

LEISURE COMPLEX AND BUS STATION PROGRAMME BOARD

Tuesday 12 July 2016

Present:-

Councillor Bialyk (Chair)
Councillors Denham, Edwards and Mrs Henson

Apologies:-

Councillors Prowse and Wardle

Also Present

Deputy Chief Executive and Democratic Services Officer (Committees) (SLS)

Justin Pickford, Baker Ruff Hannon
Iain McNeill, WSP Group

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of discloseable pecuniary interest were made.

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PRESENTATION ON THE PROPOSED INTERIM BUS STATION ARRANGEMENTS

Justin Pickford and Iain McNeill of WSP Group presented the detail and sought Members' approval to proceed with the detailed design and implementation of the arrangements for an interim solution for the Bus Station whilst the new facility was being developed. Justin Pickford referred to the last meeting of the Programme Board on 28 June when Members were presented with the details of the proposed on-street solution, including temporary bus stands on Sidwell Street, with additional stands in Paris Street and Bampfylde Street and the temporary re-routing of traffic through Western Way and Southernhay. A further period of consultation for this element of the Bus Station development had also taken place on 5 and 6 July in Southernhay and the St Sidwells Community Centre for local residents and businesses.

The construction of the new Bus Station would require its bus stands and some facilities currently provided within the existing bus station to be temporarily relocated, it was proposed that the following arrangements would be provided during the period of construction.

- minimum of 12 bus stands / stops – with weather protection and information for passengers;
- minimum of 13 layover bays;
- a travel centre / ticket sales shop;
- suitable public toilet facilities to be identified, with options being explored on Sidwell Street and Paris Street;
- bus driver welfare facilities, including showers, lockers and a rest area
- bus operator facilities – office accommodation, paying in facilities, and an operations management facility, and

- directional signage, including tactile/braille signage for the public advising of the bus stands and services at each stand, so that the bus operations were clear to all.

Iain McNeill provided the background to the technical solutions which would provide for a combination of up to 21 stands on Sidwell Street, Paris Street and Cheeke Street to allow Stagecoach greater flexibility for their operations around the city. In addition there would be 13 layover spaces in approved locations to facilitate the necessary traffic movements as the development of Paris Street commences. The stands and layover spaces would be located in the following places:-

- 7 stands on Sidwell Street North;
- 5 stands on Sidwell Street South;
- 5 stands on Paris Street;
- 4 stands on Cheeke Street, and
- 13 layover spaces in the approved locations at various times on Red Lion Lane, Verney Street, Bampfylde Street, Paris Street, Summerland Street and Sidwell Street.

He referred to the logistics of the arrangements and that every effort would be made to ensure that the appropriate traffic management was in place to deal with any potential congestion hot spots. He explained how this would be possible, subject to Devon County Council approval, with a temporary traffic solution and rerouting of the traffic and changes to the existing bus routes in those streets. Work would include the removal of 17 short stay parking spaces located on the north section of Sidwell Street to provide four bus stands, with three stands opposite. It was also confirmed that as a consequence of widening the access on Southernhay, four disabled spaces would be relocated further along the road. Access to the main Princesshay car park, Dix's Field and Broadwalk House car parks would also change, the bollards adjacent to Broadwalk House car park entrance would be removed enabling traffic to move in one direction. Members stated that it was important to ensure there was a clear signposting strategy in place.

The existing Bus Station site would need to be vacated by 30 March 2017, and the temporary facilities would need to be in place ahead of that date. It was anticipated that the highways alteration works in Sidwell Street and Paris Street would commence in December 2016 or January 2017, with the works in Southernhay commencing January or February 2017. The interim arrangements would need to be in place until the new Bus Station was completed and open to the public, and that was currently scheduled for December 2018. Any of the areas subjected to highways remodelling would be returned to their current layout in January/February 2019. In response to a question from the Chair, Iain McNeill outlined the legislation relating to the legal agreements to enforce the necessary changes to the highway.

The Chair also sought clarification on the provision for shelter for those waiting passengers, and whether there would be adequate space or protection from the elements particularly at peak times. Iain McNeill noted the plea that adequate shelter should also be appropriately located in Sidwell Street and Paris Street. Justin Pickford also responded to a request that adequate toilet provision be made.

Justin Pickford advised that should the proposals for the solution be approved by Members, the team would progress the following to continue to develop and implement the solution:-

- develop the detailed design solution;
- consult with accessibility groups;

- continue consulting with Bus Users Group, Stagecoach and other stakeholders;
- identify and procure suitable Travel Centre / ticket sales accommodation;
- identify and procure suitable Bus Operator and driver welfare facilities;
- appoint a Highways contractor to undertake the works, and
- implement the directional signage strategy

Iain McNeill also referred to ongoing discussions with Stagecoach, National Express, Megabus and Devon County Council regarding the temporary location for long distance coaches parking. Three potential options were being explored - South Street, upper Sidwell Street within the curtilage of the bus stands and Bampfylde Street, but it was recognised that each location presented its own challenge.

In response to a Member's question, the Chair confirmed that a planning application for reserved matters for the development of the new Bus Station would be considered at a special meeting of Planning Committee in the Autumn. The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that the Project Team, as well as appropriate officers from both Exeter City Council and Devon County Council would continue to work together to ensure that the best solution for the city was pursued.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) Members approve the detailed design, procurement and implementation of the proposed Interim Bus Station arrangements as presented at the meeting; and
- (2) Members approve the continuation of discussions with National Express, Mega Bus and Devon County Council in relation to the Long Distance Coaches, and for the Project Team to proceed with the design, procurement and implementation of the most appropriate temporary Long Distance Coaches solution.

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DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was anticipated that the next Leisure Complex and Bus Station Programme Board meeting would be held on Monday 7 November at 6.00pm, or another date to be determined to coincide with the programme gateway.

(The meeting commenced at 4.00 pm and closed at 4.50 pm)

Chair