

12 January 2022		ITEM: 12 Decision: 110596
Cabinet		
Parking Policy and Strategy, Parking Design and Development Standards, and Parking Enforcement Strategy		
Wards and communities affected: Borough-wide	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Councillor Ben Maney, Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways		
Accountable Assistant Director: Leigh Nicholson, Assistant Director Planning, Transportation and Public Protection		
Accountable Director: Julie Rogers, Director of Public Realm		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

It is important to ensure that the Council's approach to vehicle parking is in accordance with national and local policy and objectives. As part of the new Local Plan, it is necessary to develop an up-to-date Parking Policy and Strategy document and new Parking Standards to respond to current transport trends and demands and also to positively shape new development proposals, ensuring homes and businesses are supported by the right level of parking provision.

The **Parking Policy and Strategy** document has been developed to assist the Council to oversee the provision of parking across the borough now and in the future, as the borough looks to accommodate growth and to incorporate emerging vehicle technologies and infrastructure (namely electric vehicles and charging requirements). It includes a number of overarching objectives and principles covering how the Council will manage parking demand in the future and how decisions on parking arrangements can be taken across Thurrock.

The **Parking Design & Development Standards** document has been developed to clearly set out the parking requirements for new developments. It provides detail on the design and standards that will be applicable throughout the Borough. This includes details such as the number, size and location of parking stock for all types of vehicle. This will also become an important tool for Officers to use when discussing development proposals with developers.

The **Parking Enforcement Strategy** document has been developed to set out the processes and procedures for undertaking enforcement of inappropriate and illegal parking across on roads under the responsibility of the Council across the borough.

These documents were published for public consultation between November 2020 and December 2020, and presented to Planning, Transportation and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee in October 2021. This paper identifies the outcomes of the consultation on the documents.

1. Recommendation(s):

1.1 To approve the Parking Policy and Strategy document for adoption by Thurrock Council.

1.2 To approve the Parking Design & Development Standards document for adoption by Thurrock Council.

1.3 To approve the Parking Enforcement Strategy document for adoption by Thurrock Council.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 It is important to ensure that the Council's parking strategy is up to date and relevant in terms of overall national and local policy and objectives.

2.2 The proposed Parking Policy and Strategy has been designed to create an updated, high-level framework against which strategic, tactical and operational decisions on parking arrangements can be taken across Thurrock.

2.3 Similarly, the proposed Parking Standards document has been produced to set clear guidance for developers and the Council's Development Management team when making decisions and recommendations on planning proposals.

2.4 The Parking Enforcement Strategy has been produced to set out the appropriate strategy and processes to undertake enforcement against vehicles parking inappropriately, creating danger to residents and all road users, and minimising obstructions on the public highway.

3 Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 It is important that the Council has an up-to-date Parking Policy and Strategy which is cognisant of current key transport trends (such as car, cycle and lorry ownership and usage) and anticipated growth in the borough. The proposed Parking Policy and Strategy has been prepared against the backdrop of the most up to date data available and sets high level principles to positively respond to the current situation in Thurrock. In particular, the Strategy has been developed to align with the Council's Transport Strategy and seeks to help tackle congestion, deliver accessibility, and improve air quality, making

Thurrock's roads safer, and supporting sustainable growth and regeneration in the Borough.

- 3.2 The Parking Design & Development Standards document seeks to not only set numerical standards for parking, but to also inform the design and layout of parking within development proposals; it is vitally important that new or extended developments incorporate good design for the layout, landscaping, and lighting of parking.
- 3.3 The design document therefore sets out a wide range of criteria and guidance for parking bays, blue badge parking bay dimensions, Powered Two-Wheeler (P2W) parking and cycle and pedestrian facilities in new developments. Additional guidance is provided in relation to the calculation of parking requirements, planning obligations, transport assessments and travel plans.
- 3.4 The Parking Policy and Strategy and the Parking Design & Development Standards should be seen as part of the Council's emerging Local Plan. It is important that new developments coming forward as part of the Local Plan are supported by the right level of car parking for the location, that parking facilities are well designed and integrated within development as a whole rather than it being viewed as a numerical calculation or tick box / afterthought. These documents will help influence and shape development proposals and by having up-to-date standards, will greatly improve the likelihood of high quality and comprehensive development coming forward. In practical terms, the standards could either be included in the Local Plan document, either in its entirety or by extracting relevant sections as appropriate.
- 3.5 The Parking Enforcement Strategy rounds off the suite of documents, by informing of the legislative powers by which the authority is able to undertake enforcement action across the borough, and any current and future actions the Council will take to enable the goals of the Transport Strategy being achieved. The document also provides an opportunity for the Council to set out operational processes under which enforcement takes place in Thurrock.

4 Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 Endorsing the recommendations set out in this report will enable the council to implement the Parking Policy and Strategy, the Parking Design & Development Standards, and the Parking Enforcement Strategy documents as policy to support future strategic and Development Management related processes and decisions.

5 Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 The Parking Policy and Strategy, Parking Design & Development Standards and Parking Enforcement Strategy have been developed as a result of community and stakeholder engagement with relevant parties and stakeholders.

- 5.2 A six week public consultation programme was undertaken between 2 November 2020 and 14 December 2020 to enable local residents, businesses, interest groups and key stakeholders to provide input and comment to shape the documents. The consultation was undertaken via the Thurrock Council consultation portal, with the published page and supporting documents available to view on the following web address - <https://consult.thurrock.gov.uk/parking-strategy-2020>
- 5.3 In total, there were 358 visits to the Parking Strategy consultation page, which resulted in 31 individuals responding to the page via the survey. The survey consisted of 18 questions, with a mix of pre-populated (e.g. yes/no) and open ended/free choice questions.
- 5.4 Based on the responses received, where questions asked whether respondents supported or opposed the documents, they were generally in favour of the documents.
- 5.5 When reviewing the open text questions, there was, as expected, a wide variety of answers and priorities for respondents. The mix of responses do not sway support for nor against the policies and documents. However, there is a predominant ask for a greater level of enforcement against poor parking, parking on verges and the blocking of footpaths, as well as more enforcement within residential areas and those areas outside town centres. Additionally, the emotive nature of parking has resulted in some responses identifying factors outside the remit of the strategy and policy documents, such as routing of traffic and learner HGV routes. This is being addressed through an increase in the number of Civil Enforcement Officers deployed by the council, with the recruitment of an additional ten officers.

Document Revisions

- 5.6 Following the completion of the consultation, there has been no identified changes to the policies or standards themselves, but it has been necessary to amend the structure and information within the documents. The changes are not material to the nature or purpose of the documents and would not invalidate the outcome of the public consultation, but they are considered necessary to make the documents more easily accessible.
- 5.7 The parking strategy documents will be reviewed on a regular basis to allow for any changes in guidance and additional relevant input to be incorporated within future iterations.

Planning, Transport, and Regeneration (PTR) Overview and Scrutiny Committee (O&S)

- 5.8 The Parking Policy and Strategy, Parking Design & Development Standards, and the Parking Enforcement Strategy were presented to PTR O&S on 5 October 2021. The committee raised comments regarding a number of issues,

including parking provision for residential developments, alternative transport options away from the car and sustainable transport options at schools.

- 5.9 Of most concern to the committee lay within the Parking Policy and Strategy document. These were considerations to managing parking and vehicle flows in the future through potential policy measures which could potentially be implemented through end-user pricing. It is to be noted that these options are listed within the strategy as exploratory opportunities and are not proposed for implementation.
- 5.10 The proposed recommendations of the PTR O&S Committee were not resolved prior to the submission of this report to Cabinet.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 The Parking Policy and Strategy, Parking Design & Development Standards and Parking Enforcement Strategy documents will have an impact upon communities, business and individuals in Thurrock. An EQIA assessment will be undertaken to identify the impacts and any mitigating measures that should be considered to manage and guide parking provision across the borough making it safer, less congested and more accessible to local people thereby promoting and supporting People, Place and Prosperity within Thurrock.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Laura Last**
Senior Management Accountant

No additional costs are anticipated from the introduction of this strategy, however any costs that are incurred relating to this will be funded from the Transport Development revenue budget.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Tim Hallam**
Deputy Head of Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Given the nature of this report, there are no legal implications directly arising from it.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**

Community Engagement and Project Monitoring Officer

Both the parking standards and parking strategy contain information in relation to ensuring appropriate provision is provided for those with a mobility issue or impairment. A CEIA assessment will be undertaken to identify the impacts and any mitigating measures that should be considered to manage and guide parking provision across the borough making it safer, less congested and more accessible to local people thereby promoting and supporting People, Place and Prosperity within Thurrock. It is anticipated that as these policies relate to the support of local development and new buildings rather than retrospectively changing existing parking that there will be little to no negative impact.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, and Impact on Looked After Children

None

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Thurrock Transport Strategy 2013 - 2026 - <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/travel-strategies/strategy-documents>
- Thurrock Draft Parking Standards (2012) (not published)
- Thurrock Parking strategy and policies 2016 to 2021 - <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/parking-enforcement/parking-documents-reports-and-auditing>

9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 – Parking Policy and Strategy;
- Appendix 2 – Parking Design & Development Standards;
- Appendix 3 – Parking Enforcement Strategy

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