

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>DfC Support for Council Variable Messaging Signs (VMS)</b>
<b>Committee Report Submitted To:</b>	The Leisure and Development Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> June 2019
<b>For Decision or For Information</b>	For Information

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)</b>	
Strategic Theme	Protecting & enhancing our environment and our assets
Outcome	Generating economic and social returns without compromising the sustainability of our natural assets.
Lead Officer	Director of Leisure and Development

<b>Budgetary Considerations</b>	
Cost of Proposal	£14,800 Council. £228,580 DfC
Included in Current Year Estimates	<b>YES/NO</b>
Capital/Revenue	Capital
Code	Event Management
Staffing Costs	N/A

<b>Screening Requirements</b>	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date: N/A
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date: N/A
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date: N/A
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date: N/A
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date: N/A
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date: N/A

## **1.0 Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the opportunity that has arisen for Council to acquire five mobile Variable Messaging Signs (VMS) and associated equipment for use at the Open and subsequently at all the other events throughout the Borough that would benefit from such signs to inform drivers, improve traffic flow and reduce congestion.

## **2.0 Background**

As part of the planning process for the Open, officers discussed the need for VMS with DfC officials. It became clear that the advantages provided by a VMS system not only applied to the Open but could also be of great benefit for all the other major events throughout the Borough over the years to come as part of the project legacy that would benefit the wider area. Accordingly, DfC has agreed to fund the purchase of a VMS system for Council.

## **3.0 VMS System**

The VMS system comprises 5 mobile trailer mounted full colour signs that can be towed to suitable locations and set up to operate independently for a period of up to 6 months but that are envisaged to be used at various locations throughout the Borough for periods ranging from a few days to a few weeks depending on the requirements of the event at which they are being used.

The system also includes 2 mobile controllers that are used to programme the messages that are displayed on the signs and car park counters at the 5 off-street public car parks in Portrush. The system can interface with existing car park counters in other towns and additional car park counters, mobile VMS signs and fixed VMS signs can be added over time if Council so decides.

The system allows for event and car park information to be communicated to drivers passing the points where the signs are located thus informing drivers, improving traffic flow and reducing congestion. This improves the overall visitor experience which enhances both the sustainability of existing events and the viability of new ones. Information from car parks fitted with counters can be updated to the VMS signs automatically and other information is input via the mobile controllers which would normally be operated by the events or parking staff at the control centre for each event.

### **3.1 Procurement**

Crown Commercial Service (CCS) operate a Framework Contract for the purchase of VMS systems which is used by most public authorities throughout the UK including DfI Roads Service. The specification of the equipment required was drawn up with input from Councils Infrastructure and Car Park staff, DfI Roads Service and PSNI. The specification was dispatched to the CCS Framework suppliers and 1 completed return was received. The return was evaluated and found to meet the required specification.

The tendered cost to supply all the specified VMS equipment is £228,580 and DfC has provided a Letter of Offer for the full amount.

### **3.2 Other Costs**

Installation of the car park counters is estimated at £2,400 per site over the 5 sites; thus £12,000 in total. Councils Infrastructure Car Parks section has indicated that it has budget for this installation and intends to bring recommendations for installation of counters at further car parks throughout the Borough in due course.

Based on information provided by the supplier, the annual operating costs of the system are estimated as follows; Annual Maintenance - £1150/y, Data charges - £108/y and software licence - £750/y totalling £2,008/y

### **3.3 Timing**

DfC wish the benefits of the VMS system to be available as soon as possible including for use at the Open and the other summer 2019 events thereafter. There is a 14 week lead-time for production of the new signs but the supplier has offered to provide alternative signs on loan until the new signs are ready at no cost other than £2800 for transport. To ensure supply of these signs in advance of the Open the order needed to be placed by the end of May / early June 2019 and accordingly to secure the £228,580 of funding and as the other costs (£14,800) are well within delegated limits, officers are proceeding with the placing of the order for the equipment.