

REAL TIME PASSENGER INFORMATION

To: **Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee**

Meeting Date: **7th December 2016**

From: **Executive Director, Economy, Transport and Environment**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Forward Plan ref: **2016/037** *Key decision:* **Yes**

Purpose: **To ask the Committee to consider whether to renew and extend the Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) Partnership Agreement with partnering authorities and enter into a joint procurement exercise for a new Real Time Passenger Information supply, installation and maintenance contract**

Recommendation: **The Committee is asked to agree the following:**

a) To renew and extend the Real Time Passenger Information Partnership Agreement with partnering authorities for the length of the new contract period.

b) To enter into a joint contract procurement exercise with the partnering authorities for a new Real Time Passenger Information supply, installation and maintenance contract.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Cambridgeshire County Council has been part of a consortium of local authorities delivering RTPI since 2009. Other members of the consortium are Peterborough City Council, Luton Borough Council, Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council and Northamptonshire County Council. The Council is currently sharing an RTPI officer post with Peterborough City Council following the departure of the full time RTPI officer from Cambridgeshire County Council.
- 1.2 In 2009/10 Cambridgeshire County Council carried out a tendering process on behalf of the partnering authorities to appoint a contractor to install and maintain RTPI infrastructure for an initial 5 year period, with the option to extend for a further 3 years. VIX Technology Ltd was appointed in 2010 and the consortium took up the option for the extension in 2015. The current contract with VIX Technology Ltd ends on 28 February 2018.
- 1.3 The implementation of RTPI forms a key part of the approach to the provision of a faster and more reliable public transport system. Bus movements are tracked and bus arrival predictions are displayed to members of the public on electronic displays at bus stops or can be viewed using the web or the MyBusTrip app on both iPhone and Android smart phones. 93% of timetabled bus journeys in Cambridgeshire are tracked, with this information being displayed on over 2900 active bus stops and 300 RTPI signs that have been installed across the County.
- 1.4 The aim of the RTPI system is to encourage the public to make greater use of the public transport system by making the planning and undertaking of bus journeys an easier and more enjoyable experience. Whilst there have been no detailed studies carried out locally to demonstrate the effectiveness of RTPI, a study in 2012, focussing on Dublin, overwhelmingly concluded that passengers want and need this information to assist with their travel planning.
- 1.5 RTPI is popular in Cambridgeshire, with the Council receiving frequent requests for new displays to be installed. For example, recent requests have been received from bus users for further on-street displays installed on Fendon Road, Cambridge and Sutton Parish Council have requested five more displays in Sutton. It is also anticipated that RPTI will play a key role in the City Deal agenda, especially given the focus on bus style transit systems as a primary transport mode to ease congestion, serving and linking future growth sites.
- 1.6 RTPI improves service reliability through the analysis of vehicle movements, leading to improved fleet management by operators and the identification of bus priority measures by local authorities. RTPI also reduces the need for conventional timetables at bus stops and the cost associated with maintaining and replacing these when timetables change. While this information is also accessed via websites, evidence from the Dublin study suggests that electronic displays allow a larger percentage of passengers to access this information; *"an electronic display at the bus stop was the most popular method of accessing the RTPI...and then of the other methods, the mobile phone application was the most popular with 33% of respondents stating that they used it to check the RTPI, whereas for example with the computer one can realistically only access the information from a set location like at home or work."*

- 1.7 There is an argument that the need for electronic displays at bus stops is reducing due to increasing use of smart phone technology. Cambridgeshire offer the MyBusTrip App and this will be a key feature of the RTPI system moving forwards. However the 2012 study acknowledges that; *"the younger bus users use a much broader range of devices to access RTPI than the older demographic. 60% of students surveyed used RTPI on the electronic displays as well as at least one other device, whereas 87% of the older demography only used RTPI at the bus stop."* Over the new contract period, the amount of new on street displays installed will reduce due to the key interchange points already being equipped, however, it is recommended that the need to maintain and install at more stops should continue in order to make this an accessible system to all Cambridgeshire residents and existing users.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 The current RTPI Partnering Agreement needs to be updated, renewed and extended. The Agreement will need to last for the length of the new contract period. It is envisaged that the length of the new contract will be as per the current arrangement, i.e. for an initial 5 year period with the option to extend for a further 3 years. Based on this assumption the new contract could run from 28 February 2018 through to 28 February 2026, subject to the extension being taken up.
- 2.2 Once the Partnering Agreement has been agreed, the Partnering Authorities will then undertake a joint procurement exercise for a new supply, installation and maintenance contract for RTPI equipment. The approximate value of the five year contract will be £3 million for the whole of the consortium. This approximate contract value is based on current annual spend for revenue and capital of all consortium members multiplied by five for the expected number of years of the new contract without the possible extension period. The total contract value for Cambridgeshire capital and revenue based on 2016/17 budget is expected to be approximately £1.2 million over the initial five year period.
- 2.3 Historically Cambridgeshire's funding for RTPI comes from two sources; capital from the Local Transport Plan (LTP) and revenue from the on-street parking account. For 2016/17 the total revenue spend is forecast to total £109k, whilst the LTP budget is set at £155k. Additional money occasionally becomes available through Section 106 funding, in order to provide infrastructure at new housing developments. Commuted sums are sought for the ongoing maintenance cost for Section 106 funded schemes.
- 2.4 Of the £109k revenue spend, £83,000 covers the maintenance of existing infrastructure including on-street displays, large display screens in bus stations and other transport hubs, on-bus displays, web and 'MyBusTrip smart phone app. The remaining £26,000 covers maintenance of the primary server, software, radio mast and licence fees, communication line rental, data configuration and server to server links.
- 2.5 As part of the procurement exercise, suppliers will be asked for ways of reducing these on-going maintenance costs. Future revenue running costs for the system will depend on growth of the system and any efficiencies which can be achieved through the new contract.
- 2.6 The capital spend for 2016/17 is set out in the Transport Delivery Plan (TDP) under the heading 'smarter travel management – real time bus information'. This funding is for the

addition of further displays on key strategic routes and to add or replace bus equipment and to invest further in direct channelling of information to bus users.

- 2.7 The TDP capital spend on RTPI is signed off each year by members of the Highways & Community Infrastructure Committee as part of the TDP approval process. The annual capital spend for Cambridgeshire for the new contract will be dependent on capital budget allocation by the LTP in future years but for the purposes of estimating the value of the contract the sum of £155k was used.
- 2.8 RTPI equipment has been installed on many of the bus routes and bus services in Cambridgeshire, particularly in areas of higher bus usage and strategic bus routes. The map of where existing RTPI equipment is located can be viewed via the following link <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1nPCUuxueoiBclV6w7WwFEV1luIE&usp=sharing> Decisions on where to install new RTPI equipment are based on an overview of strategic bus routes and where existing equipment is already in place, feedback from bus operators, members and bus users and current and forecasted bus usage.
- 2.6 The decision to continue with RTPI has been agreed in principle by all partners; subject to each Local Authority's own internal governance and member sign off. All the partnering authorities are currently seeking approval from their respective Members to continue with the arrangements. Cambridgeshire County Council has previously acted as the lead authority within the partnering authorities and it is proposed the council will retain this responsibility into the new contract period.
- 2.7 Renewing and extending the Partnering Agreement and procuring a new RTPI contract will enable Cambridgeshire and the partnering authorities to continue implementing, expanding and maintaining the existing RTPI system. Benefits associated with remaining in the consortium include:
- Reduced costs and officer time spent on the tendering process for a new supply, installation and maintenance contract.
 - Reduced unit costs for purchasing RTPI equipment and maintenance, through economies of scale.
 - Allows continued operation of the existing system and technology already in place.
 - Ensures bus operators across the partnering authority areas are all equipped with the same technology.
 - System is too expensive to continue without partnership with other partnering authorities.
- 2.8 As part of the Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3), the Council is committed to promoting passenger transport and improving the quality of public transport information. RTPI supplements the drive to encourage the public to move to this mode of transport and subsequently assists with tackling some of the LTP3 challenges including making sustainable modes of transport a viable and attractive alternative to the private car
- 2.9 RTPI is a more challenging goal if the County Council does not act in conjunction with the other partnering authorities and working in partnership is considered to be the most appropriate and cost effective way forward to continue implementing this technology. The current approach has successfully demonstrated that a consortium comprising of the Local

Authority partners, the bus operators and the contractor drives value for money, promotes innovation and sharing of best practice through economies of scale and ongoing collaboration.

- 2.10 The option to only maintain the current system or re-procure and maintain on an 'as and when' basis as it stands is not viable. As part of the new contract procurement, the technical updating of equipment and software will be a central element going forward. Investment will be required to ensure that Cambridgeshire's system does not miss out on opportunities to use new technology where appropriate, which in turn will improve efficiency and effectiveness of the overall RTPI package.
- 2.11 Working with bus operators and other partner authorities will ensure Cambridgeshire's equipment works with neighbouring systems, thus driving value for money. The option to re-procure, build on our central data system and maintain our assets will result in a system that has the ability to keep pace with current technology and is therefore more cost effective rather than becoming an outdated system that becomes costly to maintain in future years. Such benefits would be lost should the County Council choose to procure in isolation or push for a maintenance only style approach.
- 2.11 Should Cambridgeshire County Council withdraw from the consortium completely the value of the investment to date would be lost. Existing equipment would not be maintained, deteriorate and would have to be switched off and ultimately removed. The removal of all existing RPTI infrastructure would carry a significant revenue cost and not demonstrate value for money. This would also have a negative impact on partnership working with the local authorities and bus operators involved, as well as the public who use the service.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- RTPI can improve bus service reliability through the analysis of vehicle movements, leading to improved fleet management and bus priority measures. This in turn can increase bus patronage, create modal shift and reduce congestion on the network. This would have a substantial benefit to the local economy.

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- RTPI improves the quality and accessibility of information for all bus users. Bus information can be accessed at bus stops, kiosks, websites and mobile phones. This allows the public to make informed travel choices, supporting them to live healthy and independent lives.

3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- RTPI improves the quality and accessibility of information for all bus users. RTPI can provide information in both visual and audio format in order to assist the more vulnerable people using the bus network.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource implications:

There will be minimal additional cost to the Council in association with the renewal and extension of the Partnership Agreement. The current Partnership Agreement will need to be reviewed and updated and then circulated to partnering authorities for approval.

The subsequent costs associated with the joint procurement exercise for the new RTPI purchase, installation and maintenance contract, will be shared between the partnering authorities and funded from the relevant RTPI budget. Working with the partnering authorities ensures value for money as to procure a RTPI system independently would increase costs significantly.

Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications:

Under the Transport Act 1985, the Council has the power (having regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness and the transport needs of members of the public who are elderly or disabled) to take any measures that appear to them to be appropriate for the purpose of or in connection with promoting the availability of public passenger transport services (other than subsidised services) or the convenience of the public (including persons who are elderly or disabled) in using all available public passenger transport services (whether subsidised or not).

Under the Transport Act 2000, the Council is obliged to prepare a Local Transport Plan containing its policies for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport to, from and within its area, and proposals for implementing those policies. Having regard to its Local Transport Plan, the Council has a duty to determine what local bus information should be made available to the public and the way in which this information should be made available. The continued expansion, installation, improvement and promotion of RTPI was identified within the Council's Local Transport Plan 3.

Equality and Diversity Implications:

RTPI improves the quality and accessibility of information for all bus users. RTPI can provide information in both visual and audio format and can be accessed at bus stops, kiosks, websites and mobile phones. This allows the public to make informed travel choices, supporting them to live healthy and independent lives.

Engagement and Consultation Implications:

Meetings have been held with all partnering authorities, local bus operators and the RTPI Project Board. The decision to continue with RTPI is as a result of these consultations. Requests continue to be received from members of the public, requesting that RTPI

displays are installed at the bus stops that they use, highlighting the need for this information to be provided.

Localism and Local Member Involvement Implications:

RTPI has been implemented across the county in Cambridge, market towns and on key bus routes. Local members can highlight areas where RTPI could enhance bus services in their areas for consideration in future roll outs of the service.

Public Health implications:

Promoting bus use and improving the accessibility of information about buses through RTPI could lead to an improvement in air quality if there are consequently fewer cars on the roads as people make a modal shift on to the bus. Effective information at bus stops can help to reduce the barriers to using public transport and this in turn can improve access to public services, particularly health services by bus. Transport and access barriers are highlighted in the Public Health report Joint Strategic Needs Assessment see -

<http://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/jsnasummaryreport>

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Name of Financial Officer: Sarah Heywood
Has the impact on Statutory, Legal and Risk implications been cleared by LGSS Law?	No officer response Name of Legal Officer: Lynne Owen
Are there any Equality and Diversity implications?	Yes Name of Officer: Tamar Oviatt-Ham
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	No officer response Name of Officer: Mark Miller
Are there any Localism and Local Member involvement issues?	Yes Name of Officer: Paul Tadd
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	Yes Name of Officer: Tess Campbell

Source Documents	Location
<p>RTPI Partnering Agreement</p> <p>An analysis of the role of Real Time Passenger Information on bus users in a European City: the case of Dublin Ireland</p>	<p>Legal team, LGSS Law Scott House Huntingdon</p> <p>http://www.irishplanninginstitute.ie/sites/default/files/thesis_bryan_sweeney.pdf</p>