

**Town Centre Car Parking Strategy**

**CABINET**

**Date: 09<sup>th</sup> June 2010**

**Author: Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Sustainability, Strategic Planning, Property and Transport, and Deputy Chief Executive**

**Parish / Wards Affected:** Old Town and Lawn, Central, and Eastcott

**Purpose**

1. To provide a direct response to the increasing decline in the town centre, particular in relation to falling foot fall and rising numbers of vacant premises through a strategic review of car parking provision and charging policy.
2. To consider options and potential impacts of changing car parking charges in Swindon town centre and Old Town until 31 July 2011.
3. To ensure impacts are properly monitored and evaluated in order to inform the direction of parking policy from 31<sup>st</sup> July 2011 onwards.
4. To consider the provision of a new 850 space car park as part of Phase 1 of the MUSE development in Union Square.
5. To start a consultation process with users and other interested parties which will consider future priorities for a wider parking strategy review, to include opportunities to provide consistency in the parking tariff, provision of 'pay on foot' where appropriate, and rationalisation of car parking capacity in the town centre.

**Recommendation**

Cabinet is requested to:

1. Approve the implementation of a reduction in tariff to £1 for up to an hour and £2 for stays of between 1 and 4 hours, (entry after 8am and before 6pm Monday to Sunday), for the period up to 31 July 2011 in Brunel North, Brunel West and Fleming Way car parks only, (Option 2).
2. Approve the implementation of a variation in tariff for Old Town to £0.70 for up to an hour and £1 for stays of between 1 and 2 hours, (entry after 8am and before 6pm Monday to Sunday), for the period up to 31 July 2011 in all Old Town car parks (Bath Road, Britannia Place, Dammas Lane, Prospect Place and The Planks).
3. Authorise the Director of Planning and Transport to implement the changes to car parking charges referred to above as soon as can be practically achieved, monitor impacts and formally report back to Cabinet on these after six and

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Samantha Howell on Direct Dial No. 01793 466500 or Email [showell@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:showell@swindon.gov.uk).

## Town Centre Car Parking Strategy

CABINET

Date: 09<sup>th</sup> June 2010

twelve months.

4. Require the Chief Executive to bring back to Cabinet in July 2010 proposals for absorbing the impact of expected reductions in income in the current financial year as a result of the above changes, that may involve utilising one-off Local Authority Business Growth Incentive scheme (LABGI) grant.
5. Authorise the Director of Planning and Transport to undertake investigation into provision of 'pay on foot' wherever possible, and develop a business case, if appropriate, to support investment in new equipment to facilitate this.
6. Authorise the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Director of Finance, the Director of Law and Democratic Services, the Head of Property Services, the Deputy Leader and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Benefits, to enter into an agreement with MUSE Developments Ltd, on such terms and conditions as are considered necessary to protect the Council's interests, for the purchase of the car park essential to the construction of the Union Square development.
7. Subject to satisfactory agreement being reached with MUSE Developments Ltd, approve capital expenditure of up to £14.75m, funded as detailed in the report including new prudential borrowing of £11m, on the basis that the impact on the Councils revenue budget is estimated to be broadly break even over a 10 year period.
8. Authorise the Director of Planning and Transport to undertake a consultation exercise with customers, businesses and other stakeholders on a rationalisation of car parking capacity in the town centre that is needed in order both to match supply more closely to predicted demand and also to reduce overall operating costs to help mitigate the financial impact of the Union Square car park, as part of a wider parking strategy review.
9. Note the package of marketing measures that retailers are proposing as set out in the attached Appendix, and that it is also anticipated that retailers will offer promotions on a store by store basis. It is further noted, however, that neither InSwindon or CiT can secure this.

### 1. Reasons

- 1.1 The economic situation in Swindon town centre is very serious. Retailers are reporting that footfall and turnover are both reducing significantly. In its civic leadership role, the Council has a responsibility to take decisive action to help stem the decline and rebuild confidence in the town centre.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Samantha Howell on Direct Dial No. 01793 466500 or Email [showell@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:showell@swindon.gov.uk).

# Town Centre Car Parking Strategy

CABINET

Date: 09<sup>th</sup> June 2010

---

- 1.2 Two possible routes for doing this are through a thorough review of car parking, including reducing charges and supporting the viability of the Union Square development, to bring much needed regeneration into that part of the town.
- 1.3 In the current economic climate it is also important that the Council supports the economic viability of Old Town. Old Town is complementary in nature as a retail and commercial centre relative to the more dominant New Town, but similar issues are being faced in respect of footfall and turnover. A reduction in the short stay tariff would encourage longer dwell times and complement any reduction in tariff in the town centre.
- 1.4 If the Council takes these actions, there is no guarantee that footfall and turnover will increase. However, in light of the views of retailers and despite the uncertainties, the Council is of the view that immediate and decisive action is imperative.
- 1.5 A reduction in car parking charges for a 12 month period in the two retail areas would represent a fundamental change in direction for the Council and detailed monitoring and evaluation would be required to inform the development of the strategic car parking policy beyond 31<sup>st</sup> July 2011.
- 1.6 This report sets out the options available to the Council to help encourage residents and visitors into the town centre and Old Town, and to improve dwell time.

## 2. Details

- 2.1 Despite some positive developments in the town centre, such as the BHS redevelopment and the new public realm, there is evidence that the town centre is continuing to decline. Plans for a new retail hub have been shelved due to the recession, footfall is reducing and retailers are reporting reduced takings.
- 2.2 Retailers have repeatedly expressed concerns about the effect car parking charges may be having on trade during the current recession and in August 2009 the Council approved a temporary reduction in car parking charges in Brunel and Fleming Way car parks to try and encourage shoppers to spend longer in the town centre. The initiative, which was implemented for a promotional period to 10<sup>th</sup> of January 2010, saw a reduction in charge to £2 for 4 hours stay, entry after 10am and before 6pm Monday to Sunday.
- 2.3 The four month promotional period specifically targeted the run-up to Christmas (the most important trading period of the year) and retailers reported an increase in footfall as well as an increase in dwell time.

---

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Samantha Howell on Direct Dial No. 01793 466500 or Email [showell@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:showell@swindon.gov.uk).

## Town Centre Car Parking Strategy

CABINET

Date: 09<sup>th</sup> June 2010

---

However, it is unclear whether this is directly related to the reduction in car parking charges or because this is traditionally the busiest retailing time of the year. There was no significant increase in the number of cars over this period but there was an observed increase in the time people stayed in the car parks.

- 2.4 A complementary reduction in car parking charges was implemented in Old Town in November 2009. The promotional period, which ran to January 2010, specifically targeted the run up to Christmas and was designed to encourage shoppers to stay longer. The nature of visits to Old Town reflects its complementary role to New Town and dwell times are considerably shorter. A reduction in the parking charge for a two hour stay in the core retail area was introduced to provide a measured and direct response to concerns from local business.
- 2.5 Retailers are of the view that the promotional period was too short and that the charges and usage times were not simple or cheap enough. Since the end of the promotional period, when charges reverted to the previous rate, retailers in the town centre have reported a serious reduction in shopper numbers. They believe one of the prime reasons for people choosing to shop at other destinations such as Bristol, Bath or Oxford, is the price of car parking in the town centre.
- 2.6 The retailers also believe that evidence from other towns and retail centres demonstrates that a reduction in charges will lead to an increase in usage which will eventually offset the costs. This is a possibility, however as these examples are not strictly comparable with Swindon, we have outlined the full financial risk in this report.
- 2.7 The Council is placed in an increasingly difficult position, balancing the economic well-being of the Borough against the impact that any loss of revenue may have on the Council's finances. Further, car parking policies can be used as an effective demand management tool to support sustainable transport objectives, by discouraging car users from driving into the town centre. The Council must consider how this can best be achieved in Swindon in the context of supporting economic growth in line with national and regional priorities.
- 2.8 A key regeneration scheme for Swindon is the Union Square development, which will bring significant new office accommodation to the town centre for the first time in many years, enabling the town to attract and retain blue chip companies to the benefit of the local economy. In order to progress Phase 1 of the Union Square development, MUSE Developments Ltd approached the Council with an option to lease the new car park which forms the major part of Phase 1 of the development. The other elements of Phase 1 comprise a new site for the medical centre

---

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Samantha Howell on Direct Dial No. 01793 466500 or Email [showell@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:showell@swindon.gov.uk).

# Town Centre Car Parking Strategy

CABINET

Date: 09<sup>th</sup> June 2010

---

currently located in Carfax Street and some affordable / sheltered housing units. MUSE firmly believe that the delivery of Phase 1 will lead very quickly to the commencement of subsequent phases, as they have received expressions of interest, on the premise that a new car parking facility will be available.

- 2.9 A number of different options have been assessed around leasing or instead purchasing the new facility and what the impact of this would be on the Council's existing car parking stock, recognising that there is currently an excess of capacity over demand (car park usage is typically around 60% of available spaces) and taking potential increased usage from Phase 2 of the MUSE development and other possible growth into account. The possible impact of the reduction in car parking charges also being considered is an important consideration, as this would potentially compromise the ability to make a new, high quality, car park financially viable.

## Car Parks

- 2.10 Swindon currently has 24 main car parks with an additional 5 car parks in Old Town. 10 of the 24 car parks provide long stay parking which offers cheaper all day parking for office or shop workers, and there are short stay and premium short stay spaces available in the town centre.
- 2.11 Brunel North, Brunel West (levels 1, 2, 3 and 4) and Fleming Way are all charged at a premium rate and these three car parks operate a 'pay on foot' system.
- 2.12 'Pay on foot' is the term used to describe the car parking payment system where drivers take a ticket from a ticket dispenser when entering the car park and 'pay on foot' at a machine at the end of their stay before exiting the barrier controlled car park.
- 2.13 In response to retailers' concerns about reductions in customer footfall in town centre stores, the Council reduced charges for a trial period from September 2009 to January 2010. Although it is believed that this change resulted in a loss of income for the Council in excess of £200k, it is impossible to be certain that other factors, e.g. the recession, did not also have a part to play. In terms of actual usage of the car parks, due to limitations in the historical car parking data available, it is only possible to compare usage year on year for the months during which the promotional period was implemented in Brunel West (see Table 1). Unsurprisingly these figures all show a reduction on the preceding year, which was before the full impact of the recession was felt.

---

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Samantha Howell on Direct Dial No. 01793 466500 or Email [showell@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:showell@swindon.gov.uk).

## Town Centre Car Parking Strategy

CABINET

Date: 09<sup>th</sup> June 2010

Table 1: Comparison of use 2008/09 to 2009/10 in Brunel West

Month	Figures for 2008/2009	Figures for 2009/10	Change
November	27,507	25,087	- 2,420
December	35,087	34,226	- 861
January	21,647	19,866	- 1,781

- 2.14 Looking at the current situation, usage data is available for two of the three multi-storey car parks from March 2009 onwards and for all from April 2009, which allows year on year comparisons to be drawn. The table below indicates some evidence to support retailers' concerns that ever fewer people are visiting the town centre, with the March figures being less conclusive than those in April.

Table 2: Comparison of use 2009 to 2010

Car park	March 2009	March 2010	Change
Brunel West	21,366	21,771	+405
Brunel North	40,312	39,239	-1,073
Fleming Way	n/a	n/a	
Car park	April 2009	April 2010	Change
Brunel West	20,090	20,877	+787
Brunel North	38,948	37,294	-1,654
Fleming Way	18,128	16,207	-1,921

- 2.15 There is evidence that retail vacancy rates for the town centre are below the national average. In February 2010 the retail vacancy rate for Swindon town centre was 9.4% and the national average for this month was 12%. However, retailers report that this figure is skewed by local circumstances as some tenants were on short-term, peppercorn rents. This is not sustainable in the longer term.
- 2.16 Footfall figures indicate that in January and February 2010 footfall in Swindon town centre declined by 18.3% and 6.7% respectively, year on year change 2009 to 2010. This compares nationally with a decline in footfall of 7.5% in January and 5.5% in February (please see Table 3). In March and April footfall in Swindon town centre increased with the most significant change year on year in the month of April. This seems to demonstrate increasing confidence in the town centre as we move out of recession. However, the figures must be treated with caution as Swindon is working from a low base and the significant increase is for one month only. Also, the figures may be skewed by the public realm works in the town centre as people use alternative routes through the Brunel Centre to navigate their way around the town centre. This could explain the significantly higher figure for Swindon in April 2010.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Samantha Howell on Direct Dial No. 01793 466500 or Email [showell@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:showell@swindon.gov.uk).

## Town Centre Car Parking Strategy

CABINET

Date: 09<sup>th</sup> June 2010

Table 3: Footfall: Year on year change 2009 to 2010

	All towns and cities	Swindon
<b>January</b>	-7.5%	-18.3%
<b>February</b>	-5.5%	-6.7%
<b>March</b>	-3.0%	5.3%
<b>April</b>	0.8%	21.3%

- 2.17 In Swindon are currently negotiating an expansion of the footfall monitoring cameras in order that a more comprehensive picture of the town centre is obtained. Currently the monitoring is only undertaken at specific locations and these do not necessarily reflect retail behaviour in the town centre.
- 2.18 Retailers have proposed a reduction in tariff at Brunel and Fleming Way car parks to 50p per hour flat rate for stays up to 4 hours entry after 6am, with a flat rate of £2 on Sundays. They believe this would ensure Swindon remains competitive against other shopping destinations and would increase footfall and dwell time in the town centre.
- 2.19 Retailers are keen to support any changes in the tariff with a proactive marketing campaign and the CiT Group are prepared to commit an initial £15,000 to launch the new tariff. This would be in addition to the existing Brunel marketing budget. A marketing report detailing their proposals is attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 2.20 The net revenue foregone to the Council should this reduction in charge be implemented is estimated to be c £1.1m for Brunel North, Brunel West and Fleming Way. In addition it would imply that all other short stay car parks would have to reduce charges to 50p per hour for stays up to 4 hours. This would be logistically challenging and may change usage patterns around the town. The impact of this has not been costed.
- 2.21 A number of alternative options have been investigated with the retailers and following detailed analysis three options are presented for consideration.
- 2.22 The full impact of the options are difficult to predict because the reported drop in Swindon town centre footfall may not be directly related to parking charges. However, retailers believe that by reducing car parking charges again, footfall will increase. Although this is possible, as the operator of the car parks, all of the risk in terms of loss of revenue is with the Council.
- 2.23 Detailed analysis has been undertaken but calculations have had to be based on a number of broad assumptions. This analysis does not take into account any impact on Season Tickets and Long Stay income as

---

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Samantha Howell on Direct Dial No. 01793 466500 or Email [showell@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:showell@swindon.gov.uk).

## Town Centre Car Parking Strategy

CABINET

Date: 09<sup>th</sup> June 2010

---

there will be the potential for drivers to move between the three car parks during the day in order to save money. This could lead to increased congestion as the same cars move around with no increase in footfall.

- 2.24 Further, the options proposed would result in an inconsistency in the tariff which would mean parking would be more expensive for stays between 2 and 4 hours in all the town centre short stay car parks (Carlton St levels A&B, Catherine St, Clarence House, King Street, The Parade, Queen St and Wyvern levels 1,2 and 3) and other premium short stay car parks (Commercial Rd, Granville St, Morley St, Princes St and Regent Close). Customers will, however, have a choice about which car parks to use.

### Options

- 2.25 The three options discussed with retailers are set out below.
- 2.26 Option 1: implementation of 50p per hour tariff for stays up to 4 hours, entry after 8am and before 6pm Monday to Sunday for the period up to 31 July 2011, in Brunel North, Brunel West and Fleming Way car parks. All other car park tariffs will remain unchanged. Under this option, the net revenue foregone, is estimated at £1.1million p.a.
- 2.27 Option 2: implementation of a reduction in tariff to £1 for up to an hour and £2 for stays of between 1 and 4 hours, entry after 8am and before 6pm Monday to Sunday for the period up to 31 July 2011, in Brunel North, Brunel West and Fleming Way car parks. All other car park tariffs will remain unchanged. Under this option, the net revenue foregone is estimated at £0.5m p.a.
- 2.28 Option 3: implementation of a reduction in tariff to £1 for up to an hour, £2 for 1 to 2 hours and £3 for 2 to 4 hours, entry after 8am and before 6pm Monday to Sunday for the period up to 31 July 2011, in Brunel North, Brunel West and Fleming Way car parks. All other car park tariffs will remain unchanged. Under this option, the net revenue foregone, is estimated at £0.3m p.a.
- 2.29 In line with the approach taken during the last trial period parking charges in Old Town would also be varied. The first hour would remain at 70p but the charge for two hours would be reduced to £1. This will be applied to all car parks in Old Town for entry after 8am and before 6pm Monday to Sunday for the period up to 31 July 2011. The estimated net revenue foregone is estimated at £25k p.a.
- 2.30 All of the options have the potential to undermine the Swindon Transport Strategy which recommends the increase of parking charges to support more sustainable modes of transport. However, this is based on an

---

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Samantha Howell on Direct Dial No. 01793 466500 or Email [showell@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:showell@swindon.gov.uk).

## Town Centre Car Parking Strategy

CABINET

Date: 09<sup>th</sup> June 2010

---

increasing demand for spaces over the longer term. Introducing reduced fees, will not undermine this in the longer term if it is accompanied by a removal of surplus capacity.

- 2.31 The changes would require a public notice under Section 35c of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 to be advertised on site and in a local newspaper for 21 days prior to the implementation of any scheme.
- 2.32 All car park tariff boards, the Council's website and 'pay on foot' machine software will need to be updated. This also has financial implications and changes to car park machine software could take up to 4 weeks, depending on complexity of the new tariff.
- 2.33 There will be minor cost implications associated with further advertisements and operational adjustments at the end of the period. These are anticipated to c£2.5k.
- 2.34 Members are recommended to accept Option 2 as best reflecting the need to simplify the tariff and address the decline in car park usage in the town. A schedule of existing car parking charges is attached at Appendix 2 for reference.

### Union Square

- 2.35 The Council has separately been approached by MUSE Developments in respect of taking a lease on the new car park. The car park and its financing would be instrumental in kick starting the Union Square development, being a key element of Phase 1. It is clear that if the Council is unable to take up an option on the car park, the development would remain unviable in the current market. MUSE have indicated that they would mothball the project and unless there is a significant improvement in the economic situation, there would be unlikely to be any redevelopment for the foreseeable future. It is clear to the Council and its partners in the development agreement, South West Regional Development Agency and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), that ensuring rapid progress on Union Square is vital if there is to be any hope of commencing significant regeneration of the town centre in the next couple of years.
- 2.36 The commencement of the Union Square development would also help address the falling footfall in the town centre. It is anticipated that future phases of the development will provide sufficient additional customers in line with growth projections assumed in the financial model.
- 2.37 It has previously been assumed that the Council would need to relinquish ownership and income from a number of its car parks in order to facilitate

---

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Samantha Howell on Direct Dial No. 01793 466500 or Email [showell@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:showell@swindon.gov.uk).

## Town Centre Car Parking Strategy

CABINET

Date: 09<sup>th</sup> June 2010

---

regeneration of the town centre. This was a key element of the development agreements for both Union Square and the former Regent Place scheme. Cabinet were advised in July 2008 of the likely significant financial impact of this approach and concluded that, although it clearly presents a difficult challenge, it is a necessary consequence of the overwhelming need for the Council to play a leading role in securing the town's regeneration. In this context, the offer from MUSE for the Council to consider retaining a role in the car park in the Union Square development presented a potential opportunity to mitigate some of the impact of lost revenue, subject to the attractiveness of the overall arrangement. The potential impact of reducing car park charges as recommended above is key to this. The aspiration for the new car park to be high quality with an associated high cost requires at least the current level of charges to ensure it remains financially viable. This would reflect the desired quality of the car park and is therefore felt to be justifiable and would effectively make this car park "super premium". Its main purpose over time will be as a "long stay" facility, serving the new office buildings, further distinguishing it from the Brunel and Fleming Way car parks.

- 2.38 Options have therefore been examined by officers using the current car park tariffs rather than the proposed reduced tariffs to inform a financial appraisal, which is summarised in Appendix 3. The original option presented to the Council by MUSE of a lease on the car park is financially unattractive, exposes us to variable leasing costs and would mean that ownership of the car park would rest with another party, meaning that control over future strategic options in that part of the town centre would be lost. In financial terms, there is little difference over 10 years between the Council owning the new car park and it being owned and operated by an external party, on the assumption that current capacity is reduced. However, the additional level of security and control that would be available if the Council was to purchase the car park, in addition the potential to benefit from additional usage over that assumed if that situation were to arise, leans towards the Council purchasing the car park, subject to the price and conditions of the purchase being appropriate. There would also be the opportunity to sell the asset in the future, if market conditions were right.
- 2.39 In relation to funding, the options appraisal indicates that a break even position can be achieved over 10 years if borrowing was limited to around £11m. It is believed that this can be achieved by a combination of negotiation with MUSE and use of grant funding from Growth Points and the HCA. Whilst the HCA have indicated their willingness to contribute to this scheme, this was before the election. The HCA are making no commitment until after the emergency budget on 22<sup>nd</sup> June. It is possible that funding may not be available from them, in which case we would need to reconsider our position.

---

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Samantha Howell on Direct Dial No. 01793 466500 or Email [showell@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:showell@swindon.gov.uk).

# Town Centre Car Parking Strategy

CABINET

Date: 09<sup>th</sup> June 2010

- 2.40 It is clear that whether or not the car park in the Union Square development is owned or operated by the Council or an external agent of MUSE, SBC will need to reduce its current car parking capacity and costs to mitigate some of the additional burden on the Council's finances when the new car park opens. An allowance for reduced costs underpins the financial model in Appendix 3, although the actual level of savings that can be achieved is dependent on which current car parks are de-commissioned. In order that the options can be considered at an early stage, it is recommended that a consultation process should commence in the coming months with a wide range of stakeholders on the future car park provision within Swindon, to inform the Council's decision on which car parks should be de-commissioned. The Council is in discussion with MUSE to ascertain whether they are willing to underwrite the estimated costs of decommissioning, which may be in the order of £250k, again subject to which car parks are to be taken out of operation.

## Alternative Options

- The Council could decide not to make any changes to car parking charges at the current time. However, this would fail to address the longer term problem of reducing foot fall, would lead to criticism from retailers and could have the consequence of some businesses failing to survive. If Members are minded to reduce and simplify charges a number of options are set out. Option 1 would place a financial burden on the Council that would be almost impossible to accommodate in the current financial year, Option 3 may be insufficiently different to have any material impact.
- The proposal could be implemented for a shorter time period e.g. 4 months. A review could be undertaken simultaneously to evaluate the impact. This could then help to determine whether there is any benefit to continue for any future periods.
- The Council could decide not to take on the car park from Muse. This would mean that the project would be unviable and the development may be shelved pending a better financial climate.

## Risk Management

### *Financial and Procurement Implications*

- The implementation of Options 1, 2 and 3 have been modelled using 2009/10 car parking data for the three multi storeys and assumed similar patterns of use. As there is capacity in Brunel and Fleming car parks currently, migration of users from other car parks, and potential movements between these car parks with no increase in footfall, is a particular concern. No allowance has been made for increased use of car parks during the 12 month period. It is estimated that a 5% increase in new customers using the 3 car parks as a result of the promotion will reduce the income pressure under Option 2 by £80k p.a.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Samantha Howell on Direct Dial No. 01793 466500 or Email [showell@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:showell@swindon.gov.uk).

## Town Centre Car Parking Strategy

CABINET

Date: 09<sup>th</sup> June 2010

### *Assumptions*

- Calculations underpinning the figures quoted in the report for loss of car park revenue are based on usage numbers for 2009/10 for Brunel and Fleming Way car parks and assumes a similar pattern of use.
- No allowance has been made for a potentially negative impact on Season Tickets and Long Stay income.
- Operational costs relating to changing tariff boards, machines and the website are anticipated to be c£2.5k.

### *Funding*

- Like all local authorities, the Council faces significant financial challenges both currently and in the years ahead. Should the revised charges proposed be implemented early in July, an additional pressure in the order of £0.4m is expected to arise in the current year. It is possible to underpin £193k of this from the Council's 2010 allocation of LABGI funding, which has in the past been used to support town centre initiatives, although it would be more prudent to identify other options to absorb the impact within the 2010/11 budget allocation, recognising the future financial challenges. Options will need to be explored and finalised as part of the monthly monitoring report that will be presented to Cabinet in July. Options to mitigate the future impact of the reduction in charges and the Union Square car park will need to be factored into the Council's medium term financial plans.
- The Homes and Communities Agency have indicated that they are likely to offer a sum of £9m to support Swindon over the next two years (although this is now subject to the outcome of the 22<sup>nd</sup> June budget). Around £7.8m of this is expected to be needed to support the affordable housing element of phase 1 of the MUSE Development, with the remainder potentially available to part finance the Council's purchase of the car park, should Members decide to do so. In addition, £2m of Growth Points funding awarded to the Council is currently unallocated and could be used for this purpose. A number of parking spaces within the car park are earmarked for the affordable housing units and it is understood that a sum of £0.5m is available to purchase these. Based on the current assumed build cost, which will be subject to further scrutiny as the design and specification are completed, a sum of around £11m will need to be funded from borrowing to secure the purchase.

### *Legal / Human Rights Implications*

- The content of this report will not have any direct implications for human rights. Statutory notification of the changes is required. The notification requirement is 21 days, which means the earliest the new charges could be implemented is 12<sup>th</sup> July 2010.

### *Links to Corporate Plans and Policies (in particular to Swindon 2010 Promises)*

- None

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Samantha Howell on Direct Dial No. 01793 466500 or Email [showell@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:showell@swindon.gov.uk).

# Town Centre Car Parking Strategy

CABINET

Date: 09<sup>th</sup> June 2010

---

## Consultees

- The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.
- Director of Planning and Transport, Head of Finance (Environment, Regeneration and Community, Planning Manager, Head of Highway Network Management, Head of StreetSmart, Head of Transport Delivery.

## Background Papers and Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Marketing Report (InSwindon)
- Appendix 2 – Swindon Town Centre Car Park Charges
- Appendix 3 – Union Square Car Park Option Appraisal

## Key Decision / Decision in Forward Plan

This is a key decision and is incorporated in the Cabinet Forward Plan for June 2010.

---

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Samantha Howell on Direct Dial No. 01793 466500 or Email [showell@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:showell@swindon.gov.uk).

This page is intentionally left blank