

Subject: GREAT YARMOUTH MARKET PLACE BUS TRIAL

Report to: Executive Management Team, 10th November 2016
Economic Development Committee, 21st November 2016

Report by: Kim Balls, Senior Strategic Planner, Growth

SUBJECT MATTER/RECOMMENDATIONS

Current status of the Great Yarmouth Market Place Bus Trial initiative.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That EMT & Economic Development Committee:

- Note the scope and current status of the Great Yarmouth Market Place Bus Trial
- Allow officers to continue developing a 'southbound' Market Place Bus Trial for a period of 12 months (dates to be confirmed)
- Allocate £25,000 from the Town Centre Initiative Fund for project costs

1. INTRODUCTION

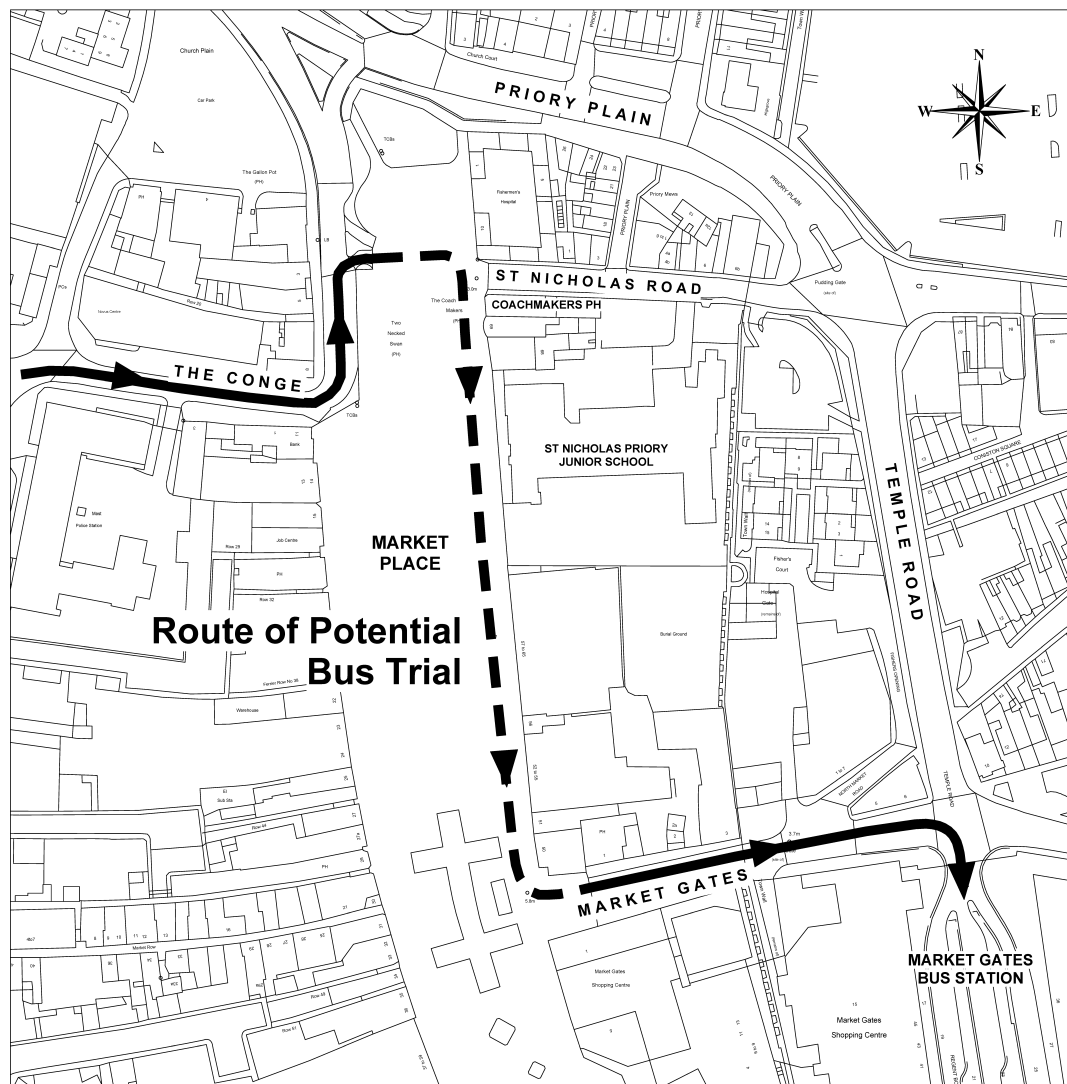
- 1.1 In June 2015 the Council commissioned masterplanning specialists Carter Jonas to prepare a masterplan with the aim of providing a future vision for Great Yarmouth Town Centre to 2030, with a particular focus on: the Market Place, the Conge, Hall Plain, the Rows, Regent Road and King Street.
- 1.2 As part of the emerging Great Yarmouth masterplanning work, Carter Jonas has identified running some bus services through the Market Place as being potentially beneficial to increasing footfall and improving the vitality of Great Yarmouth Town Centre.
- 1.3 This report briefs Members on the scope for investigating the location of a potential bus trial through Great Yarmouth Market Place, for a period of at least 12 months, as endorsed by the Great Yarmouth Town Centre Members Working Group on 5th October 2016.

2. GREAT YARMOUTH MARKET PLACE BUS TRIAL

- 2.1 The concept of the bus trial was suggested by Carter Jonas and principally seeks to bring more people directly into the Market Place to boost pedestrian footfall and stimulate town centre activity.
- 2.2 The original bus trial concept involved running bus services one-way northbound along the western (Palmer's store) side of the Market Place and out via the Conge towards Fullers Hill. This proposal was investigated and a site visit was held on 5th October 2016 with representatives from Great Yarmouth Borough Council, Norfolk

County Council and First Bus. A double-decker bus was used by First Bus so that the impact of a large bus in the pedestrianised area of the Market Place could be seen at first hand. It was quickly concluded by all those present at the site visit that running buses along the western side of the Market Place would not be a sensible idea for practical and safety reasons.

- 2.3 It was suggested by the Members of the Town Centre Working Group that the bus trial should run southbound along the eastern (St Nicholas Primary School) side of the Market Place, running along the front of the Coach Makers PH and the Edinburgh Woollen Mill store between the junction of St Nicholas Road and Market Gates Road (see below). This area currently has limited access to motor vehicles, for servicing only, and was felt to be much more capable of accommodating buses as it is wider than the western side of the Market Place and currently has less pedestrian activity. Buses could exit the Market Place before Market Gates Shopping Centre and travel to the central bus station.



- 2.4 It was indicated by First Bus that if buses were able to access this stretch of the Market Place, then it could be possible to re-route buses so passengers are dropped off here before proceeding on to the Market Gates bus station. It was highlighted by the bus company that more people would alight than board the buses.
- 2.5 Therefore, to enable an effective and commercially viable bus trial, it would be necessary to create a through route across the Market Place car park (using the existing car parking entrance) in line with the route of St Nicholas Road to enable buses to cross from the Conge. Buses from Caister-on-Sea and the Barrack Estate would be able to gain access via St Nicholas Road. Based on figures from First Bus, these physical changes would allow 29 out of 42 services per hour to run southbound along the eastern side of the Market Place.
- 2.6 Issues that would need to be considered and addressed before a southbound Market Place bus trial could be implemented are:
- Addressing the conflict between buses and schoolchildren outside the St Nicholas Priory Primary School
 - Preventing illegal stopping of vehicles which could block bus passage
 - The present condition of the road surface
 - Air quality mitigation measures
- 2.7 Assuming these factors can be overcome and a trial was implemented it would be important to monitor its impact to measure the extent of the potential uplift in pedestrian footfall and vitality of the town centre area. On 5th October 2016, Members of the Town Centre Members Working Group agreed that Officers should continue to investigate trialling the southbound Market Place bus route, for a period of 12 months (dates to be confirmed).

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Potential loss of revenue from car park and works to reconfigure the car park entrance to allow buses to cross the Market Place. Only a small number of car parking spaces would be affected. Also, automatic barriers (with sensors) to be investigated to avoid traffic enforcement implications. To be funded by the Town Centre Initiative Fund, with finance being sought from the Great Yarmouth Sustainable Transport Fund (Norfolk County Council/New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership).

4. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 As identified in 2.6 – will need to be fully investigated prior to trial taking place.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 As part of the emerging Great Yarmouth masterplanning work, Carter Jonas has identified running some bus services through the Market Place as being potentially beneficial to increasing footfall and improving the vitality of Great Yarmouth Town Centre.
- 5.2 This report briefs Members on the scope for investigating the location of a potential bus trial through Great Yarmouth Market Place, for a period of at least 12 months, as endorsed by the Great Yarmouth Town Centre Members Working Group on 5th October 2016.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

That EMT & Economic Development Committee:

- Note the scope and current status of the Great Yarmouth Market Place Bus Trial
- Allow officers to continue developing a 'southbound' Market Place Bus Trial for a period of 12 months (dates to be confirmed)
- Allocate £25,000 from the Town Centre Initiative Fund for project costs

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	n/a
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	n/a
Existing Council Policies:	Corporate Plan. Town Centre Improvement.
Financial Implications:	See paragraph 3 above.
Legal Implications (including human rights):	Potential Traffic Regulation Orders required
Risk Implications:	See paragraph 2 above.
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	n/a
Crime & Disorder:	n/a
Every Child Matters:	n/a