

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Date of Meeting: 10 June 2025

Report of: Strategic Director for Corporate Services

Title: Generating income to fund Net Zero activity

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

1. What is the report about?

1.1 To request a budget to undertake the works required to provide a temporary car park on the former bus station site. The net income generated will provide an ongoing budget to fund the net zero team and its activities at the Council.

2. Recommendations:

2.1 That Council approves a capital budget of £75,000 to undertake the works including highways works to enable the car Park to be constructed; and

2.2 That Council agrees that from 2026-27, the net income generated will be ring-fenced to support the Net Zero work at the Council.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

3.1 In line with the approved parking places order, the recommendations will allow the temporary car park to be delivered whilst meeting the Council's aspiration to continue funding the Net Zero team. This will formally approve the commitment to use the additional funds to continue the work of the Council's net zero team.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources

4.1 It is intended that the net income received in 2025-26, will be used as a revenue contribution to capital to offset the costs of delivering the Car Park. Going forward it is proposed to use the net income to fund the Net Zero team formalising the commitments made by Councillors.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

5.1 The additional funding will be used to continue funding the existing Net Zero teams and their activities. At this stage the estimated income of around £220,000 is considered sufficient to fund the activity.

6. What are the legal aspects?

6.1 The report seeks authority for approval of a capital budget to undertake work to enable the car park to be constructed to undertake works at the site in order to make it ready to be used as a car park. The authority for the area to be designated as a car park

was approved by Executive on 3rd March 2025. The area will be officially designated as a car park when the parking places order amendment takes effect.

6.2 Any expenditure on works to the new car park must be procured in accordance with the Procurement Act 2023 and the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedures.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

7.1 Members will note the legal aspects above. The Monitoring Officer has no additional comments.

8. Report details:

8.1 In 2024, the demolition of the former bus station site in the City Centre was completed. The Council has long term plans to develop the site and medium-term aspirations to provide an affordable meanwhile use.

8.2 On 5 March 2025, Executive approved the latest Parking Places Order, which allowed for a new car park on the site of the former bus station in Paris Street. Whilst this allowed the Council to legally make use of the site for a car park. No approval was sought for a budget to undertake the works.

8.3 The costs of the works is projected to be £75,000 and this will cover on-site works, off-site highways works around the junction, highways design and consents, planning costs, and a risk budget to cover unknowns such as drainage clearance works.

8.4 The car park will have around 50 spaces and is allocated in the Central Zone for charging purposes. This should provide an income of around £220,000. It is important to remember that with the sale of Mary Arches and other planned changes to improve active travel, the Council will lose close to 500 parking spaces in the City.

8.5 The current funding for the Net Zero team has been taken from an earmarked reserve allocated a number of years ago. This funding ends after 2025-26. It is anticipated that the net income from this car park (£220,000) will be sufficient to allow the continued funding of the team and its activities and the external work currently undertaken. Any surplus will be held in an earmarked reserve to ensure it is available to fund net zero once the car park has ceased.

8.6 The maximum length that the car park will operate is expected to be 3 years.

9. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

9.1 The provision of car parking helps to support a prosperous local economy.

10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

10.1 Given the location and performance of car parks in the vicinity and the loss of central spaces, it is considered the risk of financial non-performance is low. Good marketing of the new location will be useful to minimise the risk.

11. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

11.1 Under the Act's Public Sector Equalities Duty, decision makers are required to consider the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

11.2 In order to comply with the general duty authorities must assess the impact on equality of decisions, policies and practices. These duties do not prevent the authority from reducing services where necessary, but they offer a way of developing proposals that consider the impacts on all members of the community.

11.3 In making decisions the authority must take into account the potential impact of that decision in relation to age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), sex and gender, gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women and new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage and civil partnership status in coming to a decision.

11.4 In recommending this proposal no potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act because it is requesting funding for a new car park, not amending the charging for parking.

12. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

12.1 Important to complete this section in light of the Council declaring a Climate Emergency. Consider whether the recommendations you are making in the report will help, hinder or have no direct impact on delivering our carbon reduction target (carbon neutral by 2030).

12.2 You should think about things like:-

- Travel (and, if travel is unavoidable, whether lower carbon options will be pursued e.g. walking, public transport, electric car);
- Infrastructure (e.g. LED lighting, energy efficient heating/hot water, solar panels, electric car charging points);
- Waste (e.g. recycling, composting, reducing non-recyclable waste); and
- Any other specific carbon reduction initiatives.

12.3 The provision of a car park will potentially attract additional vehicle movements in the City. However, it is likely that these movements will have occurred anyway and be offset by the loss of substantially more parking spaces within the City.

12.4 There will be some impact from the changes required to prepare the land for use as a car park.

12.5 The net income will be used to fund the Net Zero team at the City Council and will therefore contribute to the furthering of work and projects to provide carbon reduction schemes in the City.

13. Are there any other options?

13.1 The land could remain unused.

13.2 The Council could identify an alternative use for the land.

13.3 The Council could actively market and sell the land.

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Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

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