

Public Document Pack  
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Place Scrutiny Committee**

Date: Tuesday, 1st September, 2020

Time: 6.30 pm

Place: Virtual Meeting via MS Teams

Contact: Tim Row - Principal Democratic Services Officer

Email: [committeesection@southend.gov.uk](mailto:committeesection@southend.gov.uk)

**AGENDA**

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Questions from Members of the Public
- 4 Minutes of the Special Meeting held on Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2020
- 5 Minutes of the Special Meeting held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2020
- 6 Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2020

\*\*\*\* **ITEMS CALLED-IN/REFERRED DIRECT FROM CABINET HELD ON TUESDAY, 28TH JULY 2020**

- 7 **Parking Policy Statement** (Pages 17 - 34)  
Minute No. 206 (Cabinet Agenda Item No. 8 refers)  
Called-in by Councillors Cox and Davidson
- 8 **Highway Restructure Funding** (Pages 35 - 40)  
Minute No. 207 (Cabinet Agenda Item No. 9 refers)  
Called-in-by Councillors Cox and Davidson

\*\*\*\* **ITEMS CALLED-IN/REFERRED DIRECT FROM CABINET COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2020**

None

\*\*\*\* **ITEMS CALLED-IN FROM THE FORWARD PLAN**

None

\*\*\*\* **PRE-CABINET SCRUTINY ITEMS**

None

**\*\*\*\* OTHER SCRUTINY MATTERS**

**9 In-depth Scrutiny Project - Update**

**TO: The Chair & Members of Place Scrutiny Committee:**

Councillor A Moring (Chair),

Councillors M Flewitt (Vice-Chair), B Ayling, J Beck, A Bright, K Buck, L Burton, A Chalk,  
D Cowan, T Cox, M Dent, S George, D Jarvis, S Wakefield, C Walker, N Ward and

P Wexham

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**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Meeting of Place Scrutiny Committee**

**Date: Monday, 15th June, 2020**  
**Place: Virtual Meeting via MS Teams**

**4**

**Present:** Councillor A Moring (Chair)  
Councillors M Flewitt (Vice-Chair), B Ayling, J Beck, A Bright, K Buck,  
L Burton, A Chalk, D Cowan, T Cox, M Dent, S George, D Nelson\*,  
S Wakefield, C Walker, N Ward and P Wexham  
\*Substitute in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 31.

**In Attendance:** Councillors I Gilbert, C Mulroney, M Terry, K Robinson, and  
R Woodley (Cabinet Members) and K Evans  
A Lewis, L Reed, J Chesterton, T Forster, J Williams, P Bates,  
S Dolling, G Halksworth, N Hoskins, T MacGregor, S Meah-Sims,  
C Robinson, T Row, R Harris and Charles Woodcraft

**Start/End Time:** 6.30 pm - 8.30 pm

**53 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jarvis (Substitute: Councillor Nelson).

**54 Declarations of Interest**

The following councillors declared interests as indicated:

(a) Councillors I Gilbert, C Mulroney, K Robinson, M Terry and R Woodley (Cabinet Members) - Interest in the referred items; attended pursuant to the dispensation agreed at Council on 19th July 2012, under S.33 of the Localism Act 2011;

(b) Councillor A Bright – Minute No. 56 (Council’s Response to COVID-19) – Non-pecuniary interest: Lives in the High Street;

(c) Councillor D Nelson – Minute No. 56 (Council’s Response to COVID-19) – Non-pecuniary interest: Member of Southend Wheelers cycling group;

(d) Councillor I Gilbert – Minute No. 56 (Council’s Response to COVID-19)– Non-pecuniary interest: Place of work is located in Town Centre Area and Council appointed Member to the Board of SAVS;

(e) Councillor M Terry – Minute No. 56 (Council’s Response to COVID-19) – Non-pecuniary interest: Lives in Eastern Esplanade and Minute No. 58 (Urgent Item of Business - SO46 Report) - Season ticket holder of Southend United Football Club - Interest;

(f) Councillor Wakefield – Minute No. 56 (Council’s Response to COVID-19) – Non-pecuniary interest: Owns a business in the Town Centre;

(g) Councillor Ward – Minute No. 58 (Urgent Item of Business - SO46 Report) - Shareholder of Southend United Football Club - Interest; and

(h) Councillor Woodley – Minute No. Minute No. 58 (Urgent Item of Business - SO46 Report) – Wife is a Season ticket holder of Southend United Football Club - Interest.

## **55 Questions from Members of the Public**

The Committee noted the responses to questions that had been submitted by Mr Ward to the Cabinet Member for Transport, Capital Inward Investment. Copies will be forwarded to Mr Ward as he was not present at the meeting.

## **56 The Council's Response to COVID-19**

The Chair reported that he had called the special meeting of the Committee pursuant to Paragraph 4 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules in Part 4(e) of the Constitution, to consider the Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its plans for recovery.

The Committee considered Minute 24 of the meeting of Cabinet held on 9 June 2020, which had been referred direct to Scrutiny, together with a report of the Chief Executive detailing the action taken by the Council to respond to the pandemic and its approach to the restoration of services and the provision of support for local residents, businesses, staff and the borough in general.

Councillors were advised that the report was to be considered by each of the scrutiny committees during the current cycle of special meetings and were reminded that, in considering the action taken by the Council in response to the pandemic, each scrutiny committee should focus on its specific areas of responsibility. The relevant members of the Cabinet and chief officers were in attendance to answer questions raised by councillors at the meeting.

The Committee also had before it the Minutes of the meeting of the Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2020 for information.

The Committee received a presentation from the Policy Manager and the Interim Head of Corporate Strategy, together with an updated version of the report of the Chief Executive, which also set out proposals to address arrangements for local COVID-19 outbreak planning and highlighted the role of the Council in supporting the NHS test, trace, and isolate programme. The report also detailed a proposed approach to driving recovery from the impact of the pandemic, through the use of the Southend 2050 programme.

In response to questions regarding the improvement to the air quality in the area, the Cabinet Member for Environment & Planning agreed to circulate the air quality levels for the area around the Bell Junction.

In response to a question regarding the redeployment of staff in the remit of the Place Scrutiny Committee, the Chair requested that details be provided in a written response.

In response to questions regarding the waste collection service, the Executive Director undertook to circulate a complete list of all the meetings we held with Veolia in the period from 23 March, the date of the commencement of the lockdown restrictions, to 12 June.

On behalf of the Cabinet, the Leader thanked all officers of the Council for their commitment in responding to local issues arising from the pandemic and for their contribution to the delivery of new, adapted and existing services in difficult circumstances. The Leader also extended his thanks to National Health Service staff and other key workers for their dedication in responding to issues arising from the pandemic

Resolved:

1. That the following decisions of the Cabinet be noted:

“1. That the action taken to date in response to the Covid-19 crisis, be noted;

2. That, in the light of the impact of Covid-19, the proposed approach to recovery, including the use of the Southend 2050 programme to drive the Borough and Council’s recovery phase and in that context undertake a review of the Southend 2050 outcomes and roadmap content, be approved;

3. That the residents, staff, businesses and partners be thanked for all their efforts to date in responding to the pandemic;

4. That the governance arrangements for overseeing preparations for a local outbreak of Covid-19 and the production and implementation of a Local Outbreak Control Plan be put in place, as outlined in paragraph 4.15.5 of the submitted report. This will see the establishment of an Outbreak Control Oversight Board and a Local Health Protection Board as sub-groups of the Health and Wellbeing Board; and

5. That it be noted that the executive decisions, that would otherwise go to Cabinet, relating to the arrangements for local outbreak planning, the Council’s role in supporting the NHS test, trace and isolate programme and associated matters, will be dealt with under the Council’s SO 46 procedure, with additional consultation with the 4 Group Leaders in the case of strategic matters.”

2. That the matter be referred to full Council for consideration in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 39. ||

Note: This is an Executive Function  
Cabinet Member: I Gilbert

## **57 Initial Local Financial Assessment of Covid-19**

The Committee considered Minute 25 of the meeting of Cabinet held on 9 June 2020, which had been referred direct to Scrutiny, together with a report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources), which provided a high-level initial assessment of the local financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the minimisation of its impact on local residents and businesses and the future sustainability of service provision. The report also outlined the Council’s initial

response to the financial challenges presented by the pandemic over the short and medium term, although councillors were advised that assumptions and understanding of many contributory factors were under constant review.

Councillors were advised that it was currently too early to assess the overall economic impact of COVID-19, but that it was currently estimated that the original lockdown arrangements could cost the authority around £2.5m-£3.0m each month and that effective management of the short and medium-term financial challenges arising from the pandemic would be important going forward, whilst continuing to provide support for local residents and businesses.

The Executive Director (Finance and Resources) highlighted areas of central Government support that had been received by the Council, including a number of elements of passported funding and reported that the pandemic had had a significant effect in terms of a number of universal income areas. He also gave an oral update on the latest announcements by the government regarding potential emergency grant funding since the publication of the report.

The relevant members of the Cabinet were also in attendance to answer questions raised by councillors at the meeting.

In response to questions regarding the costs of the temporary contraflow system in Western Esplanade to assist with social distancing measures, the Executive Director (Finance & Resources) agreed to circulate the costs of the security staff employed to manage the scheme to the Committee after the meeting.

Resolved:

That the following decisions of the Cabinet be noted:

- “1. That the Council’s initial assessment of the local financial impact of the unprecedented challenges that has been caused by the pandemic, be noted;
2. That the proposed tactical and strategic response to managing the financial challenges, be noted; and
3. That regular reports be presented to future Cabinet meetings, which will provide updated assessments on the Council’s financial position and outline any changes to the Council’s strategy and range of assumptions.”

Note: This is an Executive Function  
Cabinet Member: I Gilbert

## **58 Urgent Item of Business - SO46 Report**

This matter was considered at this meeting as an urgent additional item on the basis of its relevance to the report on the Council’s response to COVID-19. The Scrutiny Committee has the report to Cabinet and the associated Minute No. 26.

With the agreement of the Chair, the Committee considered a report setting out details of the following decisions that had been implemented pursuant to Standing Order 46 (Urgent Action) during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic and were of relevance to the earlier report on the Council’s response to the pandemic:

- (a) 1.3 Business Continuity Plans – Waste Collection & Disposal Services
- (b) 3.1 Footway Re-surfacing Policy Change

There was no debate on the report by councillors.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

Note: This is an Executive Function

Cabinet Member: As appropriate to each item

**Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Meeting of Place Scrutiny Committee**

**Date: Wednesday, 24th June, 2020**  
**Place: Virtual Meeting via MS Teams**

**5**

**Present:** Councillor A Moring (Chair)  
Councillors M Flewitt (Vice-Chair), B Ayling, J Beck, A Bright, K Buck,  
L Burton, A Chalk, D Cowan, T Cox, M Dent, N Folkard\*, S George,  
D Nelson\*, S Wakefield, N Ward and P Wexham  
\*Substitute in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 31.

**In Attendance:** Councillors I Gilbert, C Mulroney, M Terry and R Woodley (Cabinet  
Members)  
J Williams, L Reed, N Hoskins, T Row, R Harris and J Norton

**Start/End Time:** 6.30 pm - 8.15 pm

**89 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jarvis (substitute:  
Councillor Nelson) and Walker (substitute: Councillor Folkard).

**90 Declarations of Interest**

The following Councillors declared interests as indicated:

(a) Councillors I Gilbert, C Mulroney, M Terry and R Woodley (Cabinet Members)  
- Interest in the referred items; attended pursuant to the dispensation agreed at  
Council on 19th July 2012, under S.33 of the Localism Act 2011;

(b) Councillor Beck – Minute 92 (Temporary Key Worker Permit) – Non-pecuniary  
interest: Normally employed as a teacher and friends are key workers;

(c) Councillor Bright – Minute 93 (Emergency Active Travel Fund) – Non-  
pecuniary interest: Parents live in Thorpe Hall Avenue which was mentioned in the  
debate;

(d) Councillor Buck – Minute 92 (Temporary Key Worker Permit) – Non-pecuniary  
interest: Governor at Eastwood Academy;

(e) Councillor Buck – Minute 93 (Emergency Active Travel Fund) – Non-pecuniary  
interest: Has been vocal in respect of 20mph speed limits;

(f) Councillor Cowan – Minute 92 (Temporary Key Worker Permit) – Non-  
pecuniary interest: He and his wife are School Governors and friends are key  
workers;

(g) Councillor Cowan – Minute 93 (Emergency Active Travel Fund) – Non-  
pecuniary interest: Chair of the local chapter of the 20's Plenty campaign;

(h) Councillor Flewitt – Minute 92 (Temporary Key Worker Permit) – Non-pecuniary interest: Friends and family members are key workers;

(i) Councillor Flewitt – Minute 93 (Emergency Active Travel Fund) – Non-pecuniary interest: Has lobbied for more cycleways and has been published in the local press in respect of 20mph speed limits;

(j) Councillor Folkard – Minute 92 (Temporary Key Worker Permit) – Non-pecuniary interest: Relation works at Broomfield Hospital; and

(k) Councillor Nelson – Minute 93 (Emergency Active Travel Fund) – Non-pecuniary interest: Member of Southend Wheelers.

## **91 Questions from Members of the Public**

The Committee noted the responses to two questions that had been submitted by Mr Ward to the Cabinet Member for Transport, Capital Inward Investment. Copies will be forwarded to Mr Ward as he was not present at the meeting.

## **92 Temporary Key Worker Permit**

The Committee considered Minute 77 of the meeting of Cabinet held on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2020, which had been referred direct to Scrutiny, together with a report of the Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment) seeking approval for the continuation of the key worker permit until 18 August 2020 (or until the Government guidelines change).

Resolved:-

That the following decision of Cabinet be noted:

“That the action taken to date and the continuation of the key worker permit to 18 August 2020 (or when the Government guidelines change) for NHS workers, care workers and volunteers working on the response to the Covid-19 pandemic in line with the national guidance (issued 3 April 2020), be approved.”

Note: This is an Executive Function  
Cabinet Member: Cllr Woodley

## **93 Emergency Active Travel Fund**

The Committee considered Minute 78 of the meeting of Cabinet held on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2020, which had been referred direct to Scrutiny, together with a report of the Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment) seeking agreement for the construction of temporary interventions to create an environment that is safe for walking and cycling during the Covid-19 pandemic and the period directly after. The report also included details of the funding arrangements associated with the highway works.

The Committee debated this item in some detail. In response to questions, the Cabinet Member Transport, Capital and Inward Investment and the Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and the Environment) undertook to provide written responses to the Committee in respect of the following:

- assurances of the estimated costs of the proposals in addition to the £100,000 from LTP3 funding;
- where in the guidance the introduction of 20mph limits are stated;
- the details of the 14km over 5 routes of cycleways proposed in the bid;
- the levels of transport modal shift per person per mile travelled as a result of the interventions following Covid-19.

The Cabinet Member for Transport, Capital and Inward Investment also gave his assurances that schemes would not be introduced in the Wards where the Ward Councillors did not support them.

In response to a question as to whether the correct procedures had been followed in respect of this matter not being published on the Forward Plan, the Executive Director (Legal & Democratic Services) agreed to look into the matter and advise accordingly.

Resolved:-

1. That the following decisions of Cabinet be noted:

“1. That the bid submitted to DfT on 5 June 2020, for £309k for tranche 1 funding from the Emergency Active Travel Fund, be endorsed.

2. That authority be delegated to the Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment) to make a further bid to the Department for Transport of £1.236 million for Tranche 2 funding from the Emergency Active Travel Fund.

3. That authority be delegated to the Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment), in consultation with the Deputy Leader of the Council, to agree the final detailed design options based upon the principle in the DfT’s guidance for temporary road space reallocation, in consultation with ward councillors for both tranche 1 and tranche 2 funding.

2. That the matter be referred to Council for consideration in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 39. ||

Note: This is an Executive function  
Cabinet Member: Cllr Woodley

**Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Meeting of Place Scrutiny Committee

**Date: Monday, 6th July, 2020**  
**Place: Virtual Meeting via MS Teams**

# 6

**Present:** Councillor A Moring (Chair)  
Councillors B Ayling, J Beck, A Bright, K Buck, L Burton, A Chalk,  
D Cowan, T Cox, M Dent, S George, D Jarvis, D Nelson\*,  
S Wakefield, C Walker, N Ward and P Wexham  
\*Substitute in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 31.

**In Attendance:** Councillors I Gilbert, A Jones, C Mulroney, K Robinson and  
R Woodley (Cabinet Members)  
Councillors M Borton and K Evans  
A Lewis, J Chesterton, L Reed, J Williams, E Cooney, S Dolling,  
G Halksworth, C Robinson, G Gilbert, A Grant, S Harrington,  
N Hoskins, P Jenkinson, T Row, R Harris< N Laver, S Newman and  
C Woodcraft

**Start/End Time:** 6.30 pm - 9.40 pm

#### 116 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Flewitt (Substitute: Councillor Nelson).

#### 117 Declarations of Interest

The following interests were declared at the meeting:

(a) Councillors I Gilbert, A Jones, C Mulroney, K Robinson and R Woodley (Cabinet Members) - Interest in the called-in items; attended pursuant to the dispensation agreed at Council on 19th July 2012, under S.33 of the Localism Act 2011;

(b) Councillor Buck - Minute No. 121 (Protection of Public Open Space) – Non-pecuniary interest: Member of Belfairs Golf Club which was mentioned in the debate; and

(c) Mr A Lewis – Minute No. 122 (Better Queensway Regeneration Project - Progress Update and Consideration of the Final Proposals) – Non-pecuniary interest: Council appointed representative on the LLP.

#### 118 Questions from Members of the Public

There were no questions from members of the public.

## **119 Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 28th January 2020**

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> January, 2020 be received, confirmed as a correct record and signed.

## **120 Parking Review**

The Committee considered Minute 67 of Cabinet held on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2020, which had been called-in for Scrutiny, together with the report of the Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and the Environment) that:

- (a) provided an update on progress made against the Cabinet Report of 5 November 2019;
- (b) explored the risks and opportunities from the COVID-19 emergency;
- (c) sought approval for a new Parking Review 2020 Project Plan; and
- (d) provided an update on the introduction of the Key Worker Permit (temporary).

Resolved:-

That the following decision of Cabinet be noted:

“1. That the updates be noted and the revised Parking Review Project Plan as set out in the submitted report, be approved.

2. That the efforts to expand the function of the Traffic Regulations Working Party to act as a monitoring and advisory panel for the Project Management Team, be supported.”

Note: This is an Executive Function  
Cabinet Member: Cllr Woodley

## **121 Protection of Public Open Space**

The Committee considered Minute 68 of Cabinet held on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2020, which had been called-in for Scrutiny, together with the report of the Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and the Environment) informing Councillors of the increasing pressure on existing public open spaces and the increasing number of requests being received from sports clubs and other organisations to lease public open space and to limit, restrict or reduce public availability. The report proposed to establish clear and consistent guidance which could be applied by officers in dealing with requests for the disposal of public open spaces.

In response to a question regarding the potential scrapping of the proposals for the area of land at Lundy Close, the Leader of the Council undertook to provide a written response to all Councillors on the Committee and the relevant Ward Councillors.

Resolved:-

That the following decisions of Cabinet be noted:

“1. That the general presumption against the disposal of public open space in Southend-on-Sea and the ongoing protection of these areas, be continued.

2. That the existing agreements relating to areas of public open space or buildings within them continue during their term and on renewal or re-letting/procurement can be agreed when applicable.

3. That requests for the Council to dispose (by any means) of areas of open space to enable their enclosure (or any other restrictions on public use) by sports clubs or other organisations and the exclusion of the public from enjoying those spaces are not considered to ensure that free public access to open space is maintained. Whilst exceptions are not expected, should they arise, such exceptions will be a matter for Cabinet to decide upon.

4. That it be noted that from time to time, the granting of easements and wayleaves for services or highway widening or realignment may be required. In these situations, the preferred position is that public access is maintained or replacement land is sought.

5. That in a situation where an area of open space has been identified as a location which could enable the delivery of a key Council outcome, and the Council has determined that the area has no or minimal recognised benefit to the public, or a replacement space of the same or enhanced value can be provided, the disposal will be considered to enable the Council to deliver its outcomes.”

Note: This is an Executive Function  
Cabinet Member: Cllr Mulroney

## **122 The Beecroft Trust**

The Committee considered Minute 69 of Cabinet held on 16th June 2020, which had been called-in for Scrutiny, together with the report of the Executive Director (Adults and Communities) proposing improved governance arrangements and decision making for the Beecroft Trust (“the Trust”).

The Cabinet Member for Business, Culture & Tourism undertook to provide written responses to the questions on the following matters:

- (a) a breakdown of external funding which the Council has received to-date in respect of the scheme to convert the Station Road property into artist studios;
- (b) whether the funding in (a) would have to be repaid if the scheme did not proceed; and
- (c) details of any further external funding that had been sought for the scheme.

The Cabinet Member for Business, Culture and Tourism confirmed (subject to the proviso that it was procedurally possible to do so) that the Place Scrutiny Committee should be able to scrutinise any recommendation to Council made by the General Purposes Committee before a decision was taken by Council as trustee of the Beecroft Trust. This would enable the Council to have the benefit of the Scrutiny Committee’s views on relevant trust issues, as well as the recommendation of the General Purposes Committee, when reaching a decision as trustee.

Resolved:-

That the following recommendations of Cabinet be noted:

“1. That the Council’s General Purposes Committee act on behalf of the Trust and make recommendations for full Council to consider.

2. That independent advice be provided to the Beecroft Trustee (“Trustee”) through the General Purposes Committee to fulfil its objectives in the best interest of the Trust.

3. That specific independent advice be sought and provided on the Beecroft Art Gallery site at Station Road, Westcliff (“the Former Gallery”).”

Note: This is a Council Function  
Cabinet Member: Cllr Robinson

**123 Better Queensway Regeneration Project - Progress Update and Consideration of the Final Proposals (the report will be considered in conjunction with the minutes of the Shareholder Board, 25th June)**

The Committee considered Minute 104 of the special meeting of Cabinet held on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020, which had been referred direct to Scrutiny, together with a report of the Director of Regeneration and Growth providing an update following the consideration of a report to the Shareholder Board on the 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020. The Shareholder Board Report specifically considered the submission of the ‘final proposals’ alongside the progress being made in respect of additional affordable housing.

Resolved:-

1. That the matter be referred back to Cabinet for reconsideration, in particular because of concerns about the intention to fill in the Queensway underpass and construct a new road at ground level.

2. That the matter be referred to full Council for consideration in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 39.

Note: This is an Executive Function  
Cabinet Member: Cllr Gilbert

**124 COVID-19 - Parking Recovery Proposals**

The Committee considered Minute 105 of the special meeting of Cabinet held on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020, which had been referred direct to Scrutiny, together with a report of the Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and the Environment) setting out how Parking Services could support the Council’s intentions to lead and support its communities and businesses through the Covid-19 crisis and help them towards a sustainable recovery.

In response to questions regarding how these proposals were being funded and the amount of money received from Government to date in respect of the Council’s Covid-19 response, the Cabinet Member agreed to circulate details to the Committee after the meeting.

Resolved:-

That the following decisions of Cabinet be noted:

“1. That the proposed temporary parking concession approach by which the Council will lead and support its communities and businesses as set out in option 2 of the submitted report, noting the relevant financial impact and proposed funding of the option, be approved.

2. That the continuation of the additional 5 Civil Enforcement Officers at an additional monthly cost of £16K up to a maximum of six months (£96K) to support the increased parking pressures being identified as more vehicles are moving around the Borough, which would be self-funded, be approved. The increase of officers will support enforcement in Controlled Parking Zones where complaints are being received due to parking of vehicles without permits.

3. That authority be delegated to the Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and the Environment), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport, Capital & Inward Investment, to remove the schemes as and when the support for extended parking and reduced hours of enforcement are no longer required.”

Note: This is an Executive Function  
Cabinet Member: Cllr Woodley

## **125 In-Depth Scrutiny Projects and Summary of Work 2019/20**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director (Legal & Democratic Services) which provided an update on progress with regard to the in-depth scrutiny projects due to have been completed during the 2019/20 Municipal Year. The report also provided information about the work that had been carried out by each of the Scrutiny Committees during the previous year.

Resolved:-

1. That the Scrutiny Committee note progress with regard to its in-depth scrutiny project due to have been undertaken during the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

2. That the completion of the in-depth scrutiny project be carried forward into the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

3. That no further topic(s) be selected by the Scrutiny Committee for additional in-depth review during 2020/21.

4. That the Committee note the summary of the work undertaken by each of the Scrutiny Committees during 2019/20, attached as Appendix 3.

Note: This is a Scrutiny function.

**Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_



# Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director Neighbourhoods and Environment

To

Cabinet

On

28<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Report prepared by: Sharon Harrington, Head of Traffic Management & Highways Network

Agenda  
Item No.

7

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## Parking Review 2020 - Project 2 Traffic & Parking Policy Statement

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Place Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Councillor Ron Woodley

Deputy Leader (Cabinet Member for Transport, Capital & Inward Investment)

Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

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### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This Report follows the Parking Review 2020 report approved by Cabinet in June 2020.
- 1.2 The purpose is to set out the short-term aspirations for the service through a Traffic & Parking Policy Statement.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approves the adoption of the Traffic & Parking Policy Statement as described in this Report and directs Officers to implement the commitments as described.
- 2.2 It is further recommended that Cabinet approved the Traffic Regulation Working Party undertaking a review of its decision making processes, and takes on the project board role in respect of the Parking Review.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 In November 2019, Cabinet approved Officer recommendations to commission a Parking Review, and in June 2020 an update Report was approved with a revised programme.
- 3.2 Original aspirations to deliver a new comprehensive Parking Strategy in 2020 were amended to account for the COVID-19 emergence response and to ensure sufficient data could be gathered and analysed, which in turn will provide a more informed and deliverable strategy.

- 3.3 To keep momentum within the service, it was agreed that a Policy Statement would be produced for approval by Cabinet. This policy statement will be used by Officers to inform customers and stakeholders how we are delivering on their priorities.

#### Parking Policy Statement

- 3.4 The Traffic & Parking Policy Statement is included in the Appendix to this report.
- 3.5 Its objectives are to:
- Respond to the immediate challenges for traffic management and parking, addressing the immediate changes in road user habits from the COVID-19 public health emergency.
  - Ensure the Council service is customer focussed and fit for purpose.
  - Support wider strategic objectives to reduce congestion and improve air quality.
- 3.6 If approved, the commitments therein will be used to inform all projects and priorities for the service from 2020, and until a new Strategy is implemented.

#### Traffic Regulation Working Party

- 3.7 The Working Party was originally designed to support Officers when seeking decisions for new and amended traffic regulations.
- 3.8 To ensure Members have ongoing influence over the delivery of the Parking Review, it is proposed that the Terms of Reference be updated by the Working Party to include acting as a project board for the Parking Review.
- 3.9 Where traffic regulations, for example a short section of 'no waiting at any time' restriction is proposed at a junction, there can be some delay between the request being submitted, and it being considered by the Working Party.
- 3.10 To ensure the Working Party remains fit for purpose, it is proposed that Officers review which items are taken to it, and make proposals to the Group to enable Officers to implement certain proposals without seeking approval in advance.

### **4. Other Options**

- 4.1 Cabinet could decide to amend any of the priorities and commitments described in the Traffic & Parking Policy Statement or reject it.

### **5. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 5.1 The Recommendations, as described in this Report are a deliverable and customer focussed series of priorities which will help deliver on the Council priorities, particularly the Southend 2050 vision and RoadMap.
- 5.2 In the absence of a Strategy, it is important that the Service can articulate the direction and reasons for decisions.
- 5.3 The proposals in respect of the Traffic Regulation Working Group are designed to ensure Members have adequate oversight of the service, and to delegate business as usual decisions to officers, improving the service to customers.

## 6. Corporate Implications

### 6.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

6.2 The Road Map for 2020 sets out the first five-year plan to achieve the Southend 2050 vision. This Policy Statement aims to set out how the service will direct its resources and activities to support the Council aspirations.

### 6.3 Financial Implications

6.4 The Parking Review is being funded through the service Revenue Budget, supported by Capital funding sought through the Capital Investment Board. Where possible, existing resources are being utilised.

6.5 It is anticipated that some elements, particularly the Fees & Charges review and Contracts Review will increase revenue and decrease costs respectively, as each project is brought forward, a more detailed cost to benefit analysis will be undertaken.

### 6.6 Legal Implications

6.7 There are no legal considerations identified for the Policy Statement, any regulated activity proposed will be subject to legal oversight as appropriate.

### 6.8 People Implications

6.9 To deliver the Parking Review, sufficient resources have been procured, supporting the existing service management team.

### 6.10 Property Implications

6.11 There are no property implications.

### 6.12 Consultation

6.13 If approved by Cabinet, engagement with Key Stakeholders and Community Groups will be undertaken to ensure all are aware of the direction being taken by the service and how they can contribute or will benefit. It is not proposed that any consultation before approval is undertaken, as all priorities and objectives are an extension to the existing Southend 2050 vision.

### 6.14 Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.15 An Equality and Diversity Assessment has been completed and is attached in the Appendix to this Report. It is not anticipated there will be any disproportionate impact on any protected groups.

### 6.16 Risk Assessment

6.17 All services and operations are accurately assessed to understand and mitigate risks. The Policy Statement will act as a reference tool to ensure that any actions reduce risk to the Council and community.

### 6.18 Value for Money

6.19 The Fees & Charges and Contracts review will give the Council opportunity to find efficiencies in the service and ensure that value for money can be properly demonstrated.

6.20 Community Safety Implications

6.21 A robust and transparent enforcement regime will give the community confidence that the road network is safe and accessible for all users.

6.22 Environmental Impact

6.23 The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and made several commitments to reduce emissions. The Traffic & Parking Policy Statement will provide a clear set of principles and projects to reduce emissions and support the Southend 2050 vision.

**7. Background Papers**

7.1 [Cabinet Report, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2019.](#)

7.2 Cabinet Report, June 2020

**8. Appendix**

Appendix 1 – Traffic & Parking Policy Statement

# **Southend Borough Council Traffic & Parking Policy Statement**

**July**

**2020**

# 1. Introduction

## Summary

Southend Borough Council has a Southend 2050 vision and has published its first Five Year RoadMap to 2023.

The decision to bring this Policy Statement forward in anticipation of the new Local Transport Plan, Transport Strategy and Parking Strategy was taken to bring forward the urgent changes required to deliver on the RoadMap.

## Objectives

This Traffic & Parking Policy Statement will:

- Respond to the immediate challenges for traffic management and parking, addressing the immediate changes in road user habits from the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- Ensure the Council service is customer focussed and fit for purpose.
- Support wider strategic objectives to reduce congestion and improve air quality.

## Local & Regional Strategies

Southend 2050 – Five Year RoadMap

Each of the policy positions in this Traffic & Parking Policy Statement will relate directly to one of the following RoadMap priorities.

- **Pride & Joy**

People are proud of where they live – the historic buildings and well-designed new developments, the seafront and the open spaces. The city centre has generated jobs, homes and leisure opportunities, whilst the borough's focal centres all offer something different and distinctive. With its reputation for creativity and culture, as well as the draw of the seaside, Southend-on-Sea is a place that residents and visitors can enjoy in all seasons. Above all we continue to cherish our coastline as a place to come together, be well and enjoy life.

- **Safe & Well**

Public services, voluntary groups, strong community networks and smart technology combine to help people live long and healthy lives. Carefully planned homes and new developments have been designed to support mixed communities and personal independence, whilst access to the great outdoors keeps Southenders physically and mentally well. Effective, joined up enforcement ensures that people feel safe when they're out and high quality care is there for people when they need it.

- **Active & Involved**

Southend-on-Sea has grown, but our sense of togetherness has grown with it. That means there's a culture of serving the community, getting involved and making a difference, whether you're a native or a newcomer, young or old. This is a place where people know and support their neighbours, and where we all share responsibility for where we live. Southend in 2050 is a place that we're all building together – and that's what makes it work for everyone.

- **Opportunity & Prosperity**

Southend-on-Sea and its residents benefit from being close to London, but with so many options to build a career or grow a business locally, we're much more than a commuting town. Affordability and accessibility have made Southend-on-Sea popular with start-ups, giving us the edge in developing our tech and creative sectors, whilst helping to keep large, established employers investing in the borough. People here feel valued, nurtured and invested in. This means that they have a love of learning, a sense of curiosity and are ready for school, employment and the bright and varied life opportunities ahead of them.

- **Connected & Smart**

Southend is a leading digital city and an accessible place. It is easy to get to and easy to get around and easy for residents, visitors and businesses to park. Everyone can get out to enjoy the borough's thriving city centre, its neighbourhoods and its open spaces. Older people can be independent for longer. Local people also find it easy to get further afield with quick journey times into the capital and elsewhere, and an airport that has continued to open up business and leisure travel overseas – but in balance with the local environment

## **Local Transport Plan, Transport Strategy**

The Transport Act 2000 set a requirement on Local Authorities to produce a Local Transport Plan. In Southend, the new LTP is due to be delivered in 2021 and will provide a strategic direction for all aspects of transport in Southend.

## **Parking Strategy**

The Council will be delivering a new Parking Strategy in 2021. This will include comprehensive review of the long-term strategic objectives of the Council

## **National Policy & Legislation**

The Council is a member of the British Parking Association, an industry Group working to improve the public perception and ensure the services offered are consistent, fair, and transparent.

Much of the regulation of our highway network is governed and legislated for nationally. In summary, the regulation is set out in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and enforcement by the Traffic Management Act 2004, both Acts are supported by Regulations, Guidance and Codes of Practice.

## 2. Parking Provision

### On Street Parking

#### Residents' Permit Parking & Controlled Parking Zones

Permit Parking Areas are generally used in areas where a residential area is impacted by demands on parking capacity from commuting via transport hubs or to neighbouring employment sites, for example a hospital or office accommodation.

These schemes should only be introduced in circumstances where the 'non-resident' demand cannot be accommodated after the need of residents.

A CPZ is introduced in areas where parking demands are shared between road user groups. An example may be where a shopping district centre is surrounded by residential properties, and parking capacity must be divided between residents, businesses, and visitors.

#### What we will do:

- Undertake a review of existing schemes, to ensure they remain fit for purpose.
- Consider new schemes in areas where the need is identified and has the support of all stakeholders.
- Review Permit types to ensure they are fit for purpose, and where possible introduce digital alternatives to paper permits.
- Ensure the pricing strategy for permits is affordable and supports wider efforts to improve air quality

### Parking at Schools

At school opening and closing times, parents picking up or dropping off children near schools can cause a danger to pedestrians and other traffic, particularly unaccompanied children. Congestion can delay access for through traffic, particularly bus services.

#### What we will do:

- Work with schools to identify safety concerns and deliver road improvement schemes, where appropriate introducing parking and traffic regulations.
- In cases where compliance remains a concern, consideration will be given to the introduction of enforcement cameras to monitor School Street and School Keep Clear restrictions.
- All schools are required to maintain a Sustainable Travel Plan. We will work with schools to improve the road network and help promote other forms of active travel for staff and students.
- Work with schools to identify and secure off site space for 'park and stride' schemes.

## **Parking near to Emergency Services Property**

The ability for our blue light emergency services to respond to incidents in a timely manner is critical. Parking and traffic congestion outside of operational depots can delay these responses and cause other operational concerns.

What we will do:

- Where appropriate, we will introduce Keep Clear restrictions to protect wide access and egress points to operational depots.
- If there is no off-street parking provision available, consideration will be given to the introduction of restricted parking spaces for operational vehicles.
- Particularly around fire stations, where congestion is a concern, the introduction of warning signals and sirens will be considered.

## **Parking for Disabled Road Users**

The Council already offers parking spaces for blue badge holders in areas for general use, for example in high streets or shopping district centres. Provision is also made in off street car parks, and provision is a requirement in Planning Policy.

What we will do:

- Review the criteria to ensure recent changes to include those with hidden disabilities are properly provided for.
- Improve the application process to ensure consideration is given to the impact on other road users, and to ensure the application process is fast and efficient to allow for spaces to be introduced at the earliest opportunity.
- Ensure a maintenance, renewal and removal programme is robust enough to remove designated spaces efficiently and compassionately when they are no longer required.

## **Paid for Parking**

Charging zones are in operation to support high streets, shopping district centres and seafront attractions. The charges and tariff bands are designed to provide for a 'turnover of spaces' maximising the use of space and discouraging use by commuters or long stay users, who should make use of the off street car park provision.

What we will do:

- Review existing charging zones and tariffs to ensure they properly support the primary user need.
- Develop a new methodology for the annual review of Fees & Charges.
- Work with the 'pay by phone' providers and move to a cashless parking solution, removing street clutter including pay and display machines and some signage.
- Consider how parking charges could be used to support wider efforts to improve air quality.

## Parking for Motorcycles

Motorcycle parking is usually provided in high streets and shopping district centres. This provision is free of charge, and where possible there is infrastructure for vehicles to be securely locked. Motorcyclists are also permitted to park free of charge in any other Pay & Display or Permit Parking Space.

When spaces are wrongly located, use of other parking capacity can significantly reduce the available space for cars and other vehicles.

### What we will do:

- Review provision for motorcycle parking to ensure locations are convenient, safe and secure.
- Consider how the 'gig economy' and use of mopeds for delivery services can be accommodated safely.

## Parking for Cyclists

To help those wishing to use a bicycle for travel, the Council provides parking facilities, usually consisting of a secure locking point. As the number of cyclists increases, these spaces can become congested and a bigger target for thieves and vandals.

### What we will do:

- Review the existing provision and ensure it remains fit for purpose.
- Work with businesses and developers to provide new capacity where required and consider more robust locking systems such as 'cycle hangers'.
- On cycle routes and in areas where cycling is popular, consideration will be given to additional infrastructure, including cycle maintenance points.

## Parking for Electric Vehicles

The Council has an aspiration to improve air quality. With a limited range, it is important that parking provision is made in key areas, with charging points fit for the intended use – for example in residential areas, a slower, overnight charge would be preferable, compared to a shopping district centre where charging would need to be rapid.

### What we will do:

- Consider and inform planning policy considerations in relation to off street parking in new developments.
- Review the existing provision of designated spaces to ensure they remain fit for purpose.
- Identify funding opportunities for new charging infrastructure, with a focus on ensuring capacity can be provided in residential areas.

## Car Clubs

Car Clubs are services offering the use of a car for an hourly or daily rate, a much cheaper and more convenient service than remote car rental services. There are several options for delivery:

- Designated Pick Up & Drop Off Points
- Pick Up and Drop Off anywhere in a defined Zone
- Peer to Peer, where a car owner can make it available for others to use.

What we will do:

- Investigate the options available, including potential funding to subsidise the costs and incentivise use.
- Consult and engage with residents and businesses to understand the need.

### **Loading & Unloading for Business**

For businesses to thrive, access is required for loading and unloading close to the premises. There must be a balance between provisions for loading and capacity for customers to park. This is often achieved with loading restricted to early mornings and overnight, but this is not suitable for all businesses.

What we will do:

- Work with business groups to review existing provisions and make sure they are fit for purpose.
- Consider how the planning and development control process could be used to plan for the parking and loading impacts on the wider community.

### **Footway & Verge Parking**

Parking on footways and verges can obstruct pedestrian access and cause damage to the surfaces and utilities' apparatus. In some areas, this parking is essential to maximise parking provision, whilst ensuring vehicles can pass safely. Where appropriate, the footway or verge can be reconstructed to take the weight of a vehicle.

What we will do:

- Work with resident and business groups to identify opportunities to redistribute parking capacity to protect footways and verges.
- Consider how education and enforcement could be used as a tool to change driver habits.

### **Vehicle & Pedestrian Crossing Points**

The footway is lowered to the carriageway level to assist pedestrians when crossing the road, and where vehicles crossover the footway to reach an off street parking space.

What we will do:

- Explore options to fund enhancements to the footway network, where appropriate reinforcing the structure to accommodate the weight of a vehicle without damage.
- Following attempts to work with property owners, take enforcement action where habitual use of illegal crossing points and footway parking is causing damage or an obstruction.

## Off Street Parking

The Council operated off street car parks primarily provide capacity for longer term parking needs, but also cover the shortage of available on street parking capacity for short stay parking. The balance changes over time and in some cases is not fit for purpose.

Multi-storey car parks (MSCP's) provide significant capacity in a smaller footprint, but many in Southend are in need of significant investment.

- What we will do:
- Review the existing estate to ensure it continues to represent value for money and that capacity is provided where it is most needed.
  - Where new capacity is required, explore opportunities to secure new sites.
  - Retain the industry standard 'ParkMark' accreditation as a demonstration of our commitment to maintaining standards.
  - Develop a pricing strategy which supports local businesses and access to services.

## 3. Moving Traffic Regulation

### Prohibited Movements

To help regulate the flow of traffic, and protect residential areas from congestion and through traffic, the Council will introduce restrictions to prohibit or mandate a direction of travel.

- What we will do:
- Review existing restrictions and compliance, where appropriate introducing enforcement cameras to ensure those affected are properly protected.
  - Consider any new requests in line with the wider Council strategy for the movement of traffic in Southend.

### Bus Lanes & Bus Gates

Bus priority schemes help to ensure services can operate to a timetable, reassuring customers and ensuring commercial and subsidised services can operate efficiently. The network of bus priority infrastructure is not as extensive as it could be, and to achieve growth in public transport use, it is important that restrictions are introduced or amended as the need changes.

What we will do:

- Review the existing network and identify areas where new restrictions are required to support local bus services.
- Where compliance impacts on the efficient use of the road network, we will introduce enforcement cameras.

## **Cycle Lanes & Shared Footways**

Cycling and Walking infrastructure supports the whole community, with quality footways a key part of providing a safe and attractive environment. To support cycling, it is important to recognise that not all cyclists will be confident or able to ride in the carriageway, and where appropriate a shared footway will be introduced.

What we will do:

- Continue to maintain and enhance the existing network.
- Identify and source funding for new cycle routes to support all parts of Southend.
- Where routes are regularly obstructed, use enforcement powers to ensure they remain accessible and safe to use.

## **Pedestrian Priority Zones**

Controlled or Restricted Zones are provided in areas where pedestrian and sometimes cycling movements are prioritised over vehicles. Restrictions on access are generally limited to daytime hours, with loading and unloading provision overnight and into the early morning.

These zones provide opportunity for businesses to expand their services to the outside space, creating a more inviting town centre for visitors.

What we will do:

- Existing pedestrian zones, particularly in the town centre, will be reviewed to ensure the restrictions are fit for purpose.
- Funding opportunities to improve and expand the pedestrian priority public realm will be explored, and improvement schemes subject to stakeholder engagement.

## **School Streets**

Where School Keep Clear markings are not sufficient to protect the roads around a school from dangerous parking or high volumes of traffic, a School Street may be appropriate. These restrictions operate in the same way as a Pedestrian Priority Zone, prioritising pedestrians and cycling at certain times of the day.

What we will do:

- Identify schools where these restrictions may be appropriate.

- Engage with Schools, Residents, and Stakeholders to consider the most appropriate restrictions, and identify new funding sources to support the implementation of schemes.
- Where compliance issues arise, identify, and introduce enforcement cameras.
- Consider how the Council could use existing powers to enforce against vehicles idling outside schools.

## Setting Local Speed Limits

To keep the road network operating safely, speed limits can be varied to suit the road conditions, in particular proposals to reduce the speed limit on residential roads to 20mph by creating a zone or a new speed limit. Enforcement of speed limits is undertaken by the Police and through a Road Safety Partnership, supporting the use of enforcement camera vehicles and fixed camera sites.

What we will do:

- Continue to lobby Government to amend national legislation to reduce the speed limit on residential roads to 20mph, reducing the need for a significant increase in signage and road markings.
- Work with stakeholders to ensure the speed limit properly balances the impact on all road users.

## Traffic Calming

Where compliance with the speed limit is low, consideration is given to the introduction of traffic calming schemes. These can go some way to enforcing a speed limit by making it more difficult for drivers to speed. A consequence of certain types of traffic calming, can be an increase in noise and vibration.

What we will do

- Review existing schemes to ensure they remain fit for purpose.
- Identify areas where the accident data suggests there is a need, and work with those directly affected to ensure there is support for it.

# 4. Public Transport

## Public Bus Services

The Council will provide facilities to support local bus services, including stopping space, signage, seating, shelters, and bins. The level of provision will be determined by footfall and local need.

Where possible, the space will be designed such that the bus can pull out of the carriageway to a layby, however, where use is infrequent or it would be difficult for the bus to re-enter the carriageway, the Council may create a 'bus box', which would require traffic to wait whilst the passengers board or alight.

What we will do:

- Work with operators to ensure facilities are fit for purpose and provide the best experience for customers.
- Identify funding opportunities to enhance infrastructure, including live service updates and bus priority schemes.

## **Coaches**

The Coach industry supports the tourism industry, providing a cost-effective alternative to trains and cars. The Council already provides facilities for coach parking, and a 'light touch' approach is taken with enforcement to facilitate safe loading and unloading.

What we will do:

- Work with operators to identify areas where the facilities could be improved at the Bus and Coach Station
- Work with the tourism and business industry groups to identify further support that can be offered to protect coach services.

## **Hackney Carriages & Private Hire Vehicles**

Ranking capacity for hackney carriages is located in key areas to support the local and visitor economy. Private Hire Vehicles do not benefit from designated capacity and are unable to 'ply for hire'. New technology based services such as mobile application based private hire operators have rapidly become popular with consumers but the legislation and licensing arrangements remain out of date.

What we will do:

- Work with all operators to ensure parking and ranking capacity is located in the most efficient and accessible place.
- Seek innovative solutions which support all areas of the trade, without undue detriment to certain types of operator.
- Ensure enforcement activity is robust to ensure customer confidence that ranks are properly serviced.

# **5. Enforcement**

## **Civil Parking Enforcement**

The Council has powers to enforce certain parking contraventions, to ensure the safe and efficient use of the road network. ACPOA provide enforcement service for the Council, including the use of Civil Enforcement Officers, fixed and mobile enforcement cameras.

What we will do:

- Undertake a review of enforcement 'beats' to ensure enforcement priorities reflect the local need.
- Maintain a fair and transparent system for appeals against penalty charge notices.
- Ensure that all operations and ringfencing for revenue is properly monitored and managed.

### **Moving Traffic Enforcement**

The Council has powers to enforce certain moving traffic contraventions. The use of enforcement cameras at School Keep Clear and Bus Priority / Bus Lane sites helps the Council to enforce where it would not be possible for an enforcement officer to operate efficiently.

What we will do:

- Ensure the deployment of enforcement cameras is limited to priority areas and engage with stakeholders and those directly affected to canvass support.
- Regularly review deployment to ensure the most efficient use of the equipment.

### **Persistent Offenders, Persistent Evaders & Debt Management**

To maintain public confidence in the enforcement of parking regulations, it is essential that debt be recovered and those who persistently offend are robustly dealt with using all available powers.

What we will do:

- Use all available powers to ensure debt is recovered, whilst ensuring at all times that vulnerable people are properly protected.
- Explore additional enforcement powers which may help the Council recover debt.
- Continue to work with the industry to ensure the service is fair and transparent.

### **Additional Enforcement Powers**

Legislation changes from time to time and additional enforcement powers become available for the Council to apply for. The Community Safety Accreditation Scheme, DVLA Devolved Powers – UnTaxed Vehicles and Littering from Vehicles have been in effect for some time, and the Government is bringing forward the ability for Councils outside London to enforce mandatory cycle lanes.

What we will do:

- Explore the risks and benefits of additional enforcement activity.
- Consult stakeholders and road users to canvas support.

- Ensure any new powers are delivered in a fair and transparent way to maintain confidence.

## 6. Service Administration

### Contracts

To ensure best value, the Council often uses contractors to deliver certain services. The enforcement operation is contracted to ACPOA and several suppliers are contracted to provide additional services such as the Pay by Phone facility and Highways Asset Management.

The contracts are managed through robust performance management systems and as each one reaches expiry, consideration is given to lessons learned, before entering a new procurement exercise.

#### What we will do:

- Review all existing contracts to ensure they remain fit for purpose, achieve best value and are future proofed.
- Work with stakeholders and suppliers to ensure innovation and enhanced service offerings are at the core of all new contracts.

### Fees & Charges

Any charges levied by the service are designed to ensure best value and that the road network operates efficiently. All charges are reviewed annually through the Council Fees & Charges review and inform the budget for the coming financial year.

#### What we will do:

- Review all existing Fees & Charges to ensure they achieve best value and are fair and consistent.
- Explore innovative ways that charges can be levied to support wider policy objectives, particularly improvements to air quality.
- Ensure revenue is effectively managed in line with legislation.

### Customer Requests

The Council relies on reports from road users to identify areas where regulations are required or should be amended. Requests can be submitted in writing, online or via Elected Representatives. Once received, they are investigated by Officers and recommendations made on the most appropriate regulation.

#### What we will do:

- Review the existing processes and ensure they remain fit for purpose, and accessible for all.
- Utilise technology to improve services, whilst ensuring those who prefer direct contact are properly provided for.

## Traffic Regulation Orders

To implement any traffic regulation, a legal order is required, following statutory consultation and engagement. The Council has invested in technology to make these Orders available online, and paper copies remain available to those who require them.

There is a need to regularly review the Orders and to consolidate into one main order. The processes and systems used for this purpose are outdated and require an overhaul.

### What we will do:

- Commission a full review and development of new processes and systems to ensure the Council is meeting its legal obligations.
- Identify opportunities to use technology to integrate systems and provide a single customer facing portal for information and interrogating public record

**Southend-on-Sea Borough Council**

**Report of Executive Director Neighbourhoods and Environment**

To

**Cabinet**

on

**28 July 2020**

Report prepared by:

Sharon Harrington

Head of Traffic, Asset Management & Highways Network

**8**

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**Highways Restructure Funding Request**

Relevant Scrutiny Committee  
Place Scrutiny Committee  
Neighbourhoods and Environment  
Cabinet Member: Councillor Woodley

A Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

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**1. Background**

- 1.1 A restructure of the service has been developed with an objective of ensuring best value, and that the service is meeting Council wide aspirations and priorities. The new proposed structure draws together teams previously part of Highways and Civil Engineering, into the Traffic & Highways Team.
- 1.2 To achieve the objectives, a range of revised job descriptions have now been through the Evaluation & Confirmation process, with agreement reached on the role salary grades and associated costs.
- 1.3 This report is requesting the additional funding required to support the new structure.
- 1.4 As expectations and demands on the service change, a new project to review how the service operates continues. This proposal will enable the Council to match its people resources to the new demands and ways of working. A core feature of this new structure is empowering teams and appropriate delegated tiered management to make timely and informed decisions.
- 1.5 To ensure key corporate priorities are achieved it remains imperative that the resources available are properly targeted and aligned to deliver better outcomes, including achieving best value.
- 1.6 It is anticipated that with additional investment, the Council will be better placed to achieve its aspirations in respect of the road network, including planning for growth, exploring revenue generating opportunities and identifying areas where savings can be made.

## **2. Recommendations**

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Approve the increased budget to fund the new service in line with the Council's Vision and Aspirations. This investment will ensure that the views and needs of our customers, residents and businesses are at the heart of the service.
- 2.2 The additional request for funding to support the new structure in 2020/21 will be met from the business transformation reserve with future year's expenditure being incorporated as part of the budget setting for 2021/22 onwards

## **3. Service changes**

- 3.1 The new service will remove the large number of temporary management arrangements including the use of agency/interims, officers on fixed term contract and acting up arrangements. It will increase capacity and expertise, providing a more robust structure to support the delivery of the changing demands on the service. A key focus of the new team structure will be understanding the existing service needs, identifying and implementing new commercial opportunities. As part of the restructure there will be a need to recruit some interim support to ensure the service continues to operate whilst key posts are recruited. This will be limited and released at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.2 The structure will see an increase from 61 to 76 FTE posts to support the statutory duties the Council must deliver in regard to highways requirements. The service has in recent years been under resourced which has resulted in difficulties delivering core functions in a timely and efficient manner.
- 3.3 The Council, as the highway authority, has a statutory duty to protect and assert the rights of the public to use and enjoy the highway network (roads and paths). The Highways Enforcement team will deal with all highway obstructions (but not parking and movement related contraventions, which are investigated by the Civil Parking Enforcement team) and offences relating to temporary structures and other items on the highway.
- 3.4 The new structure also focusses on providing additional Engineers to support the delivery of the multitude of civil engineering projects that are required for the regeneration of Southend. Engineers are in high demand globally and Southend has in recent times struggled to retain officers. As such the career graded structure that has been proposed is designed to support, attract, and retain suitably qualified and experienced Engineers.
- 3.5 The Council undertakes a range of functions in terms of Major Project, Highways and Traffic activities. Over recent years there has been a number of changes to positions within this service area, functions have moved into different arrangements and there have been shifts in demand. It has become necessary to review the current structure to ensure it continues to meet demand and provide an effective service to the community.

- 3.6 The purpose of this report is to request additional funding to support the proposed changes that will ensure the Council is able to deliver its vision and priorities by effectively managing, realigning, and deploying resources effectively.
- 3.7 The proposals are part of the Council's wider agenda and supports the five priorities for Southend;
- Pride & Joy
  - Safe & Well
  - Active & Involved
  - Opportunity & Prosperity
  - Connected and Smart
- 3.8 Throughout the lifetime of this new service there will be a need to recruit additional Graduate Engineers who will be associated with specific projects. These officers will be solely funded through capital funds and will not have an impact on the core revenue budget.
- 3.9 The enforcement policy is expected to propose a significant increase in highway enforcement activity. It is anticipated that this could be self-financing through the generation of enforcement revenue. This assessment and conclusion will be driven by a comprehensive strategic review as existing enforcement is not currently delivered efficiently or effectively. The current arrangements fail to meet the demands and expectations of the borough.
- 3.10 As already referenced, the Council has had difficulty in retaining Engineers which has put a strain on the delivery of multiple projects to time and within budget. The new structure increases engineering capacity and proposes a career graded approached and training arrangements to support Southend in attracting and retaining the required knowledge and expertise.

#### **4. Options**

If the additional funding is not approved; it must be noted that:

- the service will not be able to deliver robust enforcement which is strongly required as the damage being caused on the highway by the public should be discouraged and where necessary costs of damage recovered. This includes the management of utility companies who are digging up our roads and pavements
- the service will not be able to carry out its statutory duties in a timely and efficient manner
- there is a high risk of turnover of engineers that could delay and also increase the costs of major schemes being implemented
- there will be a need to review the expectations of service delivery and non-statutory duties may not be undertaken in a timely fashion.

## **5. Financial Implications**

The current structure contains 61 FTE's at a total cost of £2.839m. Of this amount, £1.187m is budgeted to be charged to the capital programme (42%).

If the new structure of 79.7 FTE's was to be recruited at the bottom scale point for all roles, the cost would be £3.740m. At the highest scale point the value would be £4.273m.

Of this amount, a proportion will be expected to be charged to the capital programme and a separate piece of work is underway to estimate this. However for comparison, if 42% was expected to be capitalised again then the revenue increase in the budget would be £570k at the lowest scale points and £880k at the highest. The roles in this new structure will also create an opportunity to collect income via enforcement which currently isn't undertaken due to a lack of resources.

The interim staff required whilst the new structure is embedded and any additional resource for new appointments in 2020/21 will require funding from the business transformation reserve and a sum of £150,000 is being set aside for this purpose.

The additional full year revenue costs of the new structure from 2021/22 will form part of the budget setting for that year and will be in the region of circa £570k to £880k

## **6. Legal Implications**

The new structure will help the Council to deliver its statutory powers and duties in respect of the road network, particularly where liabilities for damage or loss rest with the Council, as Highway Authority.

## **7. People Implications**

N/A

## **8. Property Implications**

N/A

## **9. Consultation**

In line with the policy and process; consultation with those affected by its proposals and their Trade Union representatives in a fair and meaningful way will be undertaken.

## **10. Equalities and Diversity Implications**

It will be important as the Council's Policy approach is developed, that proposals are subject to appropriate equalities and diversity impact assessments to ensure that the key principles of a safe, fair, consistent and transparent service are adhered to.

**11. Risk Assessment**

N/A

**12. Value for Money**

The proposals to create a more resilient and permanent structure that covers Major Projects, Traffic, Parking and the Highways Service will provide a more responsive, resilient, effective and efficient service. The introduction of the revised structure will also provide clear responsibilities and accountabilities, together with improving productivity and efficiency of delivery to provide better value for money for the public purse.

**13. Community Safety Implications**

N/A.

**14. Environmental Impact**

N/A.

**15. Background Papers**

None.

**15. Appendices**

None

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