

**REPORT TO: PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE 17 APRIL 2006**

**REPORT ON: CENTRAL DUNDEE PARKING STRATEGY**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION**

**REPORT NO: 218-2006**

## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present a Draft Parking Strategy for Dundee which includes a series of proposed objectives and measures for the Council's parking service. While this report makes mention of Residents Parking Scheme(s) this subject is covered in a separate report which will be brought to Committee shortly.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee approve the draft Parking Strategy and that the Director of Planning and Transportation be remitted to report back on consultations with relevant stakeholders.

## **3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 Parking policy is an important element of transport strategy that can affect the economic prosperity of the city. The level of both on-street and off-street parking charges and any policy decisions made will need to give consideration to this aspect of parking provision and enforcement.

## **4 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Car parking policy decisions are aimed at achieving a balance of economic prosperity of the city and safe sustainable transport. Local Agenda 21 will be a significant consideration in arriving at the appropriate balance.

## **5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Car parking policy will ensure that consideration is given to all grades of ambulant car users.

## **6 BACKGROUND**

- 6.1 Dundee City Council recognises the need to implement demand management measures to restrain car use. Traditionally the most common method of restraining the non-essential use of the private car is to control the number of parking space available and the price charged. However, in order to provide for essential usage, there must be enough spaces as not to jeopardise the proper economic functions of the city.
- 6.2 Dundee has for some time operated a pricing and space availability system that restricts the amount of commuter parking and accommodates variable term shopping, business and other essential parking.
- 6.3 Since 1991 the number of spaces available to commuters around the city centre has been maintained at around 1,900 Local Plan spaces (fluctuating up to 2,100 during

the late 90s early 00s). However, over this period there have been significant changes to lifestyles and also commercial, business and residential development in the city. In light of this, it has become apparent that the Council now needs to review its parking policies to cater for these changes.

- 6.4 In order to assist in Dundee's parking policy development a best practice review of parking strategies for other UK towns and cities has been undertaken. 'Dundee Parking Strategy - Best Practice Review' is attached in Appendix 2.
- 6.5 Drawing on the Best Practice Review a draft Parking Strategy has been prepared for consultation purposes and is attached in Appendix 1.
- 6.6 In order to gain acceptance of and a commitment to a Central Dundee Parking Strategy it is vital that key stakeholders play a part in its formation and implementation. To this end it is important that a group be brought together comprising members of the City Centre Action Group, Chambers of Commerce, the local Elected Members and community council representatives of the central Dundee area to form a focus group.
- 6.7 The first project will be to draw together the focus group to agree the principles of the Parking Strategy and to prioritise within an agreed budget and deliverable timescale the key measures requiring implementation.
- 6.8 There are several projects which can move forward at an early date such as the secure Car Parks Standard. All Council city centre car parks have now achieved this standard and will be signed as part of the strategy. The provision of variable message signage is being researched and costed at present along with a study into improving/introducing naming and signage.

## **7 CONSULTATIONS**

- 7.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance) and Assistant Chief Executive (Community Planning) have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report.

## **8 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1 Local Transport Strategy - Dundee City Council

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5 April 2006

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**DRAFT OF**

**A CENTRAL DUNDEE PARKING STRATEGY**

## DUNDEE CENTRAL PARKING STRATEGY

It is recommended that the following objectives are considered for inclusion in the Parking Strategy.

- **Objective 1 (OB1): To support the economic vitality of the city by encouraging a high turnover of car parking for shoppers and visitors.** Over the period 2000-2004 the city's wholesale and retail sector has significantly expanded by 800 new businesses (Economic Development Plan 2005-07). The regeneration of the city centre, in particular the development of the Overgate Centre has breathed much needed vitality into the city centre making it the successful regional shopping centre it is today. Parking policy should seek to support the vitality of the city centre by encouraging a high turnover of shoppers and visitors.
- **Objective 2 (OB2): To ensure that the provision and management of parking encourages and facilitates walking, cycling and public transport use.** The measures included in the parking strategy should seek to manage parking in Dundee efficiently. The management of parking should support policies to encourage modal shift to sustainable modes as contained in Dundee City Council's Local Transport Strategy. Parking provision should not hinder the use of sustainable modes and its use should not be encouraged in preference the use of alternative sustainable modes.
- **Objective 3 (OB3): To provide safe and attractive parking facilities and contribute to improved road safety.** Car park users should feel safe in the parking facility they choose to use and should feel confident that measures are in place to ensure their car is as secure as possible. The improvement of the safety and security of all parking facilities can assist in distributing parking demand across the city as car users become less selective about the facility they choose to use. Parking facilities should also be designed in such a way as to minimise conflict between parking and parked cars with other road users.
- **Objective 4 (OB4): To ensure that residents without off-street parking facilities in residential areas surrounding the city centre or major trip attractors are able to park their vehicles near their homes.** Measures should be considered to provide on-street parking provision for the use of residents in the vicinity of their home, in preference to other users. It can be difficult for residents in areas close to the city centre or to large employment sites to park in the vicinity of their homes because commuters are tending to make use of the free and unrestricted parking. The measures included in the parking strategy should seek to discourage the use of residential areas for commuter parking and provide adequate parking provision for residents.
- **Objective 5 (OB5): To ensure the effectiveness of the parking strategy through enforcement of parking restrictions.** The parking strategy will be actioned by the implementation of restrictions to manage parking so that it is used efficiently and appropriately. To ensure that parking restrictions are adhered to they must be enforced.
- **Objective 6 (OB6): To ensure that there is no net increase or decrease in existing car parking facilities.** To support policies to encourage the use of sustainable modes, parking provision in the city centre should not increase in net terms. Against a backdrop of nationally increasing traffic levels this will promote a natural shift to sustainable modes. It is also considered that there should be no decrease in the number of parking spaces. A number of existing car parking facilities are located on valuable land which may be redeveloped during the ongoing regeneration of the city centre. At this time it is not considered that the rate of current and planned improvements to the provision of

alternative sustainable modes will enable the rate of modal shift necessary to cope with a net reduction in parking provision. As such the redevelopment of land currently occupied by parking facilities will need to be matched by the provision of parking facilities elsewhere in the city centre.

- **Objective 7 (OB7): To facilitate ease of access for all users to and from parking facilities including mobility impaired people, pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and public transport users.** Parking facilities should be appropriately located to provide ease of access for all users to the trip attractor. They should be designed to provide safe access and egress routes for pedestrians. The provision of on-street parking facilities should not take priority over the needs and safety of other road users.
- **Objective 8 (OB8): To assist in meeting the National Air Quality Standards.** Dundee City Council has a statutory obligation to improve air quality in the city by seeking to meet the National Air Quality Standards. Traffic has been identified as a major contributor of air pollution in the city, with levels of pollutants being particularly high in congested areas. The parking strategy can assist in demand management and therefore reduce congestion, a major contributor to pollution.

## Measures

It is recommended that the following measures are considered for inclusion in the Parking Strategy.

- ***Measure 1: Promote a car parking prioritisation and tariff regime***

The promotion of a clear and uncomplicated car parking prioritisation and tariff regime is central to an effective parking strategy.

Dundee City Council should continue to develop and implement a clear parking prioritisation regime which favours short term parking in central areas. This encourages a high parking turnover, for use by shoppers and visitors, thus providing support for the economic vitality of the city centre. Long term parking should be directed to off-street car parking facilities directly accessible from but located outwith the Inner Ring Road.

The tariff regime should be directly linked to the cost of public transport. The cost of public transport should always compare more favourably to the cost of parking.

The car parking restriction and tariff regime should extend to cover the residential areas on the periphery of the city centre to deter commuter car parking. Dundee City Council is currently considering the development of Residents' Parking Zones in such areas.

- ***Measure 2: Agree maximum parking standards***

The setting of maximum parking standards for new development is an essential component of a parking strategy. This is also essential to meet the requirement set out in Scottish Planning Policy 17: Planning for Transport, for local authorities to adopt maximum parking standards for new development.

Dundee City Council sets out maximum parking standards for new development in the document "Dundee - Streets Ahead: Dundee City Council Road Standards (August 2005)".

For new non-food retail development in the city centre the maximum parking standard is 3-7 spaces per 100m<sup>2</sup>, plus 3 disabled spaces or 6% of the total number of spaces whichever is greater. The application of this maximum parking standard would lead to an increase in the net number of parking spaces in the city centre. Therefore the parking standard does not support Objective 6: To ensure that there is no net increase or decrease in existing car parking facilities.

Dundee City Council should seek to review the parking standard for retail development in the city centre so that it does not lead to a net increase in parking spaces in the city centre. Measure 6 sets out how this may be achieved through the removal of parking spaces elsewhere in the city centre which have a low demand.

- ***Measure 3: Implement the parking strategy within a wider strategy to improve public transport, walking and cycling facilities***

The parking strategy should seek to manage the existing parking provision effectively. It should not seek to increase the net number of parking spaces. Nationally, car ownership is set to continue to rise which would increase demand for parking spaces unless other measures are implemented. As such, the parking strategy cannot be implemented in isolation. It must form one component of an overarching strategy to improve public transport, walking and cycling facilities so that car drivers have a genuine, practical, attractive alternative.

Implementing the parking strategy within a wider strategy of improvements to sustainable modes will secure greater public acceptance of parking policies.

- ***Measure 4: Provide accessible parking facilities for people with disabilities***

The parking strategy should seek to ensure that there are good disabled on-street and off-street parking facilities provided in the most accessible locations to shops and services. The provision of disabled parking spaces should be regularly audited to ensure that supply is meeting demand both in terms of the number of spaces and the locations of these. Consideration should be given to converting smaller off-street car parks in accessible locations to disabled user only facilities.

- ***Measure 5: Undertake marketing of transport and travel in Dundee***

Parking facilities in Dundee should be marketed in such a way as to encourage its appropriate use when needed, but to favour the use of public transport, walking and cycling. Up-to-date information about parking facilities should continue to be provided on the Council's website, marketing leaflets and other Council marketing materials. This will include information on parking tariffs with a clearly presented comparison to the cost of travelling by public transport.

- ***Measure 6: Maintain parking provision in city centre***

The parking strategy should ensure that there is no net increase or decrease in parking provision in the city centre. The provision of parking spaces should support, rather than undermine, policies to encourage modal shift. A net increase in parking provision would send out a contradictory message that increased car use is sustainable in Dundee. However, a net decrease in parking provision would currently be unviable without further improvements to alternative sustainable modes of transport to make them a more attractive and viable option. Therefore the parking strategy should ensure that where new developments create a reduction in the provision of public parking, these are

replaced. The parking strategy should also ensure that any new public car parking developments are matched by a removal of the same number of lower quality parking spaces elsewhere in the city centre and in conjunction with bus priority measures and Park & Ride. This will need to be carefully managed to ensure that only parking spaces which are operating inefficiently are removed.

The parking strategy should not seek to reduce the number of long stay parking spaces in the city centre. The Council is to give consideration to the implementation of a Residents' Parking Zones which will reduce the availability of unrestricted on-street parking, currently used by commuters. Modal shift should primarily absorb the impact of this reduction in unrestricted parking.

- ***Measure 7: Implement Residents' Parking Zones***

The parking strategy should seek to implement, where appropriate, Residents' Parking Zones (RPZs) in areas where residents are experiencing difficulties parking their cars in the vicinity of their homes. These difficulties generally arise because residential areas provide an opportunity for commuters to park free of restrictions or charges. They may also arise because there simply are not enough parking spaces to meet demand from residents.

Dundee City Council currently manages two RPZs: the City Centre RPZ; and the Menzieshill RPZ (next to Ninewells Hospital). The council have received complaints from residents in a number of other residential areas on the periphery of the city centre that they are experiencing difficulties parking in the vicinity of their homes. Consideration should be given to implementing RPZs in these areas in order to manage parking supply and demand.

The implementation of RPZs on the periphery of the city centre is likely to become increasingly important to ensure that the non-increase in long stay parking provision in the city centre (Measure 6) encourages modal shift instead of a transfer of long stay commuter parking to the periphery.

- ***Measure 8: Review the City Centre Residents' Parking Zone***

The parking strategy should seek to review the City Centre RPZ to ensure that the needs of city centre residents is balanced with the need to provide short stay on-street parking for the use of shoppers, visitors and business. Consideration should be given to the use of off-street parking facilities by residents and converting on-street bays that can currently be used by permit holders to pay and display only. It would also be prudent to review the cost of permits to ensure they reflect the costs of administering the RPZ.

- ***Measure 9: Impose planning conditions on new privately owned parking facilities***

Dundee City Council issue planning conditions for new privately owned public car parks to control the restriction and tariff regimes. To ensure the effectiveness of the parking strategy it is important that such planning conditions continue to be issued so that tariff and restriction regimes at privately owned public car parks do not undermine parking policy.

The parking strategy should seek to ensure that planning conditions placed on the new public parking facilities continue to be issued and are strictly maintained. If changes are sought the presumption should be that they will not be accepted unless parking conditions in the city change substantially, and only then would be allowed to change

once it has been assessed as not having a detrimental impact on the objectives of the parking strategy.

- **Measure 10: Provision of Park & Ride**

Tayside and Central Transport Partnership (TACTRAN) in conjunction with Dundee City Council, should consider if Park & Ride schemes would be appropriate for Dundee. As a regional centre serving a wide area commuting by car will continue to be the main mode used by commuters from outside the City of Dundee. Park & Ride could remove a substantial proportion of these commuter car trips before entering the city, thus reducing congestion and relieving pressure of demand for long stay parking in the city centre.

- **Measure 11: Improve the security of car parks**

Dundee City Council has improved the security of council owned car parks such that all but one has achieved the ACPOS Secured Car Park Award. The parking strategy should seek to ensure that all council owned car parking facilities maintain these standards.

The parking strategy should also seek to encourage privately owned public car parks to improve security and to attain the ACPOS Secured Car Park Award.

The parking strategy should also seek to ensure that the pedestrian routes to all car parks (council owned and privately owned) are as safe and secure as possible. Measures to provide safe and secure routes may include improved lighting, CCTV and removal of vegetation and other obstructions which can create an intimidating environment.

The improvement of security at all car parks and routes to them will play an important role in reducing incidences of crime, improving the character of the city and encouraging more efficient use of parking facilities by distributing demand across all car parking facilities.

- **Measure 12: Improve Variable Message Signs**

A feasibility study for the installation of improved Variable Message Signs (VMS) for parking facilities in the City Centre is currently being carried out by Dundee City Council. Improving the VMS could play an important role in managing parking demand throughout the city's parking facilities. It could encourage more efficient use of car parking facilities, reduce congestion and improve air quality.

- **Measure 13: Improve/introduce naming and signage of car parking**

The parking strategy should seek to ensure that all car parking facilities in Dundee are appropriately named according to their location and that all car parking facilities are clearly sign posted both for traffic and pedestrians.

Table 1 shows how the recommended objectives relate to the recommended measures.



**TABLE 1 : Relating recommended objectives to recommended measures**

		OB1	OB2	OB3	OB4	OB5	OB6	OB7	OB8
Measure		To support the economic vitality of the city by encouraging a high turnover of car parking for shoppers and visitors	To ensure that the provision and management of parking encourages and facilitates walking, cycling and public transport use	To provide safe and attractive parking facilities and contribute to improved road safety	To ensure that residents without off-street parking facilities in residential areas surrounding the city centre or major trip attractors are able to park their vehicles near their homes	To ensure the effectiveness of the parking strategy through enforcement of parking restrictions	To ensure that there is no net increase or decrease in existing car parking facilities	To facilitate ease of access for all users to and from parking facilities including mobility impaired people, pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and public transport users	To assist in meeting the National Air Quality Standards
M1	Promote a car parking restriction and tariff regime	✓	✓			✓			
M2	Agree maximum parking standards	✓	✓				✓		✓
M3	Implement the parking strategy within a wider strategy to improve public transport, walking and cycling facilities	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
M4	Provide accessible parking facilities for people with disabilities	✓		✓				✓	
M5	Undertake marketing of transport and travel in Dundee	✓	✓					✓	✓
M6	Maintain parking provision in city centre	✓	✓				✓		✓
M7	Implement Residents' Parking Zones		✓		✓				
M8	Review the City Centre Residents' Parking Zone	✓			✓			✓	
M9	Impose planning conditions on new privately owned parking facilities	✓	✓					✓	
M10	Provision of Park & Ride	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓
M11	Improve the security of car parks			✓					
M12	Improve Variable Message Signs	✓	✓					✓	
M13	Improve / introduce naming and signage of car parking	✓	✓					✓	

**DUNDEE PARKING STRATEGY  
BEST PRACTICE REVIEW**

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# **1 INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Background**

1.1.1 To develop a set of effective, meaningful and relevant objectives and measures, Dundee City Council has drawn on best practice from parking strategies for other UK towns and cities.

## **1.2 Identifying elements of best practice**

1.2.1 In order to identify a set of recommended objectives and measures for the Dundee Parking Strategy, the elements of best practice from the parking strategies of comparable cities and towns have been summarised.

1.2.2 Chapter 2 of this report presents this summary of best practice. The context within which parking strategies are developed and implemented is described. This is followed by a discussion of perceptions of parking policies, in particular looking at why public perception is very positive in some areas and negative in others. The mechanism by which parking strategies have been developed is then presented. This is followed by a summary of the objectives and measures identified in the parking strategies.

# **2. PARKING STRATEGY BEST PRACTICE**

## **2.1 Introduction**

2.1.1 This chapter presents a summary of the information derived from a review of other UK parking strategies. The following authorities supplied information.

- Aberdeen
- Chester
- Doncaster
- Glasgow
- Ipswich
- Nottingham
- Southampton
- York
- Cheltenham
- Darlington
- Edinburgh
- Hull
- Luton
- Oxford
- Swansea

## **2.2 Options in developing a parking strategy**

2.2.1 Several councils undertook extensive public consultation during the development of the parking strategy. A number of council parking strategies are contained within their LTS and as such consultation exercises were carried out on the content of the LTS as a whole. For example Glasgow City Council carried out the following consultation in the development of their LTS "Keep Glasgow Moving":

- A public consultation involving the distribution of a questionnaire;
- A series of discussion forums involving the business sector, interest groups and public bodies.

2.2.2 A number of councils chose to undertake consultation with interest groups only, including council departments, the emergency services, community councils and disability groups.

2.2.3 Aberdeen City Council has established a working group consisting of councillors and officials to guide the formation and implementation of Aberdeen's parking strategy.

## 2.3 Setting objectives

2.3.1 Most of the parking strategies included a set of objectives. These generally followed the same theme: promoting access to town centres; supporting the use of sustainable modes of transport as an alternative to the car; and managing the conflict between commuter and residential parking.

2.3.2 In addition to these main themes a number of others were repeatedly evident in the parking strategies.

2.3.3 The following objective themes have been identified from the parking strategy case studies:

- Objective 1 (OB1): Protecting / enhancing town centre vitality
- Objective 2 (OB2): Encouraging modal shift and reducing traffic levels
- Objective 3 (OB3): Promoting safety and security
- Objective 4 (OB4): Balancing the parking needs of residents and commuters
- Objective 5 (OB5): Providing effective enforcement
- Objective 6 (OB6): Managing parking in relation to town centre redevelopment
- Objective 7 (OB7): Providing ease of access

2.3.4 These objective themes together with examples of objectives from the parking strategies are discussed below

### **OB1: Protecting/enhancing town centre vitality**

2.3.5 Protecting and enhancing the vitality of town/city centres is a key objective for most of the parking strategies. Table 1 provides examples of the parking strategy objectives to protect / enhance town centre vitality.

**TABLE 1: Objectives to protect/enhance town/city centre vitality**

<b>Protecting/enhancing town/city centre vitality</b>
To support the economic and environmental well-being of town/city centres in the County
To avoid competition between neighbouring authorities over parking provision
To ensure short stay shopping and tourist journeys are accommodated in order to protect the viability and vitality of the town centre
To reduce the provision of long stay commuter parking whilst providing short stay parking for business, shopping and tourism
To help maintain and improve the economic vitality of the city centre and district shopping centres

### **OB2: Encouraging modal shift and reducing traffic levels**

2.3.6 Most of the parking strategies included objectives to encourage more use of sustainable modes through parking policy. Some strategies specifically stated objectives to achieve traffic reduction targets. Table 2 provides examples of the parking strategy objectives to encourage modal shift and reduce traffic levels.

**TABLE 2: Objectives to encourage modal shift and reduce traffic levels**

<b>Encouraging modal shift and reduce traffic levels</b>
To help achieve the traffic reduction targets of the Local Transport Plan/Strategy
To encourage trips to be made by modes other than the car
To encourage, where possible, that journeys to work in the town centre are made by an alternative mode to the private car
To discourage peak hour car travel
To encourage off peak shoppers and visitors
To manage parking provision to develop a safe, convenient, efficient and attractive transport infrastructure which encourages and facilitates the use of walking, cycling and public transport and which minimises reliance on, and discourages unnecessary use of private cars
The Council will encourage major employers to consider measures to reduce the number of staff commuting by car
To ensure that parking provision does not encourage commuter car travel (especially to the city centre), and relates to the ease of access by public transport, cycling and walking
To link parking requirement to accessibility by other types of transport.

**OB3: Promoting road safety and personal/vehicle security**

- 2.3.7 The improvement of safety and security at car parks formed a key objective for some of the parking strategies. Often car parks (especially multi-storey) are being under-used because of poor security. Clearly the improvement of security at such car parks can encourage increased use and improve the overall parking management of a town centre.
- 2.3.8 The management of parking, particularly on-street, can also affect road safety.
- 2.3.9 Table 3 provides examples of objectives to promote the safety and security of car parks.

**TABLE 3: Objectives to promote road safety and personal/vehicle security of car parks**

<b>Promoting safety and security</b>
To contribute towards road safety
To provide car parks which are safe and incorporate the best features to ensure personal security for all users
To improve road safety and reduce congestion
To improve safety and security of the car parks

**OB4: Balancing the parking needs of residents and commuters**

- 2.3.10 The issue of commuter parking in residential areas on the periphery of town centres is dealt with in all the parking strategies. In some parking strategies the objective is to prevent commuter parking, whereas the focus for other parking strategies is to ensure adequate provision of residents' parking. Table 4 provides examples of objectives to deal with this issue.

**TABLE 4: Objectives to balance the parking needs of residents and commuters**

<b>Balancing the parking needs of residents and commuters</b>
To ensure residents in and adjacent to the town/city centre without off-street parking facilities are able to park their vehicles near their homes
To ensure priority for residents' parking over commuter parking

**OB5: Providing effective enforcement**

2.3.11 Parking has been de-criminalised in some, but not all of the towns and cities included in this research. Where parking is not de-criminalised the strategy commonly indicates a desire to pursue de-criminalisation. Table 5 provides examples of objectives for providing effective enforcement.

**TABLE 5: Objectives to provide effective enforcement**

<b>Providing effective enforcement</b>
To ensure adequate enforcement of parking regulations both on and off road utilising Decriminalised Parking Enforcement measures
To ensure effective enforcement of parking regulations in order to achieve the Council's wider transportation objectives

**OB6: Managing parking in relation to town/city centre redevelopment**

2.3.12 Many of the towns and cities included in this research are undergoing rapid retail and residential redevelopment of their town and city centres. Frequently it is off-street car parks situated on valuable land that are redeveloped, leading to a reduction in the baseline parking provision. This puts pressure on councils to provide more parking, particularly for new town/city centre residents. In the majority of cases councils have strict maximum parking standards which restrict the number of car parking spaces that new developments can provide.

2.3.13 Table 6 provides examples of objectives to deal with this issue.

**TABLE 6: Objectives to manage parking in relation to town centre redevelopment**

<b>Managing parking in relation to town centre redevelopment</b>
To mitigate the effects of car parking supply that redevelopment of key sites in the town centre will have in view of the fact that the majority of key sites are currently car parks.
To ensure that its policies are fully incorporated into the decision-making processes associated with highway proposals and planning applications, and in all complementary strategies
To keep car parking standards for development under review in the light of guidance from the Scottish Executive
To set standards for new developments which will restrict the availability of free parking
To encourage through the local plan the reuse of land currently used for parking

## **OB7: Providing ease of access**

- 2.3.14 A number of councils have recognised the importance of providing ease of access to and from parking. This covers the issues of finding a place to park (signposting) by car and onward movement by foot and also when returning to the parking location. This involves consideration of the actual location of parking in relation to the purpose of car trips, signing provided at the parking location and signing/facilities to and from the parking location that provide ease of access to destination.
- 2.3.15 There is also recognition that parking, particularly on-street can create a hindrance to the ease of access of other road users. Table 7 provides an example of objectives to tackle these issues.

**TABLE 7: Objectives to provide ease of access**

<b>Providing ease of access</b>
To facilitate access and movement by all users to and from designated parking locations to include mobility impaired people, pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and public transport users

## **OB8: Assist in meeting the National Air Quality Standards**

- 2.3.16 Whilst no other council has overtly stated that the parking strategy can assist with air quality targets and measures it is clear that it can.
- 2.3.17 All the previous 7 objectives contribute in some and part way to air quality targets. However this is deemed to be of such importance that it warrants being a specific objective and is measurable.

**TABLE 8: Objective to assist in meeting air quality targets**

<b>Improve Air Quality</b>
By deploying the previous 7 objectives these will assist in meeting national/local air quality targets.

## **2.4 Developing measures**

- 2.4.1 The parking strategies studied present a raft of measures which have largely been successfully implemented. Different combinations of these measures have been applied in each town or city to reflect their differing characteristics.
- 2.4.2 Table 8 shows how the measures presented in this section of the report are related to the objectives previously outlined. The measures that are directly related to an objective are ticked (✓). However it should be appreciated that all measures will indirectly contribute to the achievement of all objectives.



**TABLE 8: Relating measures to objectives**

Measure		OB1	OB2	OB3	OB4	OB5	OB6	OB7
		Protecting / enhancing town centre vitality	Encouraging modal shift and reducing traffic levels	Promoting safety and security	Balancing the parking needs of residents and commuters	Providing effective enforcement	Managing parking in relation to town centre redevelopment	Providing ease of access
M1	Implement a car parking restriction and tariff regime	✓	✓			✓		
M2	Agree maximum parking standards	✓	✓				✓	
M3	Implement the parking strategy within a wider strategy to improve public transport, walking and cycling facilities	✓	✓					
M4	Provide accessible parking facilities for people with disabilities	✓		✓				✓
M5	Undertake marketing of parking facilities	✓	✓					✓
M6	Reduce parking provision in city centre	✓	✓		✓			
M7	Implement Residents' Parking Schemes				✓			
M8	Implement city centre residents' parking schemes				✓		✓	
M9	Implement a business permit scheme	✓			✓			
M10	Impose planning conditions on new private parking facilities	✓	✓				✓	
M11	Provision of Park & Ride	✓	✓		✓			
M12	Improve the security of car parks			✓				
M13	Install Variable Message Signs	✓	✓					
M14	Improve / introduce naming and signage of car parking	✓	✓					

2.4.3 Similar measures are grouped and summarised below. Measures which are essential to any parking strategy are marked with \*\*\*. Measures which significantly support essential measures are marked with \*\*. Finally measures which can complement a parking strategy and whose selection is entirely dependent on the situation are marked with \*.

**\*\*\*Measure 1: Implement a car parking restriction and tariff regime**

2.4.4 The implementation of a clear and uncomplicated car parking restriction and tariff regime is central to an effective parking strategy. Existing and successful parking strategies have clear parking restriction regimes which favour short term on-street parking in central areas. This encourages use by shoppers and a high parking turnover, thus providing support for the retail sector. Long term parking is not encouraged and is directed to off-street car parking facilities.

2.4.5 The implementation of restriction and tariff regimes is often in partnership with measures to encourage modal shift, for example Park & Ride. The City of York provides short stay on-street parking for £2.80 for a maximum of 2 hours and long stay parking is provided at up to £9.50 per day. The cost of long stay parking has been set deliberately higher than the cost of using Park & Ride facilities to encourage modal shift (particularly amongst commuters), whereas the cost of short stay parking has remained relatively constant and below the rate of inflation to encourage its use.

- 2.4.6 Similarly, parking restriction and tariff regimes often need to be accompanied by supporting measures such as residents' parking schemes to prevent the shift of parking elsewhere. This is discussed in Measure 7.
- 2.4.7 Difficulties do arise in implementing these regimes due to the presence of privately owned off-street public car parks some of which are able to charge as they please. Some councils have been able to impose restrictions on private car parks through the planning process and this is discussed in Measure 10.

**\*\*\*Measure 2: Agree maximum parking standards**

- 2.4.8 The setting of maximum parking standards for new development is an essential component of a parking strategy. This is also essential to meet the requirement set out in Scottish Planning Policy 17: Planning for Policy, for local authorities to adopt maximum parking standards for new development.
- 2.4.9 The setting of maximum parking standards needs to be carefully balanced with measures to provide a viable alternative to the private car (see Measure 3). Without viable alternatives it becomes very difficult to secure public and political support.
- 2.4.10 Some councils are experiencing difficulties with the practicalities of implementing maximum parking standards to new developments in city centres, in particular for residential development. For example, Hull City Council have accepted that car ownership will continue to be relatively high amongst city centre residents, but that they will make fewer trips by car because of the central location. To this end the council has a city centre residents' parking scheme which provides a limited number of on-street parking bays for residents' use only and residents are now able to buy season tickets to park for unrestricted periods in multi-storey car parks which have received the "Secure Car Park" Award.

**\*\*\*Measure 3: Implement the parking strategy within a wider strategy to improve public transport, walking and cycling facilities**

- 2.4.11 The most effective parking strategies which been widely accepted by the public, retailers and businesses have been implemented within a wider strategy to make significant improvements to sustainable transport modes.
- 2.4.12 Nottingham City Council is a prime example. The parking strategy is contained in the Greater Nottingham Local Transport Plan and provides a strategy which balances the parking needs of the city and its surrounding districts. The position of the parking strategy within the LTP ensures that it maintains close links to policies for public transport, walking, cycling, road safety, traffic management etc. Nottingham Council have made significant improvements to public transport such that the city now boasts a comprehensive bus and tram network which links in with seven Park & Ride sites surrounding the city. As a result the reduction in long term parking provision in the city centre has been accompanied by attractive and viable alternatives and as such the parking policy has been well received.

**\*\*\*Measure 4: Provide accessible parking facilities for people with disabilities**

- 2.4.13 All councils usually provide dedicated parking bays for the use of people with disabilities who hold a Blue Badge and this is usually free of charge. Blue Badge Holders are able to park on single and double yellow lines and free of charge in on-street and off-street council car park pay and display bays

2.4.14 However, the location of disabled parking bays are not always in the most accessible locations. Some councils have introduced dedicated disabled parking in very accessible locations e.g. next to the main shopping areas of a city centre. Similar parking is not provided for non-disabled users. For example Nottingham City Council provide dedicated disabled on-street parking bays in the central core of the city for use by Blue Badge Holders. Similarly Chester City Council have converted two of the most accessible parking areas for the city centre shops to disabled user-only car parks.

**\*\*\*Measure 5: Undertake marketing of parking facilities**

2.4.15 The marketing of parking facilities plays a vital role in influencing where commuters, visitors, shoppers and other users choose to park, and therefore is integral to the success of a parking strategy.

2.4.16 The marketing of parking facilities is rarely included as a specific measure in a parking strategy (with the exception of Park & Ride schemes). However, it is clear that some of the most effective parking schemes are marketed to the public extremely well. The internet provides an important medium on which to market parking facilities and this should be utilised together with more traditional marketing methods.

**\*\*Measure 6: Reduce parking provision in city centre**

2.4.17 The reduction of the overall number of parking spaces in city centres is an essential long term component of a parking strategy if it is to support effectively the wider objectives of achieving modal shift. This is not an action that can be implemented before measures are in place to ensure that alternatives are available such as Park & Ride, and improved public transport.

2.4.18 Currently there are no examples of councils reducing the overall number of parking spaces, however there are many examples of councils reducing the number of long stay parking spaces. This, together with the application of maximum parking standards, is effectively reducing the number of spaces available for commuters, leading to modal shift.

**\*\*Measure 7: Implement Residents' Parking Schemes**

2.4.19 Residents' Parking Schemes are utilised by all the towns and cities included in this research as a means of preventing commuter parking in residential areas.

2.4.20 Residents' Parking Schemes almost always operate around the periphery of town and city centres where commuter parking is often deflected as a result of stricter town centre parking tariff and restriction regimes. They also operate around large employment sites that are located within residential areas such as hospitals, universities and businesses.

2.4.21 Residents' Parking Schemes operate through the issue of permits which enable a resident to park their car on-street, near to their home without restriction. One or several permits may be issued per household on completion of an application.

2.4.22 Residents' Parking Schemes can be broadly grouped into 2 types:

- Schemes which utilise residents' only bays; and
- Schemes which utilise mixed use bays (for all or part of the day).

2.4.23 In schemes which utilise resident' only bays, bays for the use of permit holders only are marked out on the street. In addition, there are a number of bays which allow waiting for a restricted period and which may incur a charge. Schemes which utilise mixed use bays are becoming increasingly more popular. In these schemes residents may park for an unrestricted period in any marked bay in their area. Cars not displaying a permit are free to use the same bays but for a restricted period and this may incur a charge. These schemes are becoming more popular because they enable a more efficient use of available parking space.

***\*Measure 8: Implement city centre residents' parking schemes***

2.4.24 City centre residents' parking schemes enable city centre residents to park for an unrestricted period in on-street parking bays by displaying a permit. Permits are charged for and are more expensive than the cost of permits for residents' parking schemes on the periphery. For example, in Glasgow permits cost £250 per annum.

2.4.25 The Glasgow City Centre Residents' Parking Scheme is only applicable to residences that were built prior to January 2000. This is to prevent the scheme from undermining the maximum parking standards which were applicable to all new developments after this time.

2.4.26 It is important to note that the councils that operate city centre residents' parking schemes indicated an uncertainty with regards to their sustainability. The schemes make use of what are otherwise (usually) short term pay and display parking bays. These are valuable parking bays designed to encourage high turnover and to support town centre vitality. As such the residents' parking schemes are compromising the effectiveness of a key component of a parking strategy.

***\*Measure 9: Implement a business permit scheme***

2.4.27 A business permit scheme can be used to complement a residents' parking scheme where businesses are located within a residential area. Without a business permit scheme a residents' parking scheme can have a detrimental effect on the operation of businesses.

2.4.28 For example, in Oxford, businesses that operate from premises within a residents' parking zone can apply for a permit if they have a vehicle that is required for an operational business need. The permit allows the holder to park their vehicle in a permit holder's space within the zone of issue only.

***\*Measure 10: Impose planning conditions on new private parking facilities***

2.4.29 Public parking provision in town and city centres tends to be a mix of council owned and privately owned facilities. The owners of private facilities are usually free to develop their own tariff regime which will inevitably be designed to compete with council owned facilities. As such this severely compromises the effectiveness of a parking strategy.

2.4.30 Whilst it is virtually impossible for a council to impose control over tariffs at existing privately owned parking facilities, some councils are using the planning system to stipulate tariff regimes in the planning agreements for new facilities. For example, Cheltenham Borough Council have stipulated in planning agreements for new privately owned public parking facilities that the tariff regime must be in line with those set for comparable council owned public parking facilities. Similarly Chester City Council stipulates in planning agreements that private developers developing on

land formally used for public car parking must provide alternative public parking facilities with parking tariffs determined by the council. Southampton Council also stipulate parking tariffs in planning agreements.

***\*Measure 11: Provision of Park & Ride***

2.4.31 The following towns and cities have successful Park & Ride schemes:

- Aberdeen (currently has 3 facilities)
- Cheltenham (currently has 2 facilities and looking to expand)
- Chester (currently has 4 facilities)
- Edinburgh (currently has 4 facilities and will soon open a further 2)
- Nottingham (currently has 7 facilities)
- Oxford (currently has 5 facilities)
- Swansea (currently has 2 facilities and considering a further 2)

2.4.32 Park & Ride schemes help to alleviate the problems of city and town centre congestion, particularly by commuters, by offering an alternative out-of-town location in which to park which is linked to the city centre by fast and efficient public transport.

2.4.33 Park & Ride sites are made attractive to car drivers because they offer a significantly cheaper parking tariff in comparison the city centre tariffs. Park & Ride sites will struggle to operate unless there is an effective city centre parking tariff regime in operation which aims to discourage commuter parking.

2.4.34 Park & Ride sites usually do not charge for the cost of parking but instead offer very reasonably priced tickets for the public transport link into the city centre. As an example the Swansea Park & Ride facilities charge £1.50 return bus fare for up to 4 passengers from 1 vehicle. This compares favourably with the charge for long stay parking in the city centre.

***\*Measure 12: Improve the security of car parks***

2.4.35 The improvement of car park security plays an important role both in crime prevention and in making efficient use of parking spaces.

2.4.36 Car parks which have installed a defined set of security measures are eligible to receive the Secured Car Park Award. This is an initiative of the Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland and is managed by the British Parking Association. The award is granted to parking areas that have achieved the requirements of a risk assessment as conducted by the Police. These requirements mean the parking operator has put in place measures that help to deter criminal activity and anti-social behaviour.

***\*Measure 13: Install Variable Message Signs***

2.4.37 VMS provides real time information on the availability of spaces in car parks, usually together with directions to each car park.

2.4.38 VMS is a powerful tool in the management of parking demand, enabling car park space to be used more efficiently and providing car drivers with the information they need to decide where they are going to park. Without VMS there is a tendency for some car parks to be over used, rapidly reaching capacity and leading to congestion

on the surrounding network. VMS provides car drivers with information on the availability of space to prevent these over-capacity problems.

***\*Measure 14: Improve / introduce naming and signage of car parking***

- 2.4.39 It is important that car park names can be easily associated with an area or landmark. This is especially important in assisting visitors to locate an appropriate car park. Chester City Council have recently completed a re-naming exercise of their car parks for this purpose.
- 2.4.40 It is also important that people are able to find car parks on foot. Again this is particularly important for visitors who will not be familiar with the city. Pedestrian signs can be installed to direct to and from specific car parks.