

STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Date: Monday 6th July 2020

Title: Bus Stops/Shelters - Tower Hill Bus Stop Improvements

Contact Officer: Office Manager – Adam Clapton

Background

During the Covid-19 lockdown officers received communication from Oxfordshire County Council to advise section 106 contributions totalling £10,000 had been allocated for improvements to the Tower Hill bus stop(s). A request was made of the Town Council as to what it would like to see included in the scheme. Central ward Town Councillors, County Cllr Laura Price and Officers discussed this with the County Council to understand the logistics and how the project could be progressed. The County Council will be the project manager and the following suggestions were made:

- Ideally, the funds should go towards bus shelters on both sides of the road,
- These shelters should be accessible for disabled users and contain seating in some form
- It would be preferable if the shelters could have real-time stats incorporated but the Council understands that the initial funding may not cover this
- Cycle racks would be beneficial to develop this into a satellite sustainable travel hub like others in the town
- There should be consultation/notification to adjacent properties (OCC to facilitate by providing drawing & letter)
- Litter bins at the stops

Current Situation

Oxfordshire County Council forwarded a proposal for this scheme which is attached at Appendix A.

Members will note that the cost of the proposal is significantly higher than the allocated funding of £10,000. The suggestions made by the Town Council were 'all-encompassing' so in order for the proposed improvements to be enacted, further funding would be necessary from existing budgets i.e. further s106 funds, County Cllr priority fund (per Cllr Price), or the scheme will need to be reduced in scope.

Due to the cost members may want to consider limiting improvements to the bus stop heading into the town centre and excluding litter bins from the proposal.

There has been further discussion following receipt of the proposal in respect of suppliers and funding with a provisional acceptance for the use of the Town Council's preferred bus shelter

supplier. Further S106 bus infrastructure funds in the town have also been provided, attached as Appendix B.

Environmental impact

- Loss of grass area to erect a bus shelter and cycle racks
- Erection of electric real-time stats bus stop flagpole
- Continued investment to encourage active and sustainable travel in Witney

Risk

In decision making, Councillors should consider any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Financial implications

- The budget for this project is £10,000 which is sourced from County Council S106 funds
- The Town Council has an existing budget line for bus shelter maintenance, set at £2000 for the year 2020/21.
- There are further possible S106 funds and Councillor priority funds which could be requested*
- The use of the Town Council's preferred bus shelter supplier would drastically alter the additional funds required. The cost of a similar cantilever shelter installed in 2019 was approximately £2,500
- The removal of one shelter from the proposal would reduce the cost of the scheme
- There will be a cost for ongoing maintenance for shelters
- There would be an ongoing cost of bin-emptying should that be included in the final agreement

*requested but cannot be guaranteed

Recommendations

Member are invited to note the report/proposal and consider the following:

- The bus improvements proposal submitted by Oxfordshire County Council and,
 - If in agreement, consider employing the Town Council's preferred bus shelter supplier to supply the bus shelter(s).
 - And/or seek funding to cover the shortfall
- To reduce the scope of the scheme by removing component parts or concentrating on one bus shelter town-centre bound,
- That following agreement on the form these improvements should take, delegation should be made to councillors and officers to conclude the project.