

SUBJECT:	Car Park Strategy
RELEVANT MEMBER:	Councillor Luisa Sullivan
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Chris Marchant, Head of Environment
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WARD/S AFFECTED	All South Bucks

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek agreement to the car park strategy for the District of South Bucks in order to commence formal consultation. This Strategy was also considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29 January 2019.

Recommendations to Cabinet

- 1. Introduce a five year car park strategy that sets out the Council's aim and objectives, along with associated parking operations for the District.**
- 2. That subject to Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet, approving the strategy, the Head of Environment be authorised to commence formal consultation.**
- 3. That following consultation the Head of Environment in consultation with the Portfolio holder be authorised to consider the comments from the consultation and implement the strategy for the District of South Bucks with or without modifications as considered appropriate.**

2. Reason for Recommendations

- 2.1 An effective parking strategy will help to further a wide range of objectives such as, economic vitality of South Bucks Towns and Villages.

3. Content of Report

Strategy

- 3.1 Introducing a car park strategy enables us to openly set out our aims in respect of off street parking in South Bucks, along with the action we propose to take to ensure the car parks meet the needs of the local community. Consultation also enables us to engage with customers and receive feedback to ensure the final document is agreeable to the majority.
- 3.2 The proposed strategy (attached at Appendix A), sets out SBDC's objectives for car parking in the District. This includes supply and demand, car park

maintenance; parking charges/season tickets in relation to how the charges are set, and parking for specialists groups etc.

- 3.3 The car park strategy does not set out specific charges, nor will the consultation to implement the strategy invite detailed feedback in this regard. This is because the Council follows the legal process for amending the Off Street Parking Places Order i.e. fees and charges, which includes a statutory consultation.
- 3.4 The strategy does however show that we recognise our customers and are able to set objectives that are appropriate, relevant, and beneficial to the residents and local businesses in the area.
- 3.5 In addition, the strategy sets out management of the car parks, along with the enforcement action taken to ensure the parking regulations are adhered to.
- 3.6 To enable customers to have a better understanding of the legalities to introduce/amend parking restrictions, an overview of the legal process has been provided.
- 3.7 Parking is a sensitive issue, particularly the enforcement side. A key element to reduce any misconceptions and promote a fair and consistent approach for all is transparency. This is a key priority for the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)

Parking Report

- 3.8 Currently, there is no mandatory requirement for local authorities to produce an annual parking report, although it is good practise to have one in place. The Operational Guidance for parking enforcement suggests as such.
- 3.9 SBDC publishes a car parking report on a yearly basis. The report provides statistical information in relation to parking fines for the year to which the report refers. This includes the number of appeals received in respect of parking fines, the number of fines cancelled due to an appeal, and debt recovery information. The report also provides current information in respect of car park provision including parking tariffs, season ticket prices etc.
- 3.10 The annual parking report, which is referenced in the strategy, provides the detail element of the parking provision. This removes the need for the strategy to be updated during the life of the document, should any changes occur on the car parks, and acknowledges DCLG's request for transparency.
- 3.11 The general period for publicising parking reports is six months after the financial year to which the performance statistics refer. Publishing the data at the same time each year enables true year on year comparisons.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 Consultation has taken place with Resources Policy and Advisory Group on 15/6/17 and Environment Policy and Advisory Group on 21/11/17. Both groups

approved the strategy in principle and supported public consultation on the proposals.

- 4.2 The delay with moving forward with the strategy is due to discussions around the option of a joint strategy with Chiltern District Council (CDC). Upon an agreement being reached that each district will have its own strategy work has taken place to align the stage that each strategy is at so the two can be consulted on at a similar time.
- 4.3 Following approval to proceed with a strategy consultation would commence with members of the public, Bucks County Council as the highway authority, Thames Valley Police, and the Parish Councils.

5. Options

The options submitted for consideration are:

- 5.1 Take the decision to not have a car park strategy.
- 5.2 Approve the strategy in its existing format and approve the recommendations listed in this report.
- 5.3 Approve the strategy in principle, but in a different format, so detail in respect of tariffs etc. are included in the one document. The downside to this option is that as changes occur, the strategy would become dated and regularly require updating.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Legal Implications

The purpose of the document is to clarify the Council's car parking policy and thereby reduce the risk of a challenge to future decisions regarding the car park estate.

6.2 Financial Implications

There are no known financial implications to introducing the strategy.

7. Links to Council Policy Objectives

- 7.1 SBDC's car parks contribute to the Council's medium term aim of planning for a thriving and sustainable South Bucks, with vibrant towns and villages.
- 7.2 This matter also contributes towards the Council's aim to deliver value for money services driven by customer and community needs.

8. Next Step

- 8.1 If the recommendations are agreed officers will commence consultation to implement the strategy

Background	None other than referred to in this report
Papers:	