

<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Managing Director</b>
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<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Report Track:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>

**CABINET**  
**23 APRIL 2015**  
**SUPPORTING CANNOCK HOSPITAL CAR PARKING REQUIREMENTS**

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To give consideration to the car parking requirements of Cannock Hospital in light of the planned increase in services at this NHS site.

**2 Recommendations**

Cabinet are asked to

- 2.1 Approve the conversion of the existing Civic Centre staff car park opposite Cannock Hospital to a public pay and display car park.
- 2.2 Recommend to Council to include a capital scheme in the General Fund Capital Programme of £300,000 to convert and extend the Civic Centre staff car park by approximately a further 80 spaces.
- 2.3 Approve entering into a lease agreement(s) with Royal Wolverhampton Trust for alternative car parking capacity near to the Civic Centre.
- 2.4 Approve entering into a lease agreement(s) for alternative car parking capacity for Council staff and tenants who need to be transferred off the Civic Centre site.
- 2.5 Recommend to Council that the existing charge for all elected Members for the Members car park be rescinded from 1 April 2015 for reasons stated.
- 2.6 Delegate authority to the Managing Director to enter into any agreements necessary to implement Cabinet and Council decisions on these matters.

**3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1 The Royal Wolverhampton Hospital NHS Trust (RWHT) directly manage Cannock Hospital as a result of the TSA recommendations relating to the dissolution of Mid Staffs Hospital NHS Trust (Stafford Hospital).

- 3.2 RWHT is making significant investments into Cannock Hospital and a much wider range of NHS services will be based at the hospital. Local residents will have better access to certain specialties such as Gynaecology, Orthopaedics, Gastroenterology, Paediatrics and Ante Natal care at Cannock Hospital which reduces the need to travel to Wolverhampton. Large numbers of Wolverhampton residents will travel to Cannock Hospital for elective and outpatient services. As Cannock Hospital is effectively a centre for elective care that is not disrupted by emergency care as it does not have an A&E or deal with emergency patients.
- 3.3 RWHT has asked Cannock Chase Council to assist in expanding car parking capacity adjacent to the hospital to cater for significant increases in patient numbers during 2015/16. There is currently an X68 bus travelling between New Cross Hospital and Cannock Hospital funded by RWHT on a six month trial basis from February 2015 which is free for patients and Trust staff.
- 3.4 Following due consideration, Cannock Chase Council has agreed in principle to support this request by converting the existing main staff car park into a Council managed pay and display facility which is accessible and opposite Cannock Hospital. This report deals with matters which require Member decisions in order that additional car parking capacity can be provided for NHS patients and visitors.
- 3.5 The recommendations are based on the principle that the Council is committed to supporting local NHS services but this will not be at any increased cost to the Council tax payer. The pay and display income will be used to fund the Council's costs to deliver its commitments without exacerbating the Council's existing financial position.

#### **4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1 This report supports NHS services at Cannock Hospital and provides additional car parking capacity for patients and visitors.

#### **5 Report Detail**

- 5.1 RWHT has asked Cannock Chase Council to assist in expanding car parking capacity adjacent to the hospital to cater for significant increases in patient numbers during 2015/16. Following due consideration, Cannock Chase Council has agreed in principle to support this request by converting the existing main staff car park, which currently has approximately 200 parking spaces, into a Council managed pay and display facility which is accessible and opposite Cannock Hospital.
- 5.2 The staff car park is used by Cannock Chase Council staff as well as Staffordshire County Council staff and Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent NHS Partnership Trust staff who are all based in the Civic Centre. There is also a Members carpark to the side of the Civic Centre.
- 5.3 In order to convert the main staff car, alternative car parking provision needs to be secured for staff and tenants. This is proposed to be delivered by entering

into a lease with RWHT for a smaller car park of approximately 100 spaces further away from the Civic Centre (the hospital car park currently used for visitors); securing additional car parking capacity in Cannock possibly at the multi storey car park in the town centre or elsewhere; and some additional use of the Members car park. Authority is sought to enter into appropriate leases and other agreements to secure these alternative arrangements.

- 5.4 It is also considered that the existing staff car park may not provide all capacity required and so a scheme has been worked up to expand the car park by demolishing the unused caretaker bungalows on site and create approximately a further 80 spaces. This would create up to 280 spaces or so in total for pay and display. Cabinet is asked to recommend to Council to include this scheme in the General Fund Capital Programme. The scheme is subject to planning consent.
- 5.5 It is likely that some further use will need to be made of the Members car park. As of now, Members are not guaranteed a parking space due to an increase in other users, although they pay a charge for doing so. As more pressure comes on this car park, it is no longer justifiable to charge Members for parking here when it is often the case that no spaces are available. Cabinet is therefore asked to recommend to Council to rescind the charge made to Members to park on this car park as no guarantee can be made at all that spaces will be available for all Members at all times. This will help the overall solution for the hospital by utilising spaces on a more intensive basis.
- 5.6 The charging regime for the new pay and display car park will be exactly the same as the Council managed Beecroft Road facility. No charges will apply after 6.30 pm on weekdays / Saturdays and it will be free on Sundays. The income is needed to convert the existing car park, fund alternative parking arrangements including the lease with RWHT, the expansion of the car park by a further 80 spaces and the ongoing management and maintenance of the car parks. An amendment to the existing Parking Order will need to be submitted to Staffordshire Highways Authority.
- 5.7 The estimated timetable is that the staff car park would be converted to pay and display and available to the public by September 2015. The expansion of the car park is likely to take place after this. This is subject to being able to reach agreements on all other arrangements so there is a risk that the timetable may slip.
- 5.8 It is also recognised that with more traffic in this area that certain improvements will need to be made to Brunswick Road to facilitate the flow of traffic and ensure pedestrian safety. The District Council is working closely with RWHT and Staffordshire Highways Authority to progress a scheme to achieve these aims and subject to agreement, it is hoped that this would be implemented during the 2015/16 financial year.
- 5.9 There are numerous risks associated with these proposals and Cannock Chase Council, RWHT and Staffordshire Highways will work closely together to manage these to ensure that patients, visitors and staff have suitable access to car parking facilities.

## **6 Implications**

### **6.1 Financial**

The proposed changes to the Civic Centre Car Parks (rear of the building) including the conversion to Pay and Display and extending the car park to provide an additional 80 spaces is estimated to cost in the region of £250,000 - £300,000. No provision exists within the Capital Programme and full Council will be required to approve the scheme.

The Heads of Terms for the operation of the RWHT and CCDC car parks are yet to be finalised but will involve additional revenue costs in relation to the lease for Council use of the RWHT car park currently used for visitors; provision of additional staff car parking via a lease of part of the Multi-Storey Car Park; additional running costs including business rates; management and enforcement costs; and capital financing charges for the Civic Centre car park.

In addition, the proposed changes to arrangements for the Members Car Park will involve the cessation of charging members for a car parking space and a loss of approximately £900 income per annum.

No provision exists within the Revenue Budget for such budgets or the additional income arising from the Pay and Display car park. It is not possible to accurately project the level of income since this is dependent upon the usage of the car parks which itself is dependent upon the success of the hospital bus service from Wolverhampton to Cannock (provided by RWHT); and the amount of income displaced from other Council car parks. Nevertheless, it is envisaged that additional income generated from the car park will enable the scheme to be self-financing within the three year pay-back budget policy of the Council.

Members will be aware that the approved budget of the Council identified a balanced budget in 2015-16 and 2016-17 but with a budget deficit of £411,140 in 2017-18 with the deficit anticipated to increase to over £1m in 2018-19. However, the Budget report to Cabinet highlighted that a great deal of uncertainty exists, pending the outcome of the General Election in May, in relation to the funding regime for Local Government for 2016-17 and the magnitude of reductions over the next three years. In particular, a budget deficit may exist much earlier than anticipated and to a much greater degree.

The provision of the Pay and Display Car Park to the rear of the Civic Centre will necessitate improvements to the current highway arrangements on Brunswick Road. Discussions are currently taking place with the County Council and RWHT and any additional financial implications arising from the discussions will be subject to a further report to Cabinet.

### **6.2 Legal**

If lease or Heads of Terms negotiations result in unplanned budget risk, then a further decision may be required by Council. There are no other specific legal implications.

### **6.3 Human Resources**

The conversion of the existing staff car park to pay and display for use by hospital visitors will clearly have the potential to significantly impact on employees of the Council, tenants within the Civic Centre and officers who form part of shared services with Stafford Borough Council who are also based at the Civic Centre. At the present time the current staff car park is accessed by approximately 249\* Cannock Chase Council employees based at the Civic Centre, of whom for business travel purposes 139 are casual car users and 65 are essential car users. Overall there are 289 staff passes to the car park which includes a number of Cannock Chase Council officers based at other sites but who regularly attend the Civic Centre.

Approximately 164 additional car park passes are issued to a range of other users such as tenants within the Civic Centre, Stafford shared service employees who are based at the Civic Centre, agency personnel etc.

\*Figures as at January 2015.

As described earlier in this report alternative provision for employee and partner parking is currently under consideration.

It should be noted that whilst there is no specifically stated contractual right to on-site staff car parking for employees the provision of such car parking has been a matter of long standing custom and practice. As such this should be construed as an implied contractual term of staff employment contracts. Any change to such a term will need to be subject to collective bargaining with the recognised trade union(s) for the staff group affected.

Some concerns have been raised informally by members of staff both in terms of operational efficiency related to parking further away from the building and with regard to personal safety. Again it will be important to pay due regard to such concerns within communications to employees and consultation with the recognised trade union(s).

A number of employees currently have access to disabled parking near the rear entrance of the Civic Centre by virtue of being permanently or temporarily disabled. Consideration will need to be given to how their needs will be met under any revised car parking arrangements.

### **6.4 Section 17 (Crime Prevention)**

The alternative car parking arrangements need to be safe for all staff.

### **6.5 Human Rights Act**

None

### **6.6 Data Protection**

None

