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| <b>SUBJECT:</b>   | <b>Car Parking Survey Results</b>   |
| <b>REPORT OF:</b> | <b>Officer Management Team - Director of Services</b><br><b>Prepared by - Head of Environment</b> |

## 1. Purpose of Report

To update members on the results of the survey of car parking capacity for Beaconsfield and Gerrards Cross and to consider the procurement of any consequential design services

## 2. Links to Council Policy Objectives

- 2.1 To contribute to the Council's medium term aim of planning for a thriving and sustainable South Bucks, with vibrant towns and villages.
- 2.2 This matter also contributes to the Council's aim to deliver value for money services that are driven by customer and community needs.

## 3. Background

- 3.1 There is a need for the Council, as both landowner and planning authority, to understand the current and future car parking capacity requirements within the District, and to consider possible actions to address any potential shortfall in capacity.
- 3.2 Following the meeting of the Environment Policy Advisory Group on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2013, having considered the advice of the PAG, the Portfolio Holder agreed to recommend to Cabinet that approval be given to conduct a parking survey of Beaconsfield and Gerrards Cross at an estimated cost of £25,000. This request was approved by Cabinet on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2013.
- 3.3 The survey has been restricted to Beaconsfield New Town and Gerrards Cross as these are the areas where there is by far the greatest demand for car parking at present and the areas where demand is likely to increase in the future. There is a consultation currently in progress for separate proposals for Beaconsfield Old Town.
- 3.4 At the meeting of Environment Policy Advisory Group on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2013, having considered the advice of the PAG, the Portfolio Holder agreed to recommend to Cabinet that, if the survey showed that additional parking was needed, then an estimated £25,000 from general

reserves should be approved in order to appoint architects to undertake a feasibility and design study for the construction of an additional deck or decks on one or more of the Council's existing car parks and to seek the planners' views. The Portfolio Holder further agreed to recommend to Cabinet that the Director of Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, be authorised to procure such feasibility and design services.

- 3.5 On 12<sup>th</sup> September 2013 the Resources Policy Advisory Group also looked at this matter. Having considered the advice of the PAG, the Portfolio Holder agreed to recommend to Cabinet that approval be given to spend an estimated £25,000 on feasibility and design services, subject to the results of the survey being reported back to the PAG before any expenditure was incurred, and subject to the architects' subsequent proposals being reported back to the PAG at a later date.
- 3.6 On 19<sup>th</sup> November 2013 the Cabinet resolved that the Director of Services, in consultation with the Environment Portfolio Holder, be authorised to procure the required feasibility and design services at an estimated cost of £25,000.
- 3.7 Chiltern District Council has procured a contractor to assist with designing additional capacity for car parks in its area and your officers will arrange for SBDC to be named as a party who may wish to call off design services if necessary.

#### **4. Proposal/Discussion**

- 4.1 The car parking survey has been carried out by Yes Engineering Ltd. The company's full reports for Beaconsfield and Gerrards Cross are available in the Members' Room. The summaries and recommendations are attached as Appendix A and Appendix B respectively.
- 4.2 The reports show that "parking stress" already exists and will get worse. There are three possible responses to this which Members may wish to discuss:
  - Do nothing;
  - Seek to reduce demand by increasing prices and promoting alternative modes of transport;
  - Provide more off street car parking spaces.
- 4.3 If SBDC is to provide additional car parking spaces then a decision needs to be made on the numbers of spaces to be provided. To facilitate this decision the reports show figures for new spaces based on 70% capacity and 85% capacity, that is to say the amount of off street parking spaces used.

- 4.4 The Institute of Highways and Transportation recommends that controls should be set at a level “to keep demand at no more than about 85% of capacity”. (See section 2 of the reports.) Beyond 85% “parking stress” arises which leads to cars travelling round and round searching for a space which is environmentally damaging.
- 4.5 Members may choose a lower capacity to aim at, such as 70%. This would allow for seasonal variation such as the effect of Bekonscot model village in Beaconsfield which suffers from insufficient parking availability in the school holidays and Saturdays. Alternatively having additional car park capacity would allow Members to consider reducing charges e.g. for residents or for office and shop workers.
- 4.6 In November 2013 the Cabinet agreed in principle that a study should be carried out at an estimated cost of £25,000 to design possible solutions by expanding provision at one of more of the Council’s car park e.g. an extra deck at Station Road car park in Gerrards Cross or at Altons in Beaconsfield. Officers believe that we should now proceed with the design study.

**5. Resources, Risks and other implications**

- 5.1 The expenditure for the design work may be charged to capital if a new deck is actually built otherwise it will have to come from revenue balances.
- 5.2 If the design work is not carried out soon after the survey report is received, the Council will be at risk of failing to meet the anticipated demand for car parking space.
- 5.3 Any extension to one or more of the Council’s car parks will be subject to obtaining planning permission.

**6. Summary and Recommendation**

- 6.1 The Environment and Resources PAGs are asked to note the contents of this report.
- 6.2 Members of the PAGs are asked to advise their Portfolio Holder whether to recommend to Cabinet that a design study should now be carried out with a view to providing further off street car park spaces in the District.

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| <b>Background Papers:</b> | <b>“Beaconsfield Car Parking Capacity Survey - 2014 to 2033” by Yes Engineering Ltd</b><br><b>“Gerrards Cross Car Parking Capacity Survey - 2014 to 2033” by Yes Engineering Ltd</b> |