

Overview of City Council Services Related to the Cambridge Joint Area Committee

To: Cambridge Joint Area Committee

Meeting Date: 12 June 2024

From: Assistant Chief Executive (City Council)

Electoral division(s): County Council divisions within Cambridge: All
City Council wards: All

Executive summary: To provide an introduction to the City Council services which are relevant to the Committee's terms of reference.

Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to:

Note the contents of the report.

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1. Background

- 1.1 This report sets the context of the relevant services provided by the City Council, apart from pavement licences, which is covered in Agenda Item 7 at the same meeting. Alongside the work of the County Council, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and the Greater Cambridge Partnership, these City Council services help to contribute to the bigger picture on local transport issues, active travel and improving people's access to Cambridge and city centre businesses, shops and restaurants.
- 1.2 The City Council's Parking Services, Shopmobility, Taxicard scheme and walking, cycling and active travel promotion grants come under the remit of the Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure (currently Councillor Thornburrow). The City Council's approach to advertising boards come within the remit of the Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services (currently Councillor Carling). Meanwhile, decisions on pavement licences are a matter for the City Council's Licensing Committee.

2. Service Outlines

Car Parks

- 2.1 The City Council's Parking Services team manages five multi-storey car parks and other publicly accessible off-street car parks across the city, which are run on a commercial basis. These include:
 - (i) Around 3,100 spaces (once Park Street car park comes back online in autumn 2024);
 - (ii) Over 110 Blue Badge parking bays, all including three hours free parking;
 - (iii) Over 100 electric vehicle (EV) charging points already installed, with more to follow;
 - (iv) More than 70 'parent and child' parking bays.
- 2.2 There are other car parks (for example, at Lammas Land, Cherry Hinton Hall and the Meadows Community Centre) run by other City Council teams. In March 2024, feedback was invited on proposals to introduce pay by phone parking for Cherry Hinton Hall car park.
- 2.3 More details about these car parks (including a map) and off-street parking can be found on the City Council's [Parking website](#). This also covers information on parking payments, permits, free parking for Blue Badge holders, the location of EV charging points and links to sections of the County Council's website relating to park and ride sites. Data is also available on the City Council's [controlled parking spaces website](#).
- 2.4 A public consultation on 2024-25 off-street parking charges for car parks managed by the City Council took place during November and December 2023. The feedback was taken into account as part of the review of the Council's fees and charges for 2024-25, which was reported to the City Council's Strategy and Resources Committee in January 2024, and was featured in the Council's Budget-Setting Report for 2024-25 in February 2024.

Shopmobility

- 2.5 Shopmobility offers free day-hire of mobility aids (for example, manual rollators and wheelchairs, electric wheelchairs and motorised scooters) from the Grand Arcade and Grafton East car parks to anyone with a permanent or temporary disability. People need to register for the service first. Bookings in advance are encouraged.

- 2.6 Shopmobility in Cambridge was used 3,989 times during 2022/23 and 3,705 times in 2023/24. Based on a cautious estimate that every use of this service might lead to, on average, £30 of spend in city centre shops, cafés and restaurants, this could equate to generating over £110,000 per year to the local economy.
- 2.7 More information can be found on the City Council's [Shopmobility website](#). To contact Shopmobility, telephone 01223 457452 (Grand Arcade car park) or 01223 461858 (Grafton East car park).
- 2.8 The running of Shopmobility is supported by volunteers, and more information can be found on the City Council's [volunteering at a Shopmobility office website](#).

Taxicard

- 2.9 The annual Taxicard scheme (running from April to March) helps disabled people who live in Cambridge and have a low income to pay for taxi journeys. In 2023/2024, the scheme had 374 members.
- 2.10 For 2024/2025, scheme members have received £160 of vouchers for the full year (in £5 and £1 vouchers). Taxicard members can use as many vouchers as they like per trip. Taxicard vouchers can also be redeemed on Cambridge Dial-a-Ride by existing Dial-a-Ride members.
- 2.11 On 1 April 2024, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority took on the transfer of the City Grant Agreement from Cambridge City Council, and will evaluate the effectiveness of this arrangement after twelve months. More information is available on the [Cambridge Dial-a-Ride website](#).
- 2.12 A survey in 2021 found that the top three reasons for travel using the vouchers were: (1) hospital appointments; (2) shopping and (3) visiting the doctor.
- 2.13 More information about the scheme, eligibility criteria and how to apply can be found on the City Council's [Taxicard website](#).
- 2.14 A review of Taxicard and other transport initiatives was reported to the City Council's Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee in January 2022.

Walking, Cycling and Active Travel Promotion Grants

- 2.15 The City Council provides grants of up to £5,000 to help local groups fund projects that: encourage people to walk, cycle or use other forms of active travel more often; and/or promote safer walking or cycling; and/or encourage people to cycle, or use other forms of active travel, for the first time; and/or reduce cycle theft. The overall budget in 2024/25 is around £20,000.
- 2.16 In recent years, the programme has supported Camcycle and Living Streets Cambridge in their promotional work, along with the Cambridgeshire Police programme of 'BikeRegister' cycle marking and registration.
- 2.17 More details (including eligibility criteria) can be found on the City Council's [Walking, Cycling and Active Travel Promotion Grants website](#).

- 2.18 Applications are welcomed throughout the year and are considered on a 'first-come, first served' basis. City Councillors on the Members Active Travel Steering Group (including the Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure) are consulted on eligible grant applications.

Advertising Boards (A-boards)

- 2.19 The City Council's 2014 City Centre Accessibility review identified that advertising boards were an issue within the city. It was determined that a policy to manage them should be drafted. In 2016/17, a policy was produced which was designed to create a street environment that complemented premises-based trading, was sensitive to the needs of users and enhanced the character, ambience, and safety of the local physical environment. The consultation showed that there was a consensus for the policy.
- 2.20 The policy came into effect in November 2017, following a four-month education and enforcement amnesty period. Since its implementation, a re-education campaign was conducted in 2022 (following the Covid-19 period of trading restrictions). Visits have been made and leaflets have been delivered to all city centre businesses.
- 2.21 Enforcement officers respond to all reports or requests for enforcement and take appropriate action in line with the policy. The levels of policy breach by businesses are low, and compliance is high when breaches are identified. There have been six cases in the last 18 months. To date, no seizures of A-boards have taken place.
- 2.22 Advice is available on the City Council's [advertising boards website](#).

3. Significant Implications

- 3.1 This report sets the context of City Council services related to this Committee's terms of reference. There are no particular financial, legal, risk, equality and diversity, climate change and environmental implications arising from this report.
- 3.2 The City Council works closely with the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) over its development of the City Access Programme (including the Integrated Parking Strategy) especially in terms of how this relates to the City Council's approach to active travel and car parks in Cambridge. The Leader of the City Council (currently Councillor Davey) serves on the GCP Executive Board, while Councillors Bick, Smith and Thornburrow currently represent the City Council on the GCP Joint Assembly.
- 3.3 There are also important links between the City Council services mentioned in this report and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's Transport and Connectivity Plan. City Councillor Anna Smith is currently a member of the Combined Authority Board.

4. Source Documents

- 4.1 Links to the City Council's website can be found throughout this report. Further details about the committee reports and engagement/public feedback exercises that have been mentioned are available on the City Council's [Browse Meetings website](#) and [Consultations website](#).

4.1 City Council websites:

- [Parking](#)
- [Controlled Parking Spaces](#)
- [Shopmobility](#)
- [Volunteering at a Shopmobility Office](#)
- [Taxicard](#)
- [Walking, Cycling and Active Travel Promotion Grants](#)
- [Advertising Boards](#)
- [Browse Meetings](#)
- [Consultations](#)

4.2 [Cambridge Dial-a-Ride](#)