

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

18 October 2011

Subject: Response to proposals from Salisbury City Council presented to Wiltshire Council 26 July 2011

Cabinet Member: Councillor Dick Tonge – Highways and Transport

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is for Cabinet to consider its response to the five proposals submitted by Salisbury City Council, presented to Wiltshire Council 26 July 2011 with the exception of on and off-street car parking prices which will be part of the full review at Full Council on 8 November 2011.

Proposal

That Cabinet considers and agrees the proposed responses to the proposals from Salisbury City Council presented to Wiltshire Council 26 July 2011 with the exception of on and off-street car parking prices which will be part of the full review at Full Council on 8 November 2011.

Reason for Proposal

To respond formally to proposals presented to the Council by Salisbury City Council with the exception of on and off-street car parking prices which will be part of the full review at Full Council on 8 November 2011.

Mark Boden
Corporate Director - Operations, Department of Neighbourhood and Planning

Wiltshire Council

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Cabinet Member: Councillor Dick Tonge – Highways and Transport

Key Decision: No

Purpose of Report

1. For Cabinet to formally consider and agree its response to proposals from Salisbury City Council (SCC) presented to Wiltshire Council 26 July 2011 with the exception of on and off-street car parking prices which will be part of the full review at Full Council on 8 November 2011.

Background

2. The Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 – Car Parking Strategy was approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 14 December 2010.
3. Following Cabinet's decision and the above Cabinet Member decision, the required amendments to the Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) were advertised in accordance with the processes set out in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Consultation on the amended TROs was undertaken between 27 January and 21 February 2011.
4. The LTP Car Parking Strategy was formally adopted by the Council at its meeting on 22 February 2011 as part of the Wiltshire LTP 2011-2026.
5. The LTP Car Parking Strategy seeks to ensure that publicly available private non-residential parking provides a car park management plan and possibly implements parking restrictions and charges consistent with those of the council run car parks in the local area.

Policy PS5 - Managing publicly available private non-residential parking

There will be a presumption that any planning application which includes provision for publicly available private non-residential parking will be required to provide an accompanying car park management plan and, subject to a case-by-case analysis, to implement parking restrictions and charges consistent with those of council run car parks in the local area.

Although this refers to new planning applications the principles are relevant to Lush House and Southampton Road.

6. Following Cabinet Member approval of the report 'Off-Street Traffic Regulation Orders for Wiltshire' (reference HT-006-11) on 11 March 2011, the revised car parking charges were introduced on 18 April 2011.
7. SCC Full Council meeting on 6 June 2011 discussed the changes to the parking fee structure in the car parks in Salisbury. The City Council wrote to Wiltshire Council with the outcome of those discussions on 29 June 2011, (as at **Appendix A**).
8. Wiltshire Council's original response is attached as **Appendix B**.
9. SCC at its full Council meeting on 25 July 2011 then considered the paper submitted by Salisbury City Centre Management, Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses.
10. The City Council informed Wiltshire Council via email on 26 July of its resolution attached as **Appendix C**, which reiterates the original proposals from 6 June, 2011.
11. The proposals from the SCC overlap those presented by Salisbury City Centre Management, the Federation of Small Businesses and Salisbury and District Chamber of Commerce and Industry but are not fully aligned.
12. SCC are silent on the longer stay car parking charges and it is assumed the City Council are supportive of these charges as they support the Council's aim of increasing the use of the Park and Ride sites around Salisbury.
13. Wiltshire Council, on the formation of SCC, transferred two car parks, Lush House and Southampton Road to the City Council.
14. The transfer of these car parks, together with a number of other parcels of land and buildings (both community use land and commercial properties), to SCC was under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the Local Government (Structural Changes) (Transfer of Functions, Property, Rights and Liabilities) Regulations 2008 (2008 No.2176) and the Wiltshire (Parish of Salisbury) Establishment and Electoral Arrangement Order 2009 (which established SCC), and pursuant to the consent of Secretary of State for the Department of Communities and Local Government dated 28 January 2010.
15. Originally the transfer was to include a covenant which would ensure that SCC would manage car parks in line with Wiltshire Council parking strategy.
16. At the point of transfer the covenant was not included as SCC would manage the car parks under Wiltshire Council's 'The County of Wiltshire (Southern Wiltshire) (Off-Street Parking Places) Order'.
17. A contract formalising the agreement between the City Council and Wiltshire Council for the management of the enforcement has been drafted and is close to finalisation.

18. The relevant rights and obligations on the part of Wiltshire Council in the draft contract are:

The right to:

“manage the monitoring and collection services at the Designated Parking Areas as a parking area for vehicles and to set the tariffs within the Designated Parking Areas at an appropriate level to help achieve the Council’s overall traffic management goals”;

The obligation to:

“notify SCC before increasing the level of Parking Charges” and “consider any reasonable requests received from SCC to increase the Parking Charges provided SCC pay all costs incurred by the Council in amending such Parking Charges”.

Main Considerations for the Council

Response to the Resolution of the City Council made on 25 July

19. Proposal 1: *SCC does not support Wiltshire Council’s current car park charging policy in respect of the two hour minimum charge*

In response to an expressed public desire, Cabinet agreed on 19 August 2011 to the reintroduction of the one hour charge (at £1.50) and variation of the two hour charge (to £2.50) in Salisbury from 19 September 2011.

20. Proposal 2: *SCC wishes to see the re-introduction of the one hour parking charge at a rate of £1.20 without delay*

As above.

21. Proposal 3: *SCC agrees that Officers should open a discussion with Wiltshire Council to get the currently imposed car park charging covenant lifted*

The current arrangement is that Wiltshire Council has included the two car parks in its ‘The County of Wiltshire (Southern Wiltshire) (Off-Street Parking Places) Order’. The Order flows from the Council’s Parking Strategy and allows for the enforcement agreement between the two authorities.

The Council could amend the Traffic Regulation Order, via the amendment process to allow differential pricing, however, this would need to be funded and traffic impact on local highway network considered. There could be a congestion issue and any differential in the costs of car parks could create the risk of motorists driving around looking for spaces in these two car parks which cause queuing at the access and onto the highway. Demand could also be drawn away from the Park and Ride sites and from Wiltshire Council car parks.

Given the re-introduction of the one hour charge, if the City Council wishes to continue a discussion on this matter Wiltshire Council officers will meet with the City Council and put any recommendations to the Cabinet for approval.

22. *Proposal 4: Officers request that Wiltshire Council considers that the Park and Ride service should run from 6:00 am to 8:00 pm to attract more employees going to / from work*

To extend the operating hours as described above there would be an additional cost to the Council as follows:

On a Monday - Friday only = £110k per annum

On Saturdays as well as Monday – Friday = £133k per annum

These costs cover the salaries for additional drivers, supervisors and other sundries such as increased mileage, fuel, breakdown cover etc. To cover the cost of this arrangement through fares taken, approximately 174 passengers would need to access the service daily during these extended hours.

During 2008 the last buses left the city centre between 6.45 pm and 7.10 pm. The usage of these bus's was poor, with only one or two people using them on average each day and often no passengers at all.

The current data shown at **Appendix D**, weekly extract does show that there is little demand for earlier or later services amongst our current customers. The data shows that there are very few people who enter the site before 7am (there are quite a few people who enter the site between 7 pm and 8 pm, but obviously few exits – which may be people being dropped off). A very small number of customers who use the site before 7 am/after 8 pm make their own way to and from the sites.

We would be pleased to accommodate extended hours of the Park & Ride if it were to be cost neutral. However, we are not prepared to take the risk of a trial without supporting data. If the City Council, with SCCM, the FSB and the Chamber, were to consult on this matter to establish what passenger numbers would be on the earlier and later buses, and how many would be displaced from the existing schedule, the data could be used to carry out a proper evaluation. If this approach were to be agreed, we could arrange for officers to meet with you to discuss the details of your consultation and we would evaluate the hours of other Park & Ride facilities operated by other local authorities to establish what the usage is during the suggested extended hours.

23. *Proposal 5: That parking charges be a flat rate of £1 when the park and ride sites are closed (Sundays and Bank Holidays)*

The Sunday usage figures shown at **Appendix E** show that the previous reduction in Sunday charges from £2.00 to £1.50 in July 2010 made virtually no change in usage. Therefore the change to a flat rate of £1.00 would have no effect.

Although the ticket machines can be programmed to have different charges on Sundays they cannot be programmed in advance for each Bank Holiday. Changing the machines manually for each Bank Holiday would be difficult and expensive. However we will continue to investigate this matter further.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

24. From an environmental perspective, changes to parking charges within the city have the potential to impact on air quality, congestion and carbon emissions. If vehicular movements in the city centre were to increase this could be detrimental in the Council's objectives to improve air quality within the AQMA and the increase in congestion could result in longer journey times, potentially deterring customers.
25. Alongside this, the current park and ride system offers a valuable and cost effective service for commuters entering the city from outlying towns and villages. However, it is less effective for commuters who live closer to the city centre.
26. Section 3.45 of the Council's recent Car Parking Strategy states that any surplus revenue from the service, once operating costs have been accounted for, could be used to fund sustainable transport projects. Whilst the economic reasons for requesting lower parking charges are noted, it should be acknowledged that this will result in fewer surplus funds being available for these projects.
27. A key reason for reducing parking charges is to encourage more footfall by making it easier and cost effective to park closer to the commercial centre. However, whilst this will assist the economy in the short term, this is not a viable option in the medium to long term as commuters will face increasing pressure from rising fuel prices and there will be detrimental impacts on air quality, carbon emissions and congestion.
28. All parties should agree to work together to form a comprehensive vision for sustainable transport measures in and around Salisbury, identifying sources of funding that help the city to remain competitive.
29. The car parking strategy was subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) as part of the development of the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026. The SEA was subject to public consultation from 4 October to 26 November 2010. The report to Cabinet on 14 December 2010 provided details of the summary findings of the SEA.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

30. None have been identified as arising directly from the proposal.
31. The car parking strategy was subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) as part of the development of the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026. The EqIA was subject to public consultation from 4 October to 26 November 2010. The report to Cabinet on 14 December 2010 provided details of the summary findings of the EqIA.

Risk Assessment

32. None have been identified as arising directly from the proposal.

Financial Implications

33. As this is a formal response to proposals received there are no direct implications arising from the proposal. However if the Council were to agree to differential pricing there could be displacement parking in Salisbury which would reduce the Council's parking income. The Council could seek an indemnity from the City Council to cover any future losses.

Legal Implications

34. Should the City Council terminate the current arrangement with Wiltshire Council for Wiltshire Council to enforce the current Order, Wiltshire Council would need to consider whether to remove the Lush House and Southampton Road Car Parks from the Wiltshire Council Order.
35. Whilst Sections 57 and 59 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 give powers to parish councils to provide suitable parking places within their area and to make an Order under Section 35 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, they may only do so with the consent of the council of the county in which the parish is situate and any consent given by the county council may be subject to such conditions or restrictions as they [the county council] think fit.
36. The consent of Wiltshire Council would, therefore, be required to any Order relating to the Lush House and Southampton Road Car Parks that the City Council might wish to impose.

Options Considered

37. In reaching the responses to the proposals consideration has been given to each of the various individual options.

Conclusion

38. That the above responses to proposals 3 and 4, outlined by SCC, represent the Council's position on these matters.

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The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:

None

Appendices:

- Appendix A – Salisbury City Council to Wiltshire Council 29 June 2011
- Appendix B – Wiltshire Council response to Appendix A
- Appendix C – Salisbury City Council resolution received 26 July
- Appendix D – Park & Ride early and late usage
- Appendix E – Sunday usage