

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Infrastructure
DATE	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2015
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	A96 Park and Choose Operation
REPORT NUMBER	CHI/15/141
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this Report is to advise Members of the options for managing usage of the A96 Park and Choose car park once the site becomes operational and to seek approval for implementing the recommended option detailed in this report. The report also advises of the cost implications of implementing the recommended option and of the operation of the site in general.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that Members:

- (a) Note the discussions that have taken place amongst officers with regards to options for managing use of the A96 Park and Choose car park;
- (b) Agree implementation of the preferred option (Option 1) and instruct officers to commence the statutory Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) process to allow for the operation of this regime;
- (c) If recommendation (b) is approved, agree that the costs of installing the bus lane enforcement camera and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) units be prioritised in the 2016/17 Bus Lane Enforcement income expenditure programme;
- (d) Instruct officers to monitor and review usage of the site at six-monthly intervals following opening to ensure the site is operating as anticipated and to report these findings back to this Committee; and
- (e) Instruct officers to commence formal engagement with bus operators, inviting them to consider operating local bus services through the site, and inviting proposed registrations from bus operators for consultation with officers, and to keep this Committee apprised of any developments.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There will be different financial implications associated with each potential operating regime. Where costs are known, these are highlighted within the main body of the report.

The financial implications of the recommended option include the capital expenditure required for the purchase and installation of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) units and establishment of the back office system (between £60,000 and £85,000). There will also be an annual revenue cost of about £5,000 associated with this regime.

There will also be a capital cost associated with the supply and installation of a bus lane enforcement camera within the site, in the region of £25,000. It is anticipated that an enforcement camera will be required, regardless of the car park management regime that is implemented.

The site itself is being delivered as part of the Non-Housing Capital Programme (NHCP). It is recommended that the capital costs for a bus lane enforcement camera and ANPR units be prioritised in the 2016/17 Bus Lane Enforcement income expenditure programme.

The site as a whole has a projected annual operating cost of approximately £78,000 which will be taken into account for 2016/17 revenue budgets onwards.

### 4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

### 5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 The A96 Park and Choose (P&C) site is scheduled to open in mid-2016 and will offer a competitive alternative to car travel for those travelling to and from the City from the north-west of Aberdeen, with benefits in terms of reducing congestion, improving air quality, and encouraging healthier and more sustainable lifestyles.
- 5.2 The site, and the accompanying Dyce Drive link road, will offer easy access to and from the A96 and, once open, the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) and will be accessible to any bus operator or bus service (whether dedicated or pass-by services) wishing to serve the site. With no funding available for supporting or subsidising services, services to and from the site will be required to operate on a commercial basis.
- 5.3 Rather than being simply a Park and Ride site (predominantly a means of interchanging from car to public transport), the A96 site has been purpose-built for 'Park and Choose'. This means that the site will cater

for a range of interchange options, including 'park and cycle', 'park and car share', 'cycle and ride' and so on.

- 5.4 To emphasise its nature as a sustainable transport hub, the site will be equipped with long- and short-stay cycle parking, shower and changing facilities, electric vehicle charging points, as well as waiting areas and toilets.
- 5.5 It is necessary to establish a car park management regime that encourages legitimate use of the site (for the purposes described above) and discourages illegitimate use. Illegitimate use in this context relates primarily to the potential for the site to act as an overspill car park for surrounding business premises and for Aberdeen International Airport. This is undesirable as it will reduce the availability of parking spaces for legitimate users, therefore undermining both the site's status as a Park and Choose and its sustainable transport objectives. These objectives relate to encouraging the greater part of journeys within Aberdeen (especially journeys through the most congested networks and Air Quality Management Areas) to be undertaken by sustainable modes of transport, and reducing traffic volumes on the approaches to, and within, the City Centre. In cases where the site is being used for overspill parking, it is likely that the greater part of these journeys will have been undertaken by private car, with only a short walk required to access neighbouring destinations.
- 5.6 Following discussions amongst officers, five options have been generated for managing the car park.

#### Option 1

Parking at the site is free, but time-limited to 36 hours using ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) technology to regulate. Those using the site for longer than the maximum length of stay of 36 hours will be issued with a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN).

#### Pros:

- There are no penalties for legitimate users and legitimate users are treated equally – parking is free for all and any subsequent costs incurred by the individual depend on the choice of onward travel mode;
- Users are not required to have change for parking or the means to utilise cashless parking, which could be a barrier to use;
- The site can be used by day visitors to Aberdeen, encouraging them to leave their cars on the outskirts of the City, thus resulting in fewer vehicles in the City Centre;
- It allows for evening/social use i.e. users can park, travel to town by another mode and pick up their cars the next day, resulting in fewer vehicles being brought into the City Centre;
- Future-proofing of the site at the design stage has ensured that the underlying technology to support implementation of ANPR is designed into the scheme so additional costs in making the system live will be minimal.

Cons:

- There are no disincentives for illegitimate use, such as overspill parking for nearby offices and the Airport;
- The special characteristics of the area and its surrounding land uses, particularly the high employment density and the proximity to the Airport, mean this regime is particularly susceptible to abuse. This risk will increase with development of the surrounding area;
- ANPR units and a back office system will require capital expenditure (£60,000 - £85,000) and will incur ongoing revenue costs (approximately £5,000 per annum); and
- A Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) will be required to ensure the time limit is enforceable.

Option 2

Parking at the site is free with a maximum stay of 36 hours. Those using a bus service from the site pay a fare on the bus. Enforcement, and the issuing of PCNs, is undertaken by City Wardens.

Pros:

- This is currently the regime used at the Bridge of Don and Kingswells Park and Ride sites, thus ensuring consistency and familiarity amongst users;
- There are no penalties for legitimate users and legitimate users are treated equally – parking is free for all and any subsequent costs incurred depend on the choice of onward travel mode;
- Users are not required to have change for parking or the means to utilise cashless parking, which could be a barrier to use;
- The site can be used by day visitors to Aberdeen, encouraging them to leave their cars on the outskirts of the City, thus resulting in fewer vehicles in the City Centre;
- It allows for evening/social use i.e. users can park, travel to town by another mode and pick up their cars the next day, resulting in fewer vehicles being brought into the City Centre;
- No additional capital expenditure is required.

Cons:

- There are no disincentives for illegitimate use, such as overspill parking for nearby offices and the Airport, provided this is for less than 36 hours;
- The special characteristics of the area and its surrounding land uses, particularly the high employment density and the proximity to the Airport, mean this regime is particularly susceptible to abuse. This risk will increase with development of the surrounding area;
- The proposed time limit requires a TRO to be enforceable; and
- This would require an additional resource from the City Wardens or would reduce coverage elsewhere. The revenue implications, compared to Option 1, are therefore likely to be significant.

### Option 3

Parking at the site is charged for (at a cost equivalent to the bus fare to and from the site). Bus services from the site are then free for all. This is the regime previously adopted at Bridge of Don and Kingswells. This option assumes that parking is time-limited, using ANPR to regulate.

#### Pros:

- Charging for car parking could discourage some illegitimate use;
- The underlying infrastructure for ANPR and parking machines has already been designed into the scheme, thus minimising retrospective costs;
- The site can be used by day visitors to Aberdeen, encouraging them to leave their cars on the outskirts of the City, resulting in fewer vehicles in the City Centre; and
- It allows for evening/social use i.e. users can park, travel to town by another mode and pick up their cars the next day, resulting in fewer vehicles being brought into the City Centre.

#### Cons:

- There is a danger that, unless there is cross-referencing of boarding passengers with parking tickets, those not leaving a car at the site and thus paying for parking (arriving by foot or bicycle, for example) will receive free bus travel. As well as being inequitable, this would result in bus operators not receiving the full revenue for the passengers transported. Taking this to extremes, there is a danger that services from the site are seen simply as free bus services by those living and working in the area, and such services fail to be commercially viable;
- It is unlikely that car parking charges could be set at a level that would discourage the majority of illegitimate users, while still encouraging legitimate use. The charge could be seen by some as a small price to pay for a parking space in close proximity to their destination;
- Those using the site for legitimate reasons would all be charged, regardless of their onward transport mode. There would be little incentive, therefore, for non-bus users to park at the site. For example, cyclists would have to pay to 'park and cycle'. Car sharers would each have to pay to park i.e. a car sharing journey from the site with 4 occupants would incur 3 car parking costs for those sharers leaving their own cars at the site. This could have the effect of discouraging cycling, car sharing, etc. which is contrary to the vision, aims and objectives of the Aberdeen Local Transport Strategy;
- Depending on the parking charge regime used, the necessity for users to have change for parking could be seen as an inconvenience and a barrier to use;
- As well as the capital outlay required for, and revenue implications of, ANPR technology (described in option 1), further capital costs would be required for the purchase and installation of parking ticket machines (approximately £6,000 per machine)

and there would also be maintenance costs associated with these; and

- Parking revenue would have to be distributed fairly between bus operators using the site, a process that is likely to be complicated.

#### Option 4

Parking at the site is charged for (at a cost equivalent to the bus fare to and from the site). This translates into a bus 'pass' for one passenger. Additional passengers must then buy a full-price ticket.

Pros:

- As per Option 3.

Cons:

- It is unlikely that car parking charges could be set at a level that would discourage the majority of illegitimate users, while still encouraging legitimate use. The charge could be seen by some as a small price to pay for a parking space in close proximity to their destination;
- Those using the site for legitimate reasons would all be charged, regardless of their onward transport mode. There would be little incentive, therefore, for non-bus users to park at the site. For example, cyclists would have to pay to 'park and cycle'. Car sharers would each have to pay to park i.e. a car sharing journey from the site with 4 occupants would incur 3 car parking costs for those sharers leaving their own cars at the site. This could have the effect of discouraging cycling, car sharing, etc. which is contrary to the vision, aims and objectives of the Aberdeen Local Transport Strategy;
- This option could discourage car sharing to the site as car share passengers, as well as presumably contributing to the costs of the car journey, will also have to pay the costs of their bus travel;
- Depending on the parking charge regime used, the necessity for users to have change for parking could be seen as an inconvenience and barrier to use;
- As well as the capital outlay required for, and revenue implications of, ANPR technology (described in option 1), further capital costs would be required for the purchase and installation of parking ticket machines (approximately £6,000 per machine) and there would also be maintenance costs associated with these; and
- Parking revenue would have to be distributed fairly between any bus operators using the site, a process that is likely to be complicated.

#### Option 5

Both car parking and bus costs are charged for with the combined cost for parking and bus use the equivalent of a normal bus fare to and from

the site. This is similar to the regime currently adopted in Oxford. This option assumes that parking is time-limited, using ANPR to regulate.

Pros:

- Charging for car parking could discourage some illegitimate use;
- The underlying infrastructure for ANPR and parking machines has already been designed into the scheme, thus minimising retrospective costs;
- The site can be used by day visitors to Aberdeen, encouraging them to leave their cars on the outskirts of the City, resulting in fewer vehicles in the City Centre;
- It allows for evening/social use i.e. users can park, travel to town by another mode and pick up their cars the next day, resulting in fewer vehicles being brought into the City Centre;
- Car sharers will benefit as all passengers, other than the driver, will effectively be charged a 'half fare'.

Cons:

- It is unlikely that car parking charges could be set at a level that would discourage the majority of illegitimate users, while still encouraging legitimate use. The charge could be seen by some as a small price to pay for a parking space in close proximity to their destination;
- Those using the site for legitimate reasons would all be charged, regardless of their onward transport mode. There would be little incentive, therefore, for non-bus users to park at the site. For example, cyclists would have to pay to 'park and cycle'. Car sharers would each have to pay to park i.e. a car sharing journey from the site with 4 occupants would incur 3 car parking costs for those sharers leaving their own cars at the site. This could have the effect of discouraging cycling, car sharing, etc. which is contrary to the vision, aims and objectives of the Aberdeen Local Transport Strategy;
- Despite the value of each of the costs, bus users may perceive they are being charged twice for the service (both to park and to ride on the bus);
- The need to potentially have two sets of change – one for parking, one for the bus fare – could discourage some users, especially casual users;
- As well as the capital outlay required for, and revenue implications of, ANPR technology (described in option 1), further capital costs would be required for the purchase and installation of parking ticket machines (approximately £6,000 per machine) and there would also be maintenance costs associated with these; and
- Parking revenue would have to be distributed fairly between any bus operators using the site, a process that is likely to be complicated.

5.7 In addition, all options assume a bus lane enforcement camera will be installed within the site to discourage abuse of bus priority measures.

- 5.8 For options 1 and 2, a maximum stay of 36 hours has been identified as this would allow for an individual parking their car at the site first thing in the morning to make an onward journey to their place of work, go out for an evenings entertainment, find an alternative means of transport home and then return to pick up their car before midnight the following night. This should allow individuals sufficient time to pick up their cars the next day, without the stay spilling over another night and into another day. The time period should still be short enough to discourage those making weekend trip from the airport using the site to avoid airport parking charges.
- 5.9 Taking the pros and cons of each into account, there is no simple option that ensures that the site is attractive to legitimate users while discouraging illegitimate users. The option that makes the site most attractive to legitimate users, while minimising the potential for illegitimate use, is Option 1.
- 5.10 It is proposed, therefore, that Option 1 is implemented but that a monitoring regime is put in place to quantify the extent of, and any problems resulting from, illegitimate use of the site. Reviews will be undertaken after 6 months of opening, after 12 months of opening and at regular intervals thereafter. If it becomes clear during such reviews that the car park is being routinely abused and this is having a negative impact on the operation of the site, officers will investigate alternative regimes.
- 5.11 It is therefore recommended that Members:
- Note the discussions that have taken place amongst officers with regards to options for managing use of the A96 Park and Choose car park;
  - Agree implementation of the preferred option (Option 1) and instruct officers to commence the statutory TRO process to allow for the operation of this regime;
  - Agree that the costs of installing the bus lane enforcement camera and ANPR units be prioritised in the 2016/17 Bus Lane Enforcement income expenditure programme;
  - Instruct officers to monitor and review usage of the site at six-monthly intervals following opening to ensure the site is operating as anticipated and to report these findings back to this Committee; and
  - Instruct officers to commence formal engagement with bus operators, inviting them to consider operating local bus services through the site, and inviting proposed registrations from bus operators for consultation with officers, and to keep this Committee apprised of any developments.

## 6. IMPACT

The contents of this report link to the Community Plan vision of creating a *sustainable City with an integrated transport system that is*

*accessible to all, and will contribute to delivery of the Smarter Mobility aims of Aberdeen – The Smarter City: We will provide and promote a sustainable transport system, including cycling, which reduces our carbon emissions.*

This will also assist in the delivery of actions identified in the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) 2013, in particular the Thematic Priority of Safer Communities (Safer Roads) and the Multi-lateral Priority – Integrated Transport (Aberdeen is easy to access and move around in).

This report may be of interest to members of the public as it concerns the proposed management regime of a forthcoming asset that will be of benefit to many people living in and around Aberdeen.

An Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment has been prepared to accompany this report and noted no negative impacts are anticipated on protected groups.

A Privacy Impact Assessment has not been undertaken for this report as, although the report recommends the implementation of ANPR technology at this location, involving the capture of vehicle registration details from which personal information can be extrapolated, such information will be handled in accordance with procedures already in place for the issuing of PCNs in response to parking offences and bus lane violations. There is an existing agreement where, following the issuing of a PCN, the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) will release the name and address of the offender to the Council so that a letter can be issued requesting payment of the PCN. Once the PCN has been paid or cancelled, records must be purged to remove any personal information.

## 7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

There exists a risk that not having the optimum car park management regime in place could result in abuse of the site, leading to reduced availability of car parking spaces for legitimate users, thus damaging public confidence in the asset. Abuse of the site, or a lack of faith in the site amongst potential users, could lead to an increase in car travel throughout the area, potentially leading to a worsening of air quality and an increase in carbon dioxide emissions. The option recommended for implementation, though not without risks, is believed to be the option which minimises these risks as much as possible.

## 8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nestrans Park and Ride Operations Study Final Report (May 2008)

## 9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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