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| Report to | Norwich highways agency committee | Item |
| | 26 July 2012 | |
| Joint Report of | Head of city development services & Director of environment, transport & development | 6 |
| Subject | The better bus area bid for the Norwich area, an overview | |

Purpose

To inform members of the contents of the successful Better Bus Area bid that received Department for Transport funding.

Recommendation

To note the report.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority to make Norwich a prosperous city and the service plan priority of delivering the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy Implementation Plan.

Financial implications

The Better Bus Area funding will see £2.9M invested in improving public transport in the greater Norwich area in 2012/13 and 2013/14.

Ward/s: All wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Bremner – Environment and development

Contact officers

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Background documents

Bid document

Report

1. In March 2012, Norfolk County Council secured £2.6m of Government funding for a series of major public transport improvements that will improve bus travel for passengers, visitors and commuters in Norwich, as well as delivering a boost to the city's economy. The bid was written with the full support and input of Norwich City Council, and was strongly supported by the local bus companies.
2. The bid, worth £2.9m in total (with £300k being funded by Norfolk county council) , was described as 'impressive' by the Department for Transport and effectively allows Norwich to fast track a range of transport improvements previously agreed in the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy (NATS). The package will deliver more than 30 projects and brings benefits to bus users, cyclists, pedestrians, coach, taxi and car users
3. The money could only be spent in areas of population greater than 100,000 so the bid was limited to the Norwich Policy Area.
4. Monies are to be spent during the period 2012/13 to 2013/14. The allocation of funding is as follows; £2.037m capital and £0.817m revenue.
5. The delivery of the Better Bus Area project has been split into 17 separate work packages. These range from improved ticketing, information and signage, to new infrastructure and changes to traffic management in the city to assist public transport. A full list of schemes is attached as appendix 1.
6. This committee will play a key role in the direct delivery of 4 of the schemes. These are :
 - The removal of general traffic from Stephens Street and Surrey Street
 - The provision of an uphill bus lane on Grapes Hill
 - A review of bus layover spaces, coach parking and demand responsive transport parking places within the city
 - A review of waiting and loading restrictions on bus routes to reduce congestion.
7. Over the coming months this committee will receive a number of reports to approve for consultation these schemes, and to consider the results of those consultations. The first of those reports is included in this agenda; the provision of an uphill bus lane on Grapes Hill.
8. Members may already be aware that the bid for funding for a contribution of £500k towards the Chapelfield North scheme from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) was unsuccessful. Making Chapelfield North two way for buses, freight and access is an essential element of the NATS proposals for the city centre and links directly with the Grapes Hill and Stephens Street schemes in the BBA project. Officers are currently investigating alternative sources of funding for the shortfall in the monies for the Chapelfield North scheme.

Appendix 1 – List of work packages

BBA1 - St Stephens Street and Surrey Street

Removal of general traffic from St Stephens Street and consideration of removal of general traffic from Surrey Street

BBA2 - Grapes Hill Bus Lane

New up-hill bus lane on Grapes Hill with retention of existing highway traffic lanes

BBA3 - Strategic Traffic Light Priority

Review of more than 160 traffic signalled controlled junctions and upgrade to Strategic Traffic Light Priority for buses where appropriate

BBA4 - Electronic Signage

New electronic signage at key transport interchanges, including Norwich Bus Station, Norwich Park & Ride sites, Tombland, Anglia Square, Theatre Street, N&N Hospital, UEA and at locations along transport corridors

BBA5 - Printed and Electronic Information

Additional timetable cases and printed travel information across the entire Norwich Policy Area, including downloadable transport guides and the use of new technologies utilising mobile phones

BBA6 - Rail Station Interchange

Improved interchange between bus and rail at Norwich rail station through the use of poster cases and posters, signage and electronic information

BBA7 - Highway Signage

Additional highway signage on approaches to Norwich promoting Park & Ride sites

BBA8 - Voluntary Quality Partnership

Work with bus operators First, Konectbus and Anglian Bus operating along Dereham Road and Newmarket Road corridors to introduce agreed minimum standards for attributes that could include service frequency, headway, vehicle quality, roadside information, marketing and promotion and customer service

BBA9 - Bus Infrastructure Enhancements

Bus shelter enhancements along Dereham Road / Newmarket Road and bus stop upgrades along all key transport corridors into Norwich

BBA10 - Smarter Choice Campaign along BRT Corridors

Smarter choice campaign along Dereham Road and Newmarket Road corridors including consideration of the use of posters at bus stops and bus backs, use of local media (newspaper / billboards / radio), social media and engagement with households

BBA11 - Bus Layover and Coach Facilities

Identify appropriate layover locations for buses as well as appropriate pick-up and drop-off locations for visiting coaches and demand responsive transport

BBA12 - Review Waiting Restrictions

Review existing waiting restrictions and introduce appropriate measures to aid flow of buses

BBA13 - CCTV access

Enable CCTV access from Park & Ride sites and bus station back to County Hall to aid monitoring and provide improved customer service

BBA14 - Fusion and PlusBus ticketing and 16-19 year old ticketing

Review and promote existing Fusion multi-operator ticket and existing PlusBus bus/rail ticketing. Work with bus operators on the availability of reduced fares for 16-19 year olds

BBA15 - Smart Ticketing for Park & Ride

Introduce an electronic Smartcard ticketing system for all 6 Park & Ride services

BBA16 - Travel Pack for Businesses

Enable businesses and other trip attracting locations, such as dentists, doctors, libraries and tourist information locations to generate up-to-date public transport information.

Provide businesses with access to 'live' travel information for bus stops serving their premises.

Seek to introduce personalised travel plans for employees

BBA17 - Mobile applications

Enable up-to-date travel information to be accessible on the move via mobile phones