

BODY: CABINET
DATE: 11th July, 2012
SUBJECT: Eastbourne Parking Strategy
REPORT OF: Senior Head of Development and Environment

Ward(s): All

Purpose: For Cabinet to recommend that Full Council approves the changes to the Eastbourne Parking Strategy following the recent consultation exercise.

Decision type: Budget and Policy Framework

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Recommendation: Cabinet is asked to recommend that Full Council approves the Eastbourne Parking Strategy incorporating the recommended changes set out and explained in Appendices 1 and 2 to this report.

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 In January, 2011, WSP was appointed by the Council to develop an Eastbourne Parking Strategy. The project was also supported by East Sussex County Council, which funded survey work and provided quantitative and qualitative survey data. The project meets two of the corporate priorities as follows:-
- Prosperous Economy – a new Town Centre that is vibrant, accessible and attractive to residents, businesses and visitors.
 - Quality Environment – Eastbourne will have a range of transport options, improved public transport and cycling facilities.
- 1.2 The Parking Strategy complements the Core Strategy and Town Centre Area Action Plan (and other local policies and plans including the East Sussex Local Transport Plan 3). It sets out a series of recommendations on how to effectively provide and manage the provision of parking in Eastbourne’s Town Centre over the next fifteen years.
- 1.3 The draft Parking Strategy was prepared in two stages:
1. Stage 1: which was completed in March 2011 considered a series of issues and options for parking in the town centre and was used to inform the Town Centre Area Action Plan. It included a review of relevant policy documents, an analysis of on and off-street parking data and a series of interviews, questionnaires and a workshop through which feedback from stakeholders and users was obtained; and
 2. Stage 2: which was completed in September, 2011 widened the scope of

parking review to cover the wider Eastbourne area. It included a second stakeholder workshop in June 2011 and additional surveys to assess the utilisation of parking in the Town Centre during the peak summer season.

- 1.4 Cabinet approved the draft Parking Strategy for consultation with the community and stakeholders on 8 February 2012. This report considers the representations received to the consultation and provides a response and resulting amendments where appropriate.

2.0 Eastbourne Parking Strategy

- 2.1 The Eastbourne Parking Strategy (attached as Appendix 1 to this report) is structured in the following way:

- Introduction;
- Background;
- Policy Framework;
- Key Issues;
- Strategy Aims;
- Provision of Parking for Special Requirements;
- Parking Standards for New Developments;
- Management and Enforcement of Parking;
- Park and Ride;
- Delivery; and
- Delivery Plan.

- 2.2 The Parking Strategy identifies the key issues associated with parking in the town centre and confirms the main aims of the document. These strategy aims include:

- Ensuring that Eastbourne Town Centre is easily accessed by all modes of travel and that all residents and visitors are provided with an attractive range of options for travel to and within the area;
- Managing on and off-street parking efficiently and cohesively with a holistic approach to all parking;
- Ensuring that parking facilities are well-managed, safe and attractive;
- Improving the quality of off-street parking in Eastbourne;
- Providing comprehensive (and interactive) signage to the various car parking locations in Eastbourne at key gateways into the Town Centre;
- Ensuring that car parking does not overly impact on the setting and place-shaping of the Town Centre and that there is a balance between car parking, pedestrian movement and an enhanced public realm, which benefits all and supports the economic growth of Eastbourne; and
- Assisting in the delivery of the wider objectives for the regeneration of Eastbourne's Town Centre set out in the Core Strategy, Town Centre Area Action Plan and the East Sussex Local Transport Plan 3.
- That parking strategies compliment and do not conflict with public transport infrastructure

- 2.3 The Parking Strategy sets out a Delivery Plan, which identifies a series of actions against different parking themes that interact with residents parking, and provides a link to the relevant policy document (setting out the lead organisation, the timescales for delivery and the potential risks involved. These themes are set out as follows:

- Disabled parking;
- Cycle parking;
- Motorcycle parking;
- Parking for heavy goods vehicles;
- Coach parking;
- Taxi parking;
- Loading and unloading arrangements;
- Parking standards for new development;
- Park and ride;
- Management and enforcement; and
- Off-street car park quality standards.

3.0 Consultation

3.1 A twelve-week consultation with the local community and stakeholders took place commencing on 1st March, 2012 and continuing until 25th May, 2012. Consultees were encouraged to comment on the draft Eastbourne Parking Strategy and to complete a feedback form. The consultation exercise included the Town Centre Neighbourhood Panel and all the stakeholders that had been invited to previous workshop sessions in March 2011 and June 2011.

Stakeholders included:

- Arndale Centre Manager;
- Bespoke (Cycle Campaign);
- Bus Companies;
- Campaign for Better Transport (East Sussex);
- Car Park Operators;
- Disability Involvement Group;
- Eastbourne Access Group;
- Eastbourne and District Chamber of Commerce;
- Eastbourne Hospitality Association;
- East Sussex County Council;
- Enterprise Centre Owners;
- Southern Railway;
- Sussex Police;
- Taxi Companies; and
- Town Centre Management Initiative.

3.2 The Council received four representations to its consultation exercise and welcomes the feedback provided (see Appendix 2: Draft Eastbourne Parking Strategy – Summary of Consultation Feedback). These include responses from:

- Chamber of Commerce;
- Eastbourne Hospitality Association (EHA);
- Performance Retail Limited Partnership (represented by Turley Associates); and
- Stagecoach.

Chamber of Commerce

3.3 The Chamber of Commerce's representation had concerns that revenue generation is given a high priority whereas a reduction in parking costs should be a priority of the strategy. It also had concerns about the cost of implementing the strategy and considered that more consideration of the economic impact of parking controls on the town centre was necessary. It

suggested that reducing the length of time the parking controls apply may encourage more visitors to the seafront at the start and end of the day. Proposals to improve the quality of off-street car parks and their usage, were, however, generally welcomed.

- 3.4 The Chamber acknowledges that some parking controls need to be in place, to which the proposed strategy agrees. The nature of the controls however, is a detail that the Borough Council will continue to discuss with the highway authority and intend to influence using the proposed Quality Parking Partnership. Whilst the borough continues to influence controls over the parking on the highway, it can and does control some of the off street parking. It is appropriate to try to encourage longer stay parking in off-street locations through permits and on-street controls as it is vital that the public are encouraged to use off-street facilities to encourage the private sector to invest in their assets. The implementation of the Parking Strategy is also something that the Quality Parking Partnership could take on a responsibility for in due course.

Eastbourne Hospitality Association (EHA)

- 3.5 EHA's representation considered that there was insufficient on street parking and that providing off-road parking for hotels would prevent guests visiting the town, as visitors need on-street parking close to hotels. The EHA supported the conversion of more car parking spaces to 'shared bays' and considered that workers and shoppers should be moved into multi-storey car parks to free up additional space for visitors. In addition, the approach to coaches was considered to be flawed and pointed out that there were occasions when there were no spaces for coaches. Overall, the EHA considered that the Parking Strategy offered little and would cause medium to long-term damage.
- 3.6 Whilst the Council acknowledges the EHA's concerns, the technical reports confirm that there is a significant amount of on street parking available to cope with demand. However, it does need to be better managed so that availability is known to users. The Council will work with East Sussex County Council to provide appropriate levels of coach parking and this is expected to form part of the Quality Parking Partnership (QPP).

Performance Retail Limited Partnership

- 3.7 Performance Retail Limited Partnership's representation drew attention to concern that the under-supply of car parking in certain areas of the town could lead to future congestion in the town. They added that the strategy needed to address the under-supply of car parking associated with the retail core and suggested that additional parking be provided at key locations where insufficient parking is provided.
- 3.8 The Council is not proposing to make any changes as a result of this representation. The technical reviews did not highlight an under-supply of parking and the issues were more related to how parking is organised and priced rather than the overall provision. However, it is accepted that proposals that identify better locations for parking would be considered favourably, particularly when associated with development sites identified in emerging strategies.

Stagecoach

- 3.9 Stagecoach's representation considered that the previous capped standards for car parking should be retained. They stated that Park and Ride would be unlikely to be successful as demand for car parking does not exceed supply. They considered that off-street parking should be developed to boost the economy rather than retained and that this would help increase the attractiveness of public transport. They also made comments on bus stop standards and the enforcement of clearways and pointed out that whilst buses only contribute to 5% of traffic, they transported 30% of people into the town centre.
- 3.10 East Sussex County Council is currently in the process of developing and updating the parking standards and these will be reviewed in light of the recently published National Planning Policy Framework (see paragraph 3.11 below). The potential viability issues are recognised; however, the strategy outlines possible investigations with a suggestion to expand the "Airbourne" service. The Council acknowledges the need for good public transport; however, these issues are outside the scope of the Parking Strategy but are, however, considered in the Town Centre Area Action Plan (TCAAP) and Local Transport Plan 3.

Recommended Changes to Eastbourne Parking Strategy

- 3.11 Appendix 2: Draft Eastbourne Parking Strategy – Summary of Consultation Feedback provides a summary of the representations received and sets out the Council's proposed detailed response to each representation. Following an analysis of the representations received, the Council is proposing to make the following principal changes to the Parking Strategy:
- Additional wording to include reference to paragraphs 39-41 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This provides advice to local planning authorities on setting local parking standards. It requires local authorities to seek to improve the quality, convenience, safety and security of parking in town centre, and to ensure that parking charges do not undermine the vitality of town centres; and
 - Additional wording to provide an explanation on the formation of the Quality Parking Partnership (QPP) and recognition of the monitoring criteria, which can be used to assess the effectiveness of the Delivery Plan, which forms part of the Parking Strategy. The Parking Strategy is already clear that the QPP will particularly address the issue of charging to park.

4.0 Resource Implications

- 4.1 Financial
There are no financial implications to the Council of this report. The cost of preparation of the Eastbourne Parking Strategy was £26,397 and this has been funded through the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant. Any budget implications affecting the Borough Council as a result of implementing the strategy will be the subject of a separate report.

- 4.2 Legal

There are no legal implications.

4.3 Staff Resources

There are no staff resource implications.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 Cabinet agreed the consultation draft of the proposed Parking Strategy at its meeting in February 2012. The consultation is now completed and four representations have been received, analysed and response prepared. The comments have resulted in some revision to the original document. Cabinet are now asked to recommend that Full Council adopts the revised Parking Strategy.

Jefferson Collard

Senior Head of Development & Environment

Background Papers:

The Background Papers used in compiling this report were as follows:

- *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); and*
- *Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.*

To inspect or obtain copies of background papers please refer to the contact officer listed above.

Appendix 1: Eastbourne Parking Strategy

Appendix 2: Draft Eastbourne Parking Strategy – Summary of Consultation Feedback