

Extract of minutes from Policy Development Group – 28 September 2016

The Head of Community Services informed Members that it was the District Council's first Parking Strategy and it related to the whole of the District. He explained that White Green Young Consultants had successfully bid for the contract to deliver the strategy and any comments from Members would be valuable as part of their consultation. Any comments received would be passed on to Cabinet when a report was considered in November. He introduced Steve Boden from White Green Young Consultants, who gave a presentation to summarise the draft Parking Strategy.

Councillor J Geary expressed his concern that Members had only had a short amount of time to scrutinise the full and comprehensive draft strategy document as it was not available when the agenda was circulated. He also referred to a mistake at paragraph 4.7 as it referred to Ashby when it should be Whitwick, he expressed his disappointment as it made him question the accuracy of the document as a whole. He went on to make the following comments:

Paragraph 1.1.3 – This paragraph referred to the use of funds raised by parking charges for other Council schemes. Councillor J Geary strongly disagreed with the statement as when the decision was made to introduce parking charges, when he was a Member of the Cabinet; it was to raise funds to maintain the parking facilities and was never meant to provide added income towards schemes and services.

Paragraph 1.2.1 – This paragraph referred to potential changes to parking to support the efforts to regenerate Coalville town centre. Councillor J Geary agreed and was in favour of anything that could be done to help local businesses flourish.

Paragraph 2.2.1 – This paragraph referred to the National Planning Policy Framework which stated that parking charges should be set appropriately to not undermine the vitality of town centres. Councillor J Geary agreed with the statement.

Paragraph 2.4.7 – This paragraph referred to car ownership levels. Councillor J Geary agreed that there was a lower level of public transport available which was constantly diminishing; he believed this would be a problem for the future.

Paragraph 2.5.1 – This paragraph referred to the regeneration plan that included the potential development of London Road car park. Councillor J Geary reported that from his experience the public were not in support due to the loss of parking spaces for the shops and public house. He also felt that any development would detract from Stenson House.

Paragraph 3.1.2 – This paragraph referred to the parking charges currently being at the lower end of the range of parking tariffs amongst comparator neighbouring authorities. Councillor J Geary did not agree as according to his calculations, North West Leicestershire was towards the middle of the range. He did agree that coach parking spaces were needed.

Paragraph 4.9.3 – This paragraph consisted of a table setting out the characteristics of council run car parks in Coalville town centre. Councillor J Geary noted that the car parking at the council offices was not included and questioned if the decision had already been made to develop it.

Councillor N Smith questioned if it was an advantage to have a parking strategy and whether it was required by planning law or a council decision to have one. He did not agree with the proposal to change long stay car parks to short stay in Ashby town centre as he believed it would cause a problem for the people who work in the town.

He questioned whether the Money Hill development would provide a car park as originally agreed. He also commented that in his opinion the parking charges were very reasonable, especially compared to other areas.

The Chairman felt that the current parking charges were low in comparison to other authorities. He also compared the charges to hospital parking which cost more to park for a few hours than it was to park all day in Coalville. He felt that this showed that hospitals used the funds generated by parking for more than maintaining the car parks and therefore it was not an unreasonable proposal.

Councillor D Harrison expressed his disappointment as he was expecting to see solutions to improve parking at Ashby town centre. He shared Councillor N Smith's concerns regarding changing the long stay car parks to short stay in Ashby town centre as businesses relied on them. He believed that the parking charges were fair but more spaces were required in specific areas. The Chairman commented that he was aware of plans to increase the parking capacity in Ashby town centre and added that the co-operative store's car park was available to park for an hour for free.

Councillor T Eynon commented that the survey was undertaken during one day only and therefore would not necessarily reflect actual daily use; however she felt that it produced some useful data. She felt it did show that the market hall parking needed to be more realistic and she agreed that there should be nine free spaces for short stay parking. Councillor T Eynon believed that the data that had been collected on Bridge Street car park was very low and she felt that something needed to be done to bring people into Coalville town centre. She suggested that car parks further out of town such as the one on James Street could be used as a cheaper long stay car park.

Councillor A C Saffell agreed that changes should not be made to long stay car parks as they supported businesses and staff. He informed the Committee that Castle Donington Parish Council had its own parking strategy and the plan was to provide an additional 60 spaces in the town centre. These spaces were necessary as all business units were full on the high street and a further 900 houses were being built. He added that Castle Donington Parish Council would be looking closely at the District Council's parking strategy and if they were not in agreement, the parish Council would take over the management of the car parks.

Councillor N Clarke agreed that any income generated from parking charges should be ring fenced for enforcement and maintenance only. He added that other authorities provided free short stay parking so he believed Councillor J Geary's comments were fair. He suggested that officers look at other ways of managing the car parks, for example paying on exit as it would also help with enforcement. The Head of Community Services commented that he had looked into the option but it was currently not feasible due to the need for dual entrances but he did take the point on board.

The Chairman asked if installing CCTV would help with enforcement as it would take images of vehicles entering and exiting. Steve Boden (WYG) reported that there was national concerns regarding automatic number plate recognition and therefore that option was not being encouraged at the moment. The Head of Community Services informed Members that he had looked into the technology to pay for parking by using a mobile telephone, this would mean that customers could extend their parking tickets without going back to the vehicle; this would be the preferred option.

It was moved by Councillor D Harrison, seconded by Councillor A C Saffell and

RESOLVED THAT:

- a) The report be noted.*
- b) Comments made by the Committee be reported to Cabinet when they consider the Parking Strategy in November*

APPENDIX 4

1	Increase off-street car park capacity in specific locations	Short term - Ashby
2	Expand the use of different parking strategies in different towns	Short term
3	Adjust charging tariffs	Medium term
4	Convert Long Stay to Short Stay parking	Long term
5	Review of on-street parking provision	Medium term
6	Residents Parking Schemes	Medium term
7	Sustainable Transport	Medium term
8	Parking Standards	Medium term
9	New development and S106	Long term
10	Enforcement	Medium term
11	New car park equipment	Short term
12	Improve Signage	Short term
13	Regeneration of car park land	Short term
14	Parking at special events and times	Short term
15	Promotions, Initiatives and Marketing	Short term
16	School-gate parking	Medium term
17	Season tickets	Short term
18	Christmas Park and Ride scheme	Long term
19	End Parking Voucher scheme	Short term
20	Sponsorship and advertising within car parks	Medium term
21	Continue and improve liaison with LCC	Short term

5.2 Coalville Recommendations

1	Use central car park land for regeneration project	Short term
2	Time restrictions on the Market Hall free parking spaces	Short term
3	On-street parking amendments	Medium term
4	Charging tariff	Short term
5	New coach parking spaces	Medium term

5.3 Ashby Recommendations

1	Remove long stay parking from central car parks	Long term
2	Identify new off-street car park for relocated long stay parking	Long term
3	Traffic Regulation Order review	Medium term
4	Public realm and traffic management improvement to Market Street	Medium term
5	Investigate options for more off-street car park capacity	Short term
6	Support provision of Money Hill public car park	Medium term
7	More off-street parking spaces require on the Coalfield Way Business Park	Long term
8	Carry out further surveys when potential new car parks open	Medium term
9	Quantify traffic and environmental impacts of proposals	Medium term
10	Increase charges at Brook Street car park	Medium term