

21 April 2016**Agenda Item: 4****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT, PROPERTY
& TRANSPORT****LOCAL BUS SERVICE REVIEW & PROPOSALS****Purpose of the Report**

1. To recommend to Committee, following consultation, the cancellation, varying or replacement of services on the local and commercial bus service network as detailed in the appendix to the report.

Information and Advice

2. The County Council has a duty (Transport Act 1985) to consider local needs and which supported bus services are necessary where there are no commercial services available. In 2016/17 £3.85m will be spent on supported bus services across the county.
3. Local bus services across the county are provided in two ways:
 - (i) Commercial services which operate without funding support
 - (ii) Supported services which are subsidised by the Council

All bus services must be registered, giving a minimum of 56 days' notice to the Traffic Commissioner, who administers and manages the local bus service registration and performance service. Bus operators must also send copies of the new registrations, variations and cancellations at the same time to the County Council. On most occasions bus operators give the County Council advance notice of their intentions so that decisions on any intervention can be taken and the public notified at the earliest opportunity.

4. This report presents the final proposals for the reduction of the Local Bus budget by £420k as part of the 2015 Option for Change approved by Full Council in February 2015. Furthermore, any recommendations made in this report have followed discussions with the cross party Members Reference Group and other key stakeholders and are coordinated with the end of existing service contracts in August 2016.
5. The proposals are to withdraw support for some local bus services and to integrate the operation of other services to reduce the operational cost. It is proposed to

entirely withdraw support for one service, this will remove the peak time service from villages in South Rushcliffe but will not affect the off peak service. The remaining six proposals will reduce the level of service on the routes involved, either reducing the number of days operation or by replacing them with services connecting them to high frequency commercial routes.

6. The services affected are The Sherwood Arrow (Bassetlaw), service 47 (Gedling, Newark & Sherwood), service 54 (Rushcliffe, Newark & Sherwood), Service 127,198 (Bassetlaw), service 728, 531,532,533 (Ashfield, Gedling, Broxtowe), service 831,832 (Rushcliffe). The specific services with further detail are shown in Appendix 1.

Reasons for Recommendations

7. The recommendation and continued financial support meet the budgetary targets set by Full Council in 2015 whilst maintaining the objectives of promoting public transport, reducing congestion, promoting economic recovery and offering travel choice.

Statutory and Policy Implications

8. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Implications for Service Users

9. The provision of local bus services enables users to access key services, jobs, training and leisure. The arrangements detailed above have been made to ensure access to the key priorities of employment, education, health and essential shopping wherever possible.

Financial Implications

10. The proposed local bus reduction of £420k meets the requirements contained in the OFC approved in 2015 to reduce the local bus budget by £720k by 2017/18.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Committee:

- 1) Approve the withdrawal and reduction of the local bus support contracts contained in Appendix 1

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Environment, Transport & Property

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Statutory and Policy Implications

11. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Constitutional Comments [L.Mc 07/04/2016]

12. The Recommendations in the report fall within the Terms of Reference of the Transport and Highways Committee.

Financial Comments

13. The financial implications are set out in paragraph 10 of the report.

Background Papers

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None.

Electoral Divisions and Members Affected

All