
Meeting	Budget & Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date	16 th September 2013
Subject	Parking Pilot Schemes – Review of the Experimental North Finchley Town Centre Parking Measures
Report of	Director for Place
Summary of Report	This report provides the Committee with an update on the changes made on an experimental basis, to the parking arrangements made in North Finchley Town Centre following the completion of a North Finchley Town Centre Parking Review

Officer Contributors	Gavin Woolery-Allen, Senior Engineer, Traffic and Development Section, Development and Regulatory Services
Status (public or exempt)	Public
Wards Affected	West Finchley Woodhouse
Key Decision	No
Reason for urgency / exemption from call-in	Not applicable
Function of	Budget & Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Enclosures	Appendix A – Drawing no. 60674_P_001 – North Finchley Town Centre Review Measures Appendix B – Selection of Transaction Data between November 2012 and August 2013 Appendix C – Selection of Parking Income Data between November 2012 and August 2013 Appendix D – Summary of objections received and Officer comments Appendix E – Drawing no. 60674_P_002 – North

Finchley Town Centre Review – Recommended
measures to make permanent

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1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 The Committee consider the update on the experiential parking measures in North Finchley as set out in the report and make comments and/or recommendations for the Cabinet Member for Environment.**
- 1.2 The Committee note that the findings from the experiential parking measures in Edgware and High Barnet will be reported to a future meeting.**

2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- 2.1 Leader of the Council's Delegated Powers Report 1727 of 9 July 2012 approved new parking initiatives and charges in Environment Planning and Regeneration
- 2.2 Cabinet Member for Environment's Delegated Powers Report No. 1847 of 5 November 2012 authorised the introduction of parking measures on an experimental basis, and resolved that the effectiveness and impact of the measures be monitored closely, with any unresolved objections dealt with by the Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Regeneration under delegated powers, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment before a decision is made on whether to make all or any of the measures permanent.
- 2.3 Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Regeneration's Delegated Powers Report No. 1859 of 6 December 2012 approved the acceptance of a quotation from Parkeon Ltd to supply and install credit/debit card machines in car parks and on a trial basis on-street in North Finchley Town Centre.
- 2.4 Cabinet Member for Environment's Delegated Powers Report No. 1979 of 30th April 2013 authorised a change in priority of the roll out of credit/debit card machines from car park locations to on-street locations

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Corporate Plan 2013/16 defines the Council's vision (under the priority to promote responsible growth, development and success across the borough) in delivering sustainable growth to ensure Barnet continues to be successful and prosperous place where people want to live and work
- 3.2 The London Mayor's Transport Strategy also addresses these areas through: "Proposal 30: The Mayor, through TfL, and working with the London boroughs and other stakeholders, will introduce measures to smooth traffic flow to manage congestion (delay, reliability and network resilience) for all people and freight movements on the road network, and maximise the efficiency of the network. These measures will include ...c) "... keep traffic moving ..." , e) Planning and implementing ... improvements to the existing road network, ... to improve traffic flow on the most congested sections of the network, and to improve conditions for all road users.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 4.1 It is considered that the issues involved are likely to give rise to policy considerations as failure to sustain and enhance Barnet's town centres will impair their key contribution to the social, economic and environmental well-being of the borough.
- 4.2 The measures were formulated having given consideration to the responses from consultation with the businesses in North Finchley, comments made at meetings with local stakeholders, and council priorities. Furthermore, the findings of the on-going operation of the measures as well as comments received from the public, give a good basis to make a decision on the future of the measures.

5. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 5.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires a decision-maker to have 'due regard' to achieving a number of equality goals: (i) to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Act; (ii) to advance equality of opportunity between those with protected characteristics and those without; and (iii) to foster good relations between persons with a relevant protected characteristic and those without. The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnership with regard to eliminating discrimination.
- 5.2 The on-going North Finchley Town Centre (NFTC) Parking Review aims to create the right environment for a vibrant and viable town centre in Barnet. Integral to this is the need to respect the diversity of the town centre network and to take into account the different requirements of each town centre, and the different needs and preferences of those who use them.
- 5.3 As part of the Parking Review, the introduction of measures on an experimental basis, has allowed the local businesses and the public to experience the measures first hand, whilst still having an opportunity to comment on their effectiveness or otherwise, enabling the Council to consider whether the measures should be continued with or without modification, so to sustain and improve accessibility for all users and seek to support the provision of a wide range of shops and services to meet the needs of diverse local population.

6. USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (Finance, Procurement, Performance & Value for Money, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 6.1 The costs of introducing the NFTC Parking Review measures (not including the credit/debit card operated pay and display machines) were contained within the North Finchley Outer London Fund budget.
- 6.2 Although the measures have resulted in an average 28% increase of patronage over the last three months on the pre-measures position, they have also resulted in week to week decrease in parking income (averaging at a

14% decrease over the last three months) than what was generally achieved prior to the changes being made, which was always considered a potential result of the measures being introduced.

- 6.3 The costs of making the measures permanent with the slight amendments outlined in this report, would require the making and advertising of the relevant Traffic Management Orders, writing to all Town Centre businesses and minor signage changes, is estimated to be in the region of £5,000 which would be met from existing capital budgets derived from 2013/14 Local Implementation Plan (LIP) funding.

7. LEGAL ISSUES

- 7.1 The Traffic Management Act 2004 places an obligation on authorities to ensure the expeditious movement of traffic on their road network. Authorities are required to make arrangements as they consider appropriate for planning and carrying out the action to be taken in performing the duty.
- 7.2 The Council's charging powers are regulated by the general duty on Authorities under Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act. The Council must exercise the powers (so far as practicable having regard to the matters specified in subsection (2), below) so as to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway.
- 7.3 The measures were introduced under Section 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act, and the Council are obliged under this and The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 to have due regard for objections made in the first six months of the commencement of the measures, or any subsequent modifications.

8. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS (Relevant section from the Constitution, Key/Non-Key Decision)

- 8.1 The scope of Overview and Scrutiny Committees are contained within Part 2, Article 6 of the Constitution;
- 8.2 Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules (Part 4 of the Constitution). The Budget and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee has, amongst other duties, responsibility for scrutinising the overall performance, effectiveness and value for money of Council services, including the planning, implementation and outcomes of all corporate improvement strategies

9. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 9.1 On 19th November 2012, the Council, having carried out a questionnaire-based review where the Council solicited the views of businesses, about parking and loading in the town centre, introduced on an experimental basis changes to the parking arrangements in North Finchley Town Centre. The

changes were designed to encourage increased patronage to the benefit of the Town Centre businesses.

- 9.2 The changes included the following measures, and are illustrated on drawing no.60674_P_001 (Appendix A):
- Reduction of parking charges by 35% to increase turnover of prime on-street and off-street parking - (Proportionately less reduction for off-street car parks to ensure overall parity)
 - Focussed medium and long stay parking to off-street car parks
 - Standardised hours of operation within on street bays to a maximum 2 hours duration
 - Amendment of existing on street 2 hour bays, to include a paid 15 minutes parking period, in order to increase parking turnover
 - Amendment of existing loading bays to allow free parking '15 minutes, no return within 1 hour' during the hours of 10am and 4pm, Monday to Saturday
 - Amendment of the parking bay outside of the Post Office on Lodge Lane to accommodate a free '15 minutes, no return within 1 hour' short stay bay
 - Issue guidance to businesses and traders to inform them of the specific loading and unloading criteria applicable to NFTC.
- 9.3 Having introduced the measures under experimental Traffic Management Orders, the Council are obliged to consider in due course whether or not to continue the provisions of the Orders indefinitely, with or without modification. In doing so, the Council must consider any relevant objection received from any member of the public within the first six months of the commencement of the measures.
- 9.4 In addition, given the nature of the measures, the Council would need to ensure that it is satisfied that they were meeting their objectives in encouraging increased patronage in the Town Centre, and consider the level of local and wider public acceptance of the measures, or otherwise, based on any comments received, prior to deciding whether the measures should be continued indefinitely.
- 9.5 It should be noted that while the measures were in operation, the Council, in January 2013 introduced credit/debit card operated Pay and Display machines in Lodge Lane Car Park and this was followed up in March 2013 in certain locations on-street in High Road and Ballards Lane to compliment the existing Pay by Phone/Paypoint and Parking Vouchers payment methods. This was followed up by a similar credit/debit card operated Pay and Display machine being introduced in the Stanhope Road Main Car Park in July 2013.
- 9.6 Appendix B outlines the parking transaction data for the town centre on-street parking places and car parks during periods within the past 10 months, including those from a couple of weeks prior to the measures being introduced, and Appendix C outlines the income data from the same parking places and car parks over the same period.
- 9.7 The conclusions drawn from the data are that, although some weeks displayed specific downward or upward trends in the number of parking transactions, considered to be attributable to external factors such as inclement weather, public holidays - when the parking charges do not apply,

holiday periods, or in the case of the upward trends - the weeks leading up to Christmas, transaction levels in the town centre have on average increased since in the measures were introduced. This increase has applied to on-street parking and car parks alike. The transaction numbers over the last three months has averaged at a 28% increase on the pre-measures position and it is considered that the transaction levels have now reached a plateau of sorts, and will not significantly increase further.

- 9.8 It has been noted that the introduction of the credit/debit card pay and display machines have had a significant impact on the patronage levels, although it is clear that pay by phone is still the primary method of paying for parking in the North Finchley Town Centre.
- 9.9 Although there have been an increased number of transactions in the main, the weekly level of income is reduced from the average of the two weeks prior to the measures being introduced.
- 9.10 Despite this reduction in overall weekly income, there is an acknowledgement, by the Cabinet Member of Environment and Officers alike that the town centre's on going viability should be supported through an effective Town Centre parking regime.
- 9.11 Officers of the Traffic and Development Section have noticed a marked reduction of complaints about the parking regime in the North Finchley Town Centre which at one stage were prevalent and vociferous. This is indicated through there having been only four objections/comments received to the parking measures since they were introduced in November 2012.
- 9.12 The objections and the Officer's response to those objections are summarised in Appendix D to this report.
- 9.13 Having considered the transaction and income data, as well as the objections and comments received, it is considered that the experimental measures have had a positive effect on the North Finchley Town Centre. The introduction of free parking spaces in existing loading bays, increased numbers of short term parking spaces, and reduced tariffs, which, combined with the introduction of credit/debit card pay and display machines, have resulted in more motorists parking in the Town Centre to utilise the local businesses and amenities.
- 9.14 It is considered that this is supported through the receipt of a minimal number of objections – which were mainly about particular one-off details near each person's premises rather than comments about the Town Centre measures as a whole.
- 9.15 Furthermore, having been aware of continued under-utilisation of some of the local car parks, the Council have, under a separate process, undertaken consultation with local businesses regarding converting the Stanhope Road Lower, Castle Road and Woodhouse Road Car Parks to business permit holders' only car parks, to make better use of those car parks. It is considered that there are still sufficient spaces in the remaining car parks (Lodge Lane, Stanhope Road Top and Stanhope Road Main) to accommodate those motorists displaced from the affected car parks.

- 9.16 In conclusion, it is felt that the North Finchley Town Centre Review measures have been a relative success, and have met the originally stated aim of increasing the number of vehicles visiting the North Finchley Town Centre, and therefore, subject to any comments and/or recommendations made by this Committee, Officers will shortly be recommending to the Cabinet Member for Environment, who has championed the Town Centre Reviews, that the North Finchley Town Centre Review measures should be made permanent with the following modifications:
- a. The 2 hour maximum stay pay by phone parking place outside Nos. 981 to 985 High Road should be converted to a 4 hour maximum stay pay by phone parking place
 - b. The 2 hour maximum stay pay by phone parking place outside Nos. 958 to 964 High Road should be revert back to a 4 hour maximum stay pay by phone parking place
 - c. The combined loading bay/free bay outside Nos. 759 to 763 High Road should revert back to a loading bay only.
- 9.17 The measures which Officers intend to recommend are made permanent are shown on drawing number 60674_P_002 (Appendix E)

10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

Cleared by Finance (Officer's initials)	
Cleared by Legal (Officer's initials)	