



6th February 2013

Agenda Item:4

**JOINT REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR TRANSPORT, PROPERTY
AND ENVIRONMENT AND SERVICE DIRECTOR, HIGHWAYS**

**MANSFIELD BUS STATION AND STATUTORY QUALITY BUS
PARTNERSHIP PROGRESS REPORT.**

Purpose of the Report

1. To advise Committee on the progress to date of Mansfield Bus Station and the Statutory Quality Bus Partnership for Mansfield Town Centre.
2. To approve the establishment of two temporary Travel Advisor posts.

Information and Advice

3. The new Mansfield Bus Station, costing £9m will provide significant benefits for bus users in the area including:-
 - A state of the art modern bus station meeting all bus passenger needs
 - A fully accessible facility
 - Improved access to the train station providing interchange opportunities between rail and bus
 - Contributing towards economic regeneration
 - Enhancing the passenger experience and waiting environment with a customer service information office, retail units, toilets and electronic displays
 - Increasing bus passenger numbers from 5.2m per annum by 5% to 5.47m in 2015
4. The new Mansfield bus station is currently under construction on the site of the former public car park on Station Road, Mansfield. The build is nearing completion and a 'Completion Ceremony' will be held on the morning of Monday 11th March 2013 to be attended by the Secretary of State for Transport and other invited guests. After a period of staff training and bus operator familiarisation, the bus station will become fully operational on 30th March 2013 when the existing bus station closes. The old bus station is owned by Mansfield District Council and plans are being progressed to create a temporary car park for the town while a more ambitious redevelopment is considered.

5. The procurement process for the letting of the two retail units has now been completed and a preferred bidder selected. This was reported to the Finance and Property Committee on 17th December 2012. The tenants are firming up their plans to fit out the units towards the end of the project build with the intention that the units will open for business at the same time as the bus station on the 30th March 2013. These units have been let for the provision of a cafe and mini supermarket.
6. The Mansfield Bus Station Manager has been appointed to set up the management systems and processes needed to ensure the bus station operates efficiently and effectively from the opening date. This includes:
 - Determining the bay allocations by destination so customers can easily locate the services they require regardless of the bus operator.
 - Determining how the stand layover facilities are used to minimise bus congestion and unnecessary mileage while buses wait for stands or layover facilities to become available.
 - Producing the higher level 'Mansfield Bus Station conditions of use' for the Managing Directors of the bus companies to sign up to, prior to opening.
 - Producing a bus driver guide for all existing drivers and setting up the systems for the guide to be included in all induction materials for new drivers. The guide will also include information on speed limits, designated pedestrian routes from the bus apron, security codes for gate usage/night time toilet facilities and the use of the crew room.
 - Negotiating with the local bus operators and national coach operators to trial the selling of tickets, so customers can get an end to end service from Mansfield Bus Station customer service staff. The selling of bus/coach tickets will generate income and reduce bus boarding times
 - Setting up of the Mansfield Bus Station management board, terms of reference and accounting/financial systems.
 - Setting up of Health and Safety and security systems including fire and security alert evacuation procedures.
 - Engagement with the Police, Mansfield District Council Town Centre management staff, CCTV control room staff, waste management and communications staff to set up appropriate processes and systems.
 - Engagement with the concessionaire of the two retail units to confirm working arrangements.
 - Recruitment and training of the Bus Station Facilities Operatives and support staff.
7. To reflect the customer focus of the Facilities Operatives and Cleaners, their job titles will be changed to Customer Service Operatives (CSO) and Customer Service Assistants (CSA) respectively.
8. The roles of the staff at the Customer service point will differ from the roles of the CSO/CSA's as their primary focus is on the dissemination of bus/coach information and ticketing trial rather than traditional facilities duties. It is therefore proposed that two temporary Travel Advisor posts (scale 1 subject to

Job Evaluation) are established to carry out these tasks. The staff would be recruited initially for a 6 month trial with a provisional start date of the 29th March 2013, with a view to making them permanent if the pilot is successful. No further funding will be required for these posts above the approved budget for 2013/14. A revised structure is appended.

Statutory Quality Bus Partnership

9. To build on the investment in the bus station a report was brought to the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Highways in January 2012 to introduce a Statutory Quality Bus Partnership (SQBP) for Mansfield Town Centre. The SQBP would ensure that the quality of the bus services and on street bus infrastructure was comparable to the bus station. This was followed up with a further Transport and Highways Committee progress report on the 12th September 2012, where it was agreed to report further progress to the Transport and Highways Committee in February 2013 prior to the bus station opening.
10. The reports also outlined the benefits of introducing these partnership arrangements to improve the quality of the travelling experience for the bus user and therefore reduce the barriers to bus use.

Progress to Date

11. The discrete stages that needed to be followed to implement the Statutory Quality Bus Partnership for Mansfield are:
 - Formulation of the draft agreement in conjunction with specialist legal advice
 - Informal consultation with the bus operators to minimise challenges during the formal consultation phase
 - Formal consultation where challenges by bus operators can be submitted
 - Sign off of the final agreement and deposit with the Traffic Commissioner
12. Formal consultation will be completed at the end of January 2013 and the scheme will be deposited with the Transport Commissioner at the beginning of February.
13. The scheme will come into effect in May 2013 to coincide with the tendered bus service contract renewal dates and Traffic Commissioner approved bus service change dates, thus ensuring a relatively stable bus network throughout this period. The scheme start date also ensures that the new bus station has settled down and any issues addressed before the SQBP scheme comes into effect.

14. The bus infrastructure improvements approved for the scheme are making good progress, with procurement for real time displays, Light Emitting Diode (LED) lit bus shelters and CCTV on track for completion by May 2013.
15. Further works such as raised kerbs, bus stop clearways, bus priority measures, bus lane enforcement and the Leeming Street scheme have been commissioned and are on schedule for implementation in May 2013.
16. Maintenance contracts for the bus infrastructure have been commissioned and contracts awarded to ensure the County Council investment is maintained to the agreed service standards.

Outcomes

17. The provision of the bus station and the Statutory Quality Bus Partnership will reduce barriers to bus use and therefore increase bus patronage and reduce traffic congestion. The opening of Retford bus station and the complementary local bus services changes have increased bus patronage by 35% since it opened in 2007. Mansfield Bus Station is forecast to increase patronage by 5% per annum by 2014/15.

Proposals

18. That the progress on the bus station and SQBP is noted.
19. That two temporary Travel Advisor posts are established, initially for 6 months, within Transport and Travel Services.

Reasons for Recommendations

20. It is recommended that the creation of two new temporary Travel Advisor posts is approved to reflect the scope and nature of the new tasks they will be undertaking to provide information and tickets to bus and coach users.

Statutory and Policy Implications

21. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

22. The financial implications are contained in paragraph 8 of this report.

Human Resource Implications

23. The Transport and Travel Services structure will reflect the addition of 2 temporary Travel Advisor posts within the Transport Travel and Development team as appended, and the posts will be recruited following the normal County Council recruitment process.

Equal Opportunities

24. The new passenger facilities in the bus station and town centre and the provision of low floor accessible buses will ensure all passengers can access the bus services.

Implications for Service Users

25. The new passenger facilities and information will significantly enhance bus services operating in the Mansfield area, improve safety in the waiting environment and promote bus travel.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Committee:

- 1) Note the progress that has been made on Mansfield Bus Station and the Statutory Bus Quality Partnership for Mansfield Town Centre.
- 2) Approve the establishment of two new temporary Travel Advisor posts, initially for 6 months, within Transport and Travel Services for the staffing of the Customer Information Point.

**Mark Hudson,
Group Manager, Transport and Travel Services**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:
Mark Hudson, Group Manager, Transport and Travel Services**

Constitutional Comments (SHB 16.01.2013)

26. Committee have power to decide the Recommendation

Financial Comments (DJK 21.01.2013)

27. The contents of this report are duly noted; the financial implications have been highlighted in paragraph 8.

HR comments (NG 16.01.2013)

28. Recruitment to the temporary posts detailed in this report will be subject to the County Council's employee recruitment policies and the current vacancy control protocol. The grade of the post is subject to JE evaluation

Background Papers

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Report to Transport and Highways Portfolio – 10 January 2012 (Decision Log No. ER/2012/0004): Proposal for Statutory Quality Bus Partnership

Report to Transport and Highways Portfolio – 16 January 2011 (Decision Log No. CM/2011/00029): Mansfield Public Transport Interchange Scheme – Department for Transport and Programme Update

Report to Transport and Highways Portfolio – 14 December 2010 (Decision Log No. CM/2010/00132): Mansfield Public Transport Interchange Scheme – Best and Final Funding Bid Submission to the Department for Transport

Report to Transport and Highways Committee – 12th September 2012 (Agenda Item 2):
Mansfield Bus Station and Statutory Quality Bus Partnership Progress Report.

Electoral Divisions and Members Affected

Mansfield