



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

Agenda Item No: 2.5

Demand Responsive Transport

To: Transport and Infrastructure Committee

Meeting Date: 16th November 2022

Public report: This report does not contain appendices which are exempt from publication under Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended,

Lead Member: Mayor Dr Nik Johnson

From: Oliver Howarth, Bus Strategy Manager

Key decision: No

Forward Plan ref: N/A

Recommendations: The Transport and Infrastructure Committee is recommended to:

- a) Retrospectively authorise the expenditure to continue to procure the Ting service for the period 17 July to 16 October 2022; and
- b) Retrospectively authorise the tender and award of a new Ting DRT bus service contract in West Huntingdonshire starting 27 November 2022 for up to three years (1 year + 1 year + 1 year) at a cost of £424,950 per annum.

Voting arrangements: A vote in favour by at least two thirds of all Members (or their Substitute Members) appointed by the Constituent Councils who are present and voting, to include the Members appointed by Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council, or their Substitute Members

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This paper is to outline the outcomes of the Ting trial in West Huntingdonshire, with the Transport and Infrastructure Committee (TIC) asked to retrospectively award a new Ting DRT bus service contract in West Huntingdonshire starting 27th November 2022 for up to three years (1 year + 1 year + 1 year) at a cost of £425,000 per annum.
- 1.2 In addition, this paper provides information around the need to retrospectively authorise the expenditure to continue to procure the Ting service for the period 17th July to 16th October 2022.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Ting Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) service commenced running across 360 square km of west Huntingdonshire in October 2021. This is a trial of technology and of operating principles and the service performs much better than anticipated. The service also meets the Authority's Vision for Bus by giving far more travel options to rural residents
- 2.2 A report to the Combined Authority Board in March 2022 explained that patronage was well ahead of expectations and permission was granted to continue the trial. This decision was based on a sound commercial basis.
- 2.3 Subsequently the operation rolled forward and continued to operate without formal sanction for payment from July to October (although the Bus Trials budget, which exists for such purposes was more than adequate for funding it). Retrospective sanction by TIC is requested.
- 2.4 The service is carrying significant passenger numbers (nearly 30,000 per annum) and contributing to modal shift with excellent customer feedback (see information later within the report). Officers made the decision to retender the service from 16th October, rather than allow for its withdrawal. This was an error, as confirmation and approval should have been sought through the TIC in a timely manner. A management review of governance and decision making for the Ting project was commissioned in October to look at this issue and the matter highlighted in Paragraph 2.3.
- 2.5 Much work is required to create the appropriate legal framework for procurement and the necessary time is considerable. The full procurement process was followed by the ten-day standstill period and the conclusion was that Vectare would provide the service. In order to ensure the smooth transition from the current provider, Stagecoach, to Vectare it was agreed through an Officer Decision Notice (ODN 368/2022) to create the necessary time by obtaining a 6-week extension for Stagecoach, from 16th October to 27th November. It is intended that following the agreement by the TIC that Vectare will set up and commence the Ting service by 28th November.
- 2.6 Having considered the reduced cost of the service, the cost per passenger being not far from average for a supported service, and the improved customer offer, including the trial use of two zero emission electric vehicles, this report also requests formal authority for the award of a new contract to Vectare for Ting for a period of 1 + 1 + 1 years, at a price of £424,950 per annum.

Ting performance

- 2.7 The decision to retender the Ting service was informed by an analysis of how the service has

been performing since October 2021. The key points from that analysis are set out below:

Number of passenger journeys was 29,600 in this first year October 2021 to October 2022, expected to rise to over 36,000 in Year Two (November 2022 to November 2023).

- Fare income: £35,272 in Year One, expected to rise to £47,000 in Year Two.
- Cost per passenger journey was £14.35 in Year One, (Oct 21 to Oct 22) expected to fall significantly in Year Two. As of 1 October 2022, this figure placed Ting 30th out of CPCA's 46 bus services when ranked by cost per passenger.
- Performance information – People booking immediate transport on the app are typically being picked up within 17 minutes. Every journey length will vary even when the passenger is on the bus and therefore is not measured.
- Usage information – A survey of 296 Ting passengers was conducted in February 2022 and at the same time we conducted face to face interviews with 96 passengers on our conventional bus services in the Ting operating area, which are 150 Tilbrook to St Neots, and the 400/401 Huntingdon rural circulars.

2.8 The market research shows a significant breakthrough into carrying teenagers and young adults on Ting, and that the service was carrying significantly more people to work and school.

2.9 The Market Research indicates clearly that Ting is opening a new demographic for public transport in line with the Authority's remit and our Vision for Bus, and is delivering modal shift, indicated by the number of 16–20-year-olds using Ting and the 121 passengers commuting to/from work. The numbers indicate that the Ting service is generating new traffic in significant volumes.

Market research outputs for Ting v Conventional buses (150, 400, 401)

Age Group, Ting	16-18	19-20	21-34	35-59	60+
Number of pass	39	21	61	117	57
% of total	13%	7%	21%	40%	19%
Age group, conventional	16-18	19-20	21-34	35-59	60+
Number pf passengers	3	0	13	18	59
% of total	3%	0%	14%	19%	63%

What is the purpose of your travel on Ting?

Commuting to / from work	Education	Health services	Daily errands	Childcare	Govt or social svcs	Leisure activities	Other
121	34	39	98	10	8	111	30
27%	8%	9%	22%	2%	2%	25%	7%
and on Conventional services							
8	6	2	55	2	3	17	0
9%	6%	2%	59%	2%	3%	18%	0%

Given a choice, would you prefer EITHER a normal bus service OR Ting?

View of Ting passengers

Normal bus service	15	5%
No answer	2	1%
Ting	279	94%
Total	296	

View of conventional passengers

If only Ting was available, would you use Ting?

Yes	74	80%
No	19	20%

2.10 The statistics above indicate it would have been very disadvantageous to our passengers to have not extended the Ting service contracts.

Significant Implications

3 Financial Implications

3.1 The cost of the Ting service in year 1 was £479,500 which was funded out of the Bus Trial Services budget line. The annual cost of Ting on the new contract from 28th November 2022

will be £424,950, a saving of around £55,000 per annum. It is funded by the Bus Trial Services budget to end of this financial year.

- 3.2 In 2023/24 onwards the Ting service will be part of the Bus Service Support Budget within the MTFP. The funds to operate the service for the initial 12 months to November 2023 are confirmed to be available.
- 3.3 It is intended to release £260,000 of Section 106 money for operating Ting around St Neots as the DRT format meets all the local service requirements in a single package. When this happens, it will reduce the cost-of-service provision over three years.

4 Legal Implications

- 4.1 A new contract with Vectare will be entered into from 27th November 2022 for a period of up to 3 years to deliver the TING service.

5 Public Health Implications

- 5.1 There are no public health implications

6 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

- 6.1 CPCA is considering the opportunity to agree to two of the new Ting fleet being small zero emission electric minibuses.

7 Other Significant Implications

- 7.1 None

8 Appendices

- 8.1 None

9 Background Papers

[Combined Authority Board reports 25 November 2020](#)