

Report For:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Cabinet 11 November 2019
Part:	Part 1 - Open

SUMMARY

Title of Report:	CABINET RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE IMPROVEMENT & REVIEW COMMISSION – PARKING TASK & FINISH GROUP
Cabinet Member: Officer Contact: Direct Dial: Email:	Councillor Mrs Julia Adey Peter Wright 01494 421841 Peter.wright@wycombe.gov.uk
Reason for the Decision:	The Commission seeks the approval of the Cabinet to the recommendations from the Parking Task and Finish Group, as agreed by the Improvement and Review Commission.
Proposed Decision:	To consider the recommendations of the Improvement & Review Commission in respect of Parking as featured below.
Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications	Risk: N/A Equalities: N/A Health & Safety: N/A
Consultees:	N/A
Options:	To consider the acceptance and endorsement, rejection or adaption of each of the Commission's Parking recommendations.
Background Papers:	N/A

Executive Summary

The Parking Task and Finish Group was set up by the Improvement and Review Commission on 24 January 2019 to consider parking capacity across the District, specifically the areas of High Wycombe, Princes Risborough, Marlow and Bourne End.

A total of 5 meetings were held; the first on 28 March then 10 April, 30 April, 15 May and 17 June.

Membership of the Group included:

Chairman of the Parking Task & Finish Group: Councillor Mrs L Clarke OBE

Vice-Chairman: Councillor A Collingwood

Other Members: Cllrs K Ahmed, A Hill, Mrs W Mallen, N Marshall, H McCarthy and P Turner

Relevant Cabinet Member (Environment) Cllr Mrs J Adey also attended meetings with the Interim Head of Regeneration and Investment, Peter Wright.

Officer contact: Catherine Whitehead (ext: 3980) catherine.whitehead@wycombe.gov.uk

The recommendations were considered by the Commission at its Wednesday 11 September 2019 meeting and it was agreed that they should be recommended onto the Cabinet Meeting of Monday 16 September 2019.

Detailed Report

1. To consider the recommendations of the Parking Task and Finish Group as agreed by the Improvement & Review Commission at its 11 September 2019 meeting as featured below.
2. The Parking Task & Finish Group was set up by the Improvement & Review Commission following discussions at its meetings on 24 January 2019 and 13 March.
3. The Task and Finish Group considered parking capacity, location, technology and planning issues relating to car parking across the district.
4. As a result the Task & Finish Group arrived at 16 recommendations for consideration, by both Improvement & Review and the Executive.
5. The recommendations were considered by the Commission at its Wednesday 11 September 2019 meeting and it was agreed that they should be recommended onto Cabinet in their entirety with no amendment to the Cabinet Meeting of Monday 16 September 2019.
6. These recommendations are featured below. Recommendations are of course open to any additions or deletions as agreed.
7. A total of five meetings were held, on 28 March, 10 April, 30 April, 15 May and 17 June. The following process was followed:

28 March – a scoping meeting took place to discuss the direction of the Parking TFG and which areas of focus could be considered.

10 April - further discussions were undertaken with members and officers, including the Parking Services Manager, Robin Evans.

30 April – information was received regarding the Park and Ride at the Handy Cross hub. Andy Clarke (Bucks CC) and Peter Cartwright (Chairman, LAF Transport Sub-Group) joined the group for discussions.

15 May – the group were joined by Melanie Williams (HWBIDCo), Charles Brocklehurst (Major Projects and Property Executive, WDC) and Ian Manktelow (Planning Policy, WDC) to receive information and discuss underutilised car parking and usage in the district. Recommendations were suggested.

17 June – External visitors, Mr Mike Rann and Mr William Knighton from Chiltern Railways and Andrew Norton from The Eden Centre attended to discuss commuter and

consumer parking. The group were also joined by Rosie Brake (Planning Policy Officer, WDC), who provided a presentation on the High Wycombe Transport Vision and Strategy. Further recommendations were suggested.

8. Relevant Cabinet Member (Environment) Cllr Mrs J Adey also attended meetings with the Interim Head of Regeneration and Investment, Peter Wright.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

That there be an agreed parking strategy.

Reason: To ensure that all car parks have the same sized car parking space, opening times, levels of cleanliness, provision of disabled and mother and child spaces. To improve the number of short stay spaces and consider the possibility of free parking for the first 30 minutes of any stay over all car parks.

Accepted: A parking strategy for the new unitary authority is being developed as part of the programme of work prior to vesting day.

Recommendation 2

That funding be provided for consultancy work to survey the usage of the Park and Ride.

Reason - Data was required to find out who was using the Park and Ride car park. Currently any member of the public could use the car park and it was suspected that a majority of users were not using the park and ride bus service.

Partially accepted: It is the case that it is difficult to assess usage in the Park and Ride currently due to the fact that the procurement of parking equipment has been delayed. A budget growth bid will be discussed by the unitary parking workstream and considered as part of the budget setting process for 2020/21.

Recommendation 3

That four buses be provided for the Park and Ride rather than three as suggested by Buckinghamshire County Council to run in conjunction with the trains to and from Birmingham/London.

Reason - BCC were currently reviewing options for the bus service to and from the Park and Ride. This was to reduce operational costs when Section 106 funding that helped subsidise the current route comes to an end. Four buses would provide a better service and help maintain the best route to and from High Wycombe town centre. This would also ensure the bus provision for the Park and Ride would run in conjunction with trains to and from Birmingham/London. Although the times have been amended they still are out of sync with the trains and takes no cognisance of the walking times to and from the platforms.

Not accepted: This is currently a matter for the County Council.

Recommendation 4

To ensure that the Park and Ride remains free for people parking and then using the bus service to and from the town centre in High Wycombe.

Reason - To encourage people to use the Park and Ride service.

Accepted: The Park and Ride service will remain free until the end of March 2020.

Recommendation 5

That the new barriers and payment system for the car park at the Park and Ride site be put in place as soon as possible.

Reason - So that charging for car park users that are not using the Parking and Ride service can be implemented.

Accepted: Procurement of the new barriers is currently underway.

Recommendation 6

Provide improved signage and information at the Park and Ride site regarding payment and tickets for the users of the bus service.

Reason - To provide users with the correct information and to ensure that they receive a ticket to enable free return travel.

Accepted: Signage will be updated as part of the equipment purchase and installation project.

Recommendation 7

That funding be providing for a report to be commissioned to provide information and data on the anticipated parking demand expected across the district in the future.

Reason - Due to housing requirements outlined in the Wycombe Local Plan and changing Government policy up-to-date data was required regarding future parking requirement in the District.

Partially accepted: A budget growth bid will be discussed by the unitary parking workstream and considered as part of the budget setting process for 2020/21.

Recommendation 8

To investigate the use of new technologies to help assess the usage of car parks.

Reason - New technologies would help to identify the amount and locality of users of car parks in the District. This would enable capacity requirements for car parking to be accurately measured.

Partially accepted: This will be fed into the development of the new parking strategy, and ultimately will be an issue for the new unitary authority.

Recommendation 9

That Dynamic Parking Management apps be utilised to help identify users such as local residents or blue badge holders to enable charging to be applied accordingly.

Reason - This would enable users to such as blue badge holders to access car parks with barriers and payment options be easier to manage.

Partially accepted: This will be fed into the development of the new parking strategy, and ultimately will be an issue for the new unitary authority.

Recommendation 10

That the electronic signs in High Wycombe providing information on parking availability be updated to include all major car parks and real-time information.

Reason - Not all of the major car parks in High Wycombe were included on the current parking information signs and the information regarding number of parking spaces available was not accurate.

Partially accepted: The upgrade of the parking information system in High Wycombe is not currently funded in the MTFP for the new unitary authority. Bids will need to be made for funding in subsequent financial years.

Recommendation 11

Issuing of on street parking permits should be limited for new build residential properties along with the instigation of greater control of pavement and grass verge parking.

(Suggested reason - new build properties in the town centre did not provide adequate parking capacity and was therefore causing issues with on street parking. Parking as a planning condition/policy would be difficult to enforce so limiting on street parking permits would be the best option to alleviate this problem.)

Not accepted: The only mechanism to limit parking permits for new build properties would be through the planning system. Many new build properties in the town centre are created through permitted development, and therefore there is no opportunity to control associated parking. For cases where permission is required, there are very few circumstances in which such a condition would be reasonable. If a development requires parking, and that parking cannot be accommodated, the expectation would be that the application would be refused. It would also fail the test of being enforceable. Further, the costs of monitoring and following up such permits would fall to the local planning authority at public expense.

The matter of controlling parking on pavements and verges is a matter for the County Council.

Recommendation 12

That all surface car parks be stacked to provide additional parking capacity.

Reason - To increase car parking capacity.

Not accepted: the increase of parking capacity is a matter for the parking strategy, until this is complete and adopted there is no strategic case for carrying out large scale capital works.

In addition, for many car parks a deck would not be efficient – more space would be lost to the ramps than would be gained by the deck – and planning permission would be required, which, depending on the site circumstances, may not be appropriate.

Recommendation 13

That funding be provided as soon as practicable possible to stack the Park and Ride car park to provide long term airport parking as per the recently approved local plan.

Reason - Due to plans to provide a bus provision to Heathrow Airport from the Park and Ride funding is sought with a view to bring this into place as soon as possible and as a future income stream.

Partially accepted: The upgrade of the parking information system in High Wycombe is not currently funded in the Medium Term Financial Plan for the new unitary authority. Bids will need to be made for funding in subsequent financial years.

Recommendation 14

That town centre car parks are refurbished.

Reason - The WDC owned town centre car parks are past their original replacement date and need to be brought up to a better standard for users.

Partially accepted: Easton St multi-storey is at the end of its design life and requires substantial investment. Currently works are limited to those related to health & safety.

However, this future of this car park needs to be considered as part of wider regeneration plans around High Wycombe station. The Swan multi-storey is in a better condition and substantial planned maintenance works are currently being scoped.

Recommendation 15

That a co-ordinated parking strategy be created to work with partners such as Chiltern Railways, Eden and supermarkets within Wycombe.

Reason – To ensure that all partners within the town were in agreement and worked to a co-ordinated parking strategy.

Accepted: Development of a parking strategy will be part of the work carried out by the Buckinghamshire Council after vesting day.

Recommendation 16

To look at provision of parking at supermarkets and residential development within the town centre. To look at what control WDC has and how much WDC can influence supply.

Reason: Some supermarkets have increased their free parking time to 3 hours. There would be reference back to their Planning Permission to ascertain whether this was in line with their original Permission.

Accepted: This issue will be investigated and if a breach of planning permission has occurred then appropriate measures will be taken.