

Issues for Consideration

Review of existing evidence suggests a number of conclusions and questions which you may wish to consider when forming your response. These are presented below. However, this list is neither directive nor exhaustive, and we would invite and welcome wider response.

Suppressed demand

- Does further expansion of car parking provision in effect just service suppressed demand?

In some cases it does, in others it does not. A generalised answer is not possible; therefore this needs to be addressed on a station by station basis

- Can we then assume that creating more space at a particular time (pre 9am) by pricing interventions will just service 'pre 9am' suppressed demand. Passengers who do not currently take their car to the station because of lack of spaces in the peak travel period now would.

As above

- It is proposed by Passenger Focus that by showing parking space availability in real time on websites/text services would allow passengers to make informed choices, avoiding use of alternative modes because they think the station car park is full. Is that a realistic option?

This would be an attractive additional 'customer service'. The question, however, is not clear. It is preferable to encourage use of alternatives to the car for travel to the station. It is not generally desirable to encourage use of non-rail modes for the entire journey.

Station choice

- Passengers will drive to stations which aren't the closest to their home but which offer greater service frequency.
- Passengers chase capacity and service. Does this suggest that there is an element of self-regulation of the balance of parking and service provision? Is an intervention required?

There is an element of self-regulation, for example, a full car park 'encourages' those who can walk or cycle to the station to do so. However, as the Scottish Government (and others) has objectives which are incompatible with the consequences of such self-regulation, various interventions are required to facilitate achievement of those objectives.

Overpricing for car parking dissuades people from rail travel

- Following simple demand and supply considerations, the pricing of rail fares already acts as rationing: it manages passenger demand against the supply capacity of rail services.
- How would any additional car parking charges affect this position? Would that discourage passengers from using rail? Currently, we do not understand in

any detail the price sensitivity and elasticity of demand around car park charging interventions to maximise capacity in shoulder and off peak times.

Introducing car parking charges on rail users is undesirable, as it imposes an additional cost on them. However, introducing charges which are redeemable in full for rail users would be useful in deterring use of car parks by those who do not travel by train; unless some other mechanism can be identified for discouraging non-rail users.

- Conversely, how do we stimulate demand if car parks are already full? By creating peak time capacity by pricing do we only tap into suppressed demand? What are the implications building overall demand by creating a peak to off-peak shift?

Where car parks are already full, it is inappropriate to **stimulate** (as opposed to meet) additional car-borne demand. As noted above, additional costs should not be loaded on rail users whether peak or off-peak.

- Would car parking charges be additional, or would these be redeemable against ticket costs? How could this be managed?

As noted above, introducing additional car parking charges on rail users is undesirable. The simplest mechanism for redeeming charges would be at ticket offices on presentation of proof of travel. However, in many cases this would be inconvenient (and probably administratively expensive). Therefore a variety of other e.g. electronic methods should be explored and made available as well as the 'manual' process described here.

Supply and demand

- How do we bring about a set of circumstances which create a shift in demand (time or geographic shift)?

The answer to this is not specific to station car parking policy. However, it is generally desirable to encourage rail travel to start as close to the point of origin as possible. In some cases (e.g. Fife circle) this can be achieved by reducing rail fares 'upstream' of popular/high-frequency stations (in Fife's case Inverkeithing)

- What, if any, are the implications for timetabling and rail service capacity?

Timetabling should reflect overall demand and operational considerations, as at present. It should **not** be determined by car park management issues. Rolling stock capacity should always be sufficient to accommodate existing and potential demand, regardless of how those passengers arrive at the station of origin.