

Report to: **Executive**

Date: **13<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

Title: **Dartmouth Park & Ride**

Portfolio Area: **Community Services and Operations – Cllr Victor Abbott**

Wards Affected: **All**

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Date next steps can be taken: After the call in period for Executive

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### **Recommendations:**

**Executive is RECOMMENDED to:**

- 1. Approve the extension of the contract of the existing Park and Ride (P&R) operator for the provision of the P&R bus service subject to changes proposed within Section 4 of this report.**
- 2. Authorise the Director of Place & Enterprise to publish notice of proposals for the approval of the South Hams District Council (Off-Street Parking Places) Amendment Order No 2 of 2022 amendments to be made to:**
  - 2.1 Amend the Dartmouth Park and Ride car park Pay and Display charges in accordance with Appendix A;**
  - 2.2 Amend the Dartmouth Park and Ride permits in accordance with Appendix B**
- 3. Request the Director of Place & Enterprise to review the consultation responses in consultation with the Portfolio holder and either prepare a report for the Executive or implement the proposals, subject to the responses received.**

## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 On 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024, the Executive resolved that any decision relating to the Dartmouth Park & Ride matter be postponed until a Special Executive meeting be held to enable officers and the lead Member to discuss the matters further with the Dartmouth Chamber of Commerce, local Ward Members and the Town Council to seek a way forward that addresses the issues raised (Min. E82/23 refers).
- 1.2 Following a constructive meeting Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March, this report sets out some proposed amendments to the operating tariff of the P&R in response to issues raised. This includes the following key changes:
  - i. £7.50 P&R ticket price (reduced from £10)
  - ii. Extension of P&R service to run the two weeks of the Easter Holidays
  - iii. The introduction of a monthly permit to reduce costs for seasonal workers
- 1.3 The Dartmouth Chamber of Commerce agreed to work in partnership with the District Council to drive up utilisation of the P&R to reduce parking congestion in Dartmouth, but also to assist in meeting the cost of delivering the P&R service.
- 1.4 Section 4 sets out the summary of the proposed P&R operation.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Executive on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024 (E82/23) see appendix C, it was resolved that any decision relating to the Dartmouth Park & Ride matter be postponed until a Special Executive meeting be held to enable officers and the lead Member; the Town Council; and other interested organisations in order to see a way forward that addressed the issues raised at the Executive meeting.
- 2.2 A meeting was held with the lead Member, Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, local ward Members, representatives from Dartmouth Town Council and representatives of the Dartmouth Chamber of Commerce on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024
- 2.3 This was a constructive meeting which included specific discussion on the following topics:
  - Events
  - Times of Operation of bus service
  - Seasonal operation of the bus service
  - Tariff Increase
  - Permits

- 2.4 The review of the park and ride aims to provide a financially sustainable solution, improved access to the Health Hub, align the services to the demand and reduce the carbon emissions from the service.
- 2.5 The group had the benefit of running through the detailed usage and costs of the service so as to collectively understand the opportunities and challenges of running the service.

### **3. Outcomes**

#### **Events**

- 3.1 The Council recognises the importance of events which support the local businesses and economy of Dartmouth, as it does across the District.
- 3.2 Key events were identified as Dartmouth Music Festival, Dartmouth Regatta and Dartmouth Food Festival and it is the intention of the Council to ensure that the P&R service is running during these events. The cost of running the service for these events will be borne by the Council, including the extended hours that operate for the Regatta.
- 3.3 If other events are added to the calendar, the Council would happily work with the organisers and their specific business cases to provide the service, on the assumption that income matches additional cost, or on a net cost recovery basis.

#### **Times of Operation of Bus Service**

- 3.4 The operating hours proposed are 9am – 6pm. This is the maximum window that the operator can run the service and not require a third driver. The step change in operating cost outside of those hours is prohibitive and it is not proposed to extend them outside of special events such as the Regatta.
- 3.5 The usage data shows that this will not impact many users as the number using the service before 9am or after 6pm is extremely limited.
- 3.6 The 92 bus service which has longer operating hours Monday to Saturday can be used to facilitate an alternative for those wishing to travel earlier or later.

#### **Seasonal Operation of Bus Service**

- 3.7 Following analysis of the ticket sales, passenger numbers and income it is proposed to operate the bus service from 25<sup>th</sup> May until 15<sup>th</sup> September, but for a further trial period this year, to include Easter (30<sup>th</sup> March – 14<sup>th</sup> April 2024).

3.8 The Service will operate in 2024 on the following dates:

- 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2024 – Dartmouth Music Festival
- 25<sup>th</sup> May – 15<sup>th</sup> Sept 2024 – Core Service
- 25<sup>th</sup> October – 27<sup>th</sup> Oct 2024 - Dartmouth Food Festival

3.9 Outside of the park & ride operating period, the number 92 on street bus will service the Park & Ride Monday to Saturday on a 30 minute frequency. Retaining connectivity between the P&R and town centre throughout the year.

### **Tariff Increase**

3.10 The parking tariff has remained unchanged since at least 2010 and during this time there has been a significant uplift in the cost of running the service.

3.11 To reduce the cost pressure that the park & ride operates with an increase in price is required. However, following discussion at the meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> March, it is proposed to:

- Remove half day tariff option
- Increase all day tariff to £7.50
- Increase coach tariff to £10.00 all day

3.12 Whilst it is anticipated that the service will operate at a loss at a ticket price of £7.50, a stepped increase in the future was deemed a more appropriate way to manage cost pressures and encourage the visitor economy within Dartmouth.

3.13 For consideration in the future, Officers will explore the opportunities into providing a combined ferry and park & ride ticket and whether operationally this can be achieved.

### **Permits**

3.14 As per the Councils policy regarding permit prices, the parking permits are increased inline with the all day parking charge.

3.15 It is proposed that the park & ride 12 month parking permit increase to £317 per annum and the park & ride business permit increase to £555 per annum

3.16 For users of the park & ride that work in Dartmouth it is proposed to introduce a monthly permit to allow flexibility of use for when required. It is proposed the monthly charge for the park & ride permit be £57 per month.

#### **4. Summary of the P&R Service Proposals:**

- Extend the contract with Stagecoach to provide the bus service at the park and ride and extend the operation to improve access to the Health Hub.
- Amend the new service to operate from 9am until 6pm.
- Continue to operate a 10 minute service in school holidays and 20 minutes in term time.
- Stagecoach to service the park and ride car park with on street 92 bus service, outside of the park and ride bus service operating period (30<sup>th</sup> March – 14<sup>th</sup> April, 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> May, 25<sup>th</sup> May-15<sup>th</sup> September and 25<sup>th</sup> -27<sup>th</sup> October 2024)
- Stagecoach provide an on-board single fare on the park and ride bus for those who have not purchased a parking ticket.
- The half day park and ride car park tariff option is removed and the all day tariff is increased to £7.50 all day for cars and £10 for coaches
- Park and ride 12 month permit increased to £317 per annum and park and ride business 12 month permit increased to £555 per annum in accordance with the Council's permit pricing policy.
- A monthly park and ride worker permit introduced at £57 per month

- 4.1 A 21 day public consultation will be undertaken following the meeting.
- 4.2 The Council must ensure the Off-Street Parking Orders are amended with the new Regulations to ensure we can continue to enforce parking restrictions by law.
- 4.3 During the consultation period, customers who wish to object to or comment on recommendations will have the opportunity to do so. Objections will be considered prior to implementation of any changes.

#### **5. Proposed Way Forward**

- 5.1 The proposed amendments to the Off-Street Parking Places Order proceed in accordance with the recommendations.
- 5.2 The parking charges and car park operations will continue to be reviewed to ensure the parking tariffs and operations suit the needs of the medical centre and the park & ride operation
- 5.3 Should the Recommendations be accepted, the following steps will occur:

- a. 21 day consultation commence (March 2024) to which customers will be alerted by notice in the local press, on the Council's website and in all affected car parks.  
This will allow customers to make comments on and/or objections to the proposals, should they wish to do so.
- b. All objections will be considered and if required, referred to the Executive for further consideration,
- c. Otherwise, the detailed implementation of the recommendations should be delegated to the Director, Place and Enterprise, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for car parking for implementation.

5.4 The contract will be awarded to Stagecoach for the provision of the bus service at Dartmouth park and ride.

5.5 The proposed revisions to the park and ride service will be implemented.

## 6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	The Council has power to provide and to regulate off-street car parks under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 set out the procedures to be followed before and after making any order regulating the use of car parks.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	Y	The cost of implementing the changes will be met from the car parking budget.  The difference between the income and expenditure on Off Street Car Parking is used to support costs associated with the operation and maintenance of parking services, its infrastructure and the maintenance of off street car parks. It is also used to support and provide other Council services such as street cleansing, toilets, parks and open spaces and other lawfully incurred identified expenditure.
Risk	y	There is a risk that a significant number of objections to the proposals may be received, which

		would postpone any implementation, as the objections would have to be considered by the Executive ahead of any changes.
Supporting Corporate Strategy		Council Communities Environment
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact	n	
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity		No implications.
Safeguarding		No implications.
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		No implications.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		No implications.
Other implications		None at this stage.

**Supporting Information**

**Appendices:**

**Appendix A – Pay & Display Charges**

**Appendix B - Permit Charges**

**Appendix C - Executive Report 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

**Background Papers: None**