

## Portfolio Holder for Transport and Highways Decision Making Session

24 April 2012

### Stratford Park and Ride Enhancements: Introductory Bus Ticket Promotion for Extended Evening Service

#### Recommendation

That the Portfolio Holder grants approval to implement an introductory promotional offer as described in Section 2 of this report, to coincide with the launch of the new evening bus service.

#### 1.0 Key Issues

- 1.1 As an outcome of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LTSF) bid to the Department for Transport submitted in April 2011, Warwickshire County Council has received a £4.9 million grant to contribute towards delivering the Stratford-upon-Avon Local Sustainable Transport Project. This involves the delivery of Stratford Parkway Railway Station and a package of Sustainable Travel measures for the town, including the enhancement of bus services.
- 1.2 The amount of LTSF revenue specified for the provision of new bus services accessing the shared Stratford Park and Ride / Stratford Parkway Rail Station site is £168,797. This figure was obtained from a cost estimate provided by JMP Consultants Ltd based on a combination of current bus contract costs at the Stratford Park and Ride and future year inflation. This element of the grant is available for 3 years (from 1 April 2012) and must be completely spent by 31 March 2015.
- 1.3 County Council officers have developed a proposal for providing enhanced bus services to the shared site that will deliver the following:-
  - Extended operational hours of the existing Stratford Park and Ride bus service; and
  - Introduction of an additional route to enable the Stratford Park and Ride to serve other locations in the town.

#### 2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 It is intended to utilise revenue funding to extend the operational hours of the Stratford Park and Ride, initially by introducing a later evening bus service in 2012-13, and to add early morning bus services once Stratford Parkway Railway Station is in operation in 2013. It is also planned to introduce route alterations during certain times of the day in order to capture additional

demand in key locations including The Maybird Centre, Justin's Avenue and certain parts of Birmingham Road.

- 2.2 The additional revenue allocation for bus services in 2012-13 is £54,773. It is proposed that from May 2012, the following enhancements will be provided:-
- Extended evening bus service up to 2330 (Mondays to Sundays);
  - Evening bus service to operate a half hourly frequency between the Stratford Park and Ride site and the town centre; and
  - Introduction of an additional route serving The Maybird Centre and Justin's Avenue during the evenings in order to attract additional demand.

These enhancements will allow customers to use the Park and Ride if they intend staying into the evening. The service will also link with the finishing time of performances at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre.

- 2.3 In respect of the evening bus service it is intended that the current Stratford Park and Ride fare structure will remain unchanged. However, to promote the new evening service it is proposed to offer a special introductory promotional rate in tandem with launching the bus service:-

Introductory Promotion (Element 1)

Reducing the charge for a Maxi Family Ticket (2 adults and up to 4 children) from £3.00 to £2.00 – only applicable to customers arriving at the Stratford Park and Ride after 1500.

Introductory Promotion (Element 2)

Specifically targeted at tourists and visitors who have made an advanced booking for a local theatre, restaurant and/or hotel. This involves offering the above reduced the charge for a Maxi Family Ticket. However, to be eligible for the offer potential customers would have to show proof of their hotel stay, theatre visit or restaurant booking.

**Note:**

The charge would enable hotel guests to have an overnight stay in the town and return on the Stratford Park and Ride bus service to collect their car the following day.

- 2.4 Element 2 of the introductory offer would be promoted on the Royal Shakespeare Company and hotel/restaurant websites, in addition to our own Stratford Park and Ride web page. The promotional offer could be widened to include other tourist attractions and businesses in the town in due course.
- 2.5 No end date for the promotional offer would be set. However, close monitoring of take up will be initiated to assess its impact which includes the potential of extending the promotional offer if it has proved successful in generating new patronage and yields good revenue.

### 3.0 Financial Implications

- 3.1 A breakdown of the 3 year revenue funding allocated for the new bus services is outlined below:-

Provision of New Bus Services Accessing the Shared Stratford Park and Ride / Stratford Parkway Rail Station				
Details	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Total
<i>Grant Allocated for:-</i>				
Provision of New Bus Services	£54,773	£56,252	£57,772	£168,797
<i>Costs Covered:-</i>				
Stratford Park and Ride Extended Evening Service	£41,310	£42,549	£43,826	£127,685
Enhancements to Daytime Bus Services in Stratford-upon-Avon	£13,463	£13,703	£13,946	£42,112
Total Cost	£54,773	£56,252	£57,772	£168,797

- 3.2 The additional bus contract costs in respect of the Stratford Park and Ride extended evening bus service covers the new half-hourly evening service and additional route. These costs will be met by the grant up to the end of 2014-15.
- 3.3 It is anticipated that the proposed introductory bus ticket promotion will attract new patronage onto the Stratford Park and Ride, and therefore, contribute towards increasing the revenue generated by the scheme.
- 3.4 All revenue generated from patronage of the extended evening bus service will be retained by the County Council.
- 3.5 There would be no ongoing contractual liabilities in respect of the extended evening bus service after the grant for the provision of new bus services expires at the end of 2014-15. At this time, if it is clear that the extended evening bus service does not yield sufficient revenue to fully cover costs then the service will be withdrawn. The Stratford Park and Ride would then revert back to its present hours of operation.
- 3.6 The extended operational hours and additional route is being added to the existing combined contract involving the Stratford Park and Ride / Service 222 operated by Johnsons Coaches. In June 2010, approval was granted by the Leader of the County Council to enter into the combined contract valued at £2.9 million in order to secure the continued operation of the Stratford Park and Ride bus service.

## 4.0 Timescales associated with the decision/Next steps

- 4.1 It is intended to launch the new evening bus service on Monday 28 May 2012. Therefore, it is hoped that the Portfolio Holder will grant approval to introduce the promotional offer in parallel with the commencement of the bus service.

### Background Papers

1. NONE

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Report Author	Nigel Whyte	01926 412179 <a href="mailto:nigelwhyte@warwickshire.gov.uk">nigelwhyte@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Head of Service	Graeme Fitton	01926 412046 <a href="mailto:graemefitton@warwickshire.gov.uk">graemefitton@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Strategic Director	Monica Fogarty	01926 412514 <a href="mailto:monicafogarty@warwickshire.gov.uk">monicafogarty@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Peter Butlin	01788 816488 <a href="mailto:cllrbutlin@warwickshire.gov.uk">cllrbutlin@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>