

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**STREET SCENE and ENVIRONMENT SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD**

**30 October 2019**

**Report of the Director of Street Scene, Leisure & Technical Services**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision**

**1 PROVISION AND OPERATION OF BUS SHELTERS**

**Summary**

**This report brings forward a proposed new and improved Agreement for the provision and operation of bus shelters.**

**1.1 Introduction**

1.1.1 There are currently 110 bus shelters located across the Borough, providing protection to the public from inclement weather. Whilst 13 of the shelters are provided and maintained directly by the Council, the other 97 are provided and maintained on the Council's behalf by a third party operator, Clear Channel UK Limited. A 5 year agreement is in place between the Council and Clear Channel which expires at the end of this calendar year.

**1.2 Current Agreement**

1.2.1 The current Agreement requires Clear Channel to provide and operate 97 bus shelters, in return for exclusive advertising rights on the bus shelters. At the present time Clear Channel advertise on 65 of the 97 bus shelters using posters in illuminated advertising panels.

1.2.2 Clear Channel clean and repair the shelters and abide by advertising user restrictions determined by the Council. For example, no advertising with a political or religious content is allowed.

1.2.3 The Agreement is cost neutral to the Council, and therefore offers excellent value for money. Clear Channel are one of only two main operators in the market, both of whom work under the same financial arrangement. In addition to the Council, Clear Channel currently operate in 6 other local authorities in Kent.

1.2.4 Over the last 5 years Clear Channel has provided a good level of service and it is not considered there would be any benefit in changing operator. A waiver from Contract Procedure Rule 13 has therefore been approved by the Council's Statutory Officers.

### **1.3 New Proposal**

1.3.1 Clear Channel has presented a new proposal to the Council. It has identified that the main change in the advertising market is the move away from paper advertising to a digital approach. Not only is this more cost effective, but also enables a greater range of sales options as the adverts can be changed instantly and remotely. In overview, the new proposal includes the following:-

- a 5 year Agreement at no cost to the Council, based on the existing Agreement;
- an ability for Clear Channel to upgrade to digital. This initially will involve up to 10 sites located close to town centres or main link roads;
- with regard to the 13 bus shelters not included in the Agreement, Clear Channel will agree to supply 10 new 2 bay shelters into the contract;
- all shelters will over the term of the contract be upgraded to LED lighting.

1.3.2 The new digital platform offers a number of benefits to this Council. It provides greater opportunity for advertising to local businesses, the Council will be offered free access to voidage (unsold space) and the screens will be available for emergency messaging. The new digital shelters will also have mobile phone connectivity, and will be beacon enabled. This will provide the potential for the Council to benefit from a marketing mobile platform in the future.

### **1.4 Legal Implications**

1.4.1 The formal agreement is currently being finalised with Clear Channel, and will be subject to review by Legal Services. A waiver has been sought from Contract Procedure Rules with regards to the procurement process.

### **1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

1.5.1 There are no financial implications as the Agreement is cost neutral. Taking this into account the proposal offers excellent value for money to this authority.

### **1.6 Risk Assessment**

1.6.1 Clear Channel are changing its focus away from paper to digital advertising in line with industry trends.

### **1.7 Equality Impact Assessment**

1.7.1 No issues identified.

### **1.8 Policy Considerations**

1.8.1 Asset Management

1.8.2 Community

1.8.3 Digital

1.8.4 Climate Change

**1.9 Recommendations**

1.9.1 It is **RECOMMENDED to CABINET** that the Council enters into an improved 5 year Agreement with Clear Channel UK Ltd for the provision and operation of Bus Shelters across the Borough.

Background papers:

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Nil

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