

7. WINDSOR PARKING STRATEGY

CABINET: 24 JULY 2008

MEMBER REPORTING: COUNCILLOR RAYNER, LEAD MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND THE ENVIRONMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider, adopt and begin delivery of a new parking strategy for Windsor

2. MEMBER'S RECOMMENDATION: That

- (i) **the new parking strategy set out as Appendix A (to follow) be adopted**
- (ii) **the solutions highlighted in paragraph 3.2.8 be developed and delivered to begin addressing the current parking concerns in Windsor**
- (iii) **the potential solutions highlighted in paragraph 3.2.9 form the basis of a consultation exercise to be undertaken as set out in Section 4.**
- (iv) **authority be delegated to the Director of Community Services (in conjunction with the Lead Member for Highways, Transport and the Environment) to review the responses to the consultation exercise; amend and implement the strategy accordingly**
- (v) **Cabinet receive a further report in January 2009 to note the outcome of the consultation exercise; to note progress on delivering the short-term solutions and consider the business case for implementation of the next phase of the strategy**

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Wards Affected:

The parking strategy will have direct, or indirect impacts on all Windsor Wards, Eton and Datchet.

3.2 Relevant Matters Upon Which Decision is Based & Reasons Supporting Recommendation

3.2.1 In November 2007 Cabinet considered a report entitled 'Windsor Park & Ride – Options Appraisal and resolved '*...that Officers be asked to bring forward options for both short term and long term solutions in early 2008 to address future parking issues in Windsor raised in the report...'*

3.2.2 In March 2008 Cabinet considered a further report entitled 'Windsor Parking Strategy' and resolved '*...That the methodology and programme be endorsed, and the positive progress to-date be noted...'*

In accordance with the previous resolutions this report presents a new parking strategy for Windsor.

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3.2.3 The aim of the strategy is:

- to deliver noticeable solutions that will put ‘Residents First’ whilst supporting local business and visitors
- to improve the public profile of Windsor and respond to negative press and poor perceptions
- to provide a strategy that is deliverable and affordable with phased implementation
- to identify some ‘Quick Wins’ that will respond to immediate pressures (in this context this report has taken into account the recommendations of the Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) report also included on this agenda)

These high level aims will focus on the delivery of an environmentally and economically sustainable transport plan, which is supportive of residents and responds to the continued growth and prosperity of Windsor and Eton for residents, visitors and businesses. To include:

- Improving parking conditions for local residents
- Supporting town centre development / vitality
- Supporting and enhancing the visitor market
- Reducing congestion and managing the impact of traffic in Windsor
- Managing future traffic growth and demands
- Maximising the efficiency of the transport network (walking, cycling and public transport)
- A contribution to improve air quality
- A contribution to regional benefits (For example; 2012 Olympics)

3.2.4 To develop aims and potential solutions it is essential to establish a clear **evidence base** that identifies and quantifies the problem for all users at varying times and days of the week.

	Weekday	Evening	Weekends
All Residents		*	*
Business employees	*		
Visitors	*	*	*

3.2.5 A comprehensive data collection exercise has been undertaken (as set out in the full strategy, attached as Appendix A (to follow)) which concludes that:

- the resident population (growth 0.5 to 1% per year); the visitor market (12% by 2016 with 53% currently seeking to drive) and the business base will continue to grow generating additional demand
- Weekday occupancy in the main car parks (February / March 2008) is circa. 80%; Weekend occupancy is circa. 95% and certain car parks demonstrate demand, exceeding capacity. This situation is likely to worsen during the summer period
- Traffic volumes are predicted to increase by 0.5 to 1% year on year and volumes on the Windsor and Eton Relief Road increase by circa. 16% from January to July
- there is suppressed demand at peak times affecting the visitor and business community
- Additional capacity of 300–500 spaces required in the short to medium term (0–3 years)
- Additional capacity of a further 500 – 1000 spaces is required in the long-term (5-10 years)
- The predominant problem is at weekends and at the seasonal peak (June to September)
- There are particular pressure points for residents at key times
- There a perception and image issue to be addressed

A further set of car park and on-street surveys will be undertaken in early July 2008 to compliment the original surveys and the results will be reported to Cabinet.

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3.2.6 Following clear identification of the aims; extensive data collection and quantification of the problem - potential solutions have been developed formed around three key criteria:

- Contribution to delivering aims and addressing problems
- Investment required
- Timescale to deliver

Solutions were then categorised under four main headings:

- Additional capacity (Weekends / Evenings)
- Additional capacity (All times)
- Information / Publicity
- Management Initiatives

This exercise enabled a strategy to be developed that is deliverable, focussed and offers solutions to manage existing demands whilst building capacity for the future.

3.2.7 The detailed strategy is attached as Appendix A (to follow) and the following summary highlights the main elements:

Solution	Timescale	Capital Investment	Operational Investment	Comment
Additional Capacity (Weekends / Evenings)				
<i>‘Centrica’ – Park and Ride</i>	4 – 6 months (Dependant upon legal agreement)	Circa. £50k	Circa. £50k pa (weekend shuttle bus) *	Opportunity to increase capacity by circa 150 spaces at weekends with shuttle bus to town centre
<i>King Edward VII Hospital – Park and Ride</i>	3 – 4 months (Dependant upon legal agreement)	Circa. £10k	Circa. £50k pa (weekend shuttle bus) *	Opportunity to increase capacity by circa 200 spaces at weekends with shuttle bus to town centre
<i>Home Park Car Park – extend existing park and ride service to 21.00hrs</i>	1 month	Nil	Circa. £15k pa	Extends benefits of existing service
<i>King Edward Court – promote car park as key venue for evening use</i>	4 – 6 months (Subject to agreement with King Edward Court)	£10k	Nil	Significant spare capacity exists that could serve the night-time economy
<i>Shared use of private business parking areas</i>	As opportunities arise	Nil	Nil	Negotiate (or secure through the planning process) use of private business parking for public use outside office hours. This could liberate significant spaces but has been difficult to deliver through a negotiated process to date
<i>East Berkshire College</i>	3 – 4 months (Dependant upon legal agreement)	Circa. £10k	Nil *	Opportunity to increase capacity by circa 50 spaces at weekends in existing overflow car park for residents and church-goers

DRAFT REPORT FOR OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

Additional Capacity (All times)				
<i>Home Park Car Park – extend car park</i>	6 – 9 months (Dependant upon planning consent / agreement with sports clubs)	Circa. £150k	Nil *	Extend existing car park to increase capacity by circa. 100 spaces
<i>Increase on-street capacity</i>	In progress	Circa. £30k	Nil	Remove parking restrictions to increase on-street capacity (potential to introduce one-way streets). <i>Circa. 170 additional spaces have been created to date and a further 60 additional spaces will be available by the end of July 2008</i>
<i>Windsor Racecourse – Park and Ride</i>	12 – 18 months (Dependant upon planning consent / legal agreement)	£450 – 650k (dependant upon specification / size)	£300k pa (3 no. shuttle buses operating 7 days per week) *	Opportunity to increase capacity by circa 200 –400 spaces at all times with shuttle bus to town centre. An additional £200k will be required if the junction with Vale Road is upgraded as part of the project
<i>Alexandra Gardens - build new decks over the existing surface car park</i>	4 – 5 years (Dependant upon funding, planning consent, consultation)	£5–7m (dependant upon specification / size)	Refer to note II below	Opportunity to increase capacity by circa 400-500 spaces at all times
Information / Publicity				
<i>Travel Information Signs (Windsor & Eton Relief Road)</i>	9 – 12 months (dependant upon upgrade of management system)	Circa. £80k	£5k per annum maintenance	Opportunity to display travel information and influence routes and parking patterns
<i>Car Park Variable Message signs</i>	9 – 12 months	Circa. £100k (including upgrade of management system)	£10k per annum maintenance	Improve effectiveness of existing signage and include King Edward Court car park in system
<i>Publicity and promotion</i>	3 – 6 months (dependant upon format / brief)	Circa. £50k	£5k per annum – updates - reprints	Rebrand parking information and effectively market

DRAFT REPORT FOR OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

<i>Technology Solutions</i>	24 months	Unknown	Unknown	Technology solutions (eg text alerts and links to satellite navigations systems) to advise motorists of available parking spaces are currently being explored with IT specialists and are at an early development stage
Management Initiatives				
<i>Windsor Dials car park – bridge link</i>	12 – 18 mths (dependant upon legal / property agreements)	£200k (unless developer funding can be secured)	£2k per annum inspection / maintenance	Complete bridge link between car park and Windsor Royal Station to greatly improve access and attractiveness of car park
<i>Flexible management of coach park</i>	Immediate	Nil	Nil	Continue flexible coach park management to ensure balance of cars / coaches is appropriate
<i>Planning process for on-street parking</i>	3 months	Nil	Nil	Introduce a new planning process that limits the number of residents parking permits for properties that are sub-divided or converted from business to residential
<i>Maximise use of spare capacity (eg. York House)</i>	3 – 6 months	£50k	Nil	Introduce a package of promotion and signing to ensure motorists are aware of all car parks and where spare capacity may exist

Notes:

- (i) * For each additional car park that is introduced there will be an increase in car park operational costs for patrols, enforcement and cash collection.
- (ii) The construction and operation of a significant new car park will incur annual operational, maintenance and running costs. At a preliminary stage this cannot be quantified
- (iii) Additional expenditure will be partly offset by additional income generated through increased capacity. This will be quantified as part of the business case currently being developed to be reported to Cabinet in January 2009

3.2.8 The solutions highlighted above offer a package of measures that are deliverable in the short, medium and long-term to meet the stated aims.

It is recommended that the following solutions be developed and implemented to begin addressing current parking concerns:

- Home Park Car Park – extend existing shuttle bus service to 21.00 hours (Subject to securing business support through the purchase of additional car park season tickets)
- King Edward Court – promote car park as key venue for evening use
- East Berkshire College (overflow car park) – weekend parking
- Increase on-street capacity (local consultations required for specific amendments)
- Travel Information Signs (Windsor and Eton Relief Road)
- Car Park Variable Message signing
- Publicity and promotion
- Technology solutions
- Flexible management of coach park
- Planning process for on-street parking
- Maximise use of spare capacity

DRAFT REPORT FOR OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

3.2.9 Additionally, it is recommended that the following potential solutions are considered further. This will include a consultation exercise (to be undertaken as set out in Section 4); development of a business case and a review of design, planning and funding issues:

- ‘Centrica’ - park and ride
- King Edward VII – park and ride
- Shared use of private business parking areas (consultation essential to establish new planning policy)
- Home Park car park extension
- Windsor Racecourse – park and ride
- Alexandra Gardens – new car park
- Windsor Dials – car park bridge link

3.3 Options Available and Risk Assessment

	Option	Comments
1.	Do Nothing	This does not respond to the Cabinet resolutions (November 2007 & March 2008) and does not address the parking concerns in the Windsor area
2.	Continue to deliver the on-street improvements; commence delivery of the short-term solutions and adopt the potential solutions as the basis of consultation	This is the recommended option that seeks to balance needs for residents, visitors and business in the short, medium and long-term
3.	Adopt an alternative strategy	This is not considered appropriate as the proposed strategy is based on a thorough evidence base and offers a package of deliverable, effective solutions
4.	Amend the strategy to include additional solutions or remove potential solutions	This may be appropriate. However, the current proposals are felt to offer a balanced, deliverable and effective package of solutions

A full assessment of risk and opportunities has been undertaken in accordance with the adopted ‘Risk Management’ policy and toolkit. The following significant risks have been identified:

- lack of available capital investment and subsequent ongoing revenue support will compromise the strategy resulting in reduced performance – this should be mitigated against by identifying all financial factors at an early stage and ensuring that the strategy is affordable.

Cabinet will receive a further report in January 2009 to consider the business case for implementation of the longer-term elements of the strategy. This is timed to compliment the formal budget setting process that will be considered by Cabinet / Council in February 2009.

- Planning consent is critical in delivering a number of elements of the strategy and early communication / consultation is essential in ensuring that solutions / designs are acceptable from a planning perspective
- Support from all partners is essential in delivering the strategy to achieve stated objectives

DRAFT REPORT FOR OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

The following significant opportunity has been identified

- Significant external funding may be available from the Regional Transport Programme (administered by the South-East England Regional Assembly (SEERA)) and it is essential that ongoing dialogue is maintained and that policy objectives are aligned

3.4 Relevant National/Regional Guidance

Various guidance is available at both, regional and national level, targeted at protecting the historic core of town centres and promoting sustainable transport modes to support the vitality of town centres whilst reducing congestion and improving air quality.

However, this guidance does not seek to manage existing problems where parking demand significantly exceeds capacity.

3.5 Relevant Council Policies/Strategies

Local Development Plan

Local Transport Plan

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Parking Strategy

The recommendations contained in this report also contribute to the Community Strategy in the following ways:

	Relevant? Yes / No
Key Themes:	
Supporting Children & Younger People	No
Supporting Adults & Older People	No
A Thriving, Cleaner, Greener Borough	Yes
Safer & Stronger Communities	Yes

4. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

The recommendations of this report seek to respond to the Cabinet resolutions of November 2007 and March 2008, which were based on community engagement and representation.

Subject to adoption of the new strategy a comprehensive and focussed consultation exercise is planned. This will involve the preparation of consultation leaflets and supporting plans and will include the following key elements:

- Written consultation with formal stakeholders (eg. Thames Valley Police, Chamber of Commerce)
- A local public exhibition (organised for two weekdays / evenings and a weekend to fully engage with the local community)
- Engagement with the press and local media to raise awareness of the project and seek feedback
- Engagement with established groups including the Windsor Town Forum, Windsor Town Partnership and Town Management (organised as part of the local exhibition process)

This focussed consultation exercise will be undertaken between August and October 2008 and the results will be collated and reported to the Director of Community Services and the Lead member for Highways, Transport and the Environment for consideration.

DRAFT REPORT FOR OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

It is necessary to ensure that this exercise is focussed and a clear process to assimilate feedback is established to facilitate early delivery of the proposed solutions and, therefore, begin addressing the current parking concerns in Windsor.

5. COMMENTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

This report will be considered at the Planning & Environment Overview & Scrutiny Panel on Monday 30th June 2008 and any comments will be reported at the Cabinet meeting on 24th July 2008.

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial

The current approved capital programme includes £900,000 for 'Additional Parking Provision for Windsor' (ref. CE64) in the financial year 2008/09.

The current approved capital programme also includes £ 300,000 for 'Intelligent Transport Systems' (ref. CG08) in the financial year 2008/09. An element of this total budget (£100,000) has been allocated for Travel Information Signs (Windsor and Eton Relief Road) and Windsor Variable Message Sign upgrade.

The Royal Borough previously submitted a major scheme bid to 'SEERA' for £7m, which was successful in securing provisional approval from the 'Regional Transport Board'.

As the previous 'Park and Ride' proposal (on which approval was based) is no longer being pursued 'SEERA' have been approached to consider whether the funding could support an alternative package of parking and transport initiatives that benefit Windsor and the surrounding area.

A 'refresh' of the original bid has been submitted to 'SEERA' and a formal response is expected in Autumn 2008.

In addition to the capital investment costs a number of solutions will require ongoing revenue support that is not currently funded. This will be partly offset by the generation of additional revenue.

Cabinet will receive a further report in January 2009 to consider the business case for implementation of the longer-term elements of the strategy. This is timed to compliment the formal budget setting process that will be considered by Cabinet / Council in February 2009.

6.2 Legal

Following the consultation exercise and adoption of the policy, legal support will be required in delivering various elements (including; amendments to existing Traffic Regulation Orders; property and planning agreements).

Any legal support given will need to be in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions.

6.3 Human Rights Act

Part II The First Protocol (Article 1 Protection of property)

Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions. No one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law and by the general principles of international law.

The preceding provisions shall not, however, in any way impair the right of a State to enforce such laws as it deems necessary to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest or to secure the payment of taxes or other contributions or penalties.

6.4 Planning

There are no Planning implications arising directly as a result of this report.

Following the consultation exercise and adoption of the new strategy this will become part of the formal planning process and will be fully considered when processing planning applications.

Planning consent will also be required if a number of the elements are to be pursued.

6.5 Sustainable Development

With respect to the Royal Boroughs' sustainability policies the following effects are identified:

- The appropriate management of parking is necessary to enhance the local environment

6.6 Diversity and Equality

With respect to the Royal Borough's Equality Impact Assessment Policy the recommendations in this report have no negative equality and diversity implications.

Background Papers:

- 'Windsor Park and Ride – Options Appraisal' (Cabinet Report – November 2007)
- 'Review of Yellow Lines (Cabinet Report – December 2007)
- 'Windsor Parking Strategy' (Cabinet Report – March 2008)