

Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED
All

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:

Highways and Transportation Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet

27 February 2002
25 March 2002

Improving Transport in the City

Report of the Director of Environment, Development and Commercial Services

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report contains revised proposals for spending the surplus income generated by the scheme in order to improve transport in the City.

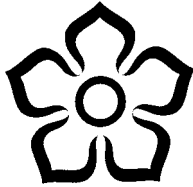
2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Cabinet Lead Member seeks the views of the Highways and Transportation Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.2 Cabinet is recommended to approve:
- a) the proposals for spending the surplus income set out in the Appendix
 - b) that the Director has power to vary the amounts spent on the various items referred to in the Appendix, subject to funding being available

3. Headline financial and legal Implications

- 3.1 There is no net effect on revenue spending arising from these proposals. No legal implications are foreseen to arise from this report.

4. Report Author/Officer to contact: Mike Pepper - Head of Traffic (Extn No: 6520)



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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1 Report

1.1 Review of on-street parking operation

1.2 Net income during 2001/02 has been slightly less than forecast. At Cabinet in March 2001, I forecast income of £1.419 million, but the forecast outturn currently stands at £1.406 million. Income from ticket sales has, at £1.166 million, been slightly more than expected. Income from fine has been slightly less than forecast, and stands at £0.240 million.

1.3 Nonetheless, the operation itself is continuing to work well, and I see no need to review it this year. Parking charges and fines were amended in June last year, but with inflation running at record low levels, it is proposed to hold these charges for the time being, and review them next year.

1.4 Use of surplus income

1.5 Funding available

1.6 The net surplus brought forward from 2000/01 to 2001/02 was significantly larger than expected, as problems with collecting fine income were overcome.

1.7 In addition, expenditure planned as previously reported has also been lower than anticipated. The net effect is that there is now likely to be a larger amount (£0.649 million, as against £0.434 million) in the balance sheet than had been expected. The details are shown in the Appendix. The reason for the changes is as follows.

1.8 The team responsible for introducing residents parking has been unable to proceed as quickly as anticipated. Steps have been taken to rectify this. The team has been split in two, and a team of four staff are now dedicated to the specific task of introducing residents parking and decriminalised parking enforcement. As a result, it is anticipated that the slippage in expenditure will not recur in future years.

- 1.9 Last year, I recommended that money should be used to introduce late night buses on Friday and Saturday. Cabinet, whilst happy with the proposal to spend money to improve bus services, did not think that late night buses were appropriate for Council support. During the past year, a Best Value review of Highways and Transportation Services began, with one of the key areas for investigation being expenditure on supporting bus services. It was thought that decisions on spending money to improve services should await the findings of that review.
- 1.10 The Transport Act 2000 contains powers for Local Authorities to require bus companies in their area to introduce network tickets valid on all bus services. Unfortunately, to date, the Secretary of State has not yet issued guidance to Councils on how these new powers are to be implemented, nor is there any indication that this advice is nearly ready. As a result, it has not proved possible to make any progress.
- 1.11 Unfortunately, these savings have largely been offset by expenditure on operations higher than advised.
- 1.12 Next financial year, in addition to the surplus carried forward from this year, I anticipate income of £1.406 million, which after deduction of £0.508 million to cover the operating cost, will leave a surplus of £0.898 million available for spending on activities approved in law.
- 1.13 Provision of off-street parking
- 1.14 Under the terms of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, the first call on this money is for the provision of off-street parking. Committee agreed at its meeting on 1 December 1999 that the provision in Leicester of further parking accommodation for vehicles, otherwise than on the highway, is, at present, unnecessary or undesirable.
- 1.15 I believe that this situation has changed.
- 1.16 Proposals to improve the Belgrave Corridor have been put on hold as a result of representations by both businesses and residents in the area. The shopping area largely centred around Belgrave Road, often referred to as the Golden Mile, differs from all other suburban shopping centres in Leicester, in that it attracts customers from all over the country.
- 1.17 Both residents and businesses have argued that additional parking for shoppers is needed, because of the pressure on existing parking space, which means that, often, neither residents nor shoppers can find a space at busy times. I believe that, at least until a residents' parking scheme can be provided and the Belgrave Corridor Scheme completed, there is a need for the Council to provide additional off-street parking in the area.
- 1.18 It is therefore proposed to lease a site in MacDonald Road for five years, and to fund the set-up costs, the lease of the car park and any operating costs from on-street parking income. The situation will be reviewed when a residents' parking scheme is introduced and the Belgrave Corridor scheme completed.

- 1.19 Network tickets.
- 1.20 Under the terms of the Transport Act 2000, the City Council now has the power to require bus operators to provide network tickets valid on all services. Despite the lack of guidance from the Secretary of State this year, I propose that funding to pay for the introduction of such a scheme should be reserved. The availability of such a ticket is going to be essential if the Council's work on travel plans is to be successful.
- 1.21 I anticipate that it will be possible to commission, design and implementation of a network ticket for a sum under £50,000. In the absence of any guidance from the Secretary of State, I suggest that it be anticipated that this activity will not now take place until 2003/04. In a full year, at least prior to the introduction of smart cards, which I am also actively pursuing, I envisage annual administration costs of up to £100,000, to make sure that income is apportioned correctly to each of the bus operators.
- 1.22 Improvements to bus services
- 1.23 It is anticipated that the Highways and Transportation best value review, which is due to report to Cabinet in June, will recommend changes to the basis on which the Council will decide whether or not to support uncommercial services. These are likely to depend on proposals to ensure that minimum standards of service, especially outside the core commercial hours of 6am to 6pm, are available to as many people as possible.
- 1.24 I propose reserving a sum of money to help fund the transition from the present arrangements to any new proposals arising from the review.
- 1.25 Staffing
- 1.26 No new expenditure on staffing is proposed, though the on-going expenditure contained in last year's report to Cabinet continues. Members are reminded that the additional staff are the public transport co-ordinator, the travel plans officer, the development co-ordinator and the signing officer, all of which were approved in 2000, in addition to the extra staff to introduce residents parking and decriminalised parking enforcement approved last year.
- 1.27 Other on-going items
- 1.28 In addition, it is proposed to continue to spend money on the introduction of residents' parking and decriminalised parking enforcement, as well as the rental of York House, which was agreed last year.

FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

1. Financial implications

1.1 No financial implications are seen to arise from this report.

2. Legal implications

2.1 No financial implications are seen to arise from this report.

3. Other Implications.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	PARAGRAPH REFERENCES WITHIN SUPPORTING PAPERS
Equal Opportunities	NO	
Policy	NO	
Sustainable and Environmental	YES	Throughout
Crime and Disorder	NO	
Human Rights Act	NO	
Elderly/People on low income	NO	

3. Background papers - Local Government Act 1972

4.1 Report to Cabinet on 19 March 2001

4. Consultations

5.1 No consultations have been carried out in the preparation of this report.

5. Report Author

6.1 Mike Pepper x6520

CD/TG/MJP/00000/ONST00A
23 January 2002