

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet **Date:** 27 July 2010

Subject: Operational Planning & Transport Portfolio

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Syd Stavrou **Item:** 6(h)

Recommending:

That the report of the Operational Planning and Transport Portfolio Holder be noted

Parking Reviews

Cabinet on 7 June 2010 received a report detailing the status of the three on-going parking reviews in Epping, Buckhurst Hill and Loughton. The report also highlighted the significant costs associated with the schemes and presented options for consideration. Cabinet deferred the implementation of these schemes whilst awaiting clarification on costs.

A special meeting was held with the ECC Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport on 22 June 2010. As a result of this meeting ECC began a review of the costs surrounding such parking reviews, particularly with regard to the costs associated with the statutory advertising of traffic regulation orders.

It is possible that as a result the cost of advertising could be reduced but this will not be known until ECC has concluded this piece of work. However, county officers indicated late last week that a cheaper option was looking feasible and if this were indeed the case then it might be possible to commence work on the schemes within the Council's allocated budgets.

As it currently stands, if ECC was able to reduce costs of the schemes, a Cabinet decision would be required to rescind the earlier decision to suspend the reviews. This will not be possible until the next scheduled Cabinet meeting in mid September and would result in delays. In order to provide flexibility and avoid delays where possible, it is proposed that the three Portfolio Holders namely: Leader, Operational Planning and Transport and Finance and Economic Development be authorised to approve recommencement of the schemes subject to three specific conditions.

At Cabinet on 19 July 2010 the above report was presented to Cabinet for discussion and the following recommendations/decisions were agreed:

- (1) To note that the Essex County Council is currently considering alternative advertising arrangements to significantly reduce the costs of compliance with the statutory obligations to advertise; and
- (2) To avoid unnecessary delays in the implementation of the three parking reviews within existing budget allocation the Portfolio Holders of Leader, Operational

Planning and Transport and Finance and Economic Development, be authorised to recommence the parking reviews subject to the following:

- (a) Essex County Council confirms that the revised advertising arrangements comply with statutory requirements;
- (b) That the revised advertising costs are acceptable and can be accommodated within the existing parking review budgets; and
- (c) That in the event of budgets still being breached to, following consultation with relevant ward members, scale back the extent of the schemes by, for example, not introducing on street pay and display parking.

Outstanding Highway Related Payments Due to EFDC

As part of section 287 agreements with the County in respect of the works at Bobbingworth Tip, deposits and guarantees to the value of £97,000 were paid over in respect of the works at the entrance to the site and potential damage caused to the high by construction vehicles.

Progress has been made on these issues with recent confirmation that:

- (a) 90% of the £37,000 has been released with the remaining 10% being payable in 12 months time (i.e. at the end of defects liability period); and
- (b) County consider that the damage attributable to the scheme should be less than £10,000 and therefore we should hopefully receive around £50,000 of the £60,000 deposit back.

Local Bus Tender Round 2010

Members are referred to the item in the Members Bulletin of 16 July 2010 regarding ECC's recent review of local bus contracts as part of the tender assessment for September 2010. Details of services which serve Epping Forest District were set out for information. Two further tables were also given, the first of which set out those services which did not meet ECC's £5.00 per passenger per journey maximum service subsidy; a second table listed the services that were near the end of their contract period and were due for renewal or due for tendering and which met ECC's criteria for continuation.

Members were invited to submit any queries to Wendy Jackson, Senior Transport Liaison Officer, Essex County Council, County Hall, Market Road, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH. Tel: 01245 437 188. Email: wjackson@essex.gov.uk.

Highway Ranger Services

Unfortunately we have been unable to progress the offer of this Council operating a County funded highway ranger service, as part of the Council's existing SCG arrangements because:

- (i) the County required their funded part to be 'branded' as a County service, which would have required the purchase of new vehicles etc. with the attendant time delays; and
- (ii) along-side those delays, the County could not guarantee funding beyond the end of the 2010/11 financial year.

These factors placed too great a risk upon this Council and therefore we have had to inform the County that we will be unable to proceed.

Changes in Responsibility to Concessionary Travel Passes and Public Consultation

Members' attention is drawn to the public consultation by Essex County Council concerning changing the responsibility for providing the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme, commonly known as the English Bus Pass, from District and Borough Councils to Essex County Council from 1 April 2011.

The consultation runs from 1 July 2010 until 30 September 2010. Questionnaires and some commonly asked questions can be obtained by calling Contact Essex on 08457 430430, from libraries across the county, downstairs in EFDC Reception and online at <http://www.essex.gov.uk/buspass/>.