



Buckinghamshire County Council

Report

Cabinet Member for
Community Services

Date: 9 July 2001

**Decision to be taken
on or after:**
13 July 2001

Title: Black Park Country Park Self-
Financing Initiatives, Pay &
Display Visitor Car Park
Management.

CM Decision No:
CS 14/01

Author HEAD OF SPATIAL PLANNING

Electoral Divisions Affected, Fulmer, Wexham and Iver Heath

Summary

Currently, the Country Parks visitor car parks at Black Park, Langley, and Denham Country Parks are managed by Euro Car Parks (ECPs) on behalf of the Council. However, due to a substantial error in their original tender pricing their contract has been terminated as of 30 June 2001. It is recommended that from 1 July 2001 the Country Parks Service (CPS) who were the next lowest tender, undertake the running and management of the Country Parks car park contract for the remainder of the contract period to 31 March 2003.

Recommendation

To AGREE:

1. That the Car Park Management Contract at Black Park be undertaken by the Country Parks Service.
2. That the staff, outlined in the report, are appointed on fixed term contracts to service the remainder of the contract from 1 July 2001 to 31 March 2003.
3. That the Country Parks Service management of the car parks contract will be formally reviewed at the end of the current contract period.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Contractual Arrangements:

After competitive tender, ECPs were awarded the Country Parks Car Park Management Contract, commencing on the 1 April 2000.

However, on the 21 December 2000 ECPs wrote to the County Council and informed them that they had made a significant error in their pricing of the contract, which had been awarded under the County Councils tender procedures. At tender submission ECPs provided two pricing structures, one for the management of each Country Park and one for managing all three Country Parks. They stated that by running all three, there were efficiencies of scale and so the contract was awarded to them.

Some ten months after the start of their contract, they wrote to the County Council and stated that they had made a significant error (see Appendix 1). This in fact amounted to an additional £1,741 per month operating fee (57% increase).

After consultation with Legal, Contracts and Financial Services it was agreed to respond to ECPs stating that the increase was not agreeable to the County Council. The Contract with ECPs stated that they should give six months notice to terminate the Contract. After correspondence and meetings with them the County Council decided to accept ECPs Contract termination.

At the time of tender an in-house bid was judged as being second lowest and in discussions with Contracts the CPS were requested to revisit their initial tender price and submit this to Contracts for evaluation. A revised in-house price was submitted, which based on the original tender submission, demonstrated that for the remainder of the contract CPS would be more cost effective than the revised ECPs submission and significantly below the third lowest tender. (See Appendix 2). The Head of Contracts has no objections to the remainder of the contract being awarded to The CPS.

Resource Implications

Additional staff will of course need to be appointed in order to service the contract, and this will be in the order of 1 full time and 3 part time members of staff. Human Resources have advised that TUPE rules do not apply to the appointment of the proposed new staff members.

Descriptions of these new posts together with their duties, responsibilities, and person specifications were forwarded to Human Resources for evaluation in order to establish the salary grades for each of the new posts. This has been completed and grades agreed. Approval has also been given by the Head of Human Resources on behalf of the member for the Resources portfolio for the posts to be established subject to the approval of the Cabinet Member for Community Services through this report.

It should be noted that the staff recommended provides a slightly improved service to that of ECPs but which is still more cost effective (See Appendix 2) than ECPs increased charges. It is felt that this should be provided for the following reasons: -

- It has come to our notice that the passing of tickets from visitor to visitor is common practice and that the only way to stamp this out is to provide a greater presence at all of the Country Parks Car Parks but particularly at Black Park.
- Also by providing an enhanced presence the practice of attempting to obtain free parking and placing tickets upside down will be restricted.

All of the above will have the effect of increasing income through more visitors paying for parking and Penalty Charge Notices for those that transgress, i.e. the net cost to the Country Parks self financing budget will be zero in that the estimated additional income raised will pay for the enhanced staffing.

It is important to note that the new Country Parks Car Park staff will have a clearly defined role and as well as managing the car park Contract, they will act as the first point of contact for visitors.

Financial Implications

The total cost of staff and necessary equipment to run and manage the car parks contract will be met entirely from the Self-financing income of Country Parks, specifically from income derived from the Pay and Display machines, Annual Parking permits and Penalty charge notices issued.

The estimated income for the 21-month period is approx. £220,000 compared to the cost of running the car park contract at £85,000.

Fee comparison:

ECPs (revised)		
Fee per month (£1425.14 x 3 Car Parks)	=	£4,275
Over 21 months	=	<u>£89,783</u>
BCC Country Parks Service		
Fee per month		£4,084
Over 21 months	=	<u>£85,764</u>

The above table clearly shows that the CPS bid not only provides a lower cost alternative to the revised ECPs offer but can also provide an improved service and enforcement in accordance with the Country Parks Business Plan.

Review of Contract

Towards the end of the current contract period, 31 March 2003, a review will be carried out on the management of the car parks contract and options for the future outlined.



Decision Taken:

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Decision Not Taken:

Signed: _____

Date:

Reason:
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Representations

Any representations regarding this proposed decision should be made to Head of Cabinet Support by 5.00 p.m. on Thursday, 12 July 2001. This can be done by telephone (to 01296 382966), Fax (to 01296 383441), or e-mail to cabinet@buckscc.gov.uk

For further information please contact: Mike Woods on 01296 383756