

STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Date: 16 November 2020

Title: Tower Hill Bus Stop Improvements

Contact Officer: Office Manager – Adam Clapton

Background

Earlier in the year the Town Council was approached by Oxfordshire County Council concerning funding which was available to improve the bus stops in Tower Hill.

Following proposals seen by this committee at its meeting on 6th July (SC199 refers) the Town Council agreed the improvements in principle and asked for the improvements to be focused on the town centre-bound bus stop. There were however concerns regarding the cost of the project.

Current Situation

Further discussions and a site visit took place with officers during the summer and the most recent proposal for the project is attached as Appendix A.

From these discussions, the hardstanding has been extended on the plans so cycle racks are installed on concrete rather than on grass, the purchase and installation of these now being the responsibility of the Town Council to reduce overall costs of the project.

The County Council believes that additional funding beyond that quoted at the start of the project, to cover the hardstanding and real-time bus stats can be sourced from existing bus infrastructure funding.

Whereas the consultation with neighbouring properties was originally to be facilitated by the County Council, due to the increased costs of the project, it will now fall to the Town Council.

Environmental impact

- Loss of a small area of green space on the grass verge in Tower Hill,
- Addition of a bus shelter which will help encourage the use of public transport, particularly from the Colwell Green development on Burford Road into the centre of the town.

Risk

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

- There is a financial risk as all the costs are currently only estimated amounts.

Financial implications

- The original budget held by Oxfordshire County Council for this project from developer funding is £10,000
- The most recent proposal in its entirety is £11,500 over budget. This amount may be reduced if the Town Council chooses to use its own bus shelter supplier
- The cost of installation of cycle racks is approximately £400 for 8 sheffield racks and labour
- The cost of consultation for this project – this is likely to be a nominal administrative fee
- The Town Council has no other funds budgeted towards this project but does have a revenue budget for Bus Shelter maintenance [4035/402] £3,800 for 2020/21, which is currently unspent – although this is set aside to maintain the Council's existing bus shelters which amount to approximately 18 in number.
- There is a small amount of funding from the Abbey Properties developer contribution received from the development on Corn Street which Officers will look into whether this can be utilised for this project if additional funding was needed to make up any shortfall.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report, and;

1. Agree to the Tower Hill Bus Stop improvement proposal submitted by Oxfordshire County Council, providing the additional funding can be sought from other developer funding
2. Agree that the purchase of the bus shelter should be through a Town Council procurement process
3. Consider the purchase and installation of cycle racks from the existing budgets/developer funding
4. Consider allocating a provisional budget of £1,800 from the Bus Shelter maintenance budget 4035/402. The use of this budget to be delegated to the Town Clerk/Office Manager if deemed necessary to complete this project

5. Consider the best way to undertake a neighbourhood consultation.