

Park and ride nine month review

1. Introduction

This report outlines all elements of the park and ride for the first nine months of operation from April 2014 to December 2014. It is split into two sections, operation and infrastructure. Each section reviews work undertaken to date, how the service has performed in this area and any reasoning for this. The final section of the report contains recommendations where any key decisions which fall out of the review of the service are outlined with reasoning for them.

2. Operation

2.1 Pricing

The park and ride started with an introductory discounted price rate. Following this introductory offer the daily price increased on 1st September from £2.00 to £3.00. This was undertaken alongside long stay on-street city centre parking price increases on 3rd September.

The city centre price increases have not had a significant impact on the park and ride service either positively or negatively as shown in Appendix 1. The number of users is in the same region as prior to the summer school holidays.

It is estimated that the Park & Ride service has had a relatively small impact on parking revenue in areas related to the Park & Ride route. Income in parking services (see appendix 2) has seen a rise although this should be analysed in conjunction with tariff increases effective from 03 September which affect the level of income received. In considering other factors which impact parking revenue such as seasonality, events and weather, around a £28,000 reduction of income has been calculated when the effect of price increases are removed.

The future aspiration for the operation of the park and ride is to become self-funding. Funding contribution from the park and ride specific reserve has been budgeted in 2014/15 and 2015/16.

Prices of fourteen other park and ride sites in the south have been researched as shown in Appendix 12. It can be seen that those established park and rides which offer comparable group travel offer it at a price in the region of £3 such as Winchester and Salisbury.

An increase in price of the park and ride may deter potential customers with all day parking available to commuters in the city centre for £3 a day. Without a strong

commuter base developed and whilst city centre parking is available at a low price increasing the price of the park and ride service risks a decrease in customers using the service. This is contrary to the work being undertaken to strengthen the commuter customer base.

There are two key market comparisons to be made in developing a pricing proposal:

1. Competition with city centre parking charges – to ensure the P&R offer is a sufficiently attractive alternative to city centre parking (to satisfy elements a, b and d of the policy statement); and
2. Relationship to other local bus services (to support element d of the policy statement) – to ensure the P&R bus service neither undercuts local bus fares (and so abstract demand) or be uncompetitive (otherwise why park at the P&R?).

These will lead to a market-based proposition, which then needs to be compared with operating costs to consider the financial implications.

The Portsmouth park and ride should aim to maximise its use and meet policy outcomes (reduce the number of vehicles driving into the city centre), but should also look to minimise subsidy to ensure it is financially sustainable. This is a difficult balance, essentially because city centre parking is currently relatively plentiful, and can be very cheap with some of the discounts available from private operators. The forecasted level of demand for the park and ride commuter market is therefore low in the short to medium term. As such the charges for the park and ride will need to be towards the lower end of the possible price ranges or the policy outcomes will not be achieved.

2.2 Usage

As at 30th November 2014, gross income generated by the Tipner park & ride was £209,000 compared to a year to date budget of £180,000.

There is expected to be an appropriation from the park & ride specific reserve at year end. This was budgeted at £350,000 although current forecasts expect this to be around £334,000

Appendix 1 shows that weekends and school holidays (the leisure market) have had the biggest up take of the park and ride service with the Saturday average usage at 588 vehicles. Excluding school holidays the weekday average is only 240 vehicles. Whilst still higher than expected when the service was launched, the Saturday usage shows the service's potential and that work needs to be undertaken to encourage commuter use.

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The service is meeting demand on a usual weekday. The service is over demand during school holidays and special events such as University Open Days. There are major issues with the capacity of buses during the mid-morning off-peak and long queues forming to board buses at the park and ride site. This has been largely overcome with duplicating the timetable in the short term with a view to increasing frequency in school holidays in the long term.

During school holidays the duplicate bus started at the end of the morning 12 minute frequency provision. The duplicate provided was a non-branded P&R bus. The regulations that apply to the duplicate service for a 12 minute timetabled service are that it has to run within 5 minutes of one of the services. This was quite a limiting factor and did not allow us to use the full potential of the duplicate bus. This particular regulation would not apply to a 10 minute or better frequency which would also allow a load and go policy.

Significant queues were experienced from around 10am to noon. The size of the queue and the duration of the queue were dependant on the passenger numbers on the day. However, large queues (70+ people) were experienced regularly throughout the summer holidays with queues of this size being present for an hour to an hour and a half.

A bigger issue however was the return journey of visitors during school holidays which peaked around the same time as commuter return journeys in the evening. Buses became full at the first return stop of The Hard (which is where most visitors were located), leaving those at Bishop Crispian Way (where the majority of commuters were located) as well as the other stops stranded. The only solution was for customers to cross the road and get the bus southbound to then return northbound. The duplicate buses were subsequently sent to start at Bishop Crispian Way northbound.

During school holiday periods over 90% of afternoon peak boardings occurred at The Hard as can be seen in Appendix 3.

An additional £26,272 (as at 30/11/14) has been spent on duplicate and standby buses since the service started. A specific school holiday timetable would overcome overcrowding issues and an 8 minute frequency as shown in Appendix 11 would allow a load and go policy. Introducing this timetable would cost £48,562.92 a year and would maintain and improve the reputation of the service. Any alterations to the timetable would require providing 56 days' notice to the Traffic Commissioner.

On Saturdays (particularly when there have been special events) there have been instances of the total number of vehicles using the site in a day exceeding the number of spaces, as seen in Appendix 1. These instances have not happened regularly but are something that highlights the need to expand the car park capacity.

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On 27th July the frequency was increased on a Sunday from 15 minutes to 12 minutes. This reduced waiting time of passengers has ensured a maintained reputation of the park and ride with queues kept to a minimum.

Future usage may increase with loss of city centre parking as Stanhope Road (Zurich) car park is likely to be lost in the short to medium term as the site is due to be developed. The planning application does not show any significant parking provision. It is difficult to say much about the Tricorn car park currently operated by NCP. The medium to long term plan for that area (Northern Quarter) is unclear.

2.2.1 Commuter market

To date commuters number are lower than leisure user numbers. To increase commuter numbers, standardised introductory offers were agreed with validity to the end of 2014. These offers aimed to entice businesses to move significant numbers of drivers to the park and ride site. To date, this has only been offered to one business that was relocating to the city centre from Lakeside. Unfortunately this was not taken up by the business as they were able to obtain free parking on their own site. However, more businesses are likely to move to this site in the near future and we will consider making similar offers.

In order to increase commuter uptake the following activities are planned to incentivise use of the park and ride:

- Deliver a targeted marketing plan
- Develop a smartphone app for payment
- Develop and promote a carnet pay as you go smart ticket which enables customers to bulk buy tickets at a reduced price which will better suit people with flexible working patterns
- Provide introductory rates for businesses who have potential to move a significant number of customers from their own site to the park and ride
- Deliver a programme of business roadshows targeting businesses who have potential to provide a significant number of customers - this includes special promotional passes

These initiatives are targeted specifically towards a commuter market, particularly outside of school holidays when capacity at the site is much higher. Carnet pay as you go smart cards and a smart phone app will offer customers more flexibility and choice, incentivising park and ride use.

Salary sacrifice is currently under investigation and will shortly be taken to HMRC to seek approval. If successful, employees of Portsmouth City Council will be able to purchase annual or bulk buy tickets via salary sacrifice. This will secure them a significant discount and is therefore likely to encourage employees who currently pay for city centre parking, to relocate to park and ride.

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Also, if the council secures salary sacrifice for its employees, other businesses are more likely to follow suit and take their own requests to the HMRC.

2.3 Ticketing

There are three ways to pay for use of the park and ride;

- a) Pay on foot
- b) Ringo
- c) Smart ticket

Pay on foot provides the option to pay with cash or card at the ticket machines located in the car parks for daily or weekly tickets or for a daily ticket with a Hover add-on.

Ringo provides the option to pay on card over mobile phone for a daily ticket.

Smart ticket provides the option to pay on card at the machines situated inside and outside the terminal building for a smart card which can be 7 days, 4 weeks or 1 year.

The majority of tickets sold are pay on foot, over 99%. Smartcard sales (including top ups) are very low and account for only 0.3% of total sales. (1 weekly = 1 sale, 1 monthly = 1 sale) account for 0.3% of total sales. The maximum number of smartcard sales in 1 calendar month has been 48 sales. This equates to less than 2 sales per day. There is also very low use of Ringo also (less than 1% each month).

Carnet, pay as you go smart tickets are being developed which are thought will prove popular with the commuter market and a smart phone ticket app will provide an additional method of payment. Both of these are expected to be in place by Spring 2015.

2.4 Operational hours meeting demand

On 1st August the operating hours were extended on a Friday and Saturday evening to 22:15 hours from finishing at 19:30 previously.

It can be seen from Appendix 5 that the majority of journeys are returning to the park and ride site. It therefore could be argued that these journeys are not providing any additional revenue during this period as the revenue was taken before 19.30. Similarly though it could be argued that if the option to return later in the evening was not available then these customers would not use the park and ride at all.

One evening which was particularly popular was when Gunwharf held their annual fireworks display. This led to 213 passengers boarding buses in the evening period as seen in Appendix 4. Discounting this evening, the average evening usage from August to mid-November was 37 passengers. It could be assumed with a car occupancy of 2.05 (average occupancy August to November) that this is around 18 cars over the three hour period, which would bring around £54 income. The extended services cost £105.88 an evening. At occupancy of 2.05 a car (average August to November) you would need approximately 72 passengers an evening arriving after 8pm to break even.

2.4.1 Christmas Shopping

For five Thursdays (20 November to 18 December inclusive) the park and ride ran later into the evening (last bus back from The Hard 22.30). Appendix 9 shows the number of people who used the service after 8pm on these days (inbound and outbound).

The cost of this extended service was £105.88 an evening. At occupancy of 2.05 a car (average August to November) you would need approximately 72 passengers an evening arriving after 8pm to break even. The last two Thursdays exceeded this number; however it is not known if these were regular users who took advantage and stayed later or new customers using this specific evening service.

2.5 Customer satisfaction

2.5.1 No of complaints

The council have responded to approximately 40 complaints since operation started. These can broadly be categorised around;

- Issues with smart cards
- Delays during school holidays
- Not catering to special events such as Victorious Festival and Great South Run.

Where appropriate the customer has been offered a refund to ensure maximum customer satisfaction levels were maintained and any potential damage to the reputation of the service was kept to a minimum.

2.5.2 Mystery Shopper

First has undertaken one mystery shopper survey for the park and ride to date. This however only focussed on bus elements of the service which fall under their responsibility and not the car park, ticket machines and terminal building. The survey

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and results can be seen in Appendix 9 and are rated as exceptional across the board with only one exception.

Portsmouth City Council are working with First to ensure the mystery shopper is undertaken regularly and that the survey is more appropriate for a full park and ride experience.

2.5.3 Customer survey

When the park and ride was launched a survey (attached in Appendix 10) was undertaken to gain customer feedback. Whilst it is no longer actively promoted, it is available for customers to complete on the park and ride website.

The survey undertaken during the first five weeks of operation had 656 respondents with the following feedback;

- 97.09% of people rate their journey experience of good or higher.
- 98.15% of people rate the service they received from the bus driver as good or higher.
- 99.08% of people rated the quality of the bus as good or higher.
- 95.35% of people said yes they were likely to use the park and ride again

Between 1 June and 26 November the survey has been on the park and ride website and received 180 responses with the following feedback;

- 78.77% of people rate their journey experience of good or higher.
- 84.89% of people rate the service they received from the bus driver as good or higher.
- 93.06% of people rated the quality of the bus as good or higher.
- 75.86% of people said yes they were likely to use the park and ride again

As the second set of results were not actively sought it is likely that a number of respondents found these when looking at the website after one of the days where the service was over-demand in the school holiday period, which could account for the drop in results. It is also worth noting the small sample size.

These surveys will be repeated by March 2015 to best inform future marketing plans. Further surveys would be undertaken when Carnet pay as you go smart ticketing and a smart phone app have been established in summer 2015.

2.6 Information provision

2.6.1 Website

Portsmouth park and ride has its own website; www.parkandride.portsmouth.gov.uk Appendix 6 shows the website usage. It can be seen that a large amount of traffic

visited the website during the opening period with just under 2000 sessions in one day. In total there have been just under 100,000 sessions with just under 70,000 users accessing the site. On average people are accessing the site for less than 3 minutes and so it can be assumed they are using the website to answer a specific question and find the information they require quite easily. This shows the website is successful. It is comparable to the MyJourney Solent Transport sustainable travel website which received just over 115,000 sessions for the same period with a total of just over 90,000 users visiting the site in total.

2.6.2 Phone line

The park and ride phone number is answered in the Transport Planning team of Portsmouth City Council. This is during Monday to Friday office hours, anecdotally around four calls are taken a day. This means that the phone number is not staffed outside office hours when it goes to answer phone. These periods are often when there are many enquiries, particularly at busy times such as weekends. During special events which are out of office hours a staff member will divert the phone line to their personal phone number and field calls whilst not otherwise working.

To overcome this less than ideal arrangement it is planned for pre-recorded messages to be put on the park and ride answerphone to tell any member of the public who calls in what the opening hours are for the phone line, where they can find timetables, and any special arrangements e.g. extra bus provision, overflow parking at the port etc. Investigations are underway as to whether an out of hours emergency contact phone number is required to be included in the message and if so what the most appropriate number is. There is an emergency call button situated in the terminal building which is accessible during service operating hours. This links through to the council's Transport Management Centre.

2.6.3 Leaflet

In the nine month period there have been five iterations of the park and ride leaflet totalling around 95,000 copies of the leaflet. These were distributed to tourist information points within a 90 minute drive of Portsmouth. Future leaflet iterations will be produced when changes in pricing or timetable require it.

2.7 Marketing activities

An extensive marketing campaign was carried out for the launch of the park and ride during March, April and May. Advertising included regional radio, local newspapers, online and social media. Lamppost banners were prominently displayed along key areas of the main route into the city and leaflets were distributed to all tourist information points within a 90-minute drive of Portsmouth. A coordinated public relations programme ran alongside this.

The launch campaign was a massive success as it generated more than 65,000 passengers for the service, far in excess of expectations of the operating team and estimates made by PCC consultants.

Customer feedback surveys during the launch period identified print and radio as the most likely advertising methods for people to hear about the park and ride (19% and 24% respectively). To a certain extent this would be expected as these elements had higher relative spend than others but it does prove they were a worthwhile exercise. One thing worth noting about the print advertising is that postcodes for those saying that had seen it mostly came within the distribution area of the Portsmouth publication The News with not many from the areas of other titles used (Southern Daily Echo, Winchester Chronicle, Chichester Observer). As a result future campaigns have focused print advertising in The News as this has proved most successful.

While social media didn't feature prominently in customer feedback surveys Facebook advertising proved particularly successful with more than 200,000 people reached for a £1,000 spend. 291 people liked the advert and 136 shared it.

The council's media monitoring has recorded more than £55,000 EAV of media coverage including regional radio and local newspapers. 68% of the coverage has been positive and a further 26% has been balanced with only 6% negative.

The current marketing strategy runs to the end of March 2015. A forward plan for the following year will be developed following the results of the customer survey which will allow further evaluation of post launch marketing activity.

2.7.1 Retail discounts - Tesco

Tesco in Craswell Street approached the council to ask if they could offer customers the same offer they offer users of their NCP car park; £1.50 off their shopping bill when spending £10 and showing a valid parking ticket. As this offer had the potential to promote park and ride to new users and there was no financial impact of the offer to the council the council agreed to a 2 month trial for October and November. The council did however spend a one-off £354.90 on producing 2,000 bespoke leaflets and 12 posters and also promoted the offer on the park and ride website. Tesco in turn agreed to display posters and leaflets in prominent locations and hand out leaflets in the entrance to the store between 12pm and 2pm during the trial. Spot checks found that leaflets and posters were not in prominent locations and leaflets were not being handed out. Around 5-10 customers took up the offer a week.

Any future offerings with other retailers should have the onus on the retailer to provide the cost of promotional material.

2.8 Parking Enforcement

There have been issues with the registration plate of those having purchased smartcards on the day not appearing on the handheld terminals of the civil enforcement officers. Work is currently on-going to resolve this issue.

2.9 Add on products

2.9.1 Southsea

Since August the park and ride ticket machines have provided an option to purchase a park and ride ticket which incorporates group travel on the Hoverbus (serving Southsea) for an additional £2. This is also available to purchase on Hoverbus when displaying a valid park and ride ticket. The uptake of this can be seen in Appendix 7.

In August 54 of the 137 tickets purchased were on the weekend of 23rd/24th when the Victorious Festival was running on Southsea seafront.

First bus also offers discounted return onward travel to Southsea on any of their services when showing a valid park and ride ticket for £2 per adult or £1 per child.

For the period 5 April to 20 November the uptake has been:

- Bus Service 1, a total of 175 adults and 31 children.
- Bus Service 7, a total of 3 adults and 3 children.

2.9.2 Gosport

A suggestion has been made that some customers use the park and ride to travel to The Hard and then on to Gosport via the Gosport Ferry. Through the customer survey and further investigations it will be assessed if there is the demand to approach Gosport Ferry regarding combined ticketing opportunities.

2.9.3 Park and Sail

As part of Portsmouth's Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) a summer weekend park and sail service ran directly into Gunwharf Quays. For 2013 parking was available at Portsmouth International Port. Once the park and ride opened at Tipner the parking provision for this service was moved to Tipner with ticketing allowing customers to return to the park and ride site by bus if desired.

The park and sail is a partnership between PCC, Portsmouth International Port and Gunwharf Quays. The LSTF funded improvements to the pontoon at the Port bringing it back into operation to enable the service to operate and other services to use this pontoon in the future. In return the Port agreed to provide a number of

specific support services at the Port for the first three years of service. Gunwharf Quays provided financial contribution to the operation of the boat service.

The price for customers for 2014 was £6 per car (up to eight passengers). Branding was introduced to complement that of the park and ride. The total cost of 2014 operation was £39,580 and income taken was £7,679 requiring a subsidy of £31,901. A total of 4,720 passengers used the service over 11 days. As LSTF funding ends after March 2015, future funding, project management and on site staffing for the operation of this service is unclear. If funding is identified the pricing structure will need to be reviewed for 2015.

2.10 Future service extensions/ bespoke services

There have been requests to extend the service to other destinations including;

- Southsea seafront
- Kings Theatre, Southsea
- Fratton Park
- Queen Alexandra Hospital
- Portsmouth Grammar School

2.10.1 Southsea seafront

It is not felt that there is a demand from the commuter market to travel to Southsea. However in the summer season there may be demand from the tourist market. To provide an hourly seasonal service to Southsea would require one additional bus as there is no capacity in the existing timetable.

A six month seasonal service to Southsea would have an estimated total cost of around £147,666 for which no budget is identified. These estimated costs are £91,666 for the cost of the bus service, £51,000 in loss of on and off street parking revenue and £5,000 set up costs.

There is identified demand for park and ride service during school holiday periods. It is therefore thought that this is the most appropriate time to undertake a short trial for a service to Southsea when financial risk will be at its lowest. The add-on ticket to Southsea on the Hover-bus (which launched 4th August 2014) saw 137 customers in August, compared with 67 in September and 44 in October, demonstrating a definite seasonal demand. The estimated total cost for a six week trial service is around £37,000. These estimated costs are £22,000 for the cost of the bus service, £12,000 in loss of on and off street parking revenue and £3,000 set up costs.

In order for the six week trial to break even with a ticket price of £3 per car 294 cars would be required to use the Southsea park and ride a day. There is not enough capacity in the park and ride car park to enable this break-even point to be achieved.

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The net cost of the park and ride will increase and so the park and ride reserve will need replenishing sooner, no source of funding is identified for this.

The use of Portsmouth International Port (PIP) as an overflow car park could be considered however the income would be split with the PIP and increased usage would be required to break even.

A proposed seasonal service to Southsea could operate a trial as outlined below;

- i. Hourly frequency
- ii. Operating times:
Monday to Sunday - 09:00 from Tipner and 17:30 from South Parade Pier.
- iii. The council would retain the revenue.
- iv. It would be a double decker non branded bus less than 10 years old throughout the contract length. (Longer term it may need to have a new branded bus at a cost of £235,000 without the inside and external branding.)
- v. PCC would need to buy a fifth Ticketer Electronic Ticket Machine (ETM). (The fourth Ticketer ETM we currently use on the spare bus for either duplicates or a change to the frequency during school holiday periods. Total cost about £3,200.)
- vi. The service would be operated by specific drivers.
- vii. Route Description

Tipner park and ride– City Centre – Hard Interchange / Gunwharf Quays - Southsea (South Parade Pier)

From Tipner park and ride via M275 (bus lane), Mile End Road, Commercial Road, Marketway, Unicorn Road, Bishop Crispian Way, Queen Street, The Hard Interchange / Gunwharf Quays, St Georges Road, High Street, Pembroke Road, Duisburg Way, Osborne Road, Clarendon Road, South Parade and South Parade Pier.

Returning from South Parade Pier, South Parade, Clarendon Road, Osborne Road, Duisburg Way, Pembroke Road, High Street, St Georges Road, the Hard Interchange / Gunwharf Quays via Queen Street, Bishop Crispian Way, Unicorn Road, Marketway, Hope Street, Mile End Road, and M275 to the Tipner park and ride.

This route has been chosen as it will be less prone to delays.

viii. Bus Stop Locations

Bishop Crispian Way, plus High Street, Old Portsmouth, Osborne Road and South Parade Pier.

The net cost of the park and ride will increase and as such the park and ride reserve will need replenishing sooner, no source of funding is identified for this. No budget is currently identified to operate a service to Southsea.

Any new service would require providing 56 days' notice to the Traffic Commissioner.

The use of Portsmouth International Port (PIP) as an overflow car park could be considered however the income would be split with the PIP and increased usage would be required to break even.

Issues are also identified with the low frequency of the service causing a likely peak in demand at key times of the day (such as the last bus home from Southsea) which the capacity of the bus may not be able to cope with.

2.10.2 Kings Theatre

The Kings Theatre customers travel from across the city including outside of Portsea Island and from further afield along the M27 corridor to Fareham/Gosport, along the A27 corridor to Emsworth and along the A3 corridor to Waterlooville. There is potential for these customers to use a bespoke park and ride service, particularly due to limited parking available in close proximity to the Kings Theatre. This service would be a bespoke evening service to serve the programme of shows the theatre operates. Further investigations into the viability of this service will be undertaken.

2.10.3 Fratton Park

A bespoke service previously operated from the Saturday Lakeside park and ride to Fratton Park. This service was funded by Portsmouth Football Club (PFC) and ran three hours prior to a kick-off and two hours after a match, utilising four double decker buses. The service dropped off and picked up passengers in Goldsmith Avenue adjacent to Lidl's. An extra bus operated five hours before kick-off for staff travel to the ground. A meeting has been held with PFC about the possibility of running a similar service from Tipner for the remainder of the 14/15 season. Unfortunately PFC is unable to fund a service this football season. They are however keen to hold conversations at the close season with a view to running a service next season.

2.10.4 Queen Alexandra Hospital

There are parking issues experienced at and around Queen Alexandra Hospital (QAH). There is a staff park and ride to the north of the hospital on Portsdown Hill.

A park and ride to the hospital from Tipner serving people from within Portsea Island, and Isle of Wight is something to consider. There are however a number of bus services which already serve QAH from Portsmouth including an express service. Any service introduced may therefore abstract from these existing services and as such should not be progressed at this time.

2.10.5 Portsmouth Grammar School

Portsmouth Grammar School approached the city council asking if it would be possible to extend the park and ride service to Portsmouth Grammar School (PGS). To maintain a high frequency timetable which provides a direct service to key destinations this was not possible, particularly with the consideration of the close proximity of PGS to both the city centre and Hard interchange stops, from which a number of staff and students already walk after travelling by rail. Another option was discussed which was the diversion of the Lucketts Solent Student Link into the park and ride site. This service currently picks up students from locations such as Bishops Waltham, Denmead and Purbrook and takes them direct to not only PGS but also Mayville High School, Portsmouth High School & Dover Court School and St John's College. The demand of diverting this service into the park and ride site is currently being investigated by Portsmouth Grammar School.

2.11 Purchase of extra bus

There is currently not a definite demand for an additional branded bus. Where demand warrants it non branded buses can be utilised. These are for trials or special events and, whilst this does not reflect the brand and quality of the Portsmouth park and ride fleet, it is felt that for temporary situations this is currently the best course of action.

The lead in time for ordering a new bus would be six months. The capital cost of an ADL 400 double decker bus identical to the current bus provision is £235,000. This cost does not include branding and internal specification upgrading costs. No budget is currently identified to fund an additional bus.

2.12 Special events

A bespoke park and ride can be run for special events, it is usual for this to be done at cost to the event organiser. The existing park and ride service can also be extended and or enhanced to cater for events. If demand warrants it there are additional sites that can be used, most commonly Lakeside North Harbour and Portsmouth International Port on agreement with the site owners. To date the park and ride has catered to varying extents for the following special events;

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- University open days/ graduations
- Victorian Festival of Christmas
- Victorious Festival
- Great South Run

These have been a mix of bespoke services to enhancing the existing service.

As well as the above events it is foreseen that park and ride may be required for the following events next year;

- Southsea Food Festival/ Race for Life runs
- South Coast Proms
- Americas Cup

2.13 Portsmouth International Port overflow

Portsmouth International Port has been used as an overflow car park when the park and ride car park has reached capacity. This has been on an ad hoc basis with individual agreements set up when high numbers of users are anticipated due to special events such as the Victorian Festival of Christmas (the Port take 50% of income generated by this additional parking).

2.14 City centre congestion

Traffic modelling and inbound recorded journey time data collated from month long periods in 2012 and 2014 show that since the introduction of the bus lane on the M275, travel times for the average car driver have remained largely the same. The modelling data for the morning peak indicates an additional 38 second delay per vehicle across the whole network while journey times for the PM peak have remained largely the same. The table below shows the changes in journey time as recorded by TomTom journey time monitoring. This is one of the two journey time source data systems available to us and was collected over month long periods. All data shown is for inbound traffic only:

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Journey	Free flow journey time	AM peak (inbound)		PM peak (inbound)	
		Sept 2012	Sept 2014	Sept 2012	Sept 2014
Binstead Rd to Rudmore via Kingston Crescent	1min 35	4min 22	5min 23	3min 14	2min 48
M27 to Anglesea Road	4min 49	7min	9min 32	8min 54	7min 16
Gladys Avenue to Anglesea Road	5min 35	9min 21	8min 38	8min 58	7min 57
Gladys Avenue to Rudmore Roundabout	1min 34	3min 20	2min 23	2min	2min

Modelling data also indicates that some roads/junctions have improved and some have gotten worse as a result of the park and ride road layout changes. Delays overall however are largely the same, but the point of queuing has moved. In the past vehicles utilised three lanes up to the Tricorn before it merged to two lanes, now vehicles are merged to two lanes just south of Rudmore Roundabout.

Meanwhile the park and ride bus service has a priority route into the city centre and The Hard. In addition, existing bus services, the X4 and X9, now also benefit from more reliable and punctual journey times. The new layout also provides reduced journey times for taxis and an improved arrangement for cyclists who also share the bus lane.

3. Infrastructure

3.1 Electric Vehicle charging points

Two electric vehicle charging spaces were allocated at the park and ride. A single charge point was incorrectly installed which was never put live. On 3rd September this was changed to a double head charging point and put live. At present it is not possible to monitor the usage of these charging points, but investigations are underway to try and make this possible.

3.2 Terminal building

There has not been a high level of usage of the terminal building at the park and ride site with most customers waiting outside for buses.

3.3 Ticket machines

The ticket machines at the park and ride site accept both coins and card working on a mobile phone signal system which is 98% reliable.

There are two smart ticket vending machines, one situated inside the terminal and one outside. Neither were active for the park and ride launch and limitations in software and hardware resulted in one of the machines only being able to vend weekly tickets, or weekly top ups when they went live. By the end of October both machines became fully functional with one of the machines requiring an upgrade to facilitate this.

As outlined in section 2.3 There is not currently a high level of usage of the park and ride smart ticket vending machines. Despite this low level of usage it is thought this may increase when the Carnet, pay as you go smart ticket is launched early in 2015. Even with this it is anticipated that one ticket machine could cope with the increased demand, giving the potential for the second machine to be relocated to the new Hard interchange if required.

3.4 Bike stands

The bike stands are not well utilised with a very low number of bikes observed at the site. The position of the current bike stands is not conducive to orderly queuing at peak times. It is the intention to reduce the availability of bike stands and to move those remaining to a more appropriate position.

3.5 Real Time Information

There are four, four-line real time information (RTI) screens at the park and ride site showing the arrival time of the next services as well as one 65" screen. There is a

screen at each of the park and ride stops displaying the times of the next few services. The RTI has in the main been working with only two issues to date which were resolved quickly.

3.6 Vehicle count loops

The loops in section A were not accurately recording vehicles but this has been rectified. New loops have been installed at the entry and exit point to enable improved monitoring and profiling of vehicle movements and timings in arriving and departing the park and ride.

3.7 Add on products

3.7.1 Brompton bikes

A Brompton dock with 20 spaces was installed at the park and ride site in April 2014 with ten bikes available for hire. These bikes were intended for customers who wished to park at the site and continue their journey into the city by bicycle. The bikes can also be taken off site and returned at a later date to this or other docks. The dock is maintained, serviced and restocked by Brompton at cost to the city council.

Since opening, usage rates have been between 1% and 4% which falls short of the 12% needed to break even.

It is possible to relocate the dock. The most viable location in the city would be The Hard Interchange. Relocating the dock would cost £5,000, reconfiguring the dock to make it single sided to fit on site at the Hard would cost an additional £1,119. The Hard Interchange is planned for redevelopment and will re-open in spring 2016.

3.7.2 Metro

The Metro newspaper is currently available onsite after introduction in September. Portsmouth City Council currently pays a subsidy of £337.50 for five months for this as the readership has not currently reached an adequate level. The uptake of the Metro will continue to be reviewed once work has commenced to target the commuter market.

3.7.3 Coffee concession

A coffee concession exists at the park and ride paying £10,000 per annum in rent (to The Leaders portfolio, not the park and ride budget), this was reduced to £5,000 for the first year to help the business start-up. The coffee concession started operation

in November and the city council will be liaising with them to review the service and their forward plan in order.

3.7.4 Click and Collect

The city council approached Tesco to investigate the opportunity of providing a click and collect grocery shopping service at the park and ride site. Tesco felt there was opportunity at the site and confirmed that their nearest Tesco Extra store (North Harbour) had capacity for extra vans to provide this service. They would require three car parking spaces (two spaces to accommodate the van and one for cars to collect). The proposal is that the van would arrive and stay in situ for two hours holding a maximum of 15 orders. Collections would be expected to take a couple of minutes per customer. The van would visit site a maximum of three times a day, this would be expected to be twice daily initially and would visit a minimum of every other day. York park and ride site has proven to be a popular click and collect location. Tesco were initially keen to progress with the offering but eventually determined it was too close to their North Harbour store. Portsmouth City Council will look for another supermarket partner to progress a click and collect offering with.

3.8 Car park extension

Appendix 1 shows that there are times where the park and ride is over capacity and overflow car parking has been required. This is before the commuter market has been targeted and grown. This demonstrates a real need to extend the car park size before these capacity occurrences become regular and the reputation of the park and ride is damaged.

As the service has been particularly popular with visitors to the city and in school holidays it is important to ensure that construction of an extension is undertaken during off-peak times for tourists primarily after the summer season and major events such as Great South Run and Gunwharf fireworks. It would therefore be suggested that November to March inclusive would be the best period for construction. This would also need to avoid the Christmas period particularly the Victorian Festival of Christmas at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

The design of an extension should be future-proofed with the ability to add further layers to any multi-storey car park constructed as and when required.

Funding for this much needed extension has not yet been identified. The planning application will cost £171,000. The extension is estimated to cost in the region of £8.25m.

3.9 Additional Sites

The park and ride site is situated on the western corridor of the city, as are potential overflow sites. Future demand may require additional park and ride sites in the city particularly in the east such as Farlington.

4. Recommendations

4.1 Operation

4.1.1 Pricing

It is recommended that the price of a 1 day ticket is not currently increased in order to continue building a reliable commuter customer base. Carnet ticketing will be introduced shortly and must be given time to settle in before a review can take place.

The future aspiration for the operation of the park and ride is to become self-funding. Funding contribution from the park and ride specific reserve has been budgeted in 2014/15 and 2015/16.

Prices of fourteen other park and ride sites in the south have been researched as shown in Appendix 12. It can be seen that those established park and rides which offer comparable group travel offer it at a price in the region of £3 such as Winchester and Salisbury.

An increase in price of the park and ride may deter potential customers as all day parking is available to commuters in the city centre for £3 a day. Without a strong commuter base and with city centre parking available at a low price, increasing the price of the park and ride service risks a decrease in customers using the service. This is contrary to the work being undertaken to strengthen the commuter customer base.

There are two key market comparisons to be made in developing a pricing proposal:

1. Competition with city centre parking charges – to ensure the P&R offer is a sufficiently attractive alternative to city centre parking (to satisfy elements a, b and d of the policy statement); and
2. Relationship to other local bus services (to support element d of the policy statement) – to ensure the P&R bus service neither undercuts local bus fares (and so abstract demand) or be uncompetitive (otherwise why park at the P&R?).

These will lead to a market-based proposition, which then needs to be compared with operating costs to consider the financial implications.

The Portsmouth park and ride should aim to maximise its use and meet policy outcomes (reduce the number of vehicles driving into the city centre), but should also look to minimise subsidy to ensure it is financially sustainable. This is a difficult balance, essentially because city centre parking is currently relatively plentiful, and can be very cheap with some of the discounts available from private operators. The forecasted level of demand for the park and ride commuter market is therefore low in the short to medium term. As such the charges for the park and ride will need to be towards the lower end of the possible price ranges or the policy outcomes will not be achieved.

4.1.2 Timetable

4.1.2.1 School holiday timetable

It is recommended that a new school holiday timetable as outlined in Appendix 11 is registered with the Traffic Commissioner who requires 56 days' notice and, subject to their approval, will be in place by Easter 2015.

During the school holidays park and ride experiences large increases in demand. This can lead to delays for passengers, and so, during 2014, duplicate buses were funded to strengthen the service on key days and periods. However, legally, duplicate buses must depart within 5 minutes of an advertised bus departure time and so reputational damage has occurred as full buses are forced to wait at a stop until the correct time. A "school holiday" service, registered with the traffic commissioner, would have an advertised frequency of 10 minutes or less, a service with this frequency can "load and go" as customers will not have to wait more than 10 minutes for the next bus. This type of service will also support operational planning and bus and driver availability.

The cost of this new school holiday timetable would be £48,562.92 per annum. This would provide a more consistent, reliable service maintaining the park and ride reputations and also prove more cost effective than continuing to duplicate on an ad-hoc basis (which currently costs £21,235 per annum but did not provide the same level of service sought now as buses could not be supplied at all requested times). This would be funded from the Traffic and Transport Portfolio's cash limited budget.

4.1.2.2 Friday and Saturday evening service

It is recommended that the Friday and Saturday evening services are withdrawn and the last bus is moved to 19:30 as per the Monday to Thursday timetable. Any alteration to the timetable requires 56 days' notice to the Traffic Commissioner.

Park and ride 9 month review: April 2014 to December 2014 inclusive

It is recommended that this service is withdrawn as uptake has been poor and the costs currently outweigh demand. It is not foreseen that demand will increase. Bespoke services will be considered for special events where required.

4.1.3 Extensions/Bespoke

4.1.4 New bus purchase

It is recommended that a new bus is not purchased at this stage and a non-branded bus is used for all special events and trials. If trials are successful then purchase can be reconsidered.

There are significant costs associated with purchasing a new branded bus. Moreover, outside of special event days and trials, the bus would sit idle.

4.2 Infrastructure

4.2.1 Add on

4.2.1.1 Brompton

It is recommended that the Brompton dock remains at the park and ride site during the interim period whilst the new Hard Interchange is constructed. Once construction is complete the dock should be relocated to The Hard Interchange.

This location will be a lot more attractive for both commuter and leisure bike hire. Moving in the interim period would cost an additional £5,000 on top of the £6,119 to move it to its final location and reconfigure it to a single sided formation.

4.2.2 Extension

It is recommended that a multi-storey extension for the park and ride is progressed as soon as funding is available to ensure that the car park capacity keeps up with demand.