

Committee(s): Policy Resources and Economic Development Committee	Date: 16 th December 2020
Subject: Draft Parking Strategy Development	Wards Affected: All
Report of: Greg Campbell Director of Environment	Public Yes
Report Author/s: Name: Greg Campbell Telephone: 01277 312500 E-mail: greg.campbell@brentwood.gov.uk	For Decision

Summary

Brentwood Council requires a modern parking strategy that provides a vision for car parking within the Borough. The strategy will provide clear direction for the future and be developed to support the Corporate Strategy 2020/2025.

This report asks members to approve the direction of a parking strategy and also to engage with a parking consultant in order to assist in delivering a parking strategy. The report sets out an initial timeline and identifies the work involved in this specialist area.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- R1.** agree the direction of the draft strategy and the workstreams included within this report.
- R2.** engage with a parking consultant to develop and deliver the Brentwood Borough Parking Strategy
- R3.** to delegate authority to the Director of Environment in consultation with the Chief Operating Officer and Section 151 Officer to select an appropriate consultant and report back to this committee the final version for sign off.

Main Report

Introduction

The Borough of Brentwood is going to be influenced in the future by the opening of Crossrail and major redevelopments of William Hunter Way and Westbury Road Car Parks into residential, retail, parking and commercial space.

The development of inner town sites will eventually create vibrant centres that meet the requirements and needs of residents and visitors. However, the desired effect of these developments need to be underpinned with sound policies and strategies. With this in mind the Council need to develop a parking strategy that identifies a direction that compliments both developments and direction of the town and borough overall.

Failure of a decent strategy could result in the reduced use of town centres and their shops, affecting income for businesses within towns and high streets, resulting in fewer pedestrians that could lead to social issues.

The strategy will also consider the parking requirement in Shenfield and Ingatestone. These two areas also face their own challenges including Crossrail at Shenfield.

Background:

Parking provides the life blood of many towns and especially that of Brentwood. It is important that we improve our provision for a modern town so it complements the businesses and the needs of visitors. It is therefore important that we continue to provide appropriate and 'decent' car parking that is accessible and encourages visitors to return again and again. This is the 'customer journey' from the time they enter the car to the time they get to their destination.

Parking created an income in 2019/2020 of £2million excluding VAT and this is important income for the Council especially when other funding continues to be squeezed and the organisation is asked to maintain services.

This income has been severely reduced by around 50% during 2020 due to coronavirus. Therefore, it is even more important that the Council has a strategy that considers the long-term provision of parking. One which will take into account the coronavirus impact and how this will affect the long-term plan and considers these affects into the near future.

The Borough of Brentwood has three major retail and travel link focal points; Brentwood Town and Shenfield & Ingatestone High Streets. The largest of these towns is Brentwood which also has the largest shopping centre in the borough.

Brentwood Council are keen to see significant developments and investment in Brentwood Town over the next few years which will impact on the towns transport and parking. To manage the pressure that developments, retailers and visitors will put on the town and its infrastructure, a clear strategy is required.

The strategy generally speaking will identify:

- The issues
- Future requirements
- Direction and
- Potential solutions / options

Issues and Options

The council have received information and surveys that will support the development and direction of a strategy. One of these surveys (Mayer Brown 2020) gathered

information from three main car parks in Brentwood Town earlier this year prior to the initial Coronavirus lockdown. The Council have also produced a local plan 'Transport Assessment', published in January 2020 as part of the local plan submission produced by Stantec UK Limited, which sets out information on future travel, population and Crossrail effects.

Further the Place Survey by Savills also highlighted a number of parking issues. The Place Survey has been followed up with some strategic workshops. One of which considered the parking issues in the borough. The information from this workshop will feed into the strategy work, the main points of which are contained in Appendix A

This information will assist in the specification to go out for a Parking Consultant to assist with the delivery of a Parking Strategy – if that is agreed?

At this point the survey by Mayer Brown indicates that there is capacity in Brentwood's three main car parks William Hunter Way, Chatham Way and Coptfold Road Multi Storey Car park. However, with the expected major developments, influence of Crossrail and general population increase it is unlikely that this requirement will remain the same and demand is likely to increase. Therefore, it is important to have a parking strategy to make for a successful borough.

In particular the Council need to consider any immediate impact that a development on Westbury Road Car Park might have. This is a site more likely to be developed in the near future. Therefore, to aid any potential development consideration as to the immediate effect of the loss of these spaces, the impact has been considered:

Westbury Road Car Park has 97 spaces, the majority of which were used by season ticket holders Monday to Friday with 68 spaces taken. Due to Covid a major purchaser of season tickets for this car park has not renewed and there are now only 8 seasons ticket users remaining in this car park. Apart from these season tickets the car park remains relatively empty. Weekend use is particularly low following a utilisation study by our Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO's). Therefore, weekend demand can be accommodated within the Multi Storey car park as can any of the remaining season ticket holders. Further the Town Hall Car Park 'A' is in the process of being added to the Parking Order which will enable residents, visitors and shoppers to use this car park at weekends adding a further 63 surface car park spaces to the overall number available in Brentwood.

The other Group who also use this car park with generally around 7 vehicles at any time is Community Transport and we are in discussion with them around relocation.

A statement to support was drafted prior to this report and prior to the number of season ticket allocation dropping which is at appendix B which would assist any future development consideration. See appendix B.

Any strategy will also consider alternative schemes and influences including but not limited to:

- Single or multi storey car parking on appropriate developments
- Utilisation of new spaces outside those in the immediate station and town centre areas
- Encourage route and destination experiences i.e. parking at local parks and walking
- First mile / last mile alternative options

The final strategy will identify opportunities and provide a roadmap that will complement the areas where parking can be created, developed or improved.

Any strategy will focus on the customer journey seeking to maximise effective engagement but limit and reduce interaction and delays

Aims, Objectives and Outcomes

This report seeks to move the development of a strategy forward by engaging with an industry expert 'a consultant' who will undertake the work to bring all the pieces of information together to produce a Parking Strategy for Brentwood

The directive to the Consultant will be to provide a direction of travel for parking for the main three centres of the Borough; Brentwood, Shenfield and Ingatestone. It should consider each location in isolation whilst maintaining the underpinning factors including charging, penalties and application of its management.

The outcomes expected from the consultant will be:

- To deliver a parking strategy that
 - encourage visitors to Brentwood, Shenfield & Ingatestone
 - create modern effective parking facilities that cater for all groups in society
 - has a positive effect for those with disabilities
 - develops simple and cost-effective payment methods
 - creates car parks which encourage residents and users to use them out of choice
 - deters poor parking and behavioural choices by residents and visitors
 - has a more positive effect on the environment by seeking to lower emissions in line with national targets
 - considers the future impact of Coronavirus
 - Looks at the changing face of retail and the trends towards delivery and click and collect methods of product acquisition and how such vehicle movements can be accommodated
 - Considers alternate uses for car parks
 - Utilizes new technology
 - Represents good VFM
 -
- Further the strategy will produce an action plan that will match the requirement and provision for the long-term aspirations of the borough

As part of the work, consultations will be undertaken with appropriate stakeholders including local business groups, residents, diverse groups and other users of our facilities.

The outcome from a successfully implemented strategy will result in fewer parking fines, public and visitors parking in the right bays at the right locations. The strategy needs to work with business groups, local planning policy, street scene and Highways Essex to ensure that movement via car, to the car park, to the town centre(s) is pleasant and seamless, encouraging visitors to return as the experience is a pleasant one.

The present customer journey is ineffective, this journey will be mapped out as part of the work in order to help determine an improved customer experience. The present experience is an ineffective way to park, using old style direction signs, poor payment machines and ineffective movement from car to shops. This strategy will address this journey.

And no longer can car parks be seen as a potential harbourer of social misbehaviour.

Initial discussions have been held with parking experts and the following timeline is thought to be a good reflection on when a strategy could be delivered.

Item	Action	When
1	Procure Consultant/Expert	Jan 2021 to Feb 2021
2	Begin Consultation work including stakeholder Engagement including Member engagement	Mar 2021 to May 2021
3	Draft Strategy produced	June 2021
4	Final Strategy before Committee for approval	July 2021 to September 2021
5	Implement projects from strategy	September 2021 - ongoing

Following initial engagement it is thought the cost of an industry expert will be in the region of £30,000.

Reasons for Recommendation

To procure expertise and capacity to develop a fit for purpose parking strategy in a reasonable time frame.

Consultation

Both SEPP and NEPP have been consulted on the direction and use of an industry expert.

Initial consultation has been undertaken through a working group looking at the outcomes of the recent Place Survey produced by Savills

Further consultation will be undertaken as part of the process by the consultant to produce the Parking Strategy

References to Corporate Plan

- Protecting our Environment – Use our buildings efficiently and to good effect
- Protect our Environment – Ensure all Council policies protect and enhance our environment
- Delivering an Efficient and Effective Council – Invest further in technology to improve the customer journey when accessing council services
- Delivering an Efficient and Effective Council – Continue a service improvement programme to ensure our services are delivered efficiently
- Delivering an Efficient and Effective Council – Deliver services that are value for money and meet the needs of our residents
- Maximising Opportunities – Be more competitive around fees and charges for commercial services

Implications:

If the council does not develop a strategy the parking provision will be less attractive which in turn will not encourage visitors to the Town and high streets which in turn would affect income

Financial Implications

Name/Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Corporate Director (Finance & Resources) and Section 151 Officer

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From the information that is known at this point in time, it has been projected that a Parking consultant could cost in the region of £30k for 6 months, part time to undertake the required work. Although the Council have a number of competent officers, they do not currently have the capacity to bring together a car parking strategy. It is not unusual with for the Council to bring in expertise to develop and deliver a specific project, and then for the Council to monitor and maintain. This can also be more cost efficient by avoiding recruitment and long term employee costs.

There is no specific budget to fund a consultant, however officers would utilise underspends as much as possible if they arise. The Council does have a service investment and Initiatives Reserve (£200k) as well as an Environmental Initiatives reserve (£100k) that could offset any potential pressure on working balances, should it need to do so.

Car parking currently generates approximately £2m including season tickets and enforcement, which is an important revenue stream in order for the Council to maintain

current service levels, ensuring a robust strategy is in place to enable the Council to continue this required level of income.

Once formalised, the strategy will enforce the revenue and capital requirements for the Medium Term financial strategy.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Amanda Julian, Corporate Director (Law & Governance) and Monitoring Officer

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The Council has a duty under the Parking Policy and Enforcement, Traffic Management Act 2004 to enforce parking. There is statutory guidance under s87 of the Act. The Council when determining its parking strategy will need to bear the statutory provisions and guidance and ensure compliance. It will mitigate challenge to the Council to have a dedicated consultant to do this.

Economic Implications

Name/Title: Phil Drane, Corporate Director (Planning & Economy)

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The provision of public car parking plays an important part in the local economic offer, among other things. Engagement with local businesses has already informed priorities for parking taking account of changing needs and this is set to continue. The further development of a Parking Strategy will assist the longer-term economic position for the Borough.

Other Implications (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

Background Papers

- Mayer Brown Parking Strategy Report March 2020
- The Local Plan Transport Assessment, Stantec UK Limited January 2020
- Savills Place Survey
- Electric Vehicle Charges Public Car Park Feasibility Report

Appendices to this report

Appendix A: Parking Strategy Workshop 23 11 20 Items to consider in the Parking Strategy Specification

Appendix B: Westbury Road Car Park Development Statement