

PASSENGER TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Transport Act 2001 and Essex Local Transport Plan presents the opportunity to improve bus stops.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 There is room for significant improvement in the maintenance of bus stops to meet the needs of bus users. Currently there is an anomaly – bus stop poles and flags signs are placed on the highway with the highway authority having no ownership or control over them, except when there is a safety issue

3. PROPOSED TRIAL

- 3.1 It has been suggested that Rochford District be used as a trial site for the County. It has a good urban/rural mix with the two main bus operators involved. The number of bus stops is estimated at around 600, although an audit would be required to check this. The amount of maintenance required is difficult to estimate, but if we assume 5% of the stops would be affected, 30 stops per year may require attention.

The bus operators are broadly in agreement with the following proposals:

3.2 Infrastructure – Bus Stop Poles and Flags, Timetable Frames

The responsibility for the supply, erection and maintenance of all bus stop infrastructure, including poles, flags and frames will be with the County Council. The County Council will accept this responsibility on the understanding that bus stops are defined as a traffic sign within the current Traffic Signs Regulations.

3.3 Infrastructure – Shelters

The local authority, normally the District, will continue to be responsible for the provision and maintenance. For urban shelters this may be through agreements with companies like Adshel and in rural areas with Parish Councils. In some locations, shelters would be provided by private developers as part of their planning obligations.

3.4 **Bus Stop Poles and Flags** – these will be supplied and maintained by the Area Highways and Transportation Manager using the partnered works contractor, Alfred McAlpine.

3.5 **Timetable Frames** – the intention is to include these with the infrastructure; this will be a Local Authority responsibility - in this case Essex County Council. It may be that this is a responsibility of supply rather than fixing of maintenance. Further discussion will be required.

3.6 **Timetable Displays** – Bus operators will be responsible for ‘posting’ information in frames and keeping information up to date.

3.7 **Role of the Borough Council in Cleaning Foot Way Area**

Discussions will be required with Rochford District Council concerning cleaning regimes for foot ways around bus stops/shelters, seats, glass and frames/timetable displays, litter bins, street lighting, etc. This would be part of a partnership agreement.

Subject to the various agreements required, the trial would start in 2002/3

4. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

4.1 It should be possible to address some of the effects of vandalism at bus stops within the trial.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Improved levels of confidence may lead to an increase in the use of buses.

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Whilst detailed funding arrangements have yet to be finalised, the improved maintenance of bus stops would be funded from the Local Transport Plan so there would not be an additional burden on the existing budget allocated to highway maintenance in Rochford District.

7. PARISH IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Parishes served by bus routes should benefit from a higher level of bus stop maintenance.

8. RECOMMENDATION

It is **RECOMMENDED**:-

That the Committee notes the proposal to trial a higher level of bus stop maintenance in Rochford District.

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Background papers:-

Memorandum from Public Transport Infrastructure/Development Manager to Highways and Transportational Services Managers 29/10/2001 and reply dated 2/11/2001.