

BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL

Environment Committee

17 September 2026

Bus Shelter Improvement Plan Funding

Recommendation

The Committee RESOLVE to agree:

- The list of bus shelters for replacement under the North East Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA) Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding scheme.
- The timeline of delivery of the project.

Ward(s)

Newsham, Plessey, Bebside & Kitty Brewster, Croft, Cowpen, South Blyth, Wensleydale.

Risk Management

Funding received from the North East MSA maximum £105,000.
£11,000 allocated within the BTC annual budget for this scheme (from the 2025/26 budget). There is £11,000 allocated within the 2026/27 budget to bus shelters, not specifically this scheme.
Total project budget £116,000

There is a risk of not meeting the final delivery deadline and not being eligible for repayment through the MSA grant scheme. There is therefore a risk that BTC are liable for costs – see below for timeline considerations.

Payments are made in arrears following receipt of the proper paperwork. All Officers working on the project are aware of the funding conditions and will work to fulfil them fully.

The Grant Funding Agreement states: The Recipient acknowledges that NCC's funding obligations under this Agreement are conditional upon receipt of funding from North East MSA and that the Recipient shall bear all risks associated with delivery, operation, maintenance, and compliance with the Project requirements,

Objective

1. Promoting the environmental, social, and economic wellbeing of the town and its community.
2. To provide high quality core services in the most effective and efficient manner which will deliver the Council's agreed priorities and objectives.

Crime Prevention

The purpose of the funding is to provide safe bus shelters.

Public Sector Equality Duty

The purpose of the funding is to provide accessible bus shelters.

Report

Blyth Town Council has been successful in its bid for £105,000 towards upgrading 10 bus shelters as part of the Bus Shelter Improvement Plan (BSIP). This scheme is part of the UK government's National Bus Strategy, and the funding is made available through the North East Mayoral Strategic Authority (previously the North East Combined Authority: NECA) and delivered through Northumberland County Council.

The original funding application in January 2025 provisionally listed 10 shelters, but noted that BTC might require flexibility on location. While the Grant Funding Agreement specifies the original list of ten, we have had confirmation that we can make changes to the list.

The original list does in fact need to be updated due to changes which have taken place over the extended period of time that we have been waiting for the outcome of the funding. Four of the shelters have already been replaced, and other shelters not originally listed have deteriorated rapidly, making them more of a priority for reasons of safety and quality.

At a meeting of the Environment Committee on 27 February 2025 the Committee resolved that that if the application successful, a further report would be brought to the Environment Committee for a decision on final locations.

The Principal Officer and General Services Assistant reviewed the list taking account of the condition inspection reports for bus shelters and the safety and accessibility aims of the project to generate the list of 10, which has 6 new sites suggested (in bold). Detailed list in Appendix 1.

1	Black Diamond	https://maps.app.goo.gl/opSt5qwgfz9NxgE16	Newsham
2	Opposite Black Diamond	https://maps.app.goo.gl/MiC1iBzeovwSjyL7A	Newsham
3	Plessey Rd (12th Ave Junction)	https://maps.app.goo.gl/qzBKIEWyX5QXUuc66	Plessey
4	Tynedale Drive	https://maps.app.goo.gl/fyPqPK3zYQvjL8U69	Bebside &KB
5	Regent Street	https://maps.app.goo.gl/4B5a6Bo64iswuVYEA	Croft
6	Cowpen Road, Crematorium	https://maps.app.goo.gl/CTCaSUZW1r95UYqP8	Cowpen
7	Briardale Road (adj to field)	https://maps.app.goo.gl/cqLwPx35UFX1dTGG9	Cowpen
8	Links Road	https://maps.app.goo.gl/2kGsdzejTfnkrazo6	South Blyth
9	Broadway	https://maps.app.goo.gl/q435ypMVPiVJ25r89	Wensleydale
10	Plessey Rd (CRC side)	https://maps.app.goo.gl/BmbaJiBfGz9kCrBu7	Plessey

There was an initial indicated budget of either £10,000 or £11,000 per shelter. Within this, BTC must cover shelter removal and disposal, installation and associated costs such as traffic management. The focus will be on the provision of a typical shelter with seating, with additional features such as lighting being considered where overall funds allow and where appropriate (e.g. lighting not required if a streetlight is immediately nearby).

The question has been raised by members around engaging a commercial advertising company to replace all shelters, as they do not charge directly but instead make money through advertising revenue. However, this is not eligible under the grant conditions: *The Recipient shall not use the Grant for any commercial purpose.*

Timeline

Within the Grant Funding Agreement, the timeline is now extremely tight for delivery. Please note that some of the key dates in the Grant Funding Agreement (including the Commencement Date) had already passed by the time BTC received confirmation.

The external deadlines set by the Grant Funding Agreement are:

Key Dates	Date
Approval Date: - being the date by which the Project Application was approved	1st June 2026
Commencement Date: - the date on which the Agreement commences and the earliest date that expenditure incurred by the Recipient in relation to the Project can be Eligible Expenditure,	20th July 2026
Practical Completion Date - being the date by which the Project is deemed by NCC to be completed. i.e. all physical asset outputs have been delivered in accordance with Application and evidenced through the monitoring returns process and following a final monitoring closure visit by NCC	Before 31st March 2027
Financial Completion Date - the date by which all Eligible Expenditure is to be defrayed.	31st March 2027
Final Claim Date - the date after which NCC is under no obligation to pay the Recipient any further Grant towards the Project.	1st June 2027

Monitoring Period - the period during which Monitoring Reports and Transaction Sheets shall be provided by the Recipient	The period from 20th July 2026 to 1st June 2027
End Date - being the date on which the Agreement comes to an end.	31 March 2028 or Asset Life (10 years from Completion for Assets >£10k)

These inform our internal deadlines:

Key dates	
Draft the tender specifications	From 10 th September
Tender issued	21 st September 2026
Tender deadline	19 th October 2026
Evaluation and selection	w/c 19 th October 2026
Work commissioned	w/c 26 th October 2026
Expected lead times	8 weeks
Installation estimated	February 2026

Supplier lead times will be gathered as part of the tender process. As an indication, when quotations were gathered in winter 2025 for living bus shelters, the delivery period from two suppliers was 4-6 weeks and 8 weeks from order date. This suggests a delivery and installation date of February, accounting for Christmas break and weather conditions.

Officers emphasise that the timelines are very tight and there is a risk that any delay creates financial risk as BTC may fall outside of the practical and financial completion dates outlined by NCC.

Officers will be keeping NCC contacts updated on BTC actions as part of this project.

Living Bus Shelter

It was agreed in the Environment Committee meeting of 9 December 2025 that one of the new shelters would be a living bus shelter. It was also agreed that members would not want it near a school to avoid risk, and would further delegate the decision on a location to Officers who would take into account the requirements for the shelter (no tree cover etc) with the advice of the supplier. The final decision is yet to be made, but within the list above the following sites are candidates:

1. Black Diamond, Newsham
4. Tynedale Drive, Bebside & Kitty Brewster
8. Broadway, South Blyth
9. Plessey Road (CRC side), Wensleydale

When the most likely site(s) for the living shelter is identified, Officer will liaise with the chair for a final decision.

Hannah Jenner
Principal Officer

10 September 2026

Appendix 1

New	No.	Nearest postcode	Location detail	Google map link to location	Scope of works
Y	1	NE24 4NP	Black Diamond	https://maps.app.goo.gl/opSt5qwgfz9NxgE16	Replacement 4 bay enclosed shelter with seating
Y	2	NE24 4NG	Opposite Black Diamond	https://maps.app.goo.gl/MiC1iBzeovwSjyL7A	Replacement 4 bay enclosed shelter with seating
Y	3	NE24 3NJ	Plessey Rd (12th Ave Junction)	https://maps.app.goo.gl/qzBKIEWyX5QXUuc66	Replacement cantilever with seating New enclosed (if living), or cantilever/enclosed (if regular) shelter, with seating.
	4	NE24 4DW	Tynedale Drive	https://maps.app.goo.gl/fyPgPK3zYQyJL8U69	New cantilever shelter with seating
	5	NE24 1ER	Regent Street	https://maps.app.goo.gl/4B5a6Bo64iswuVYEA	Replacement 3 bay enclosed shelter with seating
	6	NE24 5TW	Cowpen Road, Crematorium	https://maps.app.goo.gl/CTCaSUZW1r95UYgP8	Replacement 3 bay enclosed shelter with seating
	7	NE24 5LA	Briardale Road (adj to field)	https://maps.app.goo.gl/cqLwPx35UFX1dTGG9	
Y	8	NE24 3PG	Links Road	https://maps.app.goo.gl/2kGsdzejTfnkrazo6	Replacement 3 bay enclosed shelter with seating
Y	9	NE24 2PL	Broadway	https://maps.app.goo.gl/g435ypMVPiVJ25r89	Replacement 3 bay enclosed shelter with seating
Y	10	NE24 3LE	Plessey Rd (CRC side)	https://maps.app.goo.gl/BmbaJbFgZ9kCrBu7	Replacement cantilever with seating
No.	Potential for living shelter			Ward	
1	Yes - very good location			Newsham	
2	No - under trees			Newsham	
3	No - under trees			Plessey	
4	Yes			B&KB	
5	No - cantilever only			Croft	
6	No - under trees			Cowpen	
7	No - too close to trees			Cowpen	
8	Maybe - wind and seagull damage possible, but also a gateway stop			South Blyth	
9	Yes (some tree cover)			Wensleydale	
10	No - cantilever only			Plessey	