WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL	**Overview Scrutiny Committee 12th January 2016**	**Agenda Item No. 6**

Title	Update on the Development of the Council's Car Parking Strategy
For further information about this report please contact	Rob Hoof Head of Neighbourhood Services
Wards of the District directly affected	ALL
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	No
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	NA
Background Papers	

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	No
Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken	Not at this stage

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	**Date**	**Name**
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	23/12/2015	Bill Hunt
Head of Service	23/12/2015	Rob Hoof
CMT		
Section 151 Officer	23/12/2015	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer		
Finance		
Portfolio Holder(s)	30/12/2015	Cllr David Shilton
Consultation & Community Engagement		
Consultation to be undertaken with a number of stakeholders over a 3 month period.		
Final Decision?	No	

1. Summary

1.1 The Council is currently in the process of developing a car parking strategy for the district.

1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has asked for an update on the development of the Car Parking Strategy which is the purpose of this report.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny note the report, the progress to date and the issues that have been raised.

3. Reasons for the Recommendation

3.1 The Car Parking Strategy is currently being developed and will be subject to extensive consultation, and a future report to the Executive.

4. Policy Framework

4.1 The Car Parking Strategy will have an influence on, and will be influenced by a number of strategies/policies/plans/projects including:-

Sustainability Strategy
Prosperity Agenda
The Local Plan
Riverside House Relocation
Leisure Options
Medium Term Financial Strategy
Fit For the Future
Equality Objectives
Asset Management Strategy

4.2 Impact Assessments

4.2.1 An Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out as part of the review and will form part of the Car Parking Strategy.

5. Budgetary Framework

5.1 Income from WDC car park activities is approximately £2.8 million per annum.

6. Risks

6.1 As the report has identified there are a number of issues that can have a significant impact on the Car Parking Strategy.

6.2 Significant investment is required to repair/replace two multi storey car parks. This will require careful consideration as to the financial viability of providing and maintaining these assets, and the impact of not providing them.

6.3 The Car Park Strategy will need to take a view as to the future parking needs of the District, and the ability of WDC to continue to provide the level of service required in the future.

6.4 The risk of not developing a Car Parking Strategy is that the Council will have no medium to long term view of a service that has a direct impact on the town centres, local economy, parks and open spaces, leisure facilities etc.

7. Alternative Option(s) considered

7.1 The Council could continue to operate the service in the absence of a Car Parking Strategy; however this has been discounted due to the issues that are currently facing the service and the decisions required relating to longer term provision and investment.

8. Background

8.1 The previous Car Parking Strategy included both on and off street parking services and covered the period 2007 to 2012. On street enforcement was carried out on behalf of Warwickshire County Council (WCC) by WDC during this period.

8.2 In 2013 WCC made the decision to take back the on street enforcement function, and operate the service using a private contractor. The contract commenced on the 1st November 2014, and is for a period of 5 years.

8.3 WDC therefore needs to develop a new off street Car Parking Strategy, which includes the operation of 3 multi storey car parks, 26 enforced surface car parks, management arrangement to enforce on 3 private car parks, and a small number of car parks where no enforcement currently takes place.

8.4 The Car Parking Strategy will need to consider a number of issues including:-

- The needs of various car park users such as residents, shoppers, visitors, local businesses and workers.
- Current and future car parking capacity required.
- How car parks contribute to a vibrant local economy and support the town centres.
- The level of car parking charges now and in the future.
- The financial viability of the service, and future investment required.
- Alternative uses for car parks which are not required.
- Impact on other Council policies, strategies, projects, plans and agendas.
- Impact on other parking providers including WCC.

8.5 There are a number of key issues that are currently being considered that affect the development of the Car Parking Strategy.

8.6 WDC engaged a specialist company to undertake detailed structural surveys of its multi storey car parks and ascertain accurate costs for the necessary repairs. This information will be made available to the Council in January 2016 and will be subject of a report to Members in February 2016.

8.7 Initial findings indicate that Linen Street multi storey car park is coming to the end of its serviceable life, and may have to close in the next 6 to 12 months. A number of options are being considered in relation to the future parking provision in Warwick.

8.8 Initial findings indicate that Covent Garden multi storey car park requires significant structural repairs in order for it to continue to operate into the longer term. It is also linked with the plans to relocate the Council Offices on Covent Garden surface car park which is currently being investigated.

8.9 Other car parks have been identified which are not required due to surplus capacity, although do offer the opportunity for alternative uses.

8.10 Although WDC holds detailed information on parking ticket sales, there was very little in relation to customer preferences and expectations of the parking service. A survey of car park users and local businesses has recently been completed which will provide a better evidence base for the Car Park Strategy.

8.11 There is currently a consultation underway with regards to increasing car parking charges across the district. Feedback from local stakeholders has highlighted the potential difficulties with significant future price rises, which may make some car parks unviable.

8.12 It is envisaged that the draft Car Parking Strategy will be produced by the end of this financial year, followed by a period of consultation with key stakeholders. The aim is to have a final proposal by July 2016 for Members to consider.