

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTORATE	OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	12 NOVEMBER 2019	6
BUS SHELTER WORKING GROUP OUTCOMES			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY

The bus shelter working group met in 2018 and 2019 to consider Fylde Council's involvement in bus shelter provision, whether new bus shelters should be provided by Fylde Council, how best to maintain the current shelters, review potential ways to improve bus shelter provision and generate funding to help support this provision. The group has put forward a number of suggestions for the committee to consider.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended:

1. To support the principle of Fylde Council continuing to provide bus shelters for a third-party service at the current level so long as they are still required;
2. To agree that additional shelters will only be provided where there is an identified need and funding in place;
3. To indicate support for the submission of a revenue growth bid for consideration as part of the 2020/21 budget-setting process in respect of bus shelter maintenance for an increase in the annual budget from £9,000 to £20,000 from 2020/21;
4. To agree that where redundant shelters are identified, and it is verified that no bus routes currently operate, or plan to operate in the near future, then they should be removed or relocated;
5. To support the principle of transferring ownership of bus shelters to Parish Councils where they request them, that adoption and sponsorship of individual shelters be explored and advertising on shelters is considered in consultation with Clear Channel; and
6. To agree the concluding of the working group on the proviso that it will reconvene when required.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

[22 May 2018 Operational Management Committee](#)

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Spending your money in the most efficient way to achieve excellent services (Value for Money)	✓
Delivering the services that customers expect of an excellent council (Clean and Green)	✓

Working with all partners (Vibrant Economy)	√
To make sure Fylde continues to be one of the most desirable places to live (A Great Place to Live)	√
Promoting Fylde as a great destination to visit (A Great Place to Visit)	√

REPORT

1. At the Operational Management Committee of 22 May 2018 a request was made for a working group to be established with the remit of developing a policy/criteria for new requests for bus shelters, reviewing the provision of the service and considering the best use of S106 agreement funding. It was resolved to establish a Bus Shelter Review Working Group.
2. The group met in 2018 and 2019. Initial membership included Cllrs Julie Brickles, Delma Collins, Sandra Pitman and Roger Small with officer support from the Technical Support Manager, on behalf of the Estates and Assets Manager, and the Asset Technician. Following local elections in 2019 the membership changed to Cllrs Julie Brickles, Alan Clayton, Paul Hodgson, Roger Small and Mark Bamforth.
3. Members agreed at the initial meeting that the scope of the group was to review the principle of providing bus shelters for a third-party service and establish the most efficient and cost-effective means of doing so.
4. The Technical Support Manager provided background information on the various types of shelter and why some are under the control of Fylde Council (76 shelters) Lancashire County Council (24) and Clear Channel/Adshel Ltd (66). Details were provided of the Clear Channel contract, particularly in regards to restrictions on advertising on non-Clear Channel shelters.

Principle of Providing Bus Shelters and Installing New Shelters

5. Discussion took place regarding the principle of Fylde Council providing bus shelters for a third-party service. Although the Council is neither the Local Highways Authority nor Local Transport Authority, both of which come under Lancashire county council, nor is it a bus company, the Council historically did operate a bus company when it did install various shelters for its customers. When Lancashire County Council took over as Highways Authority it did not assume control of street furniture including bus shelters. When the Council sold its shares in the bus company in the 1980s and 1990s the shelters remained under the Council's control. If the Council were to cease providing bus shelters it is unlikely other party/parties would be prepared to assume control of all of them which would result in most of the shelters being removed with an associated negative impact to a significant number of Fylde residents. As such the working group supports the principle of Fylde Council continuing to provide bus shelters for a third-party service at the current level so long as they are still required.
6. The working group considered whether the Council should install new shelters if requested. Historically members of the public made requests which were added to a long-list of such requests to be considered if funding became available. However there has never been a criteria set to judge the relative merits of each request to justify the initial cost of installation or the ongoing maintenance. It had been hoped that bus operators that have services that operate in the Borough would be able to provide user data for each bus stop to show how many people board services. Unfortunately, those operators that responded to a request for data declined to provide the relevant information due to business confidentiality and the cost of providing such information. The group considered whether total user numbers should be the only criteria considered or other factors such as the location of proposed shelters should be taken into account eg higher use urban bus stops with more services where waiting times are likely to be less vs less used remote isolated rural locations with limited services and likely longer waiting times. The working group agreed in principle to the need for more shelters once identification of need is established. Bus companies will be approached again for information relating to specific individual bus stops as required.

Maintenance and Cleaning

7. The council's current annual maintenance budget for 76 shelters is £9,000 which equates to £118.42 per shelter. During 2017/18 two shelters required to be replaced due to vehicular damage. This used up most of the annual budget and required vandalised shelters to only be made safe rather than being repaired. As a result the current maintenance regime is reactive rather than proactive. Lancashire County Council recommend an annual maintenance budget of £800 per unlit shelter.
8. Of the 76 Council-controlled shelters, 34 are cleaned by 9 Parish Councils for which an amount is paid each year. Of the remaining shelters, some are jet-washed twice a year by the Council's cleansing team with others, mainly rural, rarely being cleaned. In general most shelters appear poorly cleaned for most of the year which can impact the visual amenity of the area and are less attractive for customers to use.
9. It is proposed that a more proactive maintenance regime be implemented for the bus shelters. Initially a three year programme will be implemented to replace lower Perspex/glazed panels with painted sheet metal to reduce the number of panels that can be damaged. Of upper panels, larger ones will be sub-divided to reduce the size of individual panels should they need replacing, thereby reducing long-term costs as a result of vandalism. Metal-frame shelters will be strengthened where needed. In addition a programme of repainting shelters will be implemented alongside a more thorough cleaning regime. Longer term it is anticipated that shelters that are in very poor condition and are beyond improvement will be gradually replaced and, where there are requests for additional facilities, such as the addition of side panels or seating where there are none, will be considered for implementation. In addition it was suggested by the group that contact details should be placed within each shelter to report issues so that timely action could take place.
10. The group considered the best way to implement a pro-active maintenance and cleaning regime and suggested an increase in the annual £9,000 maintenance budget by £11,000 to £20,000. This equates to £263.15 per shelter; some way short of the £800 per shelter suggested by Lancashire County Council but an amount that Technical Services believes will enable improvements to be implemented. A revenue growth bid has been submitted for this.
11. The group considered whether redundant shelters should be looked at. When all the Council's shelters were reviewed in 2018 only one brick-built shelter between Ballam Road and Park View Road was identified as not being served by a bus or coach service. However this shelter provides wider community benefit by offering sheltered seating to pedestrians. The group suggested that if in future redundant shelters are identified and verified that no bus routes use them or plan to use them in the near future then they should be removed or relocated.

S106 Funding

12. Previously new bus shelters were installed by utilising S106 funding where contributions were towards generic public transport facilities/infrastructure in an undefined locality. Some funding is available within the vicinity of Highbury Road, St Annes and South Promenade, St Annes. However, in more recent times, S106 contributions have become more prescriptive as to the exact improvements they will fund in specific locations resulting in generic funding being unavailable. The group had hoped that S106 funds could be requested for potential new shelters and to fund the maintenance of existing ones. To work within legislation the planning team's preferred route would be for S278 agreements to be developed for improvements to bus infrastructure to be delivered by Lancashire County Council. However Technical Services will look to work with planning to establish whether S106 funding can be requested for specific locations should relevant planning applications be submitted.

Asset Transfer, Adoption, Sponsorship and Advertising

13. The group were advised that in at least one area the Parish Council, in addition to cleaning shelters, had been maintaining them as well without Fylde Council's knowledge. It was suggested that some Parishes may wish to have the bus shelters in their area transferred to them as, especially in rural areas, they may be better placed to respond to issues when they occur which could lead to an improved environment for bus users while reducing the number of shelters Fylde Council are liable for. It was proposed that Fylde Council should

write to all parishes to ascertain whether there is any desire for the shelters to be transferred to their ownership.

14. It was suggested that, to help with improving the appearance of bus shelters, some community groups may wish to adopt individual ones in the same way that train station adoption groups help care for them and improve surroundings. Such groups, such as In Bloom and similar groups, could be allowed to provide planting around bus shelters to improve appearances and would aid in reporting issues with the shelters. Adoption of shelters may also enable opportunities for individual shelters to be sponsored by local businesses, to contribute to the improved maintenance of the shelters as any other suggested improvements such as planters.
15. The potential of advertising on bus shelters was considered. Although there is a condition within the Clear Channel contract for the 66 shelters they maintain that advertising on other similar street furniture within the Borough should not be erected, there is the possibility that, with Clear Channels agreement, Fylde may be able to advertise on other bus shelters. As a trial in 2018 and 2019 Lytham Festival has been advertised on selected shelters for a limited period. It is proposed that, so long as it does not contravene the Clear Channel contract or provide a disincentive for the future of this contract which is due for renewal in 2021 plus adheres to planning advertising consent, advertising on bus shelters be looked into further.

Conclusion

16. The bus shelter working group consider that, at this time, their work is complete and that the group be concluded on the proviso that it will reconvene when required.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	This report requests support for the submission of a revenue growth bid for consideration as part of the 2020/21 budget-setting process in respect of bus shelter maintenance for an increase in the annual budget from £9,000 to £20,000 from 2020/21. There are no financial implications arising at this stage.
Legal	There are no implications arising directly from the report
Community Safety	There are no implications arising directly from the report
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no implications arising directly from the report
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	There are no implications arising directly from the report
Health & Safety and Risk Management	There are no implications arising directly from the report

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Andrew Loynd	andrewl@fylde.gov.uk , 01253 658 527	Date of report

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Document name		Council office or web address

Attached documents

None or List any attachments, each on a new line –