

Scrutiny Task and Finish Panel Agenda



Town Centre and Car Parks Task and Finish Scrutiny Panel Monday, 2nd October, 2006

Place: Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, Epping

Time: 7.00 pm

Democratic Services Officer: Z Folley - Research and Democratic Services
email: zfolley@eppingforestdc.gov.uk Tel 01992 564532

Members:

Councillors M Colling (Chairman), Mrs R Gadsby (Vice-Chairman), K Angold-Stephens, Mrs P Brooks, J Demetriou, P Gode, P McMillan, Mrs P Richardson, D Stallan, M Woollard and K Wright

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Head of Research and Democratic Services). To declare interests in any items on the agenda.

In considering whether to declare a personal or a prejudicial interest under the Code of Conduct, Overview & Scrutiny members are asked pay particular attention to paragraph 11 of the Code in addition to the more familiar requirements.

This requires the declaration of a personal and prejudicial interest in any matter before an OS Committee which relates to a decision of or action by another Committee or Sub Committee of the Council, a Joint Committee or Joint Sub Committee in which the Council is involved and of which the Councillor is also a member.

Paragraph 11 does not refer to Cabinet decisions or attendance at an OS meeting purely for the purpose of answering questions or providing information on such a matter.

3. SCOPE OF THE REVIEW (Pages 3 - 20)

Attached to this agenda is a report highlighting issues for consideration and a copy of the proposals presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which led to the setting up of this Town Centre and Car Parks Panel. Members are requested to

consider this information to determine the final scope of the study and a set of Terms of Reference, which reflect those objectives.

In order to help the Panel, a set of 'Notes for Guidance' for the operating of a Task and Finish Panel is also attached. This sets out how a Task and Finish Panel should ideally go about scoping its programme of work, gathering information and evidence. The note also suggests how final reporting back to the main Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the larger Council is undertaken. A draft layout for a Final Report is also attached.

4. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 21 - 22)

Recommendation:

To determine a Work Programme with reporting deadlines.

Having agreed the Scope of the Review and a Terms of Reference, it is necessary to agree a Work Programme to achieve the outcomes.

A draft timetable is attached. The Panel is requested to allocated a deadline to each item.

5. FREE STATURDAY PARKING (Pages 23 - 26)

Attached to the agenda is the item intended to be presented to Cabinet at its next meeting on the 9 October 2006.

The Portfolio Holder for Civil Engineering & Maintenance wishes to hear the views of scrutiny before its consideration by Cabinet.

6. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

17 October 2006, 7.00 pm, Council Chamber.

7 November 2006,7.00 pm, CR 1.

Report to Town Centre and Car Parks Task & Finish Panel

Date of meeting: 2 October 2006

Subject: Scope of Review /Terms of Reference

Officer contact for further information: J Gilbert (01992 564062)

Democratic Services Officer: Zoe Folley (01992 564532)



Recommendations:

- (1) To consider the issues identified in this report and the attached information;**
- (2) To consider the need to work with the Crime and Disorder Task and Finish Panel on joint issues and determine arrangements if necessary**
- (3) To agree and recommend a terms of reference for the Panel to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

(Head of Environmental Services). A copy of the proposal submitted by Councillor J M Whitehouse for this review is attached.

The Panel is asked to consider the issues and set the parameters of the review.

(a) Town Centres

The District has 6 main town centres; Epping, Waltham Abbey, Ongar, Loughton High Road, Loughton Broadway and Buckhurst. Each of these has its own town centre partnership and in addition some also have separate traders' associations or groups. Each town centre has its own characteristics, with Epping and Waltham Abbey for example having Chartered Markets. and are Conservation Areas. The role of this Council is different from a Council having a single large town. We have long had policies to protect the characteristics of these centres, but we cannot avoid changes in retailing which come about through national or social change.

There are some obvious factors which affect the vitality of our town centres and these include (in no particular order):

- access (i.e. road, cycle, pedestrian, public transport etc.)
- car parking availability and cost
- the type of retail outlets available
- leisure time facilities (e.g. pubs, clubs, restaurants etc)
- local employment opportunities
- availability of (affordable) housing
- environmental (street scene, lighting, CCTV etc)
- crime and disorder
- facilities for young persons, the elderly, the disabled etc

- presence of large multiples rise in use of internet to purchase particular goods
 - rise in café culture
- demise of specialist and independent traders (particularly in the prime frontage)

The Panel will wish to seek the views of the town centre partnerships

In simple terms the issues referred to in (b) above need to be addressed, although it must always be recognised that local circumstances will differ. It should also be recognised that the Council has a role to play, but in partnership with others, hence the creation and support of the town centre partnerships.

The Council has already done a lot, through for example:

- town centre enhancement schemes (Epping, Ongar, Buckhurst Hill, Loughton and The Broadway)
- establishment of town centre partnerships
- appointment of a town centre manager
- section 106 agreements to help fund local improvements / schemes etc
- reviews of car parking strategy
- free Saturday parking
- Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme in Waltham Abbey

Car Parking

(b) Development of the new car parking enforcement contract

The existing contract with Vinci Park expires in October 2007. This is a very complex contract and the procurement exercise is underway with the appointment of consultants 'Parking Associates'. It is important that the consultants report into this Panel throughout the process so that Members can comment upon the strategies for enforcement and procurement being put forward.

(c) Free parking on Saturdays

The provision of free parking on Saturdays is one of the new administration's "6 key Messages". Free parking has been provided for quite some time during the run up to Christmas each year, but the extension of this across the year does have significant financial implications. The proposed report to cabinet is set out elsewhere on this agenda for the Panel's views and comments. There is an issue of how much free parking to provide.

(d) Anti-social behaviour in car parks

Unfortunately problems in the Council's car parks are becoming more commonplace, arising from gatherings of young and other people on foot, with motor cycles or in cars, causing nuisance and distress through:

- (a) the playing of car radios at high volume;
- (b) driving around the car parks making a noise through engine and tyre noise etc; and
- (c) general disturbance through the gathering of people close to residential dwellings etc.

The Council is under pressure from local communities and the police to take some form of controlling action, such as to close car parks at night. This is not a straightforward issue carrying with it cost and operational consequences.

It is also noted that there is a Crime & Disorder Task & Finish Panel charged with reviewing new and forthcoming legislation.

It is suggested that the Panel work with the Crime and Disorder Panel in consideration of the matter. The Panel may wish to determine how this should be pursued.

(a) Church Hill, Loughton

Car park has been closed to prevent the gathering of people and their vehicles who were creating noise and distress for residents backing onto or in close proximity to the car park. The closure was at the request of, and supported by, Essex Police

(b) Sainsburys car park, Loughton

Similar difficulties resulted in a dispersal order, which has now expired. Essex Police report however that difficulties are still arising.

(c) Cottis Lane car park, Epping

Officers are currently engaged in a monitoring process in view of nuisance caused by young people and motorists. Local residents are very concerned, and there have been on-going meetings between them, the Council and Essex Police. Notices have been served and warnings issued, but difficulties continue. Essex Police are seeking a dispersal order. Environmental Services have altered the layout of the car park to limit the risk of high speed driving and manoeuvring, and have also enhanced the lighting and installed CCTV.

Problems also arise in town centre car parks through users of local facilities such as clubs, pubs and restaurants, making a nuisance of themselves when returning to their cars in car parks often in the early hours of the morning. In many cases the problem is not necessarily one of deliberate nuisance or disorder, but simply customers returning to their vehicles after a 'good night out'. However, the lateness of the hour can result in disturbance to local residents.

It has also to be remembered that the provision of car parks is a public service. the car parks are there to enable visitors to visit out town centres and use the wide range of facilities available. Whilst there is a significant amount of on street parking available during the evening, the car parks are important in supporting the local economy and many people prefer to use them rather than exposing their vehicles to some risk if parked on main roads etc.

Essex Police and some residents have requested that the Council consider the closure of car parks at night so as to prevent them being used as a source of nuisance and disturbance. This is not however as straightforward as it might initially appear, although there are many ways this could be achieved. The issues to consider include:

- (a) the timing of closures such that users are themselves not unduly inconvenienced;
- (b) who will close and then re-open the car parks in the morning?;
- (c) how will we deal with users who find themselves 'locked in'?;
- (d) if there is a technical problem who will attend to deal with it, especially outside of normal Council operating hours?; and
- (e) the costs of managing closures and any associated technology.

There are a number of different methods by which car parks may be secured at night. These include:

- (a) simple swing barriers (vertical or horizontal);
- (b) ramps (or blockers);
- (c) rise and fall bollards;
- (d) pay on exit barriers; and
- (e) pay on entry with auto raise exit barriers

Each has advantages and disadvantages, with the most simple requiring manual opening and closure whilst the more complex will only require intervention when the barrier fails to operate correctly or it is misused in some way. Costs vary from £10,000 at the barrier end of the scale to £20,000 plus for the rising blocker. Pay on exit arrangements will be even more expensive and would require additional manual intervention adding further to costs. These types of barrier will be adequate to prevent access by cars or light vans etc, but they will not prevent access by cyclists and motor cyclists who are able to 'go through' the barrier or around or under it.

7. The Council has also established a task and finish panel to look at new and forthcoming Crime & Disorder legislation. It seems sensible for the two panels to work together on this issue to ensure that this Panel has a full picture of the crime & disorder issues and the range of powers available to deal with it. This should be explored before any commitment to a potentially costly technical solution is considered.

(e) Potential development of car parks

Cabinet, at its meeting on 10 April 2006 resolved to appoint Bidwells (development consultants) to undertake a study of the development potential of a number of the Council's car parks. This study was to establish whether development could be undertaken whilst protecting as far as possible the existing capacity for car parking. The Consultants have completed their task and submitted their report, which officers are currently considering. It is intended that a report be made to this Panel at its mid October meeting.

Resourcing the Review

Where the Panel believes that expenditure is required to deal with issues raised, for example, securing car parks at night, reports will need to be completed and submitted to Overview & Scrutiny Committee in time to allow for inclusion in the 2007/08 budgetary process.

Terms of Reference

A draft set of proposals has been produced and is attached at page 11 of this agenda

Request by Member for Scrutiny Review



Please complete the form below to request consideration of your issue by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Proposers Name:	Date of Request
Cllr John Whitehouse	March 2006
Supporting Councillors (if any):	
Summary of Issue you wish to be scrutinised:	
<p>Town Centre and Car Parks T & F Panel.</p> <p>The objectives of the scrutiny exercise would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to consider what sort of town centres we wish to encourage in Epping Forest; • to identify the key factors affecting the vitality of each of our town centres; • to make recommendations on whether existing council policies affecting town centres should be amended, or new policies developed; • to make recommendations on whether any of the existing resources devoted to town centres should be redirected, or whether additional resources are required; and • any other relevant objectives agreed by the O&S Committee. 	
NOTE: ENTRIES BELOW RELATE TO ISSUE CATEGORIES OF THE PICK PROCESS. PLEASE REFER TO THE EXPLANATORY NOTES TO THIS FORM FOR FURTHER INFORMATION	
Public Interest Justification:	
<p>It seems to be to be a suitable and timely subject for scrutiny because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local concern over changes in our town centres, notably about the loss of retail businesses in Epping and Waltham Abbey; • concern about the loss of potential employment and business sites in town centres to residential use; • current socio-economic trends that affect our town centres (including the rise of the service economy, increasing dominance of supermarket chains, the Internet and residents' changing lifestyles and leisure choices); • the ability of the district council to influence the vitality of town centres through its policies regarding town centre enhancements, parking, town centre managers, planning controls, support for Town Centre Partnerships and in other ways such as the heritage Economic Regeneration 	

Scheme, and the need to ensure these policies are "joined-up";

- the lack of public understanding over town centre issues (e.g. the fact that business rates are set nationally and the council's limited ability to control changes of use)
- the need to base (potentially expensive) decisions affecting town centres on clear evidence and a robust policy framework;
- our economic development policy (if it still exists) has not been reviewed for some time and is probably out of date;
- potential extra resources for economic development via the business rate growth incentive scheme (or whatever the pot of money we got recently is called);
- the apparent difficulties experienced by the Town Centre Partnerships in making an identifiable impact; and
- the difficulty that the portfolio holder and F&PM Scrutiny Panel had identifying a suitable economic development key objective when we considered the draft Council Plan.

Impact on the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area:

I hope that any task and finish group set up as a result of this will

- * take evidence from traders, residents and landlords
- * look at best practice evidence from elsewhere and relevant research
- * consider relevant national and local statistics and trends
- * potentially use the scrutiny budget to commission research or relevant consultancy

It would be possible to expand the topic to take a wider look at the council's economic development policy but I think the above is probably enough to be going on with.

Council Performance in this area (if known: Red, Amber, Green):

Keep in Context (are other reviews taking place in this area?)

Office Use:

Pick score:

Considered By OSCC:

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Town Centre and Car Parks Task & Finish Panel

Proposed Term of Reference:

To consider and formulate recommendations on the following issues:

Town Centres:

- (i) the type of town centres that should be encourage in Epping Forest
- (ii) the key factors affecting the vitality of each of our town centres
- (iii) the steps required to assist and encourage the economies and growth of our town centres

Car Parking:

- (iv) The development of the new car parking enforcement contract;
- (v) Free parking on Saturdays;
- (vii) The development and future use of car parks

Anti-social behaviour in car parks;

- (viii) the extent of anti-social behaviour in car parks and the action taken to date;
- (x) the various technical solutions available should closure of car parks be a necessary solution;

Aims and Objectives:

To gather evidence and information in relation to the topics through the receipt of data, presentations and by participation in fact finding visits;

To consult with Partners, Agencies, Stakeholders and Users of the services under review, to establish key issues and future need;

To work with the Task and Finish Panel on Crime & Disorder in the consideration of Anti-social behaviour in car parks;

To evaluate all relevant facts in relation to the topics under review in an objective way and to produce recommendations for future action accordingly;

To establish whether there are any resource implications arising out of the topics under review and advise Cabinet for inclusion in the Budget Process 2007/08; and

To report back to Overview and Scrutiny Committee at appropriate intervals and to submit any final reports in the proposed Corporate Format for consideration by O & S, the Cabinet and Council.

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TASK AND FINISH PANELS GUIDANCE NOTES

Introduction

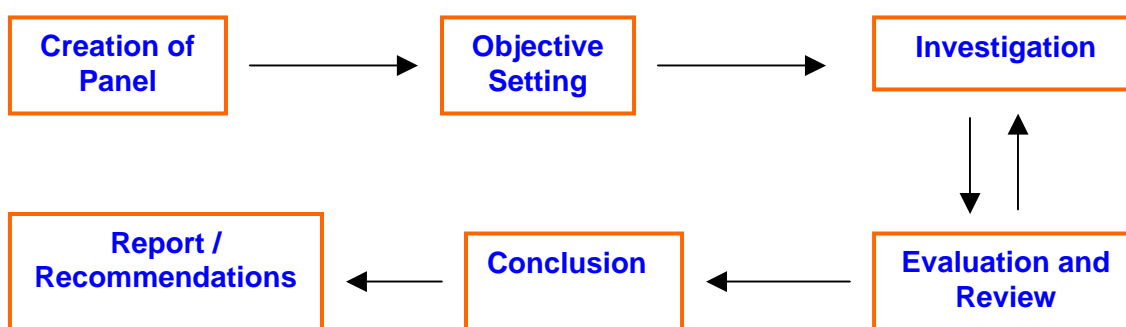
1. Task and Finish Scrutiny Panels are established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in order to deal with ad hoc projects or reviews included in the annual work programme for Overview and Scrutiny.
2. Task and Finish Scrutiny Panel status will be restricted to those activities which are issue-based, time limited and non-cyclical in character and have clearly defined objectives.
3. Task and Finish Panels as with all Overview and Scrutiny must be member led. The members should control the agenda and have ownership of the work programme.

Scoping Phase

4. **(Pre Scoping)** Before their first meeting with the Chairman, the Lead Officer should hold an informal meeting with any officers that may be connected to the topic to be reviewed to try and establish any and all issues related to the subject, so that that the Lead Officer on meeting with the Chairman, has some background information to submit.
5. **(Scoping)** At the start of a Task and Finish Panel the Lead Officer will draft the Terms of Reference in conjunction with the Chairman of the Panel. The Panel will then meet to discuss the Terms of References and decide how they are to achieve their goals. An emphasis must be put on clear and realistic objectives, which are timely and time limited.
6. Terms of Reference and objectives should, if at all possible, be defined using the **SMART** objective framework:

Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic Time Limited

7. The life cycle of a Task and Finish Panel will look like this:



Investigation Phase

8. Before any conclusions can be drawn, evidence must first be gathered. All available sources must be tapped, making the most of the expertise within the Council, any outside organisations and public opinion if applicable.
9. The investigation phase can be handled as a full group review or as a 'delegated tasks' approach, with individual members or small sub groups, gathering evidence to bring back to the full Panel.
10. Any reports by officers to a Task and Finish panel should provide relevant evidence and background but should not make any recommendations. They should be done in an informal style, and not mirror the house Cabinet, Portfolio Holder style of reports.
11. If thought necessary outside bodies should be involved in the evidence gathering phase, either by inviting that organisation to give a one off presentation or by co-opting an outside member onto the Panel for the duration of the Panel's life in a non-voting capacity.
12. Creativity and imagination should be used in gathering evidence. Ways can and should be found of getting the views of groups who may be overlooked. Perhaps the review should be publicised and contributions invited, the use of community venues encouraged and feedback provided to participants.

Witnesses and Questioning

13. When questioning witnesses, questions should be kept brief, clear and to the point. Start with broad questions first and then narrow down the focus. Remember to use 'follow ups' to obtain a clearer explanation. The use of pre-meetings could be used to organise the Panels approach to the questioning of 'witnesses' and to get the most out of the session.
14. Remember the panel is not there to trip people up, "grill" them, apportion blame or to make their life difficult. Rather it is to understand the issues affecting the topic under review and how it affects the District Council and its residents.

Gathering Evidence

15. Methods of evidence gathering should be as systematic and objective as possible, not just anecdotal. Use a variety of approaches and not just rely on a single source. Some different ways that evidence could be gathered are:

- Statistical Surveys;
- Focus Groups and Workshops;
- Public Meetings;
- Self-advocacy groups;
- Street surveys;
- Site visits;
- Mystery Shopping.

Panel members should carry out these tasks, design the survey forms or prepare the questionnaires themselves. Officers are to be used in an advisory capacity only.

Report and Follow-up

16. The concluding report will need to be clear, concise, evidence based with illustrative anecdotes. All the evidence gathered should be listed and if thought appropriate summarised. There will need to be clear, realistic and specific recommendations formulated so that progress can be measured and followed up. The report should (wherever practicable) ask for responses to its recommendations within a realistic time period. (A draft format of a Task and Finish report is attached.)

17. The report should, if thought appropriate, be promoted to the public, e.g. through a press release and/or publicised via our website.

18. A mini-review of outcomes be carried out after an appropriate period (not later than six months (if appropriate) after the end of the review). The results of this review should be reported back to the main Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The entire Panel should not be involved in this follow-up review. The Chairman on his/her own or a small sub-group of two or three members would be enough. They could provide the full panel with a short written report on their findings if necessary; otherwise a verbal report would suffice.

Democratic Services
July 2006

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SCRUTINY



Epping Forest District Council

REPORT OF THE TOWN CENTRE AND CAR PARKS TASK AND FINISH PANEL

Contact for enquiries:
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- Make the contents table lines invisible
- Each section to start on its own page
- The addition of photographs always make a report more reader friendly and a document more professional looking.
- It may be argued that the introduction and context section could be put under one heading. Splitting up these headings helps to keep the report in small chunks, making it easily readable and more accessible.
- The same applies for keeping the recommendations separate from the main body of the report.
- If needed more section headings can be added.

1. Chairman's Foreward

Setting out briefly what the panel was tasked to look at, and how the panel went about it.

The Chairman can use this section to give any personal thanks to the people and organisations consulted.

This should take up about one side of A4.

2. Introduction or Overview

This section sets out the formal terms of reference for the panel, who they consulted and how they went about gathering the evidence (i.e. by interview, site visits, questions to organisations, questionnaires etc.). This will be a more detailed explanation that's in the Chairman's forward.

If pertinent it should set out why the Panel did not look at some aspect of the topic they were charged to look at.

3. Context

Background to the topic under review – how Government Policy fits in, any relevant legal considerations any laws (European or domestic).

How the Council's policies are affected (if at all) or how EFDCs geographical area fits in (local context) and any other local considerations that were taken into account.

4. Recommendations

The Panels recommendations should be listed out here. If there are enough recommendations it could be divided into sections, each relating to different section of the report.

Recommendations should begin: **"The Panel recommends that...."**

5. Report

This section will detail the evidence gathered and the conclusions reached. This should be related to the recommendations made in the summary of recommendations.

Start with a general introduction (if thought useful) and then repeat each recommendation adding an explanation as to why that recommendation was made, citing any evidence gathered and the conclusions drawn. In order to meet legal requirements, if the recommendations are to go on to Cabinet or Council for action, the report should indicated any options that were considered and rejected and reasons why.

6. Conclusion

Very short version of report for busy people – maybe with an eye for putting this bit out as a press release.

7. Acknowledgements

To give formal acknowledgement to any sources used e.g:

Organisations;

People;

Officers;

Experts;

Websites;

Laws;

Locations visited;

Council policies etc.

8. Appendices

If needed to add background information, tables, graphs etc.

Agenda Item 4

Town Centre and Car Parks Task & Finish Panel – Work Programme

Date of meeting	Topic	Comments
2 October 2006	Agree Terms of reference and proposed work plan including Consideration of liaison with C and D Panel Free Saturday parking (including changes to Darby Drive car park, Waltham Abbey) – Consideration of report to 9 October 2006 Cabinet meeting.	
17 October 2006	1. Car parking enforcement contract 2. Development of car parks	1. Receipt of consultants stage I report. Consideration of consultation with TCPs, local councils etc 2. Receive initial consultant's report and officer comment thereon
7 November 2006	Car parking enforcement contract	Receipt of consultants stage II report. Then to OS Committee on the 9 th of November and to Cabinet on 18 th December

A number of these topics will require a multi-service approach, particularly those involving the economic viability of the town centres. The issues regarding free Saturday parking, the new parking contract and anti-social behaviour in car parks are particularly pressing and are therefore put forward in the proposed timetable for early consideration.

Consideration will need to be given with regard to the wider Panel reviews on town centres as a whole, including consultation, meeting interested parties, taking evidence etc.

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Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C/nnn/2006 - 07.

Date of meeting: 9 October 2006



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Civil Engineering & Maintenance

Subject: Free Saturday Car Parking

Officer contact for further information: J Gilbert (01992 – 56 4062).

Democratic Services Officer: G Woodhall (01992 – 56 4ext).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) To provide free car parking on Saturdays in the Council's long stay and combined car parks as set out in paragraph 11 of the report;**
- (2) To make any necessary changes to the existing traffic regulation orders; and**
- (3) To note the revenue consequences of foregone income of approximately £75,150 (CSB) per annum and the one off cost of £10,000 (DDF) for signage and traffic regulation orders.**

Report:

Background

1. One of the new Administration's 6 "Key Messages" is the provision of free car parking on Saturdays as a way of providing further support to the district's town centres. Free parking is already provided on Saturdays throughout the District during December each year as part of supporting the Christmas trading period.
2. There are a number of factors which need to be considered in determining the most appropriate strategy for the provision of free parking:
 - (a) should all car parks be free, given that those owned by Sainsbury's but managed by the Council will have to be excluded?;
 - (b) should the free parking allow for an unlimited stay during Saturday or should there be a maximum period of free parking?
 - (c) what are the costs through lost income and the processes involved in change?
3. The Council manages 22 car parks, 20 of which it also owns. The short stay car parks at Sainsbury's in Loughton and Ongar are owned by Sainsbury's but are managed by the Council. Sainsbury's retain the income generated, but the Council levies a 10% management fee and retains all penalty charge notice (PCN) income. Sainsbury's operate a refund of up to 2 hours parking if customers spend beyond a certain amount in the store, thereby making the car parking free for the majority of shoppers. There are a number of privately owned and operated car parks which the public can use, notably those associated with Waitrose at Buckhurst Hill, Tesco at Waltham Abbey and Epping, and Marks and Spencer in Loughton.
4. The Council's car parks are categorised as:
 - short stay
 - long stay
 - combined (have both short & long stay tariffs)

Short stay car parks are intended, as the name suggests, for short visits and tariffs are set accordingly to discourage long term usage. Conversely, long stay tariffs are set to encourage long usage although a 2 hour stay can be had in both types for the same tariff (£1.20). Combined car parks utilise the short stay tariff for stays up to 2 hours and the long stay tariff thereafter. This enables better car park utilisation of otherwise less used car parks.

Appendix aa sets out the car parks, the number of spaces and the category.

5. There is already some free car parking within the district, at the Broadway (Burton Road and Vere Road), in Roydon and at Quaker Lane in Waltham Abbey, where there are 24 free spaces operating with a 2 hour no return within 3 limitation. There are no limits in Roydon or at The Broadway although the town centre enhancement proposals will bring into place a time limited pay and display regime. There are also free car parks associated with supermarkets and village halls etc.

Income on Saturdays

6. Officers have undertaken a detailed study of income generated on Saturdays. This was complex due to the need to exclude income generated on the preceding Friday but collected on the Saturday and the inclusion of income from Saturday which was not collected from the machines until the following Monday. The analysis shows that approximately £2,900 of income is generated from all car parks (excluding both Sainsbury's) on a Saturday. Allowing for the fact that Saturdays in December are already free this amounts to approximately £140,000 per annum. Of this approximately 60% (£84,000) is generated in the short stay car parks and 40% (£56,000) in the long stay/combined car parks. Further income is generated from PCNs which approximates to £43,500 per annum. This can be broken down into 56% short stay (£24,350) and 44% long stay/combined (£19,150).

7. The Saturday income from the Council's only on-street pay and display regime in Queens Road Buckhurst Hill generates around £12,000 per annum based on 18 pay and display machines. This equates to approximately £670 per machine per annum. Whilst direct comparisons are difficult, the presently agreed proposals for The Broadway and Loughton High Road include the provision of on-street pay and display regimes, and the installation of yy machines. Using the figures from Queens Road, this would generate an additional £zzz in income. The income from PCNs at Buckhurst Hill is approximately £6,000 per annum or £330 per machine. Taking this forward to The Broadway and Loughton High Road would realise PCN income of approximately £xxxx per annum.

8. The above can be summarised as follows:

	Short stay	Long stay & combined	Total
Off street P & D	84,000	56,000	140,000
Off street PCN	24,350	19,150	43,500
On street P & D	12,000	N/A	12,000
On street PCN	6,000	N/A	6,000
Future on street P & D	??	N/A	
Future on street PCN	??	N/A	
Total	120,350	75,150	195,500

Enforcement regime

9. It is important to determine whether the car parks are to be free all day for all to use or whether the free period is, as at Quaker Lane, to be time limited. The free spaces at Quaker Lane operate all through the week and therefore the time limit is imposed to prevent their use by commuters or local employees. This may not be considered necessary on a Saturday,

although in towns with LUL Stations it is likely that free car parking all day will result in some long stay use by those not intending to shop locally. However, current data indicates that the level of income from those staying more than 2 hours is very limited and this income would probably be outweighed by the costs of a more complicated enforcement regime. A free Saturday regime would also be much simpler for the users to understand.

Possible Saturday regime

10. Given that two of the larger short stay car parks cannot in any event be included in a free regime, and the fact that those shop based car parks under private management are required to operate as short stay car parks using a tariff broadly similar to the Councils, it is suggested that only the long stay and combined car parks should be free all day on Saturdays.

11. This approach would provide free parking in all town centres as follows:

Town centre	Location
(i) Loughton	Traps Hill (197 spaces) and Smarts Lane (22 spaces)
(ii) Buckhurst Hill	Queens Road (lower) (100 spaces)
(iii) Waltham Abbey	Cornmill (197 spaces), Darby Drive (66 spaces) and Quaker Lane (24 spaces)
(iv) Epping	Bakers Lane (145 spaces)
(v) Ongar	The Pleasance (81 spaces)
(vi) The Broadway	To be decided as part of TCE arrangements (see later report)

This regime would provide a significant amount of free parking at an approximate cost of £71,150 per annum, compared to £195,500 if free parking were to be provided all day in all of the Council's car parks and on street locations. There would be additional costs associated with new signage and amendments to TROs estimated at not more than £10,000

Statement in support of recommended action:

12. The recommended regime provides more than 800 free parking spaces in the town centres. This should facilitate local shopping and support the town centre economies. It also limits the loss of revenue to the Council's general fund budget although no account has been taken of the 'knock-on' effects of the reduced use of the short stay car parks and on-street pay and display bays where the standard short stay tariffs would remain.

Other options for action:

13. The other options are essentially those set out the report, each of which provides additional degrees of free parking but also with an increased revenue loss to the Council.

Consultation undertaken:

None

Resource implications:

Budget provision: £10,000 (DDF) for amendments to the traffic order and new signage
£71,500 (CSB) loss of income to the general fund

Personnel: Nil

Land: Nil

Community Plan/BVPP reference: Supporting the local economy

Relevant statutory powers: N/A

Background papers: N/A

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: N/A.

Key Decision reference (if required): Will advise when key decisions have ref nos.