

CAB1119(TP)
FOR DECISION
WARD(S): ALL

CABINET (TRAFFIC AND PARKING) COMMITTEE

8 September 2005

REVIEW OF PARKING ISSUES

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Contact Officer: Alan Jowsey Tel No: 01962 848 583

RECENT REFERENCES:

EA 45 – Parking Review – 1 December 2004

CAB 1044 – Charges for On-Street Parking Permits – 19 May 2005

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report considers the minutes and recommendations of the Parking Review Informal Scrutiny Group meeting held in February 2005, and also in particular the increasing use of Park and Ride and possible changes to the locations of on-street pay and display parking bays in Winchester.

The report also reviews the parking charges at the car parks at River Park Leisure Centre and Wickham Square where charges have been recently introduced. Wickham Parish Council has previously been opposed to allowing parking for up to 3 hours in Wickham Square although this is supported by several local businesses. The report recommends increased charges for long-stay parking at the Leisure Centre, and allowing parking for up to 3 hours at Wickham Square subject to the Parish Council no longer being opposed to this change.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1 That a free trial of Park and Ride to those renewing their car parks season tickets should not be offered after the end of September 2005.
- 2 That the on-street pay and display machines in Wales Street should be relocated to College Walk with charges as existing for up to 2 hours with an exemption for residents permit holders, that the parking bays in Wales Street be designated as free parking for up to 30 minutes with an exemption for residents permit holders, that additional pay and display spaces be provided in the Broadway and Tower Street, and that the City Secretary and Solicitor publishes notice of these proposals and subject to no objections being received, makes the appropriate Traffic Regulation Order .
- 3 That the parking charges at River Park Leisure Centre be increased from £2.40 to £3.00 for 3 to 4 hours, and from £4.80 to £6.00 for over 4 hours, and that notice of variation be published.
- 4 That if supported by Wickham Parish Council, proposals be advertised for an additional period of parking to be allowed at Wickham Square for up to 3 hours, and that the charge for this period be 70p, and that subject to no objections being received, the Off-Street Parking Places Order be amended accordingly.

CABINET (TRAFFIC AND PARKING) COMMITTEE

8 September 2005

REVIEW OF PARKING ISSUES

Report of Director of Development

DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 During the 2004/05 year, the Parking Review Informal Scrutiny Group had two meetings. The first meeting in late 2004 considered proposed increases in charges for on-street and off-street parking, and those increases have now been implemented. The second meeting on 8 February 2005 considered other parking issues, and this report considers the minutes and recommendations of that meeting, attached as Appendix A.
- 1.2 There have also been other issues raised since the February meeting that it would be appropriate for this Committee to consider. These include the latest data on usage of the Park and Ride sites, and concerns raised as a result of the introduction of parking charges at River Park Leisure Centre and Wickham Square.

2 Park and Ride

- 2.1 The Parking Review Group noted at its February 2005 meeting that the use of Park and Ride had increased consistently during 2004. However further data is now available on usage during the first part of 2005, and this is attached as Appendix B. This shows that usage of the Park and Ride car parks is approaching the maximum capacity, and this appears to be primarily due to the increases in off-street parking charges from 4 April 2005. It is anticipated that the Park and Ride car parks will be full on Mondays to Fridays by November 2005.
- 2.2 In the longer term the increase in usage gives a clear justification for the provision of more Park and Ride sites, and the County Council is being encouraged to progress a South of Winchester site within the Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 currently being prepared. In the shorter term, the increased demand has resulted in capacity problems on the Park and Ride buses during the busiest times. There will be a need to consider over the next few months how the demand for Park and Ride should be managed until an additional Park and Ride car park can be provided.
- 2.3 The Parking Review Group also considered the free two weeks trial of the P&R facilities that has been offered to the holders of town centre season tickets. The trial offer has resulted in 38 drivers opting to use P&R rather than renewing their season tickets. The Group had recommended that the trial period should continue to be offered when season tickets are renewed until March 2006.
- 2.4 However it is clear that the increase in season ticket charges has had far more of an impact on increasing P&R usage than anticipated, and there is no benefit in offering the free trial when usage of the P&R car parks is approaching their maximum capacity. It is therefore now proposed that the free trial should not be offered after the end of September 2005.

2.5 The Parking Review Group discussed changes to the P&R bus service at its February meeting, but since then Cabinet has agreed various changes. An additional service to the Romsey Road area commenced on 7 March 2005 as a six month experiment, but the level of usage of the service has been very low and the service will terminate on Friday 30 September 2005. Most of the additional evening journeys added to the main P&R bus service from 1 November 2004 were removed on 3 May 2005 and the last P&R bus now departs from the railway station at 19.15. Cabinet has also agreed various minor timetable changes and the introduction of buses with a higher passenger capacity as part of the next tendering process for the Park and Ride bus service later this year.

3 On-Street Pay and Display

3.1 The Parking Review Group considered the options for extending the use of on-street pay and display. There were three pay and display machines identified that were taking an unsustainably low amount of money in Wales Street and Water Lane, and it was agreed that possible locations for resiting these three machines would be College Walk, College Street and Hatherley Road.

3.2 The two lengths of free, on-street parking in College Walk are similar being well used, close to the centre of Winchester, and having an existing restriction of 2 hours maximum stay with an exemption for residents permit holders. Due to the high level of usage, residents permit holders can have difficulty finding a space and conversion to on-street pay and display will result in more spaces being available for residents permit holders as well as generating a significant income from short-stay users. On-street pay and display will also be more easily enforced than the existing two hours maximum stay.

3.3 Hatherley Road has different problems. It is located a considerable distance from the centre of Winchester and the rest of the on-street pay and display area. It has a 2 hours maximum stay with an exemption for residents permit holders, and the main complaints are that the parking is used by students at the adjoining Peter Symonds College. However if a pay and display machine is installed, the income would be very low and unlikely to justify the costs involved in providing and maintaining a pay and display machine.

3.4 It is therefore proposed that the two pay and display machines in Wales Street should be relocated to College Walk, and that the parking bays in Wales Street should be designated as a maximum stay of 30 minutes with an exemption for residents permit holders. Parking controls in Water Lane and Hatherley Road would remain as existing.

3.5 In addition there are existing on-street pay and display parking bays on both sides of the Broadway and on Tower Street outside Mottisfont Court where the bays could be extended to provide additional parking and income without any changes to the pay and display machines at those three locations. It is therefore proposed that those changes should be carried out at the same time as the changes in Wales Street and College Walk in order to minimise legal costs.

4 Off-Street Parking Charges

4.1 Over the last year, parking charges have been introduced in two off-street parking areas that were previously free of charge, the River Park Leisure Centre car park at Winchester and at Wickham Square. At both locations, the charges have resolved

most of the problems that were occurring and in particular spaces are now available for short stay users, leisure centre customers at the Winchester location and shoppers at the Wickham location. However there are some specific problems to be resolved at each location.

- 4.2 At River Park Leisure Centre, most drivers who were using the car park for all day use while working in the town centre were displaced into other car parks. However in April 2005, long-stay parking charges in the town centre were increased and in addition all-day parking was removed from St Peter's car park by not allowing an all-day payment into the pay and display machines. Since the charges had only recently been introduced in the Leisure Centre car park with a charge of 20p per hour for up to 3 hours, £2.40 for between 3 and 4 hours, and £4.80 for over 4 hours, there did not appear to be any need to increase those charges in April.
- 4.3 Since April, there are now typically 6 users per day purchasing the 3 to 4 hours tickets and 14 users per day purchasing the over 4 hours tickets. While this does not cause any significant problems, any further increase in all-day usage would use up parking for which leisure centre users should have priority. There are two options available, either to increase the long-stay charges to £3.00 and £6.00 respectively to bring them back in line with the charges at Tower Street and Gladstone Street, or to remove the availability of the over 4 hours charge completely as has been done in St Peter's car park. It is recommended that at this stage, the charges should be increased to £3.00 for 3 to 4 hours and to £6.00 for over 4 hours. If there is any further increase in the number of all-day users, the option for all-day parking can be removed at a later date.
- 4.4 At Wickham Square, there have been several complaints from restaurants, pubs and a ladies hairdressers that the maximum stay of 2 hours has resulted in a loss of trade while there is still sufficient parking capacity available in Wickham Square to allow parking for up to 3 hours. When the charging was approved, officers considered that parking should be available for up to 3 hours, but the Parish Council was strongly in favour of allowing parking only for up to 2 hours. Cabinet therefore approved parking charges in Wickham Square with a maximum stay of 2 hours and these charges were implemented from March 2005.
- 4.5 The Parish Council has still been opposed to allowing parking for up to 3 hours, and the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Transport has had a meeting with Parish Council and business representatives to try and agree the best way forward. There would be clear benefits for some local businesses in allowing parking for up to 3 hours and this would not cause any significant problems for other users. Subject to the Parish Council confirming that it no longer objects to this change, it is recommended that the parking charges in Wickham Square be amended to allow parking for up to 3 hours. The appropriate charge for between 2 and 3 hours parking would be 70p, so that the charges in Wickham Square would be identical to the charges in Basingwell Street car park, Bishops Waltham.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

5 CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

- 5.1 A key priority is to promote more sustainable approaches to transport in order to reduce congestion and air quality. The efficient control and management of on and off street parking contributes to achieving a strong and diverse urban economy.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 The increasing usage of the Park and Ride car parks is generating some additional income, but most additional users are likely to be transferring from the town centre car parks where charges are higher. There is also likely to be an increase in the costs of the bus service contract from November 2005.
- 6.2 The proposed changes to on-street pay and display and to off-street parking charges at River Park Leisure Centre and Wickham Square will generate additional income. There are one-off costs in making these changes that can be met from existing budgets.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None.

APPENDICES:

- A. Minutes of Parking Review Informal Scrutiny Group held on 8 February 2005.
- B. Bar Chart showing Park and Ride usage from June 2004 to May 2005.