

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director Neighbourhoods and Environment

To

Cabinet

On

16 June 2020

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

Agenda
Item No.

3

Parking Review 2020

Relevant Scrutiny Committee(s): Place Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Councillor Ron Woodley

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

Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This Report:

- a) Provides an update on progress made against the Cabinet Report of 5 November 2019.
- b) Explores the risks and opportunities from the COVID-19 emergency.
- c) Seeks approval for a new Parking Review 2020 Project Plan.
- d) Update on the introduction of the Key worker permit (temporary)

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- a) notes the updates and approves the revised Parking Review Project Plan as described in this Report
- b) supports efforts to expand the function of the Traffic and Parking Working Party to act as a monitoring and advisory panel for the Project Management Team.

3 Background

3.1 On 5 November 2019, Cabinet approved the recommendations in the report (Place) titled 'Parking Review – Scope'.

3.2 The Report proposed 6 policy projects to be taken forward.

- a) Resident Permit Scheme (Southend Permit/Pass)

- b) Approach to charging and zoning for parking in car parks
- c) Policy on Pavement Parking
- d) Policy on parking enforcement and to tackling persistent parking fine evaders
- e) Policy on Electric Vehicles (EV) car clubs and charging points
- f) Introduce policy relating to how people pay for parking

3.3 To date, the team has been focussed on drawing together data and evidence to inform each of the project areas.

Service Update

3.4 Since the report was approved in 5 November 2019, the Head of Service has revised the Project Team and appointed a consultant to undertake a scoping exercise and 'gap analysis' of the service.

3.5 A key recommendation of the report was that a policy driver was required to give the service a clear direction. This should be taken forward as a 'policy statement', which could be produced much sooner than a full Parking Strategy.

3.6 It was further recommended that the function of the Traffic & Parking Working Party be reviewed, to draw together Officers and Elected Members, providing oversight and guidance as the projects move forward.

3.7 The remaining recommendations are being reviewed by the Head of Service, and a service plan is being developed to drive them forward.

3.8 There has also been an introduction of a key worker permit in May 2020. These permits are being issued for a period of three months (expiry date 18/8/20); with a view to review whether the permit is kept available for a longer timeframe but with the list of key workers reduced. The introduction of this permit has been considered in line with the messaging from Government indicating that key workers should use a car where possible; therefore it could be assumed that many don't use their car normally.

COVID-19

3.9 The response to COVID-19 has been unprecedented, short term impacts are primarily limited to revenue.

3.10 Longer term impacts are largely unknown; however, the following notes and assumptions have helped focus the proposals in this Report.

COVID-19 Impacts on Parking

3.11 Government anticipates that, at least in the short term, capacity on Public Transport will be significantly reduced. At the time of writing, advice is to avoid public transport and either drive, walk or cycle.

3.12 A £2bn fund was announced in February 2020, to support local authorities to implement social distancing measures and infrastructure improvements for walking and cycling.

- 3.13 It is anticipated there will be a significant increase in demand for parking, and that the infrastructure for wider footways and cycling infrastructure will reduce available capacity into the longer term.

Revised Project Plan

3.14 Parking Policy Statement

- 3.15 A Parking Policy Statement will provide direction for the service for the period up to delivery of a Parking Strategy and provide for policy revisions to understand and support the short-term initiatives to support the recovery from COVID-19.

- 3.16 The Statement will be drafted, and stakeholder engagement undertaken in June 2020, with a report submitted to Cabinet for approval at the July 2020 meeting.

3.17 Southend Pass

- 3.18 Elected Members have previously indicated a desire to provide residents a concession for parking within the borough, promoting use of services, leisure, and retail offerings, and a 'shop local' message.

- 3.19 Officers are working to understand the financial impact of permits, in the short and long term, with consideration being given to the introduction of permit for residents to support businesses and the rejuvenation of the town centre.

- 3.20 A set of options will be submitted to Cabinet for approval at the July 2020 meeting, for implementation in at the earliest opportunity, in 2020

3.21 Policy Review

- 3.22 If approved, the Parking Policy Statement will provide 'holding' policies, giving the service the opportunity to review historic data against the 'new normal' as COVID-19 restrictions are relaxed, and develop new policies for implementation alongside the new Parking Strategy. The parking strategy will be developed in line with Local Plans and the Transport Strategy.

- 3.23 Key policies will include:

- Car Clubs
- Electric Vehicle Charging
- Fees & Charges (including cashless parking options)
- Pavement Parking
- Persistent Evaders and Offenders
- Traffic Regulation Orders – policy and review (including Controlled Parking Zones)

- 3.24 A programme of work will be developed, which will provide for policies to be considered in tandem with the Parking Strategy.

3.25 Parking Strategy

- 3.26 A Specification for the new Parking Strategy is being developed, and will be informed and updated throughout 2020, with a view to procuring resources to deliver it in early 2021.
- 3.27 The Strategy will be supported by a series of sub-documents, including relevant assessments, policies, and an Implementation Plan.
- 3.28 The Implementation Plan will set out a new series of projects to deliver on all obligations and aspirations relevant to Parking, particularly focussed on the Southend 2050 vision.
- 3.29 Informed by a series of stakeholder and public engagement, it is anticipated the final Parking Strategy and associated sub-documents will be submitted to Cabinet for approval in Spring/Summer 2021.
- 3.30 Contracts Review
- 3.31 Several key contracts held by the Highways and Transport division are due to expire in 2020/21. This review will consider existing arrangements, benchmarking against similar authorities and market testing, with a view to developing recommendations for new procurement exercised.
- 3.32 It is anticipated that the longer-term impact of this review will be a reduction in operating costs and improved customer service. Linked to the Policy Review, opportunities will be highlighted to future proof contracts, procure jointly or separate elements where considered appropriate.
- 3.33 The programme of work will be prioritised based on the date of expiry and the value and complexity of the contract.
- 3.34 Indicative Programme

Project	Milestone	Delivery Date
Key Workers Permit (temporary)	Cabinet	May 2020
Parking Policy Statement	Drafting / Stakeholder Engagement	June 2020
	Cabinet	July 2020
Southend Pass	Scheme Drafting	June 2020
	Cabinet	July 2020
	Implementation	TBD
Policy Review	Review / Policy Drafts	June 2020 – December 2020
	Stakeholder Engagement / Public Consultation	As Parking Strategy
Parking Strategy	Cabinet	As Parking Strategy
	Specification	June 2020 --August 2020
	Stakeholder Engagement	August 2020
	Market Test	August 2020
	Procurement	September 2020 – October 2020
	Strategy Development	December 2020 – March 2021
	Stakeholder Engagement / Public Consultation	March 2021
Cabinet	March 2021	
		April 2021

Contracts Review	TBD	As required
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4. Other Options

4.1 Cabinet could decide to revise the programme or scope, or abandon elements.

5. Reasons for Recommendations

5.1 Following the Service Updates in Part 3.4 – 3.6 of this report, the revised project plan has been developed to ensure it is deliverable with the ongoing uncertainties.

5.2 The revised project plan also ensures proposals and decisions are supported by robust strategic direction linked to corporate objectives and aspirations, with input from Elected Representatives, public and key worker consultations where appropriate.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

6.2 The Road Map for 2020 focuses on Town Centres and an integrated transport provision. The projects proposed in this Report will set the theme, immediate and longer-term direction for the Service.

6.3 Financial Implications

6.4 With the exception of the Parking Strategy delivery, it is anticipated all other projects will be delivered within the existing budget, including that allocated to consultant support. A budget for the Parking Strategy will need to be developed alongside the Specification.

6.5 Legal Implications

6.6 The Transport Act 2000 requires the Council to produce a Local Transport Plan, it is proposed the Parking Strategy will be a sub-document of the LTP, providing a focussed programme of work for road infrastructure and use.

6.7 Contracts will be procured in line with Council policies and procedures.

6.8 People Implications

6.9 It is anticipated existing people resources will be utilised to support and inform projects. The requirement for support in delivery of the Parking Strategy will be developed alongside the Specification.

6.10 Property Implications

6.11 There are no immediate property implications, however, the output could include proposals to dispose of, renovate, repurpose or procure parking assets.

6.12 Consultation

- 6.13 Stakeholder engagement and public consultation will be undertaken to meet Council policy and statutory requirements.
- 6.14 Equalities and Diversity Implications
- 6.15 An impact assessment will be undertaken for each individual project.
- 6.16 Risk Assessment
- 6.17 The project team will maintain a risk register, which will be reviewed, and actions agreed at regular project governance meetings. Where appropriate, risks will be escalated to the Corporate Risk Register.
- 6.18 Value for Money
- 6.19 All projects identified in this report have an aspiration to deliver best value for the Council. It is anticipated there will be efficiencies found during the contracts and policy reviews, with new revenue generating opportunities identified in the strategic documents.
- 6.20 Community Safety Implications
- 6.21 Traffic regulations and enforcement are tools for the Council to respond to safety concerns on the road network. Without the significant review proposed in this report, the absence of a strategic approach could result in the Council not identifying or responding to issues.
- 6.22 Environmental Impact
- 6.23 The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and made several commitments to reduce emissions. Traffic regulations are an essential part of this effort. The strategic documents will explore how the Council could better use its regulation and enforcement powers to improve air quality.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 Cabinet Report, 5 November 2019