

29 October 2020

Report of	Assistant Director Environment	Author	Richard Walker ☎ 507855
Title	Positive Parking Review		
Wards affected	All		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Panel will receive an update on the Positive Parking Review that has been undertaken to inform Colchester's Parking Strategy for the next five years. The strategy is in the process of being finalised to reflect feedback from public consultation before being taken to Cabinet for endorsement.
- 1.2 Implementation of the recommendations in the strategy will ensure the continued prosperity of the town and its shopping and business centres whilst mitigating the manageable factors that contribute towards environmental damage.
- 1.3 The strategy will set out the future of Colchester's carparks. This includes some adjustments to tariffs to manage demand and combines this with positive innovations that could offset increases for motorists who can subsequently adjust travel patterns and behaviour.

2. Action Required

- 2.1 To consider an update/presentation on progress with the strategy, and have the opportunity to ask questions before a final draft of the strategy is presented to Cabinet.

3. Reason for Action

- 3.1 Environmental impact is a key element of the Council's Parking Strategy

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 Not applicable

5. Background Information

- 5.1 Having adequate car parking facilities is particularly important in helping to deliver the Council's programme that supports regeneration of the town centre, helps manage air quality and reduce congestion, whilst seeking to improve the commercial vitality of the town, encourage greater footfall and to improve the public realm and streetscape enhancements. The supply and provision of adequate, accessible and good quality car parking is important to visitors and residents alike.
- 5.2 Following its Climate Emergency declaration, Colchester Borough Council must look at ways to influence motorist behaviour. A change on just one day a week could take a fifth of the traffic out of the peak, with consequent improvements in air quality, reductions in congestion and CO2 emissions. Small changes can reap rewards in terms of congestion

management.

- 5.3 The Council is also installing its first Electric Vehicle (EV) charging point in a shoppers and residential car park to encourage alternatives to internal combustion engine car travel, reducing air pollution at the point of use.
- 5.4 The quality and availability of off-street car parking, including realistic charges compared with other travel modes has an impact on the number of people visiting our towns and using the facilities they have to offer.
- 5.5 The Strategy sets out several recommendations which, if implemented, will assist in managing the issues above whilst continuing to support the economic vitality of the town centre in very challenging times.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 In revising any strategy there is a need to consider the impacts. The current EIA is in the process of being reviewed.

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 An effective Parking Strategy underpins the entire Strategic Plan in that it should seek to support economic prosperity, influence car usage to reduce the impact on the environment, promote healthy behaviours, active travel and alternatives etc and make our communities an attractive place to live, work and visit.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 Public consultation has been undertaken.

9. Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 A communications plan is in development to ensure the strategy is effectively communicated.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1 Off street car parks generate £3.6 million income per annum which is used to support other services provided by the Council. The impact of Covid will see this reduce by approximately £1.8m in 20/21. Future pricing strategy, alongside motorist behaviour, will influence income levels.

11. Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 An effective car parking strategy needs to take account of the potential crime and antisocial behaviour issues that can arise in car parks.

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 Not applicable

13. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 13.1 The proposed strategy recognises the environmental and climate change implications of car usage. However, there is a sensitive balance between unduly influencing car usage to impact negatively on the prosperity and vibrancy of the Town Centre.
- 13.2 Considering petrol/diesel car usage is necessary for the period covered by this strategy, it proposes to use tariffs to influence behaviour to limit the environmental impact such as higher charges during peak times. Where tariffs are adjusted, they could also be used to generate a revenue stream that could then be used for activity to offset the environmental impact of car usage.