

# Economic Success Panel

## Agenda

### Date

Monday 19 August 2019

### Members of the Economic Success Panel

Mrs J K Copplestone  
(Chairman)

Mr P E Bulman  
(Vice Chairman)

Mr S C Beadle  
Ms S J Catchpole  
Mr A D Crotch  
Ms R M Grattan

Mr D King  
Mrs T M Mancini-Boyle  
Mrs K A Vincent

### Time

6pm

### Place

Council Chamber  
Thorpe Lodge  
1 Yarmouth Road  
Thorpe St Andrew  
Norwich

### Substitutes

#### Conservative

Mr N J Brennan  
Mr S M Clancy  
Miss S Lawn  
Mr G K Nurden  
Mr N C Shaw  
Miss J L Thomas  
Mr S C Walker

### Substitute

#### Liberal Democrat

Mr S Riley

### Contact

Dawn Matthews tel (01603) 430404

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Council  
Thorpe Lodge  
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Norwich NR7 0DU



**If any Member wishes to clarify details relating to any matter on the agenda they are requested to contact the relevant Director / Assistant Director.**

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**The Chairman will ask if anyone wishes to  
film / record this meeting**

**A G E N D A**

**Page No**

- |          |  |               |
|----------|--|---------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b><u><a href="#">To receive declarations of interest under Procedural Rule no 8</a></u></b> | <b>3 – 4</b>  |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Apologies for absence</b>   |               |
| <b>3</b> | <b><u><a href="#">Minutes</a></u></b>  | <b>5 – 7</b>  |
|          | To consider the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2019                                   |               |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Matters arising therefrom</b>   |               |
| <b>5</b> | <b><u><a href="#">Car Parking – a consistent approach</a></u></b>                            | <b>8 – 24</b> |
|          | All Members have been invited to attend for this item  |               |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Work Programme</b>  |               |
|          | To consider the Panel's future work programme  |               |
|          | 14 October 2019 – Tourism Briefing (meeting at Carrowbreck)                                  |               |
|          | 9 December 2019 – Broadband Briefing (all Members to be invited)                             |               |

Trevor Holden  
Managing Director

## DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AT MEETINGS

When declaring an interest at a meeting Members are asked to indicate whether their interest in the matter is pecuniary, or if the matter relates to, or affects a pecuniary interest they have, or if it is another type of interest. Members are required to identify the nature of the interest and the agenda item to which it relates. In the case of other interests, the member may speak and vote. If it is a pecuniary interest, the member must withdraw from the meeting when it is discussed. If it affects or relates to a pecuniary interest the member has, they have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public but must then withdraw from the meeting. Members are also requested when appropriate to make any declarations under the Code of Practice on Planning and Judicial matters.

Have you declared the interest in the register of interests as a pecuniary interest? If Yes, you will need to withdraw from the room when it is discussed.

Does the interest directly:

1. Affect yours, or your spouse / partner's financial position?
2. Relate to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or your spouse / partner?
3. Relate to a contract you, or your spouse / partner have with the Council
4. Affect land you or your spouse / partner own
5. Affect a company that you or your partner own, or have a shareholding in

If the answer is "yes" to any of the above, it is likely to be pecuniary.

Please refer to the guidance given on declaring pecuniary interests in the register of interest forms. If you have a pecuniary interest, you will need to inform the meeting and then withdraw from the room when it is discussed. If it has not been previously declared, you will also need to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days.

Does the interest indirectly affect or relate any pecuniary interest you have already declared, or an interest you have identified at 1-5 above?

If yes, you need to inform the meeting. When it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but must then withdraw from the meeting.

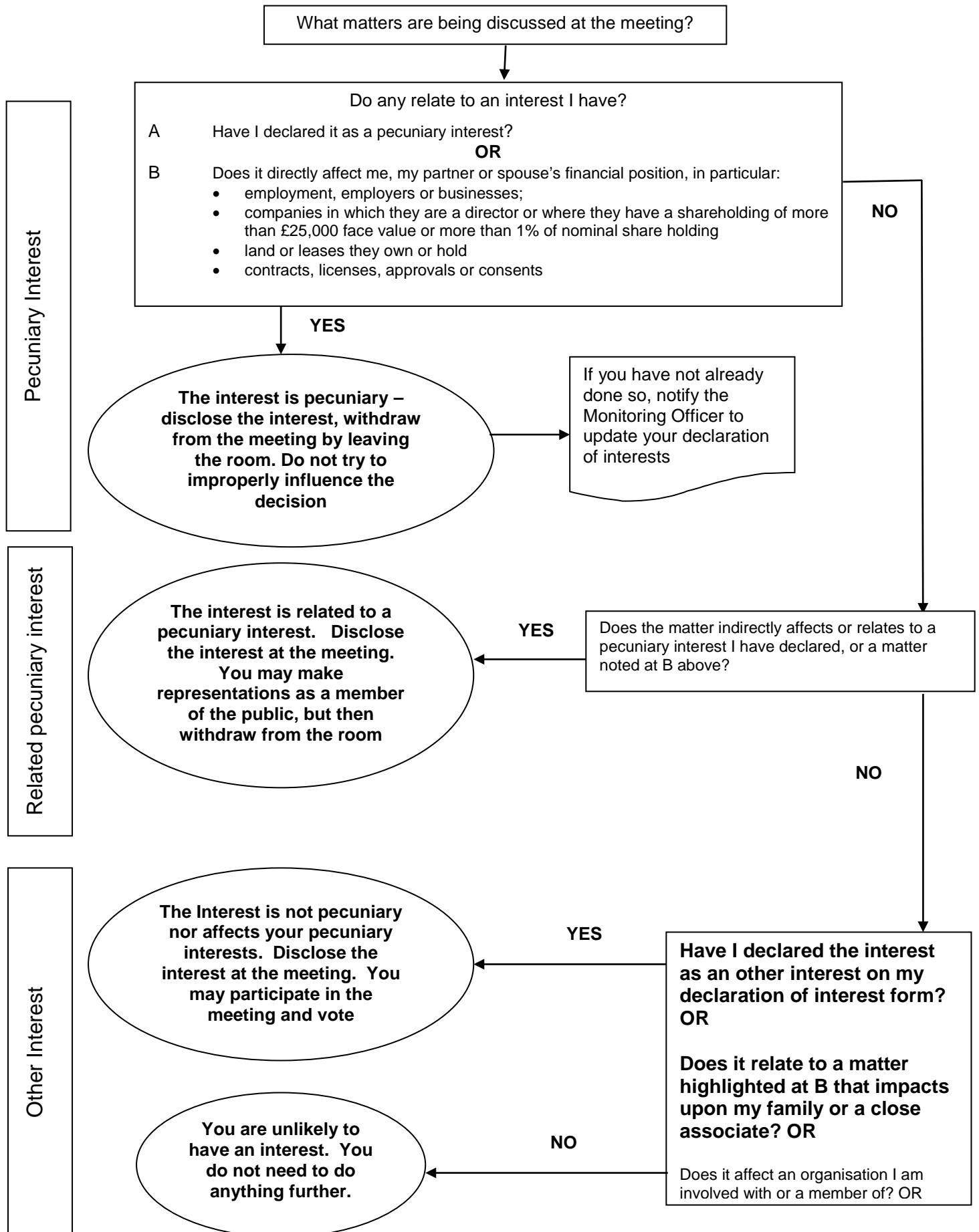
Is the interest not related to any of the above? If so, it is likely to be another interest. You will need to declare the interest, but may participate in discussion and voting on the item.

Have you made any statements or undertaken any actions that would indicate that you have a closed mind on a matter under discussion? If so, you may be predetermined on the issue; you will need to inform the meeting, and when it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but must then withdraw from the meeting.

FOR GUIDANCE REFER TO THE FLOWCHART OVERLEAF

**PLEASE REFER ANY QUERIES TO THE MONITORING OFFICER IN THE FIRST INSTANCE**

# DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



Minutes of a meeting of the **Economic Success Panel** held at Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich on **Tuesday 2 July 2019** at **6pm** when there were present:

Mrs J K Copplestone – Chairman

Mr S C Beadle  
Mr P E Bulman  
Mr N J Brennan

Ms S J Catchpole  
Mr A D Crotch

Mrs T M Mancini-Boyle  
Mrs K A Vincent

Also in attendance were the Assistant Director of Economic Growth, the Economic Development Manager, the Economic Development (Partnerships & Growth) Manager and the Committee Officer (DM).

### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Ms R M Grattan and Mr D King.

### **2 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2018 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **3 OVERVIEW OF THE WORK OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

Members received a presentation from officers (a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes) on the following:

**Economic Development Strategy and Joint Position** – Members noted the commonality between Broadland and South Norfolk Councils in their economic ambitions. South Norfolk Council's key priority in delivering its ambitions had focussed on support at a strategic level whilst the Broadland offer also included a desire to continue to provide support to emerging and small businesses. There was now a shared acknowledgement of the merits of supporting a whole range of economic development from emerging businesses through to strategic support and the alignment of the two officer teams would enable expertise in both areas to be shared across both Councils.

**Delivering Economic Growth** – Members noted the various ways in which the Council supported economic growth, both at a strategic level and a local level and that ways to extend or improve support were always being explored. The Chairman commented that indications were that economic growth was set to increase exponentially in the region, particularly in relation to agri-food,

agri tech, clean energy and in relation to ICT/digital. Reference was also made to SETI – the Smart Emerging Technology Institute and its innovative and ambitious aims to enable the acquisition and sharing of data by providing a high performance data management facility linking major research sites.

**Economic Development Services** – Members noted the range of activities promoted and support given to economic development in the district. The service was successful in achieving very high levels of engagement with its customers but one of the key areas for attention was to continue to raise awareness and enhanced marketing. Members felt this was particularly important to make sure small businesses and those thinking of starting up a business were aware of the support available to them. This year, 322 businesses had engaged with the Council, 138 of which were new, the remaining were existing businesses returning for further support / advice. Reference was made to the Council's support for the Young Enterprise Scheme and work undertaken within schools as part of the Learn to Earn project. Members commended the value of this work and welcomed any feedback from young people at schools in their wards. They also commended the Choices scheme which sought to help people back into work and was predominantly being taken up by those aged 50+. The changes to the pension age for women would potentially lead to a need for some women to change careers / retrain. Members commented on the value of ongoing training opportunities, including short-term evening courses which officers commented they had been investigating.

Members also noted that a comprehensive review was needed in relation to car parks. The Council was part of the Norfolk Parking Partnership and had received parking enforcement services as part of this for a number of years. However, the Council had now contributed £15,000 (50% of the cost of the Council's enforcement service) for 2018/19 and would be asked to contribute this amount for the current financial year as a contribution to the Partnership costs and would need to take a more active role in the Partnership. A review of car parking was being prepared for consideration at the next meeting of the Panel. Members welcomed the opportunity to be involved in the review having regard to some of the issues caused by parking in the district's towns and parishes which could potentially be better controlled with a mix of appropriate parking restrictions.

Members thanked the officers for the presentation and commended them for the excellent work being undertaken. They agreed that continued and enhanced marketing and publicity / promotion of the services was essential and encouraged all to spread the word.

### 4 WORK PROGRAMME

Officers updated Members on the latest position on Broadland Gate – this was an extension of approximately 20 hectares (10 units) to the Broadland Business Park and all utilities and services were now in place and the main anchor tenant would soon be taking up their unit.

It was agreed that the next meeting on 19 August 2019 would be held at Carrowbreck and the substantive item of business would be to consider a report on car parks in the district.

*The meeting closed at 7:15pm*

DRAFT

## **CAR PARKING – A CONSISTENT APPROACH**

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>Report Author:</b>         | David Disney<br>Operational Economic Development Manager<br>tel: 01508 533731<br>email: <a href="mailto:ddisney@s-norfolk.gov.uk">ddisney@s-norfolk.gov.uk</a>   |
| <b>Portfolio Holder:</b>      | Economic Development   |
| <b>Wards Affected:</b>        | All  |
| <b>Purpose of the Report:</b> | To discuss the wide ranging issues around car parking across the Broadland district and seek guidance on the development of opportunities to manage car parking that collaboration can provide to take a consistent approach to car parking across the wider geography. This will take into account the multiple stakeholders and their roles, the financial impact to the authority both now and ongoing and the wider benefits to both businesses and residents. |

### **Recommendations:**

The Panel is requested to recommend to Cabinet to instruct officers to:

1. Fully develop a Car Parking Management Plan for Cabinet approval, to improve overall space availability and mitigate the financial impact of the Norfolk Parking Partnership.
2. Make an application to the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) to take advantage of the grant funding available to extend the Electric Vehicle Charging Point network and set aside a budget of £7,500 for implementation if successful.



## **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Following a decision to consider opportunities for a consistent approach to car parking across the new wider geography that the collaboration provides, officers have compared the current parking principles adopted in each sovereign council, their approach to both On and Off-Street parking, the Norfolk County Council (NCC) and Norfolk Parking Partnership (NPP) roles, Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) and the financial impact to both councils moving forward.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 This report outlines the opportunity to provide an efficient and well managed parking provision consistent with the needs of the range of individual settlements; particularly with regard to space blocking, and the need to provide turnover of spaces to increase footfall, so vital to the economy of our market towns and villages. It also provides the solution to minimising the financial burden to each authority in both routine maintenance and future investment, and also the potential contribution to CPE in the future. Lastly, we explore the potential for expanding the Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP) network across the wider geography.

## **3 CURRENT POSITION / FINDINGS**

- 3.1 The two sovereign councils have taken different views on parking provision; SNC going down the traffic management and charging route since 1986 in Diss, 2001 in Wymondham and 2008 in Loddon. BDC has opted for a free provision in all its settlements.
- 3.2 **South Norfolk Council** – as part of its Market Towns Initiative, undertook a full review of its off-street car parking service in 2016 and determined that the following parking principles are still relevant:
- (a) The public should expect to receive an improved standard of service in terms of maintenance, security etc.
  - (b) The approach to the question of charging for car parks should be on a consistent basis across the district, recognising the need to encourage the use of our market towns.
  - (c) Charges and free parking periods should be set to encourage short stay use in the town centres, and separate long stay use in other areas.
  - (d) As a general rule the cost of maintaining car parks should fall on the beneficiaries rather than the general Council Tax payer.
  - (e) Any surplus generated should be retained in a car park reserve and used to increase maintenance or decrease costs for following years.

- (f) The charging regime should not be inconsistent with the Council's overriding principles.

**3.3 Broadland District Council** – adopted its own principles in 2003:

The district council is the off-street parking authority for Broadland. Its aims are twofold: firstly, to support the provision of off-street parking where access to services and facilities is required by residents and visitors from outside the immediate locality and secondly, to support provision where access to public recreational facilities or sites of interest in the countryside are difficult, due to their remoteness from public transport routes, or they serve a wider tourism benefit.

- 3.4 The provision of car parking in appropriate locations is regarded by the district council as a positive tool in encouraging the use of local services and facilities in support of the local economy and for enabling the enjoyment of the district. However, this must be balanced by the need to avoid unnecessary traffic generation in accordance with sustainability principles.

- 3.5 BDC has adopted the following policy objectives to guide provision of off-street parking in the district:

CP1 – the district council will seek to ensure that there is a well-managed and adequate level of off-street parking:

- (a) Within market towns and those villages which perform similar functions;
- (b) At public countryside recreational sites where access would otherwise be difficult;
- (c) At rail stations and halts

- 3.6 Having regard to their function, and the need to avoid unsustainable traffic generation “and its statutory duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998”. Such parking should include provision for people with physical disabilities.

- 3.7 CP2 – the district council will support the provision of lay-bys at appropriate locations to enable access to the public right of way network, countryside and sites of interest.

- 3.8 CP3 – the district council will not levy a charge on users parking their vehicles in car parks for which it is responsible.

- 3.9 BDC officers have previously presented Members with evidence to suggest that CP3 is in need of revision because of the high occupation and space blocking that exists in some car parks and also the very real issue of the district not contributing equitably to the CPE budget; this will ultimately mean that financial contributions are very likely to be required sooner rather than later.

- 3.10 **Norfolk Parking Partnership (NPP)** – legislating and the enforcement of parking restrictions on the highway (on-street) is the responsibility of NCC which has in turn delegated the operational function to the NPP since 2012. This partnership is made up of voting members from individual districts and NCC. On its behalf, Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) is carried out by Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs), some of whom are employed by individual districts to perform on and off-street enforcement as part of their function in their own area. South Norfolk Council has two CEOs employed on this basis.
- 3.11 Both authorities are part of the NPP and as the future of the parking provision across the wider area is intrinsically part of its own future strategy, its inclusion in our own thinking is essential. The NPP has in the past invested budget surpluses in various parking schemes across the county in an attempt to increase revenue or to solve a particular local issue. However, the cost of CPE has in recent years exceeded the income generated which has understandably focused attention on those districts which do not contribute a surplus over and above the provision cost. Where revenue does not match the cost of providing CPE, the NPP are rightly considering On-Street paid for parking in areas where it can be considered viable, and as hi-tech solutions are developed, this may mean in more rural locations across the county.
- 3.12 December 2018 saw the NPP ask for individual contributions from districts for the financial years 2018/19 and 2019/20. This was to enable the Better Parking Project and a CPE budget deficit to be funded, and officers feel it highly likely that districts will again be required to contribute financially to the NPP, either by direct payments or via paid for on-street parking income where viable in the future, as mentioned. It is therefore sensible that all avenues are explored to provide a holistic parking solution in our area, but also to ensure the burden for that provision is borne generally and where possible by the end user and not the general Council Tax payer.
- 3.13 The vision of parking meters in every town and village is not really conducive to promoting our visitor economy and even though this would potentially be in high traffic areas initially, it would make sense for us to derive income from Pay & Display and to readily contribute via CPE income to prevent this spectre becoming a reality.
- 3.14 **Parking Management** – Individual settlements have individual traffic issues. It is a common misconception that providing as many parking spaces as possible is the best way to manage parking. Rather, the key is to ensure that parking stock is managed so that spaces are made available for users when and where is deemed appropriate for their needs. In this context, it is the number of parking acts that can be accommodated that is important, not the absolute number of parking spaces provided. Proper management of parking will benefit in many ways, including contributing positively to economic performance and visual amenity. A parking ‘free for all’, with no restrictions or controls on parking and a lack of enforcement, could represent a failure to manage the asset and a failure to provide good customer service. This may then adversely affect economic performance. When changes to parking restrictions, charges or enforcement are made, the evidence suggests that the primary responses to that change tend to be:

- (a) an acceptance of the new arrangements (in which case people's behaviour broadly remains unchanged);
  - (b) a change in parking location (people park further away from their destination in an attempt to avoid paying a charge); or
  - (c) a reduction in the length of stay in order to reduce parking costs.
- 3.15 Despite fears to the contrary, there is little evidence to suggest that the primary response to parking management is more extreme than this; there is no evidence that visitors use alternative destinations more. Management of parking can have a positive impact on economic viability by enabling more productive use to be made of the spaces within towns, providing that it is done sensitively and appropriately. Public space is often limited within market towns, and it is not uncommon for the most attractive parts of the town, such as historic and picturesque market squares, to be hidden behind a sea of parked cars. Where towns have appropriate sites on the approach routes to the town, there is an opportunity to develop long stay provision to free up space within more sensitive central areas for short stay shopping, whilst at the same time helping to keep moving traffic out of these areas too. However, it is essential that any long stay non-central parking is complemented by good signposting to the car park on approach roads, as well as proper pedestrian signing from the car park to the town centre itself.
- 3.16 **Footfall vs Retail Performance** – There is a well-established relationship between footfall and retail performance: higher footfall should mean higher retail performance. However, there appears to be no evidence to link retail performance to parking tariffs or length of stay restrictions. Higher parking costs do tend to lead to shorter stays which can affect retail revenue per head, but unless the town's offer is promoted, it does not necessarily follow that more people will visit town. If parking is free or cheap, people may stay longer, reducing car parking availability, and thereby deterring other shoppers from visiting that town centre. It is difficult to generalise about the impact of parking management as it depends very much on the status of the town and on parking supply and demand. What we can say is that in the case of Harleston in South Norfolk for example, which controversially offers free parking via an increased parish precept and a subsidy by a local supermarket, the town suffers from space blocking at peak times and does not enjoy any higher footfall as a result of its free offer. Repeated surveys show that it actually has lower numbers than the regional and national average and of course has a higher level of Council Tax too – certainly it does not compare to Diss or Wymondham for average footfall. A free car park which is permanently full is an indication of space blocking, park and ride users, and staff parking – but perversely not high shopping footfall.
- 3.17 **Parking Management Strategy** – Parking management can be used to support the broader aims or objectives for market towns. There are a wide range of possible strategic objectives:

- (a) enhancing accessibility to the town's services by maximising access for shoppers, workers and visitors by ensuring sufficient, appropriate parking is available;
- (b) enhancing the public realm by controlling illegal or inconsiderate parking; reducing the impact of parking in sensitive locations; and by reducing the absolute amount of parking stock;
- (c) improving traffic conditions by enforcing parking restrictions; reducing obstructive parking; and reducing traffic searching for parking spaces;
- (d) funding further transport improvement projects by creating a sustainable revenue stream; and
- (e) supporting broader transport policy generally by using parking to manage demand for travel by private car.

Parking management strategy can include:

- (f) introducing charging for at least some of the parking stock to encourage appropriate use, to ensure turnover and hence improve the availability of parking spaces;
- (g) considering the introduction of residents' and business' permit schemes, where there is significant conflict between town centre residents and other users; and
- (h) enhancing the quality of parking by providing good information, signage and amenities in the car parks. A parking strategy will contain some or all of these elements, but it must be supported by effective enforcement which may be achieved through CPE.

- 3.18 **Pay and Display (P&D)** – The principle of paid for parking is a sound one – it places the burden of the cost of provision on the end user, rather than the general Council Tax payer – rather like the Road Fund Licence. A high-quality service, with well-maintained car parks which are well lit, clearly marked out, adequately signed, feel safe and secure and clean, is a fundamental part of attracting visitors and shoppers to our Market Towns. There is a common misconception that free parking is the principle attractor for a resident selecting a particular town or car park, when both our own local and lots of national evidence suggests that proximity to the services they require, and the availability of a free car parking space are actually the most important consideration for the majority of users. Survey after survey conclude that a limited retail offer is the main reason for local residents abandoning our High Streets.
- 3.19 South Norfolk Council Members have long maintained that the first hour of a parking session should be free of charge to allow for short visits, removing the barrier that charging from minute one raises when simply stopping for a paper or carton of milk for example. Feedback from modern multi-payment method, multi- function ticket machines allows us to closely analyse parking behaviour,

and a robust P&D policy with sensible tariffs increases the number of free spaces available across the chargeable day and an increase in ticket sales results; this has been the case in South Norfolk. The prospect of introducing charging is obviously contentious, but when the financial burden on the council and the subsequent threat to the delivery of other services is weighed up, it could be considered the fairest solution; particularly if an increase in footfall results.

- 3.20 **Enforcement and Charging** – Setting out a management regime for parking is only part of the story; effective enforcement of restrictions and charging regimes is critical if parking controls are to have the desired effect. Without enforcement, it is inevitable that parking management could fail, and the objectives will not be achieved. There will always be a need for some level of enforcement to encourage compliance; the important thing is to understand what will work best for the settlement in terms of level of enforcement, visibility and image. It is important to remember that the most enforcement presence is needed where maximum waiting times are shortest and where competing demands for spaces are highest, so probably in town centres. Enforcement will support the broader objectives by ensuring a higher turnover of users and therefore more efficient and equitable use of a limited resource. This can potentially allow for a reduction in the total number of parking spaces, especially from where it is most intrusive, or dangerous, or where the space could be used more productively, in a picturesque Market Town for instance. Alternatively, greater efficiency may mean that we are able to avoid providing more parking spaces in the future.
- 3.21 **Financial Implications** – the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 includes provisions to control the use of parking surplus. In essence, the legislation says income from all penalty charges (whether issued for on-street or off-street contraventions) plus any income from on-street parking fees and charges must be used to provide, maintain or improve parking, roads and transport services. Income from Off-Street parking fees and charges is for general use by the local authority. Often it is used to pay for other vital public services. It is important to remember that all council income, regardless of where it comes from, is usually reinvested for the benefit of the local community. This obviously presents councils with the opportunity to try and reduce any financial burden from the service on the general reserve. Maintenance of car park surfaces, lining, lighting, drainage, fuel interceptors, trees, bins, signage, rates, electricity, barriers, fencing etc. all have a considerable and ongoing cost, and without any income to mitigate these costs merely become a burden on the general Council Tax payer.
- 3.22 **Operational Approach** – The South Norfolk Council review and subsequent confirmation of its parking principles in 2016 led to a series of further proposals to be agreed for off-street parking across the district straight away and then a more bespoke needs-based approach to On-Street issues on a settlement by settlement basis since; working very closely with NCC and the NPP on the latter.
- 3.23 The adoption of a district wide off-street policy across all 16 of its sites was as mentioned compromised in Harleston, however, it is outside the control of

SNC until 2027 when the lease ends. Long Stratton, although only a village, is on the A140 and also suffers from space blocking as a free car park and as such is considered to be suitable for the implementation of the district policy in the very near future.

- 3.24 In the busy Market Towns of Diss and Wymondham where competition for town centre spaces is high, we have implemented short and long stay off-street provision to balance the overall offer. This implementation has changed parking behaviours and has also increased ticket sales and the number of parking sessions overall, with availability of free spaces increasing in the high demand Short Stay locations. The introduction of new multi-payment method ticket machines which offer a pay on return facility, has also provided flexibility for visitors, initially unsure of how long their stay would be. This has gone a long way to mitigate the argument that pre-paid P&D charges reduces dwell times and therefore individual customer spend.
- 3.25 The original SNC off-street policy always provided for up to 50% of available spaces to be offered as Permit Holder spaces; these to be occupied by residents without adequate Off-Street parking at their property and those business users who rely on the provision for themselves and their staff. The 2016 revisions now restrict non-resident Permit Holders to access only the Long Stay car parks; freeing up valuable and much needed high turnover spaces in the town centre. Only those Resident Permit Holders who live within 500m of the car park will have full access as before.
- 3.26 On-street policy is largely driven by NCC/NPP as the highway authority responsible for the publicly adopted roads, with SNC employing two CEOs working approximately 50% of their time on policing yellow lines, time restricted bays and controlled parking zones. Although these restrictions were historically put in place because of pedestrian or driver safety and general traffic management, new On-Street schemes are now designed in consultation with all the stakeholders and the NPP; a truly holistic view and displacement is now being robustly considered far more as a result. As previously alluded to, the NPP did have a policy of spending any budget surpluses on new schemes; particularly those which would increase revenue and contribute to the overall viability of CPE. However, recent schemes in North Norfolk which failed to gain majority support have used much of this surplus and led to the NPP taking a standpoint that requires the individual districts and parishes to contribute financially to fully consulted and supported schemes before any implementation can take place.
- 3.27 SNC recognised that the pressure on on-street parking spaces in some of its parish's causes problems for many of its residents. This may be extraordinary or occasional high demand from specific events at local venues, or a more constant issue derived from local business staff parking in residential areas for example. Officers initially considered Residents Parking Schemes as a viable solution, but criteria aimed at proving their viability is difficult to define for a districtwide policy. Consequently, the South Norfolk approach was to offer every parish the opportunity to consider whether it had a problem and if so to co-fund individual solutions to those individual problems, using a full range of restrictions. This offer has been taken up by three parishes which

considered serious concerns voiced by its residents needed addressing. Officers from SNC, NCC and the residents and local members from each parish have collaboratively worked on a range of tailor-made solutions which we hope will be a model for future schemes in the county and will share the financial burden of implementation between partners. These solutions include virtual permits, single and double yellow lines, timed bays, controlled parking zones, virtual meter parking etc and can be used in combination as required to provide the best outcomes.

- 3.28 **Operational approach BDC** – currently, although being a member of the NPP, BDC does not employ any CEO's as part of the county wide CPE team. It is therefore at risk of an increasing demand for financial contributions to the CPE central budget or the imposition of on-street charges to produce the partnership a revenue; or both. The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk undertake CPE duties across the Broadland district.
- 3.29 Off-street provision is currently free of charge to the user in Broadland and as such provides no revenue for routine maintenance or necessary future investment in the service.
- 3.30 Maintenance is currently funded centrally from a repair and renewals fund and only where necessary; consequently, the standard of some car parks need improving; reflecting this approach.
- 3.31 The settlements with BDC operated car parks are in the main, smaller than their SNC counterparts, but occupation certainly seems to be very high in both Reepham and Aylsham, indicating that availability of free spaces, general footfall and the overall visual appearance and presentation of the town / village, would all certainly benefit from the introduction of P&D in the longer term.

#### **4 PROPOSED ACTION**

- 4.1 BDC is currently bearing the increasing financial burden of maintaining car park provision, without its residents reaping the benefits to the local economy that P&D could deliver. Therefore, officers feel that a consistent approach can only be achieved by introducing charging to some Broadland car parks with the following outcomes.

To introduce a charging regime would provide the following:

- (a) a solution to space blocking which prevents turnover in the car parks
- (b) increased footfall due to more available free spaces
- (c) increased enforcement would act as a visible deterrent to inconsiderate parking
- (d) better resilience across the geography with an additional CEO for Broadland



- (e) placing the burden of cost on the direct user instead of the general Council Tax payer
  - (f) an income stream to mitigate the potential cost of NPP contributions and any maintenance requirement moving forward
  - (g) a fair and consistent approach across the wider geography.
- 4.2 **Broadland Sites** – BDC controls a number of car parks in its market towns and also some village sites and small lay-bys in various settlements. It is reasonable to expect that unless there is an extraordinary parking phenomenon / problem or a significant business/service offer, a P&D car park will not be supported by users or prove viable, if there is sufficient free provision close by. The market towns of Reepham and Aylsham appear to have considerable demand for off-street parking, as well as some on-street provision which is managed as part of the CPE. The villages of Acle and Brundall, due to a far lower retail concentration may not prove viable as things stand. (Acle however, is the subject of some planned additional restrictions.)
- 4.3 **Implementation** – There would be initial implementation costs as indicated in the proposal further below, but the potential for surplus will help mitigate this. Ongoing, the predicted annual surplus would allow for investment in new technology, particularly with regard to cashless parking, virtual permits etc.
- 4.4 **Infrastructure and staff** – The infrastructure to operate P&D from an administrative perspective already exists within the South Norfolk system. The processing of Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) and management of the back-office system is handled by the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk and agreements are in place to fund the process. There would be a requirement for an additional CEO and accompanying vehicle and equipment, but this would in fact add resilience to the wider team and allow a robust and more agile enforcement to be in place. 50% of the additional employment cost would be borne by the NPP as 50% of the CEO's time would be spent in on-street enforcement and 50% off-street.
- 4.5 **Creating a P&D car park** – If Members wish to pursue a common approach, there are a number of steps to undertake before charging can commence.
- (a) infrastructure – ticket machines
  - (b) tariff boards
  - (c) general signage
  - (d) lighting
  - (e) lining
  - (f) Traffic Regulation Order (TRO)
- 4.6 **Ticket Machines** – SNC conducted extensive research when choosing its ticket machines. One of the major considerations was the option to pay on

return, removing the need to predetermine the length of stay. This facility utilises the latest contactless technology and removes the argument that P&D has a negative effect on dwell times for residents and visitors. The ability to check-in and check-out using a credit card and only paying for the time used, is proving increasingly popular in South Norfolk. The option to pay by cash, credit card and phone also means that every sensible method is covered for users not familiar with technology. A full back-office management system also allows reports to be generated meaning trends can be analysed, income can be tracked, and ticket sales monitored following events for example. Although SNC opted to directly replace mains powered machines already on site, a solar powered version is available which offers a solution where mains electricity is not currently available at the required location.

- 4.7 **Tariff Boards** – Clear and unambiguous tariff information is vital to avoid confusion. SNC renewed its tariff boards in 2017 and they are sited next to the machines wherever possible.
- 4.8 **General Signage** – Signs to and from the car park must be clear and unambiguous to guide both residents and visitors to the site. Assuming people know where they are is poor practice, as visitors will soon leave if they struggle to find an official looking car park. Local residents often forget that the signage is not intended for them and complain that they add clutter to the streets. A compromise needs to be reached for the reasons already mentioned. Equally important is directional signage from the car park to the retail centres, if not immediately obvious; the return leg also needing equal consideration. Signage in the car park should be kept to a minimum and generally as close to the tariff board as possible, to avoid being missed.
- 4.9 **Lighting** – Lighting in car parks creates a sense of safety and security not only at night, but when the evening and mornings are dark too. An unfortunate side effect of creating well maintained and convenient car parks is that they can sometimes be a target for anti-social behaviour. Adequate lighting does tend to make them less attractive to this activity and upgrading where necessary would be highly recommended.
- 4.10 **Lining** – As one of the regulations in a P&D car park requires vehicles to be parked within the white lines, clear and undamaged markings are obviously of paramount importance. Smart white lines also give the best first impression of a well-maintained car park and therefore the town.
- 4.11 **Traffic Regulation Order** – The procedure for making a TRO in England and Wales is as follows:
  - (a) Preliminary requirements: The authority should consult with any body specified in Regulation 6 (depending on the order, other authorities and/or emergency services) and it must publish a notice in a local newspaper. It shall ensure that adequate publicity is provided to those likely to be affected. This may include display of notices in the relevant area and distribute the same to local properties and road users (though there is no requirement to do this specifically so long as other publicity is adequate). The relevant documents must be held on deposit from

the date that the notice of proposal is first published and must remain on deposit until six weeks after the proposed Order has been made (or a decision has been made by the authority not to proceed with the proposal).

- (b) Public objections and inquiries: Anyone may object in writing to an order by the date specified on the notices or if later within 21 days of the notice being given and publicity being adequate (see above). A public inquiry only has to be held in certain circumstances, namely: that it affects loading and unloading at certain times of the day; or bus services. Full details are given in Regulation 9. If the authority decides to hold a public inquiry it must give notice of the fact and the inquiry must begin within 42 days of that notice being made. The inspector decides how the inquiry is to proceed.
- (c) Consent for certain schemes: The Secretary of State's consent is required where, for example, a scheme affects a road for which (s)he is the traffic authority; where a scheme will restrict access to property for 8/24 hours; and a scheme involving speed limits, particularly where the limit is 30mph or less. Full details are given in Schedule 9, Part II of the 1984 Act.
- (d) Making an order: Orders cannot be made before the statutory period for objections has ended or after a period of two years from the making of the initial notice. Within 14 days of making the order the authority must place a notice in the local press announcing their decision, ensure again that adequate publicity is given to the making of the order and write to those who objected to the proposal outlining the reasons for their decision to proceed. Any traffic signs required as a consequence of the order must be in place before it comes into force. This process is usually coordinated by NP LAW on behalf of the Council and could simply mirror the SNC TROs already in place.

- 4.12 **Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCP)** – The news that the Government has decided to ban the sale of all diesel and petrol cars and vans by 2040, and car manufacturers increasingly announcing that they will cease to sell diesel cars from as early as next year, has led to an increasing focus on ultra-low emission Electric Vehicle (EV) technology and Electric Cars. The use of EVs is on the rise and they are fast becoming commonplace. EVs are also expected to play an important role in achieving the UK's targets for improving air quality and reducing carbon emissions. Just six years ago there were only 2,500 EV's in the UK – now there are almost 212,000 and that number is predicted to continue to rise.
- 4.13 By not embracing this technology, the risk of marginalising our towns and villages caused by other EVCP providers outside our retail centres could result in fewer visits and the resultant lower footfall.
- 4.14 On March 19, 2018 SNC Cabinet approved the installation of a network of 22kw Type 2 'fast' charge EVCPs across South Norfolk. Officers were able to secure a grant from the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) for up to 75% of the total cost. This under-utilised government grant is still open to

new applications and although the criteria is restrictive, the possibility to at least extend the network into Broadland ought to be exploited while the financial assistance is available.

- 4.15 Importantly, to qualify for the grant, the car park must have residents nearby that do not have access to a convenient plug in power source to charge an EV. They do not need to own an EV, but the exercise is an effort to not preclude them from the benefits of owning one. This could be any property without off-street parking and may well include flats, apartments above shops etc.
- 4.16 The network provides a dual tariff offering:
- (a) PAYG tariff, £0.30 per kW hour and a night-time rate of £0.20 per kW hour.
  - (b) these tariffs are aligned with the car park timings meaning that daytime is considered 8:00am to 6:00pm, and night-time is after 6:00pm until 8:00am.
  - (c) the £0.20p night-time rate also reflects the savings residents would make in not having to pay higher standing charges on a domestic tariff or the cost of installation of charging equipment where applicable. (It is also not possible for domestic chargers to provide the Fast 22kW charging rate without a three-phase electricity supply.)
  - (d) totally transparent process with no connection fees.
- 4.17 There is a potential surplus of between 5p and 15p per kW hr which will provide for the maintenance, signage and possible expansion of the network when demand dictates. Logically, investing in a property which is not wholly owned by the Council would not make commercial sense in the long term. Therefore, the obvious choice for EVCPs, should Members wish to expand the network into Broadland would be in Station Road, Reepham and Burgh Road, Aylsham.
- 4.18 As a guide, the cost of providing 4 EVCPs in each of two locations would be approximately £30,000 in total. Assuming we were able to submit a grant request in the next few months, the Council's commitment would be £7,500.

## **5 OTHER OPTIONS**

- 5.1 The evidence suggests that charging for parking is the only viable way BDC can continue to operate car parks and hope to mitigate the ongoing financial burden on the general ratepayer. The Council's aim of improving the car parking service and reinvigorating the high street as a result, is reliant upon a sound policy of placing the burden for this provision on the user. A return to free parking in South Norfolk would simply choke the town centres and dramatically reduce footfall.

- 5.2 On this basis, it would be financially unsound to adopt the current free parking model currently operating in Broadland as a consistent approach across the wider geography.
- 5.3 Officers have also considered the following options:
- 5.4 **Do nothing:** this option risks the economic viability of the settlements in Broadland from space blocking and also does nothing to mitigate the financial burden on the council from maintenance and the contribution to CPE.
- 5.5 **Free Parking with maximum stay:** this would prevent space blocking, but the lack of revenue would not fund the necessary enforcement required to police the restrictions or mitigate the financial burden.
- 5.6 **Pay and Display with no free hour:** this option has the potential to alienate local residents and shortly thereafter, local business.
- 5.7 **Lower or higher charges:** tariffs set too low will not achieve the revenue to provide a proper enforcement service or accrue for maintenance and reinvestment in the future. Too high and users will not use the site, local business will suffer and revenues to the council will soon follow suit.

## 6 ISSUES AND RISKS

- 6.1 Officers have considered the following issues and risks:
- (a) inevitably there will be a change in parking behaviour in Broadland if charges are introduced; although short term, there could be a resistance to P&D and lower footfall as a result.
  - (b) there will be a need for public consultation and this may invite some disapproval; a robust set of final proposals will need to be prepared and perhaps a drop-in session in each community.
  - (c) there is a risk that P&D will not produce a surplus over and above the initial investment required. Because the infrastructure in SNC is already in place, the costs will be minimal and the likelihood of a surplus is greater as a result.
- 6.2 **Resource Implications** – the model below assumes that parking income will ultimately reflect the SNC usage, which cannot be guaranteed from the outset. It is likely that a period of adjustment will be expected as charging for the first time is introduced. The occupancy in the above BDC car parks at present is very high, but as providing available free spaces is the overriding objective, it is likely but desirable that there will be a decrease initially. There may also be a business rates implication if charging were to be introduced which would need to be clarified with the valuation office.

| Car Park Charging Proposal - Broadland       |  |                           |            |  |                                |   |
|--|--|---------------------------|------------|--|--------------------------------|---|
|  |  |                           |            |  |                                |   |
| Proposed Charging at the following Car Parks |  |                           |            |  |                                |   |
|  | Aylsham  | Burgh Road                | 57         |  |                                |   |
|  | Aylsham  | The Buttsland             | 58         |  |                                |   |
|  | Reepham  | Station Road              | 58         |  |                                |   |
|  |  |                           | <b>173</b> |  |                                |   |
| Anticipated Income                           | (Based on South Norfolk usage)                   |                           |            |  | % of spaces offered as Permits |   |
|  |  |                           |            |  | 0%                             |   |
|  | Fees & Charges                                   |                           |            |  | £ 62,401.44                    |   |
|  | Permits (Up to 50% of spaces)                    |                           |            |  | £ -                            |   |
|  |  |                           |            |  | <b>£ 62,401.44</b>             |   |
| Anticipated Expenditure                      | (Based on South Norfolk costs)                   | No of Machines            |            |  |                                |   |
|  | Civil Enforcement Officer (50% picked up by NPP) |                           |            |  | £ 10,509.00                    |   |
|  | Cash collection                                  |                           | 3          |  | £ 8,335.96                     |   |
|  | Software Costs                                   |                           | 3          |  | £ 745.20                       |   |
|  | Clothing   |                           |            |  | £ 700.00                       |   |
|  | Fuel   |                           |            |  | £ 1,200.00                     |   |
|  | Other costs - Software changes, Electricity Est  |                           |            |  | £ 850.00                       |   |
|  | <b>Additional on costs</b>                       |                           |            |  | <b>£ 22,340.16</b>             |   |
|  | <b>Net revenue bought in</b>                     |                           |            |  | <b>£ 40,061.28</b>             |   |
| Additional savings                           |  |                           |            |  |                                |   |
|  | Parking Partnership contribution                 |                           | Estimated  |  | -£ 2,500.00                    | £15k in 2019/20 - expected to reduce with employment of CEO in District |
|  |  |                           |            |  | <b>-£ 2,500.00</b>             |   |
| Up Front Capital costs                       |  |                           |            |  |                                |   |
|  | Capital costs of machines                        |                           | 3          |  | £ 10,468.42                    |   |
|  | Vehicle  | Ford Fiesta van 1.5l TDCI |            |  | £ 15,000.00                    | Based on List price per Ford website                                    |
|  |  |                           |            |  | <b>£ 25,468.42</b>             |   |
|  |  |                           |            |  |                                |   |
|  | <b>Annual Surplus</b>                            |                           |            |  | <b>£ 42,561.28</b>             |   |
|  | <b>Surplus in Year 1</b>                         |                           |            |  | <b>£ 17,092.85</b>             |   |

6.3 **Equality Implications** – there are no foreseen equality implications in the proposals.

6.4 **Environmental Impact** – the impact on the environment will be positive in providing more available spaces to users, reducing the need to drive around or queuing for free spaces. Also, the proper enforcement of on-street issues will improve the overall character and appearance of the area and help to prevent inconsiderate parking which causes so much annoyance to other motorists and pedestrians.

- 6.5 **Crime and Disorder** – there is a small risk with (ever decreasing) amounts of cash in P&D ticket machines; the new style machines in South Norfolk have had no issues of this nature and with card and telephone payments increasing all the time, this will eventually negate the cash risk.
- 6.6 **Risks** – inevitably there will be a change in parking behaviour in Broadland if charges are introduced; although short term, there could be a resistance to P&D and lower footfall as a result.
- 6.7 Members may wish for public consultation and this could invite some disapproval and prove divisive; a robust set of final proposals will need to be prepared and evidenced with perhaps a drop-in session in each community to mitigate fears.

## **7 CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The opportunity to have a consistent approach would appear to be timely and presents Members with the benefits of solving some very real parking issues as highlighted in this report. It will provide:
- (a) a solution to space blocking which prevents turnover in the car parks;
  - (b) increased footfall due to more available free spaces;
  - (c) increased enforcement would act as a visible deterrent to inconsiderate parking;
  - (d) better resilience across the geography with an additional CEO for Broadland;
  - (e) placing the burden of cost on the direct user instead of the general council tax payer;
  - (f) an income stream to mitigate the potential cost of NPP contributions and any maintenance requirement moving forward and
  - (g) a fair and consistent approach across the wider geography.
- 7.2 Utilising the opportunity to obtain a grant of up to a 75% to extend the EVCP network across Broadland while the fund exists, makes good financial sense. This provision will add to the offer of our market towns and reduce the risk of them being marginalised by other providers and eroding footfall. It may also attract the casual visitor as the entire network is searchable online and could attract users en route to other areas who would otherwise not visit.

## **8 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 The Panel is requested to recommend to Cabinet to request officers to:
- 1. Fully develop a car parking management plan for Cabinet approval, to

improve overall space availability and mitigate the financial impact of the Norfolk Parking Partnership.

2. Make an application to the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) to take advantage of the grant funding available to extend the Electric Vehicle Charging Point network and set aside a budget of £7,500 for implementation if successful.

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## **Background Papers**

None