

ENVIRONMENT CAPITAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Agenda Item No. 6
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Report of the Executive Director of Operations

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CHRISTMAS PARK AND RIDE SERVICE

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report is being presented at the request of the Environment Capital Scrutiny Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The committee is asked to scrutinise the provision of the Christmas park and ride service and make any appropriate recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Community Development for consideration.

3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 3.1 Peterborough's Sustainable Community Strategy is the plan for the future of our city and the surrounding villages and rural areas. It sets the direction for the overall strategic development of Peterborough. This report directly links to the Council's strategic priority, Creating the UK's Environment Capital.

In addition, the proposal contained in this report would help to improve performance against the following indicators:

- NI175 Access to services by public transport, walking and cycling
- NI177 Local bus passenger journeys
- NI185 CO2 reduction from local authority operations
- NI186 Per capita CO2 emissions

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Peterborough has operated a Christmas park and ride service since 1999. Whilst relatively successful, the Christmas park and ride service has always operated at a cost to the Council.

- 4.2 The table below gives a comparison of usage for the Christmas park and ride service from its commencement in 1999.

Table 1: Comparison of Usage

Year	Number of operating days	Number of cars	Number of passengers	Charge
1999	11	3,203	6,843	£1 per car
2000	11	3,249	7,836	£1 per car
2001	9	2,570	5,435	£1 per adult
2002	10	2,392	4,746	£1 per adult
2003	10	2,452	4,954	£1 per adult
2004	9	3,479	8,598	Free

2005	20	5,095	13,960	Free
2006	19	6,560	16,152	Free
2007	19	6,057	17,321	Free
2008	13	3,780	7,149	Free
2009	12	3,361	6,914	Free
2010	15	1,943	3,923	£1 per adult*

* £2.50 family ticket available (2 adults and up to 3 children)

4.3 The average number of passengers using the service per day each year fluctuates. This is due to a number of reasons:

- The number of passengers using the service on Sundays is less than on Saturdays. The split of operational days has varied year on year.
- The Town Bridge repair work impacted on ease of access for car users into the city.

However, it is noticeable that charging for the service, whether per person or per car, reduces passenger numbers.

2011 Christmas Park and Ride Service

4.4 There is a net budget of £29k (£35k expenditure, £6k income) to fund a Christmas park and ride service for 2011. The estimated cost in 2010 was £35k, with a contribution of just £3k income received from customers.

4.5 There is a need to provide some consistency to the operational days of the service. The changing from year to year can be confusing to the users of the service. In addition, the figures in table 1 above demonstrate that charging for the service has a negative impact. It is therefore proposed to operate the service in 2011 as follows:

Saturdays: 29 October to 24 December - 9 days.

Sundays: 13 November to 18 December - 6 days.

4.6 This is consistent with the number of operational days for 2010 and will be the operational period going forward, available funding permitting.

4.7 It is also proposed that the service operate free of charge, however this would mean a loss of income, which could only be partly offset by a reduction in printing/advertising costs. The remaining shortfall will need to be met from within the Operations Directorate overall cash limit budget.

The future of the Christmas Park and Ride Service

4.8 The provision of a Christmas park and ride service meets with the Council's aspirations to become the UK's Environment Capital. The Christmas park and ride service contributes to the sustainable transport agenda by reducing congestion and ensuring the accessibility of the city centre, therefore reducing CO2 emissions.

4.9 However, there is a need to further develop the park and ride service within the city. Officers will investigate external funding sources to expand the existing park and ride service. Consideration will be given to an all year weekend operational period or alternatively, so called 'pocket park and ride sites' whereby existing parking provision strategically positioned at points to intercept car users on the outskirts of the city could be used. By careful selection of sites, close to existing commercial bus services, there would be no additional bus service revenue costs associated with the provision of this type of service. The sites could also be designed to encourage multi modal interchange such as car to bus, cycle to bus, car to cycle, 'stride and ride' etc.

4.10 This type of provision would then naturally lead to expansion of park and ride as detailed in the council's Long Term Transport Strategy. Any proposals will be subject to a separate appraisal

that will consider all the financial and non financial implications.

5. KEY ISSUES

- 5.1 Officers have previously explored the possibility of obtaining sponsorship to contribute towards a Christmas park and ride service to no avail.

Charging customers for the service reduces participation.

Should external funding not be sourced for developing the park and ride service it will not be possible to deliver these improvements from other budgets.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are financial implications for not charging passengers. A reduction in printing/advertising costs will partly offset the loss of income. The remaining shortfall will need to be met from within the Operations Directorate overall cash limit budget.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 There is no consultation applicable to the contents of this report. Should it not be possible to deliver a Christmas park and ride service in the future the appropriate advertising will need to take place to inform all councillors, residents and potential users.

8. NEXT STEPS

- 8.1 Any recommendations from the Committee for changes to the Christmas park and ride service should be referred to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Community Development for consideration.

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 9.1 None.

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