

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**1 FEBRUARY 2007**

**REPORT OF CORPORATE  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

**CABINET DECISION / KEY DECISION**

***Regeneration & Transport - Lead Cabinet Member - Councillor R Cook***

**STOCKTON TOWN CENTRE CAR PARKING STRATEGY**

1. Summary

This report presents the findings of a study into current and future car parking provision in Stockton Town Centre.

The Report brings together work on off-street parking analysis carried out by Faber Maunsell Consulting Engineers together with development of the on-street strategy agreed by Cabinet at the meeting on 20 April 2006. Members will recall that this followed an exercise, led by the Town Centre Manager, on addressing historical concerns for businesses, coach operators and taxi operators affected by current on-street restrictions and lack of dedicated facilities.

Members are also asked to note the current progress on bus lane enforcement and expansion of Residents Parking Schemes where it impacts on the strategy.

2. Recommendations

Recommended that

- (i) Members approve the short to medium term off-street Car Parking Strategy detailed in the report in order to deal with impending redevelopment of existing sites.
- (ii) Members approve the longer term car parking strategy to inform future Capital bids subject to detailed feasibility and a further report to Cabinet.
- (iii) Members approve the detailed on-street pay and display car parking proposals to assist businesses with additional short stay customer parking opportunities.
- (iv) Members agree the Council Travel Plan contribution to the overall strategy
- (v) Members approve the implementation of camera enforcement of the High Street Bus Lane.
- (vi) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration to take detailed actions to delivery the Stockton Town Centre car parking Action Plan using Local Transport Plan Capital allocations.

- (vii) Members note the introduction of a Residents Permit Zone in the Parliament Street area with consultation on further expansion to the Wellington Street area planned for later this year.
- (viii) Members note that there are no significant changes to the Service area's Medium Term Financial Plan at this stage.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

Regeneration initiatives in Stockton will have a significant impact on the car parking stock from 2007 onwards and it is essential that the Council have a strategy in place to manage demand for both long and short stay off-street parking facilities, particularly in view of the long lead time for developing permanent facilities.

4. Members Interests

Members (including co-opted members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (paragraph 8) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (paragraph 10 of the code of conduct).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting is being held, whilst the matter is being considered; not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (paragraph 12 of the Code).

**Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc; whether or not they are a member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting, and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room during consideration of the relevant item.**

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**1 FEBRUARY 2007**

**REPORT OF CORPORATE  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

**CABINET DECISION / KEY DECISION**

***Regeneration & Transport - Lead Cabinet Member - Councillor R Cook***

**STOCKTON TOWN CENTRE CAR PARKING STRATEGY**

1. Summary

This report presents the findings of a study into current and future car parking provision in Stockton Town Centre.

The Report brings together work on off-street parking analysis carried out by Faber Maunsell Consulting Engineers together with development of the on-street strategy agreed by Cabinet at the meeting on 20 April 2006. Members will recall that this followed an exercise, led by the Town Centre Manager, on addressing historical concerns for businesses, coach operators and taxi operators affected by current on-street restrictions and lack of dedicated facilities.

Members are also asked to note the current progress on bus lane enforcement and expansion of Residents Parking Schemes where it impacts on the strategy.

2. Recommendations

Recommended that

- (i) Members approve the short to medium term off-street Car Parking Strategy detailed in the report in order to deal with impending redevelopment of existing sites.
- (ii) Members approve the longer term car parking strategy to inform future Capital bids subject to detailed feasibility and a further report to Cabinet at the appropriate time.
- (iii) Members note the progress with on-street pay and display car parking proposals to assist businesses with additional short stay customer parking opportunities.
- (iv) Members agree the Council Travel Plan contribution to the overall strategy
- (v) Members approve the implementation of camera enforcement of the High Street Bus Lane.
- (vi) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration to take detailed actions to delivery the Stockton Town Centre car parking Action Plan using Local Transport Plan Capital allocations.

- (vii) Members note the introduction of a Residents Permit Zone in the Parliament Street area with consultation on further expansion to the Wellington Street area planned for later this year.
- (viii) Members note that there are no significant changes to the service area's Medium Term Financial Plan at this stage.

## **DETAIL**

### **Background**

- 1 Members will recall that at their meeting on 20 April 2006 (Minute //// refers), approval was given to the principle of revocation/relaxation of Town Centre waiting restrictions and to the introduction of on-street charging where it would assist short stay customer parking and support small businesses.
- 2 The report also endorsed a review of Market Trader parking, Taxi Rank provision, Blue Badge enforcement as well as the introduction of Bus Lane Camera monitoring.
- 3 Finally, Members were mindful of the Stockton Riverside Sites Master Plan exercise and its potential impact on off-street parking provision in the town and agreed that a further report be brought to Cabinet on a Parking Strategy for Stockton Town Centre.

### **Riverside Sites Master Plan**

- 4 There are significant developments proposed for the town centre, both land use and transport initiatives, which will impact on demand for and supply of the car parking stock. The economic success of the town centre will, in part, be dependant on ensuring residents, shoppers, visitors and workers can both efficiently access and park in the town. This is particularly important given the proximity of competing regional and out of town centres.
- 5 In this context, Cabinet received a report on 30 November 2006, detailing the work carried out by Gillespies. The proposals in the Riverside Sites Master Plan that may involve development on existing car parks have been fed into the ongoing Car Parking Strategy review in order to ensure that there will be sufficient car parking provision in the future to sustain the levels of proposed development.
- 6 The key issues emerging from the Riverside Sites report that impact on Town Centre off-street parking stock are: -
  - A new anchor food-store on the Southern Gateway site that will replace an existing privately operated long stay multi-storey car park with one provided primarily for shoppers.
  - A landmark site on the land at Riverside Road currently used as a Council operated long stay car park. The loss of the long stay car park might actually occur earlier than assumed in the November report.
  - The Eastern Gateway site and Splash extension will result in the loss of Council operated short stay parking spaces.
  - The Northern Gateway site assembly will remove the Council operated car parks in the Tennant Street area.

## **On-Street Parking Strategy**

- 7 Following the Cabinet decision in April 2006, detailed proposals to introduce on-street pay-and-display parking, extend town centre residents parking zones and provide additional taxi ranks have been developed. The provision of additional on-street parking opportunities will assist short stay demand but the introduction of further town centre resident parking zones (RPZ) will increase pressure for additional off-street commuter parking spaces.
- 8 Work is currently progressing on an RPZ in the Parkfield area immediately south of Yarm Lane and the extension of the Victoria Estate RPZ. Consultation will also commence later this year on the introduction of an RPZ in the Wellington Street area.
- 9 The first phase of on-street pay-and-display ultra short stay parking bays to assist the viability of small businesses are currently at the consultation stage.
- 10 Additional hackney carriage ranks are also under consideration near Bridge Road and adjacent to the Cultural Quarter.

## **Faber Maunsell Study**

- 11 The principal objectives of the Stockton Town Centre Parking study was to gain an understanding of the current parking regime, to identify options for the future and to develop a car parking strategy/framework to ensure the appropriate level, location, quality and pricing of on and off street public car parking in the town centre in order to assure the continued vitality of Stockton town centre in the short, medium and long term.
- 12 Parking can be seen to influence and be influenced by the wider Urban area policy goals in relation to transport, land-use, the economy and environment. For this reason it is important that the development of a parking strategy took account of the policies and strategies relating to these areas together with the views of key Council officers and other stakeholders who can contribute to the strategy development process. The Viewpoint Panel was also consulted during Summer 2006 to take account of public perceptions.

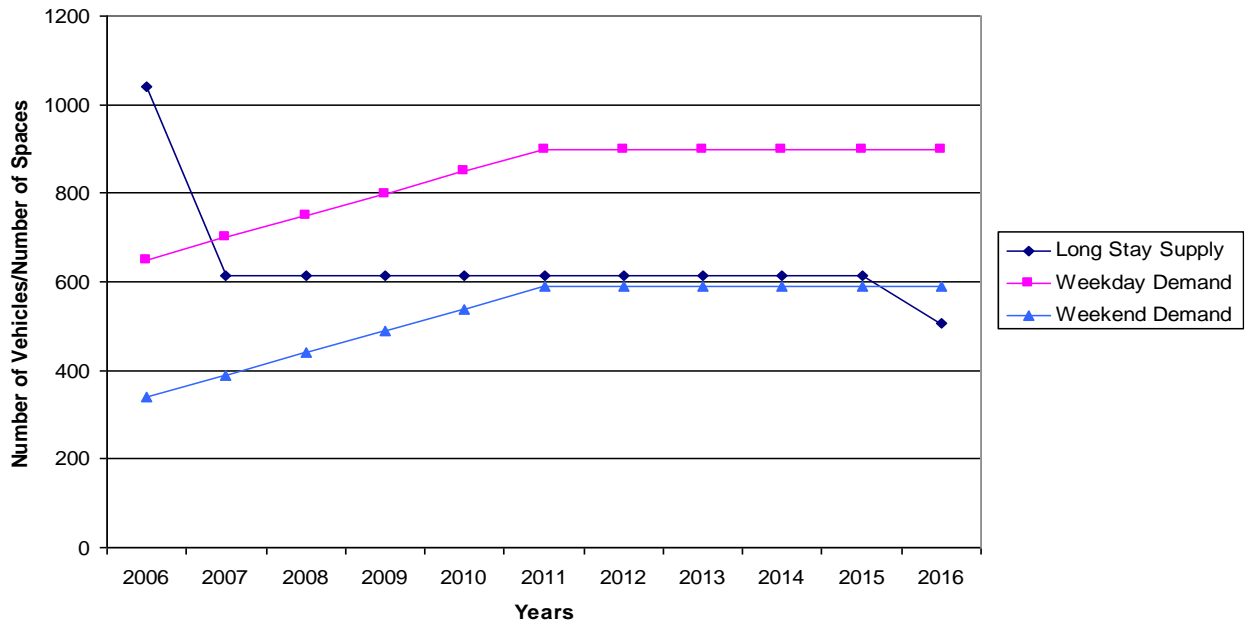
The review consisted of several elements; *policy context, quality audit, wayfinding, consultation, location and capacity considerations.*

- 13 A copy of the full study report can be viewed in the Members Library and the Executive Summary and Action Plan is reproduced at **Appendix 1**. The key findings and recommendations are summarised below.

### **Key Findings**

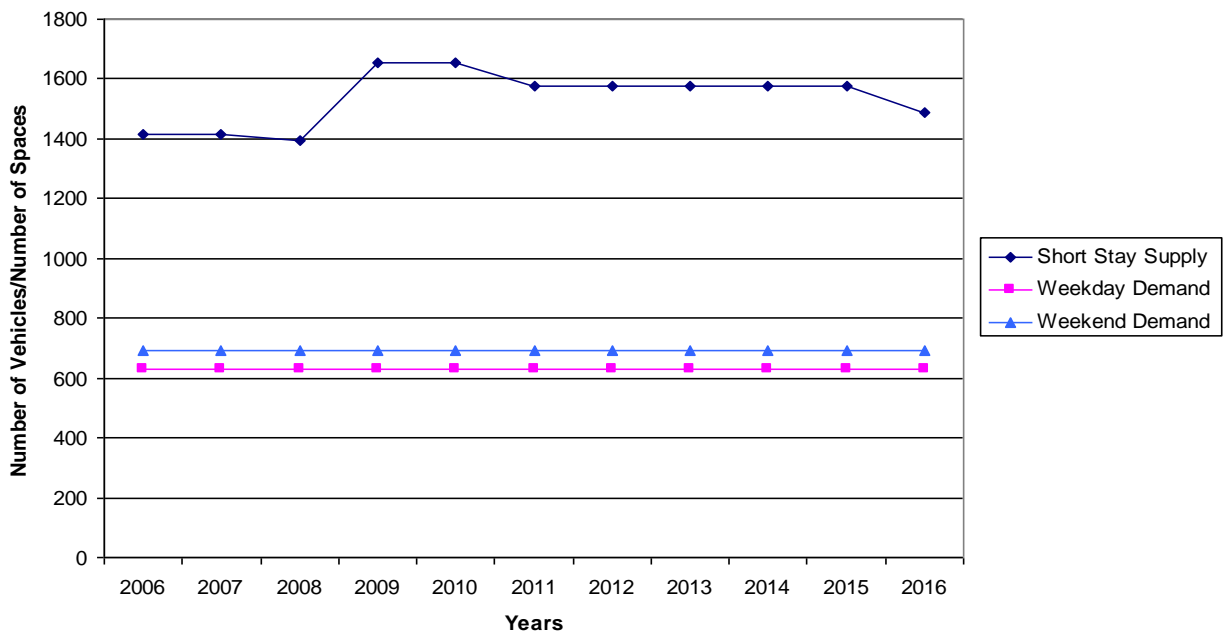
- Car parking availability is important for the town centre economy but the number and location should not dissuade people from using more sustainable forms of transport. Consideration could be given to Park & Ride sites.
- There are sufficient long stay off-street parking spaces available at present, although those spaces closest to the Civic Centre are usually full and predominantly taken up by Council staff.
- There are surplus spaces at Thompson Street, Parliament Street and in the Castlegate multi-storey car park for commuters but free on-street spaces are taken up in preference.
- The demolition of the Castlegate multi-storey will create an immediate deficit in supply of long stay spaces. This will be exacerbated by the phased implementation of further residents parking zones and the future redevelopment of the Riverside and Northern Gateway sites.

## Long Stay Car Parks, The Supply and Demand of Parking in Stockton Town Centre over the Next 10 Years



- The deficit is of the order of 200 spaces on the loss of Castlegate with this increasing to 400 with loss of Riverside car park and effect of Residents Parking Zones.
- There is a large surplus of parking spaces that currently operate with a short stay charging tariff. The new Southern Gateway food-store car park is likely to further increase the surplus availability of short stay parking.

## Short Stay Car Parks, The Supply and Demand of Parking in Stockton Town Centre over the Next 10 Years



- Whilst the quality, condition and security of car parks were found to be good, the motorist and especially pedestrian signage is in need of improvement.
- Stockton off-street car parking charges are amongst the lowest in the Tees Valley and unlike most other authorities in the region, there are no on-street charges to facilitate extra short stay provision

## Consultation

- 14 The consultants undertook consultation with the public through the Viewpoint Panel during Summer 2006 and had detailed fact finding sessions with key officers in a number of Town Centre related services and the salient comments are summarised below.

### *Viewpoint*

The Viewpoint survey revealed that there is concern over the perceived low level of enforcement and abuse of Blue Badge conditions. Better lighting, more parking attendants and CCTV were requested.

The favoured car parks are Riverside and Castlegate, which are both affected by development proposals.

### *Regeneration*

Under utilisation of Alberto Street and the privately controlled Wellington Square car park should be addressed. There are existing operational problems for Council staff needing to park during the day and difficulties for visitors seeking long stay spaces around the Civic area.

In the longer term, if the Civic Centre relocates to the South of the town centre then additional long stay provision may be required in this location.

### *Environment*

There is a need to review the current Council employee car park permit system and promote car sharing, 'hot desking' and work from home initiatives as part of a wider Council Travel Plan to encourage modal shift (recently endorsed by Cabinet at its meeting in August 2006).

Relocation of Council Offices should be coupled with a Park and Ride facility as Council employees are filling public car parks to the detriment of visitors.

### *Parking*

No urgent need for better commuter car park signing as the vast majority of motorists are local and are familiar with choices.

Consideration be given to issue of warning letters to vehicles parked in contravention of conditions of use of Blue Badges. The Council to not renew Blue Badges to their own residents on issue of 3rd such warning.

### *Town Centre management*

In agreement with the proposals for on-street ultra short stay car parking and the additional taxi ranks. Variable Message Signing to car parks would be beneficial together with information on what facilities are nearby.

Stockton may not yet be ready for a Park & Ride facility.

Significant problems with blue badge parking which could undermine any parking Strategy.

Lack of Coach parking and need for better market trader parking facility. Two-Wheeler parking provision is also weak.

## Proposals

- 15 The consultants suggested Action Plan is attached at **Appendix 2** with the location of the key sites identified in **Appendix 3**.

Taking into account the consultants recommended action plan and the need to make some positive steps to both manage single occupancy Council employee car trips and encourage modal shift, it is recommended that the following strategy be supported.

### *Short Term*

- Minimal works to the former NE Co-op site to provide a car park incorporating temporary coach parking and market trader parking subject to planning consent. Allocation of spaces at the Dairy should underpin Council Travel Plan objectives. It is not intended to bring this car park up to a suitable standard for pay and display public parking due to the likely short duration for which it would be available.
- Continued support for the Council's On-Street parking strategy and promotion of the off-street facility at Alberto Street. Residents Parking Schemes to be introduced in Parkfield and Victoria Estate (amended scheme) initially with Wellington Street area to follow.
- A pedestrian 'wayfinding' strategy be pursued for the Town Centre in conjunction with the Town Centre Manager, using funding from the 2007/8 Local Transport Plan.
- Greater enforcement of Blue Badge conditions of use is undertaken including the issue of warning letters to the issuing authority.
- Camera Enforcement of High Street Bus Lane.
- Town Centre two-wheeler parking facilities to be greatly improved using 2007/8 Local Transport Plan capital funding.

### *Medium Term*

- An alternative location is found to replace the Dairy site once North Shore/Eastern Gateway development proceeds. Possible sites are Wellington Square, Black Path or North Shore.
- Further expansion of Residents Parking Schemes as necessary.
- Park and Ride facilities be pursued with sites to be investigated to include Tees Barrage Events Car Park (also serving Teesdale and the University) and Portrack Marshes.
- Variable Message Signing to large town centre car parks and park and ride facilities.
- Development and full implementation of Council Travel Plan initiatives.
- Identify and protect sites for possible Multi-Storey Car Parks. Possible sites to include Parliament Street, Thompson Street, North Shore or Portrack Lane.

### *Longer Term*

- Selective implementation of multi-storey car parking or further Park and Ride facilities.

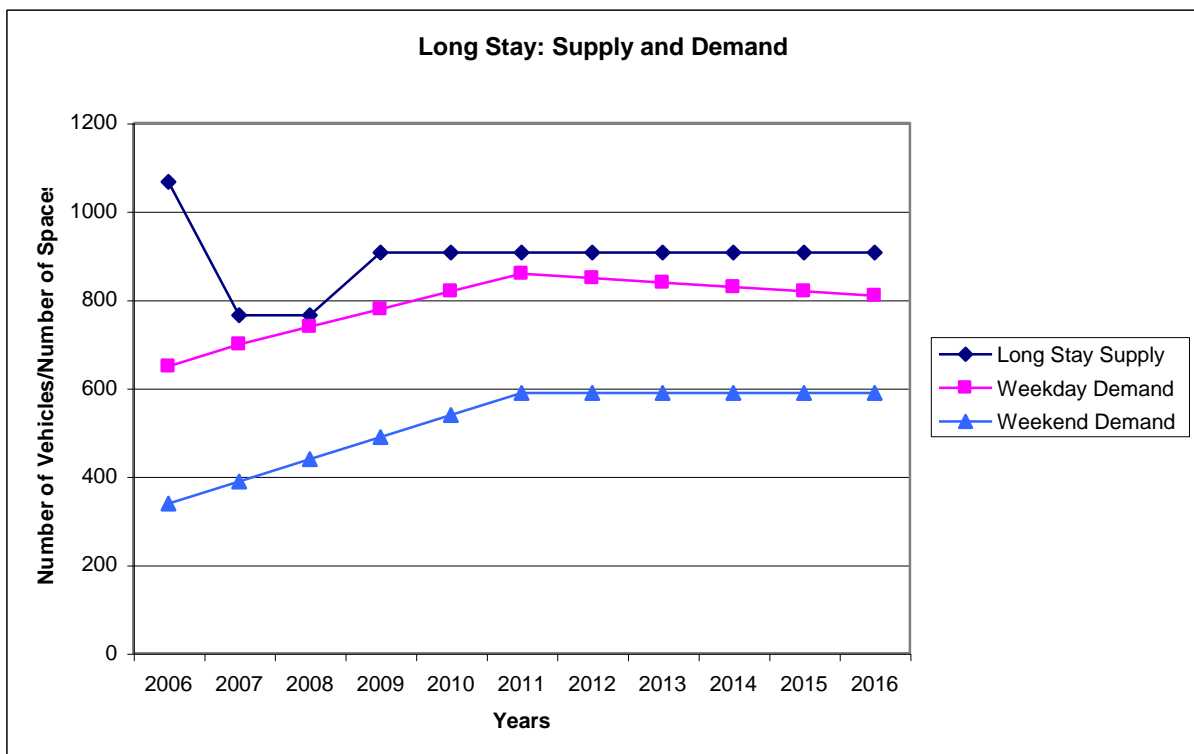


16 Whilst it is not yet certain which of the proposed new sites will prove to be the preferred location, one possible scenario is for the Dairy/Wellington Square site to provide approximately 150 spaces with a future surface car park providing a further 250 spaces. It is also assumed that the implementation of the Corporate Travel Plan will have an impact on demand for weekday spaces. It is also possible that the development of Riverside car park may occur much earlier than assumed during the study. These assumptions are summarised in the table below and the resulting impact on the supply and demand situation represented graphically below.

|  |              |                           |
|--|--------------|---------------------------|
| Temporary use of Dairy site                      | 2007-8       | <b>150</b>                |
| North Shore/Black Path/Tees Barrage              | 2009 onwards | <b>250</b>                |
| Wellington Square or other permit site           | 2008 onwards | <b>150</b>                |
| Riverside – assume loss occurs earlier than 2016 | 2009         | <b>0</b>                  |
| Impact of Council Travel plan on demand          | 2008 onwards | <b>-10<br/>cumulative</b> |

### The Supply and Demand of Parking in Stockton Town Centre over the Next 10 Years

#### Impact of the Action Plan on Weekday Long Stay car parking



## **FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

### **Financial**

Short-term infrastructure proposals, including a special type approved bus lane camera, to be funded from the appropriate Integrated Transport Block of Local Transport Plan 2007/8 and 2008/9 allocations. The initial phase of the on-street parking controls is funded from the LTP 2006/7.

Temporary use of the Dairy site including a control barrier will cost £20,000 and will also incur rates which are yet to be determined. However, the control barrier will be able to be transferred to a new site once the Dairy is under development. The maintenance and running costs of the High Street Bus Lane camera will be met from fixed penalty ticket income.

Implementation of Residents Parking Zones is assumed to be budget neutral as the administration costs are met from the sale of permits and the cost of enforcement is met from fixed penalty ticket income. The cost of the traffic regulation orders and appropriate signage will be funded from the Traffic Management budget.

### **Legal**

Both the on-street and off-street parking strategy will require legal Orders subject to statutory consultation procedures. Enforcement of Bus Lane contraventions requires legal Orders and the use of appropriate type-approved equipment.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

Failure to address potential shortfall in car parking supply could undermine regeneration objectives for Stockton Town Centre.

Some of the identified sites for future parking facilities are not within Council ownership.

## **COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS**

### **Environment**

The Corporate Travel Plan aims to encourage more sustainable forms of transport and reduce emissions by reducing car travel. Key aims include a modal shift away from single occupancy car journeys. One of the objectives is to increase the number of people car sharing to work from 7% to 10% by 2011. The proposals in the report will underpin the aims and objectives of the Travel Plan.

### **Community Safety and Well-Being**

Stockton's car parks are Secure by Design and all future facilities will ensure that this standard is maintained.

### **Health**

The Council Travel Plan aims to encourage more sustainable forms of transport and healthier lifestyles.

### **Economic Regeneration**

The Parking Strategy is designed to complement and underpin the Town Centre regeneration initiatives including the Riverside Sites Master Plan. A key aim of the Corporate Travel Plan is to reduce the pressures on car parking in key locations in order to support regeneration programmes.

## **Education and Lifelong Learning**

None.

## **Arts and Culture**

On-street parking proposals support the development of the Cultural Quarter.

## **CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS**

As covered in the report, consultation has taken place with the Viewpoint Panel and key stakeholders including town centre businesses. Further detailed consultation will take place as appropriate in line with statutory requirements and the Council consultation protocols.

Town Centre parking strategy is of interest to all Members but particularly those representing the Town Centre Ward, Councillors Coleman and Kirton.

### **Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services**

**Contact Officer** : **Bill Trewick**  
**Post Title** : **Traffic and Road Safety Manager**  
**Telephone No.** : **01642 - 526716**  
**E-mail address** : **bill.trewick@stockton.gov.uk**

### **Background Papers**

Report to Cabinet on On-Street Car Parking, 30 April 2006  
Report to Cabinet on the Corporate Travel Plan, 10 August 2006  
Report to Cabinet on Riverside Sites Study, 30 November 2006  
Faber Maunsell Report, January 2007

### **Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:**

All

### **Property**

Medium to long term proposals may require acquisition of land and construction of large facilities.