

## **The Vale of Glamorgan Council**

### **Cabinet Meeting: 7 March, 2016**

### **Report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration**

### **Supported Local Bus Services**

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

1. To outline to Cabinet proposed alterations to local bus services that will enhance bus service provision for residents in the Vale of Glamorgan.

#### **Recommendations**

1. THAT Cabinet approve the extension of the current contract for Supported Bus Service 321 (Llantwit Major to Talbot Green) to 31st March, 2017.
2. That Cabinet approve the revision of the bus timetable for the partially supported bus 303/304 (Bridgend - Barry - Cardiff) service on Sundays and bank holiday Mondays at an additional cost of £6,000 per annum funded from the Public Transport budget.
3. That Cabinet agree the Council entering a de minimis Contract Agreement with Cardiff Bus to re-schedule the existing commercial service (95A, Cardiff – Penarth) to serve the Penarth Heights development, initially using Section 106 planning funds from the development in this area to support the service, and pending a further review of the service during Spring 2017.
4. That Cabinet agree to again support the re-scheduling of the Cardiff Bus summer commercial Service 91 (Cardiff – Penarth Pier) to include Penarth Marina and further extend the bus service through to Cosmeston Country Park and Lakes funded from the Public Transport budget.

#### **Reasons for the Recommendations**

1. Bus Service 321 (Llantwit Major – Talbot Green), to provide continued service provision beyond the current service's trial period (i.e. from 5th January 2015 to 31st March 2016) that was initially agreed by Cabinet (Cabinet minute C2563, 1st December 2014 refers).
2. Bus Service 303/304 (Bridgend – Barry – Cardiff), to improve service reliability without reducing actual service provision, as the current schedule is based on timings that are no longer achievable in reality.

3. Bus Service 95A (Cardiff – Penarth), to provide local bus service provision and a bus stop facility in the Penarth Heights area of Penarth following a new residential redevelopment in this area.
4. Bus Service 91 (Cardiff – Penarth Pier), to help promote the local attractions and businesses in the Penarth area by making them more accessible to visitors arriving on foot from Cardiff Bay via the Cardiff Bay Barrage and from Cardiff City Centre and Cardiff Bay by public transport during the summer months.

## **Background**

2. Bus service 321 (Llantwit Major - Talbot Green) commenced operating on 5th January 2015 following an open tender procedure in order to establish what the market could economically provide with the most advantageous benefits for customers. Cabinet agreed to award the service to New Adventure Travel Ltd and trial the service until the 31st March 2016 (Cabinet minute C2563, 1st December 2014 refers).
3. The latest patronage data available for this service identified a total of 1,765 passengers using the Bus Service during January 2016.
4. The Service is operated by New Adventure Travel, who recently agreed to include Pentre Cwrt, Llantwit Major on its route, following a number of requests from local residents for it to do so.
5. Bus service 303/304 (Bridgend - Barry - Cardiff) was introduced in June 2013 following an open tender procedure to procure continued service provision on what were then known as Services 95 (eve), 145, X5. However, it was agreed that the successful service provider (New Adventure Travel Ltd) could re-brand these services, along with a degree of additional service provision provided on a commercial basis, as Service 303/304.
6. The Sunday and bank holiday Monday element of the current Service 303/304 schedule forms part of the original tendered element of service supported by the Council (i.e. Service X5) and generally provides a 2-hourly service in both directions between Bridgend and Cardiff via Llantwit Major and Barry, as well as other locations on route.
7. The latest patronage data available for this service identified a total of 22,789 passengers using the Service during October 2016.
8. Bus service 95A (Cardiff - Penarth) is currently provided on a commercial basis by Cardiff Bus. However, following the residential re-development of Penarth Heights and request for service provision in this area, Cardiff Bus were approached to see what options were available to include provision on one of its existing commercial services serving Penarth. This is considered to be the lower cost option based on a 'de minimis' Contract Agreement (an on-going arrangement providing both parties remain in agreement).
9. Bus service 91 (Cardiff - Penarth Pier) is usually provided on a commercial basis by Cardiff Bus and runs between Cardiff City Centre and Penarth Pier via Cardiff Bay and Penarth Town Centre on an hourly basis during the day. Service 91 is usually a Summer Sunday and bank holiday Monday service but the support last year provided by the Council and Penarth Town Council extended the Service and turned it into weekend as well as a bank holiday Monday service.

10. In 2015 the Council's Passenger Transport Team tendered for service provision in line with previous summer service provision for Penarth (i.e. Service P1), but also gave the opportunity for alternative options to be considered. This subsequently resulted a contract being awarded to Cardiff Bus with their summer weekend and bank holiday service 91 being rescheduled to include Penarth Marina on route and further extend it beyond Penarth Pier to Cosmeston Country Park and Lakes.

## **Relevant Issues and Options**

### **Bus Service 321**

11. The current Contract Agreement with New Adventure Travel Ltd for the local bus service 321 (Llantwit Major - Talbot Green) is due to terminate after service provision on Thursday, 31st March 2016, as initially agreed by Cabinet. However, with Cabinet approval, the Contract Agreement can be further extended up to a maximum period of 5-years (i.e. until 4th January 2020, or sooner depending on continued financial resources to support it) in agreement with New Adventure Travel Ltd.
12. There is no alternative public transport service that directly connects the towns of Llantwit Major, Cowbridge and Talbot Green on a regular Monday to Saturday schedule. Any loss of this Service would cause significant transport problems for a number of local residents and users that now depend on this service, as they would instead have to rely on private transport (if available), taxis or the Council run Greenlinks Community Transport service (if available to accommodate an individual request).
13. In view of the need for Bus Service 321 it is proposed to extend this Service for a further year to 31st March 2017 at the same cost (plus any inflationary award due). The operator New Adventure Travel has agreed to this contract extension providing additional promotion of the service is undertaken by the Council to encourage greater use of the Service.

### **Bus Service 303/304**

14. The schedule for bus service 303/304 (Bridgend - Barry - Cardiff) was developed many years ago at a time when there was less traffic on the roads. Minor timetable changes have been applied in an attempt to resolve time keeping problems, but delays continue to be experienced by the Operator and time keeping is getting worse.
15. Without the introduction of additional resources by the operator (i.e. an additional vehicle and driver), the problem cannot be resolved leaving the operator exposed to possible penalties imposed by the Traffic Commissioner for the Welsh Traffic Office, which could include the possible loss of the operator's licence. Therefore Cabinet approval is sought in order to increase payments by £6,000 per annum for this Contract to enable the operator to provide the additional resources required to provide an achievable schedule on Sundays and bank holiday Mondays without the loss of actual service provision. Without Cabinet approval the operator will have to introduce a reduced service timetable to enable existing resources to meet a more achievable timetable.

### **Bus Service 95A**

16. Cardiff Bus has offered to re-route its commercial Service 95A in the Penarth area in order to serve the Penarth Heights development. Monday to Saturday daytime the

service would run every 30 minutes from Cardiff to Llandough Hospital then split once per hour clockwise and once per hour anti-clockwise to serve Redlands Road, Stanwell Road, Penarth Town Centre, Penarth Heights and The Cowslip.

17. The current Contract Agreement for this Bus Service can be provided on an annual basis up to and including 2019 between the first Saturday in July and the last Sunday in September.
18. Other additional options were also considered to serve the new development such as evening and Sunday service provision and further extension of the route to include Penarth Esplanade. However, the prices quoted for these options are not considered financially viable at this time.
19. It should be noted that existing service provision provided by Service 95A along the majority of Redlands Road and Stanwell Road will still be available but the service will run in the opposite direction hourly.

### **Summer Bus Service 91**

20. Previous years have seen this Service operate from July to September, however, as Penarth Town Council have offered again to contribute to financially supporting the service it is proposed to provide the enhancement to Service 91 from Saturday 30th April 2016 until Sunday 25th September 2016. This is in line with the operation of Summer Service 91.
21. Running an extension to the existing Summer 91 bus service is the most cost effective option for the Council and Penarth Town Council. Other options, such as running a standalone service are not seen as financially viable at this time.
22. It is anticipated that the extension of Bus Service 91 (Cardiff – Penarth Pier) will again encourage greater visitor numbers to Penarth and the Vale of Glamorgan over the summer months.

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

23. The cost of Bus Service 321 (Llantwit Major - Talbot Green) is estimated at £42,700 per annum. The recommendation in this report will incur no further costs to the Council.
24. The cost of Bus Service 303/304 (Bridgend - Barry - Cardiff) is estimated at £210,914 per annum. An additional £6,000 per annum is required to support the outlined proposal. This increase in cost can be funded from the Public Transport Budget.
25. The current Contract Agreements provide employment for drivers employed by New Adventure Travel, support of this proposal would provide additional employment for another driver.
26. To amend the Bus Service 95A (Cardiff - Penarth) the estimated cost per annum is £60,696; split £193.02 per operational day (Mondays to Fridays, excluding bank holidays) and £228.13 (Saturdays), as quoted by Cardiff Bus.
27. The cost of this service can initially be met by the use of the use of Section 106 monies from the Penarth Heights development. Should these S106 monies not be made available for this Service then it would not operate as outlined in this Report as the current supported bus budget cannot accommodate any additional bus services.
28. To alter Bus Service 91 (Cardiff – Penarth Pier) the estimated cost per annum is £8,845. The cost of this service is split between the Council and Penarth Town

Council, with the latter providing a maximum contribution of £4422. The cost of this service can be met in 2016/17 by the Public Transport budget.

29. The above costs for Bus Services may increase depending on inflationary increases applied from 1st September annually following a Contract's first anniversary, which are calculated from certain relevant indices.
30. The Contract Agreements can be terminated at any time throughout the Contract's term should financial resources become insufficient.

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

31. Public Transport can reduce the number of vehicles used and therefore reduce carbon emissions which can damage the environment.
32. Increasing and improving the public transport network in the Vale of Glamorgan can lead to greater usage of bus services and thus enhance the sustainability of such services.

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

33. The provision of supported local bus services is provided the Transport Acts 1985, 2000 and Transport (Wales) Act 2006. It is discretionary and the Council can defend any provision, or the lack of it, on the grounds of availability and targeting resources.

### **Crime and Disorder Implications**

34. 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)**

35. These services can be used by all persons no matter of gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, beliefs or language and thus providing equal access to employment opportunities, services and facilities within the community.
36. Welsh residents who meet the age (60yrs plus) or certain disability criteria and are in possession of a free Welsh concessionary bus pass would be entitled to free travel on all these services under the existing Vale of Glamorgan Concessionary fare scheme.
37. All young persons aged 16 to 18 years of age that are in possession of the new 'Young Persons Travel Discount Card' issued by the Welsh Government are entitled to cheaper travel.
38. The specifications of all vehicles to be provided under the terms of these Contracts must be compliant with 'Equality Act 2010' requirements.

### **Corporate/Service Objectives**

39. The Council's objective with regard to local bus service provision is "to work closely with transport stakeholders to achieve a more efficient, equitable and sustainable transport network in the Vale of Glamorgan".
40. The provision of a reliable and efficient public transport service provides alternative and sustainable means of travel and ensures good accessibility for those without access to private modes of transport.

## **Policy Framework and Budget**

41. This is a matter for Executive decision.

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

42. There is no statutory requirement for consultation regarding the provision of public transport.
43. Penarth Town Council has been consulted with regard to its joint support of Service 91 with the Council.
44. As the report covers a number of areas in the Vale of Glamorgan no ward member consultation has been carried out.

## **Relevant Scrutiny Committee**

45. Economy and Environment

## **Background Papers**

None

## **Contact Officer**

Emma Reed, Head of Visible Services and Transport

## **Officers Consulted**

Committee Reports - Legal  
Visible Services and Transport Accountant  
Head of Regeneration and Planning  
Principal Planner Development Contributions  
Passenger Transport Manager  
Public Transportation Officer

## **Responsible Officer:**

Miles Punter, Director of Environment and Housing Services