

The Vale of Glamorgan Council

Cabinet Meeting: 6 June, 2016

Report of the Cabinet Member for Building Services, Highways and Transportation

Bus Services Support Grant 2016/2017

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform Cabinet of the Bus Services Support Grant (BSSG) of £363,809 that has been made available from the Welsh Government for the continued support of the local bus services for the 2016/2017 financial year. The report also outlines how the BSSG will be used.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet approves the acceptance of the sum of £363,809 Bus Services Support Grant (BSSG) for 2016/2017.
2. That Cabinet approves the use of the BSSG revenue funding as detailed at [Appendix A](#) to this report.

Reasons for the Recommendations

1. To ensure continued local bus service and community transport provision through the expenditure of the BSSG.
2. To authorise the allocation of the BSSG Funding for 2016 / 2017.

Background

2. The Bus Services Support Grant (BSSG) is ring fenced for Public Transport Services (Local Bus and Community Transport Facilities) and associated administrative costs, together with publicity, and also minor works such as bus shelter improvements.

Relevant Issues and Options

3. The total value of the Grant across Wales is £11,096,918 for the 2016/2017 financial year compared to £11,175,347 in 2015/2016. In 2015/16 the Vale of Glamorgan received £366,347 (uplifted to £370,450 following on from reconciliation of finances). This year the Council is to receive less at £363,809.

4. One of the conditions of the grant is that a local authority must spend a minimum amount of its allocation on Community Transport Services. Our minimum spend for this would be £24,479, although Welsh Government has set a suggested target of £81,164 for the 2016/17 financial year. The Vale of Glamorgan Council will contribute £28,200 to Community Transport Operators in the 2016/17 financial year.
5. The Vale of Glamorgan Council contributes to the operating costs of VEST (Voluntary Emergency Services Transport), EVCT (East Vale Community Transport) and DPVC (Dinas Powys Voluntary Concern) as well as our own community transport scheme - Greenlinks. Applications for each operator have been assessed and the potential grant award is contained at [Appendix A](#).
6. In respect of standard Local Bus Services, the BSSG has in the past been used to support a number of additional services together with services provided on enhanced frequencies and in certain cases where there have been commercial services withdrawn but reinstated with BSSG.
7. 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.
8. [Appendix A](#) shows the routes that have been identified as strategic and support the Welsh Government's key objectives as well as the proposed expenditure on these services.
9. [Appendix B](#) shows the amount of cross boundary income that the Council received from neighbouring authorities (Cardiff and Bridgend) in 2015/16. Cross boundary income is received as services funded by the Vale of Glamorgan operate within a different authority, giving those residents access to a service that they may not otherwise have. 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.
10. As there is no binding agreement in place for payment of cross boundary income, it is very much an "informal agreement" between authorities. 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 2016/17 financial year. This payment is usually received in September following on from any inflationary price awards.
11. For this purpose Services 321 and 95 (UHW Extension) will initially be funded from the Council's established budget. When the cross boundary income is received from neighbouring authorities then these services will be funded from this income. Any money put back into the Public Transport budget can then be used for bus service enhancements, bus stop/shelter improvements and publicity.

Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)

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

Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)

13. 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

14. 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)

15. 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

16. The provision of a reliable and efficient Public Transport Services provides alternative means of travel and ensures good accessibility for those without access to private transport. This links with the Council's Corporate Plan (2016-2020) wellbeing objective W02 (An Environmentally Responsible and Prosperous Wales).
Objective 4: Promoting sustainable development and protecting our environment.
Action ER9 seeks to implement bus and community transport services as part of the Visible Services and Transport Service Plan.

Policy Framework and Budget

17. This is a matter for Executive decision.

Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)

18. No Ward Member consultation carried out as this matter is a Vale wide issue.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

19. Environment and Regeneration.

Background Papers

[Appendix A](#) - Proposed Expenditure for BSSG 2016/17

[Appendix B](#) - Cross Boundary Income 2016/17

Contact Officer

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Officers Consulted

Accountant - Environment and Housing Services

Legal - Committee Reports

Responsible Officer:

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