

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Forest Heath  
District Council

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Car Parking Update</b>	
<b>Report No:</b>	<b>OAS/FH/16/031</b>	
<b>Report to and date:</b>	<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	10 November 2016
<b>Portfolio holder:</b>	Cllr David Bowman Portfolio Holder for Operations <b>Tel:</b> 07711 593737 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:david.bowman@forest-heath.gov.uk">david.bowman@forest-heath.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Lead officer:</b>	Darren Dixon Car Parking Services Manager <b>Tel:</b> 01284 757413 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:darren.dixon@westsuffolk.gov.uk">darren.dixon@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To update Members on the implementation of the Car Parking Review and future priorities	
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee:</b>  <b>1) Members are asked to <u>note</u> the report; and</b>  <b>2) Recommend that the Head of Operations, under his delegated authority, and in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Operations, incorporates the Snooker Hall Pocket Car Park spaces into All Saints Car Park for use by pay and display customers.</b>	
<b>Key Decision:</b>  <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that <b>do not</b> apply.)</i>	<i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

<b>Consultation:</b>	Significant consultation was undertaken during the 2015 review. This report sets out the results of the recommendations agreed by stakeholders.		
<b>Alternative option(s):</b>	N/A		
<b>Implications:</b>			
Are there any <b>financial</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any <b>staffing</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any <b>ICT</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any <b>legal and/or policy</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any <b>equality</b> implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Risk/opportunity assessment:</b>	<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>		
<b>Risk area</b>	<b>Inherent level of risk</b> (before controls)	<b>Controls</b>	<b>Residual risk</b> (after controls)
Car parking tariffs are set incorrectly resulting in sub-optimal performance	Medium	Regular consultation should be carried out to provide clear rationale for proposed changes	Low
Town centres adversely affected by tariff changes	Low	Feedback from customers/ Stakeholders and benchmarking information	Low
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	All		
<b>Background papers:</b> <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>	<a href="#">CAB/FH/15/063</a> dated 22 December 2015 - Car Parking Review		
<b>Documents attached:</b>	None		

## 1.0 Key issues and reasons for recommendation

### 1.1 Review

1.1.1 A review of car parking was undertaken in 2015 and a number of recommendations were made to car parking arrangements in Newmarket and levels of enforcement (see background papers). This report provides an update on the implementation these changes and to car parking across the district.

### 1.2 Usage

1.2.1 The use of car parks varies by location and across different times of the week. Usage is measured by the number of car parking ticket transactions in each car park which is recorded when a ticket is purchased from a Pay and Display machine and therefore, only accurate data is available for Newmarket.

1.2.2 The number of car parking ticket transactions in Newmarket increased from 626,867 in 2014 to 683,231 transactions in 2015 which equates to 9%. Over the period Jan-Sept 2016, car parking ticket transactions are up by 11,954 compared with the previous year.

1.2.3 The introduction of weekly long stay tickets has proved popular with an average of 48 sold each week since April 2016. Given that less daily long stay tickets are now being sold, the growth in ticket transactions suggests that the total number of parking transactions in 2016 will exceed that of 2015.

1.2.4 RingGo, the pay by phone cashless payment system, is demonstrating growth in popularity. A total of 11,532 transactions were made by RingGo between Jan-Sept 2016, which already exceeds the total number of transactions made in 2015 of 9,365.

### 1.3 Occupancy

1.3.1 The car parking operation in the towns of Mildenhall, Lakenheath and Brandon is more self-regulatory in the absence of charging or restrictions on permitted length of stay parking. The Council's team of Car Parking Attendants have audited the car parks by counting of parked cars and report the following:

	Average Occupancy
Mildenhall – Recreation CP	60%
Mildenhall – Carters Yard	75%
Brandon – George St	85%
Brandon – Bury Road	80%
Lakenheath	60%

1.3.2 The industry standard for an efficient car park is an occupancy rate of 95%. The recorded use of the Mildenhall, Lakenheath and Brandon car parks suggest they operate well below this rate and can accommodate significant growth in the medium to long term.

1.3.3 Monitoring of usage in Newmarket has been conducted over the month of October between 11am and 2pm (peak time use). The results compare favourably with the detailed testing undertaken a year ago and includes the first visitors to the Home of Horse Racing.

Short stay car parking (496 spaces)

Car Park	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
Guineas	74%	84%	58%
Rouse	70%	82%	55%
Market	90%	n/a	60%

Saturday has the highest number of parking events across the week, and the occupancy counts suggest that approximately 40 car parking spaces are available at peak times.

Long- stay car parking (393 spaces)

Car Park	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
Guineas	77%	74%	45%
All Saints	58%	57%	42%
Grosv.	70%	85%	46%
St Marys	90%	94%	55%

Although classified as long stay car parks, users can purchase a short stay or long stay tariff in these car parks. These car parks have the greatest spare car parking capacity with approximately 100 spaces available at peak times.

1.4 Impact of the Home of Horse Racing

1.4.1 The Home of Horse Racing (HOHR) has recently opened and they have estimated that the total number of visitors in the first year of business will be in the region of 52,000 people, with 1 in every 3 admissions arriving by car for an average stay of between 3-4 hrs.

1.4.2 The capacity of Newmarket car parks to accommodate the increase in parking events arising from the HOHR was assessed as part of the review undertaken last year and it was concluded that the car parks would have enough capacity to absorb the increase in visitors and from natural growth of the local economy and housing. Based on the recent capacity counts and the level of capacity as identified in paragraph 1.3 of this report, we make no change to this assumption. Clearly the opening of the HOHR will enable us to monitor actual usage and should there be a significant variation to the visitor

assumptions, we will work with HOHR to deliver capacity.

## 1.5 Pocket Car Parks

The District Council owns six Pocket Car Parks providing 68 spaces which are available for lease to local residents. The cost of renting a Pocket Car parking space was reduced from £300 to £150 plus VAT per annum last year. Since the change, the number of spaces occupied has increased from 48 to 56 as set out below:

<b>Pocket Car Park</b>	<b>Let Spaces</b>
All Saints	14/16 Spaces let
Queen Street	13/13 Full
Queen Street (Garage area)	3/3 Full
Granby Street (Small)	7/8 paces let
Granby Street (Friendship House)	12/16 Spaces let
Snooker Hall (All Saints)	0/5 Spaces Let
Rous Road	7/7 Full

Members should note that the Snooker Hall Pocket Car Park remains unoccupied and may wish to consider releasing these spaces to the general public mind-full of the potential car parking pressures arising from the Home of Horse Racing in this area of the town.

## 1.6 Enforcement

A total of 1,214 Excess Charge Notices were issued in the first 9 months of 2016. Whilst the car parking service continues to develop an ambassadorial, customer focused approach to service delivery, inevitably the number of fines will increase as car parking events rise and enforcement has now extended to Sunday. Furthermore additional resource has been recruited to enforce the car parks. Nevertheless the number of fines issued over the course of this period equates to 0.2% of all car parking events, reinforcing that 99.8% of our customers understand and comply with our car parking regulations.

## 1.7 Car Park Improvements

### 1.7.1 Road Directional Signage

New road signs have been installed across Newmarket to direct vehicles to the short and long stay car parks. Included on the signs is car parking for the Home of Horse Racing.

### 1.7.2 New information Boards

All car park information and tariff boards have been revamped arising from the restriction and tariff changes made earlier in the year.

### 1.7.3 Improvements to Rous Road Car Park

Three new lighting columns have been added to Rous Road Park and all other existing light columns replaced with LED. In addition, the car park has been relined and accommodated an entrance into the Home of Horse Racing.

### 1.7.4 Electric Charging Points

Two Electric Charging Points have been ordered and will be installed in the Guineas Car Park in January 2017. The charging points, that are manufactured and operated by Charge Master, will provide a source of electric to enable a vehicle to be fully charged between 3-4hrs. Given the authority's commitment to the promotion of green energy, vehicles will not be charged for parking but required to pay a charge for the electric.

## 1.8 Park Mark

1.8.1 As in previous years, the Council's pay and display car parks have been independently inspected by the Police and parking specialists. The inspection considers the level of safety, cleanliness, quality of signage, frequency of patrols and uniformed attendants, and maintenance within our car parks. The District's car parks have again been recognised for their high quality of management with a Park Mark award.

## 1.9 On Street Parking

### 1.9.1 Residential Parking Zones

Suffolk County Council had resolved to review proposals for Newmarket Resident Parking Schemes in light of the impact of off street parking recommendations agreed at Cabinet in December 2015, and the opening of the Home of Horse Racing. Given that the Home of Horse racing has only recently opened, the scheme will now be reviewed in the spring of 2017 when the impact of additional visitor traffic can be fully assessed.

### 1.9.2 Civil Parking Enforcement

The Police, Suffolk County Council and District/Borough Councils in Suffolk are working up a business model for the transition of on-street parking enforcement in Suffolk from the police to local authorities. Such a change is known as Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE). The aim of the business case will be to ensure that an effective system is created, allowing all parking enforcement to be fully coordinated across the west and east of the county in addition to the current operation in Ipswich. FHDC would be responsible for enforcement of on and off street car parking and setting charges. Members

will be minded that the Newmarket High Street Design brief will consider the physical provision of parking in the High Street and once agreed, the management issues such as the introduction of pay and display parking will be considered in conjunction with the business case for CPE and Newmarket Masterplan process.

If agreed by all partners, the aim will be for transfer of powers to be fully operational across Suffolk by April 2019. This would be subject to the approval of the business case by FHDC Cabinet and a successful application to the Secretary of State for Transport.

## 1.10 Financial

1.10.1 Income for the first 6 months is £17,000 more than 2015 and is likely that total income generated from charges and fees will be £608,000 by the end of the financial year. This increase has been generated by more parking events, the introduction of Sunday charging and higher Excess Charge Notice fines. This additional income is contributing to the investment made in car parking provision and additional enforcement identified in this report

1.10.2 At the request of the Newmarket Retailers Association and agreed by the Operation Portfolio Holder, the car parking charge will be waived from 1pm on every Thursday through-out the month of December. This is in support of an initiative to attract more shoppers and visitors to the town over this important trading period. The loss of income will be approximately £2,600 and will be trailed for the first time this year. Data will be collected and the impact will be assessed.

### 1.11.1 Conclusion

The Car Park Review in 2015 focused on the ability to manage capacity, to provide a high quality service, to maintain affordable car parking and meet the challenges of the Mid Term Financial Strategy. Since the implementation of the recommendations set out in the review, we have seen an increase in car parking events, exceeded income targets whilst not increasing short stay tariffs, and have seen significant investment in car parking infrastructure and resource to enforce the car parks.

1.11.2 Clearly challenges are still to be delivered such as the management of car parking capacity to facilitate an increase in visitors to the Home of Horse Racing and addressing the enforcement of on street parking. Nevertheless this report sets out the processes that the District Council has in place to achieve positive outcomes.

## **2. Recommendations**

2.1 Members are asked to note the report; and instruct the Head of Operations under his delegated authority and in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Operations, to incorporate the Snooker Hall Pocket Car Park spaces into All Saints Car Park for use by pay and display customers.