

Appendix A

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Car Parking Strategy

2024 – 2029

Car Parking Services

Business Unit 6 Environment Transport

May 2024

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Executive Summary

This car parking strategy has been compiled to develop and implement plans to help Car Parking Services deliver a specific set of aims and objectives, along with a service delivery plan that illustrates how those objectives will be achieved. This aligns with the Council's Local Plan and Town Centre Masterplan, which have been designed to shape the future growth of the borough and quality of the town centre. This strategy has been developed from the Car Parking review 2024 completed by the Head of Commercial and Operational Service Support and the Head of Strategic Transport.

National and Local transport policies emphasise the importance of parking strategies and the role they must play in supporting local economic growth, along with local BMBC 'Sustainable Barnsley,' objectives by reducing carbon emissions, encouraging smarter life and sustainable transport choices, social well-being, and access to essential services for all.

Whilst the Council's long term strategic ambition is to reduce car usage by encouraging people, to consider their transport choices, including the use of active travel and low emission vehicles, parking provision is fundamental to the successful operation and economic growth of the town centre. Consideration has been given to:

1. BMBC Statutory duties to the Road Traffic Act 1984 (Statutory Guidance updated Oct 2022)
2. Where we are now – assessment of the quantity, location, quality, and cost of existing parking stock in the town centre.
3. Where we want to be – consideration of existing and future demand and assessment of the use of the wider Glassworks and Alhambra developments.
4. How we get there – an action plan, recommendations and proposals for car parking priorities and policies to be delivered by the Council over the next 5 years.

This strategy provides a framework for the supply and management of the Council's off street, car parks and on-street parking predominantly within the town centre. The strategy will be a living document, it will constantly change and flex to meet the challenges, needs and best interests of the borough.

The review identified times when the car parks are used the most and the least, it considered the most (and least) financially viable car parks and the ones that needed priority maintenance. It also reviewed statutory enforcement resources and procedures. This strategy proposes the following aim and objectives to be implemented through a service delivery plan.

The Aim of this Car Parking Strategy is to develop and implement plans to help Car Parking Services deliver our statutory duties and deliver our vision for providing essential parking services across the Borough; to meet the needs of all our road and service users, including residents, local businesses and visitors and deliver against our climate change objectives.

Objective 1 Provide sufficient parking capacity that will support the town centre activities.

Objective 2 Improve accessibility and signage to car parking within the town centre and from key routes to reduce the need for unnecessary traffic movements in the town centre.

Objective 3 Rationalise Car Parking Tariffs, whilst supporting the vitality and economic attractiveness of the town centre to visitors, investors, and developers.

Objective 4 Provide sufficient enforcement to support the efficient operation and management of the car parks.

Objective 5 Support carbon reduction and air quality management goals by providing the infrastructure for additional electric vehicle charging.

1.0 Introduction

This car parking strategy has been compiled to develop and implement plans to help Car Parking Services deliver a specific set of aims and objectives, along with a service delivery plan that illustrates how those objectives will be achieved. This strategy aligns with the Council's Local Plan and Town Centre Masterplan, which have been designed to shape the future growth of the borough and developing opportunities for enhancing the quality of the town centre.

- 1.1 The Barnsley Borough has a population of over 225,000 with 35% of households owning two or more vehicles. Following the COVID pandemic there has been an increase in the number of people working from home, but of those residents that still travel to and from a place of work many do so by driving a car or van. Only 5.1% of Barnsley residents take public transport to work. These figures identify that the Borough is significantly dependent on private vehicles, which reflects some of the rural nature of the area and the limitation of viable transport alternatives.
- 1.2 It is essential that the Council provides suitable car parking provision for residents, visitors, and businesses across the Borough. Parking (and its location) influences the decisions people make about where to go and how to get there. The Council needs to provide sufficient parking to support local economies but not too much to encourage congestion and more car use.
- 1.3 In September 2019, the Council voted unanimously to declare a Climate Emergency and set out an ambitious and realistic vision for the borough to become net zero carbon by 2045 and as an organisation to lead by example to become net zero carbon by 2040. To do this, all Council services have a responsibility to assess the positive and negative impact of the services it provides on the economy, society, and environment. Where applicable, services will enhance the positives and explore ways to either mitigate, reduce, or remove the negative impacts. As such, the objectives outlined in this strategy will deliver both operational and environmental efficiencies, such as reducing the need to print paper copies by introducing virtual services and working to raise awareness about the negative impact of idling which will help to have a positive impact on health and wellbeing by improving local air quality.
- 1.4 The Council operates 2675 parking spaces within the town centre area in 16 car parks and over 440 on street parking spaces. There are also 2467 spaces in privately owned car parks within the town centre in 13 car parks (not all owned by the same operator).
- 1.5 In 2020 the last Car Parking Strategy was presented to the Council where it was agreed that it would be delivered in three phases:
 - Phase 1 – the Glassworks opening.
 - Phase 2 – the wider town centre economy – understanding the impact of the Glassworks on the wider town centre to ensure that parking continues to work for all.

- Phase 3 – the wider town centre impact – a review of all parking related assets within a 15-minute walk of the town centre to understand the impact on businesses, retail, and the environment.
- 1.6 At the time, it was agreed to.
- split car parks into commuter / retail / leisure parking.
 - Introduce a new pricing regime.
 - Undertake a Phase 1 review against several outputs.
- 1.7 As the Glassworks is now operational and the Phase 1 review has been undertaken, it is timely to establish new priorities for the service over the next five-year period. It is worth noting that during the initial Car Parking Strategy period, the car parks have experienced some significant issues, not least the COVID pandemic, where charging was suspended, and many people were working from home. Therefore, accurate baseline data including patronage, income and expenditure has been difficult to define over a longer timeline.
- 1.8 With the opening of the new Glassworks development and the increase in town centre footfall, the Phase 1 review has been undertaken, the new strategy is a light touch and sets out recommendations for the way the Council will manage and regulate its car parks assets going forward.
- 1.9 The Council recognises that car parking plays an important role in promoting the vitality of the town centre assisting both residents and businesses. As such a parking review has been undertaken to consider current parking trends and to develop an empirical evidence base that supports the proposal of several interventions that are primarily focused on the following:
- Parking capacity
 - Parking charges
 - Quality of car parks
 - Location of car parks
 - Car parking enforcement
- 1.10 The parking review has been used to support the development of this parking strategy, which cannot be viewed in isolation, having clear and direct linkages and inter dependencies on the following corporate strategies:
- Barnsley 2030
 - Barnsley Local Plan
 - Transport Strategy
 - Town Centre Masterplan
 - Principal Towns strategies
 - Medium Term Financial Strategy
- 1.11 The Council believes that each car park should fulfil a specific purpose for the benefit of residents and businesses but that an underused car park is a potentially wasted resource for which there may be a more appropriate and beneficial use.

- 1.12 This Car Parking Strategy specifically focuses on off-street and on-street parking in the Town Centre and covers the next five-year period (2024 – 2029). Other areas such as Principal Towns and Cultural Car Parks will be considered alongside other Transformation plan strategies.

2.0 Background and Policy Context

- 2.1 Parking plays an important role in providing for and facilitating the key economic and service functions of a borough by allowing for access by car. Parking is particularly important for Barnsley town centre, which provides services for a population drawn from a wider catchment area than its immediate vicinity, many of whom may live in relatively dispersed / suburban locations, distant from key services and are often difficult to connect by public transport.
- 2.2 Central government has provided a significant national steer for transport strategies across the country with an emphasis on climate change and environmental sustainability. While the design and implementation of parking policies is a local decision, national policy and guidance help place these decisions in context. Sustainable development applied to transport systems requires the promotion of linkages between environmental protection, economic efficiency, and social progress, in which car parking has a role to play.
- 2.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) sets out the Government’s guidance for transport policies with a significant emphasis on the part they must play in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives. The framework highlighted:
- Smarter use of technologies to reduce the need to travel.
 - Having transport systems balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes - giving people a choice in how they travel at the local level for short trips, encouraging them towards more sustainable choices.
 - Supporting an appropriate mix of uses across an area to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education, and other activities.
 - Transport solutions that support reduction in greenhouse gases and reduce congestion.
 - Plans that exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes, e.g., facilities for charging vehicles and the needs of people with disabilities to access all modes of transport.
 - Recognising that patterns of movement, streets and parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places. The framework also directly challenges local authorities to improve the quality of parking in town centres, making it convenient, safe, and secure, with adequate provision for electric charging, motorcycles and appropriate parking charges that do not undermine vitality.
- 2.4 The national transport strategy set out in The Future of Transport: A Network for 2030 (July 2014), presents the long-term goals for modern, efficient, and sustainable transport systems. The paper states that local authorities should have a clear idea of what its parking policy is and what it intends to achieve by it.
- 2.5 The Traffic Management Act (2004) imposes a duty on local authorities to manage their networks in a way that reduces congestion and disruption. It also provides local authorities

with additional powers related to parking. The Department of Transport Full Guidance on Local Transport Plans is clear that local authorities should have policies aimed at tackling congestion and changing travel behaviour, including restricting and or charging for parking. The criminal deregulation of the Traffic Management Act (2004) enables Local Authorities to enforce some offences previously undertaken by the Police, and as such, manage local parking to meet local requirements. The National Planning Policy Framework (2021), looking at supporting a prosperous rural economy, urges Councils to understand the important role parking facilities play in rejuvenating shops, high streets, and town centres by providing convenient, safe, and secure parking with proportionate enforcement. The economic vibrancy and sustainability of commercial areas are also significantly assisted by enforcement which ensures parking turnover to help local businesses.

- 2.6 However, the link between off street parking and the High Street changed dramatically during the Covid pandemic. The number of retail sales online with home delivery and click-and-collect escalated; retail sales online reached an all-time high of just over 35% in 2021 compared with 18% of all retail sales in 2019. There is an ongoing debate about the role of car parking and township prosperity. The High Street Task Force report (2021) noted that provision of easy, plenty and reasonably priced car parks are factors for high street patronage.
- 2.7 Car parking research by Yorkshire Forward (Renaissance Market Towns Programme), found that the availability of parking and ease of use were more important aspects of parking provision than charges. The report also recognised that a parking ‘free for all’, with no restrictions or controls on parking and lack of enforcement was seen as a failure to manage assets effectively and provide good customer service.

The Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy (LTP3) 2011 – 2026

- 2.8 The SCR Transport Strategy provides a long-term strategy with 26 policies for transport across the Sheffield City Region during the period to 2026 with emphasis on encouraging sustainable travel. The Transport Strategy has four main goals:
- To support economic growth
 - To reduce emissions
 - To enhance social inclusion and health
 - To maximise safety

Barnsley Local Plan

- 2.9 The Local Plan identifies a strategy for growth in the Borough in the period up to 2033 and includes a need for 21,546 homes as well as additional jobs and growth in retail, leisure and community uses.
- 2.10 Growth identified in the Local Plan and the parking implications of this growth are discussed in detail in Chapter 7. The Barnsley Local Plan 2019-2033 was adopted on 3 January 2019

Policy T1 – Accessibility Priorities states:

“C. Facilitate sustainable transport links to and from existing and proposed employment, interchange, community and leisure and tourism facilities in the borough, including

provision for car parking and enhancing the non-car role of the transport corridor shown on the Accessibility Priorities diagram as ‘potential enhanced road based public transport corridor’.

Para 16.9 states *“Additionally the Council is currently undertaking a review of town centre car parking supply and management.”*

Para 16.11 states *“Challenges Whilst protecting and further enhancing these strengths the strategy needs to mobilise a coordinated management and development response to challenges from pressures and trends which weaken the viability and vitality of the town centre such as:*

- *Concerns as to the oversupply of long stay car parking within the town centre occupying premium development land”.*

- 2.11 The Town Centre Policy states *“We have looked at what we need to do to meet the needs of Barnsley’s residents, extend the town’s economic base and attract new people to the town”.*

The Barnsley Transport Strategy 2022 - 2040

- 2.12 The current Transport Strategy has a section on car parking and states *“Parking is an important part of the transport infrastructure for many Barnsley residents and can have a significant impact on quality of life”.* However, it is also true that enabling largescale free parking for residential vehicles can discourage use of sustainable modes, particularly public transport which can find it difficult to compete with the convenience of the private car.
- 2.13 The local economy is also influenced by parking provision, particularly at service and retail hubs and employment locations. Again, a balance needs to be achieved between providing sufficient parking to support the growth of the local economy and the need to encourage residents and visitors to access these areas by means other than the private car.
- 2.14 Parking provision going forward therefore needs to aim to achieve a balance between competing needs. It is known that parking controls, particularly at destinations, can play a significant role in influencing travel choice and therefore in encouraging trips to be carried out by sustainable modes.

The Barnsley Sustainable Energy Action Plan 2020 – 2025 (The SEAP)

- 2.15 The SEAP recognises that transport is one of the third highest emitters in the borough; one of the aims of the action plan is to improve air quality.
- 2.16 Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is vital. Targeted educational campaigns will help to promote positive behaviour change (such as campaigns to prevent idling and supporting motorists to consider active travel); coupled with other discrete programmes of work, for example, the installation of electric vehicle charging points will help car parks to reduce their environmental footprint.

3.0 Aims and Objectives

- 3.1 The aim of this Car Parking Strategy is to develop and implement plans to help Car Parking Services deliver our statutory duties and deliver our vision for providing essential parking services across the Borough to meet the needs of all our road and service users,

including residents, local businesses and visitors and deliver against our climate change objectives. Along with aligning with and supporting the wider BMBC strategies.

3.2 To do this, we have developed five key strategic objectives.

- Provide sufficient parking capacity that will support the town centre activities.
- Improve accessibility and signage to car parking within the town centre and from key routes to reduce the need for unnecessary traffic movements in the town centre.
- Rationalise Car Parking Tariffs, whilst supporting the vitality and economic attractiveness of the town centre to visitors, investors, and developers.
- Provide sufficient enforcement to support the efficient operation and management of the car parks.
- Support carbon reduction and air quality management goals by providing the infrastructure for additional electric vehicle charging.

Objective 1

Provide sufficient parking capacity that will support the town centre activities.

- 3.3 The review evidenced that considering the inclusion of all public and private car parking provision there is sufficient stock across the Town to cope with current and future development plans. With car ownership increasing and several new housing developments being constructed within the borough, it will be necessary to monitor this with a view to implementing interventions as necessary to manage future demand.
- 3.4 Currently our Traffic Regulation Order stipulates that when using an EV parking space, the parking must be paid for and connected to the charger but states that they must be charging. Evidence shows that some users are taking up the bay but not charging for the full parking session.
- 3.5 Following a positive review of other district EV parking arrangements, we propose to increase availability for more EV users that the maximum stay in an EV parking bay is 4 hours where the user must still pay for parking and be charging when parked there.
- 3.6 The following actions are recommended:
- Develop the Council's own policy for a "park mark" standard.
 - Ensure our car parks are well maintained.
 - Ensure our car parks provide a safe and secure environment for both drivers and pedestrians.
 - Review potential for the under-used car parks in the Southern Fringe area for redevelopment.
 - Review provision of EV parking

Objective 2

Improve accessibility and signage to car parking within the town centre and from key, routes to reduce the need for unnecessary traffic movements in the town centre.

- 3.7 Our current car parks are well located, are easily accessible and allow users quick access to all areas of the town centre. The proposed actions will need to be considered to improve the customer experience, reduce unnecessary journeys, and reduce carbon emissions.
- Implement strategic car parking signing on key routes into the Town Centre routing and access strategy.
 - Utilise electronic media (including website and apps) to provide more information for visitors.
 - Ensure existing short stay and long stay spaces are situated in the most suitable locations for the user.
 - Ensure that access and exit from the car parks to the town centre is well signposted, maintained, and accessible for all.

Objective 3

Rationalise Car Parking Tariffs, whilst supporting the vitality and economic attractiveness of the town centre to visitors, investors, and developers.

- 3.8 A benchmarking exercise carried out in the parking review highlighted that parking charges in Barnsley are comparable with other districts, it is essential that the charging structure remains reasonable and supports the continuing growth of the Town Centre.
- 3.9 **Long Stay Parking**
- Employers want cheap all-day parking spaces within a 10-minute walk for their employees. Employers' private car parks will satisfy a significant amount of the demand for employee car parking. But for many employees, visitors, and residents the expectation is simple, reasonably priced safe and secure long-stay car parks.
- 3.10 Currently our Town Centre Car Parks are divided into Retail and Leisure Parking which offer easier access to shops and leisure attractions and has a slightly higher charging tariff as opposed to the Commuter Parking which offers cheaper all-day parking for workers.
- 3.11 Free parking was introduced to promote the growth of the Town with the opening of the new Glass Works development.
- 3.12 **Short Stay Parking**
- 3.13 On street Parking is defined as the availability of short-stay spaces relating to the degree of "turnover" occurring within each space. Encouraging turnover of spaces is important for retailers and businesses as it offers parking availability for as many visitors as possible.
- 3.14 The two main tools to encourage turnover are time-limited parking regulations and short stay parking tariff structures (e.g. parking is cheap for a short visit but expensive to stay all day and more expensive than using off street, car parking).
- 3.15 Table 1 below illustrates the existing model and charges and the new proposed simpler standard charge where all Town Centre Car Parks charge the same rate with a minor exception of the Multi Story Car Parks at weekends. Table 2 below illustrates the current and proposed on street, short stay on street, car parking charges.

Table 1. Current and proposed Long Stay Car Parking Charges

Current Town Centre Car Parking Charges 2023-2024					
Retail & Leisure Parking			Commuter Parking		
	Charge	Time		Charge	Time
Weekdays	£2.00	For first 3 Hrs	Weekdays	£2.00	For first 3 Hrs
	£0.50	Per 30 mins after		£0.30	per 30 mins after
	£9.00	Max for 24hrs		£6.00	Max for 24hrs
Weekend					
Weekend	Free	For first 3 Hrs	Weekend	Free	For first 3 Hrs
	£0.50	per 30 mins after		£0.30	per 30 mins after
	£7.00	Max for 24hrs		£4.00	Max for 24hrs
NB Permit and Season Tickets are not valid in these car parks			NB Permit and Season Tickets are valid in these car parks. Season Tickets cost £978.00 for a full year and are only valid in Commuter car parks		
Proposed Town Centre Car Parking Charges 2024-2025					
All Off Street, Car Parks with exception of Glassworks & Alhambra			Glass Works & Alhambra Muti Story Car Parks only		
	Charge	Time		Charge	Time
Weekdays	£1.00	Per Hour	Weekdays	£1.00	Per Hour
	£5.00	Max for 24hrs		£5.00	Max for 24hrs
Weekend					
Weekend	Free	For first 3 Hrs	Weekend	£1.00	For first 3 Hrs
	£1.00	Per hour thereafter		£1.00	Per hour thereafter
	£5.00	Max for 24hrs		£5.00	Max for 24hrs
NB Permit and Season ticket holders are valid in these car parks. Permit and Season tickets will cost £1,000.00 for a full year			NB Permit and Season ticket holders are valid in these car parks. Permit and Season tickets will cost £1,000.00 for a full year		

Table 2: Current and proposed On Street, Short Stay on Street, Car Parking Charges

Current Town Centre on Street, Car Parking Charges 2023-2024					
Retail & Leisure Parking			Commuter Parking		
	Charge	Time		Charge	Time
7 Days a Week	£0.90	Per 30 mins	7 Days a Week	£0.45	Per 30 mins
	For a Maximum of 24hrs Bank Hols Free			For a Maximum of 24hrs Bank Hols Free	
NB Permit and Season Tickets are not valid in these parking bays					
Proposed Town Centre on Street, Car Parking Charges 2024-2025					
All On Street Parking Bays revert to a standard charging tariff					
	Charge	Time	Free Parking on Bank Holidays		
7 Days a Week	£0.50	For 1 st 30 mins			
	£1.00	Per 30 mins thereafter to a Max of 24hrs			
NB Permit and Season Tickets are not valid in these parking bays					

3.16 Permits & Season Tickets

- 3.17 The cost of an external annual permit/season ticket will increase from £978.00 to £1000.00 and is still cheaper than the proposed pay and display as seen in Table1 at £5 per day or £1680.00 for a worker (minus 28 days Annual Leave). The new proposal allows permit/season ticket holders to park in all car parks which offers more choice and closer proximity to the Town Centre workplace.
- 3.18 The 2020 Car Parking Strategy offered NHS staff the option to purchase a monthly parking permit at £30, this has not increased since its introduction the proposal is that this will rise to £40 per month and will increase annually in line with inflation. Holders will benefit by being able to use these in all Town Centre Car Parks. With the recent introduction of NHS facilities in the Town Centre this will allow NHS to use more convenient parking close to their workplace.
- 3.19 This strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure the continuous improvement of Car Parking Services and that the car parking stock remains fit for purpose; and supports the continuing growth and economy of the Town Centre. All projects will be delivered in line with clear project plans and time limits and in line with the Council's policies and procedures.
- 3.20 We currently have four residents' parking zones in and around Barnsley, residents can buy a parking permit to allow them to park anywhere within the zone. Having a permit doesn't guarantee a parking space directly outside their home. Residents can also buy vouchers to allow visitors to their home or business to park in a designated space. They are not used

for people to park while they go to work or go shopping. Businesses can buy permits to allow them to park near their premises. Table 3 illustrates the current and proposed Parking Permit charges. NB These Tariffs have not increased since 2022.

Table 3 Current and proposed Resident and Business Parking Permits

Resident and Business Parking Permit over last 10 years including new proposed tariffs				
Residents.	01/04/2014	01/04/2019	01/04/2022	Proposed for 2024/2025
Residents Permit 1	£20.00	£25.00	£26.00	£30.00
Residents Permit 2	£40.00	£50.00	£52.00	£55.00
Businesses.				
Business Permit 1	£30.00	£37.50	£39.00	£40.00
Business Permit 2	£60.00	£75.00	£77.50	£80.00
Replacements.				
Residents	£5.00	£10.00	No change	£15.00
Business	£10.00	No change	No change	£20.00
Visitor Vouchers	£7.50	£12.50	No change	£15.00

3.21 To deliver this proposal the following actions will be undertaken.

- Rationalise parking charges in all car parks to encourage and increase use in underutilised car parks.
- Ensure fees suitably reflect the experience and are appropriate with accessing the town centre and its services and facilities available.
- To retain free parking in surface car parks on a weekend
- Review tariffs on an annual basis and amend if required.
- Introduce payment machines offering contactless debit / credit card payments whilst retaining some pay by cash options.

Objective 4

Provide sufficient enforcement to support the efficient operation and management of the car parks.

3.22 We acknowledge that car parking enforcement is an important customer facing service and it is crucial to provide the best and most effective way of delivering the service. *“Enforcement authorities should provide enough staff for the volume of work”* (Road Traffic Act 1984: Statutory Guidance 2022). To make sure this remains the case the following actions will be undertaken.

- Ensure the number of Civil Enforcement Officers is appropriate to support the efficient operation and management of our car parks and are sufficient to enforce the hours confirmed in Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO)
- Ensure all car parking payment equipment is regularly checked and maintained so it remains in good working order.
- Ensure up to date driver, pedestrian and visitor advice and guidance is provided in our car parks.

- Ensure the Traffic Regulation orders are up to date.
- Enhance traffic management and safety of pedestrians within the car parks.
- Explore the use of appropriate software to provide system support and enhance the efficient operation of the payment systems.

Objective 5

Support carbon reduction and air quality management goals by providing the infrastructure for additional electric vehicle charging.

3.23 In September 2019, the Council voted unanimously to declare a Climate Emergency. All services are committed to helping the Council reach its goal of carbon net zero by 2045. To do this, we need to look at how our services are provided. The actions outlined below will deliver both operational and environmental efficiencies.

- Introduction of EV charging points in all council car parks when commercially viable including the new planned EV chargers on the Lower Seam development
- Install LED lighting in all car parks.
- Move towards phasing out coin payments and introducing cashless permits.
- Reduce the need to print paper copies by introducing virtual permits.
- Explore the promotion of educational / behaviour change campaigns to raise awareness of the impact of idling vehicles on air quality, which is a direct contributor to respiratory diseases and to support motorists in making decisions to use other modes of transport.

4.0 Continuing Development

4.1 This strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure the continuous improvement of Car Parking Services and that the car parking stock remains fit for purpose; and supports the continuing growth and economy of the Town Centre. All projects will be delivered in line with clear project plans and timeframes and will be delivered in line with the Council's policies and procedures.

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May 2024