

Arun District Council

REPORT TO:	Environment Committee, 7 September 2023
SUBJECT:	Two Hour Town Centre Parking Schemes
LEAD OFFICER:	Karl Roberts, Interim CEO and Director of Growth
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Sue Wallsgrove, Chair of Environment Committee
WARDS:	All

CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:

Helping to improve the social, economic, and environmental wellbeing of the district by supporting footfall into the town centres through a 2-hour free virtual permit system.

The proposed changes support the Carbon Neutral Strategy 2022-2030 by reducing and then eliminating the production, storage, and distribution of approximately 55,000 cardboard parking discs each year.

DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:

The proposed changes support the Off-Street Parking Strategy 2021–2026 by continuing to review our charging structure to consider the changing needs of residents, visitors, and businesses within the district.

The Off-Street Parking Strategy sets out a framework within which detailed policies are developed to achieve the vision for parking. This proposal aims to employ enhanced technology and information to improve the customer experience, alongside implementing appropriate management and structures to support vitality and economic growth.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

Arun District Council (ADC) is working with current software providers to support the implementation of virtual permits within the current contract parameters. An up to 10p per permit transaction fee will be incurred by the Council for every virtual permit purchased. Discs are more expensive at approximately 17p per unit. Depending on the ratio of take up of virtual permit : cardboard disc, the cost is likely to be between £4,500 and £6,750 per annum per annum based on an estimated number of permits issued of 45,000.

Expenditure in relation to the promotion of the schemes through virtual and paper formats is anticipated to be contained within existing budgets.

The financial contributions currently received annually are £21,000 from Bognor Regis Town Council and £28,500 from Littlehampton Town Council. The proposal commits to equal financial status for both Bognor Regis and Littlehampton Town Councils at a contribution of £21,000 for each Town Council for an initial two-year agreement. Under the proposal, contributions from both the Littlehampton Traders Partnership Ltd (LTP) and the Bognor Regis Business Improvement District (BID) would cease. This further reduces annual income by £6,600 and £5,000, respectively.

If agreement on contributions from the Town Councils cannot be reached the proposed £2 administration fee will need to be increased accordingly by £1 per annum.

The LTP have had challenges collecting the agreed contributions from retailers towards the scheme. Currently there is an outstanding debt of £22,000 owed to Arun District Council. The Partnership has £7,230 in reserve to cover some of the outstanding monies, but advise the rest is likely to be uncollectable. The LTP have advised that they have considered dissolving the Partnership because of their inability to collect and pay the £22,000 debt to ADC. As part of this proposal, the LTP have been requested to pay £7,230 from the total amount owed. Committee is being asked to write off the balance.

The estimated total annual income in admin fees for both scheme's is anticipated to be approximately £72,000. This is based on the Bognor Regis BID sales figures for 21/22 of 24,780 cardboard parking discs and an estimate of the number that will be sold in Littlehampton (after deductions for VAT and transaction fees).

The virtual permits are expected to eliminate lost revenue from misuse of the current cardboard disc schemes. The proposal is expected to reduce misuse in its first year and eliminate misuse in its second year of operation. During a one-day survey 18 vehicle owners were found to have moved the clock on their disc forward. Extrapolating this produces an annual figure of 6,570 occasions of misuse which represents significant revenue loss to Arun District Council across both schemes.

There is currently no means of identifying the use of the cardboard discs at either the Littlehampton scheme or the Bognor Regis scheme, nor therefore the revenue that the Council foregoes. After considering the partner contributions, if each disc obtained by members of the public is used on one occasion each year for less than one hour the current schemes cost Arun a total of £28,000 per annum in foregone revenue. If each disc is used once per month for less than one hour the current schemes cost Arun a total of £935,500 per annum in foregone revenue. The absence of financial loss information makes it impossible for Arun District Council to make fully informed decisions about the schemes, nor to promote their inferred contribution to supporting footfall in the town centre. Virtual permits will provide usage information which will enable the Council to make more fully informed decisions in the future.

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek the Committee's approval to continue to offer 2-hour free parking schemes in both Littlehampton and Bognor Regis after the existing schemes expire at the end of 2023. This report sets out proposed changes to the form of the 2-hour free parking schemes. To also seek Committee approval to write-off the balance outstanding from the Littlehampton Trader's Partnership owed as part of the existing 2-hour scheme in Littlehampton.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Committee delegate authority to the Group Head of Technical Services to implement a further 2 hour free town centre virtual parking permit scheme administered by Arun District Council effective 1 January 2024 in Bognor Regis and, to enter into and implement any further agreement with Bognor Regis Town Council, to make any necessary changes to Arun District Council's Parking Orders and to take any other actions necessary to enable the scheme to take effect. The scheme will include virtual permits and cardboard discs in 2024 before moving to virtual permits only from 1 January 2025.
- 2.2 That Committee delegate authority to the Group Head of Technical Services to implement a further 2 hour free town centre virtual parking permit scheme administered by Arun District Council effective 1 January 2024 in Littlehampton and, to enter into and implement any further agreement with Littlehampton Town Council, to make any necessary changes to Arun District Council's Parking Orders and to take any other actions necessary to enable the scheme to take effect. The scheme will include virtual permits and newly issued cardboard discs in 2024 before moving to virtual permits only from 1 January 2025.
- 2.3 That Committee endorse participation of the Chair of the Environment Committee and officers in a working group with Town Councils, the Bognor Regis Business Improvement District and Littlehampton Traders Partnership in a working group to advise on how the transfer to virtual only permit scheme in January 2025 is managed to provide assurance that elderly and vulnerable drivers' needs are sufficiently understood and accommodated.
- 2.4 That Committee approves the write-off of the balance of £14,770 that remains due from the Littlehampton Traders Partnership Ltd in financial contributions to Arun District Council.

3.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1 The Council, with partners, operate 2-hour parking schemes in Littlehampton and Bognor Regis to support town centre footfall. The current 2-hour parking schemes in Bognor Regis and Littlehampton town centres both expire in 2023. This report sets out proposals to continue 2-hour parking schemes in each town centre beyond 2023.

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 The two 2 hour free parking schemes which operate in Bognor Regis and Littlehampton are the subject of five year agreements, both of which expire at the end of 2023. Without agreement from the Environment Committee on a replacement, 2 hour free parking in Bognor Regis and Littlehampton will end on 31 December 2023.

- 4.2 The Council operates 3 car parks in Littlehampton and a further 3 in Bognor Regis, covering 954 eligible pay and display spaces, within two separate schemes which allow customers to park for 2 hours free of charge. These 6 car parks provide a vital service to residents and the local economy, facilitating visits by people both inside and outside the district, helping to support the tourism and the local economy. The purpose of the schemes is to support footfall in the town centres.
- 4.3 Disc holders in each scheme display a cardboard disc showing the time of their arrival. The disc holder can stay for a maximum of two hours, with a no return restriction within one hour. The Littlehampton parking disc is valid continuously at no cost to customers, with no expiry date. The disc has remained largely unchanged since its introduction in 1997, so the data available on the number of discs in circulation at any given time is not available, though approximately 30,000 are distributed each year. In contrast, the Bognor Regis parking disc is valid from 1 January to 31 December each year at the cost of £2 to customers. The Bognor Regis Business Improvement District (BID) produce a new disc each year, invalidating the previous year's disc. Disc production in Bognor Regis is capped at 27,000 units per annum.
- 4.4 Both Town Councils pay to Arun District Council a yearly contribution towards the loss of parking revenue incurred by ADC. In addition to this, the Bognor Regis BID have also been paying a yearly contribution to ADC. A contribution was being made by the Littlehampton Traders Partnership, but due to challenges collecting the agreed contributions from retailers, a debt of £22,000 remains outstanding. Contributions have not increased since the schemes were introduced in Littlehampton in 1997 and in Bognor Regis in 2012.
- 4.5 At this time, there is the potential for the disc to be misused in the format it is currently. The terms do not prohibit disc holders from relocating their vehicle to an alternate car park or returning to the original car park for a further 2 hours free parking, allowing the user to park for free all day. This is not the intended purpose of the scheme and has a detrimental impact on the revenue generated by ADC car parks. There is also evidence that the discs are being abused by moving the time of arrival on the discs forward in both Littlehampton and Bognor Regis, resulting in lost parking revenue. Effective, efficient enforcement in these circumstances is challenging and impractical.
- 4.6 There are currently no accurate means of quantifying the usage of the discs, nor therefore the financial contribution made by Arun District Council to supporting town centre footfall by way of foregone parking revenue. The only data available is the number of parking discs sold in Bognor Regis and distributed free of charge in Littlehampton, but this does not provide information regarding their usage within participating car parks or their overall misuse.
- 4.7 Consequently, a proposal has been prepared to conclude the use of the current cardboard discs and progress to virtual permit systems in both the Littlehampton and the Bognor Regis schemes. This proposal achieves the schemes' purpose of supporting town centre footfall, enables Arun District Council to better manage and enforce the schemes and reduce their carbon and wider environmental impact. During the first year of the scheme cardboard discs will also be available

- to purchase for £2 from Arun Civic Centre and Bognor Regis Town Hall for those who prefer them.
- 4.8 This proposal does not depart from the tariff increase proposal set out in the Variation to Parking Charges Report which was agreed by the Environment Committee on 31 January 2023. The tariff increases implemented earlier this year do not affect this proposal.
- 4.9 The proposal is for new two-year agreements, one with Bognor Regis Town Council and the other with Littlehampton Town Council. Each scheme will enable participants to park free of charge for a 2-hour period in three town centre car parks and would operate from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2025. It is the intention to support a 2-hour free parking scheme for the next four years, but given the paucity of financial information currently available, it is recommended to make a 2-year agreement which enables a review to be carried out once further usage data becomes available.
- 4.10 In Littlehampton, the scheme will encompass three Arun District Council owned and operated car parks at Manor House, Anchor Springs and St Martins covering a total of 349 eligible pay and display spaces. Similarly, in Bognor Regis, the scheme will encompass three Arun District Council owned and operated car parks at Hothamton, Fittleet and Lyon Street covering a total of 605 eligible pay and display spaces. Customers will be able to purchase a virtual permit for either Littlehampton or Bognor Regis, which will be valid for the calendar year, with the administration fee of £2 (VAT inclusive) being paid to Arun District Council. In both schemes participants will be able to use their permit once per day. Arun District Council will administer the scheme using proven software already in use for issuing on-street and off-street parking permits in the district. The scheme will be advertised ahead of the go live date to promote uptake of the scheme. During the first year of the scheme cardboard discs will also be available to purchase for £2 from Arun Civic Centre and Bognor Regis Town Hall for those who prefer them.
- 4.11 Financial contributions from Bognor Regis Town Councils would be frozen at the current rate for this initial 2-year period, with contributions from Littlehampton Town Council reducing to the same level and contributions from Bognor Regis BID and the Littlehampton Traders Partnership ceasing altogether. If agreement on contributions from the Town Councils cannot be reached the proposed £2 administration fee will need to be increased accordingly by £1. The Littlehampton Traders Partnership will clear £7,230 of the outstanding balance and approval is sought from the Committee to write-off the remaining £14,770 owed to Arun District Council.
- 4.12 The proposal is for the introduction of virtual permits as a replacement for discs, with an emphasis on assisted self-serve and alternatives available for customers without smart phones. Moving to a virtual permit will enable customers to purchase permits online, 24 hours a day. A survey will be available to customers when purchasing the virtual permit to gather data on whether the customer resides within the Arun District Council district. The survey will not ask for exact location details. This will provide data on the reach of the scheme and whether customers from outside the district are coming to Littlehampton and Bognor

Regis town centres. Once purchased, customers with smart phones will use an app to activate the 2 hours of free parking. A reminder can be sent to the customer when the 2-hours of free parking is coming to an end and offers the opportunity for customers to purchase additional parking, encouraging customers to spend additional time supporting local businesses.

- 4.13 All cardboard parking discs currently in circulation for 2-hours free parking in Littlehampton and Bognor Regis Town Centre will become null and void from 1st January 2024. However, during the first year as a transitional arrangement, new cardboard discs will be available to purchase from Arun Civic Centre and Bognor Regis Town Hall.
- 4.14 Councils were reminded by the Secretary of State earlier in the year of their duty to ensure they do not discriminate in their decision making against older people or those with vulnerabilities. Cash remains legal tender and it will continue to be used in our daily lives by people who favour its accessibility and ease. The equalities implications of this proposal have been fully considered as part of the appended Equalities Impact Assessment. The proposal is considered to be fully compatible with the Council's equalities duties. Support will be available for those customers who need it during the set-up process and an automatic renewal of the permits would be configured to make it easy for customers. Customers without a smart phone would be directed to call a customer helpline number and this will be available to customers Monday-Friday 8-6, Saturday, and Sunday 8-4. The helpline number is a local rate, which most mobiles would usually have included within their call minutes package. During this call, the 2-hour free parking would be activated with the customer providing their vehicle registration details. Pay stations will remain in the car parks for any customers wishing to pay for additional parking using either cash or card.
- 4.15 The information available from the introduction of a virtual permit-based scheme would provide quantifiable data on the usage of the 2-hour free parking scheme and inferred impact on footfall within the town centre. The data collected through the virtual permit system would also ensure that more fully informed decisions can be taken regarding the scheme in the future. As detailed above, there is the potential of the current cardboard discs in circulation being misused by customers. By introducing virtual permit schemes, the schemes would be practical to enforce as it would be using proven software already in use for issuing permits in the district. Therefore, the potential for misuse of the two hour scheme would be eliminated from 1 January 2025.
- 4.16 One of the most important benefits of progressing to a virtual permit system is that it continues the 2-hour free parking scheme in the Littlehampton Town Centre. This is beneficial for the local businesses as well as encouraging tourism within the area. The continuation of the scheme is likely to encourage customers to stay local and the introduction of the parking app will make it easier for customers to purchase additional time in the car parks, without the urgency of returning to their vehicle to ensure they don't receive a Penalty Charge Notice. The proposals above would support more enforceable, efficient, and manageable parking schemes in both Littlehampton and Bognor Regis. In addition, under a virtual permit system, there will be no limit on the number of permits issued per year. This will have a positive impact on the number of

customers able to access the schemes which has the potential to generate additional footfall into the town centres. Virtual permits allow customers to purchase and amend their permits at any time during the day.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 Consultation has been undertaken with both Town Councils, the Bognor Regis BID, and the Littlehampton Traders Partnership. This took the form of early informal engagement and more recent formal consultation on the proposals which were revised following feedback received during the early engagement. Early engagement established interest in continuing to deliver 2 hour free town centre parking schemes and a common understanding of the limitations the disc approach entail. Littlehampton Traders Partnership also conceded they would be unable to commit to making contributions to a future scheme. During the course of the consultation with stakeholders it has become evident that some concerns remain regarding the accessibility of the virtual permits and it has been proposed that there would be benefit stakeholders participating in a working group during 2024.

5.2 The Bognor Regis BID has provided their response. They do not support the proposed scheme as they state it does not represent the best interests of businesses or the wider community and believe it is likely to contribute to reduced footfall in the town centre. Issues raised are summarised in italics with responses below each:

- *Businesses benefit from having people enter their businesses to purchase the discs.*
 - This benefit is limited to an annual purchase.
- *Digital exclusion.*
 - Those without smart phones can still purchase a virtual permit and activate it by any phone. The virtual permit system is already being used successfully for other on-street and off street car parks in the district. Staff will be available to assist customers at Bognor Regis Town Hall and Arun Civic Centre.
- *Restricted locations and hours for purchasing permits.*
 - The virtual permits can be purchased 24/7 from any location with internet access which is wider than the trading hours of existing disc retailers. In the transition year cardboard discs will be available Mon-Fri 0900-1600 with the exception of Wednesday which is open from 1100 from centrally located Bognor Regis Town Hall and Arun Civic Centre.
- *Cash cannot be used to purchase the annual permit*
 - Permits can be purchased by drivers with credit/debit cards / bank accounts. Cash can continue to be used to purchase standard priced parking tickets from all Arun's pay and display car parks. Cash purchases account for a decreasing proportion of car parking ticket purchases with customers increasingly preferring the convenience of App and contactless payment methods.
- *Misuse of the scheme will not be eliminated.*
 - The only examples of misuse the BID referenced (such as overstaying) are not specific to the two hour scheme and are readily enforceable.
- *Environmental impact is unquantified.*

- Agreed as this is one of the less significant benefits of the proposed scheme.
- *Equity between the Bognor Regis and Littlehampton schemes penalises Bognor Regis.*
 - The Bognor Regis partners have fully honoured their contributions which the Littlehampton Traders Partnership have been unable to in recent years. The Bognor Regis scheme does however include 256 more car parking spaces than in Littlehampton, and current partner contributions are lower than in Littlehampton.
- *The BID makes only negligible profit from the scheme but will need to adjust staffing levels as a consequence of the current scheme ceasing.*
 - Arun has software which is already in use to deliver virtual permits which can efficiently be used to deliver the scheme without the need to increase staff costs, making it a cost-effective way to deliver the scheme.
- *Objection to the use of the term “profits” made by the Bognor Regis BID and businesses who retail the Bognor Regis discs as misrepresentation, preferring “payments for services rendered” and “surplus revenues”.*
 - BRTC and BR BID’s correspondence during informal consultations has made reference to gross profits made by businesses retailing the discs of £9,250 in 2022.
- *The businesses retailing discs would no longer receive income for services rendered in the retail of discs.*
 - The purpose of the 2 hour parking scheme is to support town centre footfall, not to generate surplus revenues for partners from Arun’s foregone car park revenue.
- *The BID would no longer generate a surplus from the proposed scheme. The surpluses currently generated are reinvested in town centre improvement activity.*
 - The Bognor Regis BID have stated that the surplus revenue equates to less than £1,250 per annum, so the impact is unlikely to be significant.
- *There is insufficient information about the costs of delivering the proposed scheme.*
 - Cost information is set out in the Financial Summary section of this report. It highlights by far the largest cost being the car parking revenue the Council foregoes, that the current uncertainty about that is unsatisfactory, and that the proposed virtual permit schemes will address this.
- *Absence of genuine consultation.*
 - Partners have been consulted with informally since February via correspondence and several in person meetings on proposals which have evolved several times taking account of feedback provided.
- *Narrow focus of proposed working group.*
 - The proposed working group’s remit is to ensure that stakeholders are involved in how a move to a virtual only 2 hour permit scheme is delivered in January 2025 after a year during which both virtual permits and cardboard discs are available.

6.0 OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- 6.1 Taking account of feedback from early engagement with partners, Arun District Council has considered alternative options for the continuation of the 2-hour parking scheme.

1. Discontinue the 2-hour free parking scheme altogether.

- This would be financially advantageous to Arun District Council as additional revenue would be generated from the car parks within both town centres. However, Arun District Council currently have no quantifiable data on usage nor therefore on how this could affect footfall into the town centres. In any case parking charges are not intended to raise revenue and therefore this consideration carries less weight.

2. Increasing partner contributions significantly.

- Increasing the partner contributions significantly would have a negative impact on their ability to provide other services and may result in the partners pulling out of the scheme altogether, as it becomes unaffordable.

3. Increasing the disc/ permit price significantly.

- There is scope to increase the annual fee significantly and yet continue to represent excellent value for customers. Increasing the initial cost may adversely affect take up of the schemes which has the potential to reduce footfall into the town centres, but as Arun District Council currently have no quantifiable data on the usage it is not known to what extent.

4. Reducing the period of time parking is free from 2 hours to 1 hour.

- Reducing the free parking time from 2 hours to 1hour, may discourage uptake of the scheme and impact negatively on footfall by reducing the period of time scheme participants spend in the town centres. 1 hour would often not be sufficient for customers to get into the town centre and utilise the local amenities and businesses before needing to return to their vehicle to pay for additional parking.

5. Reducing the number of car parks within the scheme from 3 to 1 in both Littlehampton and Bognor Regis.

By removing two of the participating car parks from each scheme, this would significantly reduce the number of spaces available to scheme participants in the town centre. This would have a particularly detrimental impact to participants during the summer months, when demand for parking in the town centre is higher,

6. To continue the 2-hour free parking scheme in its current format.

- Continuing the 2-hour free parking schemes in their current format would continue to provide difficulties with enforcement and would not eradicate misuse of the schemes. Quantifiable data on usage and the benefit the schemes have on town centre footfall would remain unobtainable. The absence of usage data and foregone revenue information would make it impossible for Arun District Council to make fully informed decisions regarding the schemes, or to promote its inferred contribution to supporting footfall in the town centre. One of the partners cannot commit to fulfil their financial obligations under the current scheme.

7. To defer implementation of the proposed virtual permit schemes

- Delaying the introduction of the virtual permit scheme would not enable Arun District Council to obtain usage data in the interim. Any decision taken regarding the 2-hour free parking scheme in the future would need to be made with the same lack of data available today. One of the partners cannot commit to fulfil their financial obligations under the current scheme.

8. To move to a virtual permit system (only) on 1st January 2024

- This is considered to be consistent with the Council's equalities duties. However, some more elderly and vulnerable drivers may appreciate the additional option of a cardboard disc during for 2024 as a transitional arrangement.

9. Scratch cards

- Single-use scratch cards (where the date and time of parking are scratched off a card) reduce abuse, and provide more usage data than discs, but not as much as a virtual permit scheme. A scratch card scheme has significantly higher financial costs and environmental impacts than a virtual or cardboard disc scheme.

6.2 Having considered the above alternative options, with the exception of option 8, none of the above would prevent the misuse of the schemes by customers, provide accurate data on the usage of the schemes and would likely have a detrimental impact on either customer, businesses, Arun District Council partners or the environment. None of the above options would prevent the misuse of the schemes by customers.

6.3 Option 8 is the only option which immediately eradicates misuse, reduces environmental impact, and gathers usage and financial data without impinging on the effectiveness of the scheme as a tool for supporting town centre footfall.

6.4 The recommended option achieves all these benefits after the first transition year.

7.0 COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER

7.1 The full year costs of the proposals in this report are summarised in the table below:

Annual Income & Expenditure Summary	
Expenditure	£
Permit Transaction fees/Disc costs (mid-point of range)	5,600
Reduced scheme contribution – Littlehampton Town Council	7,000
Reduced scheme contribution – Littlehampton Traders Partnership	6,600
Reduced scheme contribution - Bognor Regis Business Improvement District	5,000
Total Expenditure	23,100

<u>Income</u>	
Scheme administration fees	(72,000)
Annual (Surplus)/Deficit	(47,800)

7.2 The amended scheme will generate an estimated additional surplus of £47,800 per annum. However, this figure will reduce in 2023/24 by £14,770 to allow for the write-off of the irrecoverable debt owed by Littlehampton Town Traders Ltd.

8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 The following risks and mitigations have been identified.

8.2 Risk of a reduction in uptake of the schemes, alongside a lack of awareness and support for transition to new virtual schemes. The schemes have been designed to ensure that any identified risks regarding economic impact and awareness are mitigated against. To assist with the change, the schemes will be advertised and promoted ahead of the proposed virtual permit activation date to ensure that all existing customers are aware of the changes and customers are aware of the schemes. Additional support will be available for customers in person at Littlehampton Civic Centre and Bognor Regis Town Hall. By introducing a virtual permit, there will be no limit on the number of permits issued each year which will have a positive impact on the number of customers able to access the schemes. In addition, virtual permits can be purchased and amended 24 hours a day, creating more efficient and convenient schemes for customers.

8.3 Risk of negative impact on older and vulnerable customers. The schemes have been designed to ensure that any potential impact on older and/ or disabled scheme users has been mitigated against. For mitigation, please see section 13.3.

9.0 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER

9.1 The Council is empowered by sections 32 to 35 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to provide off street parking places and to make Parking Orders relating to fees and charges. This report is about continuing the agreements with Littlehampton Town Council and Bognor Regis Town Council to provide limited free parking spaces in the relevant Car Parks with the Littlehampton Town Council and Bognor Regis Town Council making a financial contribution towards the cost of the limited free parking. Committee is able to agree the recommendations as long as committee is satisfied that the decision is reasonable. This means taking into account all the relevant considerations set out in the report (financial, equality, environmental and the parking strategy 2021-2026) and disregarding any irrelevant considerations.

10.0 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

10.1 The proposals to transfer the administration of the schemes to Arun District Council can be accommodated from within existing staffing. There are no other Human Resource Implications.

11.0 HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

11.1 There are no direct Health and Safety impacts from the proposals.

12.0 PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

12.1 The Council car parks require regular maintenance to ensure that they remain in a good and safe condition to be used by members of the public.

12.2 Maintenance is part funded from penalty charge notices and part funded from the Council's general revenue budget. Income from parking charges is needed to support the latter funding source.

13.0 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:

- the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010,
- the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not; and
- 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 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken which identifies that there is a minimal financial impact on the scheme users in the Littlehampton area. The admin charges for both schemes are designed to be equitable for both sides of the district and the charges are designed to be affordable for all. The administration fee provides exceptional value for money and would continue to encourage customers into the town centre. Most users would only have to use their virtual permits once in a year to reap the benefits of the schemes in both Littlehampton and Bognor Regis schemes. There will continue to be an option to purchase town centre and seasonal permits. All users of these permits will benefit for any length of stay in town centres or seasonal car park at a considerably reduced rate. There is not, therefore considered to be an adverse financial impact.

13.3 The virtual permit schemes have been designed to ensure that any identified risks are mitigated against and any potential impact on older and disabled scheme users are protected in both Littlehampton and Bognor Regis. As the new permit system is virtual, some customers may not have access to pay by phone apps on their phones. To accommodate all car park users and to ensure that all shoppers and visitors have access to the scheme, a helpline will be available to any customers unable to obtain their free parking via pay by phone apps. The helpline will be available to customers Monday-Friday 8-6, Saturday, and Sunday 8-4. Once called, the operator will be able to enter the customers vehicle registration details and initiate the free parking period. Customers will still be able to purchase additional parking via the Pay and Display machines situated in the car park. Staff will be available at the Civic Centre in Littlehampton and the Bognor Regis Town Hall to assist customers in person to set up a permit. Automatic renewals will be activated on these accounts to assist customers moving forward. There will continue to be an option to purchase town centre and seasonal permits. All users of these permits will benefit for any length of stay in town centres or seasonal car park at a considerably reduced rate. Holders of blue badges can continue to park for free all day in all the Council's off-street car parks, in any car parking space. There is not, therefore considered to be an adverse impact on protected characteristics. Nonetheless, during the first transitional year of the virtual permit scheme, it will be possible to purchase cardboard discs as an alternative.

14.0 CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE

14.1 The progression from cardboard discs to a virtual permit system would have a positive environmental impact. Currently, approximately 55,000 cardboard discs are being produced, stored, and distributed annually. By moving to a virtual permit system, the environmental impact would be significantly reduced.

15.0 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

15.1 All six of the participating 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 The proposal has no impact on crime and disorder.

16.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

16.1 The proposals do not adversely impact on human rights.

17.0 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

17.1 There are no specific Freedom of Information or Data Protection Consideration issues arising from the proposals of this report.

CONTACT OFFICER:

Name: Lisa Emmens

Job Title: Parking Services Manager

Contact Number: 01903 737643

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Equalities Impact Assessment

[Council Vision 2022 - 2026](#)

[Off Street Parking Strategy 2021-2026](#)

[Carbon Neutral Strategy 2022-2030](#)