

Title of meeting:	Cabinet Member for Traffic and Transportation Decision Meeting
Date of meeting:	27 th January 2022
Subject:	Car Club Provision
Report by:	Tristan Samuels, Director of Regeneration
Wards affected:	All
Key decision:	No
Full Council decision:	No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To provide the results of the resident and business car club surveys undertaken between 13th September and 11th November 2021.
- 1.2 To recommend priority locations for a car club, to take forward through the tender process.
- 1.3 Provide updated timescales for the delivery of a car club in Portsmouth.

2 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Traffic and Transportation:

- 2.1 **Notes the results of the resident and business car club survey**
- 2.2 **Approves the procurement exercise for a car club, to initially prioritise the wards of St Jude, Central Southsea, Eastney and Craneswater, and St Thomas.**
- 2.3 **Notes that a report with the car club scheme details will be brought back to Traffic & Transportation, following the tender exercise in summer 2022.**

3 Background

- 3.1 A car club is a scheme in which people pay to become a member, and then have access to a shared car that can be used for personal or business use on a pay-as-you-use basis. Car club vehicles generally have a dedicated parking bay located close to homes or workplaces, enabling easy access.

- 3.2 Portsmouth City Council recognises the need for sustainable transport options to help improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions. Measures which reduce the reliance on the private car, such as car clubs, will support this. Car clubs already in operation have been shown to reduce car ownership as members of the car club often get rid of second or third vehicles. Car clubs have also been demonstrated to lead to a reduction in total miles driven by members as well as delivering further benefits to air quality due to better euro standards of the vehicles being driven compared to vehicles that are privately owned.¹
- 3.3 Reducing reliance on the private car can also help to reduce congestion and residential parking issues. The recently adopted Portsmouth Transport Strategy (LTP4)² recognises that a key part of reducing demand to own private cars will be to provide residents with the confidence that they have alternative transport modes available to make various trips, such as access to a car club. Policy C within the Transport Strategy has a focus on making parking easier in residential areas through encouraging fewer vehicles and supporting shared transport modes, such as car clubs.
- 3.4 At the Traffic and Transportation meeting in July 2020³ a report set out details on the benefits of a car club, highlighted case studies, and outlined how a car club supported other Portsmouth City Council (PCC) plans and strategies. Approval was given for the development of a car club for Portsmouth, including further research and market testing followed by the undertaking of a procurement process to establish a car club provider. Approval to appoint a preferred supplier was given subject to a satisfactory financial appraisal approved by the Section 151 Officer that demonstrates that the Car Club is financially viable.
- 3.5 Following this approval the research was put on hold, due to rising levels of Covid-19, and potential concerns of people using shared vehicles. Once restrictions were lifted, resident and business surveys were undertaken in September 2021.

4 Car Club Survey - Methodology

- 4.1 Two targeted research surveys were undertaken; one for residents and members of the public, and one for businesses to better understand demand for a car club in Portsmouth.
- 4.2 The surveys were open for a four week period on 13th September 2021 closing on 11th November 2021.
- 4.3 A number of marketing and communications channels were used to promote the surveys and maximise engagement. This included PCC email marketing, PCC social media, including Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, a press release and a targeted letter drop to all houses and businesses in Central Southsea, St Jude and St Thomas wards.

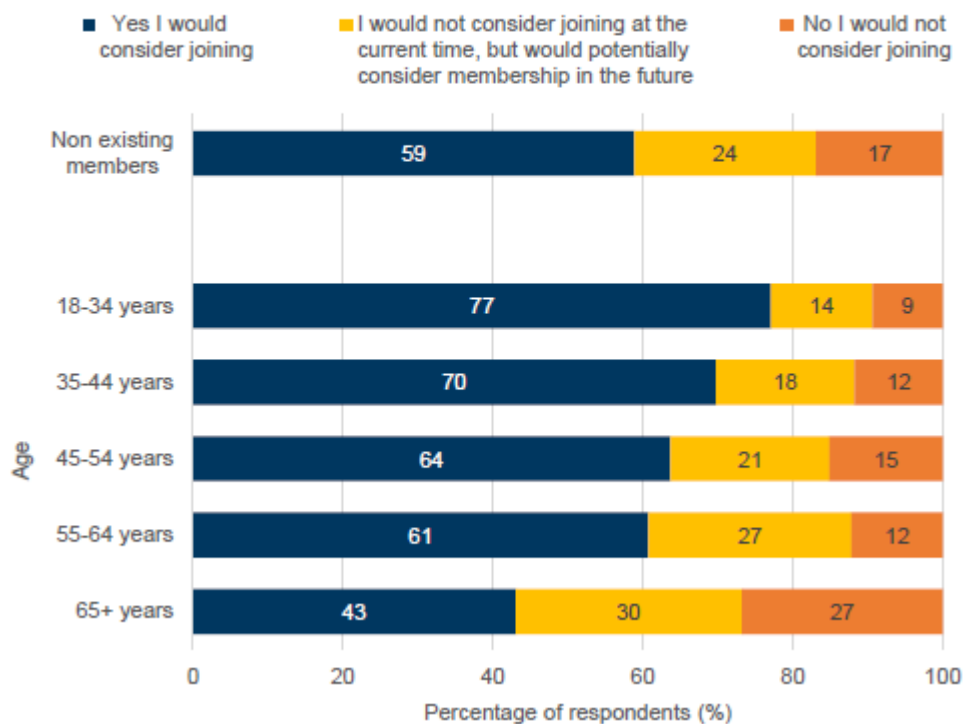
¹ CoMo UK, Car Club Annual Report 2020: <https://como.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CoMoUK-England-and-Wales-Car-Club-Summary-Report-2020.pdf>

- 4.4 The wards included in the letter drop were selected from previous research, which was undertaken in 2019 as part of the Local Air Quality Plan. This included which areas of the city may have high potential for the successful operation of a car club based on the characteristics and demographics of these areas. These three wards were highlighted as having a 'very high' potential for a car club in this assessment. Whilst the development of a car club is not being taken forwards directly as part of the Clean Air Zone mitigation measures, as private vehicles are not directly impacted by the class B Clean Air Zone, PCC are keen to progress with a car club for the city. This will complement the other mitigation measures being taken forwards in the Local Air Quality Plan, to help reduce harmful emissions from road traffic and to offer a range of sustainable travel options for residents and businesses.
- 4.5 The aims of the car club consultation were:
- to understand the appetite for a car club within Portsmouth
 - to identifying the level of interest by geographical location
 - to gain an understanding whether the pandemic is affecting current interest levels
 - to gain an insight into the potential barriers of using a car club
- 4.6 In total, 879 people responded to the residents' survey and 60 businesses participated in the business survey. It is not possible to accurately measure the statistical robustness of this sample because the total population of residents and business employees that could become car club members within Portsmouth is not known. However, a response of this level provides reliable local insight that can be used to inform the decision making around launching car clubs.
- 5 Main survey key results**
- 5.1 The key results of the main car club survey have been detailed in a summary report, (Appendix A).
- 5.2 As shown in Figure 1, the majority of respondents who do not already belong to a car club would consider joining a car club in their area of the city (59%) with just under a quarter (24%) indicating they would not consider joining a car club at the current time, but would potentially consider joining in the future. 17% of respondents would not consider joining a car club. Younger respondents (18 to 34 year olds) show the most interest in joining a car club at the current time.

Figure 1: Likelihood to consider joining a car club in your area of the city

Q: *By sample and age*

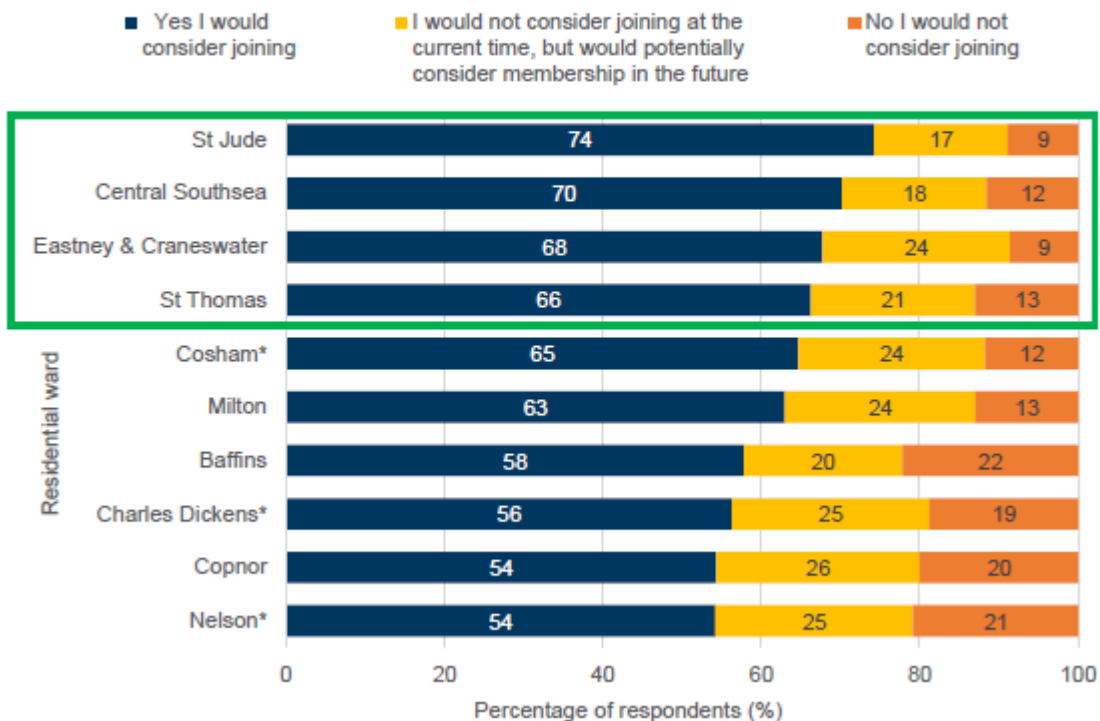
Base: Those not already belonging to a car club (792) | 18-34 years (96) | 35-44 years (119) | 45-54 years (146) | 55-64 years (173) | 65+ years (179)



5.3 Figure 2 illustrates that the top four wards by interest in joining a car club were St Jude, Central Southsea, Eastney and Craneswater and St Thomas.

Figure 2: Likelihood to consider joining a car club in your area of the city by residential ward

Q: **By residential ward** Base: St Jude (101) | Central Southsea (104) | Eastney & Craneswater (93) | St Thomas (77) | Cosham (17*) | Milton (54) | Baffins (45) | Charles Dickens (16*) | Copnor (35) | Nelson (24*) | *caution small base



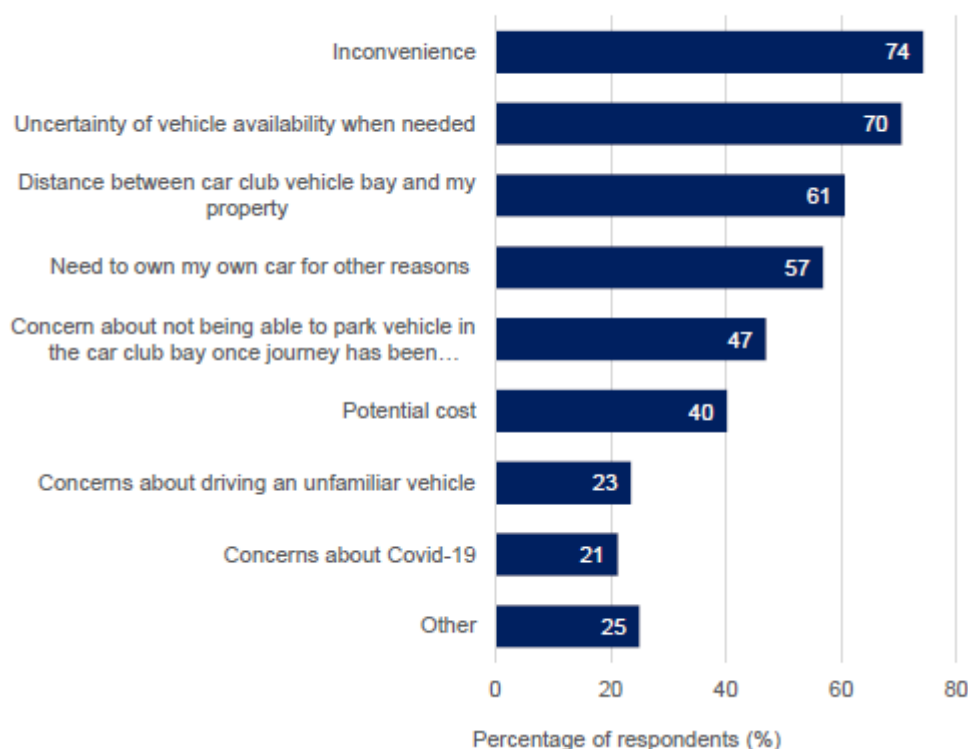
- 5.4 Almost half (44%) of respondents who would consider joining a car club at present and have a car registered to their address would consider getting rid of their vehicle. This increases to 50% of those with two or more vehicles registered to their address and 51% of those aged 45-54 years. Those who would consider joining a car club in the future are more likely to want more information before deciding whether to get rid of their car (60%).
- 5.5 The three wards that were selected for the letter drop rated highly in terms of the proportion of residents who would consider getting rid of their car if they joined a car club. Milton and Eastney and Craneswater also scored highly in this question.
- 5.6 As shown in Figure 3, in the main survey, the key reason that was given by respondents for not considering joining a car club was inconvenience (74%), followed by uncertainty about vehicle availability (70%). Concerns were also raised

around the distance of the car club bay (61%), and the need to own a private car for other reasons (57%). Concerns around Covid-19 were mentioned by 21% of respondents.

Figure 3: Why would you not consider joining a local car club?

Q: Why would you not consider joining a local car club?

Base: Would not consider joining a car club (132)



- 5.7 Respondents who would not consider joining a car club at the current time but would potentially consider membership in the future were given the opportunity to expand on the reasoning for why they would not consider joining a car club at present. A number of reasons were given including already owning or leasing a vehicle. Other reasons given included a car club not suiting needs or personal circumstances, wanting to see how a car club works before signing up, inconvenience/lack of freedom, potential cost and not wanting to share vehicles with others.
- 5.8 In terms of motivations and key features that respondents would like to see in a car club, the key motivations mentioned included environmental benefits and having easy access to a car without needing to own one. Key features included the system being easy to use and book vehicles, car club being cheaper than alternative modes of travel and parking provision for car club vehicles.

- 5.9 On preferences that respondents may have regarding the car club, over half of those interested in joining a club think they would use it 'often' or 'frequently'. The most popular size of vehicle amongst respondents were small or medium cars and electric vehicles were the most popular choice, by 48% of respondents, with 35% selecting a hybrid vehicle type. 41% of respondents had no preference over vehicle type.

6 Business survey key results

- 6.1 The key results of the business car club survey have been detailed in a summary report, (Appendix B). Whilst the PCC focus of the car club would be on residential membership, businesses would be encouraged to sign up to the scheme directly with the car club supplier. It was felt important to gather information on local business views on a scheme to help inform this element of the scheme between businesses and the supplier.
- 6.2 Almost half of respondents who responded to the question in the business survey of whether they would consider joining a car club for business purposes said they would consider joining (47%) and a further 19% would consider joining in the future. 34% would not consider joining. 15% of those interested in joining a car club at present are 'very likely' to join, with requests for further information by some, before making a decision about how likely they would be to join, particularly those who indicated they may be interested in joining in the future. It should be noted that there was a small sample size for this question.
- 6.3 Businesses who would not consider joining a car club are being put off by uncertainty around issues such as vehicle availability, the distance to the vehicle bay as well as concerns about sharing vehicles due to Covid-19. High costs of using a car club would also deter some business use. Again, there was a small sample size for this question.
- 6.4 Affordability, convenience and having electric vehicles are important features to encourage business sign up. This is a further question which has a small sample size. Initial indications are that businesses would want more information before deciding whether to join a car club.
- 6.5 In terms of employee numbers and parking spaces, the majority of businesses who responded to the survey had less than 10 employees (60%). Just over half of businesses who responded have private parking spaces (55%) and parking provisions are limited with almost two thirds of businesses with spaces having less than 10 (65%). This question had a small sample size.

7 Potential details of a car club

- 7.1 The results of the car club surveys will help to inform the specification taken forward to tender. The final detail will then be further developed with the preferred car club supplier once appointed following a full procurement process.

- 7.2 It is proposed that the tender for the car club scheme is focussed on the four wards in the city which came highest in the survey question about *likelihood to consider joining a car club in your area of the city by residential ward*. The four wards that scored highest were St Jude (74%), Central Southsea (70%), Eastney and Craneswater (68%) and St Thomas (66%). St Jude, Central Southsea and St Thomas were also the three wards that received the targeted letter drop following 2019 research indicating their high potential for a car club. The fourth ward, Eastney and Craneswater is a neighbouring ward to them. Whilst these four wards are to be taken forward at this stage it is anticipated that the car club scheme will initially start on a small scale, which may require a high density of vehicles in a small geographical area, this would be determined through the procurement process and subsequent discussions with the appointed supplier. It is hoped that as interest in the scheme grows, the number of locations and vehicles available would increase over time.
- 7.3 A further question on *consideration of getting rid of a private vehicle by interest in joining a car club either at present or future, by ward* would support the inclusion of St Jude (52%) and Central Southsea (49%) as these wards had the two highest responses to this question. Eastney and Craneswater came joint fourth with St Thomas, both with 40%.
- 7.4 There is some uncertainty over the exact number of vehicles that will be able to be included in the scheme until the procurement process is completed and further specific information is gathered from suppliers, however from initial research it is expected that at launch the car club may have around six to eight vehicles. The consultation indicated that vehicle availability is important to respondents, with 73% stating that they would be put off joining if there was uncertainty around this, so it will be important to ensure that there is adequate cover of vehicles in the locations selected.
- 7.5 A further barrier selected by respondents was apprehension of the distance to a car club bay, with 69% stating that that distance to the bay could prevent them from joining. It will therefore be important to carefully consider the locations of car club parking bays to ensure maximum coverage for the neighbourhoods selected. 49% of respondents who would consider joining a car club would consider 2-5 minutes to be an acceptable walk time to access a car club bay, with 48% considering 5-10 minutes to be acceptable. A fifth of respondents would consider a walk of less than 2 minutes to be acceptable and one in 10 respondents would consider walking over 10 minutes to reach the car club bay.
- 7.6 73% of respondents who would consider joining a car club indicated that they would want to be able to park in a car club bay, and a potential barrier to joining a car club is concern of not being able to park in a car club bay when a journey has ended, with 44% of respondents giving this response. It will therefore be important to ensure that each car club vehicle has a designated parking bay which is enforced.
- 7.7 It is proposed that the vehicles included in the car club fleet would be electric cars. Respondents in the survey who were either an existing car club member or who would consider joining a car club selected electric vehicles as the most preferred

vehicle type, with 48% selecting this option. Hybrid vehicles were selected by 35% of respondents with 11% selecting petrol vehicles. 41% had no preference on vehicle choice. Using electric vehicles in the fleet would support the council's target to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2030, with a climate emergency declared by the council in March 2019. With the government banning the sale of diesel and petrol cars by 2030, it is also important to support a move towards electric vehicles, supporting sustainable transport options and helping to improve air quality. Appropriate EV charging facilities will be provided at the car club parking bay locations, exclusively for the use of the car club vehicle to enable the vehicles to be charged efficiently before their next booking. It is noted that the use of pure EVs will incur time when the vehicles cannot be used between bookings to ensure they are charged. If the tender process highlights this as a particular issue then hybrid vehicles may be considered.

- 7.8 It is proposed that a mixture of small and medium sized vehicles are included in the fleet, as feedback in the surveys showed that 58% of respondents would prefer to drive a small sized car club vehicle, with 51% preferring a medium sized vehicle.
- 7.9 Regarding the booking and use of vehicles, this element would be further considered through the procurement process, as it will be important to ensure that the system is easy to use. 86% of respondents felt that the most important feature of a car club would be that it is easy to use and book vehicles. Information on the cost of joining the car club and vehicle hire would be determined through the procurement process. It is known that potential costs of using the scheme were considered to be a possible barrier to 52% of respondents, and this element will be carefully considered with the preferred car club provider. We will work closely with the PCC Finance and Legal teams during the procurement process to ensure that costs to members are kept as attractive as possible whilst not requiring on-going support from the council.
- 7.10 The development of the car club scheme was initially delayed due to the pandemic, and potential concerns around sharing vehicles. 21% of respondents cited concerns about Covid-19 as a potential barrier, with 58% of respondents who would consider joining a car club stating they would want reassurance that the vehicles would be cleaned in between use. This would be considered as part of the tender process.

8 Next Steps

- 8.1 A full procurement process will be undertaken to appoint a car club provider for the city in winter 2021/22 with a supplier appointed in April/May 2022.
- 8.2 The details of the scheme, including the exact location of parking bays and number of vehicles to be introduced, will be determined with the appointed car club supplier.
- 8.3 Following this, a report will be brought back to Traffic and Transportation in early summer 2022 detailing the scheme and seeking permission for designated car club parking bays to be brought forward in Portsmouth prior to formal Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) consultation. The TRO would be formally advertised.

8.4 It is anticipated that the car club will be fully operational late summer 2022.

9. Integrated impact assessment

9.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) has been undertaken for the car club and is attached in Appendix C of this report. As the car club is developed a further IIA will be undertaken once the detail is understood.

9.2 Within the IIA, the car club development impacts positively on the following sections:

Section A - Community safety
A3 - Health

Section B - Environment and climate change
B1 - Carbon emissions
B5 - Air Quality

Section C - Regeneration of the city
C3 - Economy

10. Legal implications

10.1 The procurement of a Car Club provider will need to be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the relevant regulations governing the award of public contracts.

11. Director of Finance's comments

11.1 The costs associated with the tender process will be met from existing cash limited budgets and staff.

11.2 There is currently no funding available to support a Car Club in Portsmouth, so before any decision can be made to award a contract the exact nature of the business model and financial appraisal will need to be approved by the Section 151 officer.

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Signed by: Tristan Samuels, Director of Regeneration

Appendices:

Appendix A - Main car club survey results - online consultation report
<https://yourcityyoursay.portsmouth.gov.uk/car-club-consultation-2021/>

Appendix B - Business car club survey results - online consultation report
<https://yourcityyoursay.portsmouth.gov.uk/car-club-consultation-2021/>

Appendix C - Integrated Impact Assessment

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
¹ CoMo UK, Car Club Annual Report 2020	https://como.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CoMoUK-England-and-Wales-Car-Club-Summary-Report-2020.pdf
² Portsmouth Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4)	https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/services/parking-roads-and-travel/travel/local-transport-plan-4-ltp4/
³ Car club report from Traffic and Transportation meeting in July 2020	Car Club.pdf (portsmouth.gov.uk)

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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 Signed by: