

Report to: **Executive**

Date: **7 March 2024**

Title: **Dartmouth Park & Ride and Health Hub Car Park Six Month Review**

Portfolio Area: **Community Services and Operations- Cllr Victor Abbott**

Wards Affected: **All**

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Date next steps can be taken: After the call in period for Executive – 5.00pm on Monday, 18 March

Author: **Emma Widdicombe** Role: **Principal Assets Officer**

**Chris Brook** **Director of Place & Enterprise**

Contact: **Emma.Widdicombe@swdevon.gov.uk**  
**Chris.Brook@swdevon.gov.uk**

---

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Executive is RECOMMENDED to:**

- 1. NOTE that the Dartmouth Health Hub Car Park continues to operate under the current Off Street Parking Places Order with a full review to be undertaken at 12 months and brought back for consideration (September 2024);**
- 2. APPROVE the extension of the contract to the existing Park and Ride (P&R) operator for the provision of the P&R bus service subject to changes proposed within Section 4 of this report;**
- 3. AUTHORISE the Head of Assets to publish notice of proposals for the approve the South Hams District Council (Off-Street Parking Places) Amendment Order No 2 of 2022 amendments to be made to be:**
  - 1.1 Amend the Dartmouth Park and Ride Car Park Pay and Display charges in accordance with Appendix A;**

**4. REQUEST the Head of Assets to prepare a subsequent report summarising any representations received in response to the notice of proposals for consideration by the Executive before making a decision whether to make the off-street parking places order as proposed or with modifications.**

## **1. Executive Summary**

### **Health Hub Car Park**

- 1.1 On 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023, the Executive resolved to amend the Off Street Parking Order to apply to a new car park at Dartmouth Health Hub, introducing parking charges and eight free one hour only parking bays within the car park (Min. E10/23 refers).
- 1.2 Since implementation, the parking charges and car park operation have been reviewed on a monthly basis in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder to monitor the parking tariffs and operational needs of the medical centre and park and ride operation.
- 1.3 An interim review of this data (six month) is provided at Section 3 of this report. It shows that the free spaces for patients are well utilised and that they represent a slight over-provision compared to demand.
- 1.4 This will be followed by a full twelve month review expected to be brought for consideration in September 2024, following a full summer's operation. This will review the opportunities to align long stay and short stay parking to demand, given the spare capacity that appears to exist.

### **Park and Ride Service and Car Park**

- 1.5 The Dartmouth Park and Ride service currently operates from late March to October annually. No service is run in the off season months.
- 1.6 In recent years, operating costs have seen a marked increased and the operation is run at a significant loss (C. £154k/yr). A review of the operation has therefore been undertaken and considered:
  - Alternative providers/market review
  - Hours of operation
  - Frequency of pick up/drop offs
  - Duration of service
  - Tariff review
  - Seek opportunities to link on street provision

➤ Carbon footprint

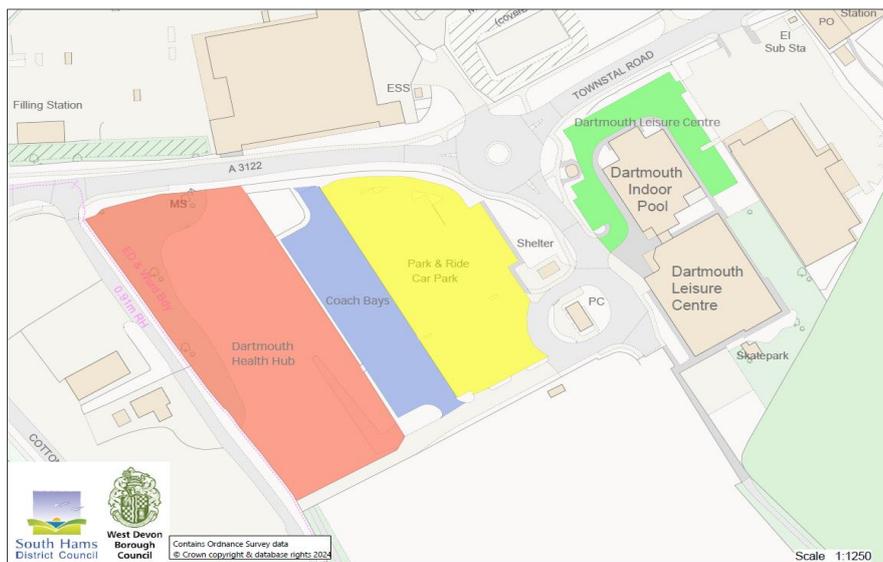
1.7 This review has concluded that a number of recommendations to amend the existing service and car park operation are implemented, enabling the service to meet the core aims and ambitions of the Council's plan, namely;

- A financially sustainable solution
- Improved access to the Health and Wellbeing Hub
- Reduce carbon emissions from the service
- Align the service to demand
- Support the Town's economy

## 2. Introduction

2.1 Dartmouth has a number of car parks located at the top of town as shown on the plan below which includes:

- Leisure Centre car park (shaded green)
- Park & Ride car park (shaded yellow)
- Coach Park (shaded blue)
- Health Hub car park (shaded red)



2.2 This report provides updates on the following:

- a. **Health Hub car park** – since the construction of the Dartmouth Health & Wellbeing Centre, the usage of the associated car park has been regularly monitored. This report provides a six month update and reports on the monitoring outcome.
- b. **Park & Ride Service** – an operational review of the park and ride service has been conducted to ensure we deliver a

financially sustainable park & ride service. This report provides the outcome of this service review.

### **3. Dartmouth Health Hub Car Park**

#### **Background**

- 3.1 At the meeting of the Executive on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023 (E10/23), it was agreed that the Off Street Parking Order in relation to the Dartmouth Health Hub car park be subject to further reviews in six and twelve months periods.
- 3.2 The Off Street Parking Order came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2023. Therefore, we have been operating for a six month period and can review the data gathered as agreed.
- 3.3 The car park has 140 parking spaces (includes EV charging, disabled bays, staff parking and provision for Dartmouth Caring) operating on a short stay tariff basis (where the maximum stay is three hours). There are also 8 free one hour parking bays for use by those visiting the Health Hub.
- 3.4 The car park is monitored on a daily basis, seven days a week throughout the year by our team of Civil Enforcement Officers. Where appropriate, enforcement measures are taken to manage parking in accordance with the Off Street Parking Places Order.
- 3.5 Key users of the car parks include NHS and Dartmouth medical practice patients, blue badge holders, EV users, staff, Dartmouth Caring, residents and tourists.
- 3.6 Monitoring of the Dartmouth Health Hub car park has been carried out since the Off Street Parking Order came into effect. This has included car park counts, income monitoring, pay & display ticket sales review and user feedback.

#### **Six Monthly Usage Review**

- 3.7 From 1<sup>st</sup> August 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024 there have been 12856 pay & display ticket issued. The breakdown of the ticket sales by tariff is as follows:

1 hour 2638 ticket sales  
2 hours 223 ticket sales  
3 hours 208 ticket sales  
Free 1 hour 9787 tickets issued



- 3.8 76% of the tickets issued are used in the one hour free parking spaces.
- 3.9 Eight parking permits have been issued for use within the Dartmouth Health Hub car park.
- 3.10 The Civil Enforcement Officers have visited the car parks 183 times during from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2023-31<sup>st</sup> January 2024 and 24 penalty charge notices have been issued during this period.
- 3.11 The Dartmouth Health Hub has been underutilised with the exception of Regatta week when a proportion of the car park was used as an overflow car park.
- 3.12 Car park counts have also indicated that there is significant capacity within this car park. A sample of the counts at Dartmouth Health Hub are shown below :

Date	Time	Amount of vehicles parked	Empty Spaces	Total Used Staff Bays inc GP	Total Used 1 Hour Limited Bays	Total Used Disabled Bays	Total Used Electric Bays
26/08/2023	08:03	7	130	1	0	0	0
28/08/2023	17:33	1	136	1	0	0	0
29/08/2023	08:38	14	123	9	4	0	0
29/08/2023	11:49	21	116	10	4	1	0
30/08/2023	13:54	14	123	6	2	0	0
31/08/2023	13:47	15	122	8	3	2	0
31/08/2023	15:55	10	127	4	4	0	0
01/09/2023	07:41	10	127	6	2	0	0
01/09/2023	10:56	9	128	4	1	0	0
02/09/2023	07:38	3	134	0	1	0	0
02/09/2023	11:44	0	137	0	0	0	0
03/09/2023	09:29	1	136	1	0	0	0
03/09/2023	15:54	1	136	1	0	0	0
04/09/2023	10:30	2	135	1	0	0	0
04/09/2023	14:27	16	121	7	5	2	0
07/09/2023	07:14	6	131	2	0	0	0
07/09/2023	16:12	15	122	10	3	0	0
08/09/2023	06:48	7	130	6	0	0	0
08/09/2023	15:04	14	123	9	5	0	0
10/09/2023	12:12	1	136	1	0	0	0
12/09/2023	07:47	17	120	13	3	0	0

- 3.13 Of the 209 counts carried out, 17 occasions all of the 8 free parking spaces were utilised, showing that free space is available 90% of the time.
- 3.14 Although there is a desire from the NHS Trust, to increase the number of free parking spaces, the counts indicates that the allocation of eight one hour free parking spaces is currently

sufficient to meet the needs of the Health Hub visitors, with no requirement to increase the current number provided.

- 3.15 Following feedback from Blue Badge Holders it is agreed that the free one hour parking tickets may be used in the disabled parking bays.
- 3.16 It is recognised as a new car park provision, there is a requirement to continue to review parking patterns for the full 12 month period prior to considering any operational changes.
- 3.17 Therefore, it is recommended a report is brought back to the September 2024 Executive (full twelve month operational period complete) for consideration.

#### **4.0 Park & Ride Service**

##### **Background**

- 4.1 The Council operates a Park and Ride service for which parking is provided in the adjacent car park (as edged yellow on the plan above) to the Health Hub.
- 4.2 This service currently operates from 25<sup>th</sup> March to 31<sup>st</sup> October, Monday to Saturday 8am until 7pm and on Sundays 9.20am until 7pm.
- 4.3 It should be noted this is not a public bus service ie subsidised and provided by the County Council but a private service operated by the District Council.
- 4.4 The service operates on a frequency of every 10 minutes during school holidays and a 20 minute service outside of these times.
- 4.5 No bus service is provided from 1<sup>st</sup> November to 24<sup>th</sup> March.
- 4.6 The high season parking tariff for park and ride has remained unchanged since at least 2010 with a tariff of £5.00 all day and £3.00 after 2pm for up to 6 passengers. Coaches are charged £7.00 all day.
- 4.7 A low season tariff is in operation from 1<sup>st</sup> November to 24<sup>th</sup> March to ensure parking charges are consistent across the site.

##### **Costs v Income**

- 4.8 There was a significant increase to the Park & Ride contract cost in 2023/24 due to driver wage increase, fuel costs as well as, engineering and maintenance costs.

- 4.9 Expenditure for 2023/24 is in excess of £270,187.00 (expenditure includes contract costs, rates, public conveniences and operational costs) with income of £114,000.00 to date.
- 4.10 The deficit for 2023/24 financial year is estimated to be in excess of £154,000.00 for the operation of the park and ride service alone.
- 4.11 On this basis, a review of the operation was identified as being required for future operating years with a view to achieving a sustainable financial position moving forward.
- 4.12 A review of the existing park and ride service has therefore been carried out with delivery aims and ambitions as follows;
- A financially sustainable solution
  - Improved access to the Health and Wellbeing Hub
  - Reduce carbon emissions from the service
  - Align the service to demand
  - Support the Town's economy

### **Park & Ride Review**

- 4.13 The review of the park and ride service has considered the following:
- Alternative providers/market review
  - Hours of operation
  - Frequency of pick up/drops offs
  - Duration of service
  - Tariff review
  - Seek opportunities to link on street provision
  - Carbon footprint

### **Alternative providers/market review**

- 4.14 A soft market test was carried out in October 2023 which invited expressions of interest from all local and community bus operators.
- 4.15 A very limited response was received, with alternative providers unable to offer the service provision required i.e. limited weekend operations, no capacity to scale up for events, no links to on street service provision. This demonstrated the market is extremely limited.
- 4.16 Following the expression of interest, we have focussed on exploring alternative options, with the current operator. This has resulted in service options, if approved and implemented which would allow us to achieve the aims and ambitions of the review.

### **Recommendation:**

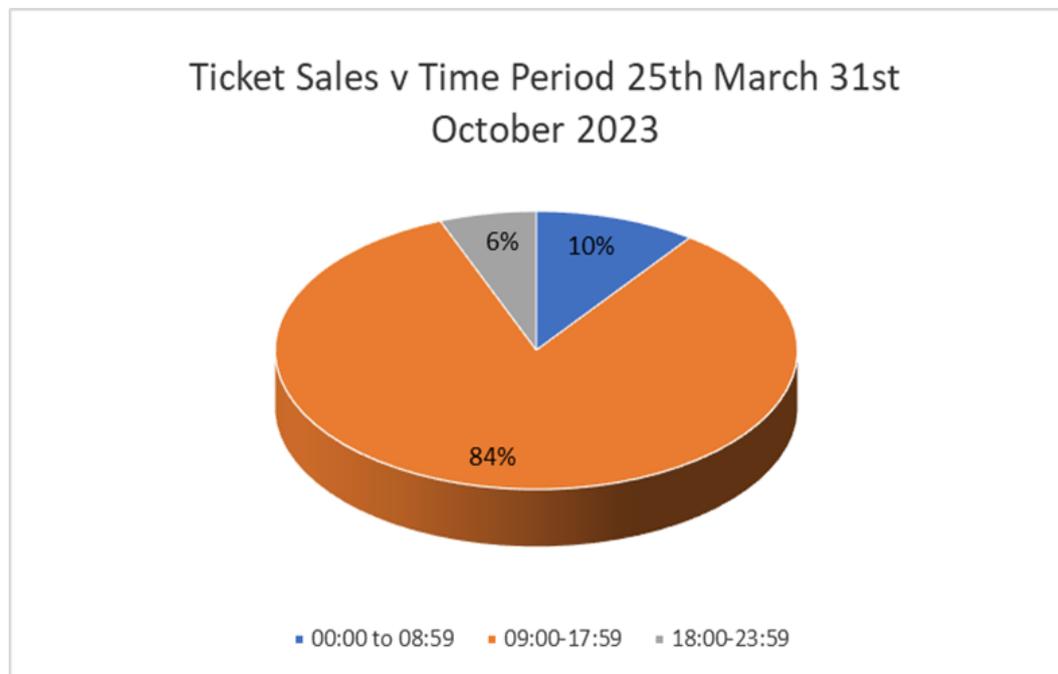
**It is proposed the contract with the existing Operator, Stagecoach is extended to provide the bus service and extend the operation to improve access to the Health Hub.**

### **Hours of Operation**

4.17 Analysis of the ticket sales per hour indicated peak service time is between 10:00-13:00 with 84% of ticket sales between 9:00 and 17:00. Limited ticket sales are achieved outside of these periods.

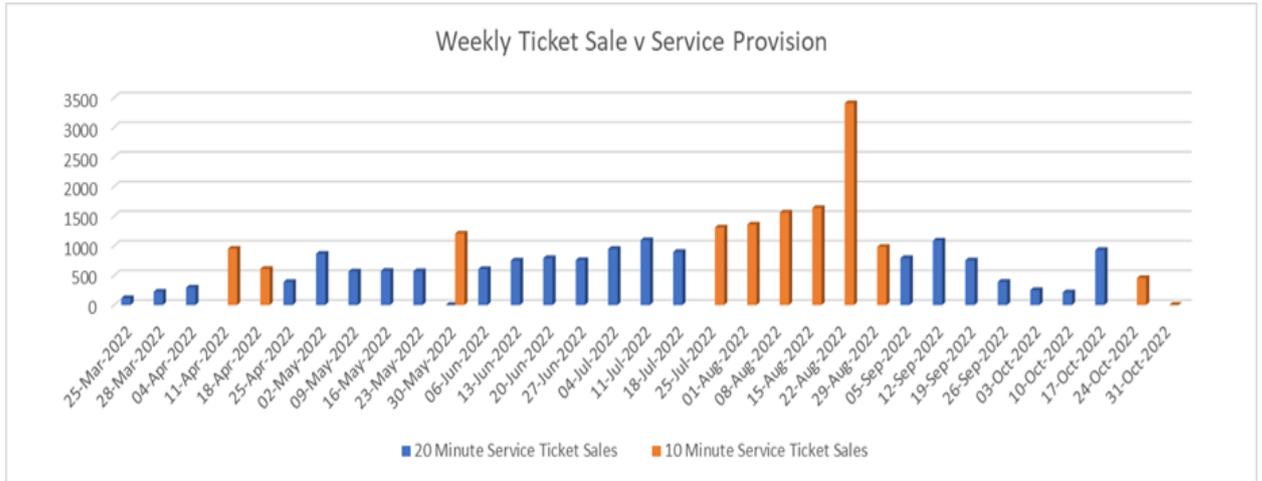
### **Recommendation:**

**It is proposed the service is amended to operate from 9am until 6pm.**



### **Frequency of pick up/drop off**

4.18 Peak usage occurs from June to September with peak ticket sales occurring during the school holiday periods.



4.19 Previously, the park and ride service operated driver breaks by bringing in an additional driver to cover break periods. Under the new service driver breaks will be incorporated into the timetable.

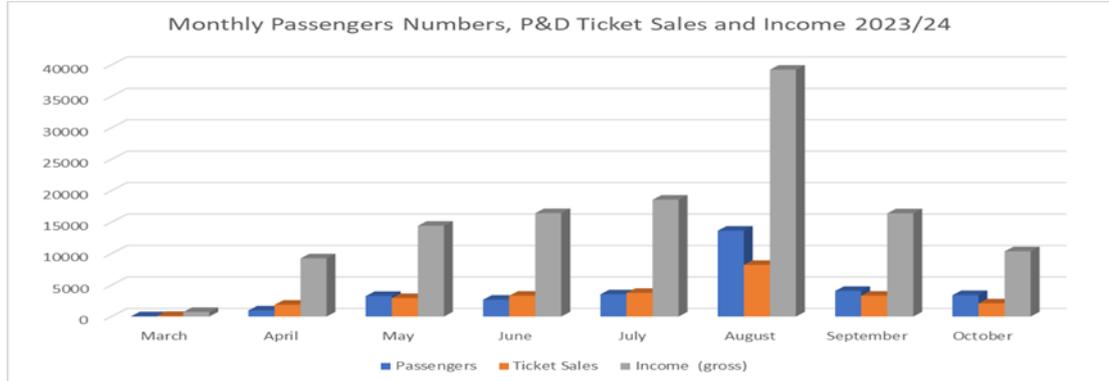
4.20 During 20 minute service operation the frequency would continue to be every 20 minutes throughout the day, with no reduced frequency for a break. For 10 minute service, the frequency would be reduced to every 20 minutes for a period in the middle of the day to accommodate driver breaks.

**Recommendation:**

**The proposed new service will continue to operate a 10 minute service in school holidays and 20 minutes in term time.**

**Duration of service**

4.21 The operating season has carefully been reviewed. It is proposed that the operating season is curtailed to operate between 25<sup>th</sup> May until 15<sup>th</sup> September to reflect the demand for the service and reduce running costs.



4.22 There will be the ability to enhance the service provision should this be required.

**Recommendation:**

**Align the operation to demand, to run between 25<sup>th</sup> May until 15<sup>th</sup> September.**

**Public Bus Service (Number 92 Bus)**

- 4.23 The contract for the existing public on street 92 bus service is currently let to Stagecoach by Devon County Council.
- 4.24 We are aware the local community are keen to retain connectivity between the park and ride and town centre throughout the year and in particular improving access to the Health Hub, including level access for wheelchair users.
- 4.25 Outside of the operating period of the park and ride we have secured the opportunity for the number 92 on street bus to service the park and ride Monday to Saturday operating on a 30 minute frequency from the pontoon.

**Recommendation:**

**Outside of the operating park and ride bus service, the on street 92 bus service will service the park and ride.**

**This is an option if Stagecoach remain as our operator of the park & ride service, as they have the contract for the on street provision.**

**Recommendation:**

**Stagecoach have agreed in principle they will be able to provide an on-board single fare on the park and ride for those who have not purchased a parking ticket. Instead, passengers will be required to purchase a ticket on the bus (or use their National Bus Pass) as they do on the on-street service.**

**Park and Ride Tariff Review**

- 4.26 The parking tariff at park and ride has remained unchanged since at least 2010.

**Recommendation:**

**To ensure the park and ride is not operated at a deficit, it is proposed to:**

- **Remove half day tariff option**

- **Increase all day tariff to £10 (£1.66 cost per passenger for unlimited travel). This would enable the service to operate at a cost negative position.**
- **Increase coach tariff to £10 all day**

## **Carbon Footprint**

4.27 By reviewing the bus service operation a number of carbon savings will be achieved through:

- Reducing time of operation – reduced by 106 days
- Reducing time of operations – from 8am to 7pm to 9am to 6pm
- Introducing driver break – reduce need for additional driver and travel from Plymouth
- No longer operating with limited passengers
- Utilising on street bus service making it more efficient in terms of passenger numbers
- Potential carbon saving of circa 17.7 tCO<sub>2</sub>e

4.28 Stagecoach have a goal of having zero emission UK bus fleet by 2035 and to be completely carbon neutral by 2050.

## **Summary of Recommendations:**

- **Extend the contract with Stagecoach to provide the bus service at the park and ride and extend the operation to improve access to the Health Hub.**
- **Amend the new service to operate from 9am until 6pm.**
- **Continue to operate a 10 minute service in school holidays and 20 minutes in term time.**
- **Stagecoach to service the park and ride car park with on street 92 bus service, outside of the park and ride bus service operating period (25 May – 15 Sept).**
- **Stagecoach provide an on-board single fare on the park and ride bus for those who have not purchased a parking ticket.**
- **The half day park and ride car park tariff option is removed and the all day tariff is increased to £10 all day for cars and coaches.**

## **5. Next Steps**

5.1 The proposed amendments to the Off Street Parking Places Order proceed in accordance with the recommendations.

5.2 Should the Recommendations be accepted, the following steps will occur:

- a. 21 day consultation commence (March 2024) to which customers will be alerted by notice in the local press, on the Council's website and in all affected car parks.

This will allow customers to make comments on and/or objections to the proposals, should they wish to do so.

- b. If a significant number of representations were to be received, the matter would be referred to the Executive for further consideration,
- c. Otherwise, the detailed implementation of the recommendations should be delegated to the Head of Assets in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for car parking for implementation.

5.3 The contract is awarded to Stagecoach for the provision of the bus service at Dartmouth park and ride.

5.4 The proposed revisions to the park and ride service are implemented.

5.5 This proposal fits with the following priorities:

- Council
- Communities
- Environment

## 6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	The Council has power to provide and to regulate off-street car parks under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 set out the procedures to be followed before and after making any order regulating the use of car parks.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	Y	The cost of implementing the changes will be met from the car parking budget.  The difference between the income and expenditure on Off Street Car Parking is used to support costs associated with the operation and maintenance of parking services, its infrastructure and the maintenance of off street car parks. It is also used to support and provide other Council services such as street cleansing, toilets, parks and open spaces and other lawfully incurred identified expenditure.
Risk		

		There is a risk that a significant number of objections to the proposals may be received, which would postpone any implementation, as the objections would have to be considered by the Executive ahead of any changes.
Supporting Corporate Strategy		Council Communities Environment
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact	Y	There are no negative impacts.  There may be small positive impacts with customers considering alternative means of transport or care sharing.
<b>Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications</b>		
Equality and Diversity		No implications.
Safeguarding		No implications.
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		No implications.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		No implications.
Other implications		None at this stage.

**Supporting Information**

**Appendices:**

Appendix A: Pay & Display Charges

**Background Papers:**

None