

- Legal K Scales – comments incorporated.
- Finance C Holden – comments incorporated.
- Other Chief Officers
- District Councils
- Health Authority
- Police
- Other Bodies/Individuals

FINAL DECISION **YES/NO** (*If 'No' complete Suggested Next Steps*)

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS :

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee
- To Council
- To Cabinet
- To an O & S Committee
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation

Cabinet - 16th June 2005

'SPARK' Annex E Major Scheme Bid

**Report of the Director of Planning, Transport and
Economic Strategy**

Recommendation

That Cabinet approves the submission of a public transport based Annex E Major Scheme Bid to the Department for Transport for funding to support the delivery of the 'SPARK' scheme outlined in this report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 It is proposed to submit an Annex E Major Scheme Bid with the County Council's Local Transport Plan submission on the 29th July 2005. The bid is for funding to support the implementation of an improved and fully integrated public transport network in the Warwick, Leamington and Whitnash area. The scheme is known as 'SPARK' and will focus on the co-ordinated promotion and provision of heavy rail and bus services, using the existing rail infrastructure as the 'backbone' of a comprehensive network of bus routes.

2. Aims

- 2.1 The aim of the scheme is to:-
- (i) Encourage the use of public transport by making it easier to use.
 - (ii) Provide a 'step-change' in Accessibility within Warwick, Leamington and Whitnash, improving access to shopping, employment, services and education for both able bodied and mobility impaired travellers.

3. The Scheme

- 3.1 The scheme enables the aims outlined in Section 2 to be met by focusing on:-
- (i) Service improvements (integrating rail and bus timetables, providing higher bus frequencies and extended periods of bus operation);
 - (ii) Infrastructure changes (Park and Ride, improved physical interchange at Warwick and Leamington stations, new low floor buses and improved bus stops).

- (iii) Extended service coverage (new and extended routes, evening and weekend services).
 - (iv) Simplified ticketing (through ticketing and travel cards covering rail and bus travel, on-line ticket purchasing).
 - (vi) Improved information provision (on-line journey planning, real-time information provision, targeted marketing).
- 3.2 A London underground style plan of the proposed bus network is provided in **Appendix A** (a colour version has been circulated to Cabinet members) and further detail on the types of measures and initiatives included in the 'SPARK' scheme is provided in **Appendix B**.

4. Predicted Outcomes

- 4.1 As a result of introducing the 'SPARK' scheme in the Warwick, Leamington and Whitnash area the following improvements can be expected:-
- (i) Minimum of 570,000 extra passenger journeys per year on the core bus network alone.
 - (ii) £270,000+ per year savings in decongestion benefits
 - (iii) A major improvement in accessibility to retail, employment, health and education opportunities.
 - (iv) Delivery of Park and Ride (which can also be complimentary to the implementation of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement in Warwick District, helping address concerns about possible shortages of long stay parking).
 - (v) At least 34 new vehicles on the bus network in order to help improve the reliability, ease of access and attractiveness of bus travel, including:-
 - (a) 19 new ultra modern high quality buses on the core 'Superbus' network.
 - (b) 15 other new low floor buses across the bus network.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 In order to ensure that the proposed scheme and bid is robust and deliverable it has been developed in close consultation with Stagecoach (the main local bus operator) and Chiltern Railways, who both support the principles and aims of the scheme. Initial discussions have been held with Officers of Warwick District Council, which have been positive and, subject to consideration by their Members, are likely to lead to further support for the 'SPARK' scheme and bid.

5.2 In order to further demonstrate the public demand for improved bus services (as indicated by the feedback received during the 2001 and 2004 Citizen's Panel surveys and Local Transport Plan consultation) some public consultation will be carried out prior to submitting the bid. This will be targeted at locally effected stakeholder groups and will seek their support for submitting a bid.

6. Funding

6.1 The scheme is estimated to cost £12 million to implement, which would be met from Annex E and developer funding. If the Major Scheme Bid were to be unsuccessful it would still be possible to implement parts of the scheme through use of developer funding and possibly some integrated transport funding but it is likely that the scheme would have to be substantially curtailed without the grant and supported borrowing available through successful.

6.2 The Benefit Cost Ratio is predicted to be 1.6.

6.3 In the initial start-up period there would be a revenue short fall for the Park and Ride element of the scheme, which would be in addition to the normal revenue cost currently expended supporting existing bus services. In order to increase service levels without 'SPARK' this revenue support would increase significantly. However, as part of 'SPARK' most of the cost of the service level increase would be off-set through a deal with operators in which new vehicles (purchased by Warwickshire County Council through 'SPARK') would be tendered out for use on specific bus routes. The cost savings subsequently made by the operator (as a result of no longer needing to supply vehicles from their own fleet) could then be used to increase service frequencies on that specific route and/or reduce the tendered cost of other subsidised services run by the operator.

6.4 The currently estimated revenue stream (based on a 40 year forecast) shows that Park & Ride places the biggest demand on revenue support, as detailed below:-

Change in operating Surplus/Deficit from current expenditure levels (£000s)	Year							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Park and Ride		-300	-155	-65	-20	+5	+30	+55
'SPARK' network	+170	+115	+45	+55	+70	+75	+75	+75
TOTAL	+170	-185	-110	-10	+50	+80	+105	+130

6.5 This revenue deficit above excludes debt charges arising from Local Transport Plan supported borrowing that would be required to make-up the difference between the level of grant received and the overall cost of the scheme. The revenue deficit detailed above could be met through the use of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement surpluses from Warwick District.

6.6 If a major scheme bid were successful it is likely that the funding would be provided as 50% grant and 50% supported borrowing. The annual debt charge on the £6M supported borrowing would be around £0.5M. About two thirds of

this debt charge would be met through revenue support grant and business rates but about one third of the cost would need to be met from Council Tax.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The scheme is a good way of delivering both current and proposed future transport policy for increased public transport use, making public transport a more viable alternative to the car. The significant Park and Ride element of the scheme helps support the economic and commercial environment in the area, providing a strategic supply of long stay parking capacity as a convenient out of town alternative for commuters, tourists and shoppers.
- 7.2 A bid for Annex E funding if successful would provide a much greater step change in public transport provision than could otherwise be afforded solely from existing Local Transport Plan funding.

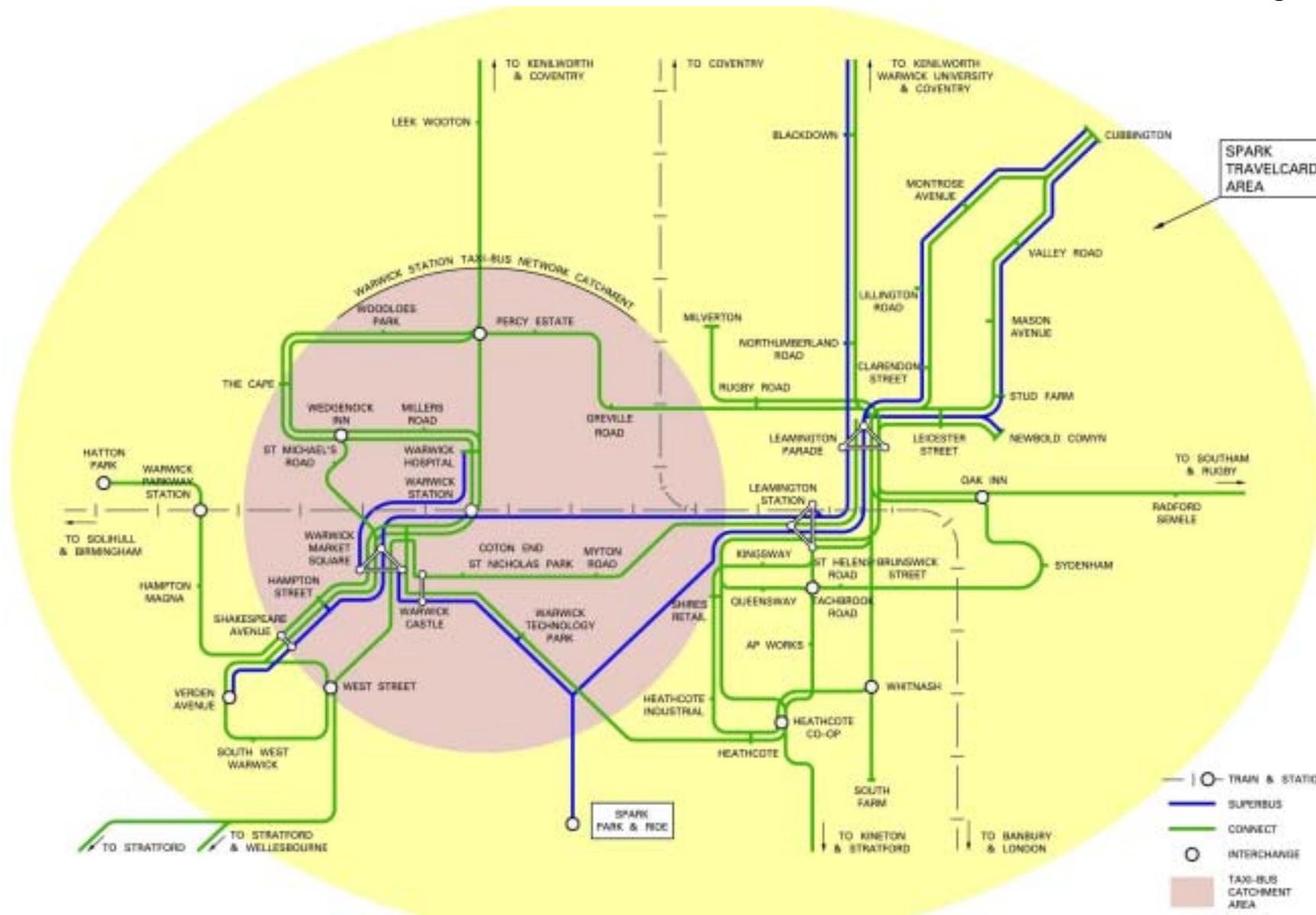
8. Recommendation

- 8.1 That Cabinet approves the submission of a public transport based Annex E Major Scheme Bid to the Department for Transport for funding to support the delivery of the 'SPARK' scheme outlined in this report.

JOHN DEEGAN
Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy
Shire Hall
Warwick

3rd June2005

APPENDIX A of Agenda No.



Cabinet 16th June 2005
 'SPARK' Annex E Major Scheme Bid

Cabinet - 16th June 2005

'SPARK' Annex E Major Scheme Bid

'SPARK' Scheme Description

The 'SPARK' scheme includes the following elements:-

1. Superbus (10 minute frequency) network including:-

- Park and Ride and Coachway site at Greys Mallory.
- Superbus stations for Warwick and Leamington.
- New alternative fuel Superbus vehicles linking the Park and Ride site with the town centres and directly linking the town centres to each other and Warwick Hospital and north Leamington.

2. Connect bus network

- Extension of hours (evenings and weekends) and frequencies on the existing network.
- New low floor accessible vehicles.

3. Integrated multi-modal ticketing

- 'SPARK' Area Travel Card for bus and local rail journeys.
- Rail station ticket barriers.
- Simplified fare structure using of zoned pricing and through ticketing.

4. Information systems

- Network branding.
- 'SPARK' journey planner website.
- Real-time journey information screens at major interchanges.

5. Interchange enhancements at major points