

TITLE	Borough-wide Parking Management Plan
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11 March 2019
WARD	None Specific;
DIRECTOR	Director of Locality and Customer Services - Sarah Hollamby

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

An effective Parking Management Plan (PMP) would be expected to result in a variety of benefits to all members of the community through;

- improvements to road safety as a result of less antisocial and hazardous parking;
- improved access to shops and services due to higher turnover of available spaces;
- reduced congestion, air/noise pollution & fuel costs due to less circulation for parking spaces;
- improved health & wellbeing from participation in active travel modes; and
- improved public transport reliability due to less congestion caused by parking obstruction

There are also benefits for businesses and the local economy from increased availability of parking spaces in local town centres, provision and enforcement of service loading bays that improves business efficiency and reduced congestion can reduce business costs.

RECOMMENDATION

That Members support the development of a Borough-wide Parking Management Plan and contribute the views, concerns and opinions of their ward electorate to enable the scope of the strategy to be determined.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The increasing number, variety and complexity of parking-related problems/issues being identified across the Borough, present a significant challenge to the Council's service delivery and the realisation of its 21C ambitions.

Wokingham has one of the highest car ownership rates of any English local authority and its parking management strategy and associated policies and procedures, need to have regard for the potential level of vehicle ownership/use and the availability of high quality alternative means of transport.

Growing car ownership and use, increased demand for on-street restrictions by residents and members, the introduction of CPE and changes to our local road network have resulted in an increase in the volume and nature of requests, demands and complaints to the Council regarding parking management issues. These requests form a substantial and growing proportion of the Council's transportation service delivery and are clearly becoming an increasingly higher profile concern for residents and businesses.

The issues being raised and the Council's current approach to addressing them presents a confusing parking landscape to customers, which leads to problems such as congestion on key routes and at commercial centres, dissatisfaction with enforcement protocols, overspill at some car parks and spare capacity in others, impacts upon business viability and detriment to residential street quality.

Historically, most of these issues have been managed separately within the Council but there is now an obvious need to address parking management more holistically to overcome these challenges, through the introduction of a borough-wide strategy. This report presents an opportunity for members to determine the scope of issues that need to be addressed in such a strategy for further consideration by the end of the year.

Background

Wokingham as a borough is undergoing a significant road transport transformation, with regeneration of the town centre itself planting seeds of anticipation and optimism for continued economic growth. To respond to that optimism, capitalise on the opportunity for growth across the Borough and deal with the transportation challenges it presents the Council needs to put in place a road network and infrastructure that is responsive, sustainable and fit for purpose.

The Council's plans for economic growth and sustainability rely upon its delivery of a progressive programme of parking control measures that will help it support the local economy and these measures will need to focus on keeping its road network, particularly in core areas and close to rail, bus and major road corridors, free from congestion and the detrimental effects of traffic and pollution.

Effective parking management is integral to these objectives and a robust parking management strategy enables the Council to strike the right between demands for accessibility by private car, the needs of Wokingham's growing and changing population, the quality of its residential communities and the economic and operational opportunities presented by new technology.

Wokingham Borough Council does not have a current Parking Management Plan. The Council adopted its previous Parking Management Strategy in 2011, drawing together key issues, recommendations and actions which were used to generate Statements of Intent which were assigned 'short', 'medium' and 'long' term timescales.

The resulting Action Plan covered 28 areas and 45 Statements of Intent and whilst there have been subsequent intentions to undertake a borough-wide review, with the aim of establishing parking policies and management procedures, these have been overtaken by decisions to address immediate parking issues, rather than develop a longer term plan with an agreed set of procedural policies and an implementation plan.

As a consequence, the continued growth in car ownership and use, increased demand for on-street parking restrictions by residents and members, the absence of a comprehensive parking plan for managing off-street availability and pricing in the context of on-street impacts, the introduction of CPE and changes to our local road network have all contributed to a confusing parking landscape for our customers.

This in turn has had a major impact on the Council's resources for managing the increased number of requests, demands and complaints to the Council regarding parking management issues, the associated problems of congestion and road safety on key routes, dissatisfaction with enforcement protocols, and overspill at some car parks and spare capacity in others.

The purpose of a Borough-wide Parking Management Plan would therefore be to clearly define the Council's vision for parking management, in support of the regeneration and economic development of Wokingham as a Borough.

The Plan should form a statement of the Council's understanding of the issues affecting residents and businesses; show its commitment to the future management of demand and supply, against a backdrop of broader transportation and mobility needs, rapidly

developing technology and set out a strategy for meeting our wider aspirations for the Borough as a connected network of places and localities.

Analysis of Issues

WBC Parking Management Responsibility

The Council currently has responsibility for managing parking provision in three forms;

- **On-street parking.** This is parking within the public highway with enforcement now undertaken by Wokingham Borough Council. On-street parking can include free parking places, disabled parking places, Residents' parking zones and paid-for parking (typically through pay and display);
- **Council off-street car parks.** These are provided by the Council and are for the use of the general public. Where charges apply these generally relate to the length of stay. Car parks can be both for short and long stays and includes our Park & Ride sites; and
- **Private off-street car parks.** These are privately owned and operated for use by a variety of users including the public, residents and employees. The Council can influence these through planning controls.

The Committee's recommendations on the type and scale of issues affecting each of these forms of parking provision is sought.

Legislative Background

The **Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984** places a statutory duty upon all local highway authorities to make Traffic Regulation Orders in order to control traffic for road safety and movement and to manage on-street parking provision within their areas.

The **Traffic Management Act 2004** places a network management duty upon Wokingham Borough Council to keep traffic flowing, and to co-operate with other authorities to the same end. Local authorities have to exercise all of their functions that have an impact on traffic in a more co-ordinated way. This Act places a strong emphasis on the local authority taking responsibility for parking enforcement through the development and implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement.

Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 is the legal framework that enables Wokingham to undertake Civil Parking Enforcement in order to help manage the issues of indiscriminate and illegal parking. The Act also places a duty on the Council to manage the flow and safety of traffic efficiently.

The Committee's recommendations for matters to be considered may cover;

1. On-street Parking

- Resident Parking
- Developer Parking Standards
- Disabled Parking
- Footway Parking & Obstruction
- Bicycle/Motorcycle Parking

- Other matters of relevance to members

2. Off-Street Parking Issues

- Tariffs & Charges
- Permits/Concessions
- Technology & Systems – such a ticket machines, barriers
- Disabled Parking provision
- Bicycle/Motorcycle Parking provision
- Other matters of relevance to members

3. Parking Enforcement Issues

- Enforcement protocols
- Penalty charge procedures
- The scale of enforcement activity
- Light-touch enforcement approaches to Obstruction & Anti-social Parking
- Other matters of relevance to members

HOW TO RESPOND

Members are invited to submit their views and those of constituents to the Council's Traffic Management, Parking & Road Safety Team Manager through the traffic.management@wokingham.gov.uk email inbox.

The opportunity to comment will remain open until 31st March 2019, following which a summary of the comments received and outline of the key issues to be addressed will be sent to all Committee members. A draft strategy document will be developed by officers thereafter, with a view to presenting it to the Committee in the Autumn.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council continues to face severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of reductions to public sector funding and growing pressures in our statutory services. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions of approximately £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Nil (Nil)	n/a	n/a
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£10,000 (n/a)	Yes	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Nil	n/a	n/a

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
A nominal sum of £10,000 has been estimated as the cost of developing a Borough-wide Parking Management Strategy, based on responses to the scoping of such a strategy received from members.

Cross-Council Implications
N/A

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2
N/A

List of Background Papers
None at this stage

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