

21 May 2015

Agenda Item: 7

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, TRANSPORT, PROPERTY & ENVIRONMENT

BEESTON STATUTORY QUALITY BUS PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an update on the Beeston Statutory Quality Bus Partnership (SQBP) scheme and approve the making of the scheme from the dates outlined in this report.

Information and Advice

2. On 9 January 2014 Transport and Highways Committee approved the report 'Mansfield Bus Station and Mansfield Town Centre Statutory Quality Bus Partnership – Building On The Success' which proposed the development of further SQBP's or Voluntary Quality Bus Partnerships (VQBP), to add value to the investment in the Beeston Bus/Tram interchange and Worksop Bus Station.
3. The Transport Act 2000 looked to strengthen partnership working between Local Authorities and local bus operators to improve the quality and reliability of bus services. The SQBP is a legal agreement between the County Council and bus operators to meet certain quality standards, which is monitored by the Traffic Commissioner to ensure compliance.
4. Significant infrastructure improvements in Beeston are underway providing an upgrade to 23 bus stops within the SQBP area including the installation of a further 11 real time displays and four bus shelters. These works will be completed by the 1st July 2015.
5. The SQBP consultation ended on 18 March. No objections to the scheme were received and it is proposed that the Scheme will come into effect from the 1st September 2015 for the Interchange and the 1st July for the surrounding bus stops. A copy of the scheme document is available online at the following address:
www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/travelling/travel/sbqp/

Beeston Public Transport Interchange (BPTI)

6. An operator of a local service may only use the facilities in the scheme area including the BPTI if they comply with Section 8 of the SQBP Scheme document – "Conditions of Use". It is the responsibility of local bus operators to notify the traffic commissioner of their commitment to participate in the scheme by completing Schedule 5 of the SQBP Scheme

document and sending to the Traffic Commissioner for the North Eastern Traffic Area in advance of the 1 September 2015 Scheme implementation date.

7. It is hoped that buses will start using Beeston Bus Tram Interchange from Summer 2015 to provide a smooth transition for the commencement of the tram service. From this date the current bus station will close and will no longer be used. The new Interchange will operate a slot booking system for buses that will be managed by the County Council and ensure that buses can only use the Interchange with prior agreement.
8. A leaflet will be produced to provide detailed information on where to catch the bus from the opening of the Interchange. This information will also be available on the County Council, Broxtowe Council, Nottingham City Council and bus operator websites. Information about Beeston bus services will also be disseminated via social media including Facebook and Twitter. Other promotional activity for bus services including any route/timetable changes will be prepared in conjunction with the bus operators.
9. A further progress report on the Beeston SQBP will be produced in January 2016.

Other Options Considered

10. To do nothing and continue without a SQBP and without the slot booking arrangements in the new Interchange. The Scheme aims to bring benefits to persons using Local Services by improving the quality of those local services operating in the Scheme Area and restricting the use of the bus stops and other facilities in the Scheme Area to those Local Services that meet the Standards of Service. To proceed without the Scheme would potentially compromise the quality of local bus services in Beeston and cause operational conflicts at the BPTI through lack of a system to regulate bus arrivals and departures. This could affect the smooth operation of the tram through the BPTI and pose a safety risk to passengers.

Statutory and Policy Implications

11. 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.

Sustainability and Environment

12. The provision of the Beeston Public Transport Interchange will encourage more people to use public transport thus reducing car use and congestion.

Financial Implications

13. The County Council as part of the LTP Programme, has funded improvements to the Interchange and a number of bus stops in the Beeston SQBP area. Any capital or revenue expenditure associated with the Scheme is funded from within existing resources.

Implications for Service Users

14. The provision of the Beeston Public Transport Interchange will improve the customer experience for users and encourage modal switch to bus and tram from other modes of transport.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) To note the outcome of the Beeston SQBP consultation and approve the making of the SQBP Scheme, effective from 1 September 2015 for the Interchange and the 1st July for the surrounding bus stops.

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Constitutional Comments (LM 28/04/15)

15. The Transport and Highways Committee has delegated authority within the Constitution to approve the recommendations in the report.

Financial Comments (TR/29/04/2015)

16. The financial implications are set out on paragraph 13.

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.

- Mansfield Bus Station And Statutory Quality Bus Partnership Progress Report - Transport & Highways Committee Report- 6 February 2013
- Mansfield Bus Station And Mansfield Town Centre Statutory Quality Bus Partnership – Building On The Success - Transport & Highways Committee Report- 9 January 2014

Electoral Divisions and Members Affected

All