

## **The Vale of Glamorgan Council**

### **Cabinet Meeting: 3 July, 2017**

## **Report of the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport**

### **Bus Services Support Grant 2017/2018**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To advise Cabinet of the Bus Services Support Grant (BSSG) of £363,087, made available from the Welsh Government for the continued support of strategic local bus services and community transport services for the 2017/18 financial year and to agree the allocation of these funds.

#### **Recommendation**

1. THAT Cabinet notes the contents of this report and agrees the Bus Services Support Grant (BSSG) funding allocation arrangements for the Vale of Glamorgan Council in the 2017/18 financial year as set out in this report.

#### **Reason for the Recommendation**

1. To ensure continued local bus service and community transport provision through the expenditure of the BSSG.

#### **Background**

2. The Bus Services Support Grant (BSSG) is ring fenced for Public Transport Services (Local Bus and Community Transport) and associated administrative costs, together with publicity, and also minor works such as bus shelter improvements.
3. The grant has been made available to Councils for a number of years and in conjunction with Council's own budgets provides the financial support needed to enable local bus provision along key strategic corridors, enhance or fully support bus services that are not commercially viable and ensure, where appropriate, funding can be administered to community transport schemes that cater for those who are socially excluded or unable to use regular public transport.

#### **Relevant Issues and Options**

4. The total value of the BSSG across Wales is £11,075,904 for the 2017/2018 financial year compared to £11,094,918 in 2016/2017. In 2017/18 the Vale of Glamorgan received £363,087 compared to £363,809 in 2016/17.

5. One of the conditions of the grant is that a local authority must spend a minimum amount of its allocation on Community Transport Services. The minimum spend for the Vale of Glamorgan Council is £24,436, although Welsh Government has set a suggested target of £80,991 for the 2017/18 financial year.
6. The Vale of Glamorgan Council contributes to the operating costs of Voluntary Emergency Services Transport (VEST), East Vale Community Transport (EVCT) and Dinas Powys Voluntary Concern (DPVC). Applications for each operator have been assessed and the grant award is contained at [Appendix A](#). The total amount to be paid is £28,200
7. In respect of standard Local Bus Services, the BSSG has in the past been used to support a number of local bus services together with services provided on enhanced frequencies and in certain cases where there have been commercial services withdrawn but reinstated with financial support.
8. Welsh Government specify in their documentation that local authorities should use the BSSG to support their core strategic networks and enhance accessibility and connectivity to communities, essential services and facilities.
9. [Appendix A](#) lists the routes that have been identified as strategic and support the Welsh Government's key objectives as well as the proposed expenditure of £433,311.93 to be spent on these services from the BSSG. [Appendix A](#) also shows an amount that can be spent on administration, publicity or infrastructure improvements such as improvements to bus stops this amount is £6000.89.
10. [Appendix B](#) shows the amount of cross boundary income that the Council will receive from neighbouring authorities (Cardiff and Bridgend) in 2017/18. This totals £98,424.93. Cross boundary income is received as services funded by the Vale of Glamorgan operate within a different authority, given those residents access to a service that they may not otherwise have access to. The neighbouring authorities can make a contribution to the authority where these services originate. This is worked out on a percentage/mileage basis and is usually received at the end of the financial year.
11. There is no guarantee that the income will be received year on year although both Cardiff and Bridgend Councils have agreed to pay their respective sums for the 2017/18 financial year. Officers will be looking to formalise this agreement with regulatory authorities.
12. The BSSG is projected to be overspent but with the cross boundary income received from neighbouring authorities the budget will balance.

### **Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)**

13. There are no additional financial implications in respect of this report.

### **Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

14. Supporting local bus service provision assists in sustainability and helps to reduce car use, helps to reduce traffic congestion and significantly reduces CO2 emissions.

### **Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)**

15. The Bus Services and Community Transport facilities detailed in this report operate under the Terms of the Transport Act 1985. The BSSG received from the Welsh

Government must be used on bus service provision, Community Transport and associated facilities.

### **Crime and Disorder Implications**

16. Public transport assists in the provision of a safe way for the population to travel throughout the Vale of Glamorgan and beyond.

### **Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)**

17. Public transport is of particular importance to those who may not have direct access to private transport, particularly the elderly, young people and the physically impaired.

### **Corporate/Service Objectives**

18. Using the BSSG to financially strategic bus services meet the Councils wellbeing objective of promoting sustainable development and protecting our environment, by ensuring residents can use sustainable modes of transport which, with a modal shift from cars to public transport, can reduce the harm caused to the environment. In addition supporting community transport schemes safeguards those who are vulnerable and promotes independent living.

### **Policy Framework and Budget**

19. This report is a matter for Executive Decision by Cabinet.

### **Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)**

20. No Ward Member consultation has been carried out as this is a Vale wide issue.

### **Relevant Scrutiny Committee**

21. Environment and Regeneration

### **Background Papers**

Appendix A - BSSG Expenditure 2017/18

Appendix B - Cross Boundary Income 2017/18

### **Contact Officer**

Kyle Phillips - Passenger Transport Manager

### **Officers Consulted**

Accountant - Environment and Housing Services

Legal - Committee Reports

### **Responsible Officer:**

Miles Punter - Director of Environment and Housing Services