



Title of report: Herefordshire Parking Strategy 2026–2041

Meeting: Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee

Meeting date: Wednesday 15 April 2026

Report by: Transport Planning Services Manager

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision

Wards affected

All Wards

Purpose

To invite Scrutiny Committee to review and comment on the draft Herefordshire Parking Strategy 2026–2041 prior to its submission to Cabinet for adoption. The strategy sets out a modern, evidence-based approach to how parking will be planned, managed, enforced and integrated across the county over the next 15 years.

The strategy aims to deliver safe, accessible, financially sustainable and user-centred parking services that support economic vitality, protect vulnerable users, and integrate parking with wider transport planning.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) That Scrutiny Committee reviews the draft Parking Strategy 2026–2041 and provides any recommendations it may wish to submit to Cabinet;
- b) Identifies any areas requiring further development, clarification or amendment before adoption.

Alternative options

Scrutiny have identified the Parking Strategy as an item they wish to scrutinise.

Key considerations

1. The strategy replaces outdated parking policies and establishes a comprehensive framework for how parking will operate across Herefordshire. It aligns with the key policy framework items – namely the Council Plan and LTP5, supporting priorities around
 - a. Economic vitality
 - b. Safety and accessibility
 - c. Climate change and environmental protection
 - d. Sustainable travel
 - e. Digital transformation
2. The strategy directly supports the Council Plan 2024–2028 priorities of People, Place, Growth and Transformation. For example:
 - a. It commits to “safe, accessible and inclusive parking for all users” (People)
 - b. It protects the environment through EV charging, reduced obstruction, and better design (Place).
 - c. It supports town centres, freight, tourism and development (Growth).
 - d. It modernises systems, governance and reporting (Transformation).
 - e. It is also a core supporting document to LTP5, helping deliver objectives around safety, accessibility, climate change, and economic prosperity.
3. A major feature of the strategy is the introduction of the Positive Parking Initiative, shifting the service from a punitive perception to a supportive, educational and safety-focused model.
4. The strategy states:
5. “Positive Parking is about creating a fair and easy to understand parking system... helping people, not catching people out.”
6. This includes:
 - a. more visible, approachable Civil Enforcement Officers
 - b. education-first enforcement
 - c. clearer signage and information
 - d. targeted enforcement at high-risk locations (schools, junctions, bus stops)

Community impact

The Parking Strategy directly supports the Herefordshire Council Plan 2024–2028 by contributing to all four priority areas:

- improving outcomes for People through safer, more accessible and inclusive parking;
- enhancing Place by protecting the environment, improving public spaces and supporting climate objectives;
- enabling Growth by strengthening town centres, supporting tourism and ensuring new developments include well-designed, future-proofed parking;
- and driving Transformation through modern, efficient and data-driven services including digital payment systems, virtual permits, better governance and transparent performance reporting. Together, these elements ensure parking plays a constructive role in improving quality of life, supporting communities and enabling sustainable economic prosperity.

The Parking Strategy is a core supporting document for Local Transport Plan 5 (2025–2041) and helps deliver its objectives by managing parking in ways that strengthen the local economy, improve safety, reduce congestion and support healthier, more sustainable travel choices.

It aligns with LTP5 by improving accessibility for all users, supporting active travel through better kerbside management, integrating parking with bus, rail and Park & Choose facilities, contributing to climate goals through EV infrastructure and smarter land use, and enhancing perceptions of safety via Park Mark accreditation, improved lighting and targeted enforcement. This ensures parking functions as an integral part of a modern, connected and resilient transport network.

9. The strategy is expected to have significant positive impacts by:
 - a. improving safety and accessibility
 - b. supporting town centres and local businesses
 - c. enhancing disabled access
 - d. reducing obstructive parking
 - e. supporting sustainable travel choices
 - f. improving public confidence in parking services
10. The document notes that the Positive Parking Initiative aims to “build trust between the council and the community.”

Environmental impact

11. The Parking Strategy 2026–2041 directly supports the council’s environmental policy commitments and aligns with the County Plan success measures in the following ways:
12. Reduce the council’s carbon emissions
 - a. The strategy promotes digitalisation—virtual permits, online payments, reduced paper use—and more efficient enforcement operations. These measures reduce officer mileage, minimise resource use and support lower-carbon service delivery.
13. Work in partnership with others to reduce county carbon emissions
 - a. The strategy integrates with the Local Transport Plan (LTP5), the Hereford Transport Hub, Park & Ride, Park & Choose, and active travel networks. By improving access to sustainable modes and reducing obstructive parking on walking and cycling

routes, it supports countywide carbon reduction in partnership with transport operators, businesses and communities.

14. Improve the air quality within Herefordshire
 - a. Reduced congestion, improved turnover, better loading management, and targeted enforcement at schools, junctions and bus stops all contribute to lower emissions in sensitive areas. The expansion of EV charging infrastructure across council car parks further supports cleaner vehicle use.
15. Improve energy efficiency of homes and build standards for new housing
 - a. The strategy supports planning policy by requiring new developments to include appropriate, future-proofed parking, EV charging, and sustainable travel infrastructure. This complements wider Local Plan policies on energy-efficient design and reduces reliance on private car use in new communities.
16. Increase the number of short-distance trips being done by sustainable modes of travel
 - a. This is a core outcome of the strategy. Measures include:
 - b. protecting cycle lanes and footways from obstructive parking
 - c. improving signage and wayfinding
 - d. integrating parking with active travel corridors
 - e. supporting e-bike hire and secure cycle parking
 - f. enabling Park & Choose and Park & Ride
17. These actions make walking, cycling and public transport more attractive and reliable for short journeys.

Equality duty

18. Due to the potential impact of this project being low, a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required. However, the following equality considerations should be taken into account when making a decision about this strategy:
 - a. Disabled people: The Parking Strategy includes significant positive measures for disabled residents, including improved Blue Badge provision, larger and better-located disabled bays, kerb and footway improvements, and stronger enforcement against pavement obstruction. Inconsiderate parking disproportionately affects wheelchair users, mobility-impaired residents and those using adapted cycles, who may be physically unable to navigate blocked pavements or may be forced into the carriageway.
 - b. Older people, children, and people with visual impairments: Obstructive parking on pavements, verges and crossing points creates safety risks for older residents, children and people with visual impairments. The Positive Parking Initiative, targeted enforcement at high-risk locations, and improved signage and design standards will help reduce these risks and support safer, more accessible movement around communities.
 - c. Low-income households and those without access to a car: Low-income households are more likely to rely on walking, cycling and public transport. Measures that reduce obstructive parking, improve footways, and protect bus stops and cycle lanes

support equitable access to essential services. The strategy also supports more affordable travel choices through Park & Choose, improved active travel links and clearer information for residents and visitors.

- d. Women and minority groups concerned about safety Improved lighting: CCTV, Park Mark accreditation and safer street design contribute to enhanced perceptions of safety, particularly for women and minority groups who may feel more vulnerable in poorly lit or obstructed environments.
19. Good relations and community cohesion: The Positive Parking Initiative promotes a more supportive, educational and community-focused approach to parking management. By improving communication, reducing conflict around parking, and ensuring fair and consistent enforcement, the strategy helps foster better relations between residents, businesses and visitors. Improve residents' access to green space in Herefordshire
- a. By reducing obstructive parking on pavements, verges and access routes, the strategy helps maintain safe walking routes to parks, riverside paths and open spaces. Inconsiderate parking of this kind creates significant safety risks, particularly where vehicles force pedestrians into the carriageway or block visibility at junctions and crossings.
 - b. These risks disproportionately affect people with protected characteristics, including:
 - i. Disabled people, especially wheelchair users, mobility-impaired residents and those using adapted cycles, who may be physically unable to navigate around parked vehicles.
 - ii. Older people, who may have reduced mobility, balance or confidence when walking in areas where pavements are obstructed.
 - iii. Parents and carers with pushchairs, who are often forced into the road when pavements are blocked.
 - iv. Children, who are more vulnerable to traffic danger and have limited ability to judge vehicle speeds.
 - v. People with visual impairments, for whom obstructed pavements and unpredictable obstacles pose serious hazards.
20. By addressing these issues through the Positive Parking Initiative, clearer enforcement, and improved design and signage, the strategy supports safer, more inclusive access to green spaces. Improved wayfinding and safer streets also encourage more short trips on foot or by bike.

Resource implications

- 21. The Parking Strategy itself does not commit the council to specific capital expenditure. Instead, it provides a strategic framework within which future investment decisions, operational changes and technology upgrades can be planned and prioritised.
- 22. Funding to support early implementation is already identified within the council's financial planning. The Local Transport Grant has allocated budget to support the delivery of key elements of the strategy, including improvements to signage and lines, digital upgrades, and the Positive Parking Initiative. This provides a secure foundation for initial phases of work.
- 23. In addition, the parking service operates on a self-financing basis. Surplus revenue generated through parking charges will be reinvested directly into the service, supporting:

- a. maintenance of car parks, signs and lines
 - b. digital and enforcement technology upgrades
 - c. accessibility improvements
 - d. EV charging infrastructure
 - e. safety and security enhancements
24. This reinvestment approach ensures that improvements are sustainable and that the service continues to deliver value for money.
25. Future infrastructure projects, such as major car park refurbishments, EV charging expansion or technology modernisation, may require additional funding. These will be subject to separate business cases and may draw on:
- a. capital programme allocations
 - b. external grants
 - c. partnership opportunities
26. No additional staffing resources are required for adoption of the strategy. However, delivery of specific projects may require coordination across departments and with external partners. ICT implications relate primarily to digital payment systems, virtual permits and data management tools, all of which will be planned and costed through existing governance processes.

Legal implications

27. The relevant legal provisions for this decision can be found in the council's constitution, www.herefordshire.gov.uk/constitution.

Risk management

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Risk: Public opposition to changes	Positive Parking Initiative, clear communication, phased rollout, member engagement and public consultation
Risk: Insufficient funding for upgrades or maintenance	Phased delivery, external funding bids, ring-fenced maintenance budgets, reinvestment of parking income
Risk: Legal challenge relating to TROs or asset decisions	Early legal involvement, compliance with statutory processes, clear evidence base
Opportunity: Improve safety and accessibility across the network	Targeted enforcement, Park Mark accreditation, improved bay design, kerb and footway enhancements
Opportunity: Support economic growth and town centre vitality	Better turnover management, improved loading arrangements, tourism-friendly parking, integration with Transport Hub
Opportunity: Deliver climate and sustainable travel benefits	EV charging expansion, Park & Choose development, protection of active travel routes, alignment with LTP5

28. Relevant risks and opportunities will be entered into the relevant service, directorate or corporate risk registers depending on their scale and impact, and monitored through established governance arrangements

Consultees

29. A structured consultation and engagement programme is planned to ensure that elected members, stakeholders, and the public have meaningful opportunities to shape the final strategy.
30. The proposed consultation sequence is as follows:
- a. Pre-consultation engagement with elected members
 - i. Following Scrutiny Committee's review, the draft strategy will be shared with all elected members for early engagement. This stage will allow members to provide detailed feedback, raise local issues, and identify any areas requiring clarification before the strategy is released for public consultation.
 - b. Public consultation (April–May 2026)
 - i. A four-week public consultation will take place in April/May 2026. This will include:
 - ii. online consultation materials
 - iii. opportunities for residents, businesses and stakeholders to comment
 - iv. targeted engagement with disability groups, town and parish councils, business networks and transport operators
 - v. This stage will ensure that the strategy reflects the needs and priorities of the wider community.

- c. Post-consultation member review
 - i. Once public consultation feedback has been analysed and the strategy revised, a further review by elected members will take place ahead of Cabinet consideration. This will ensure transparency, member oversight and alignment with local priorities.
- d. Cabinet review (July 2026)
 - i. The revised strategy, incorporating Scrutiny recommendations, member feedback and public consultation responses, will be presented to Cabinet for adoption in July 2026.
 - ii. This staged approach ensures that the Parking Strategy is shaped collaboratively, reflects the views of residents and stakeholders, and is subject to robust member oversight throughout its development.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft parking strategy 2026-2041

Background papers

None identified

Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report

- LTP5 – Local Transport Plan 2025–2041
- RPZ – Residents’ Parking Zone
- EV – Electric Vehicle
- NPP – National Parking Platform
- TRO – Traffic Regulation Order
- LEVI – Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund