

CAMBRIDGESHIRE GUIDED BUSWAY PARK AND RIDE SITES – INTRODUCTION OF PARKING CHARGES

To: Economy and Environment Committee

Meeting Date: 11th November 2014

From: Executive Director: Economy, Transport and Environment

Electoral division(s): All (as it is a Financial Decision)

Forward Plan ref: Not applicable **Key decision:** No

Purpose: To consider the implementation of parking charges at the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway Park and Ride sites at St. Ives and Longstanton

Recommendation: Committee is recommended to:

- a) Approve the introduction of the parking charges.
- b) Agree to consult on the necessary changes to the Traffic Regulation Orders.
- c) Agree the proposed charging structure as detailed in Appendix 1.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The current Business Plan relies on income being raised from the introduction of parking charges at St Ives and Longstanton Park and Ride sites from the beginning of April 2015. The level of income is noted in the Business Plan at £120,000 per annum. This is assumed to be net of the 20% VAT that the County Council will have to pay on income raised.
- 1.2 For the financial year 2014/15 the cost of operating the Busway is approximately £508,000. This covers staffing costs for the Park and Ride sites plus utilities and business rates. All of this cost is recovered from the two bus operators (Stagecoach and Whippet) who pay an access charge to use the guided section.
- 1.3 Concessionary fares for Busway bus services cost £964,616 during 2013/14. There were 711,000 single passenger journeys undertaken and the reimbursement to the operators (Stagecoach and Whippet) was paid at £1.36 per single passenger journey.
- 1.4 Though the operation of the Busway is revenue neutral to the County Council, the concessionary fares cost is significant and unavoidable. Given the pressing budgetary position, the introduction of parking charges at the two sites will raise important revenue.

2. INCOME PROJECTIONS AND IMPACT ON PASSENGER NUMBERS

- 2.1 The County Council has commissioned a study of the potential impact on the number of passengers using the Busway services if a parking charge is introduced. The key findings of this report are discussed below. The study was undertaken before the initial impacts of the introduction of charges at Cambridge Park and Ride were available.
- 2.2 The study only assesses the impact on passenger numbers for those passengers accessing the Busway services at Longstanton and St Ives Park and Ride sites. Passengers who access the services at other points on the routes or who walk, cycle or are dropped off or collected at the Park and Ride sites will not be affected by the parking charge.
- 2.3 The Busway carries 3.5 million passenger journeys per annum. There are a variety of destinations served between Peterborough and Cambridge and there are a number of locations where passengers can board the services. These include the Park and Ride sites at Longstanton and St. Ives. Based on ticket sales, and thus excluding pass holders and on line smartcard purchase, 50% of passengers access the services at these sites. This contrasts to the Cambridge Park and Ride sites where the vast majority of passengers start or end their journeys at the Cambridge Park and Ride sites. In addition, only a proportion of those accessing the Busway at the Park and Ride sites will be parking, as many people walk, cycle or are dropped off.
- 2.4 The study assessed the potential reduction in passenger numbers if parking charges ranging from 50p to £2 per day for a car are implemented. Overnight parking will be charged at £10. The key findings of the study are summarised in the table overleaf. The table uses annual values where applicable.

Parking Charge	Income Raised (£000)	Busway Park and Ride Passenger Numbers Changes %	Bus Operator Revenue Changes (£000)	Return to 2015 Passenger Level
50p	119	-1.2	-24	2016
£1	238	-2.4	-49	2017
£1.50	351	-3.6	-74	2018
£2	465	-4.9	-99	2019

- 2.5 The study assumed that the Busway Park and Ride passenger numbers will increase at a rate of 1% per annum. This means that additional parking income will be raised from those new passengers. This may be an underestimate as Busway passenger numbers continue to grow strongly. In the 12 months to September 2014 the Busway carried 3, 496, 593 passengers which is a 10% increase on the 12 months to September 2013. Continued growth will offset the dip predicted in the table above.
- 2.6 The impact on the bus operators' revenue as a result of the reduction in passengers has been estimated and is shown as a negative financial amount (reduced revenue) in the table above. It is considered that patronage will recover over time.
- 2.7 The study forecasts that the impact of charges will be lower than at the Cambridge Park and Rides. This is explained by the greater proportion of the total cost to travel (bus ticket and car parking) that is taken up by the bus fare. Hence the parking charge is less likely to deter passengers than may be the case for the Cambridge Park and Ride. For passengers who hold Concessionary Bus Passes the assessment models whether they will be willing to pay the parking charge or not.
- 2.8 About 50% of the total passengers accessing the CGB services, in terms of ticket sales, access the services at the Longstanton and St Ives Park and Ride sites. Therefore the 1.2% reduction noted above is actually a reduction of 0.6% of the total Busway passenger numbers.
- 2.9 The operators would prefer the Council not to introduce charges as there will be an impact on their revenue, at least initially. It should be noted however that the agreements with the Bus Operators governing the operation of the Busway do not provide any guarantees of patronage or revenue to the operators, nor prevent the Council from seeking additional revenue through parking charges.
- 2.10 Committee will also be aware of the significant remedial works required to the Busway. This programme of remedial works may take up to 3 years and require temporary diversion of services during which time there may be a dip in patronage. The timing of these works is not yet known and, even if a settlement is reached swiftly with the Busway contractor, will take some time to procure and implement. If a parking charge is introduced in April 2015 as set out in the Business Plan, then it is likely to be established and the impacts known well before the remedial works programme commences.

- 2.11 Following the introduction of the parking charges at the 5 Cambridge Park and Ride sites the reduction in passenger numbers has been 10%. It was forecast that the reduction in patronage as a result of introducing charges at the Park and Ride sites would be 4.7% in the first year. It is to be expected that this would fluctuate over the year, being higher initially and then reducing. It is reported that some people have had difficulty using the machines and that this has led to significant queuing at times. A package of measures, including new ticket machines, and improved information and publicity, has now been introduced. The lessons learned from the introduction of charging at the Park and Ride sites will be taken forward to the Busway. Details of implementation are provided in section 4 below.

3 IMPACT ON THE LOCAL HIGHWAY NETWORK

- 3.1 In addition to impacting on passenger numbers the introduction of charges may also impact on the local road in the vicinity of the St Ives and Longstanton sites if drivers currently using the sites were to park on nearby roads and walk to the sites.
- 3.2 In the vicinity of Longstanton there is limited opportunity for overspill parking given the location of the site. However as Northstowe Phase 1 is built out, the situation will need to be carefully monitored to ensure that the local streets do not become a destination for Busway users, who park and then walk to the site. The parking charge may also positively encourage Northstowe residents to walk or cycle to the sites rather than to drive.
- 3.2 For the St Ives site there are a variety of loading and waiting restrictions on Meadow Lane and Station Road. There is also the car park at Waitrose where a charge is payable. However there are two areas where parking may overspill. The first is in the Cromwell Place and Needingworth Road area. This area will be subject to monitoring and the County Council would undertake before and after surveys to assess whether on street parking becomes more prevalent following the introduction of a charge.
- 3.3 The second area is on Meadow Lane, immediately outside the St. Ives Park and Ride site. It will be necessary to introduce double yellow lines along the entire length of the section that is public highway. This is to ensure that clear and safe access can be achieved to the business premises at the end of Meadow Lane. It will also reduce revenue loss. The process to install the waiting restriction on Meadow Lane has commenced and will take approximately 3 months.
- 3.4 On street parking changes have been surveyed in Milton village following the introduction of the parking charges at Milton Park and Ride site. Extensive surveys have been carried out at 16 residential streets. These surveys were undertaken on two weekdays and Saturday and Sunday. 75% of the locations are showing parking accumulation equal to or less than it was prior to the parking charging being introduced. The other sites are showing limited increases (5 or 6 cars). It is important to note that Officers have not received any complaints about inappropriate parking such as in front of drives or on corners.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The implementation of parking charges requires changes to the Traffic Regulation Orders that govern the Park and Ride sites. The charging schedule for vehicle type and length of stay will form part of the changes to the existing Traffic Regulation Orders.
- 4.2 The process of amending Traffic Regulation Orders is set down in legislation and requires the changes to be advertised and offers the public 21 days to make their comments.
- 4.3 The consultation responses to proposed changes to Traffic Regulation Orders would be reported to the Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee towards the end of the year.
- 4.4 The suggested charging schedule is attached as Appendix 1. It is identical to that currently in place at the five Cambridge Park and Ride sites. This approach is being suggested as it would result in consistency across all of the Park and Ride sites. Having a different charging schedule for Busway passengers at Trumpington compared to St Ives and Longstanton could be seen as inequitable. Also having different charging mechanisms at different sites may lead to confusion.
- 4.5 In terms of the equipment and ticket machines it is proposed to use Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology and, the existing contract that is being used for the Cambridge Park and Ride sites. However as there are a much greater range of bus journeys and fares available on the Busway it is proposed to install separate machines for the parking charges and retain the existing machines for bus tickets. This will separate the two transactions.
- 4.6 As with Park and Ride, there will be a full range of on line payment options for both regular and occasional users. Regular users in particular will be encouraged to use the on line option. Advance payment for parking means that passengers will not have to use the on-site machines and can board the buses more quickly.
- 4.7 To assist passengers to use the parking payment system comprehensive information will be provided before the start date as follows:
 - videos on the County Council website to show visitors how to pay for parking on the day and in advance
 - comprehensive leaflets at the sites to provide information on the parking payment system
 - publicity on the bus to advertise the advance payment system
 - demonstrations on how to use the machines at the launch and thereafter
 - comprehensive on-site signage to remind people that a payment needs to be made and that they need to remember their vehicle registration number
- 4.8 Advance publicity is critical and will be undertaken starting 3 months ahead of the implementation date. Key local bodies such as parish and town councils, local businesses and large local employers will be contacted.

- 4.9 If approved the implementation of the parking charges at Longstanton and St Ives will be in place in time for April 2015.

5. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

The following bullet point sets out details of implications identified by officers:

- The Busway provides a convenient and attractive public transport option that links housing, employment, education and other public services. Therefore the Busway underpins economic activity within the corridor it serves. Whilst there is a small project reduction in ridership as a result of the parking charge, the passenger numbers are anticipated to return quickly.

5.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- The Busway offers a convenient and independent way to travel and is very popular with concessionary bus pass holders. The Busway services are also heavily used by learners attending Cambridge Regional College. The Busway maintenance track is also busy with cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians either travelling to work or enjoying some active leisure time. The introduction of the parking charge should not impact on this important feature of the Busway.

5.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Introducing parking charges will not reduce accessibility to the destinations served by the Busway. However there may be a reduction in the number of journeys any individual makes as a result of introducing the charge. It is important to bear in mind that concessionary passes will remain valid on the Busway buses although the parking charge will be payable.

6. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Resource Implications

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- The budgetary pressures that will be eased by the generation of parking income at the St Ives and Longstanton Park and ride sites are noted in Section 1 of this report
- The capital cost of implementing an Automatic Number Plate Recognition system at Longstanton and St Ives will cost approximately £150 000 and will be funded from within ETE.

6.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

The following bullet point sets out details of implications identified by officers:

- Changes to Traffic regulation Orders will be publicly consulted on for the statutory requirement of 21 days

6.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

The following bullet point sets out details of implications identified by officers:

- The design of ticket machines at the sites will be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act. This would complement the physical design of the Park and ride sites that have disabled parking closest to the bus stops allowing the most convenient location for parking for disabled drivers and passengers.

6.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- The proposed parking charge was published as an outline proposal during 2013 as part of the 2014/15 Business Plan.
- A full Community Impact Assessment has been completed.

6.5 Public Health Implications

See wording under 5.2 above.

Source Documents	Location
Atkins Report	3rd Floor A Wing Castle Court Cambridge

Proposed Car Parking Charges

Waiting time/period	St Ives CGB Park and Ride	Longstanton CGB Park and Ride
Up to 1 Hour	Free	Free
Between 1 hour and 18 Hours	£1	£1
Season Tickets For Pre-Purchased 1-18 Hours Parking only	Annual £230 Four weekly £18 Weekly £5	Annual £230 Four weekly £18 Weekly £5
Between 18 hours and 24 hours	£10	£10
Between 24 hours and 48 hours	£20	£20
Between 48 Hours and 72 Hours.	£30	£30
Maximum Time Limit	72 Hours	72 Hours

Proposed Coach Parking Charges

	St Ives CGB Park and Ride	Longstanton CGB Park and Ride
Parking Charge	Buses and Coaches £10 per day or per visit whichever is the shorter	Buses and Coaches £10 per day or per visit whichever is the shorter
Maximum Time Limit	72 Hours	72 Hours