

## TOWN CENTRE PARKING REVIEW UPDATE

<b>Cabinet</b>	28 April 2022
<b>Report Author</b>	Penny Button, Director of Neighbourhoods
<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	Cllr David Saunders, Cabinet Member for Finance
<b>Status</b>	For Decision
<b>Classification:</b>	Unrestricted
<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes
<b>Reasons for Key</b>	Significant effect on communities
<b>Previously Considered by</b>	Council - 12 January 2022
<b>Ward:</b>	All Wards

### **Executive Summary:**

At Council on 12 January 2022 it was proposed that the growth of town centre residential developments throughout the District are putting pressure on residential and visitor parking, to the detriment of both residents and visitors. Thanet District Council recognises these challenges and proposed to undertake a District wide impact assessment of increased pressures on both on and off street parking in our town centres arising from the expansion of town centre residential development, taking into account relevant factors such as access to electric vehicle charging, public transport links, cycle storage and pedestrian safety (especially at night), in order to develop solutions that support the community, recognising the need for some groups to have access to safe personal transport due to work conditions or disadvantage.

### **Recommendation(s):**

That Cabinet adopt recommendation 3.1 and agree to undertake a well evidenced strategic review of parking across the district and then develop a district wide parking strategy.

### **Corporate Implications**

#### **Financial and Value for Money**

A review of parking strategy will allow for a review of all aspects of parking, including fees. The framework for the setting of fees and charges for car parking is set out in Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Fundamentally, the Act stipulates that the parking charges, either on-street or off-street cannot be set with the sole purpose of raising revenue. As such, any

review should not be undertaken with the intention or objective of generating additional income.

Any costs associated with this review can be contained within existing resources.

## **Legal**

Whilst there is no legal implications to carrying out a review of parking within the District any strategy or policy emerging from the review will need to comply with relevant legislation. Any proposals will also need to be considered in line with the Traffic Management Act 2004 and relevant regulations to ensure that they are legally compliant and enforceable.

## **Risk Management**

The main risk to this project is failure to project manage correctly which will allow the review to drift. This will be mitigated by using an external consultant to undertake the work ensuring it is a stand alone piece of work. This mitigation should reduce the likelihood of this occurring.

## **Corporate**

The review of parking will meet all three of the Corporate objectives of Growth, Environment and Communities. This will be achieved by reviewing provision, need and location to ensure that the needs of business, residents, visitors and the environment are balanced.

## **Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty**

Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Protected characteristics: age, sex, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.

This report relates to the following aim of the equality duty: -

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- To foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

## **Corporate Priorities**

This report relates to the following corporate priorities: -

- Growth
- Environment
- Communities

## **1.0 Introduction and Background**

- 1.1 At Council on 12 January 2022 it was proposed that the growth of town centre residential developments throughout the District are putting pressure on residential and visitor parking, to the detriment of both residents and visitors.
- 1.2 Whilst it is within the Local Plan, in accordance with National Policy and consistent with climate change targets, that parking facilities will not be required or expected for residential development planning applications within town centres, this does not take into account the needs of workers, especially key workers, or residents with disabilities, who genuinely need access to their own transport. Few of those most affected are in a position to pay for resident parking schemes or annual season tickets for car parks. The result has been increased pressure on what limited parking is available in the streets surrounding our town centres and beyond.
- 1.3 Thanet District Council recognises these challenges and commits to undertake a District wide impact assessment of increased pressures on both on and off street parking in our town centres arising from the expansion of town centre residential development, taking into account relevant factors such as access to electric vehicle charging, public transport links, cycle storage and pedestrian safety (especially at night), in consultation with KCC, ward councillors, other stakeholders (e.g. public transport providers) and the public, in order to develop solutions that support the community, recognising the need for some groups to have access to safe personal transport due to work conditions or disadvantage.
- 1.4 This motion was debated and following the debate was forwarded to Cabinet.

## **2.0 The Current Situation**

- 2.1 Thanet District Council does not currently have a formal parking strategy and with the existing policy due to expire shortly and the interest in all aspects of parking restrictions across the District this motion is an ideal opportunity to expand the scope to include a district wide review. In recent months there have been various aspects of parking raised at council meetings including disabled parking arrangements. The review should be a well evidenced strategic review of parking across the district which will then lead to the development of a district wide parking strategy.
- 2.2 A review will include engagement activities with key stakeholders including the local community, service users, Joint Transportation Board and councillors. This will ensure that those who are interested in the parking strategy development and the impact it will have on their town have the opportunity to find out and where possible influence the process.
- 2.3 A strategy should not only address the motion but also support economic growth and recovery, identify parking pressure and prioritise opportunities, flex between the

differing seasonal, day and night economies as well as align with climate change commitment, Thanet Local Plan and Government legislation and policy changes.

### **3.0 Options**

- 3.1 Agree to undertake a well evidenced strategic review of parking across the district and then develop a district wide parking strategy.
- 3.2 Reject the motion and proposal for a well evidenced strategic review of parking across the district and then develop a district wide parking strategy.
- 3.3 Agree to undertake a review based on the motion proposed.

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Reporting to: Gavin Waite (Corporate Director - Communities)

#### **Corporate Consultation**

**Finance:** Chris Blundell (Director of Finance)

**Legal:** Estelle Culligan (Director of Law and Democracy)