

**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****THURSDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2021**

The following questions were received from Mr. M.J. Hunt CC

**“The budget for bus stops, shelters and passenger information**

1. What has been the budget for bus stops, shelters and passenger information over each of the last five years.

**Reply from Chairman**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Budget – covering:</b>  <b>Bus shelter cleaning and maintenance contract.</b>  <b>Bus service area guides and timetables.</b>  <b>Bus stop infrastructure (flag, poles and shelters).</b>  <b>Public Transport Technician equipment.</b>
<b>2017/18</b>	<b>£70,000</b>
<b>2018/19</b>	<b>£70,000</b>
<b>2019/20</b>	<b>£67,500</b>
<b>2020/21</b>	<b>£67,500</b>
<b>2021/22</b>	<b>£50,500</b>

N.B the above table does not include real time information costs.

2. How many new bus shelter requests have been received and how many agreed in that time.”

**Reply from Chairman**

Since 2018 we have received 7 new shelter requests that have not been agreed and 4 replacement shelter requests which have all been agreed.

**“The Passenger Transport Strategy**

The Passenger Transport Strategy, agreed by Cabinet states:

11.1 Leicestershire County Council will continue to provide and maintain infrastructure that facilitates passenger transport use, in cooperation with operators where appropriate. This includes bus stop poles/flags and shelters, information display cases at stops, and interchange facilities.

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Selection of locations for any new bus stops and shelters will follow good practice and will particularly consider accessibility for people with impaired mobility.

3. What is “good practice” when selecting the location of bus shelters and where can it be accessed?

**Reply from Chairman**

Experienced County Council officers make the assessment by using their knowledge of the network and by carefully considering each request based on frequency, usage and locality as well as reviewing daily passenger usage. As there is no specifically defined scoring criteria covering other factors to determine shelter requests, it is recognised that this approach requires a review. The intention going forward is to work towards developing a clear policy for bus shelter requests which will include a scoring framework for a range of factors.

4. When considering “accessibility for people with impaired mobility” is this likely to include members of the public with learning difficulties and unable to use a private car?

**Reply from Chairman**

The strategy and paragraph referenced covers physical impaired mobility and consideration is given to accessibility in terms of raised kerbs where appropriate and low floor vehicles. Through the siting of bus stops (i.e. flag and pole) access to public transport is available on a universal basis to everyone in Leicestershire regardless of disability or learning difficulties. It is therefore anticipated that those with learning difficulties and unable to use a private car would have access, as above, or to other County Council transport provision i.e. Special Educational Needs (SEN) transport/Adult Social Care transport where eligible.

5. How many bus shelters do not meet your criteria or have low patronage and for how long do we continue to maintain them?

**Reply from Chairman**

Once a shelter is installed, usage is not monitored, and we would only look to remove a shelter in extenuating circumstances. The reason for this is that the cost to remove a shelter is far greater than the on-going cleaning and maintenance costs. In addition, the bus network is subject to change and where operators reinstate services, a bus stop may once again come back into use. The shelters that are the responsibility of the County Council are maintained through an external contractor.

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6. Until several years ago several local highways functions, including bus shelters, were delegated to district councils covering unparished areas. Can you confirm these so called "Highways Agencies" have now ceased and the responsibility for bus shelters now resides exclusively in accord with the County's Passenger Transport Strategy?

**Reply from Chairman**

There are over 800 shelters throughout the county and the County Council are responsible for 217 of these. The remaining shelters are the responsibility of parish or district council both in terms of ownership and on-going maintenance. The District Council previously supplied bus shelters under the local Agency agreement with the County Council however they no longer provide these.

7. With the growth of 'on demand' services will some bus shelters become redundant?

**Reply from Chairman**

No. Fixed bus stops and shelters will continue to be used for demand led services with the addition of some virtual stops where appropriate.

8. What proportion of passengers now use 'on demand' services as opposed to a 'traditional' bus?

**Reply from Chairman**

Currently in Leicestershire there is only one 'on demand' service which is in the New Lubbethorpe area. This therefore represents a very small number of passengers using this type of service. The County Council has been successful in receiving the recent Rural Mobility Fund and it is anticipated that a further new 'on demand' service will start early next year. Usage for the New Lubbethorpe service is growing steadily and is still a relatively new service which started in April 2019.

Please note 'on demand' has been defined as a service which can be booked via an app on the day of travel within a defined zoned. There are also approximately 47 demand responsive transport (DRT) services in the county. These services need to be pre-booked the day before travel and operate on a fixed time and destination basis.

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