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Ward (s) affected	All

Subject	Car Parking Review

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the progress made in delivering the Car Parking Strategy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2013, Executive approved the Council's 2013 – 2018 Parking Strategy, which was developed by the Scrutiny Committee Parking Panel. The Parking Panel continued to meet on an annual basis to review progress in the delivery of the strategy and to report to the Committee.

This report provides Executive with a more detailed outline about the improvements that have been made in the service through delivery of the car parking strategy, together with an update on some of the current key issues with the function and future challenges.

The strategic objectives for the function are set out in the Car Parking Strategy. They are:

- Listening to residents and our communities to understand their views on council car park provision;

- Helping residents to access the car parking services they need;

- Protecting the environment and character of Mole Valley through the appropriate provision and design of car parks;

- Delivering value for money to all local tax payers from the council's car park assets.

The Car Parking Strategy was supported by a 24 point action plan. This has been reviewed on an annual basis by the Parking Panel. The report to the Panel's last meeting, in March 2015 is set out at Appendix One. Some of the key achievements have been:

- Introduction of RingGo cashless payments

- Improved, more responsive enforcement

- More effective working with Surrey County Council's Parking Team

The differing nature of every district and borough in Surrey means that comparisons on performance have to be treated with some caution. Appendix Two highlights a comparison of the Districts and Boroughs in Surrey.

This Council is at the lower end of the number of PCNs issued. This is due to a number of factors such as car park capacity, the size of the District, and the fact that the vast majority

of people pay to park, or park in line with the parking restrictions.

A key focus over the next few years will be further improving the experience for customers. Whilst plans are still to be developed, the team will be aiming to introduce improvements including:

- Cashless payment at pay and display machines (card payments, Apple Pay (or equivalent)).

- Improved online application processes for parking permits

- Wider roll out of virtual permits

- Better online appeals processes

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The car parking function contributes towards all three elements of the Corporate Strategy, in particular within the Prosperity Priority to "Make best use of our town centre parking, balancing the needs of residents and local businesses".

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1.   BACKGROUND

1.1   In 2013, Executive approved the Council's 2013 – 2018 Parking Strategy, which was developed by the Parking Panel, which had been established by the Scrutiny Committee. The Parking Panel continued to meet on an annual basis to review progress in the delivery of the strategy and to report to the Committee.

1.2   This report provides Executive with a more detailed outline about the improvements that have been made in the service through delivery of the car parking strategy, together with an update on some of the current key issues with the function and future challenges.

2.   ROLE AND PURPOSE OF THE TEAM

2.1   The Council is responsible for the management and provision of over 2,000 car parking spaces across 21 car parks in Ashtead, Bookham, Dorking and Leatherhead as well as the enforcement of on street parking restrictions through a partnership agreement with Surrey County Council.

2.2   The strategic objectives for the function are set out in the Car Parking Strategy. They are:

- Listening to residents and our communities to understand their views on council car park provision
- Helping residents to access the car parking services they need
- Protecting the environment and character of Mole Valley through the appropriate provision and design of car parks
- Delivering value for money to all local tax payers from the council's car park assets

2.3   The Traffic Management Act 2004 sets the legal framework within which the team operates. This was the legislation that decriminilised parking offences, and shifted the responsibility for on street parking enforcement from the Police to local authorities. This legislation defines the various parking offences and also sets out the processes that must be followed to allow people to appeal against Penalty

Charge Notices and that the Council must follow to collect income that is owed.

2.4   The Council takes an ethical approach to parking enforcement. No targets are set for Penalty Charge Notices, and wherever possible, Civil Enforcement Officers will encourage drivers to move their vehicles, rather than issue a PCN, particular for on-street parking offences. The Council also takes a sympathetic approach to the appeals process to ensure the service is operating in the interests of communities and businesses as well as the individual needs of our residents.

3.   DELIVERY OF THE CAR PARKING STRATEGY

3.1   The Car Parking Strategy was supported by a 24 point action plan. This has been reviewed on an annual basis by the Parking Panel. The report to the Panel's last meeting, in March 2015 is set out at Appendix One. That report highlights the progress of all of the actions; some of the key outcomes that have benefited residents include:

- Introduction of RingGo cashless payments which accounts for 13% of ticket sales with use continuing to grow on a monthly basis
- Improved, more responsive enforcement, including targeting areas identified by residents, such as in areas near to schools
- More effective working with Surrey County Council's Parking Team to support the introduction of new parking restrictions where the community have requested them
- Introducing more motorcycle bays, to meet the needs who motorcycle owners and therefore ensuring more full sized bays are available for cars

3.2   A key factor in the development of the Strategy and in its implementation has been to listen to the needs of customers and to refine the way in which the service is delivered. In the initial stages of the delivery of the strategy, the car parking team received a large amount of feedback and comment on the way in which the service should be provided. Although the team continues to receive feedback, it has reduced considerably, which suggests that through the delivery of the strategy, the car parking service is being delivered in a way that meets the needs of the community.

4.   CURRENT KEY ISSUES

4.1   On street parking enforcement remains a key issue. In both Leatherhead and Dorking there are growing demands for more residents parking zones, as residents are concerned about workers and commuters parking in residential areas adjacent to town centres and railway stations. Business feedback from changes introduced through SCC's 2014 Parking Review highlighted some concerns about the impact of resident parking zones on the local economy. As a response to this, the Team worked quickly to develop a new low paid worker permit, aimed at people who work in Dorking Town Centre which would enable them to buy a season ticket for £150 to park at St Martins Walk. This was developed and promoted in partnership with the Dorking Chamber of Commerce and the West Street Association. We have currently sold 46 of these permits (out of a maximum of 100), although new changes to residents zones be introduced by SCC early in 2016 may further increase demand for these permits.

4.2   A concern shared by the Council, businesses and communities identified in the development of the Parking Strategy was the free flow of traffic in Bridge Street/North Street, Leatherhead and Dorking High Street. New parking restrictions have been

introduced in both locations which allow enforcement to be undertaken seven days a week. Feedback from the Civil Enforcement Officers has been that the new double yellow lines have been effective in changing people's parking behaviour and that the traffic flow has improved.

4.3   Demand for long stay parking continues to be a challenge in Leatherhead. The acquisition of Clare and James House has allowed some parking to be provided there on a temporary basis which will relieve some capacity in Randalls Road. Other options for the provision of additional parking in the town are also being considered. Car Parking will be a fundamental element of Transform Leatherhead, and relevant officers have been involved as appropriate in that project.

4.4   It is recognised that car parking is a factor in town centre sustainability and growth, although it is not the only one. The parking team works with others in the authority, in particular Planning Policy, Economic Development and Property, to ensure a holistic and comprehensive view is taken as to how parking supports our town centres.

4.5   The team continues to be focused on responding to and understanding the needs of the community. Very often there are short term issues, or re-occurring issues that happen at specific times of the year (such as airport parking at Povey Cross Road, Hookwood). The team will target enforcement as relevant and liaise with individuals and communities to discuss potential solutions to issues.

5.   BENCHMARKING

5.1   The differing nature of every district and borough in Surrey means that comparisons on performance have to be treated with some caution. However, Appendix Two highlights a comparison of the Districts and Boroughs in Surrey, highlighting:

- The number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued
- The number of cancellations
- Staffing numbers (Civil Enforcement Officers and back office staff)

5.2   This Council is at the lower end of the number of PCNs issued. This is due to a number of factors such as car park capacity, the size of the District, and the fact that the vast majority of people pay to park, or park in line with the parking restrictions. An analysis of the number of PCNs issued each year per CEO employed highlights that the Council is in the average range per member of staff.

6.   FUTURE CHALLENGES

6.1   A key focus in the over the next few years will be further improving the experience for customers. Whilst plans are still to be developed, the team will be aiming to introduce improvements including:

- Cashless payment at pay and display machines (card payments, Apple Pay (or equivalent)).
- Improved online application processes for parking permits
- Wider roll out of virtual permits
- Better online appeals processes

6.2   An increase in residents parking zones will have an impact on various communities in Dorking and Leatherhead. The team will administer the schemes and undertake the enforcement of the restrictions. The schemes will also have other impacts. It may

increase demand for our car parks and parking permits and may also have an impact on other areas where there are fewer parking restrictions. The team will work with communities and businesses as appropriate, depending on the impact of the changes.

6.3   The team needs to be constantly aware of how the dynamics of change in our town and village centres impact on parking. Transform Leatherhead is an obvious example of where we have to get the right car parking solution in place, but other, smaller, changes in terms of the types of shops or other businesses that operate in the District can have a significant impact on how and when our car parks and roads are used.

Car Park Strategy – Progress Update provided to the Car Parking Scrutiny Panel in March 2015

Introduction

The Car Parking Strategy was approved in February 2013. In the period since then the Car Parking Team has been focused on the delivery of the strategy and continuing the provision of the service in line with the Strategy's objectives:

- Listening to residents and our communities to understand their views on council car park provision
- Helping residents to access the car parking services they need
- Protecting the environment and character of Mole Valley through the appropriate provision and design of car parks
- Delivering value for money to all local tax payers from the council's car park assets

This paper provides the Panel with a status report on progress against delivery of the Car Parking Strategy.

Progress on Delivery of the Strategy

The appendix provides a summary of the actions included in the Strategy and the progress that has been made in delivering them. Many of the ones that were completed in the early stages of delivering the strategy (such as improved working with SCC) have been implemented and are now at a stage where they are 'business as usual'.

The 26 specific actions have been assessed on a rating of 1 – 4:

1. Fully Implemented
2. Partially Implemented
3. Under Way
4. Not started

24 of the actions have been fully implemented and 2 partially implemented.

When the Panel reviewed progress in February 2014, the position was that:

- 16 actions had been fully implemented
- 6 had been partially implemented
- 5 were under way

Good progress has therefore continued to be made in the delivery of the strategy.

Action	Progress	Progress Rating	RAG
Improve lighting and security at car parks to help reduce anti-social behaviour	Improved LED lighting installed and reconfigured to provide improved lighting at reduced cost. A review of all lighting in car parks has been undertaken and improvements being delivered during 2015/16.	Fully Implemented	G
Engage with Parish Councils about rural car parking needs / demands / issues	Issues are addressed with parish councils as and when identified (not all issues can be resolved). No current outstanding issues.	Fully Implemented	G
Monitor usage and abuse, and act appropriately Ensure staff have appropriate tools and training to maximise effectiveness Introduce a rota system to maximise on street enforcement	CEOs are providing extended enforcement earlier in the morning and later in the evenings in response to identified need. Additional training, equipment and support has been provided to CEOs to enable them to undertake their roles as effectively as possible. The Parking Team respond to issues when identified by residents, businesses and councillors.	Fully Implemented	G
Fee structure to be set in line with the principles of the Council's Fees and Charges principles.	New charges introduced from April 2013	Fully Implemented	G
Review season ticket discount	New charges introduced from April 2013	Fully Implemented	G
Promote season tickets to businesses	Season tickets have been promoted to businesses across Mole Valley. Regular discussions have been established with business representatives – particularly in Bookham and Dorking.	Fully Implemented	G
Work with SCC to make improvements to existing on-street parking to reduce congestion and increase traffic flow	Effective working relationships in place with SCC both at officer and member level. The MVDC/SCC Parking Task Group provides an oversight to on-street parking issues in the District and feeds in to the Local Committee.	Fully Implemented	G
Review existing provision and adjust supply where appropriate, to meet requirements of users.	Opportunities for additional parking in Leatherhead and Bookham are being considered/developed.	Fully Implemented	G
Review the current status of car parks (long stay/short stay), how they are used and what	Complete	Fully Implemented	G

Action	Progress	Progress Rating	RAG
would best support town centres and meet the needs of residents			G
Develop & review the parking enforcement policy utilising feedback from users, businesses & PCN and parking machine data.	Policy adopted in line with the requirements of the Parking Panel.	Fully Implemented	G
Identify potential income through advertising, concessions and other potential opportunities.	We are continuing to look for opportunities for further income streams including through advertising on P&D tickets and introducing new car wash franchises.	Fully Implemented	G
Work with Town Centre Managers and businesses to ensure that car parks can fully support events and encourage both shoppers and businesses into the District	The Strategic Parking and Parks Manager meets on a monthly basis with other relevant officers to discuss issues relating to economic development, including car parking.	Fully Implemented	G
Direct businesses towards guidance on developing travel plans	Advice circulated to businesses via Town Centre Manager	Fully Implemented	G
Review charging policy for bay suspensions	Policy adopted	Fully Implemented	G
Improved signage to help visitors locate car parks	Improved signage has been introduced in the following car parks: Dorking: St Martins Walk, Reigate Road, Pippbrook (advertising Saturday P&D), Southside (Lyons Court & Marlborough Rd), South Street, Wathen Road Leatherhead: Station Road, Bridge Street & Church Street	Partially Implemented	A
Provide new/improved maps that show visitors places to visit in towns and villages and how to get there (e.g. similar to 'Walking in Dorking')	A new map/noticeboard has been installed in South Street.	Partially Implemented	A
Provide more information on parking on the	The car parking pages have been updated recently as part of the website re-design.	Fully	G

Action	Progress	Progress Rating	RAG
Council's website Encourage users to report issues or faults online, on Twitter or through other methods of social media	We respond to issues as they are raised on social media in a timely fashion.	Implemented	
Introduce improved signage within the car park.	Implemented new signs alongside machines to provide clearer information	Fully Implemented	G
Ensuring that both authorities' approaches to car parking complement one another and meet the requirements of local residents and businesses	MVDC/SCC Parking Task Group reviewed the two parking strategies and agreed that they are complementary.	Fully Implemented	G
Discussion with Councillors and residents Depending on the outcomes of this we would: • work with SCC regarding Residents Parking Schemes • work with SCC/Local Committee to establish appropriate on street parking requirements In conjunction with SCC identify and review 'hot spot' areas.	Work is ongoing through the MVDC/SCC Parking Task Group	Fully Implemented	G
Ongoing review of car park layouts to increase numbers of spaces Provide increased motorbike and cycle parking without reducing car parking spaces by making better use of 'smaller' car park bays	Lower Road, St Martins Walk, Southside & Dene Street – created larger motorcycle bays where they could be accommodated without reducing car parking spaces. Recycling banks at Leatherhead Leisure Centre moved to create more space for permit parking.	Fully Implemented	G

Action	Progress	Progress Rating	RAG
Review position of recycling sites			G
Discuss with other organisations, (e.g. Surrey County Council and private businesses) about the potential to use their car parks when not in use. (e.g. evenings and weekends)	Initial discussions haven't yielded any results.	Fully Implemented	G
As and when land is identified, which either has a clear demand for use, or where demand can be created, develop proposals for use as a car park	As sites become available or demand appears we will review provision and opportunities.

Discussions have taken place about Bookham, and there is demand in Leatherhead for a site at Leatherhead Leisure Centre. | Fully Implemented | G |
| Review charging structure to introduce differential charging

Offer incentives to local traders for long term parking

Establish clear criteria for discounted permits

Consider charges and special promotions to encourage usage throughout the day including Saturday | School/Nursery parking arrangements in place.

Evening and weekend permit introduced for people living in town centres.

Low Paid worker permit introduced.

Business Permit and revised charging regime introduced for Lower Shott, Bookham. | Fully Implemented | G |
| Develop a detailed planned maintenance programme (with forecasting for 3 years) for all of the Council's car parks | Structural works completed on St Martins Walk Car Park.

Car Park conditions survey completed and sets the framework for an ongoing programme of maintenance. | Fully Implemented | G |
| Ensure the principle is included in the Land Allocations Policy that any new development replaces existing parking spaces if demand dictates and provides additional parking where the development is known to increase demand | This will be addressed in the development of the new Mole Valley Local Plan. | Under Way | G |

Action	Progress	Progress Rating	RAG
In conjunction with an ongoing assessment of demand, consider the provision of further town centre parking as a result of redevelopment or the use of existing sites as well as provision for alternative fuel vehicles where there is demand.	This will be a key part of the Transform Leatherhead project.	Under Way	G
Introduce Pay by Phone for P&D tickets Introduce online payments for season tickets	Both RingGo and online payments for season tickets are in place	Fully Implemented	G

PCN Benchmarking

	Elmbridge	Epsom & Ewell	Guildford	Mole Valley	Reigate & Banstead/ Tandridge	Runnymede	Spelthorne	Surrey Heath	Waverley	Woking
No. off street parking spaces	2,621		5,103	**2,029**	1,879/	1,457		3,436	3,680	4,645
On Street PCNs	14,937	8,747	14,768	**3,643**	11,934	4,851	5,070	8,953	5,780	10,219
Off Street PCNs	10,686	8,152	12,139	**5,366**	6,670	3,567	6,093	1,524	13,215	1,766
Total PCNs	25,623	16,899	26,907	**9,009**	18,604	8,418	11,163	10,477	18,995	11,985
Average No. of PCNs per CEO	1,830	1,536	1,793	**1,501**	1,431	2,104	1,240	1,496	2,713	1,712
PCNs cancelled – appeals (1)	3,318	2,723	3,216	**910**	2,064	597	1,909	794	2,593	1,206
PCNs cancelled – other (2)	109	641	332	**434**	489	362	512	449	213	549
Total PCNs cancelled	3,427	2,990	3,362	**1,344**	2,092	768	2,110	847	2,641	1,595
% PCNs Cancelled	13.4%	17.7%	12.5%	**14.9%**	11.2%	9.1%	18.9%	8.1%	13.9%	13.3%
No. of CEOs	14	11	15	**6**	13	4	9	7	7	7
No. of back office staff	5	5	3.5	2	4.5	3	5	3	3	4

Notes:

Reigate and Banstead BC undertake enforcement on behalf of Tandridge DC and have provided a single set of figures.

A PCN being cancelled does not mean that the Council was wrong to issue it. It allows the driver to provide evidence to show why it should be cancelled, such as a blue badge which had not been displayed, or a P&D ticket which had fallen from display. 'Other' reasons for a PCN being cancelled would include: operator error, issues with RingGo, or issues with handheld devices – as they may sometimes print two PCNs for the same offence.