SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 14 APRIL 2015

HINCKLEY TOWN CENTRE CAR PARKS DATA
REPORT OF DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (COMMUNITY DIRECTION)

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide information to Scrutiny Commission on Hinckley town centre car parks.

2. RECOMMENDATION

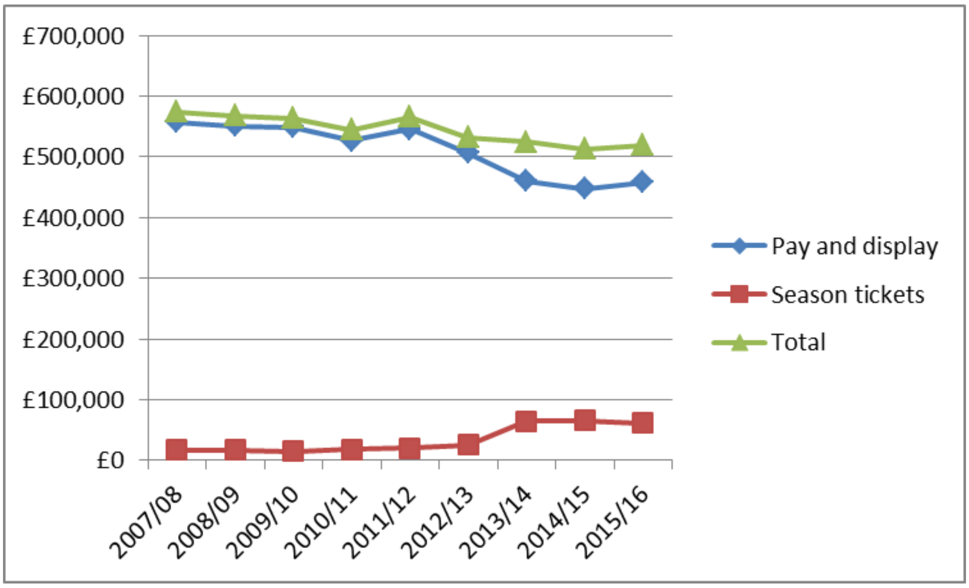
2.1 That Scrutiny commission note the contents of the report and advise if any further information is required for future meetings.

3. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

3.1 At Scrutiny Commission 3 March 2016, a report was requested on Hinckley town centre car parks. This report provides data on income and occupancy, an overview of the findings of the town centre car parks working group, and other changes.

INCOME

3.2 Income since 2007/8 is shown in the graph below.



Short stay tariffs were reduced in June 2013.
LCC started to provide long stay season tickets for their staff during 2013/14. This ended March 2016.

3.3 The following trends can be identified:-

- 2015/16 income through the pay and display machines is approximately £100,000 lower than 2007/08 (pre recession).
- 2015/16 income through the pay and display machines is approximately £10,000 higher than the previous year indicating increased demand and usage of Hinckley town centre car parks.
- Season ticket income increased by approximately £40,000 when LCC purchased these for their staff. This has now ceased.
- 69% of income is from short stay car parks, 31% from long stay.

OCCUPANCY

3.4 Occupancy counts are undertaken every month and are the best available measure of availability of car parking spaces. Counts are undertaken between 12noon and 2pm (peak times) on a market day, non market day and Saturday during 1 week each month.

3.5 Table 1 below gives the percentage of each type of car park space occupied.

Table 1	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March
Short stay % Occupied	79	60		75	81	66	70	72	78	80
Long stay % occupied	65	52		70	74	73	59	72	65	71
All car parks % occupied	72	56	0	73	78	69	65	72	72	75

Data shows occupancy is increasing but there still remains plenty of capacity.

3.6 Table 2 gives the number of unoccupied spaces over the last 3 months. The total number of spaces available are 791 (412 short stay and 379 long stay).

Table 2	Jan	Feb	March
Short stay number of spaces unoccupied	117	90	84
Long stay number of spaces unoccupied	105	132	111
Total number of spaces unoccupied	222	222	195

Data shows at peak occupancy there were 195 spaces free in March. Availability on long stay was greater than in short stay.

3.7 Table 3 gives occupancy by percentage by car park.

Table 3		% Occupied
Designation	**Car Park Name**	**Mar-16**
Short Stay	Church Walk	84
Short Stay	St Marys	89
Short Stay	Trinity Vicarage	72
Short Stay	Stockwell Head	93
Short Stay	Rear of Castle St	80
Short Stay	Trinity Lane East	94
Short Stay	Mansion Street	37
Long Stay	Mount Road	83
Long Stay	Trinity Lane West	91
Long Stay	Holliers Walk	80
Long Stay	Druid Street	25
Long Stay	Alma Road	31
Long Stay	Lower Bond St	79
Long Stay	Thornycroft Road	62

Data shows demand for car parks varies. Demand is greatest for car parks closest to the Crescent (thought to be high demand from contractors / workers).

Demand for Alma road and Druid street is low and will be reviewed once Holliers school relocates.

CAR PARKS WORKING GROUP

3.6 A working group was established in 2015 to review the operation of car parks during the completion of the Crescent and Leisure Centre developments. This group includes representatives of HBBC, Hinckley BID, and Hinckley chamber of trade. The findings of this group to date are included in appendix A.

OTHER CHANGES

3.7 The parking places order will be changed on May 1. Key changes will be:-

- Trinity Vicarage car park will become long stay (currently short stay) to provide additional long stay parking once the old Leisure centre closes.
- Trinity East will become both long and short stay (currently short stay) to provide additional parking for people who work at the Crescent.
- Mount Road will be renamed the Leisure centre car park and will become short stay (currently long stay) to provide parking for the new Leisure centre users.

3.8 The lease on the Rear of Castle Street car park will be renewed until May 2021 (subject to Council approval on 12/4/16)

3.9 LCC works on Regent Street will create more free on street parking (limited wait).

3.10 LCC are commissioning a study of on street parking in and around Hinckley Town Centre. HBBC have requested this study should commence after all the town centre developments are complete to provide an accurate picture of parking behaviour. LCC's MTFS also indicates they may introduce on street parking charges.

4. <u>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (CS)</u>

4.1 Total car parking income for the last 5 years is shown in the following table:

	Budget	**Actual**
	£	**£**
2015/16	455,000	521,096
2014/15	425,000	512,492
2013/14	455,600	524,420
2012/13	520,000	532,309
2011/12	520,000	565,491

In 2015/16 income was £66,096 greater than the budget. This is due to the potential impact of loss of income from the closure of Brunel Road, Bus Station car parks and the new Sainsbury's car park not materialising in the short term. Additional income in 2014/15 and 2013/14 was mainly due to the Brunel Road car parks remaining operational due to the rephasing of the Bus Station Development.

4.2 The budgeted for 2016/17 is £413,990. Compared to the 2015/16 budget this is a reduction of £41,020. This is due to the expected reduction of season ticket income of £30,000 and reduction in pay and display car park of £11,020.

5. <u>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [JB]</u>

5.1 None.

6. <u>CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS</u>

6.1 Car parking supports the aims of creating a vibrant place to work and live, and providing value for money services.

7. CONSULTATION

7.1 The Hinckley BID and Chamber of trade have been represented on the working group. A car parks user survey was also undertaken in September 2015.

7.2 The proposal to change the parking places order was also published and advertised in line with the statutory requirements. No comments were received

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 It is the Council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.

8.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.

8.3 The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

Management of significant (Net Red) Risks		
Risk Description	Mitigating actions	Owner
Failure to meet income budgets for car parks.	Modelling of options prior to implementation. Monitoring of income.	Caroline Roffey
Negative perceptions of car parks and car parking charges.	Consultation with users needed to inform decisions. Ensure joint working group continues (including town centre business representatives)	Caroline Roffey
Changes result in insufficient parking spaces to meet demand	Modelling. Ensure charging strategies account for demand.	Caroline Roffey

9. KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Only car parks with Hinckley town centre have been considered by this report. As such there are no rural implications.

9.2 No proposals identified to date have equalities implications.

10. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:
- Community Safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset Management implications
- Procurement implications
- Human Resources implications
- Planning implications
- Data Protection implications
- Voluntary Sector

Background papers: Car parks working group key findings
Contact Officer: Caroline Roffey, Head of Street Scene Services x5782
Executive Member: Councillor Chris Ladkin

Appendix 1:

WORKING GROUP: HINCKLEY TOWN CENTRE PARKING

Key Findings: December 2015

Introduction: A task and finish group was established September 2015 to consider car parking issues relating to Hinckley Town centre. This report identifies the key findings to date and future work required.

Membership Cllr Ladkin & Cllr Wright – Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Executive (HBBC)
Jonathan White & Karl Brooks– Hinckley Business improvement district (BID)
Brian Wright & Gary Bird – Hinckley chamber of trade (HCOT),
Caroline Roffey – HBBC support for group

Key Findings

1. Payment systems –methods explored.
    - Pay on foot - expensive(£53k – £79k per car park), increased operational costs, loss of spaces to accommodate barriers etc.
    - Deferred payment system. £5,500 per machine. Additional £500 pa to operate plus merchant banking charges. Rental option available (more economic to purchase).
    - Pay by phone – costs prohibitive as 16.6p per transaction plus 5.8% banking charge. All agreed too high on a 50p ticket.
    - ANPR – LA's cannot enforce with this system
    - Contactless emerging as a payment system but still not widely available. Given low tariffs this could become a popular payment method in the future.

    Conclusion: Choice costs – increasing payment options will increase costs. Current low tariffs and high proportion of short visits mean new payment systems will result in significant increase in cost per transaction.
    New payment system will require increase in charges to fund.
    Further explore trial deferred payment system - potential to share costs between BID and HBBC.
    Await wide availability of contactless payments before significant investment.
    Current machines have a life expectancy of >8 years.

2. Tariffs
    - Removal of 1 hour tariff explored – feasible but risk of deterring those currently visiting for less than 1 hour who will have to pay £1 (currently 50p), and of reduced capacity as a result of longer stays. BID contribution would be needed if £1 tariff was reduced. Also need to consider increase in charges for stays over 2 hours to ensure adequate turnover of spaces.
    - Refund on parking charge by businesses identified as method to reward customers spending in Hinckley.

- Initial survey of BID members (November 2015) identified:-
  - remove the 1 hour tariff, - BID members supportive
  - increase charges for longer stays – BID members NOT supportive
  - Refund parking to customers when spending in stores – BID members NOT supportive.
- Initial survey of ca r park users (September 2015) identified:-
  - 78% of users thought charges were good value for money compared to other towns
  - 68% of users would stay for longer if bigger/different shops, 13% would stay for longer if free parking.
- Free parking explored. Ilkeston visited - free first hour parking initiative resulted in a increased the number of visitors by car by an average of 32% within first 9 months. No footfall data / town centre vitality data available. Costing £250,000 pa which EBC are seeking to fund from increases in other car park charges.
- Research review – various reports reviewed including "Assessing the impact of car parking charges on town centre footfall" Welsh Govt 2015. This report identified charging as one of a complex array of factors that can influence town centre vitality.

Conclusion: free parking is not an answer on its own. Parking offers need to be developed to meet specific objectives.
Reduction in charges to 1 and 2 hour tariffs introduced in May 2013 have not resulted in increased footfall.
Further research with shoppers and businesses required.
Further modelling required as the change in demand for town centre car parks emerges.
No major changes recommended to car park designations / tariffs until impact of new developments is known (other than those identified in this report).

3. PCN's
   - Increase in proportion of people not buying ticket despite reduction in charges. Agreed no further action on penalty notices.

4. Directional signage
   - Signage will all be revised and updated as part of the LCC funding bid for 2017. 3 parking zones with variable message signs advising availability of spaces.
   - HBBC to make temporary improvements to signage. £2000 investment.

5. Christmas offer
   - Free after 3pm every day, 1-24 December. Jointly funded by BID and HBBC.

6. Performance indicators - agreed BID develop a suite of indicators to monitor health of the high street. To include car park occupancy, market stall occupancy, footfall, vacancy rates, unit occupancy split by business types, turn over, rent yields. NB all the research into parking and charges identifies a lack of monitoring and therefore limited ability to fully measure the impact of any free parking offers.
   Conclusion: Lack of data inhibiting ability to make informed decisions. Any future decisions to be made based on information from the full suite of indicators.

7. Other parking providers / parking changes. Update
   - Crescent–2 hours free no spend in store required. 3 hours free if spend £5 in store. Operating on ANPR system. Opened 4/11/15. Issues with high demand for long stay parking initially.
   - Britannia – NCP now managing. Evening charges being introduced.

- CO-OP – HBBC have requested COOP allow HBBC to operate once store closes in January.
- Station road public realm improvements – completed end of November 2015.
- Regent Street to be reopened to traffic. 8 additional on street parking bays to be created. Waiting limit to be increased to 1 hour.

8. Demand for parking.
   Time of changing demand at present
   - High demand for parking for construction projects
   - Unknown impact from free parking at Sainsbury's
   - Unknown impact of increased shoppers visiting the Crescent / Hinckley town centre
   - Unknown increased demand from people working in the Crescent.
   - Occupancy at 66% weekdays, 76% Saturdays.

   Changes which can be made:-
     - Redesignate Mount road as short stay for the Leisure Centre (May 2016).
     - Redesignate Trinity Vicarage as long stay (May 2016) – temporary change until this site is redeveloped.
     - Redesignate Trinity East car park (May 2016) as a combined short/long stay car park to create more long stay parking.
     - Renew lease of rear of Castle street car park (current lease expires 1/5/16).
     - Extend charging period to 8am – 6pm to mirror Sainsbury's
     - Conclusion: Other than the changes above monitor occupancy and parking habits until July 2016 when new parking arrangements are all embedded.
     - NB All of these changes require HBBC to amend their parking places order which takes at least 2 months to implement.

9. Future work:

Ongoing	– Monitor occupancy of HBBC owned car parks - Seek to identify other relevant research - Input into LCC new signage plan
December 2015	– seek agreement with COOP to operate this car park
January 2016	– Explore trial of post parking payment system. If agreed implement ASAP - Seek Council approval to change car park designations / lease Rear of Castle street etc. - Establish BID KPI's to monitor health of the high street - Introduce new temporary signs for car parks - Report interim findings to HBBC Executive briefing - Report interim finding to TCP
April 2016	– Amend HBBC parking places order - Identify and evaluate potential parking offers
May 2016	– Implement changes to car parks designations - Survey of car park users and BID users
July / August 2016	– Full review of HBBC car park use - Agree parking offers - Recommendations to HBBC and TCP