

Cabinet

10 March 2026

Gateway 1 Procurement and Gateway 3 Contract Award – Bus Information Screens

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Simon Curry, Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration

Report from: Ruth Du-Lieu, Deputy Director of Place

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Summary

This report seeks the Cabinet's approval to award a contract for the procurement, installation, and maintenance of thirty-four new real-time information (RTI) bus screens and associated CCTV. These will replace the existing outdated system and improve the accuracy, reliability and accessibility of bus information across Medway.

1. Recommendations

- 1.1. The Cabinet is recommended to approve the procurement, installation and on-going maintenance of 34 new RTI screens and associated CCTV at Chatham Waterfront Bus Station and key bus stops across Medway.
- 1.2. The Cabinet is requested to delegate authority to the Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration, to finalise contractual arrangements and implementation details.

2. Suggested reasons for decisions

- 2.1. A small national market and benchmarking exercise demonstrates that partnership organisation Kyndi provides a high-quality, good-value, and deliverable solution. A direct award ensures the Council can meet BSIP funding timescales and address operational issues with the existing system.

3. Budget and policy framework

- 3.1. The recommendations in this report fall within the Council's existing policy and budget framework. The provision of RTI aligns with the Council's Local Transport Plan and Bus Service Improvement Plan. It will also support the One Medway Council Plan priority for clean, green, safe and connected communities by improving opportunities to use public transport. The project

will be funded through the Department for Transport's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) grant allocation for 2025/6.

4. Background

- 4.1. The current RTI infrastructure across Medway is outdated and increasingly unreliable, with frequent outages and no active maintenance contract in place. This has led to growing inconsistencies in the information provided to passengers, contributing to reduced confidence in the bus network and increased complaints.
- 4.2. Improving RTI provision is a core element of Medway's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), which identifies better real-time information at bus stops as essential to supporting passenger growth, improving journey planning, and encouraging modal shift. This is strongly supported by recent consultation findings for Medway's Local Transport Plan, where real-time information at bus stops was the single most frequently requested improvement to bus services, selected by 60% of respondents (the highest of all bus-related measures).
- 4.3. The Council's BSIP funding for 2025/26 includes a dedicated capital provision for upgrading Medway's RTI screens. A commissioning strategy was considered through the Council's Gateway process. Both Gateway 1 (Project Commencement / Options Appraisal) and Gateway 3 (Contract Award) reports were approved by the Council's Procurement Board on 26 January 2026, confirming the preferred procurement route and supplier.

5. Options

- 5.1. Option 1 – Do not proceed with the procurement and installation of thirty-four new RTI screens and associated CCTV at Chatham Waterfront Bus Station and key bus stops. This option would avoid any immediate capital expenditure; however, it would leave the existing RTI system in its current unreliable state. This option would not align with BSIP and Council Plan objectives, and risks undermining bus patronage and network confidence.
- 5.2. Option 2 – Proceed with a direct contract award to Kyndi under the Teckal exemption. This option provides a legally compliant, cost-effective and timely route that ensures the Council can utilise BSIP grant funding within the agreed timeframe. This is the recommended option.

6. Advice and Analysis

- 6.1. The RTI provision will comprise four banks of summary screens on Platforms A and B at Chatham Waterfront Bus Station (CWBS), along with individual screens on Platforms C and D, and a further 28 RTI units installed at key bus stops across Medway. All screens will incorporate CCTV to enhance passenger security, as well as vandal-resistant sensors and 4G communication to improve reliability and protect against service disruption. The system will provide full functionality for delivering real-time service information and custom messaging when required, with comprehensive

maintenance and servicing included as part of the proposed contract. Contractual arrangements allow for a 5-year term with a possible 3-year extension.

- 6.2. A direct award to Kyndi under the Teckal exemption is proposed due to the very limited national market for real-time information systems, with only around four viable suppliers. Kyndi has proven capability in delivering similar RTI systems for other local authorities and already provides integrated 24/7 operational support, maintenance and emergency repair services. This route offers a compliant, cost-effective solution and ensures delivery within BSIP funding timescales.
- 6.3. RTI sites will be prioritised based on passenger numbers, social need, route importance, safety considerations, geographic coverage, and technical feasibility. Priority will be given to locations with a history of RTI provision. These criteria reflect BSIP priorities, equalities duties, and the findings of recent transport consultation, particularly the strong public demand for improved real-time information. Applying these consistently ensures that investment delivers the greatest benefit for bus users, offers value for money, and supports Medway’s wider strategic objectives.
- 6.4. The proposal will deliver a substantial improvement in passenger information across Medway. Providing accurate, real-time updates will help passengers plan journeys with greater confidence, supporting more reliable journeys across the network and promoting sustainable travel choices that contribute to improved air quality, health and well-being. A Diversity Impact Assessment is appended to this report.

7. Risk management

- 7.1. The following table considers key risks arising from this report:

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Delay in commissioning	A delay in the installation and go-live of the new RTI screens	Robust project plan and existing strong working relationship with supplier	CIII
RTI screen reliability	Risk of technical faults	Comprehensive maintenance, servicing and emergency call-outs included	CIV

Likelihood	Impact:
A Very likely	I Catastrophic
B Likely	II Major
C Unlikely	III Moderate
D Rare	IV Minor

8. Consultation

- 8.1. The Council's Bus Service Improvement Plan was subject to a period of engagement and consultation prior to adoption. The proposals for RTI were considered and supported by the Council's Active Travel Group, and by local bus operators as part of the Enhanced Partnership. Informal engagement will be undertaken prior to the installation of the RTI screens. This approach is considered proportionate given that RTI installation does not alter service patterns, routes, or infrastructure footprints.

9. Climate change implications

- 9.1. [The Council declared a climate change emergency in April 2019](#) - item 1038D refers to this and has set a target for Medway to become carbon neutral by 2050.
- 9.2. As part of this commitment, the Council's Climate Change Action Plan highlights the need to reduce emissions from transport, one of the largest contributors to Medway's carbon footprint. Improving the availability and accuracy of real-time bus information will make public transport more reliable and convenient, helping residents feel more confident in choosing the bus over private car use. By encouraging a shift to more sustainable travel, the upgraded RTI network directly supports the Council's climate objectives, contributing to reduced congestion, lower carbon emissions, and improved air quality across Medway.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1. The cost of developing, procuring, and installing RTI screens is £767,918. This cost will be met through BSIP grant funding from the Department for Transport. Maintenance and servicing costs of £40,000 per annum will be met from existing transport revenue budgets set by the Council.

11. Legal implications

- 11.1. Medway Council has the power under the Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 and the Localism Act 2011 to enter into contracts in connection with the performance of its functions. The Council is also permitted to directly award this contract to a partnership organisation under the "Teckal exemption" and the proposed award meets all the necessary criteria for allowing such an award.
- 11.2. The process described in this report complies with the Procurement Act 2023 and Medway Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 - Diversity Impact Assessment

Background papers

None