

Committee	Cabinet
Date	8 June 2004
Report By	Director of Transport and Environment
Title of Report	Decriminalised on-street parking
Purpose of Report	To provide Cabinet with an up to date position regarding the introduction of decriminalised parking schemes in Hastings, Eastbourne and Lewes and in particular the financial implications of these and other on-street parking schemes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1. approve the decision making process in relation to allocation of parking surpluses as set out in paragraph 5 below;**
 - 2. approve the specific allocations for the three projects for 2004/05 as set out in Appendix C and note the estimated sums for schemes in 2005/06 onwards .**
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1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 The report outlines the scale of surplus income estimated to be received by the County Council in relation to on-street parking schemes. While some surplus on-street parking income arising primarily in Eastbourne has been received for many years, the introduction of decriminalised (on-street) schemes in parts of the County is likely to generate a significant increase in the overall surplus. A table showing broad estimates and the balance of funding held in the on-street parking reserve at 31 March 2004 is set out in Appendix A. Given the growing significance of this income stream, Cabinet will wish to discuss and agree how the annual surplus is deployed, understanding the legislative background and restrictions on use.

2. Introduction

2.1 The County Council, as highway authority, is, solely, responsible for on-street parking provision. Where a decriminalised scheme has been introduced (transferring the enforcement function from the Police Authority to the highway authority), enforcement can be delegated to districts. Surplus income from operation of such schemes accrues to the County Council.

3. Permitted use of surplus income

3.1 The use of surplus income arising from on-street parking operations is set out in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (the Act). Essentially, the first call on any surplus should be repayment of deficits incurred in previous years of operating the scheme, including set up costs. When a scheme moves into a surplus position, the County Council must make a judgement whether further off-street parking provision is needed in the area where the surplus was generated and, if it is deemed not, contributions can be made to passenger transport services or general highway improvements at the discretion of the Council.

3.2 The former Highways and Transportation Committee approved a policy for the distribution of surplus revenue in its Policy Statement PS4/20 on 16 September 1992 in line with the requirements of the Act.

3.3 Assuming that the Council deems further off-street parking is not required, consideration should be given to the rationale behind the powers given to highway authorities to introduce charging for on-street parking.

3.4 It is the Department for Transport's (DfT's) intention that the introduction of parking charges be used as a means of influencing people's travel patterns and choices. For example, a link can be made to the provision of additional or improved bus services.

3.5 The introduction of decriminalised schemes and the use of surplus income is directly linked to the objectives in the Local Transport Plan (LTP) and delivery against targets reported through the Annual Progress Report (APR). In fact, the APR guidance requires surplus on-street parking income to be reported together with the schemes that have been supported as a result.

4. Options for use and future decision making

4.1 The Act places a duty on the Council to consider firstly the need for further off-street parking facilities in East Sussex before allocating surplus income to other highways and transport related services or improvements.

4.2 Given the current financial climate, a balance needs to be struck between new initiatives and the continued delivery of core services. While it may be appealing to deploy the surplus income to core maintenance activity, for example, the Cabinet will wish to note that maintenance is not included in the definition of 'improvements' in paragraph 3 above, and consider the direct impact this course of action will have on external assessment or inspection of the Council through, for example, the LTP, APR or the Whole Service Inspection of Transport which is forthcoming.

4.3 Some options for the use of any surplus arising are set out in Appendix B.

5. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation

5.1 While the surplus income must be deployed in accordance with permitted uses set out in the Act, given the current financial climate, the Cabinet may wish to retain some flexibility in the process for approval of spending from surplus income.

5.2 For this reason I recommend that in future surplus income is allocated:

- in the financial year after it arises (when the actual amount is known thereby reducing financial risk);
- 'first call' should be the repayment of set up costs incurred in relation to that areas scheme;
- any remaining balance is considered as part of the annual Reconciling Policy and Resources exercise with allocations approved to broad priorities;
- detailed programme of projects to be approved by Lead Member for Transport & Environment

5.4 It should be noted that under the local agreement with Hastings Borough Council for the operation of the Hastings Decriminalised Parking Scheme, all surplus income arising in that area must be spent in Hastings and should not be used to compensate for budget savings taken directly in relation to that area. The Borough Council is permitted under the agreement to nominate schemes for up to 50% of the surplus which must be approved by the County Council.

5.5 In the short term approval is sought to the specific allocations set out in Appendix C. The proposal in respect of pedestrian crossing facilities in Hastings is also being referred to Hastings Borough Council and, subject to both Authorities' endorsement can be actioned.

BOB WILKINS

Director of Transport and Environment

03 June 2004

Cabinet:C8JUNE-DecriminalisedParking

Contact Officer: Mo Hemsley - Tel. No. 01273 481908

Local member: All

Prioritised Use of Surplus On-Street Parking Income

The projects and programmes identified below are options for the use of surplus on-street parking income in accordance with the permitted uses as set out in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

It is recommended that priorities are considered each year as part of the Reconciling Policy and Resources exercise and followed by detailed programmes to Lead Member for Transport & Environment for approval. All decision making will be based on the surplus accrued to the end of the preceding financial year.

- Repayment of set up costs in connection with future schemes including introduction of the Lewes and Eastbourne decriminalised schemes.
- Contributions towards off-street parking provision and / or improvements within the district councils
- Contributions towards public transport facilities including maintenance of Real Time Bus Information infrastructure in Lewes, Eastbourne and Hastings
- Contribution towards bus service provision in decriminalised areas
- Programme of pedestrian / cycle / public realm improvements in Lewes, Eastbourne and Hastings
- Measures within Local Transport Plan forward programme in Lewes, Eastbourne and Hastings
- Street lighting, where linked to highway improvements.

Approval sought for the specific allocations identified below:

Description	Allocation	Timing	Frequency
	£		
1. Hastings pedestrian crossing facilities	50,000	2004/05	One-off
2. Maintenance and running costs of Real Time Bus Information system in Lewes	12,000	2004/05	Per annum
3. Maintenance and running costs of Real Time Bus Information system in Eastbourne	80,000	2005/06	Per annum
4. Maintenance and running costs of Real Time Bus Information system in Bexhill & Hastings	120,000	2006/07	Per annum
5. Repayment of set up costs in respect of the Lewes decriminalised parking scheme	60,000	2004/05	One-off

Supporting Information**1. Hastings pedestrian crossing facilities**

The surplus to the end of 2003/04 is estimated to be some £350,000 in total. This is divided equally between the Borough and County Councils, with the value of the County's share at 31 March 2004 therefore estimated at £175,000.

At the Lead Member for Transport and Environment – Individual Decision Making Meeting on 10 May, a report was presented to consider a petition requesting a pedestrian crossing in St Helen's Road, Hastings in the vicinity of Dordreht Way. The Lead Member agreed that the petitioners be informed that the provision of this crossing is supported in principle, and it should be included as a candidate for funding from the Hastings on-street parking surplus.

When assessed in comparison with other crossing requests in Hastings this site is ranked sixth in terms of priority, and therefore its implementation can only be justified if consideration is also given to constructing those above it. It is estimated that the cost of implementing the crossings in Hastings would be in the region of £100,000 and this sum could be shared equally between the Borough and County Councils with each authority contributing £50,000 from its share of the Hastings parking surplus, all of which has to be spent in the town. The Borough Council's Cabinet has already agreed to this course of action.

2. Maintenance and running costs of Real Time Bus Information system in Lewes

In Lewes District a system of signs displaying Real Time Bus Information has been installed at bus stops along the A259 corridor between the Brighton & Hove boundary and Seaford. The installation cost was met through the capital programme. The ongoing annual

maintenance and running costs amount to £12,000 per annum and it is recommended that this be met, on an on-going basis, from the overall on-street parking surplus.

3. Maintenance and running costs of Real Time Bus Information system in Eastbourne

The Annual Progress Report submitted to GOSE in July 2003 included a supplementary bid for funding to extend the Real time Bus Information system with integrated urban traffic control to Newhaven to Eastbourne. The bid was successful and subsequently included in the Transport & Environment Capital Programme approved by the County Council at its meeting on 17 February 2004. Annual running and maintenance costs of some £80,000 will need to be met to ensure the continued operation.

The controlled parking arrangements in Eastbourne are proposed to be extended together with the implementation of a decriminalised regime in the Borough in 2005/06. This scheme will aid implementation of the proposals and is fundamental to a comprehensive parking strategy.

4. Maintenance and running costs of Real Time Bus Information system in Bexhill & Hastings

The annual progress report to be submitted in July 2004 will include a similar bid to the Eastbourne scheme above to provide a Real Time Bus Information system in areas of Bexhill and Hastings, again with the on-going revenue implications.

5. Repayment of set up costs in respect of the Lewes decriminalised parking scheme

The Lewes decriminalised parking scheme is due to be operational from September 2004. Set up costs have been incurred which, in accordance with the Act, are a first call on surplus income generated.