



# EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION

<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Executive Member for Growth and Development
<b>LEAD OFFICERS:</b>	Strategic Director of Growth and Development
<b>DATE:</b>	01 June 2023

**PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:** Growth and Development

**WARD/S AFFECTED:** (All Wards);

**SUBJECT: Procurement of provision and maintenance of real time bus information displays**

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To seek approval to commence procurement for a replacement provider to supply maintenance and software for real time bus information displays including the provision of new screens for Lancashire County Council (LCC).

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Member:

Approves the procurement for a new provider for real time bus information displays through an open tender process for 3 years with the option to extend for a further 2 number 1 year periods.

## 3. BACKGROUND

Under the national bus strategy, local authorities were invited to bid for a share of the Bus Services Improvement Grant. In order to strengthen our bid and make it more attractive to the Department of Transport, it was decided that Blackburn with Darwen BC would submit a joint bid with Lancashire County Council. The bid had to include certain criteria such as improved ticketing systems, cross ticketing, highway infrastructure improvements to improve bus punctuality, improve waiting facilities, marketing, demand responsive options, bus stops etc.

As part of the successful joint Pennine Reach bid with LCC in 2014 and subsequent development of bus corridors and bus stations (Blackburn & Accrington), real time information screens were installed at the gates of those bus station, as well as summary screens within the bus stations. A number of real time screens were also installed at key locations along the primary Pennine Reach Corridors in Accrington, Blackburn, Darwen, Rishton, Great Harwood and Oswaldtwistle. At present there a total of 83 screens across the network.

The current contract includes maintenance on the screens as well as the software that provides travel information, public service announcements and advertising. The existing contract ends on the 30<sup>th</sup> September this year which means that the department needs to tender for this service moving forwards.

Real-time displays work by accessing a device on the bus which reports their position to a central system. The system then estimates how long the bus will take to reach all bus stops along the route.

These screens show the arrival times of the next bus by counting down the minutes until the bus arrives at the stop.

Currently LCC have a requirement for the installation of a further 70 screens for themselves which will be included within the tender which should provide better pricing for our requirements due to economies of scale.

An evaluation of existing frameworks was carried out with only one potential framework being identified which was the Crown Commercial Services transport technology & associated services framework. Whilst this framework would be able to meet the tender requirements for both local authorities, the current provider to the Council (Journeo) was not a supplier under this lot. As Journeo already have the infrastructure and systems in place under the current contract, there is the potential that they could be able to offer better pricing for the requirements and therefore it is in both local authorities best interests that Journeo are able to bid.

The department are therefore recommending that the requirement is advertised as an open tender process to all suppliers through the Governments find a tender service. The tender will be evaluated in accordance with the following weightings;

Social Value – 15%

Price – 50%

Quality – 35%

As this is a joint procurement with LCC then the social value element will ask suppliers for social value initiatives across both local authorities.

The use of real time information is very popular with bus users as they can see instantly when arriving at a bus stop if a bus is due, on time or even cancelled. In particular, the elderly who struggle to read paper timetables. Real time data is also transferable to mobile application which are very popular with the younger element of bus users.

#### **4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS**

If no contract is in place, the existing equipment wouldn't be maintained and would ultimately lead to blank displays and the discontinuation of the system. The removal of failed equipment would require extra revenue.

The existing system has become a well-established and relied upon source of information for bus passengers, bus operators and other parties who disseminate the information. It would be difficult and expensive to recreate the current system in future years.

#### **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The provision of real time bus information is a necessary part of providing good transport links to the town centre. The displays provide a vital role in encouraging people to use buses and will provide an on-going role in supporting bus operators and passengers over the coming years.

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The current cost of support and maintenance for the solution is split fairly evenly between the two authorities with a small contribution from Transdev Rawtenstall who use the system to make changes to their screens.

## 7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The procurement process complies with the regulations of the Council's Contract and Procurement rules and the Public Contract Regulations 2015. All contracts and contract variations will be in a form approved by legal officers in the Commissioning and Procurement team.

## 8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no internal resource implications with this decision.

## 9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1  Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2  In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3  In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

## 10. CONSULTATIONS

Consultations have taken place with LCC with regards to the procurement.

## 11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

## 12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded and published if applicable.

<b>VERSION:</b>	<b>1</b>
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<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>Peter Hughes</b>
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<b>DATE:</b>	21/04/2023
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<b>BACKGROUND PAPER:</b>	None
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