



Report to Cabinet Member for Transportation

Decision to be taken on or after 24 July 2007

Decision can normally be implemented at least 3 working days after decision
has been signed.

Cabinet Member Report No. T04.07

Title: Wycombe District SPA

Date: 2 July 2007

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Electoral Divisions Affected: Abbey; Booker, Cressex and Sands; Bowerdean, Micklefield and Totteridge; Chiltern Valley; Downley, Disraeli, Oakridge and Castlefield; Greater Hughenden; Hazlemere; Icknield and Bledlow; Marlow; Ryemead, Tyler's Green and Loudwater; Stokenchurch, Radnage and West Wycombe; Terriers and Amersham Hill; Thames and the Risboroughs

Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Community and Environmental Services

Summary:

A limited Special Parking Area (SPA) has operated in the central area of High Wycombe since 1998. The County Council is responsible for on-street parking enforcement and the operation is managed by contractors NCP. Outside of the SPA - across most of the District - there is virtually no on-street parking enforcement (nominally the responsibility of Thames Valley Police). The District Council operates off-street parking both within and outside of the SPA.

In response to complaints about lack of parking enforcement, Cllr Peter Cartwright, Welcome District Council (WDC) wrote to the Cabinet Member for Transportation at Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) almost two years ago asking that a district-wide SPA be investigated as a matter of urgency. In March 2006 BCC appointed a consultant, RTA Associates to carry out a feasibility study into the financial viability of extending the existing SPA to a District wide SPA. A joint Member meeting on 14 June 2006 considered the feasibility appraisal work that has been done to date with a presentation by the consultants who are doing the work. They reported that:

There is scope for agreement in principle to developing a district-wide SPA with Wycombe District Council (WDC) but much detailed work remains to be done. This work continues, most importantly in relation to agreeing the financial implications and risks for both Councils.

A briefing for Members from BCC/WDC took place on 10th October 2006. On 30th October 2006 WDC Cabinet met and recommended:

That Buckinghamshire County Council be requested to apply for a Special Parking Area covering the whole of Wycombe District from 1 April 2008, with the District Council taking responsibility for on street parking enforcement, subject to any comments of the Improvement and review Commission, and subject to the details of the agreement between the two councils and other operational issues being finalised by the Head of Environment in consultation with the Cabinet members for Environment, Transport and Employment and Resources.

WDC wrote to BCC on 1 May 2007 to formally request BCC to start the procedures to make an application to the Department of Transport to extend the current High Wycombe SPA to cover the whole District.

Recommendation

The Cabinet Member is invited to **AGREE:**

- 1. that BCC should agree to enter into a partnership agreement with WDC and assist the District Council to make an application to the DfT to extend the existing SPA to a District wide SPA which should be achieved by summer 2008 with a target date of June 2008.**
- 2. to the formation of a joint working committee of members and officers from both Councils to ensure the smooth introduction of the new SPA area and for this committee to agree the final draft of the Partnership Agreement.**
- 3. that the consultants RTA Associates are retained to assist in the application to DfT and implementation of the enlarged SPA.**
- 4. that all existing Traffic Regulation Orders are consolidated in a new map based Traffic Regulation Order and that all lines and signs reflect this Order to allow civil enforcement within the District of Wycombe.**
- 5. to the early termination of the contract with the contractor that currently enforces the limited SPA.**

A. Narrative setting out reasons for decision:

Whilst on-street enforcement within the existing Special Parking Area is effectively carried out on-street enforcement within the remainder of the District is almost non-existent it is however expected that future enforcement will initially only be carried out with enhanced levels of enforcement to ensure compliance of existing signs and lines.

The enhanced level of enforcement should reduce the congestion and reduce the hazards and associated collisions caused by inconsiderate parking. There will also be opportunity to tackle commuter parking in residential areas and manage parking to the best effect for retail and businesses. The visual

and air quality environment should also be improved by having an organised parking regime. These themes are contained in the Local Transport Plan 2 2006/11.

RTA have been involved in the financial evaluation of the SPA and also getting the on-street controls into a consolidated form. They have won these tasks through competition. Consequently we have invested knowledge in RTA who have been both very competitive and produced good quality work. RTA are well versed in making such application which will assist the Parking Team.

B. Resource implications

The proposal to extend the existing SPA, in conjunction with WDC is expected to cost BCC £310k over the period to 31 March 2013. This compares with ongoing deficits on the operation of the current SPA which were £68k last year and estimated over the same period to be in the region of £340k.

Although this year's capital programme has not been signed off yet, the Transportation Service has confirmed the high priority of the £310,000 from the Capital Programme resources to meet these costs. However, some of the costs involved may not meet the definition of capital and the service is exploring how the identified capital resources can be converted to revenue. The estimated one-off costs are:

- £135,000 Map based consolidation order and review of the current Traffic Regulation Orders and the relevant signing and lining. It is a requirement of the application to DfT that all the restrictions are reviewed. Without this task DfT will not approve any application.
- £10,000 Consultancy services required to assist in the implementation of the extended SPA.
- £165,000 Early termination of the existing contract in place with NCP which ends on the 31st March 2009. The contract requires a minimum notice period of 12 months within the terms of the contract NCP would be entitled to costs relating to an early termination.

The recommended District-Wide SPA is expected to make a small on-going surplus compared to an annual deficit on the current SPA. Our agreement with WDC is likely to require that any surpluses be directed back into eligible activities (as specified in the DfT guidance Local Authority Circular 1/95) in the District by agreement between WDC and BCC.

RTA Associates predict that the district wide SPA will, if properly implemented break even within 5 years of commencing the SPA. This is demonstrated through the feasibility study work that has been undertaken. A full financial model based on the District Wide SPA is developed as part of the application process. This model is based on the marginal model but uses actual data on WDC's staffing requirements. The model will be submitted to both Council's finance teams for comment and be agreed by the Members working committee.

A members group consisting of BCC Cabinet Member for Transportation and WDC Cabinet Member for Environment along with other local members for the Wycombe District is to be set up to oversee the establishment of the district wide SPA and allow decisions to be taken on how to operate the SPA. The Group's remit will be to ensure that the decisions taken, on the basis of consensus, allow the SPA to break even at the earliest opportunity.

The letter from BCC to WDC dated 21 March 2007 sets out proposed heads of terms and should be considered as it highlights potential resource implications over the 5 year life of the contract. In overall terms, if the SPA did not break even within 5 years then WDC would be responsible for the first £50k, between £50k and £120k would be shared equally by BCC and WDC and above £120k would be shared on the basis of 20% from BCC and 80% from WDC.

C. Legal implications

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services will be required to arrange for the consolidation of the existing Traffic Regulation Orders to be sealed and brought in to operation as well as assisting in forming the legal agreements required to allow the District Council to manage the day to day SPA operation.

A draft partnership agreement setting out roles and responsibilities has been agreed in-principle but will be subject to final agreement of the Council's legal representatives and agreement of the Working Committee.

D. Property implications

None

E. Other implications/issues

Transfer of Undertaking Protection of Employment (TUPE) legislation is applicable both to staff employed by BCC at Wycombe Area Office and all staff employed by NCP in regard to the on-street operation. It has been agreed that BCC and WDC will share the cost of any TUPE costs of staff transfer from BCC and NCP to WDC. The TUPE risk is likely to be a low risk because WDC are between 6 and 8 staff short on their outline staffing structure. TUPE costs, if any, will only be known when the staffing structure has been agreed with the Members Working Group.

F. Feedback from consultation and Local Member views

No formal comments have yet been received/requested. However, briefing of BCC/WDC members on 10 October 2006 produced a positive response. The application for a SPA requires the BCC to liaise with all interested parties (including the public) prior to making its application to the DfT.

G. Communication issues

Consultation will take place prior to a formal application to DfT.

Background Papers

- Executive Summary of the Consultants feasibility study report
 - Letter dated 21 March 2007 from WDC to WDC
 - Letter dated 2 May 2007 from WDC formally requesting the District Wide SPA application.
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Your questions and views

If you have any questions about the matters contained in this paper please get in touch with the Contact Officer whose telephone number is given at the head of the paper.

If you have any views on this paper that you would like the Cabinet Member to consider, or if you wish to object to the proposed decision, please inform the Democratic Services Team by 5.00pm on 23 July 2007. This can be done by telephone (to 01296 383602), Fax (to 01296 382538), or e-mail to cabinet@buckscc.gov.uk

CABINET MEMBER REPORT NO. T04.07

DECISION TAKEN:

I have taken into account any representations received concerning the contents of this report.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

DECISION NOT TAKEN:

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Reason: _____

For Reference

Professional advice supporting the decision was provided by the following Officers

Name	Signed	Date
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