

Arun District Council

REPORT TO:	Environment Committee, 17 November 2022
SUBJECT:	Parking Services Review
LEAD OFFICER:	Nat Slade, Group Head of Technical Services
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor David Edwards
WARDS:	All

CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:

To seek to identify the best way of using the Council's car park assets to deliver the Arun Council Vision 2022-2026 aims:

Fulfilling Arun's economic potential

Supporting our environment to support us

DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:

The Council's recently adopted Off-Street Parking Strategy established the vision for the Council's Parking Service: "We will provide safe, well-maintained car parks that meet the needs of residents, shoppers and visitors to Arun, providing support for economic growth, promoting a sustainable environment and creating a positive parking experience." This report seeks authority to commission a review of the Council's Parking Services to obtain specific recommendations on how to deliver this vision and the elements within the strategy:

- Appropriate management and charging structures to support vitality and economic growth;
- Providing safe parking;
- Investment to provide well-maintained car parks;
- Promoting a sustainable environment;
- Providing support for economic growth, and;
- A positive parking experience.

The income generation principles are in line with the commercialisation and income generation strategy's objectives which is currently being developed. The strategy focuses on maximising current income sources that are sustainable in the longer term; and on developing quality chargeable services that meet the needs of the customer and whereby full cost are recovered by the Council.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

The review would be commissioned, and the cost is expected to be in the region of £40,000. The expected cost is containable within existing budgets.

The purpose of the review is to recommend how best to use the car park assets to deliver the strategic aims set out in the Council's Vision directly through service provision, and indirectly by optimising the revenue it generates from these assets.

It is therefore considered to be an investment that will yield increases in revenue. The proposed review will include benchmarking of the income the council receives from its assets and recommend what levels of revenue the Council should expect to generate from its assets. Alongside a review of the fee setting process, the review is expected to optimise the revenue it generates from its assets. The proposed review will consider existing and future levels of car parking demand and provide recommendations on any development or disposal options for existing car park sites and whether any new car parks should be developed. The financial implications of any such recommendations would need further detailed consideration before any decisions on specific recommendations from the review are taken forward.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek the Committee's agreement to commission consultants to undertake a review of the Council's Parking Services that will make recommendations for Committee to consider in future. Furthermore, to set out the proposed scope of the review. The purpose of the review itself is to seek recommendations on how the Council's car park assets can best contribute to the delivery of the Council's Vision directly through service provision, and indirectly by generating revenue to support the revenue needs of the wider Council.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That committee agree:
 - 1) that a Parking Services Review be commissioned, and;
 - 2) the scope of the Parking Services Review (as set out in paragraphs 4.5 – 4.18)

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1 The Council's car parks are important assets for directly contributing to the delivery of the Council's Vision aims, and indirectly through generating revenue to support delivery of other Council services.
- 3.2 This report sets out a proposal to commission a review of the Council's off-street parking services to make recommendations on how to obtain best value from these assets. The recommendations from the proposed review would be reported back to the Environment Committee for consideration and implementation.

4. DETAIL

- 4.1 The Council operates 28 car parks, 3 in shared ownership. London Road coach & lorry park has been marketed for disposal. Banjo Road and Mewsbrook car parks have coach bays within them. In addition, there are some smaller parking facilities attached to some Council owned public open spaces. The car parks provide a vital service to residents and the local economy facilitating visits by people from outside the district, helping to support the tourism sector.
- 4.2 The car parks are defined as short stay, long stay, seasonal or free depending on their location and charging structure. The short stay and long stay car parks are within town centres whilst the seasonal car parks are mainly on the seafront and have summer and winter charging structure.
- 4.3 The Council's gross off-Street pay and display income for 2021/22 was £1,329,300. Income from permits for using seasonal and town centre car parks generated gross income of £61,530 in 2021/22. Income from Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) for 2021/22 was £109,000 which is exclusively for re-investment into the delivery of parking services. The Council incurs costs in managing the parking services, planned and reactive maintenance of its car parks and on improvement initiatives. Net income derived from the Council's car parks is significant in helping to fund delivery of other Council services which contribute to delivering the Council's vision.
- 4.4 In November 2021 the Environment Committee approved an Off-Street Parking Strategy which established the Parking Services vision. It is proposed that to inform how the Council's vision, and the Parking Services vision is best delivered a review be commissioned to make recommendations. The recommendations would then be presented to the Environment Committee for their consideration.
- 4.5 The proposed scope of the review is set out as follows:
- 4.6 How to make best use of the car park assets to support delivery of the Council's Vision.
- 4.7 How to increase revenue from the assets whilst also facilitating economic development and the interests of other stakeholders.
- 4.8 Analyse current usage of existing car and coach parks to establish current levels of demand.
- 4.9 Forecast how demand will change over the next 15 years.
- 4.10 Use the usage analysis and future demand forecasting and an appraisal of the sites' development potential to make recommendations on our parking capacity, and whether there are viable opportunities for acquisition of new sites or disposal and/or development of existing sites.
- 4.11 Benchmarking of parking services, charging levels and revenues against neighbouring Council areas.

- 4.12 Engaging with key stakeholders including as a minimum all town and relevant parish councils, WSCC, Arundel Chamber of Commerce, Bognor Regis BID, Littlehampton Traders Association, Bognor Regis Regeneration Board, Butlins, Harbour Park, Chichester University, Freedom Leisure, Arundel & Downland Community Leisure Trust, and coach operators.
- 4.13 Make recommendations about how the Council's car parks can contribute to delivering the Council's Carbon Neutral Strategy 2022 -2030.
- 4.14 The usage analysis and forecasts, benchmarking and stakeholder input to help inform recommendations on optimal charging structures for each car park. The scope of this to consider all concessionary, permit and disc parking schemes, hours and levels of charging.
- 4.15 Designing a methodology for reviewing future years charging levels, ensuring the scope of charging is both practical and effective in increasing revenue to the organisation whilst supporting economic growth.
- 4.16 Consider the existing coach parking/drop-off facilities and recommend what type, scale and location of facilities should be provided by the Council in the future.
- 4.17 Review the condition, layout and use of space to optimise revenue, design, accessibility and safety in line with the guidance from the British Parking Association.
- 4.18 Review the Council's current use of technology and identify and make recommendations on relevant opportunities for new use of technology including but not limited to for example automatic number plate recognition and sensors that assist with enforcement, monitoring and managing capacity and usage including free car parks, payment methods etc.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Consultation has not been undertaken as part of the process of preparing this report for decision. If Committee agree that a review should be commissioned, the specification will require the Reviewer to engage with and seek the views of all key stakeholders including Town/Parish Councils, West Sussex County Council, Safer Arun Partnership and Bognor Regeneration Board. These views will be considered by the Reviewer when preparing their recommendations.

6. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- 6.1 Not to undertake a review of Parking Services. Opportunities for using these assets to deliver Council Vision aims and opportunities for revenue generation may go unrealised.
- 6.2 Undertake an internal review. There is currently insufficient capacity within the Council to undertake the review.

7. COMMENTS BY THE INTERIM GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER

7.1 The Financial Summary of the report states the planned review can be accommodated from within existing budgets. There is no increase in total Council spending. The financial implications of any recommendations arising from the review will be reported to Members when these are known.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 The following risks and mitigations have been identified.

- Risk of costs exceeding available budget. Soft market testing has been undertaken and indicates that it should be possible to have the work delivered from within existing budgets.
- Risk of being unable to find a consultant with the necessary skills and expertise with availability. Soft market testing has been undertaken which indicates this should not be an issue.
- Risk that the review does not identify deliverable recommendations that will increase revenue and contribute to the delivery of the council's vision aims. This is considered unlikely given the broad scope of the review.

9. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER

9.1 In accordance with section 32 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, the Council has the power to provide car parks. Section 35 of the Act allows the Council to make orders in respect of parking places for their conditions of use and the charges that apply.

9.2 The use of any surplus from penalty charge notices relating to off-street parking is governed by Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 which specifies that the surplus may be used for:

(a) the making good to the general fund of any amount charged to that fund (to make good any deficit in the Special Parking Account) in the 4 years immediately preceding the financial year in question;

(b) meeting all or any part of the cost of the provision and maintenance by the local authority of off-street parking accommodation, whether in the open or under cover;

(c) the making to other local authorities or to other persons of contributions towards the cost of the provision and maintenance by them, of off-street parking accommodation, whether in the open or under cover;

(d) if it appears to the local authority that the provision in their area of further off-street parking accommodation is unnecessary or undesirable, the following purposes-

- i. meeting costs incurred, whether by the local authority or by some other person, in the provision or operation of, or of facilities for, public passenger transport services,
- ii. the purposes of a highway or road improvement project in the local authority's area,
- iii. in the case of a London authority, meeting costs incurred by the authority in respect of the maintenance of roads maintained at the public expense by them,
- iv. the purposes of environmental improvement in the local authority's area, in the case of such local authorities as may be prescribed, any other purposes for which the authority may lawfully incur expenditure.

10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 10.1 There is insufficient internal capacity to undertake the proposed review, following the retirement of the Parking and Customer Services Manager in September 2022.
- 10.2 Commissioning an external review will have no adverse impact on internal capacity to continue to deliver the existing services.

11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

- 11.1 Any recommendations by the review regarding future design or layouts must have regard to the British Parking Association guidance.

12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

- 12.1 The proposed review will consider whether car park redesign, layout change, or if development of car parks would better assist in delivering the Council's Vision aims and if new car parks should be developed. The Council's Property, Estates and Facilities team will be consulted as part of that process e.g. to advise on site constraints and any opportunities which may already have been explored. If disposals, leases, or acquisitions are recommended by the review, the Economy Committee will also be advised. Recommendations may also have implications for the planned maintenance programme which is developed and delivered by the Property, Estates and Facilities Team. These implications will be assessed and presented to the relevant committee as part of taking forward any specific recommendation in the future.
- 12.2 The proposed review will take account of any relevant projects under development at the time which may affect the Council's car park assets.

13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE

- 13.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions to have due regard to:
 - i. the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010,

- ii. the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not; and
- iii. foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

13.2 The Council is committed to all of the above which will be considered and included within the parking strategy as it is developed improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all residents in respect of socio-economic and health determinants.

13.3 The EIA for the review identifies positive impacts for the following protected groups:

- Age – any vulnerable person, regardless of age will be able to access suitable parking for their needs.
- Disability – any person with a disability, regardless of their disability will be able to access suitable parking for their needs.

14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE

14.1 The scope of the review includes a request for recommendations on how the car park assets can contribute to delivering the Council's Carbon Neutral Strategy 2022 -2030.

15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

15.1 Twenty-five of the Council's car parks currently hold the "Park Mark" award. The Safer Parking Scheme is managed by the British Parking Association (BPA) on behalf of Police Crime Prevention Initiatives Ltd. A Park Mark is awarded to parking facilities that have met the requirements of a risk assessment conducted by local police. These requirements mean the parking operator has put measures in place to help deter criminal activity and anti-social behaviour, thereby doing everything they can to prevent crime and reduce the fear of crime in their parking facility.

15.2 Good design, effective lighting, CCTV and increasing their use can be useful in deterring crime and anti-social behaviour.

15.3 Any recommendations made by the Reviewer for changes to the layout and design of the Council's car parks must have regard to the British Parking Association's guidance.

15.4 Stakeholder engagement with the community safety team and 'Safer Arun Partnership' (the statutory local partnership with responsibility for reducing crime and disorder) will assess potential issues.

16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

16.1 No human rights impacts have been identified from this review beyond the accessibility impacts summarised in Section 13.

17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

17.1 The findings and recommendations of the proposed review will be reported back to Committee in a public session.

17.2 Any personal data will be handled in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations.

CONTACT OFFICER:

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

[Council Vision 2022 - 2026 | Arun District Council](#)

[Off Street Parking Strategy 2021-2026 | Arun District Council](#)

[Carbon neutral strategy | Arun District Council](#)

[Car parks | Arun District Council](#)

Equalities Impact Assessment