

Background Papers, if any, are specified at the end of the Report

ANNUAL CAR PARKING REPORT

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 That Members note this report which combines both off and on street parking.**
- 2 That members note that under the Traffic Management Act 2004 this report will be submitted to the Department for Transport.**

Relationship to Council Objectives

- 1. Efficient and Effective Customer focussed services*
- 2. Conserve the Environment and Promote Sustainability – specifically ensure appropriate levels of short and long stay parking are available in town centres to support the needs of shoppers and the workforce.*

Implications

- (i) Not a key decision.*
- (ii) Within the Policy and Budgetary Framework.*

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report

Risk Implications

There are no direct risk implications associated with this report.

Equalities Implications

Parking for Blue Badge holders is provided throughout all Council owned/managed car parks and national exemptions are provided on-street within the District.

Sustainability Implications

There are no direct sustainability implications associated with this report.

Report

- 1 It has been practice for a number of years to present Members with a report on the operation of the off and on-street parking functions. Both these reports were last presented in February 2009.
- 2 From September 2009 CDC are required to report annually to Central Government on the Council's on and off-street parking management statistics.

Off-Street Parking

- 3 The Council operates one multi-storey car park, the Amersham Multi-Storey Car Park (AMSCP) and 17 surface car parks. In addition, the Council Office car park is accessible to the public for use free of charge after 5.30pm weekdays and through weekends and bank holidays.
- 4 *Appendix 1* shows all the car parks, their capacities, number of disabled spaces and parking tariffs. There is a total availability of 2,521 spaces which includes disabled spaces but excludes the Council Office car park which has a further 177 spaces.
- 5 All of the car parks are owned by this Council except for Buryfields Car Park which is leased from the Great Missenden Parish Council until 2013 and Chesham Station Car Park which is leased from London Underground until March 2012.

Finance

- 6 A tariff increase was brought into effect on 1 March 2009 which increased only the daily parking charge in the AMSCP, increasing it from £4.00 to £5.00 per day. Charges in all other CDC car parks including season ticket charges remained the same.
- 7 The policy for off-street car parking requires that charges be set at a level that, as a minimum, covers the total cost of the operation of the off-street car parks and, as required by the Council's financial strategy, generates an income stream to support the Council's revenue budget thereby reducing the financial impact on Council Tax payers.
- 8 The Off-Street Car Parking out-turn figures for 2008/09 were:

2007/08 Surplus £		2008/09 Income £	2008/09 Expenditure £	2008/09 Surplus £
(334,350)	Surface Car Parks	(950,162)	644,612	(305,550)
(248,721)	Amersham Multi Storey Car Park	(636,554)	329,265	(307,289)
(583,071)	Total	(1,586,716)	973,877	(612,839)

- 9 Under a parking arrangement Chiltern District Council currently have with Buckinghamshire County Council, Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) income from off-street enforcement is credited to the on-street Civil Enforcement Area (CEA) account.

- 10 PCN performance is monitored through on-street operations and accounted for in the on-street account.

Security Issues

- 11 On 12th December 2006 the ‘Park Mark’ award was gained for all Chiltern District Council car parks. This award is presented on behalf of the Association of Chief Police Officers for England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.
- 12 The award advises the public that our car parks have been assessed by an independent body and demonstrate a high standard of service and, in particular, a high level of customer security.
- 13 The District’s CCTV which is maintained by Chiltern District Council is monitored by Wycombe District Council for use by Thames Valley Police.

General

- 14 The Civil Enforcement Officers are responsible for both on-street and off-street parking enforcement, covering a minimum of 6 days each week on a rota basis.
- 15 Their most important off-street duties which the Parking Manager supervises are to ensure that a high standard of health and safety is maintained and to check compliance with the car park regulations.
- 16 The CEOs on and off-street activities includes being the “eyes and ears” of the Council by reporting vehicles without valid road fund licence, reporting graffiti, road defects, rubbish/fly tipping as well as giving advice and directions to the public and motorists, offering first aid when needed and working with the Police in reporting and collecting evidence to assist in protecting the community.
- 17 The Parking Manager is responsible for the overall parking management which includes managing all the CEOs and back office functions.
- 18 As it was anticipated, turnover of CEO staff has been relatively high, we are on our second parking manager, two team leader posts have been refilled, and since the beginning of the CEA five parking attendant posts have become vacant, subsequently four have been filled with the fifth being recruited at the time of writing this report. A temporary part time post is in place to lessen the impact on income levels caused by staff shortages.

Health and Safety

- 19 Equipment and working procedures have been reviewed and the Council’s responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASWA 1974) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. (MHSWR 1999) regarding this function are being managed and are regularly addressed through ongoing reviews.

Training

- 20 To continually offer a high level of service, in what can be very difficult and, in some cases confrontational situations, the CEOs are trained to NVQ Level 2 in parking, with some studying for Level 3 later this year.
- 21 During 2008/9 the CEOs received the following training:
- City and Guilds 1889 level 2 CEO course
 - City and Guilds level 2 Conflict Management training
 - IT Training
 - Verrus pay by phone training
 - Defensive driver training
- 22 The establishment for the Parking Section is 1 Parking Manager, 6 full time equivalent and 1 temporary part time Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) and 2 Notice Processing Assistants (currently 1 NPA is part time).

Parking Facilities for Parents Dropping off School Children ('Go For Gold')

- 23 Within the District we currently operate seven 'Go for Gold' schemes. This scheme was approved at the Executive meeting on 3rd September 2002 (Minute 111). These schemes are designed to enable parents to park free of charge for an agreed time (which depends on the distance from the car park to the school) and then walk their children to school along a designated route.
- 24 Such schemes currently operate within the car parks at Great Missenden (Link Road), at Chesham (Water Meadow), at Chalfont St Peter (Church Lane) and Chalfont St Giles (Blizzards Yard), Amersham (Sycamore Road), Amersham Old Town (Dovecote Meadow) and Prestwood (High Street).

Developments made within the Parking Section's Management and Operation this year

- 25 Cabinet gave approval to the implementation of the Verrus system of cashless (mobile) payment for parking in all the Council operated car parks as an addition to the existing payment facilities. A review of the first year's operation is to be conducted in October 2009.
- 26 Cabinet agreed revised Parking Enforcement Observation times.
- 27 Cabinet agreed a revision to the Council's Policy "that the practice of allowing Town and Parish Councils to provide free car parking be continued, provided that the income lost to the Council is reimbursed" and "that the loss of income to the Council by allowing Town and Parish Councils to provide free parking be calculated on each car park individually and be based upon the ticket income from an agreed period of "charged based parking".
- 28 Cabinet agreed to the introduction of group C permits for Dovecote Meadow, Blizzards Yard and Church Lane car parks. A further group D could be given consideration for Dovecote car park to coincide with the Amersham Old Town scheme.

Charging Hours

- 29 Charges for the Council's off-street car parks apply from 7.30am to 6.00pm, Mondays to Saturdays.
- 30 Currently no charge is made on Sundays and Bank Holidays in Chiltern District Council's car parks. Aylesbury Vale DC do not charge for Sundays or Bank Holidays. Wycombe DC charge £1 per day in their busiest car parks on Sundays and Bank Holidays with the rest remaining free. South Bucks DC charge £1 in all car parks during those periods.

On-Street Parking

- 31 The decision was made by the Executive on 9 March 2004 (Minute 219) to proceed with the Special Parking Area (SPA) (now CEA). An agreement was entered with Buckinghamshire County Council as to how the CEA would operate.
- 32 The agreement with the County Council set out a framework of how the CEA should operate with delegation over management made to Chiltern District Council. Parking statistics are discussed monthly with BCC.
- 33 Operation of the CEA commenced on 1 September 2005.
- 34 The cost of the CEA has to be met from income. Currently this income results from Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued for parking contraventions and a small section of short-stay Pay and Display in Whieldon Street Old Amersham.
- 35 The Chiltern CEA is legally required to operate under the original agreement signed between the District and County Council which requires it to be self financing. However, under Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 which came into effect on 31 March 2008 CEAs do not need to be self financing.

Finance

- 36 It was agreed that the income from Penalty Charge Notices, whether issued on or off-street would be credited to the CEA account. This is to reflect that the off-street car park pay and display income will increase as a result of the enforcement of on-street parking restrictions.
- 37 The cost of a PCN is currently £70 for the higher contravention and £50 for the lower. If payment is received within fourteen days of the contravention date then the cost is reduced to £35/£25. The CEA is currently reliant on the PCN income and a short section of pay and display in Amersham Old Town. The recovery rate for PCNs is important.
- 38 A key function for the CEOs was to carry out cash collections and maintain the pay and display machines in the Council's off-street car parks to ensure that they were able to take payments. Since the cash collection and machine maintenance function has been out sourced the CEOs have had more time to focus on their priority function of enforcement.

- 39 The On-Street out-turn figures for 2008/09 are set out in the table below. The variance in indirect costs is attributable to a change in methodology for the calculation of capital charges for depreciation in respect of the equipment assets which, as at 31 March 2009, are fully depreciated. The level of PCN income was slightly down against budget.

	Budget 2008/09 £	Actual 2008/09 £	Variance 2008/09 £
Revenue Costs			
- direct operating costs	161,670	165,887	4,217
- indirect costs	213,030	248,830	35,800
- PCN income	(187,000)	(173,426)	13,574
- Pay & Display income	(30,000)	(35,910)	(5,910)
- income from charges/other income	(3,210)	(5,866)	(2,656)
Net Revenue Cost of CEA for year	154,490	199,515	45,025
Capital Costs <i>to be met from surplus on on street account</i>			
- set up costs (capital)	0	0	0
Net Capital Cost of CEA for year	0	0	0
Net Deficit on CEA Account for year	154,490	199,515	45,025

The cumulative position to 31 March 2009 on the CEA account is shown in the following table:

CEA Account

	Actual 2005/06 £	Actual 2006/07 £	Actual 2007/08 £	Actual 2008/09 £
Revenue Costs <i>from Sept 2005</i>				
- running costs	212,216	283,586	343,813	414,717
- PCN income	(102,595)	(148,379)	(174,770)	(173,426)
- Pay & Display income	0	0	(19,542)	(35,910)
- income from charges/other income	(3,553)	(3,795)	(3,829)	(5,866)
Net Revenue Cost of CEA for year	106,068	131,412	145,672	199,515
Cumulative Net Revenue Cost of CEA	106,068	237,480	383,152	582,667
Capital Costs <i>to be met from surplus on on street account</i>				
- set up costs (capital)	184,525	26,938	13,825	0
Net Capital Cost of CEA for year	184,525	26,938	13,825	0
Cumulative Capital Cost of CEA	184,525	211,463	225,288	225,288
Net Deficit on CEA Account for year	290,593	158,350	159,497	199,515
Cumulative Deficit on CEA Account	290,593	448,943	608,440	807,955

- 40 When the ARUP financial appraisal was produced in February 2004 it set out several scenarios. The preferred option was a combination of two scenarios. This was:

Years 1 and 2 Enhanced Enforcement

Year 3 Onwards Enhanced enforcement, short-stay
pay and display and Residents Parking.

- 41 By operating the CEA for the first two years only with enhanced enforcement it allowed the predictions to be validated before making the decision about on-street charging.
- 42 With the CEA entering its fourth year of operation and as reported in last years Annual On-Street Parking Report in February 2009, Chiltern District Council conducted an informal statutory consultation based on the original SPA model which set out to convert existing limited waiting bays to short stay, pay and display bays. A decision was taken not to proceed with those proposals and it was agreed that due to the known parking issues in Chesham and Amersham further reviews of options to address specific issues be conducted.
- 43 On-going consideration is being given to two schemes which are with BCC awaiting statutory advert:
- a. The Chesham and Amersham pay and display and permit schemes which were presented to Cabinet in June 2008.
 - b. The Amersham Old Town comprehensive parking scheme being which was presented to Cabinet in December 2008.

Confirmation from the County Council is awaited in respect of the anticipated implementation dates of these schemes; when this is known a revised financial assessment of the anticipated position at the end of year 5 of the CEA will be undertaken.

- 44 Phases 2 and 3 have been more protracted in developing than was envisaged.
- 45 The year 1 (phase 1) quick fix review is being installed at the time of writing this report. BCC will inform CDC once all lining work has been completed, CDC will then conduct a check to ensure all lines and signs conform to the current Traffic Regulation Order prior to enforcement.

Surpluses

- 46 No surplus has been generated on the parking account.

Performance

- 47 Statistics for performance for the on and off-street parking functions between 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009 can be found in *Appendix 2*.
- 48 Appendix 2 shows 3617 PCNs issued off-street with 4491 PCNs issued on-street in 2008/09.
- 49 In 2009/10 the length of restrictions in the District could increase by approximately 10% once the new restrictions from the quick fixes, Amersham and Chesham are implemented and enforceable.

50 Shifts Covered 91% (of which 9% was training and sickness).

51 Hourly PCN rate 0.74 (based on a 9.25 hour shift).

Miscellaneous Matters

52 During the 2nd year of operation Chiltern District Council accepted responsibility for the future maintenance of all the CEA signs and lines.

53 In the first Annual CEA Report we stated that we were seeking “compensation” from the County Council for PCNs which were not able to be issued because of the defective signs and lines. Two methods were used to calculate lost income which resulted in two similar figures. An average between the two was agreed. The sum of £6,620.89 is to be deducted from this Council’s liability at the end of the 5th year.

Conclusion

54 This Council’s Parking Management continues to meet with Buckinghamshire County Council, Aylesbury Vale District Council, South Bucks District Council and Wycombe District Council Parking Officers at a Parking Forum where operational and policy aspects are discussed some of which include how the parking service can be improved throughout the County for the future.

Background Papers:
