

CABINET

15 APRIL 2015

PARK & RIDE TENDERING, OPERATION & SERVICE REVIEW

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (ENVIRONMENT)

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RECENT REFERENCES

[CAB2130](#) – Park & Ride Operation Review – 16 March 2011

[CAB2240](#) – Car Parking Charges & Operation Review – 9 November 2011

[CAB2301\(TP\)](#) – Park & Ride Operation Review – 16 February 2012

[PHD553](#) - Winchester Park And Ride: Changes To Bus Contract Funding – 19 March 2014

[CAB2579](#) – Park & Ride: Contract Extension – 30 April 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The current contract for the operation of the Winchester Park & Ride bus service is due to expire on 18 April 2016. This was initially a five year contract commenced in April 2010. A one year extension was agreed by Cabinet in April 2014 (CAB 2579 refers) in order to enable a comprehensive review of the Park and Ride operation to be completed and to allow the bus industry time to monitor the financial and other impacts of new (Euro VI) emission legislation for buses

The purpose of this Report is to recommend options as to how the service could operate in future under a new 5 year bus contract (with the option of up to 8 years) and so approval is sought for the retendering of the Park and Ride contract as set out in the recommendations which have been informed by customer survey data and informal key stakeholder consultation. This is considered in detail in the P&R review attached at Appendix 1. In summary the feedback received suggests that the service

works well and the options recommended represent an evolution of Winchester's Park and Ride facility rather than radical change to its operation. There are however some significant modifications to the P&R operation which should be included within the tender options. These relate to the use of more efficient buses (Euro VI as opposed to the current Euro V), increased bus fleet and therefore frequency of service (peak and off peak), revised hours of operation (six days a week from 0625 to 1930 (Monday to Friday) and 0700 to 1930 (Saturday), and inclusion of additional services for the pre-Christmas period. It is also proposed in the Review to reduce block booking discounts from 50% to 30% which will help fund the new and improved service.

It is further recommended that the possibility of securing funding from the Government's Office for Low Emission Vehicles be considered as it may be provide an opportunity to look at other types of bus, such as hybrid vehicles, which might otherwise be prohibitively expensive for the Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the contents and recommendations of the 'Park & Ride Review Report 2014 to 2015' be approved and adopted.
2. That the Assistant Director (Environment) be authorised to seek tenders for the main Park and Ride bus contract for a 5 year period from 18 April 2016, and that the tender include the following provisions:
 - a) Vehicles should be specified as new at the beginning of the contract with diesel engines to a minimum of Euro VI standard, a minimum capacity of 70 passengers and a maximum length of 12metres.
 - b) To include tender options that allow for Euro V standard buses.
 - c) To include tender options to allow for a contract period of 8 years.
 - d) To allow for a peak time vehicle frequency of 7.5 minutes (8 buses) and off-peak frequency of 12 minutes (5 buses).
 - e) To include tender options to allow for a peak time vehicle frequency of 8.6 minutes (7 buses).
 - f) To operate the P&R service six days a week from 0625 to 1930 (Monday to Friday) and 0700 to 1930 (Saturday).
 - g) In the case of a Euro VI bus contract the maximum age for the vehicles at the end of the contract be 5 years (in the case of a 5 year contract) and 8 years (in the case of an 8 year contract).
 - h) In the in the case of a Euro V bus contract the maximum age for the vehicles at the end of the contract be 11 years (in the case of a 5 year contract) and 14 years (in the case of an 8 year contract).

- i) To continue to run a 'linked' bus route as currently operated, connecting all the Town's Park & Ride sites as detailed in Appendix 5 to the report.
 - j) To allow for enhanced levels of operation during the five weeks before Christmas.
3. That further work be carried out on the consideration and development of an Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) bid for Low Emission Buses (LEB's) to operate the P&R service and the Assistant Director (Environment) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Transport be given delegated authority to determine if such a consideration be included in the tender specifications.
 4. That the Assistant Director (Environment) be given delegated authority to prepare the contract documents as outlined in the report, and determine the procedure to be used pursuant to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, selection criteria, and the detailed evaluation criteria for the award of the contract based on the most economically advantageous tender with a price: quality ratio of 80% price: 20% quality.
 5. That the outcome of the tendering process be reported to Cabinet in Autumn 2015 for approval to award the contract, such report to include details on how any increased contract costs can be funded.

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DETAIL:

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The provision for a network of Park and Ride (P&R) sites surrounding Winchester was first adopted in the Winchester Movement and Access Plan (WMAP) developed by both the City and County Councils in the early nineties and later was established as a key feature of the current Winchester Town Access Plan (WTAP).
- 1.2. The first Park and Ride site at St Catherine's (including Barfield) was opened in 1993 with approximately 300 spaces, and was subsequently expanded in 2004 to hold 785 vehicles. In April 2010 the 'South' car park was opened increasing the overall capacity to 1650 spaces. In Summer 2015 a further 200 spaces at Pitt will take the total to 1850 spaces which represents a 35% share of the WCC car parking capacity for Winchester Town.
- 1.3. The current Bus contract began on 19 April 2010 and was due to expire on 18 April 2015. In April 2014 (CAB 2579 refers) approval was granted to extend the contract by a period of one year to enable a comprehensive review of the Park and Ride operation to be completed and to allow the bus industry to monitor the financial and other impacts of new (Euro VI) emission legislation for buses. The Park and Ride Review is complete and is found at Appendix 1 to this Report.
- 1.4. The service has been successful in accommodating large numbers of commuter vehicles, which would otherwise exacerbate peak hour congestion in town and more recently facilitating the development of Winchester's shopping and visitor experience, along with special events such as the Christmas Market.
- 1.5. In 2014 the Park & Ride buses carried in excess of 800,000 passenger journeys. The average weekly load is over 15,000 passenger trips and pre-Christmas weeks this figure exceeds 40,000. Peak time buses carry an average of between 35 and 40 passengers, and off-peak buses carry an average of 21 passengers. Appendix 2 shows the significant and welcome growth in the P&R service over the last five years.
- 1.6. If the recommendations of this Report are agreed, then the new Park and Ride bus contract will run consecutively from the existing contract and it will not be necessary to serve notice of termination on the current contract. The aim is for the new contract to become operational in April 2016. In order to meet this deadline, and allow any operator to procure buses, the new tender will need to be awarded by the end of November 2015.

1.7. A full timetable for the Report and Tender programme is found at Appendix 3.

2. Park & Ride Review 2015

2.1. Over the last year, Officers have been considering a number of different options for operation of the P&R service taking into account customer feedback. This review is now complete and a detailed report based on its findings has been compiled (the 'Park & Ride Review 2015' (P&RR2015)), attached as Appendix 1.

2.2. This Report asks that Cabinet note, approve and adopt the content and recommendations of the P&RR2015. In summary recommendations from that report are to: -

a) Improve passenger capacity (additional buses) throughout the day by the use of enhanced bus frequencies. This will meet excess demands at peak times and anticipated increased demands from town centre growth. (P&RR2015 – Section 3.1b) Retain the existing route. The existing route works well and we know that part of the attractiveness of the Park and Ride facility to customers is that the service is direct, reliable and serves all key destinations (P&RR2015 – Sections 3.2, 3.3 & 3.9)

c) Seek tender prices for using both the current Euro V buses and the provision of new Euro VI buses which produce even lower emissions. (P&RR2015 – Section 3.4)

d) Consider the use of hybrid vehicles or other Low Emission Bus (LEB) alternatives in the light of the current funding possibly available through the OLEV (Office for Low Emission Vehicles) (P&RR2015 – Section 3.4)

e) That permanent provision of extra buses for enhanced Christmas operations be incorporated into the tender specifications. (P&RR2015 – Section 3.5)

f) End the evening bus operation at 19:30. After this time the level of use is so low (only 2 or 3 passengers are usually carried per bus) that given the need to manage contract costs it is hard to justify the cost per passenger. (P&RR2015 – Section 3.7)

g) Continue to allow carriage of non-Park and Ride users so long as the additional passenger loadings do not affect the reliability of the bus service or the capacity of the bus to carry Park and Ride users. (P&RR2015 – Section 3.8)

h) Not operate the P&R service on a Sunday, except for pre-Christmas peaks and possibly special events. (P&RR2015 – Section 3.10)

i) Maintain the current ticketing provision and structure with a review of the pricing levels to be carried out once tender prices are known (P&RR2015 – Sections 3.6 & 3.11) whilst reducing the block booked discount level from 50% to 30% (Sections 3.11).

- 2.3. The recommendations from the Park and Ride Review 2015 have been used to determine the tender specifications for the new bus service, a summary of which are found in Appendix 4.

3. Consultation

- 3.1. The whole review process started by consulting the regular P&R users. The service has developed well since major changes in 2010 and it is imperative that any further changes do not unduly affect this significant and very important user base. The results of the survey have been published on the City Council's website and have been used to shape the review and its recommendations. Details are set out in section 2.11 of the P&R Review but the general message is that users consider the service works effectively and does not therefore need radical changes made to it.
- 3.2. Regular operational meetings are undertaken with the incumbent operator; Stagecoach, who it is considered have proved to be a reliable and efficient service provider and most importantly have been quick to respond to any issues relating to the operation of the service.
- 3.3. Meetings have been offered and held with other potential bidders (local bus operators) to enable them to better understand the operation of the service and its aspirations under a new contract should they wish to consider tendering.
- 3.4. As the review process evolved, key stakeholders including the University, the Hospital, the County Council, Winchester BID, WinACC were asked for their views.
- 3.5. There were six responses, including WinACC, Hampshire County Council and the University of Winchester. The primary themes were; a clear support for increased frequencies/more buses and additional buses to serve special events; a desire to retain the evening services and large organisations do not want a reduction in block booking discounts which would increase their costs. The consultation responses and comments are set out in Appendix 6.
- 3.6. WinACC suggest a change in operation to fully integrate the P&R buses into town services. They would prefer an option of pay to park and pay on the bus (as per the Oxford/Cambridge model). However this can result in an increase in user costs (Oxford charges the equivalent of £4.7 for one adult P&R where as Winchester is £3 for the driver and all passengers) and where this mechanism was recently introduced in Cambridge it has resulted in a 13% decline in use of the car parks.
- 3.7. WinACC also believe that the retendering process is an opportunity to upgrade the buses used beyond the Euro VI standard, potentially using funding through the OLEV LEB fund. This possibility will be considered further and is reflected in the recommendations accordingly.

4. Procurement of Contract

- 4.1. The contract will be procured in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Hampshire County Council has agreed to run the tender process on the Council's behalf, given their expertise in letting contracts for bus services.
- 4.2. It is proposed that the open procedure be used, whereby a specification is prepared and a public notice placed in the Official Journal of the European Union, and on the South East Business Portal and Contracts Finder, inviting suitably qualified operators to submit tenders. These will then be evaluated on the basis of a price:quality split, the details of which will need to be agreed with Hampshire County Council in discussion with the Assistant Director (Environment) and the Portfolio Holder.
- 4.3. At the last time of tendering in 2009 the assessed price:quality split was 70:30 with the 'quality' element assessed using a 'Quality Questionnaire' using the following five categories: compliance with tender specifications; delivering an effective service; customer focus; innovation & environmental issues.
- 4.4. However, HCC have now adopted an 80:20 split and as the service is now well defined, with most requirements being set out within the tender specification there are fewer opportunities for operators to demonstrate 'Quality' and therefore it is proposed to adopt their 80:20 split.
- 4.5. Once tenders have been evaluated, the results will be reported to Cabinet for a decision on the award of the contract, and consideration of any financial implications arising from the tenders and options.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. Overall, the existing operation works well. The recommendations set out in the Review and this Cabinet paper represents an evolution of the service which is intended to improve the efficiency of its operation without prohibitively increasing the cost to the Council. The overarching objectives are to grow the use of the facility, which benefits those who visit and work in Winchester, as well as contributing to the improvement of city centre environment and its economic vitality.
- 5.2. The provision of an enhanced P&R bus service would support the Council's adopted Parking Strategy in that it would provide further incentives to use the facility as well as encourage use of the new car park being constructed at Pitt. In addition any anticipated town centre redevelopment or reduce car parking availability will need an enhanced P&R service.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

6. COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND PORTFOLIO PLAN (RELEVANCE TO):

- 6.1. The proposals accord with the Community Strategy outcome of safeguarding our high quality environment, and our economic prosperity outcome in terms of providing good, reliable transport options for those who live, work and visit the Winchester District.
- 6.2. There are considerable environmental benefits as a result of the ongoing operation of the P&R services, particularly in relation to the reduction in cars entering the town centre and their impact on the Air Quality Management Area. The new contract presents an opportunity to further the Council's Community Strategy commitment to reducing the carbon footprint of the Winchester District.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 7.1. The majority of P&R services in operation around the UK do so with an element of public subsidy. Most, like Winchester, are supported by other off street parking income.
- 7.2. The actual cost of the P&R operation in 2013/14 was £1,039k which included expenditure on the bus contracts of £924,009 with the remainder on maintenance and support services. The total was offset by income of £891k leaving a total net expenditure of £148k. This is approximately half the Cabinet agreed operating subsidy of £300,000 when the 'South' car park opened and the new contract commenced operation in 2010, this reduction in subsidy is the direct result of increased use of the P&R service. At the same time there has not been a decline in town centre income. This assessment does not include costs for NNDR, cleaning, maintenance etc. which are covered in the overall parking account.
- 7.3. The budget allowance for 2015/16 includes a bus operator budget set at £1.008m to be offset by an HCC contribution of £79k and the £45k Government Grant.
- 7.4. Winchester's P&R operation has now effectively reached a plateau at peak times as there is often higher demand for bus capacity than there is bus space available; therefore a contract allowing for additional buses is recommended. This will inevitably result in increased costs.
- 7.5. The adoption of the recommendations relating to the ticket costs and discounts given to large employers, and the use of the HCC P&R car park also has potential to off-set some of the anticipated bus contract cost increases.
- 7.6. Only by undertaking a re-tendering exercise will these costs be established. The results of the retendering exercise will be reported back to Cabinet in Autumn 2015, along with the annual parking charges review report. The combination of these two reports will seek to balance the anticipated increased costs from a revised and improved P&R bus contract and link in with the budget setting process for 2016/17.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES:

- 8.1. There is a risk in that the undertaking of any new tender process may be that any new tender submitted could be considerably more than the current level. This risk is minimised by allowing for a tender specification that includes options largely similar to what is currently operated.
- 8.2. A full financial evaluation and appraisal can only be made once tenders have been submitted. As any new contract will not start until April 2016 this does allow officers' time to develop funding mechanisms to off-set any price increases.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Winchester Park & Ride Review 2015 - User Survey Results (on WCC website)

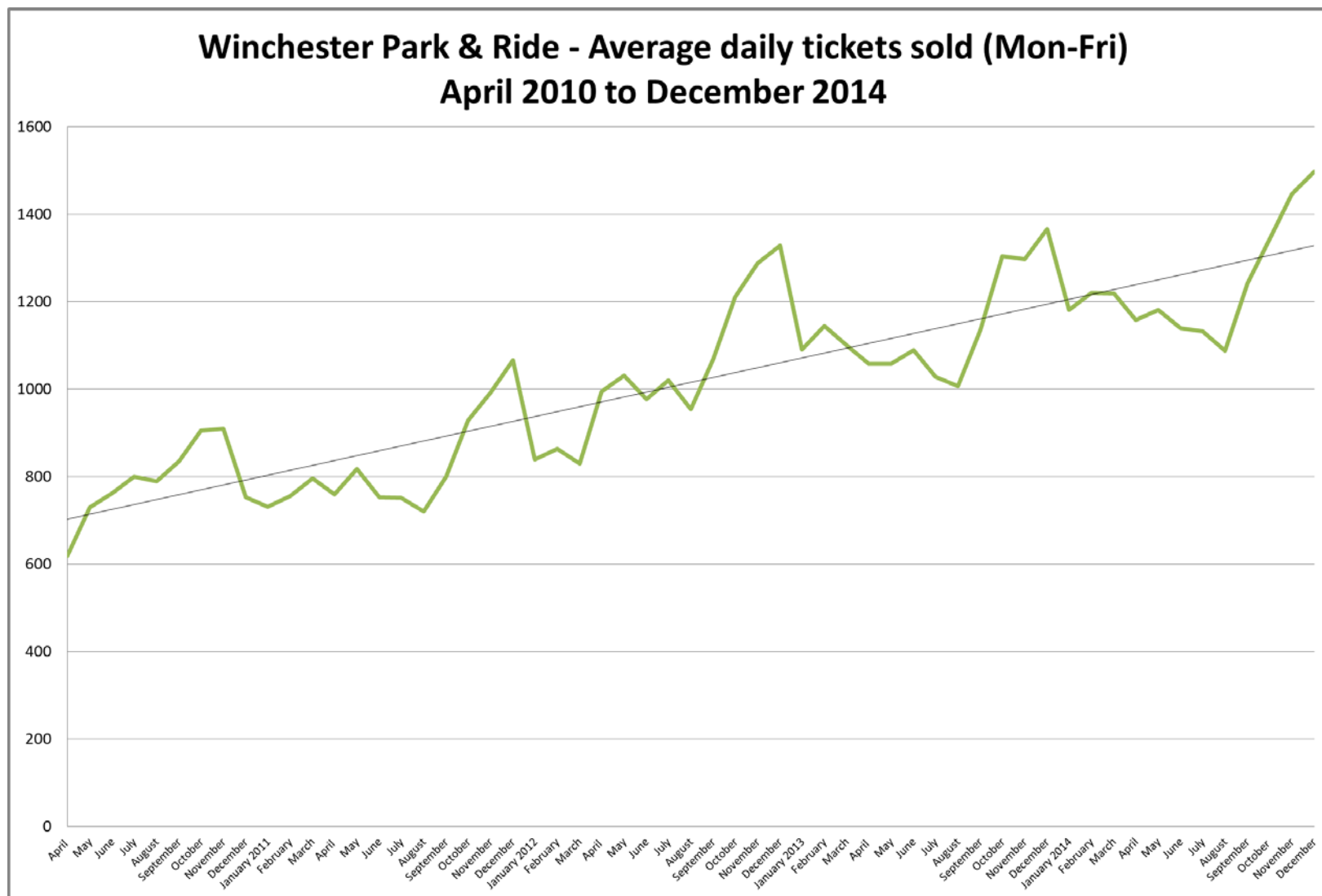
APPENDICES:

- Appendix 1: Park & Ride Review – 2015 (separate document*)
- Appendix 2: Park & Ride Growth (Car park tickets sold 2010 – 2014)
- Appendix 3: Report and Tender programme
- Appendix 4: Tender Specification & Frequencies
- Appendix 5: Bus Route Details
- Appendix 6: Stakeholder Consultation Responses

**Due to its size, Appendix 1 is attached for Cabinet Members, Chairman of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Leaders of the Opposition Groups only. It is available on the Council's website via a link from the following page:*

<http://www.winchester.gov.uk/meetings/details/1356>

Appendix 2: Park & Ride Growth (Car park tickets sold 2010 – 2014)



Appendix 3: Report and Tender Programme

- April 2015 - Cabinet approval to seek Tenders, along with Contract and Operational details
- May 2015 – HCC & WCC develop tender documents
- May 2015 – WCC consider OLEV funding opportunities and develop bid if considered appropriate.
- June / July / August 2015 - Seek tenders (three month period required)
- September / October 2015 – Tenders returned and analysed.
- October / November 2015 – Cabinet Approval of Tender and referral to The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (if necessary)
- December 2015 - Award new contract
- April 2016 – New Contract Commences

Appendix 4: Detailed Tender Specifications & Frequency Details

In summary the identified tender specifications are –

- Buses to be a minimum of 11.8metres long with a minimum seated capacity of 45 people with a minimum standing capacity of 25
- Buses to be provide in the livery as required by WCC
- The service to be operated according to the timetable developed by Winchester City Council (based on established operating schedules in the current contract) which includes the **approximate** following provisions
 - 0625 to 0730 buses every 15 minutes (4 buses)
 - 0730 to 0900 buses every 7.5 minutes (8 buses)
 - 0900 to 1545 buses every 12 minutes (5 buses)
 - 1545 to 1745 buses every 7.5 minutes (8 buses)
 - 1745 to 1830 buses every 15 minutes (4 buses)
 - 1830 to 1930 buses every 20 minutes (3 buses)
- On Saturdays the service will operate on a 12 minute frequency between 0730 and 1930 (five bus operation)
- Tender options will also be sought for the operation of slightly lower peak hour frequency (buses every 8.6 minutes) using a 7 bus operation.
- A tender for a five year operation from April 2016 will be sought, along with the option for operators to tender for an eight year period of operation.
- Tender options be included for both buses to meet the new Euro VI emission standard and the existing Euro V emission buses
- In the case of a Euro VI bus contract the maximum age for the vehicles at the end of the contract be 5 years (in the case of a 5 year contract) and 8 years (in the case of an 8 year contract).
- In the in the case of a Euro V bus contract the maximum age for the vehicles at the end of the contract be 11 years (in the case of a 5 year contract) and 14 years (in the case of an 8 year contract)
- The contract will require that during the contract the age of the vehicles should be profiled profile to ensure that a contractor does not consider swapping to much older buses during the contract
- Tenders must be willing to work with WCC to submit and develop an OLEV bid for Low Emission Buses (LEB's) such technology and share any operational cost savings achieved should such a bid be successful.
- Advertising – 'In bus' advertising will be allowed using a maximum of 50% of the available space (the remainder for WCC service advertising) with revenues to be shared between the operator and WCC.

- Vehicles to be fitted with Air Conditioning, Next stop announcements, WiFi, GPS & locational technology
- Tenderers be encouraged to provide 'added value' contracts where they can demonstrate other operational, commercial and advertising benefits beyond the minimum set out in HCC's standard terms and conditions.

Appendix 5: Bus Route Details

Route Details –

EAST Car Parks (St Catherine's & Barfield) to SOUTH Car Park

St Catherine's Car Park
Barfield Car Park
Barfield Road
The Broadway
St Georges street
Jewry Street
City Road
Rail Station
Sussex Street
Romsey Road - RHCH & University
Pitt Car Park
Badger Farm Road
South Car Park

SOUTH Car Park to EAST Car Parks (St Catherine's & Barfield)

South Car Park
Badger Farm Road
Pitt Car Park
Romsey Road - RHCH & University
Upper High Street
Rail Station
City Road
North Walls
Union Street
The Broadway
Barfield Road
Barfield Car Park
St Catherine's Car Park

Appendix 6: Stakeholder Informal Consultation Responses

Stakeholder & Comment	WCC Response
<p>WinACC - We hope that you will consult with potential users as well as users. It would be important to explore thoroughly how the facility can be made more relevant for those who do not use it, so that its future can be put on a firmer footing by attracting a wider range of users. Too many of the buses that run in the off-peak have fewer than eight passengers.</p>	<p>WCC comment 1: We undertook a comprehensive survey of the existing users; these people provided excellent feedback on the operation of the P&R facility and made it clear that they wanted the service to evolve on the same lines as currently operated.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that consultation has focused on existing users but recent growth in use suggests that improving the service further is likely to attract new customers. Whilst some buses may have less than 8 passengers at any one time the overall picture is that off-peak the services carry an average of 20 passengers on each trip.</p>
<p>WinACC -We would like to see full integration of the service into town services. The Oxford system of a very low parking fee, charging for the buses, and making the buses an integral part of the town bus service would provide benefits for everybody wishing to travel into Winchester Town centre, and would help increase the frequency for both P&R users and everybody else. It would not make journeys take more time because the main impact on timing is traffic congestion</p>	<p>WCC comment 2: WCC have considered different methods of payment. However, this can result in an increase in user costs (Oxford charges the equivalent of £4.7 for one adult P&R where as Winchester is £3 for the driver and all passengers) and where this mechanism was recently introduced in Cambridge it has resulted in a 13% decline in use of the car parks.</p>
<p>WinACC -We welcome the proposals to: increase peak frequency & increase off-peak frequency, provided that more is done to encourage greater use of the P&R through better signage and greater price differentials with central parking. Otherwise this would not be a good use of resources</p>	<p>WCC comment 3: The support for enhanced bus frequencies is welcomed. The Council already intends to review parking signage. Reviewing parking charges across the board is being recommended and should be considered by cabinet in Autumn.</p>
<p>WinACC -We do not support the proposal to close the service at 19:30 in the evening. We often work into the evening, partly because many of the people who work for us are volunteers, and even the current end at 20:30 means we sometimes cannot use the service on days when we have evening meetings or have to work late. Generally people do not use the 'last bus' on any service because they do not want to be stranded if the bus fails to turn up. Even if the last bus were at 19:30 it might still run empty because of this. We believe you should accept that the final bus is bound to run almost empty We worry that the 19:30 last bus will make the service unattractive to London commuters and the whole service less viable in the long term. We would like more effort to be put into actively attracting London and Southampton commuters and the later buses retained</p>	<p>WCC comment 4: There are two services running in each direction after 19:30. The average patronage on these services is approximately two people, yet those buses cost approximately £25,000 per annum. This level of patronage and support is not sustainable in the long run. The P&R has operated later evening services since 2010, this has given plenty of time to establish a user base which simply has not happened.</p> <p>The provision of 'Public Transport' services where socially required and not commercially viable is the responsibility of the County Council. The County Council have recently cut all of Winchester's evening buses; financially it would an unduly onerous for Winchester City Council to try and take on that role and corresponding costs. .</p>
<p>WinACC - We think this is an important opportunity to upgrade the buses used well beyond the Euro 6 standard you are proposing. Winchester has a serious pollution problem and any additional expenditure to reduce emissions would be well worth it. We hope you will be able to apply for and receive funding through the government's brand new Low Emission Bus Scheme. It will fund 90% of the extra cost of low emission buses, and 75% of the infrastructure (e.g. inductive recharging equipment). so it makes electric buses feasible and affordable</p>	<p>WCC comment 5: Real world testing has shown that Euro VI buses represent a 95% improvement to NOx emissions (the primary causes of Winchesters AQMA and upgrading to those buses could make a significant difference. However, WCC are considering the development and submission of a LEB bid to OLEV</p>
<p>Response – Hampshire County Council (HS) initial comments – have advised that a further response may follow.</p> <p>Proposals look good in principle.</p> <p>The only missing element is the overall financial picture. WCC is as much under pressure as HCC. A cost reduction (or of course income increasing) set of objectives/targets in the document to show that the service will continue to be cost effective for users and the public purse should be included.</p>	<p>WCC comment 6: The overall financial picture can only be established through a re-tendering exercise. What is clear now is that the P&R already operates with a significant level of public subsidy from other WCC and it is not likely to be sustainable to increase that level of subsidy. Therefore discounts and subsidies given to other organisations need to be reviewed as part of the overall picture. . The level of discounts has been set at the same level since 2010. Organisations receiving discounts have always been told that the initial levels would not be sustainable in the longer term. It has been identified that reducing discount levels would off-set some of the anticipated increased costs with an improved P&R service. Having said that a discount of 30% is still significant and provides an incentive to use P&R.</p>
<p>Theatre Royal – ref: Additional/extra services Our perspective comes from anecdotal evidence and emails</p>	<p>WCC comment 7: WCC are working with the Hatfair to develop an enhanced level of service over the festival</p>

<p>from many members of the public during and after the Hat Fair event held on the first weekend of July every year. As this creates a not unsubstantial increase in footfall over that weekend we thought you may be interested in the feedback we'd received. Points the public have made to us refer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park and Ride hours not being extended later on the evenings of the FRI and SAT during the festival. They have left feeling disappointed as the event runs on past the servicing hours, leaving people who have actually used the facility with a long walk back, costly taxi to their cars, or people simply not bothering. This results in more vehicles being parked centrally. • No park and ride service at all on the Sunday of the Festival...This has been raised each year of the event. With the main event being in a residential area on the Sunday, there would be a genuine need for people to use the facility if there was one. • It was also mentioned in one email about it being inconvenient on Farmers Market days. With increased Market activity on Sundays overall is there now a need for this in general? 	<p>WCC comment 8: As the City Council does not charge for parking on Sundays there is no potential for an income stream to pay for the P&R operation on Sundays or farmers' market days.</p>
<p>Individual (GY) ref: the proposal to stop the P&R buses at 7.30pm</p> <p>I am concerned about the suggestion to end the evening Park and Ride buses at 19.30. The number 5 bus on which rely to get home after my various working hours has been cut back to 19.30 already and when a public reliance on the later bus times became clear, a concession of allowing us to board the later Park and Ride service was made. The fact that this service is now proposed to be cut as well is very badly thought out. A 9-5 work day is no longer the norm and cutting the service in the evenings effects people who most need it. Is increasing the frequency of buses in the daytime the most effective use of resource?</p> <p>Winchester is a delightful city to live in but suffers from the amount of traffic in the town centre, to alleviate this we are encouraged to us public transport. Cutting the bus services is a massive dissuasion for people. Cut the service and people will be forced to drive. Is this really what is best for our city?</p> <p>Winchester should be investing in our public transport service if it wishes to encourage people to use it, not stripping it.</p>	<p>See WCC comment 4 above</p>
<p>Individual (HM) – ref: the proposal to stop the P&R buses at 7.30pm.</p> <p>The number 5 bus has recently had its hours reduced in the evenings, which is a massive problem for those of us who don't work 9-5! Fortunately help was at hand when it was announced that the P&R would accept no.5 passengers – last service being 8.30pm. Times have changed, and working hours are no longer static, especially when you work in events, pubs, restaurants etc. Later buses really are needed. 7.30pm isn't late enough.</p>	<p>See WCC comment 4 above</p>
<p>University of Winchester - UoW</p> <p>The Transport Working Group has considered the points raised in this document and would like to offer the following comments in response to the points mentioned;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Passenger capacity: Bus size & Frequency (timetabling) - The University would welcome increased capacity and frequency at peak times 2. Bus Route Variations & options - No Comments 3. Air quality & Environmental Considerations - This is a sensible approach and should prove a more cost 	<p>See WCC comment 3 above</p>

<p>effective option for users.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Additional or 'Extra' Park and Ride services - We would welcome this particularly around graduation times (October) or large conferences. We will advise of dates for this academic year when available and promote the scheme to graduates and their families. 5. Evening Park and Ride Bus Services - The University will soon be working hard to promote P&R and any reduction to services later in the evening will be a significant issue for users. Staff and students often do not finish until 8pm when lectures are taught in the evening and P&R would therefore not be viable for these users many of whom try to park when the car parks are full and P&R will be a better option. 6. Use of Park and Ride buses for regular passenger transport use - No Comment 7. Sunday Operation - No comment 8. Ticket Costs, Fees and Discount levels - We would wish to see the maximum discount for other large organisations to stay at 50%, or in the very least large public sector organisations. <p>As you are aware, we now have a staffing resource to promote green travel initiatives and to do this any justice we would be keen to keep our current discount scheme this year at least, before any charges escalate. We would foresee a significant increase in users from the University at the P&R sites next academic year with proper promotion of the facilities to staff and students.</p> <p>With increasing pressure on the car parks and drastic changes needed on onsite parking eligibility, we will need to focus on P&R as a solution for many users. Any increase in P&R charges would be problematic when trying to promote the scheme to users, certainly in the 1st year.</p> <p>One of the potential solutions we have identified is to offer 4 out of 5 parking to all users, pushing many to P&R, this will be a significant change in our current offering and any increased costs to staff and students at this time would be difficult to manage and may damage any goodwill we would have with the new scheme.</p> <p>Another potential solution which will be considered is a staged approach to banning students from parking on site by application year. This approach would significantly increase P&R use over the coming 3 years if approved. Again any increased costs to our students would not be favoured by the University. We estimate that up to 75% of this increased P&R use would be out of your peak travel periods and therefore beneficial to the scheme overall.</p> <p>Finally I am also led to believe that WCC employees and members get free P&R or free parking in town? All UoW employees and students pay for their parking/P&R costs themselves and have done so for the last 12 years. Before any discounts are renegotiated I would hope the council would see fit to charge their own staff for P&R and in town parking to help cover any short fall in funding before increasing costs to other users of the service.</p>	<p>We have looked at the past dates of Graduation and there is significant, but manageable uplift in P&R demand. The proposed increases in bus frequencies will be able to accommodate those demands without special additional services.</p> <p>See WCC comment 4 above</p> <p>See WCC comment 6 above –</p> <p>WCC comment 9: The 50% daily discount given to large organisations was set in 2010 to encourage initial use and take up of the P&R operation. Those organisations receiving discounts have always been told that the initial levels would not be sustainable in the longer term. It has been identified that reducing discount levels would off-set some of the anticipated increased costs with an improved P&R service</p> <p>The large organisation discount of 50% is not in keeping with the 10% smart card discount or 20% season ticket discount and therefore it is thought that a 30% discount is more appropriate level as it still provides a significant financial incentive to use P&R, with the public benefits that follow, whilst ensuring that these organisations make an appropriate contribution to the running of the service.</p> <p>The actions taken by UoW in support of their green travel credentials and the P&R operation are most welcomed</p>
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Appendix 1: Park and Ride Review - 2015

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present a comprehensive review of the operation of the Winchester Park and Ride (P&R) service and make recommendations relating to the future provision of the service. It considers the operational issues arising from its existing operation and considers what changes should be undertaken as part of the retendering exercise prior to the commencement of a new bus contract in 2016.

It seeks to support and supplement the recently adopted Winchester District Parking Strategy with the development of a specific strategy for the Park & Ride service that will cover the period from 2016 to 2021. At a time when town centre parking provision is likely to come under increasing pressure through increased demand and a temporary reduction in spaces it seeks to reinforce the policy of encouraging the use of the P&R provision outside the town centre.

Furthermore, if the P&R operation is to grow by accommodating more vehicles used by visitors to the town centre car, then there is a need to improve the frequency of the bus operation in order to increase both passenger capacity and confidence in the service by reduced waiting times both at the car parks and on the return journey.

In summary the emerging recommendations include:

1. Passenger capacity: Bus size & Frequency (timetabling)

The tender specification should allow for increased capacity and more regular buses by -

- a. the continued use of large single decked buses (rather than double decked (as more vehicles would be required to provide the same bus frequency)
- b. increase peak time bus frequency from 10 minutes to 7.5 minutes*
- c. increase off-peak bus frequency from 15 minutes to 12 minutes

*(but also allows for a slightly lesser peak time enhanced frequency of 8.6 minutes should the additional costs be too high)

2. Bus Route Variations & options

There are no proposed changes to the existing routes. The existing routes work well and we know that part of the attractiveness of the Park and Ride facility to customers is that the service is direct, reliable and serves all key destinations.

3. Air quality & Environmental Considerations

The tender specifications should include options for both using the current Euro V buses and the provision of new Euro VI buses which produce even lower emissions. The use of hybrid vehicles or other Low Emission Bus (LEB) alternatives needs further consideration in the light of the current

funding possibly available through the OLEV (Office for Low Emission Vehicles) and may be included as an option to ensure that this is tested

- 1. That contract options for both Euro V and new Euro VI buses are included as part of the retendering exercise scheduled for 2015**
- 2. That further work is done in the consideration and development and possible submission of an LEB bid to OLEV**

4. Additional or 'Extra' Park and Ride services

That permanent provision of extra buses for enhanced Christmas operations (Mon-Sat) will be incorporated into the tender specifications.

5. Evening Park and Ride Bus Services

That the P&R bus evening bus service will end at 19:30. After this time the level of use is so low (only 2 or 3 passengers are usually carried per bus) that given the desire to reduce contract costs it is hard to justify the cost per passenger.

6. Use of Park and Ride buses for regular passenger transport use

That where there is no conflict of issues (in capacity and competition terms) we will continue to allow carriage of non-Park and Ride users so long as the additional passenger loadings do not affect the reliability of the bus service or the capacity of the bus to carry Park and Ride users.

7. Sunday Operation

Except for Christmas peaks and special events the Park and ride service will not operate on a Sunday.

8. Ticket Costs, Fees and Discount levels

Pricing would be based upon the following principles:

- the current two-part basic ticket method is continued.
- the maximum daily fee is kept at approximately half the price of the cheapest full day town centre charge
- the off-peak ticket price be set at the same level or below that for two hours parking in town
- discounts be continued on the basis of 10% for smartcards and 20% for season tickets
- That the maximum discount given to large organisations is set at 30% of the daily charge

1.2 REPORT STRUCTURE

This, the first section of the report summarises and explains the context of the review, why it is being carried out and what it sets out to achieve.

The second section of the report explains the existing operation, its costs and development of the Park & Ride operation.

In the third section a number of different individual elements of the P&R operation are reviewed. It considers how and if these should be changed and makes recommendations for changes in some instances.

Finally the fourth section summarises the recommendations made and sets these out as part of the strategy for the on-going development of the Park and Ride service.

It should be noted that a coherent and accurate prediction of the likely cost impacts cannot be included at this stage, as only by retendering for the service using a range of options will provide accurate financial forecasts.

1.3 BACKGROUND - SUMMARY

Park and Ride (P&R) in Winchester first started over twenty years ago and demand has increased year on year. The number of car parking spaces and sites has also increased. From 1994 to 2010 the P&R service operated solely from one site; the 'East' Car parks of St Catherine's & Barfield. Buses ran from the car parks through town to the rail station and back again.

The current operation (and a revised P&R bus service) began on 19 April 2010 with the opening of the new 'South' Winchester car park, which also increased the total number of spaces from 785 to 1650. The buses now shuttle between all car parks and serve the major destinations in town and on the route, including the city centre, rail station, Hampshire County Council (HCC) offices, Law Courts, the Hospital and University.

The service has been very successful in attracting a large number of users. On an average day it carries approximately 3,000 passenger trips. This equates to well over three quarters of a million passenger journeys a year. On peak shopping days before Christmas the daily use regularly exceeds 8,000 passenger trips.

The service operates six days a week, with buses every ten minutes at peak times and every fifteen minutes off-peak and on Saturdays.

Some revisions to the timetable were made in 2012 to allow the service to commence operation earlier in the morning, but with some reductions in evening services where passenger numbers could not justify bus operation. The changes to the services resulted in annual savings of £30k but did not result in any noticeable deterioration of service levels.

The number of cars parked across the P&R sites (including the temporary HCC car park) continues to grow; from an average of 600 prior to opening of the new site to 1,190 vehicles in May 2010 to 1,370 in November 2010 and 1,500 in December 2012 (these figures are based on a combination of data sources including vehicle counts and ticket sales).

The basic charges for use of the P&R service has been deliberately set lower than town centre charges so that the maximum all day fee of £3 is half that of the cheapest all day parking in the town centre. The off-peak charge of £2.50 is designed to encourage shopper and visitor use at a price that is less than two hours parking in central Winchester.

The letting of a new contract for the operation of the Winchester Park and Ride bus service to commence in April 2016 coincides with a number of possible changes in Winchester Town Centre which may impact upon parking

provision. At such a time the operation of the Park and Ride service will need to deliver an ever more significant role in Winchester's Parking Strategy.

It is therefore paramount that the service focuses on optimum efficiency from the view of the customer perhaps with an even greater focus on reliability and passenger capacity as opposed to simply prioritising cost cutting efficiencies and minimising operational costs albeit the service needs to be affordable for the Council and deliver value for money.

Also as the P&R buses all pass through the designated Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in the town centre it is important ensure that the vehicles used meet appropriate emission standards

Cost efficiencies could be achieved by the use of older buses, reduced vehicle frequencies and perhaps reducing operational routes and times. However, this would undoubtedly be detrimental to the way the service is perceived and its ability to meet customer needs, with associated affects on the environment of the city centre. This review looks at a number of different components of the operation and costs of the Park and Ride facility and makes recommendations for its further development for the period 2016 -2021.

2.0 Current Park & Ride Operation

This section of the report briefly explains the development of the Park & Ride facility, the existing service, its costs and operation.

2.1 TRANSPORT POLICY CONTEXT

Winchester Park & Ride was first developed as a major element of the Winchester Movement and Access Plan (WMAP) adopted in the early 1990's giving priority to people over traffic. The then overall aims of WMAP were -

- Reduce impact of traffic on the environment
- Reduce traffic accidents and the severity of casualties
- Reduce air pollution, noise and vibration
- Reduce the visual intrusion of traffic

Park and Ride continues to be a cornerstone of the Winchester Town Access Plan (developed and adopted by both the City and County Councils in 2011 as the replacement for WMAP), the Air Quality Action Plan (Adopted 2006) and the Winchester District Parking Strategy (adopted 2014)

2.2 BRIEF HISTORY

- Sept 1994 - pilot Park and Ride scheme at Bar End - Barfield: 195 spaces & St Catherine's: 143 spaces - Total: 338 spaces
- Autumn 1996 to May 2003 development of 428 space extension to the St Catherine's car park on the site of the former site of the A33.
- June 2003 – constructions started
- January 2004 – Opening of St Catherine's extension (of 564 spaces) giving total of 785 spaces. New contract with Euro IV buses
- Autumn 2006 – HCC evaluated sites for new P&R sites
- Summer 2007 - HCC applied for and was granted planning permission for a new 'South Winchester' site along side the M3.
- April 2010 – Opening of new 'South Winchester' P&R site (850spaces) with significant route and operational changes, with Euro V buses
- April 2012 – Minor operational changes to timetables – earlier operational starts, but some reductions to evening services
- April 2014 – Approval of 1 year extension of existing bus contract to facilitate service review and evaluation of Euro VI buses

2.3 CURRENT BUS SERVICE OPERATIONS

- Monday to Friday – 06:25 to 20.45, Saturday - 07:15 to 19:30
- 10 minute minimum frequency during peak hours (six buses)
 - Peak Times – 0730 to 0930 and 1600 to 1800
- 15 minute frequency off-peak & Saturdays (four buses) 10 bus stop locations in town

- Operated under contract, normally five year duration
- Dedicated liveried P&R buses with low floor access, with climate control carrying 70 up to passengers (45 seated & 25 standing)
- New buses in 2006, Euro IV Alexander-Dennis Enviro 300's
- New buses in 2010; Euro V Alexander-Dennis Enviro 300's
- Contract has always been won by Stagecoach

2.4 COSTS/CHARGES

- Original 1994 car park scheme cost £938,000
- 2003 car park extension cost £3.85m – funded by HCC
- 2010 new 'South' car park cost £7m approx. – funded by HCC
- Cost of P&R parking £3.00 max per day which includes bus ticket-
- All day car parking at half the cost of town centre parking
- Range of discounts for season tickets, smart cards and block bookings
- Park & Ride is cross-subsidised from city centre parking charges.

2.5 KEY FEATURES OF P&R CAR PARKS

- Sheltered waiting
- Consistent branding of stops and vehicles
- Pleasant landscaped car parks with a permanent layout
- Amenity buildings with public toilets, waiting area, tourist information, help point
- Secure car parks
- Good quality lighting
- use of CCTV monitoring
- Multiple bus stops in car parks
- Static and real-time information
- P&R signs & variable message signs

2.6 KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

Evidence from a number of P&R operations across the county demonstrate that there are a number of key factors which make these operations successful, all of which feature on Winchester's Park and Ride service.

- Good access to the strategic road network
- Historic city / town centre where space availability and pricing managed effectively
- An attractive price differential between P&R and city / town centre parking
- Attractive and secure car parks
- High frequency public transport services
- No competing public transport service. (In Winchester, P&R is on opposite side of city from the railway station)

2.7 FEES & TICKET OPERATION

The standard fee / fare has always been a two part ticket. One part is for the car to be parked (a pay and display ticket) the other is shown to the Bus driver to allow free carriage of the car driver and passengers into and around town (and back to the car park). The ticket allows travel for the car driver and up to 6 passengers (to reflect the modern 7 seater MPV's)

Year	Daily Fee	'Smart Card'	Off-peak (after 10.30)	All-day In town
1994	£1.00		N/A	Not known
1998	£1.50		N/A	Not known
2004	£1.50	£1.20	N/A	£2.80
2005	£1.50	£1.20	N/A	£3.50
2006	£2.00	£1.70	N/A	£4.00
2007	£2.70	£2.50	N/A	£5.00
2008	£2.70	£2.50	N/A	£5.00
2009	£2.70	£2.50	N/A	£5.00
2010	£3.00	£2.70	£2.00	£6.00
2011	£3.00	£2.70	£2.00	£6.00
2012	£3.00	£2.70	£2.50	£6.00
2013	£3.00	£2.70	£2.50	£6.00
2014	£3.00	£2.70	£2.50	£6.00

'Smart Cards' allow a 10% saving on the standard daily fee. Season tickets were first introduced to the Park & Ride in 2010 and are priced at a 20% discount on the daily charge based on 230 uses per annum and are currently set at £552. The current maximum daily charge of £3.00 has remained unchanged since 2010

2.8 PARKING IN WINCHESTER

- All parking in the town centre is restricted by a controlled zone, which includes residents parking restrictions.
- All on-street waiting and loading and off-street parking spaces are enforced by Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs).
- WCC has adopted, in its Parking Strategy 2014, a 'Three Ring' approach to parking in Winchester. Central car parks are most expensive, getting progressively cheaper further from the town centre. Depending on the distance from the city centre, long-stay charges vary from £6 to £8 per day.
- P&R is £3.00 per day or £2.70 with a 'smart card'
- Payment is either by pay-and-display, pay-on-foot, pay-by-phone or by purchasing a season ticket
- Parking charges cease at 18:00 with no evening or Sunday charges.
- CCTV monitoring is used extensively in car parks.

2.9 FUTURE EXPANSION

An additional 200 P&R spaces at 'Pitt Manor' is likely to be available in summer 2015. This site is adjacent to Romsey Road and these spaces will be served by the existing bus service travelling into town from the 'South' Car park.

A further 200 P&R 'lite' spaces at 'Barton Farm' should be available in 2017/18. This site is adjacent to Andover Road and these spaces will be served by a commercial bus service travelling into town and also serving the new development.

2.10 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

In 2009 when the P&R expanded its operation Cabinet approval had been sought and agreed for the operation of a revised contracted bus service. At that time the initial level of subsidy required was estimated to be £300,000 per annum. The figures in Appendix 3: Park and Ride Financial Summary 2006/7 to 2013/14 show that this was an accurate estimate.

Furthermore, growth in the passenger numbers and use of the P&R service has reduced this subsidy year on year despite increases in the operational costs of the service. In 2013/14 the level of subsidy was half that of 2010/11.

A full summary of the P&R operational cost is found in Appendix 3: Park and Ride Financial Summary 2006/7 to 2013/14

If the recommendations set out in this report are taken forward for inclusion in the retendering for the new P&R bus contract commencing in 2016 there will inevitably be financial implications for the P&R and Parking Service, these will need to be fully accounted and planned for in Autumn 2015, but such work can only be done after the tendering process is carried out and further costs are known.

2.11 STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

As a review of the Park & Ride service was underway, the opportunity was taken to seek the views and understand travel patterns of the existing users to ensure that any possible alterations to be operation of the Park & Ride facility did not adversely affect those users.

A survey was devised to gather travel pattern data and opinions on the service. Staff members made themselves available to answer questions on the park and ride sites on two separate mornings.

A total of 564 surveys were completed with a further 24 comments sent in by email. The full results of the survey can be found online:

<http://www.winchester.gov.uk/parking/park-and-ride/park-ride-review-2014/>

The survey showed that the majority of our park & ride users have the opinion that the overall service is either good or excellent. The punctuality of buses is a clear priority for our users, with the majority rating is as good or adequate. This is confirmed by survey comments asking for more peak time buses.

The responses of the existing users for certain options are summarized below:

- **Splitting the P&R route:** 67% of customers said they would continue using Park & Ride; however, many of them do not have a choice due employer parking situations and this is reflected in the negative comments that were received regarding this option.
- **Diverting the bus through residential areas:** 53% said they would stop using P&R. 43% of customers have said they would continue using the Park & Ride; however the comments made on this question shows a very negative response to diverting buses through residential areas. Park & Ride users want a direct service to their destination only.
- **Reducing evening services:** This would not affect the majority of our 9am-5pm users but a small number of our respondents who do use the Park & Ride later in the evening have said they would stop using it if we cut the services back to 7:30pm.
- **General comments received:** 48 comments received said that the P&R works well and they don't want any changes. 57 comments received asked for more peak time buses, and on days with special events when buses become very full.

The views expressed through the User Stakeholder consultation have been used to guide the recommendations of this review and the development of the emerging Park & Ride Strategy for the period beyond March 2016

3.0 Review of the Park & Ride Operation

In this section a number of different individual elements of the P&R operation are reviewed. It considers how and if these different elements should be changed and makes recommendations for changes where considered appropriate.

The following elements have been reviewed:

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Each element of the P&R operation has been reviewed on a similar basis;

- **P&R Component**
- **Background / Detail**
- **Options considered**
- **Discussion**
- **Recommendation**

All of the recommendations from the individual elements reviewed are collated in Section 4. The point of these recommendations is to inform and set out an agreed P&R strategy which can be incorporated into the tender specifications for a new operational bus contract commencing in 2016.

The different P&R Components under consideration have come from a variety of sources including regular users, officers, councillors and other stakeholders.

3.1 PASSENGER CAPACITY: BUS SIZE & FREQUENCY (TIMETABLING)

Component

Increasing bus capacity and/or frequency of the buses would improve the service and attract more customers.

Background / Detail

In 2013 the Park & Ride buses carried in excess of 800,000 passenger journeys. The average weekly load is over 15,000 passenger trips and during the pre-Christmas weeks this figure approaches 40,000. Peak time buses carry an average of between 35 and 45 passengers, and off-peak buses carry an average of 19-21 passengers.

With each bus having 45 seats, any time period carrying an average passenger loading approaching this figure is likely to be a number of services carrying passenger numbers well in excess of the average, consequently users often have to stand and on some occasions buses cannot accommodate all the people waiting at the stop. To the daily user this represents a capacity problem and is likely to be seen as a barrier to increased use and growth at those times.

As a consequence there is now a clear and established need to improve passenger capacity if we are to encourage further growth and possibly additional use replacing reduced car park capacity from within the town centre whilst potential redevelopment schemes take place.

At full occupancy during peak times the current buses allow for 420 passengers journeys per hour from both the South and East Car parks. (Operating 6 buses per hour gives a ten minute frequency).

During peak times this has been shown to be inadequate and many passengers are usually standing between 0815 and 0845, and on occasion passengers cannot get on the first bus. Options which would provide increased passenger capacity would be the use of larger vehicles or increased frequency of services i.e. more buses.

Option 1 - Increase Bus Capacity

The current buses allow for 45 seated and 25 standing passengers, these are single deck 12m long buses. Slightly longer buses are available (up to 12.6m) that do have marginally improved capacity, but trials in 2006 indicated that such length vehicles had some difficulties negotiating some of the tight turns in some Winchester streets, therefore only double decked rather than longer buses could offer increased passenger capacity per vehicle.

This option has been discussed with Stagecoach (the incumbent operator) and reviewed in action at Portsmouth's new Park and Ride service. Whilst double decked buses can allow capacities in excess of 100 passengers per vehicle, the majority of the space is on the upper deck. This can cause problems for the less mobile user and even with agile users there are significant additional delays in the loading and unloading of such vehicles.

In the case of operating double decked buses in Winchester it is anticipated that the additional loading times required would necessitate the procurement of additional buses to maintain the same timetable frequency. Therefore this option would be considerably more expensive than simply increasing the bus frequency of single decked buses (see below).

Option 2 - Increase Bus Frequency

Providing additional buses (and hence increasing frequency) would also address the issue capacity issue. Operating 8 buses per hour at peak times would provide a 7.5 minute frequency which would allow for 560 passengers journeys per hour from both South and East sites (33% capacity improvement).

It is accepted that this option, whilst most desirable, could significantly increase contract costs and an alternative of a 7 bus peak would provide a 8 or 9 minute frequency which would allow for 490 passengers journeys per hour from both South and East sites (16% capacity improvement).

Furthermore, due to the anticipated temporary reduction of town centre car parking capacity associated with potential redevelopments and the probable subsequent increase in demand following the opening of any new development it is suggested that an increase in off-peak bus frequency from 15 to 12 minutes (4 to 5 bus operation) would make for a more attractive and reliable service to encourage and maintain use by both shoppers and workers in the longer term.

Discussion

As the P&R buses are operating at or exceeding capacity at peak times it is clear that an increase in passenger capacity is warranted to assist in getting passengers to or from town. Furthermore it is evident that an increase in bus frequency would deliver this more efficiently than the use of bigger (double decked buses).

Recommendation - Passenger capacity: Bus size & Frequency (timetabling)

- 1. To include contract tender options that allow for -**
 - **Use of large single decked buses rather than double decked vehicles**
 - **Peak time bus frequency of 7.5 minutes (8 bus contract)**
 - **Alternative Peak time bus frequency of 8.5 minutes (7 bus contract)**
 - **Peak Time operation (departures from 0730 to 0900 and 1545 to 1730 TBC)**
 - **Increase off-peak bus frequency from 15 minutes to 12 minutes**

3.2 BUS ROUTE VARIATIONS & OPTIONS

Component

This section reviews options for the revision of the P&R bus service to provide additional bus / P&R services to other areas of Winchester.

Suggestions have been made by a number of local residents and Councillors for a number of different route variations to the P&R route to enable some areas of Winchester to either benefit from improved bus services

Background / Detail

A number of route diversions and/or alterations have been suggested as part of this review and these suggestions have come from councillors, stakeholders and residents. A simple financial model has been used to assess the likely costs of route changes, details of this financial assessment methodology are found in Appendix 3 to this report.

Using the same simple model approach estimates have been made as to the cost of increasing the frequency of buses at certain times, though it must be made clear that such estimates do not consider additional cost requirements for additional services run for short periods of the day at peak times.

What must be noted is that any changes to the route that require substantial additional time could cause a decline in patronage from P&R users rather than an overall increase from new users, with associated decline in overall income.

Options Considered

The following options and assessments have all been based on permanent inclusion on P&R route – 120 trips per day, 304 days per year.

Oliver's Battery Loop

1.82km £4.53 per journey £165,338 Annual cost

Badger Farm Loop

1.00km £2.49 per journey £90,872 Annual cost

Winnall Manor loop

2.8km £5.10 per journey £185,902 Annual cost

Whilst a simple financial model has been developed to assess the cost of service diversions, there has been no attempt to anticipate potential levels of income from users. However, Oliver's Battery has been unable to maintain a commercial bus service, so the levels of income are not likely to match expenditure and therefore this would require to be operated as a subsidised service. Winnall benefits from a good commercial bus service and the idea of a P&R diversion was to provide an additional facility for businesses located in the area. However since there are no parking controls in the area there is no financial or access restrictions that would encourage users to relocate to the P&R – as this would cost them both time and money.

Discussion

The advantages of these proposals are the provision of enhanced bus service to areas with less than ideal levels of public transport provision.

However, there are a considerable number of disadvantages. Longer journey times for the buses means that additional time spent on diversion reduces the appeal of the service to P&R users who expect the bus part of the journey to be as fast as possible to try and match the desirability of parking at the final destination. This would inevitably lead to the potential to lose (P&R users) rather than gain more of these customers. As an overall result it is anticipated that there would be a massively increased bus contract cost and a reduced income. Furthermore the operation of a Park and Ride service more along the lines of a Public Transport provision would give potential for legal challenge from bus operators where P&R routes were in competition with commercial routes.

Recommendation - Bus Route Variations & options

- 1. In view of the potential loss of attractiveness of the facility to park and ride customers with consequent effect on passenger numbers, possible problems associated with competition with commercial routes and very significant costs involved and the limited potential for additional income to offset those costs it is recommended that the Park & Ride bus route / service should stay as currently operated and not divert to serve additional routes or residential areas.**

Note: Now that the recent HCC review of subsidy levels for non-commercial bus operations has removed funding for many evening bus services in Winchester there may be a case to develop new models of operation in evenings to benefit both P&R and residential users. This consideration is covered within the review section on evening bus service levels

The option for partial diversion of P&R bus services (i.e. diversion of some but not all buses) was considered but is not recommended as this would result in a very confusing level of services for P&R users.

3.3 OPERATION OF AN 'EXPRESS' P&R SERVICE

Component

The provision of an 'Express' P&R bus service from the 'South' car park, straight to town along St Cross Road.

Background / Detail

It has been suggested that more town centre users (particularly those parking in Gladstone Street / Station / Tower Street) might be more inclined to use the P&R service if the bus operation from the 'South' car park provided a faster / more direct service into town via St Cross Road rather than using the current route via Badger Farm Road & Romsey Road.

Options considered

Evaluation of the benefits of an express bus service from South using St Cross road for some journeys.

It is important to note that due to the nature of the town centre one-way system (Upper High Street is one-way west bound) there is limited opportunity for any express services to return to 'South' via any other route than Romsey Road unless it was direct from Broadway (which would consequently not provide an express return service for the Rail Station or Westgate), so only the option for an AM peak inbound service has been considered.

Under the existing operation the current peak hour journey times during the AM Peak from the 'South' Car Park along Romsey Road takes 10 minutes to the Hospital, 13 minutes to Westgate (HCC) and 15 minutes to the rail station.

In comparison an 'express' service along Southgate street could take 10/11 minutes to reach Westgate (HCC) and 11/12 minutes to the rail station, this service could then either return to the 'South' car park – reaching the Hospital in 15/16 minutes or continue its run to the 'East' Car parks serving stops such as City Road, North Walls and the Broadway which would also see journey savings of 2/3 minutes. If the latter option was chosen it is important to note that the hospital stop would not be served which is the main destination from the 'South' car park as it serves both the University and the Hospital.

Discussion

The potential journey time savings of an 'express' service are limited and the provision of any 'express' service into town from the South Car Park would only have a marginal (two to three minute) journey time saving for users heading to either Westgate (HCC) or the rail station, but could cause confusion to all other users, especially if it was limited to just Westgate (HCC) and Rail station as many users value the notion of one bus serving 'all destinations'.

Adding or directing resources in the form of additional busses to provide a fast service for a limited number of users is not considered to be an equitable way of balancing the service for all users. Recent survey work indicated that over half (54%) of the current users of the 'South' car park are going to the hospital stop.

Current capacity limitations (at peak times) may also contribute to restrictions on future growth in patronage so there is a need to improve service capacity for all users (either in the form of additional buses or larger buses) but it is not suggested that such additional capacity is diverted to alternative routes where only a limited numbers of users would benefit.

Another important consideration is pricing. Most of the existing Park and Ride users choose this option for financial reasons (or that their employer pays for their parking at the P&R site). It is suggested that on-going pricing differentials between town centre parking and P&R are a better way of ensuring that P&R continues to grow

Recommendation - Operation of an 'Express' P&R service

- 1. That the idea of an 'Express' P&R service is not considered further and that the operation from the 'South' car park continues to use Badger Farm Road and Romsey Road.**

3.4 AIR QUALITY, ALTERNATIVELY FUELLED VEHICLES & OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Consideration

That the new contract includes options for the replacement of the Bus Fleet with new buses built to Euro VI specification and that other low emission vehicles are considered for the P&R operation.

Background / Detail

There are considerable environmental benefits as a result of the on-going operation of the P&R services, particularly in relation to the reduction in cars entering the town centre and their impact on the Air Quality Management Area and the Council's Climate Change Strategy.

The current P&R buses were new in 2010 and operate to Euro V emission standard (this is a simple indication of the pollution emitted from the vehicle).

All new vehicles must now meet Euro VI standard. Whilst this is good news for the environment, as the buses are cleaner, there are cost implications; any new P&R contract that now specifies 'new' buses would automatically be specifying the provision of Euro VI vehicles.

Early indications from the bus industry were that the Euro VI buses would cost in the order of £10k more to buy than the equivalent Euro V but discussions with the incumbent operator suggest that this figure has since been slightly reduced. Any contract which specifies the use of the new buses will have these costs included, and tenderers are also likely to add in a level of contingency given the uncertainty of the additional costs of maintaining and operating the latest technology required to achieve Euro VI compliance. This factor is therefore likely to increase tender prices to minimise the risk to the operator.

In addition the fuel consumption (Stagecoach is now using the first Euro VI buses outside London on the Basingstoke P&R shuttle) has proved to be better than anticipated (10% lower) and as a result operators will be in a better position to make more accurate, and hopefully lower tender bids. This was one of the main reasons why the re-tendering of the service was deferred for a year.

When the last retendering process was undertaken in 2009, the cost of specifying new Euro V buses rather than the continued use of the then existing Euro IV buses was approximately £40,000 per annum.

The table below shows the relative improvements in emissions since the introduction of Euro standards in 1992.

		CO	HC	NOx	PM	
Emission Standard	Date effective	(g/kWh)	(g/kWh)	(g/kWh)	(g/kWh)	Smoke
Euro I	from 1992	4.50	1.10	8.00	0.36	
Euro II	1st October 1996	4.00	1.10	7.00	0.25	
Euro III	1st October 2001	2.00	0.66	5.00	0.10	0.80
Euro IV	1st October 2006	1.50	0.46	3.52	0.02	0.50
Euro V	1st October 2009	1.50	0.46	2.00	0.02	0.50
Euro VI	1st January 2014	1.50	0.13	0.40	0.01	

The table does show that in terms of emissions of NO_x, the improvement from Euro V to Euro VI is considerable. Furthermore, real-life testing has shown the effectiveness of Euro VI engines in reducing harmful emissions has now been substantiated in testing by TfL (Transport for London) that re-creates real world driving conditions. During this testing, a bus with a Euro VI Engine was found to have 95 per cent lower NO_x emissions than a bus with a Euro V engine (down from 10 g/km to 0.5 g/km). This test result correlates with testing conducted by manufacturers. On this basis alone it is recommended that due to the positive, but currently unquantifiable, contribution this would make to the Winchester AQMA that tender options are only pursued for Euro VI buses rather than continued use of the existing (Euro V) buses.

Whilst including a tender option that allowed for re-use of the existing buses may offer a slightly reduced tender price, the emerging evidence of the associated environmental improvements of Euro VI over Euro V standards suggests that the Authority should pursue the cleaner option as and when economically acceptable to do so.

Work is now on going to develop a 'source-apportionment' assessment model with detailed traffic data for the town centre, from that work it should be possible to quantify the impact that improving the P&R buses would have on the AQMA. However, even without that detailed appraisal clearly there would be a benefit in an early upgrade to Euro VI buses.

Option considered

Two clear options exist; to continue operations using the existing buses (allowing for a tender that specifies the use of Euro V vehicles) or retendering specifying the use of Euro VI vehicles.

A further option would to investigate and consider the use of alternative fuelled vehicles to operate the P&R bus service.

Discussion

It had been hoped to carry out a more detailed appraisal of the relative 'vehicle source apportionment' and modelling of emissions from different vehicle types so that the impact that P&R buses have on the AQMA can be quantified. However this work is now on-going and should be available when

the tenders for the new P&R contract are assessed later in 2015. The Park and Ride service is acknowledged to play a significant role in delivering improved access to the town centre, without visitors relying on the need to take cars into the city. Over a year this could equate to over 700,000 less vehicle trips - with the associated traffic reduction benefits.

If cost and expenditure is the overriding consideration, then one option would have been to retender in 2014 for a 2015 start and to specify Euro V (current bus technology / existing buses). However, in view of the Air Quality issues relating to Winchester city centre it is considered that we should be looking to move from Euro V to Euro VI buses.

The Park and Ride contract has always been operated using conventionally powered (diesel) buses. However, alternative fuelled and powered vehicles are also available. Trials have been carried out using such vehicles (hybrid buses trialled as part of the 'Miracles' project) in 2003 which sought to demonstrate the development and use of low emission vehicles in Winchester, but the reliability issues experienced and increased capital costs meant that this option was not pursued.

The use of diesel-electric hybrid buses had been considered. Whilst these are now in commercial production and do offer some improved emissions over traditional diesel fuelled vehicles, they do so at a considerable expense; a conventional bus would cost in the region of £150,000 a comparable Hybrid model would cost nearly double (£290,000). Discussions with the bus industry indicate that all of the additional costs (and most likely considerably more) would be reflected in the contract cost, potentially adding at least £1million to the cost of the contract (over 5years).

In recent years a number of central government funds have been available to carry out full trials of alternative fuelled technology, however with limited resources to evaluate and bid for such funds these opportunities are difficult to pursue. In the case of Winchester's P&R, where it is imperative that the service offers a high degree of reliability and cost effectiveness (even using conventional buses the service is still subsidised) there are many unknowns and risks innovative and emerging technologies so it is advised against tendering for them. However, as the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) has recently announced the details of a new Low Emission Bus (LEB) fund the timings may be appropriate to carry out further evaluation and consider a bid as part of the tendering process.

Recommendation - Air quality, Alternatively Fuelled Vehicles & Environmental Considerations

- 1. That contract options for both Euro V and new Euro VI buses are included as part of the retendering exercise scheduled for 2015**
- 2. That further work is done in the consideration and development and possible submission of an LEB bid to OLEV**

3.5 ADDITIONAL OR 'EXTRA' P&R SERVICES

Component

That the use of Additional or 'extra' P&R bus services be permanently included into the tender and timetable requirements of any new contracted bus service.

Background / Detail

Winchester now has a thriving Christmas Market, and in addition to the natural draw as Winchester as a shopping destination this has led to greater and greater demands on the P&R service. In response to those demands extra services are now organised over the five weeks before Christmas; Extra buses are contracted on an ad-hoc basis to supplement the timetabled service. These are funded through the additional usage of the P&R service. In recent years the 'Christmas Saturdays' saw three times the normal Saturday patronage levels.

These additional services are run during a period of unprecedented demand for parking which could not have been met in any other way. The cost of these extra buses was more than compensated for by the additional ticket sales.

In addition a Sunday service is also operated and the service was run at no charge to the users due to funding from both the City Council and Winchester Business Improvement District, providing additional parking capacity over and above the free provision in the town centre.

These seasonal demands have highlighted the car parking levels at which the current level of bus service (15 minute frequency) struggles to accommodate passenger numbers, and hence indicate that - in the longer term - should demand for P&R car parking continue to grow, then the bus service needs to be developed to meet this demand.

Option considered

That permanent provision for the enhanced pre-Christmas bus service be set out within the tender details for inclusion within the P&R contract as opposed to continuing the current ad-hoc arrangement where fees for providing additional seasonal services are negotiated annually with the operator.

Discussion

In the early years of the new operation additional Christmas buses were contracted on an ad-hoc basis to help cope with the additional passenger demands in relation to the draw of Christmas shopping and the market in Winchester. Over the last three years patronage has reached the point where the demand levels can and have been anticipated to the extent that an agreed timetable is now operated using seven buses to maintain a ten minute frequency throughout the day.

It should be noted that normally a 'six bus' contract can be used to maintain a ten minute frequency, however during the pre-Christmas period the traffic

volumes on the highway network made such operation impossible and an additional bus was required to maintain bus frequencies.

Recommendations – Additional or ‘Extra’ P&R services

- 1. That the provision for enhanced Christmas operations (extra buses Mon-Sat) be incorporated into the tender considerations for implementation from April 2016**
- 2. That provision for additional services & one-off events be contracted on an ad-hoc basis**

3.6 HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL P&R CAR PARK

Component

That operation and use of the HCC car park is reviewed with a view to making better use of the contribution made by HCC in the operational bus services.

Background / Detail

Hampshire County Council currently uses a 250 space car park adjacent to the St Catherine's Car Park (East Site). HCC staff using this site walk to the St Catherine's car park and travel into Winchester using the P&R buses. It is understood that approximately 400 HCC staff have permits to use this P&R facility.

Rather than pay WCC for P&R tickets, the approach has been that HCC pays for the procurement of additional bus services (at a current cost of £80k per annum) to provide extra peak time capacity. These buses are superimposed on the P&R timetables and at certain peak times improve bus frequency from 10 to 5 minutes.

The HCC car park is operated under a temporary permission, which was first granted in 2005. Permission was extended by one year in 2010 and again for a further two years from 2011. In both circumstances permission was granted by the County Council. In the past HCC had expressed the opinion that there were no plans to seek approval for an extension of the use of this car park beyond March 2013, but it is now currently understood that the County intend to continue to use this car park for the foreseeable future.

Whilst the additional buses may appear useful, the additional expense would be better targeted at improving the peak capacity for all, rather than at a limited number of peak times.

Option considered

That the continued use of the HCC car park is on the basis of a pay-per-parking space arrangement for the bus subsidy, rather than the currently agreed limited number of buses at certain times.

Discussion

Whilst the additional buses can provide welcome additional capacity, the fact that these are superimposed on the regular timetable means that the capacity is not ideally distributed throughout the peak periods.

It is also thought that the cost of the HCC bus contract does not represent a realistic cost for the P&R services actually used as the County Council issues 400 permits to maximise the use of its 250 spaces, other organisations are charged on a permit basis which would be at a considerably higher cost. Charging HCC a realistic fee for the total number of parking spaces would provide a more significant level of income which could be used to offer improved service levels for all users. For example; 250 spaces at £2.00 per day equates to £130k per annum which compared to the current arrangement which is £80k.

Recommendation - Hampshire County Council P&R car park

- 1. It is recommended that a fixed price contribution based on a price per space at the HCC car park be agreed and that this money be allocated to improving the overall P&R peak time bus frequency**

3.7 EVENING BUS SERVICE LEVELS

Component

That where evening buses are only carrying a limited number of passengers that service levels are reduced with a view to reducing the bus contract cost.

Background / Detail

The P&R service operates at a high frequency until 18:00, then drops to a half hour frequency until the end of service at 20:45, similarly the level of use quickly declines and the numbers of passengers carried after 7pm drops to around 6 people per journey, and in the last hour of operation only 2 to 3 passengers are carried on each bus and therefore the operation of evening services should be reviewed.

Based upon industry experience Stagecoach has advised the Council that curtailing the later buses will simply move the natural 'drop-off' in evening numbers to earlier buses

During the period of this review HCC clarified that they would be withdrawing support for subsidised evening bus services in Winchester, which consist of two or three buses after 19:30 on routes 1, 3, 5 & the Spring. These reductions came into effect in January 2015. To partially offset this reduction it has been agreed that where P&R operates over routes for which the service has been cut, through agreement with Stagecoach, it currently operates as a public service in addition to serving its P&R role.

Options considered

The options for the operation of evening bus service levels on the P&R service are;

1. Curtail the time of the evening operation to reflect the lower passenger levels.
2. Continue with the evening operation, allowing (in agreement with the operator) P&R buses to serve all stops en route after 19:30 to provide some element of evening public transport provision

Discussion

The P&R service previously ran every 15 minutes until 21:30 in an attempt to support the evening economy in Winchester. However with no parking charges in the town after 18:00, there was not sufficient demand for such a level of service and in 2012 the end of evening service was brought forward to 20.45 and remaining evening bus frequencies were halved. This has retained a good working level of bus service but with lower operational costs.

The options should really be considered as either/or options because there is little point continuing to run evening services which are only lightly used. However, it must be noted that should the second option be pursued it effectively represents a WCC subsidy of local bus services, which has never been an adopted policy of the City Council and is a responsibility of the

County Council to fund such services where required (the exception being the night bus service subsidised by the Town Forum) . Officers are recommending the termination of the service at 19:30 which should not significantly diminish the attractiveness of P&R to users.

Recommendation – Evening Bus Services

- 1. It is recommended that the P&R contract provides for operation until 19:30 reflecting the drastically reduced demands for the service after that time.**

3.8 USE OF P&R BUSES FOR REGULAR PASSENGER TRANSPORT USE

Component

That we seek to utilise 'spare' capacity on the buses by encouraging additional non-P&R users to make use of the service

Background / Detail

Since the commencement of the 'new' operation there have been times when the appearance is that very few passengers are carried on the buses and this has prompted calls to encourage additional perhaps non-P&R users onto the buses.

However, considerable year on year growth in the use of the P&R service means that the average passenger loadings at peak times is 44 passengers (this is also is the seated bus capacity meaning that often passengers are standing and therefore view the service as having insufficient capacity). The average off-peak load is 19 passengers.

Option considered

Encourage the use of P&R buses for regular bus users.

Discussion

This is a difficult and emotive issue. The P&R is not run as a conventional bus service, but it can appear so, and for some journeys passengers can use and pay for bus travel as a commercial service. However, as the contract is let and paid for by the City Council it is in effect a subsidised bus service and legally there are issues with the carriage of non P&R passengers on the bus when and where there are commercially operated buses on the same route.

In the case of Winchester, the same routes are operated by Stagecoach – who also operates the P&R buses on our behalf. Therefore the service is operated on the understanding that any revenue from non-P&R users is retained by Stagecoach. There is also the issue of passenger loading / payment and unloading times. P&R passengers tend to be quick to load as they already have tickets. The carriage of non-P&R users does have potential for longer loading times, delays and capacity constraints on what is ostensibly an express service.

Should an alternative operator be successful in winning the P&R contract the service would be unable to carry non-P&R users where the route duplicated that run on a commercial basis.

On balance it is considered preferable to continue with the current arrangement and not therefore to further encourage the use of the P&R buses by non-P&R users due to the inherent issues with capacity and reliability problems at peak times explained above..

Recommendation - Use of P&R buses for regular passenger transport use

- 1. To continue with the current arrangement regarding the carriage of non-P&R users which allows such passengers to access P&R**

buses so long as the additional passenger loadings do not affect the reliability of the bus service or its capacity to carry P&R users

- 2. Should a different bus operator succeed in winning the P&R contract that the buses will not be able to take 'fare-paying' (non-P&R) passengers where the P&R route duplicates that run on a commercial basis.**

3.9 'SPLITTING THE SERVICE' - ROUTING SEVERANCE

Component

That operation of the P&R bus service is split to provide individual dedicated services from the East and South Car Parks

Background / Detail

When the new car park opened at 'South' in April 2010, an amended bus operation was introduced that linked all of the P&R car parks with the same bus service, and that bus served all of the primary town centre destinations.

Prior to the letting of the last bus contract an evaluation (by HCC) was carried out of the alternative route operations for the P&R buses.

Option considered

Suggestions by have been made to operate the buses from the two car parking sites on an independent basis. This would affectively 'sever' bus routes in from the East and South car parks as follows:

- Buses from 'East' would shuttle to and from the Broadway only
- Buses from 'South' would travel along Romsey road, past the hospital, and Westgate before turning around at the railway station

Note: there would be a number of stops missed: M&S, Jewry Street, City Road, North Walls.

Discussion

There are a number of advantages to this revised method of operation:

- Possible contract / bus operation savings by the elimination of some 'dead mileage' of buses running with low load levels around the one way system
- Possible Air Quality Improvements associated with above
- Possibility of increased frequency of buses for the same contract cost
- Less route disruption if problems / incidents happen on certain parts of the network, delays on one service would not affect the other.

However, these possible benefits are offset by a number of problems:

- The Park and ride buses from any one car park site would not reach all destinations. Customers would have to know which car park they needed to use to reach their destination.
- Park & Ride prevents cars driving into the City Centre. If drivers had to reach a specific car park, it could create additional car mileage.
- 'East' buses would not reach Railway station or the hospital. Visitors to the Hospital & medical appointments are one of the big users. This would therefore dictate which P&R car park they would have to use.

- Park & Ride needs to be easy for its customers to understand and use. Mass marketing would be needed if service was split. It would be difficult; we have customers who only rarely use the service.
- Other places with different P&Rs services for different parts of the town are often much larger cities, sometimes with the bus provider operating a commercial bus service, such as Cambridge, Oxford, Exeter,

As part of the Stakeholder consultation nearly a third of the respondents made a specific negative comment regarding the suggested option of splitting the service.

Overall therefore it is considered that the benefits of continuing the current service outweigh the benefits of splitting it so this is the recommended option.

Recommendation - 'Splitting the Service' - Routing Severance

- 1. That the P&R service is not split. On balance it is thought that the Park & Ride bus route / service should continue to operate on the same basis as currently to avoid complication and confusion, and to avoid alienating customers working in the town centre/railway areas.**

3.10 SUNDAY OPERATION

Component

That with the ever increasing commercial activity in Winchester town on a Sunday that consideration be given to operating the P&R service on Sundays.

Background / Detail

With the exception of running a reduced service on the five Sundays before Christmas, the P&R does not operate on this day of the week.

Between 2010 and 2013 the Sunday operation was only undertaken from the 'East' car parks and in 2014 the Sunday operation was expanded to serve all P&R car parks. Whilst there is no charge for this service (all parking in Winchester is free on Sundays) support funding from both Winchester's BID (Business Improvement District) and the City Council has enabled the service to run.

Option considered

That a Sunday P&R service be run on the same basis as Saturdays, reflecting the similar town shopping characteristic on that day. This operates from 0700 to 1900 with buses every fifteen minutes.

Discussion

The current decision not to run P&R on a Sunday reflects the fact that running of the P&R facility has always required some level of operational subsidy, and whilst parking charges in Winchester town remain free on a Sunday, there is no funding available for that subsidy, nor would it be reasonable charge for the use of the P&R if town centre parking remains free.

It is estimated that annual operation of the P&R on a similar basis to that done on a Saturday would cost in excess of £150,000.

Recommendation – Sunday Operation

- 1. That the P&R service is not routinely operated on a Sunday**
- 2. That operation of the pre Christmas Sundays continues to be done on an ad-hoc basis whilst service and operation levels are established.**
- 3. That a review of the provision of Sunday P&R operation is carried out if and when charges are made for parking in town on a Sunday**

3.11 TICKET COSTS, FEES AND DISCOUNT LEVELS

Component

That we review the ticket costs, fees and discount levels in operation

Background / Detail

The standard operation has always used a two part ticket. One part is for the car to be parked (a pay and display ticket) the other is shown to the Bus driver to allow free carriage of the car driver and passengers into and around town (and back to the car park).

The basic ticket costs are listed in Section 2. The current maximum daily fee is £3. This reflects the agreed policy of charging the half the price of the cheapest all day ticket price in the town centre. .

'Smart Cards' allow a 10% saving on the standard daily fee. Season tickets were first introduced to the Park & Ride in 2010 and are priced at a 20% discount on the daily. Currently further discounts are set for large organisations (e.g. Hospital, University, HCC) at a discount level set and agreed with the Portfolio Holder for bulk purchases of over 100 annual tickets; discount levels of 50% have been successful in gaining long term patronage and support for the P&R operation, but such levels of discount are not financially sustainable if the service is to be improved with additional buses and now need to be reduced.

There is also a term time season ticket available for the University of Winchester. This ticket is based on the term time dates supplied by the university. The University of Southampton also have a base in Winchester and should be allowed to purchase a term time ticket. The term time ticket will, therefore, be brought in line with the original season ticket based on a 20% discount of the daily fee. The term time ticket will be based on 140 days which takes account of 2 months off during the summer, 1 month off at Christmas and at Easter. The term times of both universities do differ, but the 140 days will span both of their term dates.

Our Smart Card system was installed over 10 years ago and although offers a discounted price to customers, 'top-ups' can only be carried out at the WCC offices. This is inconvenient for customers and time consuming for officers. Other new smart card technology has been developed but replacing all the ticket machines and smart cards would need a huge amount of funding.

Currently, park and ride payments can be made by text or phone for daily charges. A text message is received and used as the bus ticket. Officers are currently trialling a 'wallet' system which is basically a virtual smart card. Customers top up their wallet using an app or phone and money is taken off their wallet every time they use Park & Ride. The advantages of this system is that customers still receive the same 10% discount as a smart card but can top-up their wallet at their convenience and not at the WCC offices. Most recently pay by phone has been trialled, and officers are currently monitoring the uptake of the service and are considering how it can be best incorporated further into the regular operation.

Option considered

1. Increasing the maximum daily ticket charge
2. Reduction of the discount given to large organisations
3. That we use different methods of parking / bus use (eg free park, pay on bus or pay per person)

Discussion

The standard P&R fee has remained unchanged since 2010 despite considerable operating cost increases relating to the cost of the bus contract. In 2016 with the likely increase in costs of tendered bus contract it is thought that the P&R ticket cost may need to increase to off-set some of this cost.

It is estimated that an increase in the daily fee from £3 to £3.5 would yield over £100k per annum. On a similar basis a reduction in the level of discounts for block booking / large organisations to from 50% to 30% would yield over £50k per annum. Together such increases would considerably assist in the funding of additional buses to improve frequency, service levels and emissions if Euro VI buses are supported in this way and are therefore considered justified and recommended below.

The notion of using different methods of parking / bus use (e.g. free park, pay on bus, pay per person) have been previously considered and rejected. With the relatively close proximity of the 'East' car park sites to the town centre there is a considerable risk of many users choosing to park free and walk, therefore providing no income to fund the buses for other users who rely on them. Such actions (whilst in many ways are attractive in some respects) could affect the viability of the whole service. Similarly options for paying per passenger would make the service less attractive for many visitors and shoppers where higher vehicle occupancy would mean that the cost to use the P&R could be considerably more than a car parking stay in the town centre. Therefore it is not proposed to change the way the ticketing is carried out.

Recommendation - Ticket Costs, Fees and Discount levels

1. **That the maximum daily fee is maintained at half of the cost of the cheapest daily town centre charge (£6)**
2. **That the off-peak ticket price be set at the same level as that for two hours parking in town (currently £2.70)**
3. **That discounts be continued on the basis of 10% for smartcards and 20% for season tickets**
4. **That the maximum block booking discount given to large organisations is set at 30% of the daily charge**
5. **To bring the term time ticket in line with the other season ticket at a discounted price of 20% and allow both the Universities of Southampton and Winchester to purchase these tickets.**
6. **That the current two-part basic ticket method is continued**

3.12 OPERATORS & TENDERING

Component

That we seek to encourage other bus operators to bid for and possibly run the Winchester P&R Bus service.

Background / Detail

Since the start of P&R operations in Winchester in 1994, Stagecoach has been the sole operator. The operation of the Winchester P&R bus service has most recently been put out to tender in 2005 and 2009. Each of these allowed for a minimum term of operation of five years, and each tendering exercise was overseen by the County Council who have considerable experience in the letting of commercial bus contracts.

Option considered

No new options have been identified for consideration. Winchester City Council's Engineering & Transport Team do not have the resources or expertise to consider or develop alternative methods of tendering for the operation of P&R bus service. This is considered unnecessary in any event because the existing arrangement with HCC is considered fit for this purpose.

Discussion

It is accepted that for most P&R operations nationally the local incumbent operator is often best placed to win a new P&R contract due to the operational difficulties another operator may have setting up in an area where they do not run services. In Winchester's case this means Stagecoach are likely to be well placed to tender for a new contract and this may not be most conducive to minimising contract costs. It is however difficult to conceive how this could be avoided, and it is considered that the incumbent operator has shown themselves to be efficient and cooperative in the provision of a good service.

At the time of the last tendering exercise another operator submitted similar cost bids, but upon detailed evaluation (the tender was judged on a 70/30 cost quality split) the contract was awarded to Stagecoach. It has been subsequently discovered that the alternative bidder has been taken into administration - which would have proved difficult had they been awarded the contract in Winchester. Recently P&R operations in Salisbury suffered considerably when the incumbent (but relatively new) operator went into administration.

Nevertheless the tendering process will be open and it is up to other operators to submit bids which are competitive both in terms of costs and quality. To make other potential bidders aware of the contract and its operation Officers have held a series of meetings with other local bus operators.

The Passenger Transport section of Hampshire County Council carries out the formal tendering of the Winchester P&R bus service to meet the specification and requirements set out by the City Council.

Recommendation - Operators & Tendering

- 1. That we continue to tender the P&R service on the same basis; WCC draft the service specification and HCC carry out the formal tendering exercise.**

4.0 Recommendations & Emerging P&R strategy

4.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section summarises the recommendations made in Section 3.

Recommendation - Passenger capacity: Bus size & Frequency (timetabling)

- 1. To include contract tender options that allow for -**
 - **Use of large single decked buses rather than double decked vehicles**
 - **Peak time bus frequency of 7.5 minutes (8 bus contract)**
 - **Alternative Peak time bus frequency of 8.5 minutes (7 bus contract)**
 - **Peak Time operation (departures from 0730 to 0900 and 1545 to 1730 TBC)**
 - **Increase off-peak bus frequency from 15 minutes to 12 minutes**

Recommendation - Bus Route Variations & options

- 1. In view of the potential loss of attractiveness of the facility to P&R customers with consequent effect on passenger numbers, possible problems associated with competition with commercial routes and very significant costs involved and the limited potential for additional income to offset those costs it is recommended that the Park & Ride bus route / service should stay as currently operated and not divert to serve additional routes or residential areas.**

Recommendation - Operation of an 'Express' P&R service

- 1. That the idea of an 'Express' P&R service is not considered further and that the operation from the 'South' car park continues to use Badger Farm Road and Romsey Road.**

Recommendation - Air quality, Alternatively Fuelled Vehicles & Environmental Considerations

- 3. That contract options for both Euro V and new Euro VI buses are included as part of the retendering exercise scheduled for 2015**
- 4. That further work is done in the consideration and development and possible submission of an LEB bid to OLEV**

Recommendations – Additional or 'Extra' P&R services

1. That the provision for enhanced Christmas operations (extra buses Mon-Sat) be incorporated into the tender considerations for implementation from April 2016
2. That provision for additional services & one-off events be contracted on an ad-hoc basis

Recommendation - Hampshire County Council P&R car park

1. It is recommended that a fixed price contribution based on a price per space at the HCC car park be agreed and that this money be allocated to improving the overall peak time bus frequency

Recommendation – Evening Bus Services

1. It is recommended that the P&R contract provides for operation until 19:30 reflecting the drastically reduced demands for the service after that time.

Recommendation - Use of P&R buses for regular passenger transport use

1. To continue with the current arrangement over the carriage of non-P&R users so long as the additional passenger loadings do not affect the reliability of the bus service or its capacity to carry P&R users
2. Should a different bus operator succeed in winning the P&R contract that the buses will not be able to take 'fare-paying' (non-P&R) passengers where the P&R route duplicates that run on a commercial basis.

Recommendation - 'Splitting the Service' - Routing Severance

1. That the P&R service is not split. On balance it is thought that the Park & Ride bus route / service should continue to operate on the same basis as currently to avoid complication and confusion, and to avoid alienating customers working in the town centre/railway areas.

Recommendation – Sunday Operation

1. That the P&R service is not routinely operated on a Sunday
2. That operation of the pre Christmas Sundays continues to be done on an ad-hoc basis whilst service and operation levels are established.
3. That a review of the provision of Sunday P&R operation is carried out if and when charges are made for parking in town on a Sunday

Recommendation - Ticket Costs, Fees and Discount levels

1. That the maximum daily fee is maintained at half of the cost of the cheapest daily town centre charge (currently £6)
2. That the off-peak ticket price be set at the same level as that for two hours parking in town (currently £2.70)
3. That discounts be continued on the basis of 10% for smartcards and 20% for season tickets
4. That the maximum discount given to large organisations is set at 30% of the daily charge
5. To bring the term time ticket in line with the other season ticket at a discounted price of 20% and allow both the Universities of Southampton and Winchester to purchase these tickets.
6. That the current two-part basic ticket method is continued

Recommendation - Operators & Tendering

1. That we continue to tender the P&R service on the same basis; WCC compile the service specification and HCC carry out the formal tendering exercise.

4.2 P&R STRATEGY

The emerging P&R strategy is predominantly based on the delivery of the recommendations set out in this report:

- Development of the service to offer improved peak time capacity to meet known demands
- Development of the service to offer improved off-peak time capacity and to meet anticipated demands from town centre changes
- Minimise subsidy of the operation from WCC funds whilst offering an improved level of service to users
- Reduce over generous ticket subsidies given to major users
- Maintain link and differentials between town centre and P&R fees
- Emphasis on running the service as an P&R making use of spare bus capacity when it is not likely to detract from the P&R operation or deter the regular users

Furthermore a number of additional elements have been identified through the review process:

- Develop agreed 'network failure' mitigation plans
- Need to develop agreed 'Emergency / 'Adverse weather' plan
- Need to develop enhanced communications strategy

APPENDIX 1: COUNCILLOR COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS DROP IN SESSION

On 16th June 2014 Officers held an open 'drop-in' session for members to discuss the operation and review of the Park & Ride operation. This appendix summarises the points made at that session

Patronage and Bus Use

- Key to development is encouraging Town centre users (as Town Centre car parks close) to move over to P&R use.
- Figures look good – and are improving
- Season tickets for PSC based on term time usage only
- Develop an App.

Park and Ride Bus Route

- Make destination clearer on the bus stops
- Need information on the buses
- Day time routes to go through Highcliffe / Winnal / Badger Farm – use the spare capacity available on some buses.

Park & Ride Bus Operation Times

- Fine – Need to consider Sundays at some time as markets growing and car parking space will diminish. (view expressed more than once)
- Consideration of Sunday operation is worthy of review
- Yes to Sunday operation – link to changes in parking restrictions on Sundays
- Sunday operation could be tried on a trial basis for 6 months.

Bus Frequencies

- Fine (view expressed more than once)

Park & Ride Changes

- Good charges but not used as major advertising material. Need to change title of 'Smart Card' as it is too much like 'smart phone'. What is wrong with 'Oyster' which is the same type of system.
- These charges are fine but you need to raise the centre car park charges and charge on Sundays. Problem is lack of shuttle on a Sunday and the need for CEOs on Sunday.
- School / college season tickets
- Progressive increase in the price differential between park & Ride and Central car parks.
- Agree some kind of 'smart card' needed.
- Ability to charge smartcard on site (in the car park).

APPENDIX 2: FINANCIAL APPRAISAL OF ADDITIONAL ROUTES / DIVERSIONS

This Appendix describes the approach developed to model the financial costs of alterations to the P&R route. It can only be used to provide estimated costs as only a retendering exercise would provide for a detailed and accurate cost.

The current cost of the P&R contract is £873,192 (using 2014/15 contact figures) and the annual distance operated is 350,000km or 18,585 annual hours.

- **This gives an estimated average operating cost per Km of £2.41 or an average hourly operational cost of £46.98**

These figures can be used to estimate the costs of permanent and all-day variations to the route on a pro-rata mileage or time bases.

It should be noted that this figure is based on full-time operation, rather than ad-hoc additional evening or peak hour services where the costs could be considerably higher. To determine a figure for this level of operation it is appropriate to use the costs associated with the HCC 'extra buses' contract which provides additional services for limited times of the day.

The cost (2013/14) of the HCC P&R 'extra buses' contract is £79,376 and the annual distance operated is 11,865km, this contract covers 910 annual hours.

- **This gives an effective operating cost of £6.69 per and an average hourly operational cost of £87.22**

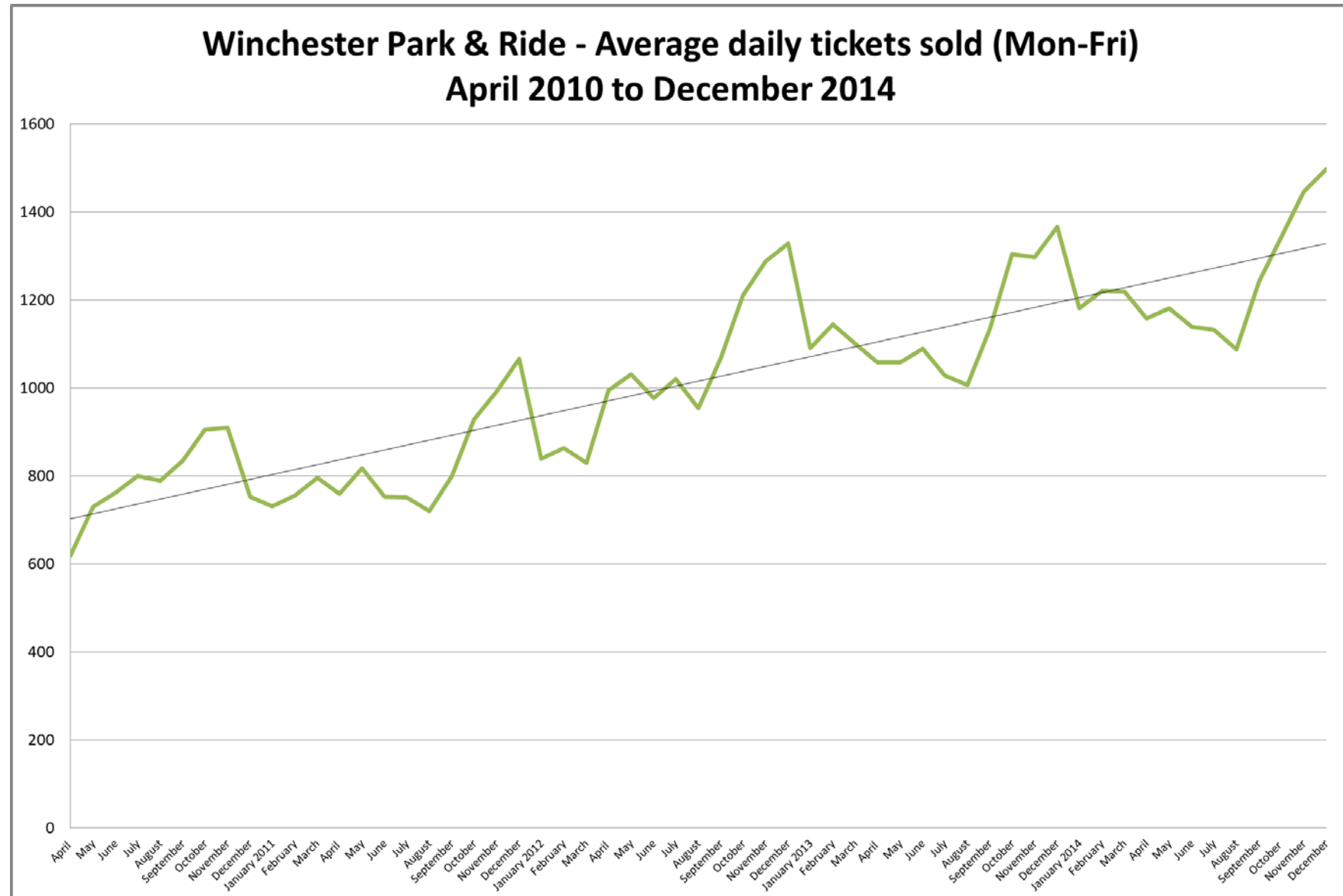
It is therefore appropriate to model full time and permanent alterations the P&R route using the lower figure, with short term ad-hoc changes using the higher figure.

It does demonstrate the considerable cost of operating the any bus service, particularly the high premium payable for short period operational requirements.

APPENDIX 3: PARK AND RIDE FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2006/7 TO 2013/14

<u>Park & Ride Financial Summary</u>								
<u>2006/07 to 2013/14</u>								
	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn
Direct Expenditure	48,833	38,575	23,342	37,003	114,615	85,425	131,553	108,295
Bus Contract	323,048	362,328	382,524	371,938	730,247	784,521	788,434	924,009
Depreciation	806	1,391	4,318	3,926				
Support Services / Overheads				480	790	9,775	8,512	6,918
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	372,687	402,294	410,184	413,347	845,652	879,721	928,499	1,039,222
<u>INCOME</u>								
Car Parking Fees	-294,592	-350,835	-348,287	-381,618	-469,254	-530,546	-613,576	-701,125
VAT Refund (Incl. prior years)				-50,309	-61,862	-69,942	-80,888	
Season Tickets						-55,202	-28,905	-76,950
HCC Bus Contributions							-6,741	-79,376
BSOG Grant								-11,339
TOTAL INCOME	-294,592	-350,835	-348,287	-431,927	-531,116	-655,690	-730,110	-868,790
Internal Staff Permits	-20,364	-25,811	-28,363	-20,155	-20,907	-27,346	-2,030	-22,171
TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE	57,731	25,648	33,534	-38,735	293,629	196,685	196,359	148,261
Notes:								
1) VAT Refund received in 2012/13 of £263k has been proportionally re-allocated to years affected								
2) Excludes all centrally paid admin costs such as cash collection, machine purchase/maintenance, admin staff etc								
3) Excludes both the cost of Parking Enforcement and the income from PCNs								
4) Excludes future maintenance costs as P&R sites start to age and require additional expenditure								

APPENDIX 4: PARK & RIDE USE (CAR PARK TICKETS SOLD 2010 – 2014)



APPENDIX 5: PARK & RIDE USE (PASSENGERS CARRIED 2014)