

Guildford Borough Council

Report to:	Executive
Date:	23 January 2025
Ward(s) affected:	ALL
Report of Strategic Director of:	Finance
Report Author:	Andrew Harkin – Parking Lead
Email:	andrew.harkin@guildford.gov.uk
Lead Executive Member:	Cllr Catherine Houston, Lead Councillor for Commercial Services
Email:	catherine.houston@guildford.gov.uk
Status:	Open
Key decision:	Yes

Off-Street Parking Annual Business Plan

1.0 Executive Summary

This report updates the Executive on the operation and financial performance of the Parking Service in 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24, recommends several the improvements completed and those to be undertaken over the next 5 years.

2.0 Recommendation to Executive

That the Executive resolves to approve:

2.1 In respect of Farnham Road Multistorey Car Park:

- To increase the standard daytime rate from £1.10 per hour to £1.20 per hour
- To remove the pre-7am £1.00 per hour rate
- To standardise the Sunday daytime rate with the proposed Monday to Saturday rate of £1.20 per hour
- To increase the maximum daily (capped) tariff from £9.00 per day to £10.00 per day.

2.2 In respect of York Road Multistorey Car Park:

- To convert from a Shopper car park to a Long-stay car park
- To remove the £4.00 up to 3-hour tariff structure and replace with a standard daytime rate of £1.20 per hour between 8am and 6pm

- To reduce the maximum daily (capped) tariff from £11.00 per day to £10.00 per day.
- 2.3 In respect of season tickets, contract parking and garages:
To increase the current rates charged by 10%.
 - 2.4 To make no other changes to the Short-stay and Shopper car park tariffs.
 - 2.5 To refocus the Parking Strategy to reflect modern technology and parking trends by using external consultants up to a budget of £50,000 and to report its findings to the Executive.
 - 2.6 To delegate approval to join the National Parking Platform (NPP) to the Joint Assistance Director of Commercial Services in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Commercial Services.
 - 2.7 To note the priorities for the capital programme for the years 2025-2030.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 In April 2024, tariffs in the Short-stay and Shopper car park were increased. However, the daytime Long-stay parking and Sunday fees at Farnham Road MSCP were left unchanged. Similarly, the Contract Parking, Season ticket and Garage fees were not revised at that time.
- 3.2 At Farnham Road MSCP the proposed 10p per hour increase from £1.10 per hour to £1.20 per hour recommended, equates to a 2.92% per increase over the 3-year period since the charges were last amended. This and the other amendments to the tariffs proposed for this car park are expected to generate an additional £119,000 per annum in net revenue.
- 3.3. Changes in the nature of the business and retail activity, in the upper High Street area of the town centre, has resulted in reduction in utilisation at York Road MSCP. This has led to an over-capacity of Shopper parking provision in the area. Therefore, to try to encourage greater use of this facility, which boasts the largest capacity of any car park in that particular part of the town, changing the car park to a Long-stay facility, with lower charges, may help to increase patronage and free up capacity in nearby Short-stay and Shopper facilities.
- 3.4 The conversion of York Road MSCP will establish a Long-stay interceptor facility on the eastern side of the town centre, like that

provided by Farnham Road MSCP on the western approach to the town centre. However, the proposed change in daytime tariffs to a £1.20 per hour fee will have a negative financial impact. This is expected to reduce net revenue by around £186,000 per annum (assuming no increase in patronage). Even so, it may help to better meet the needs of businesses, who since the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis, have been seeking concessions for staff parking.

- 3.5 However, if as anticipated, the reduced fees encourage greater utilisation, the negative revenue position could be reduced. A 5% increase in patronage would reduce the net revenue reduction from £186,000 to £159,000 per annum, A 10% increase in utilisation would reduce the net revenue reductions to £133,000. Indeed, if there was a 15% increase in use, the £106,000 net reduction would be exceeded by the net increase in revenue anticipated at Farnham Road MSCP (£119,000). So, the proposed changes could be broadly 'cost neutral'. Of course, if there is displacement from other nearby Short-stay and Shopper car parks, this may reduce revenues there, but this would help to free up capacity in these centrally located facilities, for other visitors to use.
- 3.6 Notwithstanding, the Parking team has been set a target to generate an additional £1.0m in net revenue in 2025-26 (in addition to the £800,000 target that it was set for 2024-25). So, other tariff changes could be considered. However, thus far during 2024-25, the service has exceeded predictions in respect ticket revenue, contract parking, season ticket, pre-payment and penalty charge notice income (see 6.3).
- 3.5 Additionally, when new Pay and Display (P&D) and Barrier Pay on Foot (PoF) parking equipment is introduced in late 2024-25 / early 2025-26, the availability of improved technology and contactless payments across all our parking facilities is likely to generate additional revenues, in respect to the anticipated transfer from cash to card payments. This could be expected to generate around £300,000 additional net revenue per annum, through people using card rather than limiting the duration of their stays based upon the amount of change they possess.
- 3.6 Contract Parking and Season tickets represent extremely good value for money for regular users, with discounts ranging between 15%-45% of standard parking tariffs. To avoid impeding the return-to-work post-pandemic, the fees associated with these two forms of parking offer have only been increased once, in 2022-23, when the

fees were subject to a 3.0% rise. Garages were last increased in 2023-24, by 3.5%. Therefore, a 10% increase in Contract, Season ticket and Garage fees is recommended. In respect to Contract and Season ticket parking, this equates to 3.23% annual increase per year over the 3-year period since the charges were last amended. This is broadly in line with the average inflation rate over the period. Given the realignment of the tariffs and daily cap on fees in Farnham Road and York Road MSCPs, it is recommended that the season ticket fees in these car parks are also standardised. These changes are expected to generate an additional £78,500 per annum in net revenue.

3.7 Summary of impact of the recommended changes

- Performance exceeding expectations FY24-25: +£265k (ticket) +£268k (PCN) + £67k (Contract etc...)
- Farnham Road MSCP: +£119,000
- York Road MSCP: -£186,000
- Contract Parking, Season Tickets & Garages: +£78,500
- Other changes to operations in FY24-25
- New payment equipment / technology: +£300,000
- Cash Collection collaboration: +£65,000
- Waverley enforcement collaboration: +£23,000

TOTAL (compared to baseline FY24/25 budget): +£1.00m

3.8 No other tariffs changes are recommended for 2025-26, on the basis that the vast majority of the other parking fees were increased in April 2024. It should be noted that these revisions were higher than the levels originally recommended by officers.

3.9 The development of a new Parking Strategy will help to determine any changes in supply and demand and assess the future requirements for the provision of parking within the town. This will help to ensure that the parking facilities remain fit for purpose and there is sufficient capacity for them to act as an effective enabler for the local economy.

3.10 The NPP will bring together car park operators, equipment suppliers and service providers, to give customers a wider range of options to pay for parking, improved business intelligence for operators and benefits in terms of the economies of scale.

3.11 The adoption of a more structured capital programme for both the structured and surface car parks will assist in budgeting for planned

maintenance, upgrades and ensure that health and safety and the customer's experience is maintained/improved.

4.0 Status of Report

Open.

5.0 Strategic Priorities

5.1 The recommendations in this report align with the following strategic priorities within the Corporate Plan 2024 – 2034:

- Sustainability
- Prosperity
- Inclusivity

6.0 Background

As the borough council is now only responsible for off-street parking, the review primarily focuses on the off-street parking situation.

6.1 Performance 2021-22, 2022-23 & 2023-24

Table 1 – Parking transactions and net ticket revenue

Car Park Usage by Year	Ticket transactions		Income	
	No.	% Change vs baseline	(NET of VAT) (£)	% Change vs baseline
2019-20	3,011,822	Pre-pandemic baseline	7,992,175	Pre-pandemic baseline
2020-21	1,040,547	-65.5%	2,567,758	-67.9%
2021-22	2,339,123	-22.3%	6,302,765	-21.1%
2022-23	2,697,177	-10.5%	8,662,507	+8.4%
2023-24	2,753,177	-8.6%	9,228,117	+15.5%

Table 2 – Income per transaction

Car Parks Payment Methods (average income/stay per transaction)	2019-20	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Overall Totals				
Overall - Overall	£2.65	£2.69	£3.21	£3.35
Overall - Cash	£2.48	£2.50	£2.94	£3.00
Overall - Pay by Phone	£3.30	£3.18	£3.70	£3.81
Overall - Cards	£4.53	£3.88	£4.64	£4.83
Pay & Display				
P&D - Cash	£2.38	£2.43	£2.84	£2.86
P&D - Pay by Phone	£3.30	£3.18	£3.70	£3.81

P&D - Card (Bedford Road MSCP only)	£3.06	£3.25	£3.82	£3.94
Pay on Foot				
PoF - Cash	£2.80	£2.82	£3.41	£3.68
PoF - Cards	£4.68	£4.01	£4.79	£5.00

Table 3 - Car Park Payment methods

Car Parks Payment Methods (as a proportion of income)	2019-20	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Overall Totals				
Overall - Cash	37%	19%	14%	11%
Overall - Pay by Phone	35%	44%	48%	50%
Overall - Cards	28%	37%	38%	39%
Pay & Display				
P&D - Cash	42%	24%	17%	13%
P&D - Pay by Phone	55%	68%	75%	79%
P&D - Card (Bedford Road MSCP only)	3%	8%	8%	8%
Pay on Foot				
PoF - Cash	25%	13%	8%	6%
PoF - Cards	75%	87%	92%	94%

Table 4 – Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) numbers issued.

PCNs Issued (Guildford)	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	% diff. from previous year
GFD ONSTR	16,985	8,817	11,805	14,004	0	-100.0%
GFD OFFSTR	11,297	5,046	7,250	9,209	18,905	105.3%

- a) **Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4** outline the major metrics by which car park performance and compliance are measured.
- b) The impact of the pandemic during the 2020-21 period was significant in respect to both the number of parking sessions, income and penalties notices issued.
- c) In **2021-22**, this continued. Ongoing COVID restrictions were still in place, the last of them being removed in March 2022. This resulted in transaction numbers **672,699** down (-22.3%) on pre-pandemic numbers. Similarly, income was around **£1.69m** down (-21.1%).
- d) This also had an impact on the income per transaction with users choosing to spend less time in town, with visits primarily focused on performing essential activities.

- e) In terms of payment methods, prior to the pandemic, over a third of users (**37%**) were still using cash. During 2021-22, revenue generated by cash payments had reduced to **19%**, with over two-thirds (**68%**) of revenue being generated via pay by phone in the P&D car parks, and **87%** via card in the PoF car parks.
- f) Contract parking, season ticket, pre-payment card and garage revenue were **£591,731** (**£358,180** contract and **£233,551** season ticket) and **£43,953** garages, respectively. During this period pandemic restrictions were still in place and pre-paid parking customers were more heavily impacted by the stay at home / work from home messaging. The period also saw a distinct transfer from season tickets to pre-payment cards in the barrier pay on foot car parks. Whilst season tickets represent particularly good value, offering parking at a 40%+ discount compared with standard tariffs, the pre-payment card option provides users with greater pay-as-you-go flexibility, as well as a 10% discount compared with standard tariffs. This may work better for staff with more flexible and home working patterns.
- g) Overall penalty notices (on- and off-street) at **19,055** were **9,227** down (-32.6%) on pre-pandemic levels. Specifically in respect to off-street enforcement, at **7,250** penalty notices were **4,047** down (-35.8%). The off-street penalties generated almost **£177,000** in revenue. The above are all reflective of the impact that the pandemic had on car park usage.
- h) In **2022-23**, tariffs in the Shopper car parks increased from **£3.00** for up to 3 hours to **£3.60** for up to 3 hours. The tariffs in the Short-stay car parks were also amended and standardised from **£1.30-£1.50** per hour to **£1.80** per hour.
- i) Overall transaction numbers of **2,697,177** were **358,054** up (+15.3%) on 2021-22's figures, albeit still **314,615** below (-10.4%) those immediately prior to the pandemic. Whilst visitor numbers in the Short-stay / Shopper car parks began to recover more markedly, changes to working patterns meant that longer-stay duration parking by workers was still subdued. Parking activity in the two main long-stay parking facilities (Farnham Road and York Road MSCPs) were still around **279,000** tickets down (-39.8%) on pre-pandemic levels. Additionally, season ticket at these facilities was also impacted. Indeed, an increasing number of business customers switched to the more flexible pay-as-you-go, pre-payment card option offered at our barrier pay on foot car parks.

- j) The combination of the recovery of transaction numbers, combined with changes to the tariffs, meant that the income in 2022-23 exceeded those in 2021-21 by **£2.36m** (+37.4%) and even exceeded pre-pandemic 2019-20's figures by around **£670,000** (+8.4%) and were in fact the best revenue figures ever achieved. This is despite overall transaction numbers being lower than prior to the pandemic.
- k) In terms of payment methods, the switch to pay by phone in the P&D car parks and card in the PoF car parks, continued. During 2022-23, revenue derived by cash transactions reduced to **14%**, with **75%** of revenue being generated via pay by phone in the P&D car parks, and **92%** via card in the PoF car parks.
- l) Contract parking, season ticket, pre-payment card and garage revenue were **£670,242** (**£485,641** contract, **£184,600** season ticket) and **£36,316** garages, respectively. Although the period saw an increased return to work, the pre-payment card option continued to find increased favour amongst regular customers, due to the increased flexibility it offers users.
- m) Overall penalty notices (on- and off-street) recovered and at **23,213** were **4,158** up (+21.8%) on 2021-22 figures. Specifically in respect to off-street enforcement, at **9,209** penalty notices were **1,959** up (+27.0%). The off-street penalties generated around **£235,500** in revenue. The above are all reflective of the slow recovery from the pandemic.
- n) In **2023-24**, Shopper and Short-stay tariffs remained static. Overall transaction numbers of **2,753,177** were **56,000** up (+2.1%) on 2022-23's figures, albeit still **258,645** below (-8.6%) those immediately prior to the pandemic. Again, Short stay / Shopper visitor numbers recovered. Longer-stay duration parking by workers remained subdued, although the closure of the railway station car park for redevelopment helped to boost use at Farnham Road MSCP. Indeed, nearly all the **94,000** fewer (-20.2%) parking transactions in the two main long-stay parking facilities occurred at York Road MSCP. This has primarily been caused by changes in the nature of the retail / business activity in the upper High Street area.
- o) Although no tariff amendments took place in 2023-24, the continued recovery of transaction numbers meant that the net ticket income in 2023-24 exceeded those in 2022-23 by almost **£566,000** (+6.5%), which had previously been our best year in terms of net ticket income.

- p) In terms of payment methods, the switch to pay by phone in the P&D car parks and card in the PoF car parks, continued. During 2023-24, revenue derived by cash transactions reduced to **11%**, with **79%** of revenue being generated by pay by phone in the P&D car parks, and **94%** via card in the PoF car parks.
- q) Contract parking, season ticket, pre-payment card and garage revenue were **£780,710** (**£493,522** contract, **£287,188** season ticket) and **£54,964** garages, respectively. Although there continued to be an increase in the return to work during the period the pre-payment card option continued to find increased favour amongst regular customers, due to the increased flexibility it offers users.
- r) 2023-24 also saw the end of on-street parking enforcement by GBC's Parking team. Despite this and the halving of the establishment of enforcement officers, the overall penalty notices (now only off-street) at **18,905** were only **4,308** below (-18.6%) the 2022-23 combined on- and off-street penalty figures. Specifically in respect to off-street enforcement, penalty notices were **9,209** up (+105.3%) on 2022-23s figures. Indeed, the **18,905** penalty notices issued in 2023-24 represented the largest ever number issued within the Borough Council's car parks.
- s) Whilst such a rise in the number of penalties issued could be interpreted as a huge reduction in compliance within the car parks, this is unlikely to be the case. Instead, this might suggest that when GBC undertook on-street parking enforcement on SCC's behalf across Guildford and Waverley boroughs, the nature of the concerns raised about on-street enforcement by the public and elected members (e.g. safety and the availability of space for residents) meant that enforcement resources were diverted away from GBC's own car parks and that effectively, enforcement of the car parks played a secondary role. The Parking team's ability to focus solely on car parks, following the transfer of on-street enforcement, has allowed it to realign the service to better meet the council's own priorities. This not only generates significantly greater penalty revenue but is also likely to improve compliance and the associated ticket revenue. It has also allowed the enforcement team to provide greater focus on customer service and educating motorists, as well as enforcement.

6.2 Effectiveness of the 'Shopper' tariff

- a) In mid-2020, at the height of the pandemic, GBC Parking Services was approached by the Experience Guildford BID. They were keen to extend

dwelt time in the town centre, on the basis that increased dwell time directly correlates to increased retail spend.

- b) As a result, in late 2020, GBC’s Parking team introduced a brand new tariff, the ‘Shopper’ tariff. This tariff effective sat in between the ‘Short-stay’ tariff and the ‘Long-stay’ tariff.
- c) The ‘Shopper’ tariff offers discounted parking (currently **£4** for up to 3 hours - the equivalent of **£1.33** per hour) for those wishing to spend a little longer in the town centre, to sample more of what it has to offer. Effectively, it offers visitors using the Shopper car parks 3 hours parking for the cost equivalent to 2 hours parking in a Short-stay car park.
- d) Whilst around **55%** of town centre parking spaces were reassigned to the ‘Shopper’ tariff, **45%** of town centre on- and off-street parking retained the hourly, or half-hourly charged tariff structures.
- e) Because of the desire to implement something quickly and given that the change took place in the midst of the pandemic, the ability to capture significant amounts of meaningful ‘before’ data was limited. The slow recovery from the pandemic also meant that the ‘after’ situation was difficult to determine.
- f) However, the circumstantial evidence appeared to suggest that it was having the desired effect. Even so, it should also be noted that there was some resistance to the concept of a discounted tariff based on a 3-hour minimum charge, albeit only an extremely small proportion of overall users.
- g) Nevertheless, reviewing the data from 2022-23 and 2023-24, it is now possible to assess the impact of the ‘Shopper’ tariff.

Table 5 – Shopper car park summary

Shopper car parks		Total				
spaces	2400	Tkts	£/Tkt	£/space	Tkts/space	Av. Duration (h:mm) ***
19-20**	cumulative	1,796,353	£3.12	£2,338.14	748	2:24
21-22	cumulative	1,348,967	£3.37	£1,891.68	562	3:21
22-23	cumulative	1,514,291	£3.92	£2,470.47	631	3:15
23-24	cumulative	1,529,910	£4.12	£2,628.85	637	3:26

Table 6 – Short-stay car park summary

Short-stay car parks*		Total				
spaces	848 (now 739)	Tkts	£/Tkt	£/space	Tkts/space	Av. Duration (h:mm) ***
19-20**	cumulative	1,018,379	£2.57	£3,096.71	1,204	1:58
21-22	cumulative	814,576	£2.67	£2,563.14	961	1:46
22-23	cumulative	934,935	£3.19	£3,520.11	1,105	1:46
23-24	cumulative	928,719	£3.20	£3,508.43	1,098	1:46

* main full-time short-stay car parks only

** calendar year 2019 (rather than FY2019-20)

*** paid for time.

- h) Clearly, the minimum paid for time in the Shopper car parks is 3 hours, even if the actual average dwell time is less than 3 hours. Therefore, it is meaningless to compare the average paid for time within the Shopper car parks with the paid for time when the car parks were Short-stay facilities. However, the trends are a more useful barometer. These indicate that the paid for time in the shopper car parks has increased from 3hrs 21mins in 2021-22 to 3hrs 26mins in 2023-24.
- i) Additionally, recent analysis of the actual dwell time in our barrier pay on foot Shopper car parks suggests that there has been an increase in actual dwell time. At 2hrs 53mins, the actual dwell time in the Shopper car parks is now almost half-an-hour greater than the previous respective paid for dwell time of 2hrs 24mins, when the car parks were Short-stay facilities (note: the average actual dwell time will never be greater than the paid for dwell time). Therefore, this demonstrates that there has been a material increase in the duration of stay. Furthermore, those staying the average actual dwell time of 2hrs 53mins currently pay £4.00 in the Shopper car parks, whereas had the car parks remained Short-stay facilities, stays of this duration would cost users £6.00.
- j) It is also evident that the turnover / churn in the Short-stay car parks has increased with the average paid for duration reducing from 1hr 58mins prior to the introduction of the Shopper tariff, to 1hr 46mins since.

- k) The above would suggest that the introduction of the Shopper tariff has modified behaviours, with customers of the Shopper car parks taking advantage of the discounted parking and, on average, spending longer within the town. Those wishing to pop in and out of town on shorter visits appear to have modified their behaviour and are taking advantage of the hourly-rates in the Short-stay car parks, to meet their needs more closely.

6.3 Forecast Performance 2024-25

- a) In April 2024, tariffs in the Shopper car parks were changed from **£3.60** for up to 3 hours to **£4.00** for up to 3 hours. The tariffs in the Short-stay car parks were also amended from **£1.80** per hour to **£2.00** per hour. This still represents good value for money compared with competing towns and cities within the region (see Annex 2).
- b) From April to November 2024 (P1-P8) transaction number were **1,757,612**. This is **36,074** down (-2.1%) on 2023-24's figures over the same period. Therefore, for the full year, **2,697,806** transactions could be anticipated, which would be **55,371** down on 2023-24's figures. The projected Full Year transaction number breakdown for FY24-25, in terms of the main Shopper, Short-stay and Long-stay car parks only, are **1,525,948 (-3,962: -0.3%)**, **868,675 (-60,044: -6.5%)** and **212,135 (+8,076: +4.0%)**, respectively, compared to 2023-24.
- c) From April to November 2024 (P1-P8) net ticket revenue has increased by almost **£700,000 (+11.5%)** compared with the same period in 2023. A projected net ticket income of around **£10.29m** is anticipated for the full financial year, which is almost **£1.07m (+11.5%)** above the FY23-24 figure.
- d) This has been achieved despite the loss of two of the most popular Short-stay P&D car parks during the period (109 spaces), due to the North Street redevelopment (Commercial Road 2 and Old Police Station). In 2022-23, these car parks accounted for **211,299** transactions. Commercial Road 1 contract car park was also lost. There is evidence to suggested that the majority (but not all) of the activity associated with the closed P&D car parks has displaced to Leapale Road, North Street and Bedford Surface Short-stay car parks, although it is possible that some parking has migrated to nearby on-street locations.
- e) Clearly, car park capacity at peak shopping periods, such as prior to Christmas, has been reduced, so there may now be occasions when

the facility available to visitors and the revenue that it was previously possible to achieve could now be lost.

- f) Indeed, since the mid-2010s, there has been a 7% reduction in the availability of town centre public car park space (356 spaces). Recently published guidance also suggests that the size of parking bays should be increased, which could also reduce capacity, particularly in multi-storey car parks. Furthermore, if more of the surface car parks were to be redeveloped, as previous proposals (such as Shaping Guildford's Future (SGF)) have suggested, then clearly this could impact the availability of space, the ability of the Borough Council's parking facilities to act as effective enablers for the local economy, as well as supporting the council's budget. If transport behaviours are not modified sufficiently and demand for parking is not met, ultimately, this could lead to greater circulation of vehicles trying to find spaces, with the resultant congestion and air quality implications that this could have. Moving forward, the recommended refocusing of the Parking Strategy will assist in determining requirements.
- g) In terms of payment methods, the switch to pay by phone in the P&D car parks and card in the PoF car parks, continues. In the period April to November (P1-P8), revenue derived by cash transactions had reduced to **9%**, with **80%** of revenue being generated by pay by phone in the P&D car parks, and **94%** via card in the PoF car parks. Nevertheless, the desire to retain cash functionality to provide the widest range of payment options for our customers remains and is reflected in the replacement parking equipment procurement referred to in 6.8.
- h) Contract parking, season ticket, pre-payment card and garage revenue are forecast to be **£744,420 (£501,083 contract, £243,337 season ticket) and £39,431** garages, respectively in FY24-25. The continued return to work during the period has resulted in increased uptake of season tickets, although pre-payment cards continue to be popular than they were amongst those wanting greater flexibility.
- i) Regarding penalty notices numbers and revenue, the figures for April to November 2024 (P1-P8) of **12,961** is **756** down (-5.5%) on the same period during 2023-24. Of course, this figure has been impacted by the loss of two popular, Short-stay car parks, which over the same period could have been expected to result in **1,402** penalties being issued. Even so, projected penalty numbers for the

full year are anticipated to be around **18,000**, which is broadly in line with the figures for 2023-24.

6.4 Park and Ride (P&R)

- a) Previously, the service has encompassed Artington, Merrow, Onslow and Spectrum P&R sites. During the pandemic, the Spectrum service was suspended by SCC, due to reduced patronage. The same applied to the Onslow service, although in that case, it was because with the site being used as a COVID testing centre and DHSC regional hub. Part of the Artington site was also given over to the NHS for a period, to provide a vaccination hub to serve both Guildford and Waverley areas (a role previously facilitated at various local centres including the GLive car park site), although the P&R service was not impacted by this.
- b) The service at Spectrum remains suspended. In September 2023, SCC decided to resume services at Onslow. However, due to poor patronage, SCC decided to suspend services at the Onslow site yet again, at the end of August 2024.
- c) Guildford Borough Council provides the car park facilities for SCC and their contracted bus service operator. Therefore, GBC's involvement is now relatively limited and primarily restricted to the provision of the car parks. The mechanism that previously managed and reviewed the provision of the P&R (the Guildford Joint Committee) was dissolved in 2022.
- d) The costs that GBC accrues, in relation to the provision, maintenance and upkeep of the facilities is currently charged to SCC. Although there is an ongoing dialogue with SCC at an officer level, the viability of the service remains unclear, particularly as the previously commercial bus service operations at Artington and Merrow may now require subsidy, due to ongoing reduced patronage.
- e) The national increase in the bus fare cap from £2 to £3, which came into effect on 1 January 2025, may also have a bearing on the attractiveness, patronage and viability of these services, as an alternative to town centre parking facilities.
- f) The Executive will be updated about developments in respect to the ongoing provision and operation of the P&R, either as part of the Annual Business Plan, or on an ad-hoc basis.

6.5 Waverley Off-street Parking Collaboration

- a) Waverley Borough Council's contract for off-street car park enforcement with its previous provider expired on the 30 September

2024. A number of options were available to WBC for providing this service once the contract ended. As part of the corporate strategy to increase collaboration between WBC and GBC, to benefit from economies of scale and improve resilience, a project was undertaken by the Business Transformation team, Parking teams, and enabling services at both Councils, to explore opportunities to work collaboratively to provide this service.

- b) These new arrangements came into effect on 1 October 2024, when 7 former NSL civil enforcement officers were transferred to GBC and began undertaking enforcement activity on its and WBC's behalf. Early evidence is positive and would suggest that there has been an improvement in enforcement activity. Furthermore, evening enforcement is now being undertaken in WBC's car parks, which wasn't previously done.
- c) As a result of the new arrangements, in addition to improved resilience, GBC benefits by being able to spread some of its overhead costs (circa £23,000).
- d) Additionally, in preparation to the transfer, WBC's Parking team changed its back-office penalty processing and permit software, to align with the one procured by GBC early in 2024. As well as increasing commonality between the two services and the potential for further integration / collaboration in the future, doing so also allowed WBC to benefit from the rates negotiated by GBC as part of its procurement exercise.
- e) Furthermore, as cash taken by the payment equipment has reduced over time, GBC and WBC combined its cash collection operation, with WBC now using GBC's existing provider. This will save both organisations around £65,000 each per annum. Cash use is expected to fall still further, when the new contactless pay and display equipment is introduced, which may derive further savings.
- f) The replacement of the payment equipment is another area where GBC and WBC are collaborating. The current procurement of P&D equipment, involving 110 machines (41 in GBC and 69 in WBC) should benefit from economies of scale, with suppliers likely to be able to offer greater discounts for the larger number of units being procured. Standardising equipment across the two authorities will also help simplify operations and the first line maintenance of the equipment undertaken by GBC's enforcement team.

6.6 Parking Strategy

- a) The most recent parking strategy was published in 2016. At the time, Guildford was responsible for both off- and on-street parking management and the strategy reflected the Council's ability to influence both elements directly. This is no longer the case.
- b) In early 2020, a supplementary Guildford town centre parking study was undertaken. This was primarily done to determine whether the re-provision of parking would be required in respect to the developments at Guildford Park and Bright Hill. However, with the anticipated housing developments in and around the borough, both strategies broadly concluded that there was a need to at least maintain the existing provision of town centre parking and that an assessment should be undertaken on a case-by-case basis, if any further losses of parking were to be contemplated.
- c) The subsequent pandemic massively impacted car park utilisation and continues to influence work patterns. This is still significantly impacting utilisation of the Park and Ride services, in particular. However, the town centre car parks have recovered considerably and are now operating at around 90-92% of pre-pandemic levels of utilisation.
- d) The new strategy will help determine the future need for parking facilities, the nature of the provision and the priorities of the Parking team over the next 5-10 years.

6.7 National Parking Platform (NPP)

- a) The NPP is a data hub and open marketplace that has been developed by the DfT and built around a new ISO standard for the exchange of parking data (APDS). It provides a series of standardised ways to share important data about parking sites and the vehicles that want to park there. It aims to bring car park operators, equipment suppliers, service providers (that software and parking apps) and car park customers together via a 'HUB', to create parking sessions. If adopted nationally, it should mean that customers can park anywhere using whichever app they want to use, to pay for their parking. Cash and card payments will also be available and recorded by the HUB (see Annex 3).
- b) The NPP itself records the transactions that take place, and later ensures that bills are settled and each parking provider receives the funds they are owed. It also passes information in real-time to enforcement software providers, and the car park operators, so that

enforcement teams know which vehicles have paid and which have not.

- c) The Platform also gathers together a live picture of parking conditions and availability across the country. Car park operators will be able to share this with others. This means that the different participants in the system can share information through a single portal, allowing them to provide pricing information, occupancy data and more to users through a variety of means.
- d) The NPP started beta testing in late 2021. This took the underlying concepts and standards, and united them into a working technical system. Over 376,000 parking transactions per month are now handled through the pilot, using five existing apps. In 2023, government funded a system upgrade so that from late 2024 / early 2025, it will be ready to operate across the UK.
- e) Currently, 10 councils are operating the system and a further 200 or so, including Guildford, have expressed an interest in joining. Although applications are currently closed, this is expected to reopen early in the 2025.
- f) In addition to benefits for users, it is hoped that the subscription model will reduce the need for car park operators to undertake multiple procurements, improved business intelligence and may also offer reduced fees for processing transactions.

6.8 Service Delivery and Capital Programme

- a) The Capital programme that was envisioned in 2015 for the period 2015-2030 appears in Annexe 4. This has been revised to provide an update on progress up to 2024-25.
- b) The programme was fully costed and agreed. However, for various reasons (not least the pandemic, the re-organisation and GBC's recent financial situation), many of the items were not progressed, or their progress was deferred. A major element that has suffered because of these challenges, is decoration of the Multi-Storey Car Parks (MSCPs). As a result, many of the facilities now look 'tired and uninviting'.
- c) Conversely, it was possible to include a small number of additional items. In the case of the relighting programme, this was brought forward in several locations, as it was considered more appropriate to relight all the MSCPs (with the exception of Bedford Road MSCP) with new dimmable LEDs. This was done on an Invest to Save basis, as it

was established that the reduced cost of the electricity used would cover the cost of the project, with a payback time of around 2 years.

d) It should also be noted that the Capital programme has previously only included works in the 'structured' MSCPs. There is no reference to the surface car parks, despite these requiring periodic resurfacing and other works. The revised programme will address this.

e) In addition to one-off projects, cyclical works (such as decoration) are necessary. Over page is an updated list of frequencies for this cyclical works, that now includes resurfacing of the car parks:

- Decoration (MSCPs) - every 5 years
- Replacing LED lighting (CPs and MSCPs) - every 7 years
- Replacing Payment Equipment (CPs and MSCPs) - every 10 years
- Protective deck surfaces (MSCPs) - every 10 years
- Upgrading lifts (MSCPs) – every 15 years
- Car park resurfacing (CPs) - every 15 years
- Electrical re-wiring (CPs and MSCPs) - every 24 years

f) Progress of the FY24-25 works appears below:

Financial year	Description	Code	Estimated spend £	Income/ funding £	Balance of fund £	Comments
	Opening balance				(2,400,000)	
2024-25	Lift Works (annual) - all car parks	B2216B 1651	11,320			
	Decorations (5 yrly) - Tunsgate Car Park	B2281B 1650	43,450			Not done
	Decorations (5 yrly) - Bedford Road MSCP	B2219B 1650	236,816			Not done
	Decorations (5 yrly) - Castle MSCP	B2277B 1650	140,809			Not done
	Decorations (5 yrly) - Farnham Road MSCP	B2244B 1650	320,021			Not done
	Lighting (7 yrly) - Leapale Road MSCP	Capital	134,490			Done FY23/24
	Electrical works (24 yrly) - Castle MSCP	Capital	68,926			Not done
	Castle MSCP - Staircase slip resistance remedials (H&S)	Capital	55,000			Additional Item - ongoing
	York Road MSCP - Corbels structural repairs (H&S)	Capital	30,000			Additional Item - ongoing
	Leapale Road MSCP - Brickwork repairs (H&S)	Capital	105,000			Additional Item - Done
	Bedford Road MSCP - Brickwork repairs (H&S)	Capital	195,000			Additional Item - Done
	Pay & Display / Pay on Foot Payment Equipment Replacement	Capital	930,000			Deferred from FY22/23 - In progress
	Bedford Road MSCP - Lift 42 replacement	Capital	125,000			Additional Item - ongoing
	Total		1,451,320			
	Funding					
	Revenue Budget	Below the line		(???????)		
	Year end balance				(???????)	

g) From a customer service perspective, by far the most impactful of the works is likely to be the replacement of the parking payment equipment. Ticketless, automatic number plate recognition within the PoF car parks and ticketless and improved contactless functionality within the P&D car parks will expand payment options and should improve the ease of use for customers. In turn, this should also help to drive extra revenue. Ensuring that the car parks remain well lit, safe, secure and are regularly decorated will also assist in this regard.

- h) The procurement exercise for the payment equipment is live and submissions have recently been received. As mentioned in 6.5, in respect to the P&D element of the procurement, this is yet another example of collaboration between GBC and WBC's Parking teams, which is expected to derive financial and operational benefits. Having standardised P&D equipment across the two authorities may also assist with customer familiarity.
- i) In addition to the above-mentioned works, there have also been various renewals to parking equipment and software during 2024/25. These include:
- Refresh of penalty notice and permit software and handheld devices – Feb 2024
 - Pay by phone contract 12-month extension – Nov 2024
 - Refresh maintenance agreement for CCTV systems – Nov 2024
 - Bodycam personal protection equipment – Jan 2025
- j) With various other services that use CCTV, the Parking team is seeking to work corporately to explore the possibility of having a single maintenance arrangement for all GBC's CCTV infrastructure. This could derive cost savings and improve resilience. Over time, there will almost invariably be a need to refresh the CCTV camera equipment that provides security and improved customer service in many of our car parks. A replacement programme covering CCTV requirements across all of GBC's estate could simplify procurement and be more cost-effective.
- k) In respect to the 2025-2030 timeframe, the revised list over page outlines the various priorities for the service.

Revised Capital / Revenue Projects Programme 2025-2030

Financial year	Description	Code	Estimated spend	Income/funding	Balance of fund	Comments
			£	£	£	
	Opening balance				(???????)	
2025-26	Lift Works (annual) - all car parks	B2216B 1651	11,600			
	Lighting (7 yrly) - Bedford Road MSCP	Capital	90,000			
	Bedford Road MSCP - brickwork repairs (H&S)	Capital	160,000			Additional item
	Bedford Road Surface CP - Resurfacing (H&S)	Capital	75,000			Additional item
	Castle MSCP - Timber turret replacement (H&S)	Capital	355,000			Additional item
	Leapale Road & York Road MSCPs - Rewiring	Capital	400,000			Additional item
	Shalford Park CP - Resurfacing (H&S)	Capital	50,000			Additional item
	York Road MSCP - Barrier works (H&S)	Capital	445,000			Additional item
	York Road MSCP - Flooding remedial works	Capital	45,000			Additional item
	Decorations (5 yrly) - Farnham Road MSCP	B2244B 1650	500,000			Deferred from FY24/25
	Robin Hood CP - Closure	Revenue			65,637	Car park to close - lost revenue
	Bright Hill CP - Partial closure	Revenue			90,500	Car park to partially close - lost revenue
		Total		2,131,600		
	Funding					
Revenue Budget	Below the line			(???????)		
Year end balance					(???????)	

Financial year	Description	Code	Estimated spend	Income/funding	Balance of fund	Comments
2026-27	Lift Works (annual) - all car parks	B2216B 1651	11,890			
	Decorations (5 yrly) - Bedford Road MSCP + staircore recoating	B2219B 1650	265,000			Deferred from FY24/25
	Farnham Road MSCP - Staircore recoating + Repainting beams	B2244B 1650	546,000			Deferred from FY24/26
	Castle MSCP - Improved drainage / box gutter replacements	Capital	25,000			Additional Item
	Leapale Road - brickwork repairs (H&S)	Capital	150,000			Additional Item
	Millbrook CP - Resurfacing (H&S)	Capital	210,000			Additional Item
	York Road MSCP - minor redecorations	Capital	30,000			Additional Item
	Guildford Park CP - Closure	Revenue		227,000		Car park to close - lost revenue
		Total	1,447,890			
	<u>Funding</u>					
	Revenue Budget	Below the line		(???????)		
Year end balance					(?????????)	
2027-28	Lift Works (annual) - all car parks	B2216B 1651	12,190			
	Lighting (7 yrly) - Castle, Farnham, Leapale & York Road MSCP's	Capital	450,000			
	Deck surfacing (10 yrly) - Castle MSCP	Capital	850,000			
	Decorations (5 yrly) - Castle MSCP	B2277B 1650	141,000			Deferred from FY24/25
	Deck surfacing (10 yrly) - Tunsgate Car Park	Capital	135,000			
	Decorations (5 yrly) - York Road MSCP	B2291B 1650	215,000			Deferred
	Upper High Street CP - Resurfacing	Capital	55,000			Additional Item
		Total	1,858,190			
	<u>Funding</u>					
	Revenue Budget	Below the line		(???????)		
	Year end balance					(?????????)
2028-29	Lift Works (annual) - all car parks	B2216B 1651	12,490			
	Deck surfacing (10 yrly) - Bedford Road MSCP	Capital	750,000			
	Decorations (5 yrly) - Tunsgate Car Park	B2281B 1650	45,000			Deferred from FY24/25
	Lighting & Electrics Tunsgate	Capital	26,898			
	Deck surfacing (10 yrly) - Guildford Park MSCP	Capital	423,892			No longer necessary
	Lighting (7 yrly) - Guildford Park MSCP	Capital	217,245			No longer necessary
	Decorations (5 yrly) - Guildford Park MSCP	Revenue	226,282			No longer necessary
	Leapale Road MSCP - brickwork repairs	Capital	100,000			Additional Item
	TBC CP - Resurfacing	Capital	???????			Dependent on deterioration / condition survey
	Portsmouth Road CP - Partial closure (Flood Aleviation Scheme)	Revenue		209,000		Section of car park to close - lost revenue
		Total	1,801,807			
<u>Funding</u>						
Revenue Budget	Below the line		(???????)			
Year end balance					(?????????)	
2029-30	Lift Works (annual) - all car parks	B2216B 1651	12,800			
	Deck surfacing (10 yrly) - Farnham Road MSCP	P37510	2,330,000			
	Deck surfacing (10 yrly) - York Road MSCP	Capital	1,500,000			Deferred from FY23/24
	Decorations (5 yrly) - Leapale Road MSCP	B2257B 1650	155,000			Deferred
	Lift replacement (15 Yrly) - All MSCP's	Capital	1,200,000			
	TBC CP - Resurfacing	Capital	???????			Dependent on deterioration / condition survey
		Total	5,197,800			
	<u>Funding</u>					
Revenue Budget	Below the line		(???????)			
Year end balance					(?????????)	

7.0 Options

- 7.1 Do nothing – revenue levels broadly similar to those expected to be achieved in FY24-25 could be anticipated in FY25-26. However, the costs associated with providing the Parking Service are likely to increase, so the net revenue target for FY25-26 might not be met and the surplus available to provide and maintain the parking facilities and provide funding for more general council expenditure would effectively reduce.
- 7.2 Do minimum – A 10% increase in contract parking, season ticket and garages would help offset any increase in costs associated with providing the Parking Service. The changes to the payment equipment and the ongoing collaboration with Waverley in respect to enforcement, cash collection and procurement of the payment equipment are also likely to bolster revenues, so that the net revenue target for FY25-26 would be achieved without any other tariff changes.
- 7.3 Do something (Recommended) – In addition to a 10% increase in contract parking, season ticket and garages, it is proposed to increase and standardise tariffs at Farnham Road MSCP and bring those at York Road MSCP into line with these. The latter would effectively be a tariff reduction, although the net effect of the Farnham Road and York Road MSCP revisions is expected to be broadly cost neutral (the changes accounting for around 0.65% of overall net revenue).
- 7.4 Do most – A separate 5% rise across all other tariffs could also be considered. However, the tariffs in the Shopper and Short-stay car parks were only amended in April 2024 (by 40p up to 3 hours in the Shopper car parks and 20p per hour in the Short-stay car parks – both 11% increases). These increases were above the levels originally recommended by officers. Whilst further increases in Shopper and Short-stay tariffs would almost certainly result in the target net revenue being exceeded significantly, it could lead to increased resistance, a resultant drop in patronage and help cultivate the belief, already held amongst some members of the public, that parking charges are set solely to meet financial targets, rather than to provide good quality parking facilities and meet

corporate objectives, such as those relating to sustainability, prosperity and inclusivity.

- 7.5 The recommended option is preferred because not only will it achieve the expected net revenue target for FY25-26, the changes in the tariffs at Farnham Road and York Road MSCPs will also help to encourage increased use of these facilities, to better meet the needs of visitors to the town centre.

8.0 Consultation

Various key officers, members and enablers have reviewed the report, its contents and have been asked to provide input. Experience Guildford have also been made aware of the report's contents and its recommendations.

9.0 Key Risks

- 9.1 The main risks associated with recommendations are summarised below:

Name of Risk	Description	Mitigation Action
Financial	If parking revenues are not maintained, the ability to fund the maintenance and upkeep of the parking facilities and fund more general council expenditure may be jeopardised.	The annual review of tariffs combined with the Parking Strategy will allow the performance of the car parks to be monitored and adapted to ensure revenues to GBC are managed and support the Council's priorities.
Prosperity	GBC's town centre car parks are estimated to support around £150m-£200m in retail and business activity within the town per annum.	The Parking Strategy will help identify the optimum provision of parking facilities to help maintain and improve prosperity.
Health and Safety	The car parks are used by around 2.7 million customers per year. Therefore, the maintenance and	The revised Capital Programme sets out a clear list of works to ensure that the car parks are safe, secure

	upkeep of the facilities is essential to minimise the risk to the public and GBC.	and pleasant to use.
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10.0 Legal and Governance Implications

- 10.1 The legal powers for the Council to provide and charge for car parking are set out in s32 and s36 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Under s35C of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 the Council may vary the charges set for car parking by providing a notice in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) Regulations 1994. The required notification will be given prior to any changes in charging being implemented.
- 10.2 The Council must exercise its functions in accordance with s122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 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. The Council must act reasonably and can set charges to cover administering the scheme and enforcement, encouraging vehicles off street and any relevant traffic management policies or strategies. The charges cannot be set for intentional revenue raising purposes and charges may not be set in order to create or increase a surplus and then transfer it to the General Fund.

11.0 Financial Implications

The recommended changes will generate the target uplift in net revenue.

12.0 Human Resources Implications

None.

13.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

The Council must have regard to its Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 before making any decision

14.0 Climate Change and Sustainability Implications

None known at this time.

15.0 Next Steps

If the recommendations are agreed, the revised charges and tariffs are anticipated to be introduced on 1 April 2025.

16.0 Background Papers

16.1 Parking Strategy 2016

<https://www.guildford.gov.uk/article/17702/Parking-strategy>

16.2 Guildford Town Centre Parking Study 2020

<https://democracy.guildford.gov.uk/documents/s17258/Item%206%202%202020.02.11%20Guildford%20Parking%20Study%20Baseline%20Report.pdf>

<https://democracy.guildford.gov.uk/documents/s17257/Item%206%201%202020.02.11%20Guildford%20Parking%20Study%20Baseline%20Report.pdf>

17.0 Appendices

17.1 Annex 1 - Annual Off-street Parking Report 2021-24.

17.2 Annex 2 – Comparison with other towns and cities in the region (November 2024).

17.4 Annex 3 – National Parking Platform (NPP) – a guide for decision-makers

17.3 Annex 4 – Original 2015-2030 Capital Programme (published 2015)

Report clearance progress:

Your report will not be published by democratic services unless the below is completed and there is evidence of the correct clearance process.

This box must not be deleted and will be published with the report

Finance	Graeme Wiltsher	Received 20/12/2024
Legal & Governance	Claire Beesly	15/1/2025
Human Resources	Francesca Chapman	Received 12/12/2024
Equalities	Norman Joss	Sent 12/12/2024
Climate Change	Nat Prodger	Sent 12/12/2024
Assets	Marieke van der Reijden	Received 20/12/2024
Regeneration	Abi Lewis	Sent 12/12/2024
Technical Services	Michael Cullen	Sent 12/12/2024
Commercial Services	Kelvin Mills	Received 13/12/2024
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Catherine Houston	Received 16/12/2024
Strategic Director	Richard Bates	Received 08/01/2025