

## **Draft questions to allow design of questionnaire and online survey.**

None of the {Y/N} questions should be mandatory. {Free text} fields conditional on {Y/N} answers if *italic*, and if marked \* should be mandatory .

### **Introduction**

Stevenage Borough Council (SBC) is consulting on an update to its 2004 Parking Strategy, to ensure that it fits the needs of the town. *The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* is envisaged as being used to shape how SBC manages on-street parking over the next decade. It doesn't set out an action plan of particular projects or schemes to be undertaken, but presents the principles that will be applied in SBC's work to manage on-street parking.

*The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* is subtitled *Living and Sustainable Streets for Stevenage*. That doesn't mean that the draft strategy proposes to turn every street into a "shared space" with no pavements, or to stop residents from having cars. It does reflect the intention to ensure that when managing parking its impact on streets as places for people, on the environment, and on other modes of transport, is properly considered. It is hoped that small changes made in day-to-day work can help make incremental improvements to provide pleasanter Living Street type outcomes.

This consultation document presents the key questions we would like your views on. You are encouraged to read *The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* in full before responding, but if you don't have time this questionnaire summarises the key content of the Strategy as it goes along. The first three chapters (Foreword, Introduction, and the description of the Policy Context) haven't been summarised.

As well as asking SBC's key questions, there is the opportunity at the end of the consultation document to make additional comments on any part of *The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031*.

### **Approaches**

#### **1. Objectives (Chapter 4)**

*The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* sets out four broad objectives that reflect national and local policy requirements. These are:

- To prevent unsafe or obstructive parking
- To restrain unnecessary or undesirable parking and encourage modal shift

- To manage necessary or desirable parking
- To support the Council's Zero Carbon ambitions

- Do you agree with these objectives? {Y/N}
- Do you have any comments on them? {Free text}

## **2. Planned programme of projects (Section 5.1 and Appendix I)**

SBC receives many requests for parking changes to be made. Most of these require long and resource-intensive work to comply with the necessary legal processes, while only limited staff and money are available to do so.

*The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* adopts a structured management approach to pursue changes only through a planned programme of projects so that work can be carried out effectively. It acknowledges the need for the programme include a mixture of project types and sizes so that best use is made of resources and a balance is struck between helping residents, businesses and others, and to give all parts of the town fair opportunity in having their problems or concerns addressed. It recognises that projects may result from requests from the public or stakeholders, or on SBC's initiative, and confirms that records of requests to SBC will be kept so that they can be considered for inclusion.

Appendix I outlines different project types that may be undertaken to deliver the Parking Strategy, which of *The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031*'s objectives they align with, who they help and what their general aim is. It highlights criteria for different projects to be undertaken, which if not specified in the main text of *The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* may be updated from time to time in agreement with the Portfolio Holder, and gives some outline expectations as to what workloads may be achievable.

- Do you have any comments on this approach? {Y/N}
- \* *What comments would you like to make?* {Free text}

## **3. Transport and Parking User Hierarchies (Section 5.2)**

The County Council's key transport policy, *LTP4*, sets out a Transport User Hierarchy. *The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* proposes a Parking User Hierarchy that reflects this, and prioritises different parking needs in different locations. For example, long stay residential parking is prioritised in residential areas, short stay (shopper) parking at "short stay destinations" such as shops, and long-stay parking by workers at "long stay destinations" such as employment sites.

It also recognises that some locations won't fall neatly into just one of these categories, and in those cases a balance must be struck considering the makeup of the area to support a mixture of uses.

- Do you agree with this approach? {Y/N}
- \* *If not, why not?* {Free text if N selected}

#### **4. Measurement, consultation and engagement (sections 5.4 and 5.5)**

Parking is an emotive subject for many people and it is easy to make purely qualitative judgements. *The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* proposes that SBC seeks to take a measured approach to quantify and understand parking issues, which could include both gathering data on parked vehicles and surveying residents to find out how they feel about an issue.

If then proposing changes to parking management in a street, as a Co-operative Council SBC will encourage feedback and contributions from the public when investigating possible alterations, as well as seeking comments once proposals have been prepared.

Public engagement will usually include a mailshot to affected households to ensure everyone has the chance to be aware and to have their say. It wouldn't usually include public meetings, which deny a voice to those who can't attend and that experience shows seldom offer a constructive forum for understanding residents' often conflicting views.

- Do you agree with this approach? {Y/N}
- \* *If not, why not?* {Free text if N selected}
- Are there any other methods of public engagement that you feel would be valuable when consulting on changes to parking, such as door-to-door canvassing of opinions or exhibition events where you can look at plans and discuss problems/proposals one-on-one? {Y/N}
- \* *What other methods of consultation are you in favour of?* {Free text if Y selected}

#### **5. Publicity and influencing opinion (section 5.6)**

Rather than relying only on formal controls on how people park, *The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* suggests that this is not always the most appropriate course of action. It proposes that where appropriate SBC should use "soft approaches" such as media campaigns or informal road lining to encourage behaviour change.

- Do you agree with SBC seeking to influence behaviour through "soft approaches" as well as formal measures? {Y/N}
- \* *If not, why not?* {Free text if N selected}

## **6. Finance and enforcement (sections 5.7 and 5.8)**

*The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* highlights that parking enforcement does not set out to make money. In itself enforcement makes a loss, and is likely always to do so. Parking fees are set to manage parking demand, not to raise revenue, and income from them goes first to offset the parking enforcement deficit. If there is any money left over after this, it is spent in line with the law, which sets out a limited range of purposes it can be spent on such as maintaining parking facilities or making improvements to support active and sustainable travel.

Enforcement activity will be kept under review throughout the period of the strategy to ensure that the number, timing and format of patrols is appropriate to supply an effective traffic management service and represents value for money for the tax payer.

- Do you agree with these approaches? {Y/N}
- \* *If not, why not?* {Free text if N selected}

## **Specific issues**

### **7. Parking for disabled car users (section 6.1)**

People with disabilities are likely to have fewer alternatives to using a car than most other drivers, if any. Once they have parked, it is likely to be more difficult for them to get from their car to their final destination.

*The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* makes parking for disabled car users a correspondingly higher priority. In particular, SBC will set out to ensure that at known destinations such as the town centres and neighbourhood centres have suitable levels of disabled parking provision and this will be located to offer greater ease and convenience than general parking. While disabled bays in residential areas are generally managed by Hertfordshire County Council, SBC will assist with this where possible (for example on SBC land) in line with the County Council's standards.

- Do you agree with SBC seeking to ensure that there is a suitable level of appropriate parking for disabled car users at destinations? {Y/N}
- \* *If not, why not?* {Free text if N selected}

### **8. Supporting sustainable transport (sections 6.2.1, 6.2.2 and 6.2.4)**

While most drivers don't park this way, a minority leave their cars parked in antisocial locations that hinder sustainable and active travel.

This could mean forcing pedestrians off the pavement on a busy road, and placing them in danger; preventing cyclists accessing Stevenage's world class network of off-road cycleways by blocking an entrance; or parking in a bus stop so that passengers can't get on and off. These and other similar parking behaviours ultimately encourage people to drive, adding to congestion and pollution, and discourage healthier and cleaner travel.

*The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* sets out that SBC will be open to changing how it manages parking to deal with such problems in specific locations where there is a concern (such as making changes so it can enforce against parking in a particular bus stop or on the pavement where it is causing residents a problem), and to enable improvements for active and sustainable travel (such as allowing access to a new cycleway).

- Do you agree with these approaches? {Y/N}
- \* *If not, why not?* {Free text if N selected}

### **9. Cycle parking (section 6.2.3)**

Cycle parking takes up a fraction of the space needed to park a car, and can be vital to people seeing cycling as a viable alternative to driving – which not only improves health and reduces pollution, but frees up space on the road for those who still drive.

*The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* says SBC will consider options to help residents who can't already store one keep a bike at home, try to ensure they can securely park it at their destination, and to make sure that cycle parking is suitably located, of a high standard and easy to find.

- Do you agree with SBC trying to help residents be able to own a bike and seeking to ensure that there is an appropriate level of suitable cycle parking at destinations? {Y/N}
- \* *If not, why not?* {Free text if N selected}

### **10. E-cars and Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) (section 6.2.5)**

Growing numbers of Stevenage residents own, or want to own, an electric car, and the government is phasing out the sale of conventional internal combustion engine powered cars. *The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* commits SBC to investigating how it can assist residents to own an e-car or other ULEV. This is expected to include helping to provide E-car charging facilities at destinations such as the town centres (which is already under way) and neighbourhood centres, and encouraging employers to provide workplace charging. SBC may also aspire to provide similar support for other new fuel types for ULEVs.

- Do you agree that SBC should try to help residents be able to run cars that don't have an internal combustion engine in this manner? {Y/N}
- \* *If not, why not? {Free text if N selected}*

### **11. Car clubs and levels of car ownership (sections 6.2.6 and 6.2.7)**

Car clubs let residents hire cars that are stored near their homes as and when they need them. This can enable residents to reduce the number of cars they own and save themselves considerable amounts of money, as well as reducing demand for parking and making it easier for residents to park their remaining cars.

SBC successfully operated a car club in the town centre from 2016 to 2020, which is now on hold due to the effect of the coronavirus pandemic on customer demand. When the market allows SBC intends to resume this service, and will be open to requests to introduce similar services elsewhere in the town. If there are competing requests, all else being equal preference would be given to the cleaner/lower emission service.

As well as being supportive of car clubs, SBC may consider other measures to encourage residents to reduce their car ownership in line with the council's parking standards.

- Do you agree with these approaches? {Y/N}
- \* *If not, why not? {Free text if N selected}*

### **Car parking in residential areas**

#### **12. "Residents Only" Parking Permits and alternatives (sections 6.3.1 and 6.3.2)**

SBC recognises that some residents often see "residents only" permit parking controls as a solution to many of their parking problems, whilst others will strongly oppose them as they place costs and limitations on all residents and their visitors.

*The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* sets out that SBC may introduce "residents only" permit parking controls to help residents be able to park, but only if there is found to be both a genuine lack of parking for residents as a result of an external source of parking demand and a high level of support for permits from residents.

SBC may also consider alternative ways to deter non-resident parking, such as "commuter ban" single yellow lines preventing parking for a short time in the middle of the day.

- Do you agree that “residents only” permit parking should only be introduced where there is a genuine lack of parking for residents due to non-resident parking, and most residents are in favour of permit parking being put in place?  
{Y/N}
- \* *If not, why not?* {Free text if N selected}
- Do you agree that SBC should also be willing to consider other ways of deterring non-resident parking in residential areas, if it is causing a problem?  
{Y/N}
- \* *If not, why not?* {Free text if N selected}

### **13. Increasing parking (sections 6.3.4 and 6.3.5)**

SBC receive many requests for parking construction, but has no responsibility or obligation to improve the highway. Some residents see a real need for more parking in their street, whilst others are concerned by the environmental impacts of building over green spaces and that increased parking can be detrimental to sustainable and active travel. At the same time, parking construction can cost considerable amounts while council budgets are strictly limited.

*The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* sets out that SBC can only consider building parking where there really isn't enough, and if funding can be obtained. It also makes environmental commitments when parking is built: to match-fund sustainable travel improvements; to plant one tree for each new parking space created; and to replace any trees that are lost in line with the council's Tree Planting Policies.

It also sets out that the sale of, or granting of an easement to allow access over, SBC land to allow private parking will be allowed where there is a real need, but not if it would cause a loss of communal parking, and that if it is permitted a sustainable transport contribution will be required.

- Do you agree with these approaches? {Y/N}
- \* *If not, why not?* {Free text if N selected}

## **Car parking at destinations**

### **14. Hospital parking (section 6.4.1)**

SBC's approach to managing parking near to the Lister Hospital has been to normally prioritise kerbside space for short-stay parking such as outpatients and hospital visitors.

*The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* proposes that this approach is continued so that on-site parking is freed up for longer-stay parking and the more

seriously ill, whilst regular turnover of on-street parking allows as many people as possible to attend for shorter periods.

In time of crisis, as in 2020-21, this regime may be temporarily changed to due to extraordinary circumstances and to support essential services such as by allowing NHS workers to park for longer and without fee.

- Do you agree that on-street parking near to the Lister Hospital should normally be prioritised for short-stay parking such as outpatients and hospital visitors? {Y/N}
- \* *If not, why not?* {Free text if N selected}
- Do you agree that in times of crisis such as the Coronavirus pandemic the Council should be willing to vary this due to the extraordinary circumstances and to support essential services? {Y/N}
- \* *If not, why not?* {Free text if N selected}

#### **15. School parking (section 6.4.2)**

“School run” parking is seen by many residents as a cause of inconvenience, obstruction and even safety concerns. The County Council has expended considerable resources to try to address this, including both encouraging families away from driving to school and introducing parking restrictions to prevent inappropriate parking.

*The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* commits SBC to continue supporting this with dedicated enforcement visits to all schools throughout term time, and whenever making any new parking proposals near schools SBC will take into consideration their impact on the school. SBC will be supportive of future projects by HCC to manage school travel to improve its safety and sustainability.

- Do you agree with these approaches? {Y/N}
- \* *If not, why not?* {Free text if N selected}

#### **16. Customer parking (section 6.4.3)**

Local businesses depend on customers being able to visit them, making this vital to the local economy.

*The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* states that where needed SBC will consider measures to enable customer parking where needed, such as placing time limits on parking so that spaces are not blocked by cars being left all day, in order that businesses can thrive.



It also says that SBC will consider the impact of any parking proposals on other modes of transport, so that customers have a choice of how to reach their destination.

- Do you agree that where customer parking needs to be managed SBC should support local businesses? {Y/N}
- \* *If not, why not?* {Free text if N selected}

#### **17. Deliveries and servicing (section 6.4.4)**

Both businesses and residents rely on goods being delivered and servicing activity such as visits by tradesmen to carry out maintenance. This is often reliant on motor vehicles due to the weight and bulk of goods or supplies.

At the same time there are growing trends in urban areas towards some of these activities being undertaken by other modes, such the use of cargo-cycles (which could be well supported by Stevenage's cycleway network).

*The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* says that SBC will take into consideration the delivery and servicing needs of businesses and residents when making new parking proposals. SBC will be supportive of changes to support more sustainable methods of servicing, for example assisting demand for cycle deliveries by providing for cargo-cycle parking at key locations.

- Do you agree with SBC taking the delivery and servicing needs of businesses and residents into account? {Y/N}
- \* *If not, why not?* {Free text if N selected}

#### **18. Local workers and longer distance railway commuters (sections 6.4.5 and 6.4.6)**

A lot of people living or working in Stevenage rely on their car to get to work. Whilst it is expected that off-street parking in employer's or public car parks will be the norm, *The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* accepts that this may not always be the case and there may be compelling reasons why they can't use other modes of transport instead.

As part of the new strategy, the council will take into consideration the impact of any new parking proposals on local workers, particularly where the expectation of their parking off-street cannot be fulfilled. It will also seek to support their transition to other modes of transport. Given the direction in which policy is developing nationwide, *The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* recognises that it may be necessary for SBC, working with HCC, to consider the implementation of a

Workplace Parking Levy to support transition away from car dependency by local workers.

At the same time, the railway station is well served by bus services and the walking and cycling network, and is well supplied with parking for both cars and cycles. *The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* expects commuters travelling via the railway station to make use of these facilities.

- Do you agree with these approaches? {Y/N}
- \* *If not, why not? {Free text if N selected}*

## **Parking in relation to other changes**

### **19. Regeneration, Placemaking and Living Streets (sections 6.5 and 6.6)**

During the life of *The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* the regeneration of the New Town Centre and renewal of some neighbourhood centres will help to reshape the town. SBC also aspires to implement “placemaking” and Living Street projects, working collaboratively with residents to transform their local environment.

Parking changes are expected to support these improvements, rather than to lead them, and to help support reduced car dependency and environmental improvements. Where this impacts parking, it doesn't necessarily mean simply taking parking away, but could involve other measures such as provision of alternative parking for larger vehicles such as vans that have a bigger visual impact so as to create a greater sense of space.

- Do you have any comments on the role of parking management in regeneration projects? {Y/N}
- \* *What comments would you like to make? {Free text if Y selected}*
- Do you have any comments on the role of parking management in placemaking and Liveable Street projects? {Y/N}
- \* *What comments would you like to make? {Free text if Y selected}*

### **20. New developments (section 6.7)**

Parking difficulties in existing streets are often attributed to perceived planning failures, whereby vehicles overflow the space allocated to them when the street was built and/or are left in locations that were never intended for parking. *The Stevenage Parking Strategy 2021-2031* envisages a future where this is better controlled and, with the help of developers, measures are put in place to prevent informal and problematic parking before developments are occupied.

- Do you agree that when new developments are built, effective measures should be put in place at an early stage to prevent parking problems from arising? {Y/N}
- \* *If not, why not?* {Free text if N selected}

### **Other comments**

- Do you want to make any further comments on the draft strategy? {Y/N}
- \* *Section number:* {Short free text if Y selected}
- \* *What comments would you like to make on this section?* {Free text if Y selected}
- Add another comment {button, duplicating the preceding two free text fields}