

CHANGES TO WHIPPET SERVICES

To: Economy and Environment Committee

Meeting Date: 10 August 2017

From: Executive Director, Economy, Transport and Environment

Electoral division(s): All

Forward Plan ref: Not applicable **Key decision:** Yes

Purpose: To consider the implications of the withdrawal of bus services by Whippet Coaches and agree an action plan.

Recommendation: Committee is recommended to:

- a) agree to fund replacement bus services for up to one year from local bus reserve funding;
- b) request that officers undertake a full review of contracted bus services and community transport provision with a view to identifying further efficiencies and alternative means of provision; and
- c) to report back to Committee on this work within 9 months to allow a decision to be made on the provision of contracted bus services and Community Transport.

<i>Officer contact:</i>	<i>Member contacts:</i>
Name: Paul Nelson Post: Interim Head of Passenger Transport Services Email: paul.nelson@cambridgeshire.gov.uk Tel: 01223 715608	Names: Cllr Ian Bates/Cllr Tim Wotherspoon Post: Chair/Vice-Chair Email: ian.bates@cambridgeshire.gov.uk tim.wotherspoon@cambridgeshire.gov.uk Tel: 01223 706398

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Cambridgeshire County Council has received notification from Whippet Coaches that they are deregistering a number of bus routes from 3 September 2017. These routes are a mixture of commercially operated and existing contracted routes.
- 1.2 The County Council has a duty under the 1985 Transport Act to consider whether replacement services are required, and if so, has the power to provide such services.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 Whippet Coaches operate a range of bus services in the County. These services are a mixture of commercial services, which are operated without any direct funding from the County Council, and others on contract to the County Council.
- 2.2 The 1985 Transport Act enables operators to deregister services that they operate by registering this intention with the local Traffic Commissioner, as long as they give the required 56 days' notice. Operators have a duty to inform local authorities of this intention at the same time, but this is only for information and the local authority has no power to stop this process.
- 2.3 Whippet Coaches have registered their intention to deregister a number of contracts, which are listed under appendix A. Appendix A also shows which services are currently commercially operated and which are on contract. These services will cease to operate from 3 September 2017.
- 2.4 The commercial services have no current resource implication on the County Council, but the contracted services have a net annual budget commitment of £268,857.
- 2.5 Officers have been in discussion with Whippet Coaches to see if replacement services can be provided within existing resources. These discussions have assumed that where there is a duplication with other commercial services, such as between Bar Hill and Cambridge, that replacements will not be provided. In addition, officers have not requested a quotation to cover areas that are better served by existing community transport schemes, such as the Monday only journey to St Ives from Holywell.
- 2.6 Unfortunately, Whippet cannot provide the reduced level of service discussed within existing resources. Whippet have indicated that the additional cost to the County Council to provide this reduced service level would be between £220k and £250k per annum. For clarification, this is in addition to the current budget commitment for the contracted services of £269k.
- 2.7 Officers have also taken the opportunity to discuss the budget implications of the services continuing as close to the existing services as possible. Whippet have confirmed that to do this, with some smaller changes to service provision, would cost around an additional £550k per annum.
- 2.8 In view of the cost implications noted above officers have issued tenders for replacement services to test the market and see if alternative providers can be obtained through a competitive process.

- 2.9 Although alternative providers are being sought it is highly likely that the cost of replacing the deregistered services will be higher than the budget currently available. It is proposed, therefore, to allocate funding from local bus service reserves for up to one year in order to maintain replacement bus services. There are two potential funds available, Cambridgeshire Future Transport (£216k) and Community Transport (£346k). The level of these replacement services will depend on the bids received within the available funding.
- 2.10 Alongside this and over the next nine months, it is also proposed the officers should undertake a full review of contracted bus services and community transport provision with a view to identifying further efficiencies and alternative means of provision. This work will be reported back to Committee and its purpose will be to identify how best, within available budgets can high quality public transport be provided for communities where there are no commercial services.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- The role of local bus services remains critical to the success of the County and its employers and businesses. Local bus services continue to ensure that car traffic is reduced and does not add to the existing congestion experienced in the county.

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Local bus services offer a convenient way of accessing employment, businesses and public services; hence allowing people to live independently. That role is illustrated by the fact that a proportion of journeys made are undertaken by concessionary pass holders.

3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- A community impact assessment is attached as appendix B.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

The resource implications are discussed in the main body of the report.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- The value of the contracts would normally require a full European Union (EU) tender process. However, the timescales involved mean that this cannot be

achieved and an exemption has therefore been granted to tender for the service under requests for quotation. The contracts will be time limited until the end of March 2018 at which point a full EU tender process will take place if required.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- There is a duty under the 1985 Transport Act to secure the provision of such public passenger transport services as the Council consider it appropriate to secure to meet any public transport requirements within the County which would not in their view be met apart from any action taken by them for that purpose. The duty, however, is only to consider and there is no duty to provide services.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- A community impact assessment is attached as appendix B.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Affected members and E&E members were made aware of the service withdrawals in an email on Friday 7th July 2017.

4.7 Public Health Implications

The implications on public health of the withdrawal of routes will be determined as part of the larger review of all contracted bus services over the next year.

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Sarah Heywood
Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by LGSS Head of Procurement?	Yes Paul White
Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by LGSS Law?	Yes Fiona McMillan
Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Tamar Oviatt-Ham

Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	Yes Eleanor Bell
Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Tamar Oviatt-Ham
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	Yes Iain Green

Source Documents	Location
None	

List of deregistered services

Appendix A

Commercial services

Service 1 Hilton – Hemingfords - St Ives
Service 1A St Ives – Fenstanton – Cambridge

Service 5 St Ives - Hemingford Abbots - Hemingford Grey - St Ives
 Service 16 Huntingdon - Oxmoor Circular
 Service 21 St Ives - Earith - Somersham – Ramsey
 Service 45A Huntingdon - Houghton - St Ives
 Service 117 Cambridge City Centre - Fen Estate

Contracted services

Service 2 Cambridge - Hardwick - Toft - Caldecote – Boxworth
 Service 3 Papworth St Agnes – Papworth Everard – Huntingdon (Saturday journeys only)
 Service 7A Whittlesford - Babraham Road Park & Ride
 Service 8 Cambridge - Dry Drayton - Papworth Everard
 Service 9 St Ives - Elsworth – Hilton
 Service 12 St Ives Town Circular
 Service 15 St Ives - Swavesey – Over
 Service 18 Newmarket - Fulbourn – Teversham – Cambridge
 Service 45 Huntingdon - Houghton - St Ives
 Service 114 Cambridge City Centre - Grafton - Beehive – Addenbrookes

Appendix B

COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Directorate / Service Area	Officer undertaking the assessment
Economy, Transport and Environment (ETE) Passenger Transport	

		Name: Paul Nelson
Proposal being assessed		Job Title: Interim Head of Passenger Transport
Reduction in Passenger Transport services		Contact Details: (01223) 715608
Business Plan Proposal Number (if relevant)		Paul.Nelson@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
		Date completed: 12/7/17
		Date approved: 12/7/17
Aims and Objectives of the Service or Function affected		
<p>The Passenger Transport service provides passenger transport services to a wide range of clients across the county. This is primarily through subsidised bus services where commercially viable services cannot be provided but are considered to be needed. It also includes financial support for the community transport sector through direct grants, subsidising the cost of using community car schemes and taxicard schemes.</p> <p>In addition to the local bus service provision the Total Transport project is designed to better integrate the commissioning and delivery of transport and to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide more efficient and tailored passenger transport services to meet community needs. • To pool budgets from different providers of transport and thus allow for more efficient overall provision. • To provide a more simple and integrated means of gaining information about passenger transport services. <p>The previous CFT programme ran from 2012 and successfully changed the model of public transport investment in Cambridgeshire.</p> <p>From 2015/16, the local bus budget and all other funding towards community transport has been considered under one budget heading. This reflects the common objective of the (formerly) separate funding streams being used to help residents and visitors to Cambridgeshire access employment, education and training and public and leisure services.</p>		
What is the proposal?		

To respond to the decision by Whippet Coaches to withdraw a number of commercial and contracted services.

Who will be affected by this proposal?

A proposal may affect everyone in the local authority area or alternatively it might affect specific groups or communities, please describe

- *Whether the proposal covers all of Cambridgeshire or specific geographical areas*
- *Which particular service user groups would be affected*
- *Whether certain demographic groups would be affected more than others*
- *Any other information to describe specifically who would be affected*

All users of commercial and contracted local bus services withdrawn by Whippet Coaches. The proposal covers areas of Huntingdonshire, Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire and will particularly impact on the elderly, disabled, lower income groups and isolated communities.

What positive impacts are anticipated from this proposal?

None

What negative impacts are anticipated from this proposal?

Please see the list of disproportionate impacts below. In general the proposal will remove or severely reduce the opportunity for residents to travel and risks isolating users of these services so they are unable to access education, work and other services.

Are there other impacts which are more neutral?

None

Impacts on specific groups with protected characteristics

Specific consideration should be given as to whether the proposal has a particular or disproportionate impact on any of the groups listed below.

Please consider each characteristic and tick to indicate any where there will potentially be a disproportionate impact (positive or negative) from implementation of the proposal. Do not tick the boxes if the impact on these groups is the same as the impact on the community as a whole (described in the above sections)

Impact	Tick if disproportionate impact
Age	X
Disability	X
Gender reassignment	
Marriage and civil partnership	
Pregnancy and maternity	X
Race	

Impact	Tick if disproportionate impact
Religion or belief	
Sex	
Sexual orientation	
Rural isolation	X
Deprivation	X

Details of Disproportionate Impacts on protected characteristics and how these will be addressed

Age

The elderly form a disproportionate share of the users of supported rural bus services. The withdrawal of services will have an impact on their ability to access shops and local services and engage in social activities.

Disability

Some disabled people are unable to drive as a result of their disability. The withdrawal of services will have an impact on their ability to access shops and local services and engage in social activities

Pregnancy and maternity

Some pregnant women are unable to drive as a result of pregnancy. The withdrawal of services will have an impact on their ability to access shops and local services and engage in social activities.

Deprivation

Local bus services are used by those without access to a car. The withdrawal of services will have an impact on their ability to access shops and local services and engage in social activities.

Rural communities

Reducing local bus services will mean fewer services provided and journey choice reduced.

Access to employment and education and training

Local bus services are used by residents of all ages, but could disproportionately impact younger people who do not have access to a car due to age or finances. Again, transport choice will be reduced and the withdrawal of services will have an impact on their ability to access employment and education and training.

Isolation

Individuals within communities may feel isolated if their regular bus service to the nearest service centre (particularly in more rural areas) is removed.

Where users cannot travel or afford increased cost there will be an impact on the Council's outcomes of: Older people live well independently as they will not be able to travel to essential services such as shopping and health; People with disabilities live well independently as they will not be able to travel to essential services such as health and shopping, as well as removing opportunity to work; People lead a healthy lifestyle as older people in particular will become more housebound. There is the risk of Impact on public health and wellbeing through people's inability to travel; organisational reputation through withdrawing this ability to travel; and other services and/or external partners such as health and social care where there could be a need to travel to residents rather than residents travelling to services, as well as the social care implications of increased isolation.

