

**Title: Surrey Heath Parking Strategy - Progress**

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| Portfolio         | Community |
| Ward(s) Affected: | All       |

**Purpose**

**To note the progress made with the Surrey Heath Parking Strategy.**

**1. Summary**

- 1.1. Following the production of the Parking Strategy in 2013, Parking Services has embarked on a full and wide ranging process of improvement. This has included physical improvements to structures and machinery, service improvements within car parks and a greatly improved on street enforcement service, now running at break-even financially; an improvement of some £250k pa.
- 1.2. The service has become pro-active and tackled some long standing problems, including out of town car parks and parking enforcement around schools.

**2. Strategy Background**

- 2.1. The Surrey Heath Parking Strategy was produced in December 2013, written by consultants Town Centre Parking Ltd and informed by staff from Parking Services.
- 2.2. It provides a review of the Service, both on and off-street, and suggests a number of actions, both short and longer term.

**3. Physical Improvements**

- 3.1. A key change has been the introduction of new ANPR based car park payment and barrier systems in the multi storey car parks. This has improved service, reduced costs, allowed the introduction of new payment methods (see section 4) and importantly began to provide a range of accurate data. As with any new system there were some teething problems, and initial familiarity required by users regarding entering car registration details.

However the system has now run well for over a year with very few issues. Indeed, town centre partners have recently praised the way the system operated over the very busy Christmas 2015 period.

- 3.2. A number of capital works have been carried out to improve the car parks. These include refurbishment of lifts in Main Square, resurfacing of Level 4 to include premium wide bays and refurbishment of all stairwells. Funding has been approved for the re-surfacing of the top deck (Level 5) which will take place in May/June 2016.
- 3.3. Deep cleaning and internal decoration of the MSCP's has taken place, alongside a process of re-signing internally. An electronic system has been established to log and monitor all faults and ensure remedial action takes place.
- 3.4. Out of town car parks have had the old Pay and Display equipment replaced with a new City Line system which, amongst other improvements, provides downloadable data on usage, via Sim Link. Savings in maintenance contracts and cash collection make the machine installation pay for itself and increased serviceability has led to an increase in car park income.
- 3.5. A full review of charging in out of town car parks has been undertaken and a recommendation for changes to the charging regime is to be taken to the Executive in March 2016.

#### 4. Service and Standards

- 4.1. The ANPR system has allowed for close monitoring of usage. This has shown that car park usage in the Town Centre has increased by some 3-5% above the increase in Town Centre footfall.
- 4.2. As well as payment by credit/debit cards, the new system allows for a cashless pre-pay system meaning customers no longer have to queue to pay for parking. The uptake on this has been steady and we anticipate an increase, as customer confidence spreads via word of mouth as well as future marketing campaigns.
- 4.3. The system also has the potential for "pay as you go" by mobile phone facility, which we anticipate will be very popular and hope to introduce in the not too distant future when the software integration solution has been completed by our supplier.

- 4.4. A commercial car wash has been introduced in Main Square CP and is proving popular with customers as well as providing additional income to the car park.
- 4.5. Additionally, working with Town Centre partners, two seasons of Roof Top Cinema have been held on the top of Main Square Car Park, providing a fun alternative use for the car park, adding to the Town Centre offer and providing additional income.

5. On Street Enforcement

- 5.1. Through effective use of targeted enforcement, agency staffing and a review of priority areas, on-street enforcement has been transformed in to a break even operation providing a valuable service to the community. We continue to have the highest PCN recovery rate in Surrey.
- 5.2. Parking Services staff have attended both nationally accredited and locally implemented training to improve standards and ensure a consistent approach to ticket issuing and recovery takes place.
- 5.3. Parking Services has worked with local Members in a number of problem areas to help deal with parking issues – this particularly relates to illegal and anti-social parking around schools at drop off and pick up times.
- 5.4. The Parking team is currently evaluating new parking notice processing software which will allow parkers issued with a PCN to access the evidential photographs online and easily pay their fine. We anticipate this will improve service, reduce customer calls and save money against the current system.

6. Town Centre Improvements

- 6.1. Parking Services has been actively involved in future plans for the Town Centre, providing advice and information relating to parking usage and demand. This has involved working with colleagues across property, legal and planning services.
- 6.2. A process of changing town centre directional signs has been completed, so as to introduce a consistent name for “Main Square Car Park”, remove “The Mall Car Park” and re-prioritise Knoll Road car park from the A30. This was introduced in time for Christmas 2015 and contributed to the very smooth parking operation over the period. Longer term, we hope to introduce VMS messaging at all key access points, but this will be subject to SCC approval and future plans for the Town Centre.

**7. Conclusion**

- 7.1. Over the last two years, Parking Services has moved from a reactive, rather outdated service to one that is effective, embraces new ways of working and works proactively to tackle issues. It is also becoming an exemplar for a number of other authorities who have consulted with us on our new ways of working.
- 7.2. The Parking Strategy has helped shape the service and, combined with the fresh new management approach, has allowed this transformation to take place.

**8. Recommendation**

The Committee is asked to note the update.

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| <u>Report Author</u> | Leigh Thornton, Business Services Manager  | 01276 707163 |
|                      | e-mail: <a href="mailto:leigh.thornton@surreyheath.gov.uk">leigh.thornton@surreyheath.gov.uk</a>   |              |
| <u>Service Head:</u> | Daniel Harrison, Executive Head of Business  | 01276 707171 |
|                      | e-mail: <a href="mailto:daniel.harrison@surreyheath.gov.uk">daniel.harrison@surreyheath.gov.uk</a> |              |