

Torbay Council's Parking Strategy 2016 - 2021

Vision

“To provide a fair and consistent approach to the way we promote and manage parking while supporting the Council’s ambition to create a ‘Prosperous and Healthy’ Torbay”

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Foreword

The development of this Torbay Parking Strategy reflects the commitment that Torbay Council continues to give to a range of parking provisions as it seeks to make efficient and effective use of available resources.

Faced with the prospect of increasing levels of car ownership, it is important that the Council has a Parking Strategy that is linked to the Local Transport Plan, the Local Plan, the Economic Strategy and that it supports the Corporate Plan. It is anticipated that this Strategy will contribute towards a 'Prosperous and Healthy' Bay by supporting the local economy and keeping our road network free from the detrimental effects of traffic congestion and pollution.

In March 2016 the Council concluded a Review of Parking in Torbay. The objective of the review was :-

“To review parking in Torbay to ensure that there is a collective understanding and consensus for the fair delivery of parking in Torbay.”

This Parking Strategy has been prepared as a statement of commitment with regard to the future of parking in the Bay and in response to the findings of the Parking Review. However, it is important that, as far as possible, the Strategy reflects the aspirations of the Local Transport Plan as well as the Ambitions, Targeted Actions and Principles set out Council's Corporate Plan (2015 ~ 2019). We were therefore keen to ensure, through public consultation, that the content of this Strategy is aligned to the expectations of our community.

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Executive Summary

This revision of the Torbay Council Parking Strategy represents the first major redrafting since the existing Strategy was approved in 2008. The Strategy presents a way forward to provide the fairest and most consistent approach to parking promotion, management and provision in Torbay. It sets out the Vision, Values and Aims that underpin our approach to parking.

It also sets out the key work areas that we will focus on to take Parking Services forward over the next five years.

As parking affects many facets of life for residents, businesses and visitors to Torbay, this Strategy seeks to balance the needs of everyone, car users and non-users alike within a local transport network constrained by both capacity and topography. This includes emergency services, commuters, public transport users and groups with more specific needs.

The on-going review and development of off-street and on-street parking will continue to address any imbalances which have led to surpluses of parking in some areas, deficits in others and the need for ongoing investment to raise the standard of parking provision. This strategy takes a realistic and long-term view of what is feasible and likely to be achieved in Torbay, and what is required to help deliver successful initiatives.

This Parking Strategy sits below the overarching Local Transport Plan – Devon and Torbay Strategy 2011 – 2026 (April 2011). More specifically it is linked to Torbay's Local Transport Plan – Implementation Plan.

Finally, this Strategy sets out the Decision Making Framework that we will use to ensure that key issues are properly considered when assessing parking schemes.

Corporate Plan

Our Corporate Plan sets out the ambitions the Council will work towards over the next four years (2015 – 2019) as well as recognising the challenges we face and the need to do things differently. The Corporate Plan is our overarching document that aims to unify all the Council's activities towards achieving key priorities.

The Corporate Plan sets out the shared vision for the Council that is to create a prosperous and healthy Torbay. It outlines five 'Targeted Actions' to help achieve this vision and three of these Actions relate closely to this Parking Strategy :-

- Working towards a more prosperous Torbay
- Promoting healthy lifestyles across Torbay
- Ensuring Torbay remains an attractive and safe place to live and visit

Our Corporate Plan is underpinned by the following three principles :-

- Use reducing resources to best effect
- Reduce demand through prevention and innovation
- Integrated and joined up approach

Values

Core values will underpin our approach to parking. These values are aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan and the Council's ambition to create a 'Prosperous and Healthy' Torbay.

- 1. Collaboration and transparency**
We will provide clear information about parking and involve or consult communities in the development of policy and the design of local schemes; as we **ensure Torbay remains an attractive and safe place to live and visit**¹.
- 2. Quality of life**
We will consider the impact of parking on health, safety and the general well-being of residents, workers and visitors, as we **promote healthy lifestyles across Torbay**¹.
- 3. Value for money**
We will maximise value for money through considered and well managed parking schemes, intelligent use of technology and fair charges and enforcement as we work **towards a more prosperous Torbay**¹.
- 4. Fairness and consistency**
We will take a fair and consistent approach to meet the needs of individuals, businesses and communities as best as possible whilst **using reducing resources to best effect**¹.
- 5. Efficiency and effectiveness**
We will make optimum use of parking spaces and provide services that are responsive to need and adaptable by adopting an **integrated and joined up approach**¹.
- 6. Supporting the economy**
All new parking schemes will aim to assist existing businesses and attract new businesses as we work **towards a more prosperous Torbay**¹.

¹ Extracts from the Corporate Plan

Parking in Torbay - the current situation

On average, 96% of the lifetime of a car is spent parked (RAC report – Spaced: Perspectives on Parking Policy). The other 4% of the time, the car plays an integral part of people's lives, whether it is picking up children from school, visiting relatives or getting the weekly shopping. As such, parking affects many facets of everyday life for residents, businesses and visitors to Torbay. Choices must be made with regard to parking provision, parking controls, charging levels and enforcement in order to provide a fair, consistent and sustainable parking offer, enable the safe and efficient movement of traffic and contribute to the environmental sustainability of Torbay.

Torbay's population and car ownership is steadily on the rise. Torbay is growing economically and demand for new homes is increasing. It is clear that action is needed to meet ever more complex challenges. There is a clear need for a modern, well-informed and fair parking service and a general approach that caters for car users and non-car users alike.

Our existing offer

We currently provide the following services :-

- On-street parking facilities - 830 on-street parking spaces exist on the highway and are serviced by parking meters;
- Disabled parking ;
- Off-street parking – 39 operational car parks with 7,580 car parking spaces;
- Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs), including residents' parking schemes;
- Issuing a range of parking permits;
- Parking enforcement for both on-street and off-street parking - 30,000 parking penalties are processed annually;
- The development of enforcement patrols and the provision of an appeals process

Each year, 1.8 million pay-and-display tickets are issued for Torbay's car parks and 630,000 for on-street parking.

There is sufficient evidence to uphold the view that there is an adequate supply of parking provided for residents, shoppers and visitors to the Torbay area. However, it is the mix in the available parking stock that needs to be regularly assessed so as to ensure that the most effective and efficient use is being made of these facilities.

Legislation & Policy

Parking is a complicated policy area and it is also controlled by various pieces of legislation. It is affected by a wide range of national and regional parking and transport policies that need to be taken into account when deciding how to provide the best parking offer to residents. The Council has a legal duty to comply with many of these policies as well as the associated legislation. Key policies and regulations that we are required to comply with include :-

- Local Transport Plan – Devon and Torbay Strategy (2011 – 2026)
- The Torbay Strategy - Local Transport Plan – Devon and Torbay Strategy (2011 – 2026)
- Traffic Management Act - 2004
- Road Traffic Act - 1991
- Road Traffic Regulations Act - 1984
- Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions - 2016
- A range of operational policies set out by the Council's Traffic and Parking Regulation Enforcement Service & Parking Operations Service

More people, more cars, more demand

Population growth in Torbay is projected to rise between 2012 and 2022.

Motor vehicle mileage has increased significantly in Torbay over the last two decades².

Between 2001 and 2011 the number of cars/vans per 1000 people in Torbay increased by 10%. The % of households with one car/van only increased by 1.7% with a 65% increase in households with 4+ cars/vans.

More recent figures from 2014 show that there is a general decline in the region, and nationally, of households with no or one car/van. However the amount of cars/vans per household increased between 2003 and 2014 from 1.24 to 1.29 regionally, and from 1.16 to 1.22 for England (excl London).

Torbay has less car ownership, a lower % of households with a car/van, and a lower % of households with 4+ cars/vans than both South Hams and Teignbridge, and Torbay is below the national average.

Car driving is the most frequent mode of transport for people with a car in their household. So with 76.4% of households in Torbay having at least one car, it is reasonable to assume that in 3/4s of Torbay's households the most frequent mode of travel is the car.

There is an added pressure to create additional off street parking in residential areas or additional on street parking places.

The provision of short, medium and long term parking to support the local economy is recognised as being entirely necessary. However, this must be balanced against the management of traffic on the key access corridors to avoid the adverse effects of congestion and air pollution, particularly at peak travel periods.

Development

The number of new households in Torbay is forecast to increase by 8220 by 2030, according to the Government's latest (July 2016) projections.

The Local Plan (2012 – 2030) provides a framework for growth and change in the Bay, including 8,900 new homes and 5,000 to 6,000 new jobs. The focus for growth is on town centres, West Paignton and Torquay Gateway.

Policies within the Local Plan resist the loss of on-street parking, especially where there is high use of on street or public spaces. Off street parking for residents, cycle parking and commercial vehicle parking is required for new development – with the amount of parking required being dependent on the location of development.

Development is promoted in locations that are accessible by foot, cycle and public transport – to help reduce reliance on the car. Major leisure and retail development will be focused in existing town and local centres. It is recognised that a significant number and percentage of journeys will be undertaken by car.

Additionally, there is a growing need for the Council to balance conflicting priorities when considering its existing land assets, particularly in regards to off-street car parks and opportunities for delivery of town centre regeneration and new development. This is likely to lead to greater patronage of a smaller number of higher quality off-street car parks and a loss of under-used car parking spaces.

Ultimately, it is very likely that there will be further development and changes in land use patterns across Torbay, bringing challenges and demand for parking. Those likely and planned changes are being carefully assessed. They will be monitored and well managed to ensure that existing pressures on parking are not compounded. New park and ride facilities, to serve all three towns, are proposed in the Local Plan and will be delivered to satisfy demand.

A Changing Council

The Council is tackling an unprecedented budget gap arising from central government cuts and service pressures. This is resulting in fundamental changes to the way the Council provides services. Those services have to become more efficient.

Our financial strategy aims to protect frontline services wherever possible however this is becoming increasingly difficult in the current financial climate.

We are running a programme to transform our services to meet the needs of our residents and businesses as well as reducing costs to meet the forecast shortfall in resources, improving services, managing demand for public services and minimising the call on the public purse.

The Council will need to balance conflicting priorities when considering its existing land assets, particularly in regards to off street car parks and opportunities for delivery of town centre regeneration and new development.

The aims of the development and implementation of this Parking Strategy are based around the key strategic aims referred to in the document rather than helping to bridge the Council's financial gap but it is obviously imperative that we carry out the changes in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

Key Issues – why we need this Strategy

In March 2016 the Council concluded a Review of Parking in Torbay. The objective of the review was :-

“To review parking in Torbay to ensure that there is a collective understanding and consensus for the fair delivery of parking in Torbay.”

This Parking Strategy has been prepared as a statement of commitment with regard to the future of parking in the Bay and in response to the findings of the Parking Review. The previous Parking Strategy was produced in 2008 and it is important that, as far as possible, a new Strategy reflects the aspirations of the Local Transport Plan as well as the Ambitions, Targeted Actions and Principles set out Council's Corporate Plan (2015 ~ 2019).

The review of parking in Torbay highlighted a need for a modern, well-informed and fair parking service.

Legislation, environmental pressures and the Council's increasingly urgent need to transform the way services are delivered have created a compelling case for review and change. Key factors are set out below :-

Funding & Charging

The charging regime used in setting the parking tariffs throughout the Bay is set, to draw a balance between the actual cost of providing the service and the need to maintain and improve the existing level of revenue generated. The charges may vary between parking facilities depending upon the type of offer, the location and seasonal periods. Customer feedback shows that users want a simplified classification of off-street car park i.e. just Long Stay or Short Stay. Generally people prefer lower parking charges and the Council will consider the option to achieve income growth through increased transactions resulting from competitive tariffs. Consideration will be given to fixing the schedule of parking tariffs for a number of years to create certainty, avoid confusion and save on the cost of frequent Traffic Regulation Orders. The use of lower tariffs during some of the winter period has been seen to assist the economy outside of the main tourist season. Different and improved methods of payment should be explored and implemented to allow for easier and more efficient transactions. Charging for the whole range of different permits should be kept under review so that they remain attractive, flexible and cost effective.

The Council continues to maintain a modest car park maintenance revenue budget which forms the basis for on-going essential repairs to off-street car parks. However, it is recognised that ongoing investment in the quality of off-street parking is necessary to improve the offer and make them more attractive to our customers. It

would be impractical, based upon current budget funding, for Torbay Council to raise sufficient funds to finance all of these improvements and it is expected that other funding alternatives will be sought. This finance may be secured through a mixture of prudential borrowing, developer contributions and private investment. We may need to be innovative in the way we achieve this, but will always look to achieve the best outcomes for Torbay.

Drawing the Balance between On-street & Off-street

A balance needs to be drawn between the provision and use of on-street and off-street car parking. Each of these parking provisions has its role to play within the overall parking stock in supporting the various activities that take place in Torbay. In general the following principles have been derived in developing this Strategy :-

- On-street parking provision in town central areas should be aimed mainly for short stay parking, “blue badge” holders, taxis and deliveries;
- Long stay parking should be directed, where practical, to off-street locations on the edges of the town centres or in designated central locations, with priority for short and medium parking provision being given to shoppers and visitors, and;
- Sufficient off-street parking should be provided in town centres, dedicated to short & medium stay parking to accommodate appropriate demand situations;

The balance in the deployment of both on-street and off-street is generally recognised as an effective tool in the management of traffic in and around town centres. For example, where traffic volumes are low, on-street parking acts as a valuable deterrent to high traffic speeds, acting as a traffic calming measure. Conversely, where traffic volumes are high, on-street parking contributes to the adverse effects of congestion and air pollution, particularly in town centres and on the key traffic corridors accessing town centres. In these instances the parking provision should be deployed to off-street locations.

Parking Stock

There is sufficient evidence to uphold the view that there is a more than adequate supply of parking provided for residents, shoppers and visitors to the Torbay area. We continue to test whether we have enough parking capacity to meet future demands, as a result of successful town centre regeneration for example, and will provide additional parking provision (e.g. park & ride facilities) where and when there is demand. However, it is the mix in the available parking stock that needs to be regularly assessed so as to ensure that the most effective and efficient use is being made of these facilities. In meeting this aim the Council will periodically review the operation of its parking stock to establish the following :-

- The locations of major parking demand generators (such as shopping areas, employment, tourist and leisure attractions) and the likely demand for parking at these locations by time of year;
- The patterns of this demand, including duration of stay, time of arrival, group size, and the propensity to pay parking charges;
- Existing parking supply at these locations, including dedicated off-street, general off-street and available on-street parking in the vicinity;
- An assessment of the quality and suitability of the parking provided, particularly in meeting the needs of the disabled and other vulnerable groups;
- The requirements for increased parking supply at certain locations, and the availability of surplus parking, and;
- The future parking requirements in line with new developments especially where these are anticipated to re-generate the immediate area.

Park & Ride

A temporary and seasonal 'Park & Ride' has been introduced for Brixham to take into account of the loss of parking capacity in the central area parking. Stakeholders in Brixham have identified the need for a more permanent and long-term solution, subject to viability. Park & Ride locations have also been identified, in the Local Plan, for Torquay and Paignton. Further reviews will need to be undertaken to identify the necessity for the provision of park and ride facilities at Brixham and elsewhere in Torbay to reduce the adverse effects of traffic congestion and to ensure an adequate number and choice of parking options.

Disabled Parking

It is important that the Council is aware of the national guidelines that exist in respect of the provision of disabled parking spaces. In the determination of the most appropriate location of these spaces, within the car parks and car parking areas, the Council will ensure that they are easily accessible to pedestrian access facilities. In some cases, it is likely that providing spaces only in off-street car parks will not meet all national standards. Where this is not the case, further consideration will be made to increasing the number of on-street spaces that are dedicated to the disabled. These additional spaces will generally be located, where possible, in the main shopping streets in town centres and at local shopping areas. The proportion of on-street spaces dedicated to the disabled will be determined on a case by case basis, based upon existing usage, known demands and consultation with disabled access groups.

Coach & Heavy Goods Vehicles

The provision of adequate parking for coaches and HGV's for both set-down and pick-up, together with overnight layover is a clear and necessary requirement. However, it is important to recognise that this parking provision must meet a number of basic requirements :-

- The facilities should be located away from residential areas to minimise disruption, particularly during vehicle parking and start up activities;
- Layover areas must be secure and provide adequate facilities for vehicle servicing;
- Coach pick-up areas must be easily accessible to the main attractions in Torbay;
- Pick-up and set-down areas must be large enough for the vehicles that will use them and must provide sufficient capacity to meet demand and to minimise disruption to other traffic, and;
- Where practical, loading areas for coaches and HGV's should be off-carriageway.

The method adopted by Torbay Council in making these provisions will be by seeking partnerships with coach operators and with HGV operators. These partnerships will match Council investment in infrastructure with operator's investment in vehicle technology and agreements on operating practices. Partnership working with freight operators, regulators and neighbouring authorities is conducted through the operation of the Torbay Freight Quality Partnership and through active participation in the Regional Freight Forum. Torbay Council is also a member of both the South Hams and Newton Abbot Freight Quality Partnerships.

Fair Enforcement

A programme of on-going improvement and refinement to the enforcement service will ensure that the overriding aim is to deliver a clear benefit to the community and dispel any adverse criticism. Improving the control of on-street parking through better enforcement and thereby increasing the turnover in short stay, on-street parking spaces are clearly important actions in maintaining the vitality of Torbay's town centres. The Council requires an efficient parking service and where appropriate we will undertake joint procurement with other local authorities for shared use of services, technology and equipment. Fair enforcement and efficiency problems will be tackled in the following ways :-

- Improvement of on-street parking enforcement to reduce the amount of inappropriate and illegal parking
- The development of this enforcement to ensure that short-stay parking spaces are used only for short-stay parking and therefore improve the efficiency of operation
- The improved use of technology, including software support systems, hardware, cameras, etc. In particular the use of mobile enforcement cameras can improve road safety for children outside school entrances and reduce the road safety risks presented to public transport users. Strict operating procedures should be applied to the use of any mobile technology to ensure that fair enforcement is undertaken and the law abiding motorist is not penalised.
- The introduction of targeted pay and display provisions throughout the Bay as an additional measure to engender greater turnover of short-stay on-street parking to assist in growing the local economy

Controlled Parking Zones

Many of the residential areas of Torbay suffer problems with commuters parking in the adjacent streets. This is a particular problem in those residential areas adjacent to town centres and close to large generators of parking demand, such as Torbay Hospital and schools. This parking, although not generally illegal, is increasingly giving cause for concern as it creates the following problems :-

- For residents, by restricting the availability of on-street parking spaces;
- For emergency services access, where already narrow streets are in some cases made virtually impassable;
- For local bus services, which are unable to use certain roads reliably and often cannot park close to the kerb for picking up and setting down passengers;
- For businesses and the generators of parking demand, by increasing the propensity for conflict with residents.

Torbay Council is committed to the process of minimising the adverse effect of non-residential parking in residential streets. The strategy to reduce this impact has four basic strands :-

- Encouraging the use of off-street parking, by a mixture of additional on-street parking restrictions and improving the quality of off-street parking;
- Discouraging the use of on-street parking, through additional on-street parking restrictions;
- Encouraging a reduction in overall parking demand, by reducing the amount of car borne commuter travel, and;
- Manage the realistic expectations of residents by introducing revised CPZ criteria.

The introduction of Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs), previously funded through the Local Transport Plan process, is a measure to introduce areas throughout Torbay that are geared to providing controlled parking in residential areas for the benefit of residents. These Controlled Parking Zones are established in close consultation with those residents and business operations within the defined areas for the purpose of providing parking to meet local needs and to drive out inappropriate long term commuter parking. The Council will have an Operational Parking Policy which will set out the methodology for conducting the CPZ process including the engagement of the public through consultation. This will include charging for CPZ permits at a rate that fully considers the whole life cost of the scheme.

Access for Emergency Services

Torbay has experienced a number of notable cases where parked cars have effectively blocked access by emergency vehicles attending an incident. In each case a review was undertaken to assess the reasons for the excessive on-street parking. Torbay Council will continue to undertake these reviews, in liaison with the emergency services, in order to avoid the potential for future incidents of this nature and also identify possible conflict points. Where deemed appropriate, additional parking restrictions will be implemented to remove inappropriate parking.

Operational Policy

The Council's Parking Services team will work under the guidance of a detailed Operational Parking Policy. Although heavily influenced by the Parking Strategy the Operational Policy will not form part of the Council's policy framework but will be used as a day to day document to enable delivery of the aims and objectives set out in this Strategy. The Operational Policy will provide significantly more detail and it will include a Delivery Plan that will assist in the implementation of this Parking Strategy.

Economic impact of parking - working towards a Prosperous Torbay

The Council is tackling an unprecedented budget gap arising from central government cuts and service pressures. Consequently the charging regime used in

setting the parking tariffs throughout the Bay is set, to draw a balance between the actual cost of providing the service and the need to maintain and improve the existing level of revenue generated. Parking provision, controls and enforcement have an impact on local business, particularly in and around local town centres, and these are contributing factors to wider business viability and inward investment.

In March 2015, mruk research (now Breaking Blue Research) published their report which was prepared for the Welsh Government entitled “Assessing the Impact of Car Parking Charges on Town Centre Footfall”. The Welsh Government had been looking to understand the evidence on the relationship between car parking charges and town centre footfall. Some of the key findings and conclusions are :-

- Parking charges are only one aspect of a complex array of factors influencing activity in town centres and it is very difficult to separate parking charges from the other factors.
- Car park charges are often perceived as the key determinant for changes in footfall levels in town centres but the available evidence is almost entirely anecdotal.
- While parking charges impact on how long people remain in the town centre, the availability of spaces is felt by visitors to be more important than cost in their overall decision about visiting.

Where practicable, parking schemes need to have regard to providing facilities for on-street loading and unloading at appropriate times and to make provision where possible for business permit parking.

We will implement different marketing techniques, including the use of social media, to promote the availability of different parking permits in Torbay to support and grow economic activity.

What would happen if the Council left things as they are?

It would not be sensible if the Council failed to develop a strategic approach to parking. It is very likely that there would be serious implications for emergency services, public transport, refuse collections and service vehicles, such as deliveries and trades people, all of which would affect the level of services that residents and businesses receive.

Developing the Strategy – your views

We were committed to holding genuine conversations to understand views from anyone on parking in Torbay. In particular, we wanted to know what was most important and what could be improved. Understanding these views was integral to developing a fair, consistent and transparent way forward for parking.

Because parking incorporates a range of issues and everyone has specific views, it is impossible for this Strategy to cater for every opinion and individual need. The fairest approach was to find the best balance of views that most people agree with.

How we consulted

Consultation was undertaken in two stages. The first stage was via a comprehensive Review of Parking which was concluded in March 2016. And this enabled us to understand the overall views related to parking. This helped us to form the Vision, Values and Aims – the basis of this Strategy. This consultation also gave us a chance to find out more about the problems residents face parking near their homes, views on car parks and views on the level of enforcement undertaken by the Council.

In the second stage of consultation, we checked to make sure you agreed with the Vision, Value and Aims set out in this Strategy. To find out more about what is most important to you, we also asked you to comment on our strategic outlook over the next five years.

Finally, we asked respondents their views on the criteria we propose to use to make decisions about future local parking schemes.

Consultation activities

- 1600 responses received from the Parking Review public questionnaire;
- Listening Panels were held with representatives of Community Partnerships, the business sector and tourism industry;
- Views were sought from schools, Council officers within the parking and highways teams and from council staff generally;
- Engagement with a representative of Coach Drivers;
- Meetings with the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Board;
- Discussions with the Mayor's Executive Group and the Council's Senior Leadership Team; and
- Consultation with key partners, including South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (Torbay Hospital) and all emergency services.

Key messages from the Parking Review public questionnaire

The 2013 Office of National Statistics mid-year estimates tell us there is a population of 132,075 people in Torbay and of those, 110,252 people are aged 16 or over (therefore of driving age). Only 1600 people in this age group responded to the survey and for the purposes of context this represents only 1.5% of that population. The summary of the results are shown below :-

- The vast majority of people that responded to the survey stated they were users of car parks, 89.9%. They were followed by users of on street parking at 69.0%.
- Most respondents felt that summer and winter parking charges are too high, 78.5% and 70.7% respectively.
- Over half of respondents have not heard of the Park Mark safer parking scheme award. Nearly a quarter said that Park Mark did not influence their decision to use a car park.
- 60.7% of respondents preferred the 'pay on exit' system when using a car park.
- Just over three quarters of respondents (76.7%) stated they don't and will not use the Parkmobile service.
- The top three problems with on street parking identified by respondents were: Parking fees too high (55.6%), traffic / parking problems at school pick up times (50.9%) and pavement obstruction (45.6%).
- Those who did and did not think enforcement would address the on street parking issues identified in the survey were almost evenly matched. 41.2% saying yes and 39.8% saying no (1.4% difference).

Responses to the public consultation of the draft Parking Strategy

The public consultation was open between 18th July 2016 and 26th August 2016. The consultation was promoted on the Council's consultation web page, posters in Torbay Council car parks and a press release issued to local media outlets. It was also promoted on the Council's social media forums and emailed to respondents from the Parking Review consultation, Viewpoint Panel members and local stakeholders. Written responses were sent to consultation@torbay.gov.uk. Employees at Torbay Council and the Torbay Development Agency were also consulted as was the Task & Finish Group set up by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Board.

In total there were only 48 responses to the public consultation on the draft Parking Strategy. Four organisations/groups responded to the consultation and the remaining responses were received from individuals. Seven of the individual responses were from residents of one road who were prompted to request solutions to parking issues in their area via the consultation inbox. These emails were forwarded to the Council's Highways service along with one further email that expressed problems with disabled parking spaces.

Overall, the majority of individuals' comments were on similar specific themes and issues related to the Parking Review consultation rather than the Parking Strategy. There were fewer comments about the Strategy itself.

Conclusion

This Parking Strategy has been informed by the outcomes of the Parking Review and subsequent feedback from the community and other stakeholders. The results of the public consultation on the draft version of this Strategy did not give rise to any further significant changes to the document. Consequently, the Parking Strategy sets out a clear **Vision**, supported by core **Values** and underpinned by specific **Aims** that are a product of a shared process of policy development. Furthermore the Strategy sets out a series of Objectives for the next five years that sit within a Strategic Action Plan shown in Appendix 1.

The intention is to continue the inclusive approach and consult with our communities on the design of local parking schemes. Consultation will include stakeholders such as Ward Councillors, Event Organisers, etc. This particularly includes consultation on any local controlled parking zone.

Parking in Torbay

Vision

‘To provide a fair and consistent approach to the way we manage parking while supporting the Council’s ambition to create a prosperous and healthy Torbay’

Values

Collaboration and transparency

We will provide clear information about parking and involve or consult communities in the development of policy and the design of local schemes; as we [ensure Torbay remains an attractive and safe place to live and visit](#).

Quality of life

We will consider the impact of parking on health, safety and the general well-being of residents, workers and visitors, as we [promote healthy lifestyles across Torbay](#).

Value for money

We will maximise value for money through considered and well managed parking schemes, intelligent use of technology and fair charges and enforcement as we work [towards a more prosperous Torbay](#).

Fairness and consistency

We will take a fair and consistent approach to meet the needs of individuals, businesses and communities as best as possible whilst [using reducing resources to best effect](#).

Efficiency and effectiveness

We will make optimum use of parking spaces and provide services that are responsive to need and adaptable by adopting an [integrated and joined up approach](#).

Supporting the economy

All new parking schemes will aim to assist existing businesses and attract new businesses as we work [towards a more prosperous Torbay](#).

Aims

- Provide good quality public car parking facilities
- Improve road safety and accessibility
- Promote sustainable modes of transport and improve air quality
- Listen to the needs of residents, businesses and visitors
- Provide for those with accessibility issues
- Consider wider Council strategic objectives in the design and management of parking provision
- Recognise the different characteristics of areas within the Bay while being fair and consistent
- Keep traffic moving and assist the reliable and effective operation of public transport
- Be responsive to changing parking circumstances

Five year objectives

This section sets out what we aim to improve over the next five years. It categorises improvements into key work areas and identifies what we intend to do. This is set out in the context of public opinion and the key challenges that we face.

With the five year intentions in place, we will use our 'Decision Making Framework' to make sure the right action is taken. These are set out in our next chapter, 'Making the Right Decisions'.

Accordingly, our Strategic Action Plan sets out, at a high level, what we aim to achieve over the next five years. The action plan is set out as Appendix 1 to this Strategy.

We have set out a five-year strategic action plan because we are subject to continuous change in national policy, population and development and because in localised areas, parking demands can change quite quickly. A more specific Delivery Plan will form part of our Operational Parking Policy, which will provide more detail on a range of issues and will assist in the implementation of the Parking Strategy. This will allow the Council to remain responsive to change and by reviewing progress we can develop revised Delivery Plans that can continue to seek to meet the needs of our different communities.

- 1. Implement operational parking policies to deliver the Parking Strategy**
 - Deliver a consistent approach to parking management throughout Torbay
- 2. Create a detailed Operational Parking Policy document**
 - Deliver a fair and consistent approach to parking within Torbay to ensure our customers know what to expect
 - Provide clear guidance on parking related activity in Torbay for all customers to include, the enforcement of restrictions, how to appeal a parking penalty charge notice, the use of Torbay Council car parks for events and parking for volunteers
 - Consult with relevant stakeholders on the content of the proposed Operational Parking Policy document
- 3. Keep parking charges under review**
 - Parking tariffs for off-street to reflect the needs of long and short stay customers; within the context of this Strategy
 - Parking tariffs to factor in demand for parking and the charges set at levels that meet these requirements
 - Promote usage which will include summer and winter demands in line with budgetary requirements
 - Revenue growth to be increased by encouraging the use of both on and off-street pay and display parking areas and other income opportunities in the car parks
 - Set charges for reserved parking bays to reflect the demand and usage. Also, consider reverting to pay and display in reserved bay areas where demand is low
 - Review annual car park permit charges in line with the daily parking charges
- 4. Improve the Customer's Experience**
 - Provide the option to make payment for annual permits via direct debit
 - Introduce a three day permit which does not need to be used on consecutive days

- Further promote payment for parking via mobile phone and make this option available for on-street parking areas
- Provide pay and display machines which will take card payments, including contactless payments
- Install new and vibrant signage into the car parks
- Consider implementing 'pay on exit' at other car parks
- Provide extra pay machines in car parks where demand is high
- Implement a programme of repairs, maintenance and improvement (where funding allows) for all relevant car parks
- Ensure the customer is able to purchase car park permits from a full range of Council outlets
- Introduce virtual parking permits

5. Efficiencies

- Update IT systems to improve the customer experience and potentially make efficiencies with less manual processes
- Ensure Civil Enforcement Officers are deployed into the areas where compliance is required through better use of technology
- Investigate joint procurement of systems, machines and other equipment with neighbouring local authorities
- Investigate shared service provision with other local authorities
- Explore alternative use of car parks where the demand for parking is low
- Make full use of technology and other methods of enforcement in areas where compliance is low

6. Marketing and income generation

- Make better use of social media to advertise the various parking permits and other parking offers
- Continually explore other income opportunities within car parks

7. Meeting parking demand

- Ensure that off-street parking demand is met within existing car parks and consider alternative or additional parking arrangements where appropriate
- Consider changes to on street parking restrictions in liaison with the Highways Department and in consultation with Ward Councillors and local Community Partnerships
- Review all existing Controlled Parking Zones, including residents parking bays, and if inappropriate, consider revoking after consultation
- Consider the demand for and opportunity to introduce 'Park & Ride' facilities in Torbay
- Consider the introduction of 'car clubs' to help reduce the number of parked cars within Torbay's neighbourhood streets

Decision Making

Taking into account the current pressures, views from our communities and legislative compliance, we have developed a mechanism that enables early consideration of key issues to ensure new parking schemes or alterations to existing parking arrangements are not considered in isolation. In the main, these schemes are suggested by the public, by Ward Members and Council officers.

The 'Decision Making Framework' enables us to be as fair as possible in the way we make decisions about all parking schemes. It means that we can retain a consistent approach to how parking schemes are considered and implemented whilst also ensuring that we consider local issues.

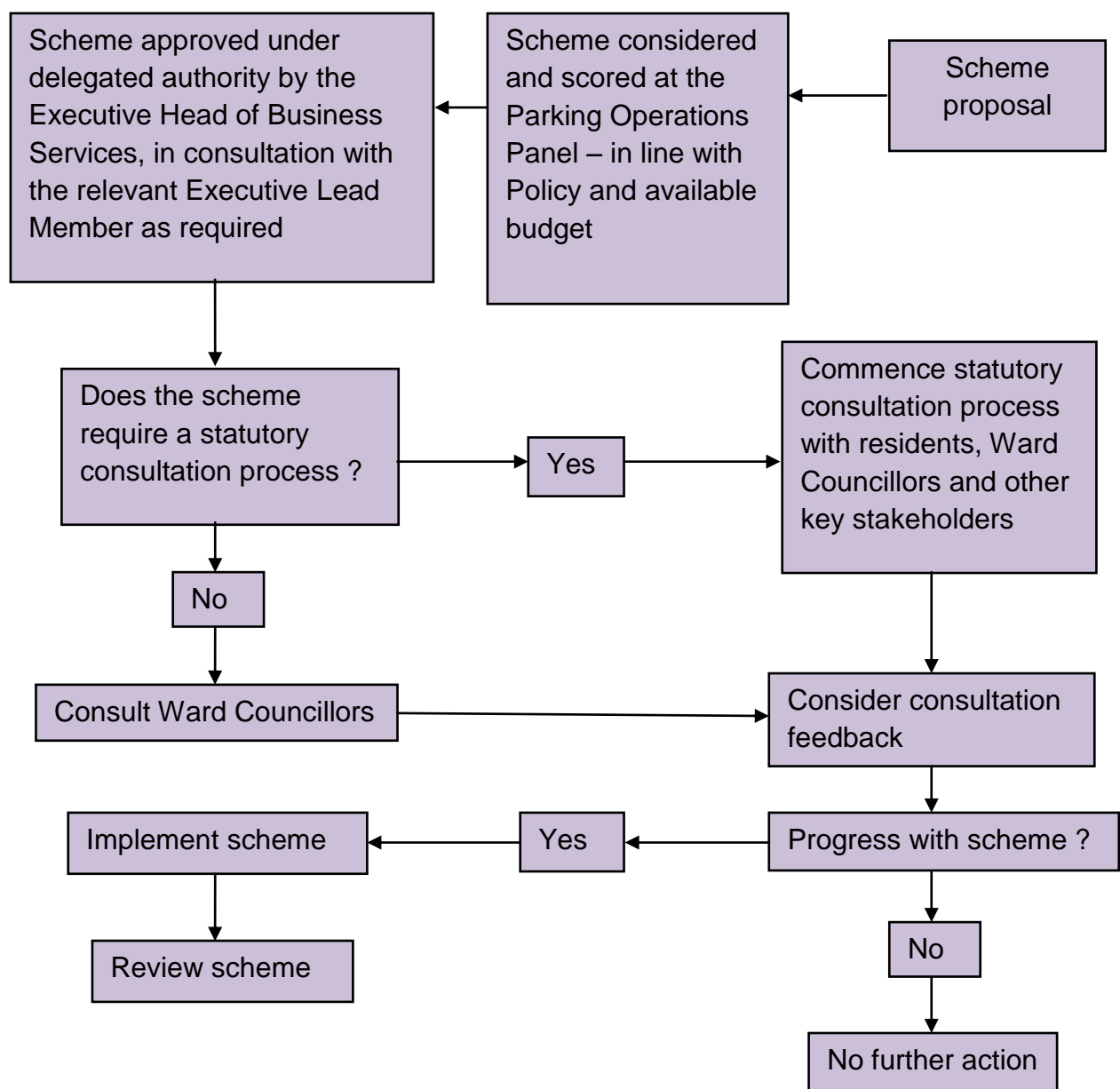
It introduces flexibility and means that we can adjust assessments of parking schemes to ensure we are meeting up to date requirements. This especially applies to schemes potentially affected by businesses or a housing development or schemes that can create displacement of parking problems. To note, the framework will not be required to consider schemes that set out to improve road safety at junctions nor will projects that have a very minor effect on parking. The framework will consider schemes that have been developed principally for parking management reasons. Accordingly, schemes containing parking features developed for, or in connection with, accident remedial, traffic management, sustainable transport, accessibility and development control reasons lie outside of this process.

Ultimately, the Council has to make choices, which can be complex, about the allocation and management of parking space and in doing so we will need to balance the needs of all concerned and take actions that some motorists, residents and/or businesses may not support. It is the Council's view that the 'Decision Making Framework & Criteria' is the fairest way to do this.

The 'Decision Making Framework & Criteria' used to consider schemes can be found in Appendix 2.

Parking Operations Panel

Schemes are considered by a Parking Operations Panel made up of various Council officers with experience in planning, development and regeneration, environmental sustainability, parking, highways and transportation. The members of the Parking Operations Panel are set out in Appendix 2. Operational decisions will be made in line with this Parking Strategy, which forms part of the Council's Policy Framework. The Parking Operations Panel is required to make decisions that comply with Council policy and can be delivered within the available budget. Accordingly, the process of making decisions is set out below :-



Appendix 1

Strategic Action Plan

No.	OBJECTIVE	KEY ACTIONS	LINK TO AIMS AND VALUES	IMPLEMENTATION
1	Implement operational parking policies to deliver the Parking Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Deliver a consistent approach to parking management throughout Torbay in line with Torbay's Local Transport Plan – Implementation Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairness and consistency • Provide good quality public car parking facilities • Consider wider Council strategic objectives in the design and management of parking provision • Recognise the different characteristics of areas within the Bay while being fair and consistent • Be responsive to changing parking circumstances 	July 2016

No.	OBJECTIVE	KEY ACTIONS	LINK TO AIMS AND VALUES	IMPLEMENTATION
3	Keep parking charges under review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parking tariffs for off-street to reflect the needs of long and short stay customers; within the context of this Strategy ➤ Parking tariffs to factor in demand for parking and the charges set at levels that meet these requirements and promote usage which will include summer and winter demands in line with budgetary requirements ➤ Revenue growth to be increased by encouraging the use of both on and off-street pay and display parking areas and other income opportunities in the car parks ➤ Set charges for reserved parking bays to reflect the demand and usage. Also, consider reverting to pay and display in reserved bay areas where demand is low ➤ Review annual car park permit charges in line with the daily parking charges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration and transparency • Value for money • Fairness and consistency • Supporting the economy • Listen to the needs of residents, businesses and visitors • Provide for those with accessibility issues • Consider wider Council strategic objectives in the design and management of parking provision • Recognise the different characteristics of areas within the Bay while being fair and consistent • Be responsive to changing parking circumstances 	<p>September 2016</p> <p>September 2016</p> <p>April 2017</p> <p>March 2017</p> <p>September 2016</p>

No.	OBJECTIVE	KEY ACTIONS	LINK TO AIMS AND VALUES	IMPLEMENTATION
4	Improve the Customer's Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide the option to make payment for annual permits via direct debit ➤ Introduce a three day permit which does not need to be used on consecutive days ➤ Further promote payment for parking via mobile phone and make this option available for on-street parking areas ➤ Provide pay and display machines which will take card payments, including contactless payments ➤ Install new and vibrant signage into the car parks ➤ Consider implementing 'pay on exit' at other car parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of life • Value for money • Fairness and consistency • Efficiency and effectiveness • Provide good quality public car parking facilities • Promote sustainable modes of transport and improve air quality • Listen to the needs of residents, businesses and visitors • Provide for those with accessibility issues • Consider wider Council strategic objectives in the design and management of parking provision 	<p>October 2016</p> <p>October 2016</p> <p>August 2016</p> <p>April 2017</p> <p>November 2016</p> <p>April 2017</p>

No.	OBJECTIVE	KEY ACTIONS	LINK TO AIMS AND VALUES	IMPLEMENTATION
4 Cont	Improve the Customer's Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide extra pay machines in car parks where demand is high ➤ Implement a programme of repairs, maintenance and improvement (subject to funding) for all relevant car parks ➤ Ensure the customer is able to purchase car park permits from a full range of Council outlets ➤ Introduce virtual parking permits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the different characteristics of areas within the Bay while being fair and consistent • Be responsive to changing parking circumstances 	<p>September 2016</p> <p>September 2016</p> <p>June 2016</p> <p>May 2017</p>
5	Efficiencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Update IT systems to improve the customer experience and potentially make efficiencies with less manual processes ➤ Ensure Civil Enforcement Officers are deployed into the areas where compliance is required through better use of technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value for money • Efficiency and effectiveness • Provide good quality public car parking facilities • Improve road safety and accessibility • Provide for those with accessibility issues 	<p>May 2017</p> <p>May 2017</p>

No.	OBJECTIVE	KEY ACTIONS	LINK TO AIMS AND VALUES	IMPLEMENTATION
5 Cont	Efficiencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Investigate joint procurement of systems, machines and other equipment with neighbouring local authorities ➤ Investigate shared service provision with other local authorities ➤ Explore alternative use of car parks where the demand for parking is low ➤ Make full use of technology and other methods of enforcement in areas where compliance is low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider wider Council strategic objectives in the design and management of parking provision • Recognise the different characteristics of areas within the Bay while being fair and consistent • Be responsive to changing parking circumstances 	<p>October 2016</p> <p>April 2017</p> <p>September 2016</p> <p>2016 ~ 2021</p>

No.	OBJECTIVE	KEY ACTIONS	LINK TO AIMS AND VALUES	IMPLEMENTATION
6	Marketing and income generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Make better use of social media to advertise the various parking permits and other parking offers ➤ Continually explore other income opportunities within car parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value for money • Supporting the economy • Provide good quality public car parking facilities • Listen to the needs of residents, businesses and visitors • Provide for those with accessibility issues • Consider wider Council strategic objectives in the design and management of parking provision • Recognise the different characteristics of areas within the Bay while being fair and consistent • Be responsive to changing parking circumstances 	<p>September 2016</p> <p>September 2016</p>

No.	OBJECTIVE	KEY ACTIONS	LINK TO AIMS AND VALUES	IMPLEMENTATION
7	Meeting parking demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure that off-street parking demand is met within existing car parks and consider alternative or additional parking arrangements where appropriate ➤ Consider changes to on street parking restrictions in liaison with the Highways Department and in consultation with Ward Councillors and local Community Partnerships ➤ Review all existing Controlled Parking Zones, including residents parking bays, and if inappropriate, consider revoking after consultation ➤ Consider the need for and opportunity to introduce 'Park & Ride' facilities in Torbay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficiency and effectiveness • Supporting the economy • Improve road safety and accessibility • Promote sustainable modes of transport and improve air quality • Listen to the needs of residents, businesses and visitors • Provide for those with accessibility issues • Recognise the different characteristics of areas within the Bay while being fair and consistent • Keep traffic moving and assist the reliable and effective operation of public transport • Be responsive to changing parking circumstances 	<p>2016 ~ 2021</p> <p>2016 ~ 2021</p> <p>April 2017</p> <p>2016 ~ 2021</p>

Appendix 2

Decision Making Framework & Criteria

Accessibility

Does the scheme...

- Improve parking infrastructure and/or availability for disabled drivers?
- Make parking easier for carers of elderly or disabled residents?
- Minimise walking distances and/or obstructions for walking disabled?
- Improve parking provision for shoppers?
- Improve parking provision for leisure and entertainment activities?
- Enables complete accessibility for emergency services?
- Enable or improve accessibility for trade collection/delivery?
- Enable or improve existing accessibility for refuse collection?
- Improve parking provision for residents parking at home?

Environmental impact

Does the scheme...

- Negatively affect the public realm and add to street clutter?
- Improve air quality?
- Help to keep traffic moving?
- Help to keep roads safe?
- Optimise use of parking facilities?
- Make a safer environment for pedestrians

Public opinion

Is the scheme...

- Supported by public opinion?

Development

Does the scheme...

- Consider investment in car parking capacity..?
- Consider housing development, including Community Infrastructure Levy, where applicable?
- Consider local business development, including Community Infrastructure Levy, where applicable?

Sustainable transport

Does the scheme...

- Promote use of energy efficient vehicles?
- Promote use of cycling?
- Promote use of, and access to, public transport?

Legislation and regulation

Does the scheme...

- Comply with national Traffic and Parking Legislation?
- Comply with the National Planning Policy Framework?
- Comply with the Local Transport Plan – Implementation Plan?
- Have potential for legal challenge?
- Meet the priorities set out in the Council Corporate Plan Priorities?

Value for money

Does the scheme...

- Generate income able to be reinvested as per section 55 of the Road Traffic Act?
- Have significant implementation and maintenance costs?
- Create efficiencies that are of time or cost benefit to the public and/or the Council?
- Support economic benefit to businesses?

Compliance

Does the scheme...

- Achieve compliance through monitoring?
- Achieve compliance through enforcement?

Members of the Parking Operations Panel

- Executive Head of Business Services – Chair
- Executive Lead for Planning, Transport & Housing
- Service Lead - Traffic & Parking Regulation Enforcement & Parking Operations – Vice Chair
- Highways and Transport Service Manager
- Highways Development & Traffic - Senior Engineer
- Team Leader – Strategy & Project Delivery
- Senior Officer - Strategy and Project Delivery Officer

Substitute representatives for Panel Members from appropriate teams may participate as necessary.