.

1.4 Reasons 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.

1.5 Evidence, Stakeholders and Witnesses

Witnesses who gave evidence to the Panel were:

- Action for a Better Charnwood: Tony Stott
- Council Officers: Head of Finance and Property Services
 Head of Leisure and Culture
 Head of Planning and Regeneration
 Head of Regulatory Services
 Principal Planning Officer (RB)
 Sustainability Officer
- Loughborough Business Improvement District: Jonathan Hale and Roger Perrett
- Transition Loughborough: Sue Meredith-Velado

Written evidence was submitted by Action for a Better Charnwood, Leicestershire County Council, Loughborough Business Improvement District and Transition Loughborough. A survey was circulated to all Town and Parish Councils and responses were received from Anstey, Burton on the Wolds Cotes & Prestwold, Sileby, Thrussington and Woodhouse Parish Councils, together with Shepshed

and Syston Town Councils. In the absence of a Town Council for Loughborough, a separate survey was circulated to local resident Groups and responses were received from the Forest Road North & Holywell Drive Area Residents' Group, Hayden Road Residents' Association and Storer & Ashby Road Area Residents' Group.

At an initial meeting of the Panel, it was agreed that the views of the car park users were an essential part of obtaining evidence for the Panel's consideration. To that end, questions for a survey were agreed² and four members of the Panel spoke to users of the Beehive Lane, Granby Street and Southfields Road Car Parks on the mornings of Thursday, 29th May and Saturday 7th and 14th June 2014. In addition an online questionnaire was published on the Councils website, to enable as many car park users as possible to participate with the work of the Panel. The questions were written to ascertain views in respect of where users lived, whether they were Blue Badge holders, which car park had been used, the purpose of journeys, regularity of the use of the car parks, the average duration of the stay, details of any difficulties encountered, other forms of transport used, views on current charges, and any other comments respondents wished to make. In total, 143 members of the public completed the survey.

Prior to the commencement of its work and during its deliberations, the Panel received background documents to provide detailed information to support its work. These are listed in Appendix ?

1.6 Summaries of Panel Meetings

A summary of the work undertaken at each meeting of the Panel, including full details of the information provided by witnesses and the issues considered by the Panel are set out in the Action Notes of each meeting, attached at appendix 4.

1.7 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

The Improvement & Organisational Development Manager stated that the need for an Equality Impact Assessment would be considered following the final submission of the report.

1.8 Background Information

The aims of car parking in the Borough are three-fold:

1. To provide good quality parking facilities.
2. To provide car parking services appropriate to local circumstances.
3. To support the vitality of Loughborough town centre, service centres, villages and businesses.

² Appendix 6 Public Survey

There are two main categories of car parking within Charnwood:

- On-Street Parking – Managed and controlled by Leicestershire County Council. The role of the County Council also included Traffic Regulation Orders, use of loading bays for parking in the evenings, changes to parking restrictions where use of areas had changed and parking restrictions and yellow lines.
- Off-Street Parking – Currently managed by the Borough Council's Street Management Team. Officers aimed to have 85% capacity at any one time. The main Loughborough car parks had been awarded the Park Mark award for safety and security, recognising safety, lighting, surveillance and clean facilities.

Investment decisions in respect of new car parks or improvements to existing car parks are considered as part of the Council's overall capital expenditure. Council owned car parks are inspected annually by Property and Regulatory Services, and any work that is required is set within the priorities for all assets. Income from car parking is not ring fenced; money is included in the general fund and allocated by the decisions of the Council.

- 1.9 Details of the position and charges of Loughborough car parks can be found using the links below:

[Beehive Lane](#) Multi-Storey 'Pay on Exit'

[Granby Street](#) 'Pay on Exit'

[Browns Lane](#) Pay and Display

[Southfields Offices](#) Pay and Display

[Southfield Road](#) Pay and Display

Details of village car parks in the Borough can be accessed using the link below:

<http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/carparklocations>

- 1.10 Following its deliberations and having received considerable evidence to support its final views, including from witnesses and background documents as attached or listed in the appendices, the Panel came to the following recommendations and conclusions not requiring further action.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CABINET

TO BE ADDED ONCE AGREED BY PANEL

CONCLUSIONS WHERE ACTION TAKEN

Following consideration of the responses to the public survey, in which a third of respondents reported a difficulty in a Loughborough car park, officers made operational changes and improvements to the quality of service by:

- Signage (directions to the lifts at the Woodgate entrance of Beehive car park)
Lifts are marked at Beehive Lane but additional signage in each stairwell can be installed.
- Introduce Meters that give change at all car parks. Pay on Exit machines take coins and notes and give change. These also take chip and pin card payments.
- Pay and Display machines could be replaced at an estimated cost of £5,000 for each machine. There would be increased on-going operational and maintenance costs for each machine dealing with change issues. Street Management is aware of these issues and will be looking to update machines when replacements are required.
- Broken meters and no contact with customer services. Helpline contact numbers are displayed in every car park and on the machines. The 'Pay on Exit' car parks have helplines which go directly through to wardens during working hours and to the CCTV control room out of hours. There were some issues with the helpline at Granby Street just after its opening – these issues have now been resolved with the supplier. Regular meetings with CCTV are undertaken to ensure that any problems are identified and minimised as much as possible. The current pay and display machines are very robust and don't have many issues. Contact details are provided on the signs, but can also be provided on machines as required.
- Improved flow around Granby Street, specifically the disabled parking area. Street Management is aware there is an issue as the car park is full almost daily and can cause circulation flow problems. A full sign has been ordered and will be installed shortly. This should inform drivers the car park is full and reduce the numbers queuing. Consideration is being given to additional line marking and keep clear signage to help maintain the circulation routes
- Facilities for people with disabilities. The provision of spaces is based on national guidelines for the provision of spaces for the disabled.
- Southfields Extension Car Park – no recommendation was required in respect of difficulties with overnight parking, as the issues had been

addressed, with new software being installed at the beginning of October 2014.

2. NEED FOR INCREASED CAPACITY

Information received from the surveys carried out by the Panel, evidence submitted by the BID and recommendations included in the Loughborough Town Centre Parking Strategy 2007 led the Panel to consider in detail the capacity for car parks, both in Loughborough and the towns and villages of the Borough. While considering the issue, the Panel also discussed the Council's financial constraints and the objective of encouraging alternative modes of transport to car use. Officers were also requested to submit information in respect of increasing car parking capacity.

The Loughborough Town Centre Parking Strategy, developed in 2007 and commissioned on behalf of Charnwood Borough Council, provided the findings of a review of existing parking at that time and set out a framework for parking policies in the town centre up to 2021, against the background of the Town Centre Master Plan. Within that document, there is evidence of a lack of capacity in car parks on Saturdays and most Thursdays throughout the year and proposals that during quieter periods incentives could be offered to encourage greater use³.

- 2.1 Evidence was received from two members of the Loughborough Business Improvement District (BID), an organisation representing town centre businesses, with detailed written evidence providing an overview, recent thinking and findings of reports by Portas⁴, Grimsey⁵, Association of Town and City Management (ATCM)⁶ and national Government⁷, together with examples of initiatives in other towns and specific suggestions for Loughborough.

The Loughborough Business Improvement District (BID) was established in February 2012 following a vote of businesses. It represents almost 600 businesses in the BID boundary, across all sectors, that each pay an annual levy to fund improvements in the area. A board of Directors made up of representatives of BID Businesses oversees the delivery and management of the scheme. The BID works closely with local organisations and authorities and in July 2012 was selected as one of only 27 Towns to be a "Portas Pilot" to trial some of the ideas in Mary Portas' Report on the future of the High Street carried out for the Government.

The BID evidence stated:

- Parking is the issue most frequently raised to the BID by businesses and the public.
- Pressure on Loughborough town centre – currently 12% vacancy rate and few enquiries for vacant shop units. Independent businesses need help to

³Background paper ?- Loughborough Town Centre Parking Strategy 2007

⁴ Background paper ? – Portas Report

⁵ Background paper ? – Grimsey Report

⁶ Background paper ? – Association of Town and City Management Report

⁷ Background paper ? – National Government Report

survive – working on higher volume and lower margins needs higher footfall.

- Current parking policies were set in a different age, driven by a desire to keep cars out of town. While supporting sustainable transport the BID had to acknowledge the convenience of cars, therefore convenient parking was pivotal to a successful town centre.
- Nearly three quarters of businesses responding to a BID survey believed there was insufficient parking in the town centre, working to capacity on Saturdays and most Thursdays. It was considered that charges for two hours plus was too high, when compared to larger town centres with a greater draw of national stores.
- Initiatives providing free parking were applauded.
- A perception that enforcement of on-street and off-street parking were often over- zealous, motivated by income generation rather than serving the public and keeping traffic moving.
- A more level playing field with out of town retail parks was needed.

2.2 The BID requested:

- (i) A review of parking policy and charges. The Council be aspirational and have a policy to encourage people into the town centre.
- (ii) The Council's budget for 2013/14 showed a surplus of income over cost of approximately £250,000. That money could be used to reduce charges or introduce parking incentives at times of low demand, invest in parking improvements or invest directly in the town.
- (iii) Consider additional parking provision, as recommended by the White Young Green report in 2007, specifically a new multi-story facility to serve the south-west of the town centre and revisit the recommendations of the report.
- (iv) While accepting there were periods of high demand for car parking, consider free parking incentives where success is evidenced from around the country during periods of low demand.
- (v) Consider how businesses engage with the Council to provide funded free parking for their customers.
- (vi) Consider long stay car parking for staff, possibly on vacant land.
- (vii) Review of on-street parking by Leicestershire County Council, following completion of the inner relief road and the availability of disabled parking.
- (viii) Training for enforcement officers to reverse negative views of the public.
- (ix) Improve signage to car parks, digital signs with details of parking availability.
- (x) In difficult times, the BID recognises challenges, while noting the community interest to have a vibrant town centre. The BID urges the panel to recommend wide ranging reform that would make a difference to the town, the community and local businesses.

2.3 Evidence from town and parish councils showed that 75% had insufficient parking and believed new housing developments are exacerbating the situation,

specific reference was made to Rothley, Syston, Sileby and Woodhouse Eaves⁸. The opinion of the Panel is that there is a need for more capacity.

2.4 Reference was made to the 2007 Parking Study which referred to the need for a multi-story car park on the north side of the town.⁹ Officers cautioned that even with evidence of need to retain accessibility and economic prosperity, planning policies put an emphasis on a move towards sustainable modes of transport.

2.5 To increase car parking capacity, officers submitted comments as follows:

(i) Expanding Existing Car Parks

For existing car parks the options and associated issues would be as follows:

District Car Parks:

- Quorn Car Park - has had some alterations completed in August 2014 that have resulted in an increase of 3-4 spaces.
- Syston Car Park - the Council have recently agreed a Licence with a land owner for access to adjacent land, which created approximately 10 new spaces at the rear of businesses.
- For all other District Car Parks the only solution to increase capacity would be to construct additional floors, which would be subject to planning permission and very significant capital investment. This would require a suitable professional survey and appraisal to determine if it would be physically feasible and cost effective prior to progressing to a capital application.

Loughborough Car Parks:

The only potential scope to increase capacity within existing car parks would be to construct additional floors at Granby Street and Browns Lane. Again this would be subject to relevant planning permission, professional surveys and feasibility study prior to the submission of a Capital Scheme bid. The costs of this would be very significant.

(ii) Creating New Car Parks

Outside Loughborough - To create new car parks close to relevant village and town centres would require the purchase of land and/or buildings. This would be subject to the availability of land and also to planning permission, prior to the purchase of any land. Again this would be subject

⁸ Appendix 10 – Town and Parish Council Survey Results

⁹ Background Paper ? - Loughborough Parking Study 2007

to a full capital appraisal being undertaken before any scheme could progress and would involve significant capital investment.

Within Loughborough – With the exception of car parks being developed through the Local Planning System, to create a new car park in Loughborough would require changes to land owned by the Council or the purchase of new land. Officers are currently only aware of one potential site on existing land which is the Limehurst Depot Site. This has already been subject to a Scrutiny Panel, where the options were discussed and recommendations made. To purchase new land would again involve a full capital appraisal and subsequent capital bid. It is not possible to know the exact costs here, as it would be very dependent on the land being purchased and the cost of developing the site – but it undoubtedly would have a significant cost.

- 2.6 Evidence received from environmental groups stated that car parking should be viewed from a sustainability perspective, Action for a Better Charnwood believe that consideration of the provision and management of car parking across Charnwood specifically needs to be set into the context and linked to the policies and plans of the Council and its partners to promote sustainability, in particular sustainable modes of transport, and to tackle climate change. These include Climate Plan Local and the Charnwood Core Strategy. In addition, there are policies and initiatives in relation to the Leicestershire Local Transport Plan 3¹⁰ and the Smarter Travel for Business Fund Bid 2012¹¹. In conclusion, they believed that the effectiveness of the Council's arrangements for providing car parking need to be judged against its sustainability and climate change objectives as well as its economic objectives.

- 2.7 From the public survey, a breakdown of responses stating there had been a problem finding spaces is as follows:

- Beehive Lane – 21%
- Granby Street – 68%
- Southfields Road – 28%
- Melton Road – Syston – 80% (although a smaller number of respondents)

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS NOT REQUIRING FURTHER ACTION

RECOMMENDATIONS:

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,

¹⁰ Background paper ? – Leicestershire Local Transport Plan

¹¹ Background paper ? - Smarter Travel for Business Fund Bid 2012

both in Loughborough and other areas of the Borough, namely, Sileby, Syston, Rothley and Woodhouse and evaluate the options for addressing any shortages.

REASON: The Panel had received sufficient evidence of need for further car parking facilities, in areas across the Borough, with demand exceeding supply and 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. (Evidence be included as an appendix to the final report)

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.

REASON: 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. That further work be undertaken to promote the availability of the Southfields Offices car park on Saturdays and Sundays to shoppers and other visitors.

REASON: To enable better use to be made of existing car parking facilities.

4. The Panel considered and supported requests for additional signage to improve the flow of traffic to car parks within Loughborough. It is satisfied that new signage planned as part of the Inner Relief Road work will assist with drivers finding parking spaces in the town and meet the needs identified to this committee. The Panel recommends that a report be submitted to the Scrutiny Management Board six months after the signage is in place to consider its affect. In particular, the views of the BID would be welcomed..

REASON: Issues in respect of signage are being addressed through the Inner Relief Road scheme but such is its importance, a review of the impact of the scheme is required.

3. PAY ON EXIT

Pay on Exit at the Beehive Lane car park was introduced in February 2008. The scheme had been successful and was introduced to Granby Street Car Park in 2014; these schemes mean greater satisfaction for users, as they eliminate the risk of facing a penalty charge, as noted in the results of the public survey conducted by the Panel¹².

- 3.1 Although some teething difficulties had been reported following the introduction of the scheme at Granby Street, the overwhelming majority of users surveyed thought the scheme was an improvement¹³ and officers were looking to address access to the disabled parking without joining the queue to access the main car park.
- 3.2 The Granby Street Car Park is a victim of its own success and is full a lot of the time, with longer stay parking, thus preventing officer recommended 82% capacity to allow for turnaround of cars parking.
- 3.3 The Panel considered recommendations to extend pay on exit to other Council owned car parks, specifically Browns Lane and Southfields requesting a business case from officers.

Initially a survey would need to be undertaken to determine for each car park the practical feasibility of the installation of additional Pay on Exit Car Parks (to match Beehive Lane and Granby Street). Without such a survey it is difficult to confirm if such a system is feasible for each car park. Officers' opinion is that the only two car parks where this could have the potential are the Browns Lane Leisure Centre and Southfields Road car parks. Whilst it is not possible to provide detailed costs, without surveys and tenders, officers can confirm, for indicative purposes, that the total cost of all the alterations at Granby Street Car Park was £250,000. The additional running costs for equipment etc. is approximately £15,000 per annum, plus additional staff time.

The annual income received for ticket sales from Granby Street was £210,000 for 2013/14, with an overall net budget after all costs of -£93,000 (overall net income).

For comparison purposes, it is possible to provide the current income and costs of providing each car park, which can be summarised as follows:

- For Browns Lane Leisure Centre the annual total income for 2013/14 was £77,000. However, the actual overall net budget including all costs for 2013/14 was £15,000 (i.e. net cost).

¹² Appendix 6 – Public Survey

¹³ Appendix 6 – Public Survey

- For Southfields Offices (which operates an evening and weekend pay and display) the income received during 2013/14 was £22,000 and the overall net budget for 2013/14 was £6,000 (i.e. net cost). Due to the limited opening hours and relatively small capacity this is unlikely to be a feasible option.
- For Southfields Extension Car Park (adjacent to the Premier Inn) the income for 2013/14 was £46,000 and the net overall budget £15,000 (i.e. net income)

3.4 The Panel concluded that although Pay on Exit was a popular with the public and desirable for all other Councils' car parks, the costs to implement such schemes further were not economically viable and the Panel agreed not to explore the matter further. However, should additional car parking be brought forward, the value of this scheme to the public should be noted.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS NOT REQUIRING FURTHER ACTION

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Panel was not minded to recommend any further conversion of existing car parks to pay on exit.
REASON: 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.

4. PARKING SOLUTIONS FOR TOWN CENTRE EMPLOYEES

As part of its submitted evidence, representatives of the BID raised the issue of affordable parking for town centre employees, requesting the Panel consider long stay car parking for staff, possibly on vacant land.

Evidence was also submitted from residents, through Panel members, in respect of cars being parked, by town centre employees, in residential areas.

- 4.1 During consideration of this matter, reference was made to the Borough Council's staff parking scheme. Essential car users, disabled drivers, Councillors and car sharers, are provided with a permit to park at either the Beehive Lane or Southfield Offices Council car parks. Other staff use the upper floors of Beehive Lane car park at a discounted rate, depending on the CO₂ ratings of their vehicles.
- 4.2 There was currently a scheme for town centre employees allowing businesses a 20% reduction on parking over a 10 week period, but this option did not appear to be attractive or widely used.
- 4.3 While considering the BID request, officers made reference to the following:

To implement any additional scheme for non-council staff, it is important to know the current capacity levels within the Councils' car parks. For each of the main car parks, officers have highlighted the following:

- Granby Street becomes full on a daily basis, so such a scheme would not be possible as there is no capacity.
- Browns Lane is predominantly used by Leisure Centre users. During the day there is some spare capacity in the overspill car park area. Any spaces taken may have an impact on the future operation of the Leisure Centre facilities. There has been no analysis of actual spaces available as this is a pay and display car park and actual numbers are not known.
- Southfields Extension Car Park – there is a very limited number of spaces within this car park.
- Southfields Offices – Monday-Friday the car park is used extensively during the day by staff and visitors to the Council offices. There is availability of spaces at weekends and bank holidays.
- Beehive Lane – is used by Council staff, hotel guests, shoppers and visitors to the Town. This car park does get near to capacity and full on some Thursdays (Market day) and Saturdays. The current capacity will vary daily. A cross section analysis of usage has been undertaken of parking capacity at Beehive over the past 12 months and can be summarised as follows:

Day	Min	Max	Ave
Mon-Fri (Excluding Thursday)	331 (58%)	437 (76%)	381 (62%)
Thursdays	461 (81%)	540 (94%)	495 (87%)
Saturdays	380 (66%)	571 (100%)	462 (81%)

The current capacity at Beehive is 572. In order to consider additional staff parking the maximum capacity figures need to be considered, as any increase in all day parking could result in shoppers and visitors not being able to park on a regular basis.

Any scheme introduced would need to be managed and monitored by the Council and would increase the staffing and IT costs to administer it. Either the business or individuals could pay for the relevant permits. Under the current scheme permits are transferable between vehicles to allow flexibility for businesses. However, permits would be required for each individual vehicle should a scheme go ahead based on CO₂ emissions.

Additional considerations:

- New developments within the Town, such as on the old hospital site could increase the usage at Beehive Lane and reduce the current spare capacity.
- Any further utilisation of the Council's buildings resulting in a net increase in people working in the offices will also have a knock on effect to reduce day time capacity within Southfields office and Beehive Lane car park. Current proposals include a Multi-Agency co-location programme, involving additional staff from the Council's depot, Leicestershire County Council and Job Centre Plus.

Following discussions, the Panel proposed that a trial be undertaken to consider the impact of introducing affordable parking for town centre employees, to look at the impact such a scheme would have on town centre car parks and whether the employees would make use of such a scheme. The Panel identified Browns Lane extension and Limehurst depot as potential sites to run the trial.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS NOT REQUIRING FURTHER ACTION

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Officers work with the BID to develop a 12 month pilot scheme, for approximately 20 to 30 spaces, to enable town centre employees to park

at a daily rate, equivalent to no more than 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.

REASONS: 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. The scheme should be flexible enough to allow retailers to purchase spaces for their employees to use and allow advertising at the space by such retailers as a means of adding value to the expenditure.

5. MARKET TRADER PERMITS

Partial season tickets for Market Traders (10 Week Permit) are available from the Council for parking in Council owned car parks, with a 20% discount. The charge for an all-day parking permit for a period of 10 weeks (Thursday or Saturday only) 6am to 6pm is £48.00 and £96.00 for a period of 10 weeks (Thursday and Saturday combined) 6am to 6pm.

An all-day permit allows parking, subject to car parking space availability, at either of the following Council owned car parks:

- Beehive Lane Multi-Storey - Levels 2 to 6 only
- Southfield's Extension - Any area

A daily permit is available from the Council for parking in Council owned car parks. The charge for a daily permit is £4.56. An all-day permit allows parking, subject to car parking space availability, at the same council owned car parks for the same period of time as a partial season ticket.

Details of the Market Traders scheme can be found on the Council's web site, using the link below:

www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/partialseasonticketformarkettrad

The scheme is an extension of the 10 week scheme that is offered to local businesses and retailers. Following consultation with Market Traders the scheme was amended to allow credits for holidays and market closures.

- 5.1 The Panel considers the scheme to have merits, while acknowledging there is little take up, one trader at the current time. The Panel considered the reason for this and how to encourage an increase to that number.
- 5.2 The Panel is satisfied that officers continue to promote the scheme through regular meetings with the Market Trader's Federation and wider traders, and details are included in letters and newsletters circulated during the year, as well as on the Council's website. Details of the scheme are also provided to all new traders.
- 5.3 Officers considered 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 and others 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.

CONCLUSION NOT REQUIRING FURTHER ACTION:

The Panel has no further comments to make on the scheme for providing parking permits for Market Traders.

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

6. CAR PARKING PROMOTIONS AND CHARGES

The Panel considered the issue of charging at the Council's car parks. In particular the Panel considered the overall level of charging and whether targeted promotions could be used to manage demand and encourage visitors to Loughborough.

CAR PARKING PROMOTIONS

The Panel had received evidence that while the town centre car parks were well used at specific times of the week, almost to capacity most Thursdays and Saturdays¹⁴, there were other times of the week when they were under utilised. Both the BID and Council officers were keen to explore ways to promote the car parks at such times.

- 6.1 The Panel received details of current schemes the Council ran in conjunction with the BID, for 'Free Sunday' parking during the summer and during the build up to Christmas, together with 'Fabulous Fridays' with free parking after 3.00pm. The Panel also considered other proposals for promotions in Loughborough car parks as follows:

Free Parking after 3.00 pm Monday to Friday
Free Parking after 6.00 pm every day
Free Parking on Sundays
Two hours free parking everywhere every day

- 6.2 At the request of the Panel, officers submitted data with indicative costs related to proposed promotions¹⁵, together with details of usage at Beehive Lane and Granby Street car parks March to September 2014, including the 'Free Sunday' scheme¹⁶. The data clearly show an increase in car park usage at Beehive Lane during days when an event is being held in the town, officers considered that the fall in usage at Granby Street is due to the car park being full to capacity and there was no turnover of cars.
- 6.3 In respect of attracting people to the town and using the car parks, there are three strands to local tourism, the Cultural heritage, including the Great Central Railway, Charnwood as a rural retreat and Loughborough as a main market town. All of which, if well promoted would add value to the area.
- 6.4 The BID made reference to providing discounted parking tickets for local shops to issue to their customers. Members of the Street Management team have investigated possible methods to achieve this with minimum costs to the retailer, have presented these to the BID and are available for them to take advantage of.

¹⁴ Appendix 11 – Car Parking Data

¹⁵ Appendix 8 – Suggested charges & tariffs, costings and revenue implications

¹⁶ Appendix 3 – Free Sunday Comparisons at Beehive Lane and Granby Street Car Parks

- 6.5 A new Electric Charge point has been installed in 2014 within Beehive Lane Car Park. Further promotional work will be undertaken for this.

The Panel found that although the BID believed that car parking prices were a barrier to use, the public survey found no such evidence and the Panel concluded that parking fees were set at a fair rate and perceived to be good value in comparison to Nottingham, Derby and Leicester.

The Panel accepted evidence that there are proven benefits to using promotions as a means to encourage people to visit the town and that the ability of retailers to exploit these promotions would be made easier if they were fixed rather than ad hoc and sporadic.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS NOT REQUIRING FURTHER ACTION

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. 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.
REASON: 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.
2. 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.
REASON: 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.

CAR PARKING CHARGES

Income raised from car parking is not ring fenced. The BID requested more¹⁷ reinvestment to economic growth, including car parking around an overall reduction in charges and promoting greater use in periods of low demand. This

¹⁷ Appendix 4 – Action Notes 2nd June 2014

request should be weighed against the results of the public survey, where over 75% of respondents considered the charges to be reasonable.

The details of all the current charges are fully outlined on the Council's web site and can be accessed at <http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/carparklocations>

The Parking Charges are reviewed on a 3 year cycle in line with the Loughborough Town Centre Parking Strategy. The reviews are undertaken by the Head of Regulatory Services in consultation with the Lead Member for Regulatory Services and are approved via a Delegated Decision. As part of this process all the charges are benchmarked against 18 other Local Authorities.

6.6. Officers submitted information to the Panel as follows:

- Car parking questionnaires had been circulated to local businesses, residents and visitors during 2013 in Anstey and Quorn. Following the consultation, changes were made to waiting limits, with the introduction of a number of short stay spaces, with a two hour waiting limit.
- Car parking charges are reviewed every three years and benchmarked against similar authorities.
- No charge is made in in district car parks, to assist the economy in those areas.

6.7. Loughborough BID submitted comments as follows:

- It is considered that chargers for two hours plus were too high, when compared to larger town centres with a greater draw of national shops and provide a more level playing field with out of town retail parks.
- The Council's budget for 2013/14 showed a surplus of income over cost of approximately £250,000. That money could be used to reduce charges or introduce parking incentives at times of low demand, invest in parking improvements or invest directly in the town.

6.8. The evidence from environmental groups suggested that the pay structure could be dependent on car emissions, to encourage the use of fuel efficient vehicles.

6.9. Public views, from the survey were given as follows:

- There is no support for introducing charging by parish/town councils although some options for changes to waiting time had been identified.
- Over three-quarters of respondents thought the level of charges to be reasonable.

- Parking can be more expensive on Sunday than during the week for short stay parking.

6.10. Members of the Panel considered the use of season ticket charges and compared them to other similar authorities.¹⁸

6.11 The Panel considered a range of issues in relation to the objectives the charging regime is seeking to achieve:

- Charnwood Borough Council - income from car parking is not ring-fenced
- The BID suggested that the Council should be aspirational and have a policy to encourage people into the town centre.
- Current parking policies were set in a different age, driven by a desire to keep cars out of town. While supporting sustainable transport the BID had to acknowledge the convenience of cars, therefore convenient parking was pivotal to a successful town centre.
- There was a perception that parking enforcement was overzealous and motivated by income generation.
- Sustainable transport options - Focus on short stay to access services in towns and villages, but be flexible, time periods could vary at different sites.
- Bus fares for two people are more expensive than parking charges so people are not encouraged to use sustainable transport.

6.12 The Panel concluded that there was insufficient evidence to justify changing the overall level of charging. In particular charges were not acting as a barrier to the use of car parks. There was no wish by Parish and Town Councils to introduce parking charges in car parks outside Loughborough.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS NOT REQUIRING FURTHER ACTION

CONCLUSIONS NOT REQUIRING FURTHER ACTION

1. Car parking fees overall were considered to be a fair rate and the Panel had no recommendations in respect of pricing.
REASON: The Panel had no evidence of pricing being a barrier for use.
2. The Panel considered the proposal that the income received from car parking be ring fenced and be used solely for developing and supporting car parking provision across the Borough. The Panel concluded that along with other forms of income, car parking revenue contributed to the provision of a range of key local services and this should continue.

¹⁸ Appendix 4 – Meeting Action Notes 4th August 2014

REASON: The Panel considered that the Borough Council had financial pressures and car parking income should be included in the General Fund rather than be spent solely on parking provision, to the detriment of other services.

3. The Panel considered the proposal that the income received from car parking be ring fenced and be used solely for developing and supporting car parking provision across the Borough. The Panel concluded that along with other forms of income, car parking revenue contributed to the provision of a range of key local services and this should continue.

REASON: The Borough Council had financial pressures and could not recommend ring fencing of car parking income to the detriment of other services. Any request for additional revenue or capital expenditure for car parking should be considered on the merits of the business case.

7. SECTION 106 CONTRIBUTIONS

The Panel received evidence that capacity issues were arising at car parks in villages and service centres as new housing developments were built in an area and the Panel wished to investigate how Section 106 contributions could be used to mitigate the issue.

The tension between supporting the vitality of town centres and seeking to minimise travel by private car is recognised within the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan, Leicestershire Local Transport Plan and within the Draft Charnwood Core Strategy. The approach in the Core Strategy supports major new car parking provision to promote the vitality of Loughborough Town Centre whilst also seeking to provide genuine choice to walk, cycle or use public transport.

Planning policy and guidance contained in the Draft Core Strategy and the Loughborough Town Centre Master Plan provides a supportive framework for considering a development proposal for a major new car park in Loughborough Town Centre. Whilst planning policy can provide a framework in which to shape development proposals, the successful delivery of a major car park would be dependent upon public and/ or private parties providing investment, and necessary project management. Similar policies could be developed for other service centres, for example through Neighbourhood Plans, where there was evidence that they were required.

- 7.1 Officers made reference to the rules governing Section 106 contributions, stating that contributions could not be sought to address existing problems, but had to mitigate the impact of a new development. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations set out the following three tests for determining whether Section 106 contributions would be appropriate:

- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
- directly related to the development
- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

- 7.2 It could be possible to seek contributions to improve car parking, alongside improvements to bus/cycle/walking routes, to retain the vitality and viability of a district centre, in the context that the car park was already at capacity and the development would increase that capacity.

- 7.3 The key to enabling the use of Section 106 contributions is to ensure there are relevant policies based on appropriate evidence in place. The Panel had discussed the matter in detail and were strongly minded that developments had an impact on parking in service centres. Evidence from the public survey and responses from Town and Parish Councils indicated issues with parking, especially in villages and service centres. Specific reference was made to Sileby and the car park, originally provided for shoppers being used for long term parking by commuters, using the station, thus leaving insufficient parking during the day for shoppers to the extent it was affecting local traders.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS NOT REQUIRING FURTHER ACTION

RECOMMENDATION:

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 car parking 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.

8. SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT OPTIONS

(i) USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The focus of the Panel is around car parking, however, members of the Panel are aware of work being undertaken by the Borough and County Council and partner agencies to encourage the use of sustainable transport. As part of its work, the Panel considered options to encourage use of public transport and how it could contribute towards providing sustainable transport options as an alternative to car use.

Representatives from Action for a Better Charnwood and Transition Loughborough provided evidence in respect of sustainable transport, including the use of buses. Specific reference was made to:

- Mini park and rides to link villages to transport networks
- Developments on the outskirts of villages having a regular service into village centres
- Dial a ride schemes and community transport (possibly volunteers)
- Easily available information in respect of routes and timetables, for those without access to the internet
- Services through villages to Loughborough need to be frequent, route clear, drop off close to the retail centre and be reliable in terms of keeping to the timetable
- Strong concerns were expressed by some ABC members in respect of the re-routing of buses through the centre of Loughborough as part of the Inner Relief Road
- As Soar Valley villages expand with further developments, there is a question as to how these areas are linked to the main bus services, with a mini park and ride or cycle parking being suggested
- New housing developments should have bus provision designed in them, with new housing being within a five minute walk of bus routes.

8.1 Bus Travel Network – Charnwood Borough Council staff are able to join the network and claim discounts on buses and assistance buying cycles. This scheme is promoted further in the Staff Travel Plan.

8.2 As part of section 106 agreements associated with planning permissions, household travel packs are distributed on new developments and include local bus passes. These were welcomed by the Panel but there was concern about the effectiveness of such schemes and the lack of evidence that a sustained impact on travel behaviour had been secured.

8.3 It was reported that bus fares for two people can be more expensive than parking charges, therefore people are not encouraged to use sustainable transport.

- 8.4. The Panel is supportive of the work being undertaken to promote the use of sustainable transport options.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS NOT REQUIRING FURTHER ACTION

RECOMMENDATIONS:

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 and social media also be used for this purpose.

REASON: 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. That officers work with Leicestershire County Council to further develop mechanisms for measuring the impact of this work.

REASON: To ensure that the effectiveness of the work was known when making future decisions about these schemes.

(ii) SUPPORT FOR CYCLISTS

Representatives from Action for a Better Charnwood and Transition Loughborough provided evidence in respect of sustainable transport, including cycling. Reference was made to the secure cycle park at Beehive Lane Car Park that had limited access and the need to provide further secure cycle parking. Transition Loughborough consider there is insufficient cycle parking facilities in Loughborough and made specific reference to outside the cinema and in Market Street, commenting that some of the stands had been incorrectly erected and therefore fewer cycles than intended could be secured to them, while other bike stands were hardly ever used, due to the quiet areas in which they were situated, cyclists did not feel they were secure enough to leave their cycles.

- 8.5 Reference was also made to the need for cycle parking facilities in village centres, to allow residents to cycle to bus stops from developments on the edge of villages, store their cycle and continue their onward journey by bus.
- 8.6 Officers made reference to Borough and County Council policies supporting sustainable transport through Climate Local. Policy 2.5 included reference to the Staff Travel Plan¹⁹, which made reference to a Bike to Work scheme and Dr Bike initiatives to support cyclists in maintaining their cycles.

¹⁹ Background paper ? – Staff Travel Plan

- 8.7 The Panel is unable to find any evidence of the need to expand current facilities, despite anecdotal evidence given to Panel members, indeed the Panel considers there are spaces in the town that do not appear to be used to capacity. A local cycling group was asked to provide evidence of further need, but the Panel did not receive a response.
- 8.8 Officers reported that there is evidence from the 'Choose How you Move' campaign, at Leicestershire County Council, that the number of cyclists are increasing in the area and the County Council has assessed the need for cycling facilities as part of the Inner Relief Road scheme, proposals for current cycle facilities had been developed as part of that scheme and an estimated 38 new cycle stands would be erected as part of the inner relief road scheme.
- 8.9 The Panel concluded that on the evidence they had received, there is sufficient cycle parking provision in the town.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS NOT REQUIRING FURTHER ACTION

CONCLUSION NOT REQUIRING FURTHER ACTION: 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.

(iii) CAR SHARING SCHEMES

'When two or more people share a car and travel together, each person can make substantial savings on their journey'²⁰.

- 8.10 Representatives from Action for a Better Charnwood and Transition Loughborough provided evidence in respect of sustainable transport, including car sharing. Specific reference was made to the Travel West website²¹, which provides details of sustainable transport, including a car sharing scheme. It is the view of Action for a Better Charnwood that the effectiveness of such schemes should be judged against environmental and social objectives as well as economic ones.
- 8.11 Officers made reference to the Borough Council policies and its commitment to sustainable transport through Climate Local²²:
- Policy 2.5 referred to commitment to reduce the impact of car use associated with work and commuting at Charnwood Borough Council.

²⁰ Travel West website - <http://www.travelwest.info/>

²¹ Travel West website - <http://www.travelwest.info/>

²² Background paper ? – Climate Local

- Policy 2.6 Commitment to encourage active and sustainable travel.
- Core Strategy²³ – CS17 – Sustainable travel by 2020
- LCC Local Sustainable Transport Fund²⁴ – approved bid June 2012.

8.12 There is a staff car sharing scheme for Borough Council officers, as part of the Sustainable Staff Travel Plan²⁵. Officers stated that further promotion of that scheme could be included as part of the next travel survey.

8.13 The Panel was advised of a reward scheme operated by Leicestershire County Council as part of its Choose How You Move scheme, for those who travelled in a sustainable way, to promote sustainable transport, 'Log your miles and earn rewards with the LeicesterShire Sustainable Travel Challenge!'²⁶

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS NOT REQUIRING FURTHER ACTION

RECOMMENDATIONS:

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.

²³ Background paper ? Core Strategy

²⁴ Background paper ? LCC Local Sustainable Transport Fund

²⁵ Background paper ? Staff Travel Plan

²⁶ <http://www.leics.gov.uk/pressrelease.htm?id=298257>

9. OPERATIONAL ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED BY OFFICERS AND OTHER AGENCIES

The evidence collected by the Panel, particularly the surveys it undertook, highlighted a number of operational details, which will be referred to officers or other agencies to address. Some of these issues are already being dealt with and the Panel received assurances during its meetings that others would be addressed.

At an initial meeting of the Panel, it was agreed that the views of the car park users were an essential part of obtaining evidence for the Panel's consideration. To that end, questions for a survey were agreed and four members of the Panel spoke to users of the Beehive Lane, Granby Street and Southfields Road Car Parks on the mornings of Thursday, 29th May and Saturday 7th and 14th June 2014.²⁷

A breakdown of the percentage of car park users experiencing difficulties, as reported in the survey is as follows:

Beehive Lane – 21%

Granby Street -68%

Southfields Road – 28%

Melton Road, Syston – 80% (there was a significantly smaller number of responses)

9.1 Following consideration of the responses to the public survey, in which a third of respondents reported a difficulty in a Loughborough car park, issues outside the scope of the panel were referred to officers who have or are making the following operational changes and improvements to the quality of service:

- Signage (directions to the lifts at the Woodgate entrance of Beehive car park). Lifts are marked at Beehive Lane but additional signage in each stairwell can be installed.
- Introduce Meters that give change at all car parks. Pay on Exit machines take coins and notes and give change. These also take chip and pin card payments.
- Pay and Display machines could be replaced at an estimated cost of £5,000 for each machine. There would be increased on-going operational and maintenance costs for each machine dealing with change issues. Street Management is aware of these issues and will be looking to update machines when replacements are required.
- Broken meters and no contact with customer services. Helpline contact numbers are displayed in every car park and on the machines. The 'Pay

²⁷ Appendix 6 – Public Survey

on Exit' car parks have helplines which go directly through to wardens during working hours and to the CCTV control room out of hours. There were some issues with the helpline at Granby Street just after its opening – these issues have now been resolved with the supplier. Regular meetings with CCTV are undertaken to ensure that any problems are identified and minimised as much as possible. The current pay and display machines are very robust and don't have many issues. Contact details are provided on the signs, but can also be provided on machines as required.

- Improved flow around Granby Street, specifically the disabled parking area. Street Management is aware there is an issue as the car park is full almost daily and can cause circulation flow problems. A full sign has been ordered and will be installed shortly. This should inform drivers the car park is full and reduce the numbers queuing. Consideration is being given to additional line marking and keep clear signage to help maintain the circulation routes
- Facilities for people with disabilities. The provision of spaces is based on national guidelines for the provision of spaces for the disabled.
- Reference was made to the difficulties experienced at the Southfields Road car park, for users wishing to park overnight. There was a rate up to midnight and the next day's rate began at 7.00am, this had led to a number of overnight users receiving parking tickets. This would be addressed through changes to the software used in the machines.
- Signage to car parks in Loughborough, including the Council offices car park at weekends, be included as part of the signage produced following the completion of the Loughborough Inner Relief Road.

The Panel was also provided with details of recent surveys undertaken in Anstey and Quorn car parks, together with officer responses and changes made, to address issues raised were submitted to the Panel.

9.2 LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The survey of residents groups in Loughborough identified teething problems with the administration of on-street parking, detailed below. These fell outside the remit of the Panel but have been fed back to Leicestershire County Council.

- The resident's preferential parking scheme in the Storer Road area is not logical. It should be from 8.00am to 8.00pm to prevent multi-parking by students after 5.00pm (one hour allowed with a 6.00pm limit).

- The restrictions do not cover June to September, when there is still lots of car parking. June is particularly difficult, as all the student cars are here and can park without control.

9.3 LANDLORD SERVICES

The survey of parish and town councils identified an issue with the car parks at Arnold Smith House and Beresford Court in Shepshed which were in need of repair. A request was therefore made, by the Town Council, for these car parking areas to be repaired up to a safe standard and these requests have been forwarded to the Borough Council's Landlord Services to arrange an inspection.

CONCLUSIONS NOT REQUIRING FURTHER ACTION

Following comments submitted as part of the Panel's surveys, 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.

APPENDICES

1	Car Parking Season Ticket Charges in Similar Authorities
2	Car Parks Managed by Charnwood Borough Council, (including the number of parking spaces)
3	Free Sunday Comparisons – Beehive Lane and Granby Street
4	Meeting Action Notes
5	Other Councils' Parking Charges
6	Public Survey Results
7	Resident Groups Survey Results
8	Suggested Charges & tariffs, costings and revenue implications
9	Survey Results – overview summary
10	Town and Parish Council Survey Results
11	Car Parking capacity data

BACKGROUND PAPERS REFERRED TO IN THE REPORT

1	Re-think Parking on the High Street Association of Town and City Management (ATCM) Report
2	Charnwood Borough Council Climate Local Report
3	Charnwood Borough Council Core Strategy
4	Grimsby Report
5	LeicesterShire Sustainable Travel Challenge
6	Leicestershire Local Transport Plan
7	Loughborough Town Centre Parking Study
8	National Government Report – Operational Guidance to Local Authorities: Parking Policy and Enforcement
9	Portas Review
10	Smarter Travel for Business Fund Bid
11	Staff Travel Plan