

ENVIRONMENT CAPITAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Agenda Item No. 6
15 JULY 2010	Public Report

Report of the Executive Director of Operations

Contact Officer – Teresa Wood, Group Manager Transport and Sustainable Environment
Contact Details - Tel: 01733 317451 or email teresa.wood@peterborough.gov.uk

PETERBOROUGH'S CHRISTMAS PARK AND RIDE SERVICE 2010

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report is being presented at the request of the Environment Capital Scrutiny Committee following recommendations at its meeting of 15 February:
- (i) to increase public confidence in the park and ride service it needs to run for a longer period up to Christmas; and
 - (ii) a small charge is imposed on the park and ride service so funds can be used to increase the period the service runs for.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The committee are asked to scrutinise the information provided for the Christmas 2010 park and ride service and make any appropriate recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning.

3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

- 3.1 This area of work relates directly to the Sustainable Communities Strategy, specifically the priority to create the country's environment capital and deliver substantial and truly sustainable growth. A Christmas park and ride service helps to achieve the following national 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 At its meeting of 15 February 2010, the Environment Capital Scrutiny Committee recommended the following to the then Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Community Development (now Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning):

- (iii) to increase public confidence in the park and ride service it needs to run for a longer period up to Christmas; and
- (iv) a small charge is imposed on the park and ride service so funds can be used to increase the period the service runs for.

The Christmas 2009 park and ride service operated both Saturdays and Sundays for six weekends from 14/15 November to 19/20 December. The service operated free of charge and over the 12 days a total of 3,361 cars and 6,914 passengers were recorded as using the service. The park and ride service has operated free of charge since 2004; a free service was original offered to minimise the impact on easy access to the city centre when the Town Bridge

repair works were being undertaken.

A budget of £29,000 has been allocated to the Christmas 2010 park and ride service.

Operating period

Over recent years the Christmas park and ride service has operated for varying numbers of days:

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Saturdays	9	10	10	9	10	14	14	9	6
Sundays	0	0	0	0	8	5	5	4	6
Bank holidays	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Operating days	9	10	10	9	20	19	19	13	12

Passenger numbers on Saturdays are higher than on Sundays and, in addition, usage is usually low at the beginning of the service and increases steadily before dropping off towards the end of the service.

Based on 2009 costs, the proposal for the Christmas 2010 park and ride service is to operate nine Saturdays and six Sundays; therefore operating from Saturday 23 October to Saturday 18 December and Sunday 14 November to Sunday 19 December. The bus operating costs and other associated costs are detailed below:

Description	Cost
9 x Saturdays	£14,400
6 x Sundays	£9,390
Publicity	£300
Security	£4,298
Signage	£1,040
Total estimated costs	£29,428

Therefore, the total estimated cost of providing the Christmas 2010 park and ride service is £29,428 plus any additional inflation costs.

Charging

The aim of a park and ride service is to attract car users away from the city centre. In recent years the council has been criticised for not allowing walking passengers to use the park and ride service. It is the view of officers that walking passengers detract from commercially operated services and, whilst the park and ride service operated free of charge, any such impact should be minimised. The table below gives a sample of park and ride charges for other city centre locations in the area:-

	Per car	Per passenger
Bedford	£3 – up to 7 people	
Cambridge	Adult return £2.20	£2.30 pay machine £2.60 on bus
Chelmsford		£2.20
Ipswich	£3 – up to 5 people	
Leicester	£3.50 after 9 am Mon to Fri for up to 5 people	£3
Norwich	£3.50 Mon to Fri £3.30 Sat, Sun & BH - up to 5 people	

It is therefore reasonable to propose a fare of £1 per adult passenger. The table below provides the passenger numbers for the past three years:

	2007			2008			2009		
	Pass	Days	Average	Pass	Days	Average	Pass	Days	Average
Sat	14188	14	1013	6038	9	671	4693	6	782
Sun	3133	5	627	1111	4	278	2221	6	370

Average number of passengers on Saturdays = 822 x 9 days = 822 @ £1 fare = £7,398
Average number of passengers on Sundays = 425 x 6 days = 425 @ £1 fare = £2,550

The total estimated income is therefore £9,948. However, erring on the side of caution an income of £7,500 should be achievable.

This additional income will be used to supplement the £29,000 budget to enhance the Christmas 2010 park and ride service on three additional Saturdays at a cost of approximately £4,800, cover any contract inflation increases and also to promote the service. Due to budgetary constraints, the service has not been well publicised in previous years; this income will provide an opportunity to enhance the promotion of the service, particularly given that there is a significant change to the service by way of introducing a charge.

5. KEY ISSUES

- 5.1 It has not been possible in the past to deliver a Christmas park and ride service through sponsorship, therefore a charge of £1 is proposed to supplement the allocated budget of £29,000. A £1 charge will allow those wishing to walk or cycle to use the park and ride service. This has not been permissible whilst the Christmas park and ride service has operated free of charge as this would detract from commercially operated bus services in the vicinity of the park and ride sites.

The operation of a Christmas park and ride service is at the goodwill of Diligenta and Perkins who provide their car parks at Lynch Wood and Eastern Industry free of charge. Discussions are currently being held with Diligenta and Perkins to secure the sites for 2010.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Should a Christmas park and ride service not be delivered, there will be city wide implications, such as increased congestion, together with implications for visitors to the city. The contracts in place with the service providers enable early termination should the budget provision be withdrawn. Current contracts have an end date of 28 December 2013 with an option to extend.

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. A Cabinet Member Decision Notice may be required to deviate from Local Transport Plan 2.

8. NEXT STEPS

- 8.1 Any recommendations from the Committee regarding the Christmas 2010 park and ride service should be referred to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning for consideration.

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

- 9.1 Environment Capital Scrutiny Committee report - 15 February 2010

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