

August 2020

Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure

**Briefing Note on the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee
Response to the Integrated Parking Strategy**

At the meeting held on the 24th June 2020, The Committee considered the draft Integrated Parking Strategy (IPS), as a statement of the County Council's commitment to the future of parking management in support of its other policies and strategies, and commented on the issues and recommended policies contained within it.

This paper sets out the comments of The Committee and the response of officers.

1. The strategic impact of Covid needs to be looked at in some detail in terms of both impact and funding, including the changes in public transport use over the longer-term.

Officer Response – A paper is included with this report.

2. There are conflicts between short-term and long-term particularly in regard to the economic dimension.

Officer Response –Officers would like to ask committee members for further clarification on this statement.

3. There needs to be more treatment of parking for cyclists, as it is not mentioned in the Strategy.

Officer Response –A brief reference to cycle parking will be made in a revised draft of the IPS but it is felt this issue would be better covered in more detail in the Cycling and Walking Strategy.

4. The Council's Climate Change and Clean Air decisions need to be referred to and addressed.

Officer Response –Further references to climate change etc will be made in a revised draft of the IPS

5. The capital and revenue costs associated with delivery of the strategy need to be better set out.

Officer Response – It is not considered appropriate or possible to include costings within a strategy document, especially as many areas of work are still in feasibility or yet to start. Any actions arising from the IPS will be considered independently and costed at that stage.

6. A report is needed on the timing and delivery of future road space audits (RSAs)
Officer Response –A report has been prepared and will be considered by the Executive Leadership Team and Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure prior to being reviewed by the Cabinet Board.
7. We need adequate resources for effective enforcement. The Committee welcomes the fact that systems to enable reporting from district and borough councils on Civil Parking Enforcement are in place. It would be helpful if views of the public can also be gathered, to improve enforcement.
Officer Response – The district and borough councils have reviewed their websites in order to make it easier for residents etc to request enforcement visits and/or report parking issues.
8. Consultation responses from district and borough councils need to be included in the Strategy.
Officer Response – It is not standard practice to include consultation responses within strategy documents. Any comments from district and borough councils will be shared with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure as well as being kept on file.
9. Controlled Parking Zones being now being dependent on RSA process (hence the need for a paper on RSA timing and delivery).
Officer Response –A programme for the review of existing CPZs is included with this report. Any future changes to this programme are dependent upon the outcome of the report outlined in 6 above.
10. Reassured to hear that the issue of verge/footway parking is being addressed as a high priority.
Officer Response – Verge and footway parking is an action arising from the IPS. Any specific measures arising from this action in the future (e.g. TROs) will need to be prioritised and costed accordingly.
11. Moving traffic violations are a particular priority around school safety zones, needs to be looked at in more detail.
Officer Response –Further references to moving traffic will be made in a revised draft of the IPS. Any specific measures arising from this action in the future will need to be prioritised and costed accordingly.
12. Parking in new developments needs to be looked at again as the planning system does not appear to be robust enough. Reassured that Matt Davey will look at our current guidance.
Officer Response - The current guidance was a key decision in June 2019 after being called in by ECSC for scrutiny in March/May

2019. The guidance went live in August 2019 and has been monitored since its introduction to ensure that it is fit for purpose. The view of officers is that it appears to be working well. A number of minor amendments have recently been made to the commercial guidance. There is no timetable to revisit the guidance but officers are continuing to monitor its use and if minor updates are required that do not change the methodology applied these will be considered on their merits.

13. The importance of the EV Strategy and Climate Change Strategy - the need for charging infrastructure is paramount.

Officer Response – A brief reference to electric vehicles will be made in a revised draft of the IPS but it is felt this issue would be better covered in more detail in the Electric Vehicle Strategy.

14. Need to give guidance to communities about what they are able to do about verge parking such as planters and communicate it to communities better.

Officer Response – Officers will liaise with colleagues in Local Highway Operations as to what guidance can be offered and how. The parking pages on the County Council website are also being updated, including information on obstruction. A paper on vehicle removals has also been prepared and will soon be shared with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure

15. Communicate better to communities about the responsibilities of car ownership, including responsible parking.

Officer Response – The parking pages on the County Council website are being updated, including information on how to park responsibly. Officers will also consider the potential for a stand-alone PR exercise.

APPENDIX A

IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC UPON ON-STREET PARKING IN WEST SUSSEX

Economic

The short term impact of COVID-19 in the UK as a whole has been a sudden and unprecedented drop in economic activity with GDP down by 3.9% compared to the same period (April to July) in 2019. The length of any subsequent recession is unknown at this stage and will depend on huge number of factors.

Recessions measurably impact traffic levels, which in turn affect parking demand and so revenue. Given the myriad of factors in play, the direct impact upon the County Councils charged on-street parking (Pay & Display) in West Sussex is not clear cut but retail activity and spend has already experienced an unprecedented reduction in the last few months. As most users of on-street Pay & Display bays are accessing town centre retail and services, the impact of a retail slump is therefore highly likely to impact parking revenue income.

The Pay & Display income in West Sussex for the period April to July 2020 (and compared to 2019) can be seen below:

APRIL 2020 INCOME				MAY 2020 INCOME				JUNE 2020 INCOME			
AREA	P&D	DISPENSATIONS	SUSPENSIONS	AREA	P&D	DISPENSATIONS	SUSPENSIONS	AREA	P&D	DISPENSATIONS	SUSPENSIONS
Billingshurst	£0.40	£0.00	£0.00	Billingshurst	£3.90	£0.00	£0.00	Billingshurst	£22.25	£80.00	£0.00
Bognor Regis	£2,759.65	£0.00	£0.00	Bognor Regis	£13,248.25	£0.00	£0.00	Bognor Regis	£19,805.90	£160.00	£50.00
Chichester	£970.25	£94.00	£35.00	Chichester	£1,923.85	£10.00	£170.00	Chichester	£6,300.60	£136	£171.00
Crawley	£2,608.30	£82.00	£0.00	Crawley	£4,854.10	£0.00	£0.00	Crawley	£9,042.80	£71.00	£0.00
East Grinstead	£747.25	£28.00	£220.00	East Grinstead	£1,186.85	£15.00	£310.00	East Grinstead	£4,326.80	£24.00	£130.00
Horsham	£364.90	£0.00	£0.00	Horsham	£708.90	£10.00	£0.00	Horsham	£2,086.30	£470.00	£25.00
Worthing	£10,082.25	£0.00	£620.00	Worthing	£27,102.40	£0.00	£2,865.00	Worthing	£52,423.00	£805.00	£2,050.00
TOTAL	£17,533.00	£204.00	£875.00	TOTAL	£49,028.25	£35.00	£3,345.00	TOTAL	£94,007.65	£1,746.00	£2,426.00
			£18,612.00				£52,408.25				£98,179.65
APRIL 2019 INCOME				MAY 2019 INCOME				JUNE 2019 INCOME			
AREA	P&D	DISPENSATIONS	SUSPENSIONS	AREA	P&D	DISPENSATIONS	SUSPENSIONS	AREA	P&D	DISPENSATIONS	SUSPENSIONS
Billingshurst	£314.40	£0.00	£0.00	Billingshurst	£202.80	£0.00	£0.00	Billingshurst	£166.05	£0.00	£0.00
Bognor Regis	£28,996.70	£599.00	£0.00	Bognor Regis	£30,850.20	£278.00	£345.00	Bognor Regis	£28,202.90	£405.00	£1,095.00
Chichester	£18,373.90	£706.00	£6,974.00	Chichester	£18,935.60	£224.00	£2,787.00	Chichester	£18,071.40	£370.00	£1,036.00
Crawley	£23,123.40	£130.00	£1,075.00	Crawley	£21,211.70	£140.00	£470.00	Crawley	£23,160.35	£25.00	£700.00
East Grinstead	£10,154.40	£334.00	£86.00	East Grinstead	£10,583.60	£143.00	£140.00	East Grinstead	£10,390.00	£302.00	£220.00
Horsham	£10,131.25	£390.00	£288.00	Horsham	£10,348.00	£590.00	£1,625.00	Horsham	£9,574.45	£1,050.00	£657.00
Worthing	£85,257.20	£3,215.00	£1,875.00	Worthing	£88,244.70	£1,850.00	£1,850.00	Worthing	£86,992.90	£2,264.00	£1,149.00
TOTAL	£176,351.25	£5,374.00	£10,298.00	TOTAL	£180,376.60	£3,225.00	£7,217.00	TOTAL	£176,558.05	£4,416.00	£4,857.00
			£192,023.25				£190,818.60				£185,831.05

Although income levels have recovered considerably (by £80k) in June compared to April they are still approximately £85k lower than would normally be expected. Bearing in mind that income normally increases in the summer months, the net result of COVID-19 could be a decrease in on-street income of approximately £800k between July 2020 and March 2021. Adding the losses from April to July 2020 to this takes the total decrease for financial year 2020/21

to £1.2m. It remains to be seen whether the County Council can reclaim any of this from the Government.

Beyond the wider impacts of economic activity on parking, there are longer term trends to the way we work and shop and it appears COVID-19 may have accelerated these. This is against a background of a changing high street and a growth in online shopping, with the proportion of online sales already rising from 5% in 2008 to 18% in 2018.

In the short term, online and convenience shopping have fared well during the pandemic, as have sporting goods and cycles. Comparative goods and non-essentials have experienced significant declines with a shift to online and an overall reduction in spend. The impact of social distancing on cultural activities and restaurants has been dramatic with wholesale temporary closure although many businesses are now re-opening and finding ways to deal with the new situation.

The impact of the pandemic on the wider economy is unclear with conflicting views and predictions against a fast changing situation. Whilst demand for transport and parking generally falls during recessions, any view on whether a recession caused by COVID-19 outlives the pandemic would be pure speculation. It is clear though that in the short-term the financial impact on WSCC has been and will continue to be severe.

The potential longer term impact of the behavioural changes are perhaps more of a consideration. The pandemic has the potential to accelerate trends already taking place in town centres across the UK; a 'crunch' in casual dining; a shift from town centre retail to internet shopping, and the recovery of out-of-town retail after a decade of decline. Accordingly, the risk for the County Council is potentially higher as car parking usage patterns in town centres suggest that the on-street parking is dominated by retail visits.

The link between town centre vitality and car park charges is far from clear, but tends towards higher charges in centres with more to offer. Keeping charges as they are, or even reducing them is unlikely to result in a measurable positive impact for centres, and the reverse may be true, as parking availability is generally considered to be the more important factor in centre choice.

Societal & Transport

The most obvious impact of COVID-19 on behaviour to-date has been limiting contact between humans; firstly through 'lock down' measures and now through maintaining minimum distances between people in public alongside limiting the size and type of gatherings.

Whilst this effects parking demand in terms of events and cultural activities, the bigger impact for WSCC could arise from the trend of working from home, which looks set to become a long term trend for companies with office-based

businesses or staff. There are a huge number of organisations across all sectors adopting work from home as the 'new normal'. The ONS reports that around 8.7m or 30% of the workforce has worked from home as a result of COVID-19.

Data shows how road, rail and bus use generally rise and fall in line with the economy. The key difference with the COVID-19 pandemic is the need to avoid large numbers of people in confined spaces. This has very clear implications for public transport. To date rail and bus trips are recovering at a much slower rate than road.

A shift from public to private transport could be one of the biggest long term impacts of the pandemic. IPSOS and the RAC have carried out surveys considering consumer intention to purchase cars and have found that it has increased, although consumer confidence in making large purchases is low. At the same time central government is promoting walking and cycling as safe travel alternatives, with many cities and towns re-allocating road and on-street parking to pedestrian and cycle use.

Specifically, 'commuter' parking could be highly impacted, with a triple whammy effect of; lower economic activity, more working from home, and a desire to avoid public transport. With less commuter parking, this could reduce the need for on-street parking interventions such as CPZs.

There are no easy answers as to how behavioural changes in society and transport might impact parking in the long term. A key unknown is how the variables interact. For example: whilst there may be less commuting overall, more of this may be by private car, negating the impact. Lower employment densities within offices may also take the pressure off car parks, in turn leading to less overspill onto the public highway.

Walking and cycling infrastructure may start to take precedence over on-street parking, as is being seen in some of the larger cities in England (and globally) already. The UK government has made £2bn available to local authorities to provide temporary to permanent facilities stating that "Local authorities in areas with high levels of public transport use should take measures to reallocate road space to people walking and cycling, both to encourage active travel and to enable social distancing during restart".

Practical / Parking

There are already signs that COVID-19 has had a direct impact upon the County Council's parking works programme. In Manor Royal (Crawley), a formal advertisement of detailed proposals for a parking management plan has been deferred for at least a year due to the uncertainty surrounding many of the businesses which are tied into the aviation industry. In turn, this has had a knock on effect on proposals to deal with issues in surrounding residential areas and other parts of Crawley. Similarly, in Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath, there

is now a great deal of uncertainty as to whether/when master planning work will progress and this is having a knock on effect on Road Space Audit (RSA) feasibility work.

RSA implementation is still progressing in other areas such as Chichester and reviews of existing parking schemes will continue as normal.

The British Parking Association (BPA) has considered the impact of COVID-19 on behalf of its members and produced a toolkit for responding to the pandemic. This includes a Risk Assessment Template to help authorities and operators assess the risk of disease transmission and template signage which can be employed at various parking sites.

The risks involved in day-to-day (on-street) operations from COVID-19 are to staff and customers and arise from parking equipment (e.g. payment machines) and places on the highway and in car parks where people linger, queue or potentially crowd together. In a number of areas, parking bay suspensions or road closures have successfully been introduced as part of the County Council's 'Safe Spaces' project and these will continue to be monitored.

With regards to the longevity of the risk, it seems likely that this will be around for as long as the pandemic, so completely unknown.

An on-street parking SWOT analysis follows:

Strengths

- Local centres with character that will continue to serve their communities
- Large part of service not impacted by reductions in commuting etc
- Measures to deal with social distancing regulations i.e. safe spaces
- Annual charging reviews
- Well run parking service with in-house expertise and knowledge

Weaknesses

- Reliance on success of retail offer/national chains in each area
- No control over changes to off-street car parks (council and private)

Opportunities

- Acceleration of cashless parking and technologies
- Other uses for parking space as they arise e.g. Parklets
- Potential changes to enforcement methods e.g. CCTV/ANPR

Threats

- Macro-economic impacts of a recession
- Changes in retail activity and a shift to online
- Rise in vehicle use and demand for parking i.e. residential
- Threat to regeneration projects and development proposals

- Pressure to reduce tariffs or keep them the same without any evidence of impact
- Less income to fund other parking measures

APPENDIX B

CPZ Review Programme

AREA	REVIEW (FEASIBILITY) START DATE	DATE TRO ADVERTISED	DATE OF CLC DECISION (IF REQUIRED)	IMPLEMENTATION DATE	COMMENTS
East Grinstead	Aug-18	Apr-19	Oct-19	May-20	Waiting to be sealed
Horsham/Billingshurst	Mar-19	Feb-20			CPZ
Horsham	Jul-19	Aug-20			Roads not in CPZ (i.e Parkfield)
Crawley	Nov-19				Being drawn up
Worthing	Jun-20				
Bognor Regis	Sep-20				
Chichester	Apr-21				
East Grinstead	Jul-21				
Horsham/Billingshurst					
Crawley					
Worthing					
Bognor Regis					
Chichester					
POINTS TO NOTE					
Reviews consist of: addition/removal of parking and loading bays (including formal disabled bays), minor amendments to yellow lines, TRO consolidations and lining/signing reviews (all within CPZ boundary). Consideration only given to CPZ extensions in exceptional circumstances.					
Each review has allocation of £10K although an underspend in one area could be used to top up another if required.					