

Meeting of:	Place Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	Tuesday, 14 July 2026
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Place Scrutiny Committee
Urgent Decision Procedure Used	N/A
Item Type	Part I
Report Title:	Bus Service Provision through “Poets Corner” in Penarth
Portfolio Holder:	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Places
Lead Officer:	Operational Manager Transport Services

1.0 What is this report about?

- 1.1 Following a request from a member of the public to consider “Bus service provision and routing in Penarth – specifically the removal of the historic Route 93 / 'Poets Bus' through Poets Corner and the adequacy of current alternative provision, including consultation, decision-making, and equality impacts”, this report informs of the decisions taken to change the route of Supported Local Bus Service 93 via Redlands Road as opposed to Wordsworth Road.
- 1.2 The information and evidence provided by the requesting member of the public can be found at Appendix 1 to the report.

2.0 What are the Recommendations?

	Recommendations – What and How?	Reason for Recommendation – Why?
2.1	To consider the detail and context provided in this report	To fully understand the changes to bus services in the area and the reason for these.
2.2	To consider the re-routing of Service 93 via Redlands Road as opposed to Wordsworth Avenue.	To scrutinise the implications of proceeding / not proceeding with this re-routing of bus services and the risk of a loss of local bus service provision for the community.

3.0 What is the background to this report?

- 3.1 Prior to Service 93 becoming a Council contracted service, Service 93 was operated by Cardiff Bus on a commercial basis with no financial support from the Council. However, following the pandemic and end to the Welsh Government funded ‘Bus Emergency Scheme’ (BES) that had supported local bus service provision throughout Wales, the

service was identified as no longer profitable and would be withdrawn if continued funding was withdrawn. Subsequently, as this issue was widespread throughout Wales, an exercise was undertaken by all LA's to identify services under threat of cancellation when BES funding would end and to put forward a case to Welsh Government for continued funding.

- 3.2 With the exception of Local Bus Service 94/96 (evenings) and those remaining commercial, as well as Service 905, all current Council supported services including Service 93 were tendered based on existing schedules as agreed with the Region (S.E. Wales). This funding for these services would be through the new Bus Network Grant (BNG) that would be required to provide continued service provision due to the economic climate that has seen a significant increase in prices required to supply transport services. The Welsh Government BNG funding in effect replaced BES, but via a different mechanism and to ensure the network is maintained up until a point that Bus Franchising in Wales is progressed.
- 3.3 The current Contract for Supported Local Bus Service 93 followed an open tender via Sell2Wales the Welsh Government's public procurement portal and open to all suppliers to access and submit bids. Only one other tender submission was received for Service 93 at a vastly higher price and subsequently not awarded following evaluation against price and quality. The current estimated cost for FY 2026-27 for the service is contained within the Part II report.
- 3.4 After the award of Contracts for the Vale of Glamorgan Council supported services, including Service 93, an opportunity arose through additional BNG funds to extend Service 7 (a Cardiff Council supported/contracted service) through to Penarth via Llandough Hospital, Andrew Rd and the Cowslip estate to re-establish lost provision and links. This was agreed by Cardiff Council and Cardiff Bus following a request to do so by the Vale of Glamorgan Council. However, due to the operational issue experienced operating the size of bus used on Service 93 through Wordsworth Avenue, it was agreed to change the operational routes of both services and enable the smaller buses used on Service 7 to serve Wordsworth Avenue instead, and retain provision in all areas concerned, albeit with a reduction in services in the Wordsworth Avenue area. It should be noted that Cardiff Bus had indicated its intention to withdraw operating through the Wordsworth Avenue area unless this could be facilitated. This scenario would have resulted in an even greater loss to residents in this area.
- 3.5 The vehicle size now used on Service through the Wordsworth Avenue area is down from 10.8m to 9.6m, and the profile of the wheelbase also contributes to enabling the vehicle to access this area.
- 3.6 The Cardiff Council Supported Local Bus Service 7 has been revised with effect from 4th January 2026 to further extend its route through to the University Hospital of Wales (Heath) providing the only direct local bus service link currently available from the Vale of Glamorgan with no change to existing frequency. Based on current costs, to increase frequency (every 30 minutes), to give Poets Corner regular bus frequency, it is estimated the cost to the Local Authority would be in excess of £400k.
- 3.7 The main challenge with the 93 service and Wordsworth Avenue relates to the buses currently in operation. The current operator has recently renewed the fleet across the entire

92/93/94 corridor, and any changes would require them to revisit that work. This would likely have an impact on service frequency across these routes. The greater cost would be associated with bringing the highway up to a standard that allows buses to operate without obstruction, particularly in relation to limited road space and parked vehicles. It is also worth noting that residents would likely be opposed to any enforcement measures that restrict parking, even if necessary to enable reliable public transport in the area.

- 3.8 A comparison of the route of Service 92 that serves the St Pauls Avenue area of Penarth with that through Wordsworth Avenue regarding parking has been undertaken. Cardiff Bus has also advised that it may have to review the route of Service 92 through this area if inconsiderate parking cannot be overcome to ensure the unhindered access and safe progress through this area. Options to try and tackle the issue are being investigated and in consultation with colleagues in Highways.
- 3.9 Residents within the vicinity of Wordsworth Avenue are generally within reasonable walking distance of existing bus stops, with an approximate walk time of between 5 and 7 minutes to access services on Redlands Road.
- 3.10 As part of the request for consideration a bus stop at the junction of Tennyson Road and Wordsworth Avenue was put forward. The distance from this proposed stop is 0.4 miles to the stop on Redlands Road where bus users can catch services 7, 93 and 305. Travelling in the opposite direction the distance to the stop on Windsor Road, via the Dingle footbridge, is also 0.4 miles. At this stop bus users can gain access to the 92, 93 and 94 services. A slightly longer distance of 0.6 miles will give users access to the 7, 92, 93 and 94 services from the bus stop on Stanwell Road, outside of Penarth Conservative Club.
- 3.11 The concentration of services along Redlands Road is due to it being a common section of route of the different routes that vary elsewhere but equally provides a high frequency of service between Redlands Road and Penarth Town Centre/Cardiff; something that is often requested to improve bus service provision generally.
- 3.12 While it is not disputed that Wordsworth Avenue has lost service frequency and this will have had an impact on residents in the area, the Council had to consider the whole bus network when the option was put forward by Cardiff Bus, to put provision back into the Cogan area that was devoid of a service.

4.0 What issues are there to be considered?

- 4.1 Financial Sustainability – The service is no longer commercially viable and now relies on grant funding. The current estimated cost for FY 2026-27 for the service is contained within the Part II report. Ongoing provision must be considered in the context of budget pressures and value for money.
- 4.2 Dependence on External Funding – Continued operation is linked to the Welsh Government's Bus Network Grant (BNG), which replaced the temporary Bus Emergency Scheme. Any future changes to this funding stream may impact the long-term viability of the service.

- 4.3 Limited Market Competition – The tender process attracted very limited interest, with only one alternative bid received at a much higher cost. This reduces flexibility and competitive pricing when procuring the service.
- 4.4 Operational Constraints – There are ongoing challenges relating to vehicle size and route suitability, particularly in areas such as Wordsworth Avenue, which require smaller vehicles to maintain access.
- 4.5 Service Changes and Network Integration – Adjustments to Service 93 and the extension of Service 7 have altered service provision in some areas (e.g. reduced frequency in Wordsworth Avenue), which may impact passenger accessibility and satisfaction.
- 4.6 Parking and Highway Issues – Inconsiderate parking is affecting the safe and reliable operation of services (including Services 92 and 93), and unresolved issues may lead to further service changes or route withdrawals.
- 4.7 Risk to Service Continuity – Operators have indicated that without operational adjustments (e.g. route changes), services may be withdrawn, which would significantly impact local connectivity for residents.

5.0 How evidence has been used to inform the report, including the views of others?

- 5.1 To cancel the Contract with Cardiff Bus and re-tender based on a route serving Wordsworth Avenue would have a high likelihood that the Council would be unable to fund the new Contract with another supplier prepared to serve it due to limited budget and ongoing financial pressures.

6.0 Next Steps

- 6.1 Ongoing Monitoring – Continue to closely monitor the performance, reliability, and cost of Service 93 to ensure it remains deliverable and provides value for money.
- 6.2 Engagement with Operators – Maintain regular dialogue with bus operators to identify potential efficiencies, operational improvements, and mitigate risks to service provision.
- 6.3 Highway Mitigation Measures – Work with Highways colleagues to explore and implement measures to address parking issues in problem areas to ensure safe and consistent service operation.
- 6.4 Funding Review – Keep under review the position regarding Welsh Government BNG funding and assess the potential impact of any future changes.
- 6.5 Network Review – Consider the wider supported bus network, including opportunities to further integrate or revise services (such as Service 7) to improve efficiency and maintain coverage.

- 6.6 Future Planning – Prepare for potential changes linked to Welsh Government proposals for bus franchising to ensure the Council is well-positioned to respond.

7.0 How does this report support the Vale 2030 and Reshaping?

- 7.1 This report supports the Vale 2030 Corporate Plan and the Reshaping Services programme by maintaining essential bus services that promote sustainable travel and help reduce reliance on private vehicles, while ensuring residents remain connected to key destinations such as employment, education and healthcare. It demonstrates a proactive and collaborative approach through partnership working with Welsh Government, Cardiff Council and transport operators to sustain service provision despite challenging financial conditions. The report also reflects the need to make efficient use of limited resources by regularly reviewing costs, securing external funding, and seeking value for money, while continuing to adapt services to meet changing needs. Overall, it supports long-term, sustainable service delivery and forward planning, including preparation for future developments such as bus franchising.

8.0 How does this support the Five Ways of Working?

- 8.1 This report supports the five ways of working by taking a long-term approach to maintaining bus services and planning for future changes such as bus franchising, while recognising ongoing financial pressures. It reflects prevention by seeking to avoid service withdrawal and the negative impacts this would have on communities, such as reduced access to employment, education and healthcare. The report demonstrates integration through its links to wider objectives around sustainable transport, wellbeing and reducing social isolation. It promotes collaboration through joint working with Welsh Government, Cardiff Council, and transport operators to sustain services. Finally, it supports involvement by recognising the importance of maintaining services that meet the needs of residents and by responding to concerns raised about service provision and accessibility.

Resources

9.0 Finance

- 9.1 The current predicted spend on bus services in the Vale of Glamorgan is £3.419m. This is made up of Council budget, Bus Service Support Grant and Bus Network Grant. These figures do not include funding that has been set aside for additional rural bus services that are in the middle of the tender process or the 905 Rhoose train station/Cardiff Airport shuttle that is funded entirely by Welsh Government.
- 9.2 The report highlights the significant financial implications of maintaining supported bus services. The current estimated cost for FY 2026-27 for the service is contained within the Part II report. It demonstrates the need for ongoing careful financial management, including maximising the use of external funding such as the Bus Network Grant to reduce pressure on Council budgets. The limited level of competition through the tendering process and rising operational costs also present challenges in achieving best value. Regular monitoring

and review of service costs, alongside consideration of alternative delivery options and network efficiencies, will be essential to ensure that services remain affordable and sustainable in the longer term.

- 9.3 To increase the frequency of Service 7 to every 30 minutes weekdays instead of the current 60 minutes would require funding for an additional 2 buses with an annual cost of over £400k per annum.

10.0 Workforce

- 10.1 No Council employee implications

11.0 Legal

- 11.1 Any cancellation of an existing contract would need to be done in line with the current contract agreement.

12.0 Key Contacts

12.1 Who are the primary officers to contact with any comments and/or queries on the report?

Lead Officer: Kyle Phillips, Operational Manager Transport Services, kwphillips@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk, 02920 673130 Trevor Baker, Director of Environment and Housing, tbaker@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk	Democratic Services Officer: Mark Thomas, methomas@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk 01446 709279
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Thomas, Mark E

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 19 April 2026 21:17
To: Thomas, Mark E
Subject: Fwd: Submission of Scrutiny Evidence - Bus Service 93 (Poets Corner, Penarth)
Attachments: Appendix D.pdf; Appendix C.pdf; Appendix B2.pdf; Appendix B1.pdf; Appendix A.pdf

Dear Mark,

I hope you are well.

As discussed, please find below my full report and supporting evidence regarding the withdrawal of the 93 bus service from the Poets Corner area of Penarth.

This submission brings together the evidence I have gathered over recent months, including:

- A petition of over 500 local residents
- Signed impact statements from affected residents
- Photographic and comparative route evidence
- A practical proposal for reinstating the service

I have structured the report to clearly present both the impact on the community and a realistic solution for consideration by the Committee.

I am due to travel to Turkey tomorrow, but I wanted to ensure this was submitted in advance of the Scrutiny meeting. If any further information or clarification is required, I would be very happy to provide it upon my return.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kind regards,
Paul Fenton

REINSTATEMENT OF THE 93 BUS SERVICE

Poets Corner, Penarth

1. CORE ARGUMENT

The withdrawal of the 93 bus service from the Poets Corner area has had a significant and demonstrable negative impact on local residents.

The replacement service (No. 7):

- Operates only at limited weekday off-peak times
- Does not operate at weekends
- Takes significantly longer (up to 1.5 hours to Cardiff)
- Follows an indirect and impractical route

As a result:

- Residents must walk considerable distances (often 10–15 minutes or more)
- Elderly and less mobile residents are disproportionately affected
- Many now rely on taxis, creating additional financial burden
- Independence and quality of life have been reduced

There is also strong concern regarding the lack of meaningful consultation prior to the removal of the service.

2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & PETITION

This campaign has been built through direct, face-to-face engagement with residents.

- Over 500 signatures have been collected the vast majority of signatures obtained through door-to-door engagement
- Additional support gathered via:
 - Griffs Deli (Cornerswell Road)
 - Redlands House (elderly persons' complex)

This approach ensured that the views of those most affected were properly represented.

3. FUNDING CONTEXT

It has been confirmed that:

- The 93 service and 94 evening service are supported by the Bus Service Support Grant (BSSG)
- Funding of approximately £282,868 for 2025–26 has been allocated

This raises important considerations:

- Whether current service provision represents value for money
 - Whether funding could support reinstatement of the original route
 - Whether infrastructure improvements (such as the proposed bus stop) could be supported
-

4. COMPARATIVE ROUTE EVIDENCE

Photographic evidence demonstrates that buses are currently operating in areas such as St Luke's Avenue under conditions comparable to, or more constrained than, those in Poets Corner.

This challenges the assertion that physical constraints prevent the reinstatement of the 93 route.

5. PROPOSED SOLUTION

A practical and low-cost solution is proposed:

- Reinstatement of the 93 route through:
 - Wordsworth Avenue
 - Grove Terrace
 - Redlands Road
- Introduction of a redesigned bus stop and turning facility at Tennyson Road shops

This would:

- Improve accessibility
- Address safety concerns
- Provide a workable turning solution for buses
- Require minimal additional infrastructure

6. CONCLUSION

The evidence demonstrates:

- A clear and significant negative impact on residents
 - Strong and sustained community support for reinstatement
 - Questions regarding current funding allocation
 - A practical and achievable solution
-

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is respectfully requested that the Committee:

1. Review the impact of the withdrawal of the 93 service
 2. Reconsider current routing decisions
 3. Explore reinstatement of the 93 service through Poets Corner
 4. Consider the proposed bus stop and turning facility
-

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – BUS STOP PROPOSAL

Bus stop design at Tennyson Road shops showing:

- Removal of kerb
 - Extended tarmac area
 - Turning circle capability for buses
-

APPENDIX B1 – ST LUKE’S AVENUE (COMPARATIVE EVIDENCE)

Photographs demonstrating:

- Bus manoeuvrability in constrained residential streets
 - Comparable or more challenging conditions than Poets Corner
-

APPENDIX B2 – POETS CORNER ROUTE

Photographs showing:

- Current road layout
 - Bus route conditions
 - Areas referenced in the report
-

APPENDIX C – PETITION EVIDENCE

- Petition front page
 - Sample pages of signatures
 - Evidence of over 500 residents supporting reinstatement
-

APPENDIX D – RESIDENT IMPACT STATEMENTS

D1 – [REDACTED]
D2 – [REDACTED]
D3 – [REDACTED]
D4 – [REDACTED]
D5 – [REDACTED]

Signed and dated statements demonstrating:

- Reduced mobility and access
- Increased walking distances
- Financial impact (taxis)
- Loss of independence
- Lack of suitable alternatives

Paul Fenton





0:29:10:45



Petition includes over
500 signatures

Bring Back Our

93

Poets Corner



STATEMENT

Resident Impact Statement – Bus Service 93 (Poets Corner, Penarth)

Name: [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED] Penarth

Age: [REDACTED]

I live alone in [REDACTED] Penarth. I am 84 years old and suffer quite badly with sciatica. I do not drive and rely entirely on public transport.

Before the 93 bus service was withdrawn, I was able to walk just a short distance—only a couple of minutes—to the bus stop in Wordsworth Avenue. From there, I could easily travel into Cardiff or to Barry.

Since the service has been replaced by the No. 7, things have become much more difficult. The 7 takes a long time to reach Cardiff and only runs at limited off-peak times. It does not operate at all on weekends.

When the 7 bus is not available, I have to walk to Windsor Road to use the Dingle bus stop. This involves going up and down the steps at the Dingle Station bridge, which is extremely difficult for me due to the pain in my hip.

I feel very strongly that removing the 93 service has been unfair. People like myself and my neighbours have been badly let down.

Declaration:

This statement is true to the best of my knowledge and reflects my personal experience.

Signed: [REDACTED]

Date: 15/4/2026

STATEMENT

Resident Impact Statement – Bus Service 93 (Poets Corner, Penarth)

Name: [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED] Penarth

Age: [REDACTED]

I live alone in [REDACTED] Road, Penarth and was recently widowed. I suffer from breathing difficulties and rely on public transport to maintain my independence.

Before the withdrawal of the 93 bus service, I regularly travelled into Penarth town centre to shop and meet friends. These daily outings are important for both my practical needs and social wellbeing.

Since the removal of the 93 service, I have had to rely much more on taxis. I now spend approximately £30 per week on taxi fares, which is a significant financial burden.

The loss of a reliable and accessible bus service has made daily life more difficult and has reduced my independence.

Declaration:

This statement is true to the best of my knowledge and reflects my personal experience.

Signed: [REDACTED]

Date:

15.4.2020.

[REDACTED] - STATEMENT

Resident Impact Statement - Bus Service 93 (Poets Corner, Penarth)

Name: [REDACTED]

Address: Penarth

I remain very disappointed regarding the appalling, indefensible and ongoing lack of a reasonable bus route to serve the Poets' Estate area of Penarth.

While it is encouraging that the current route includes the centre of Cardiff and provides a direct bus between Penarth and the University Hospital of Wales, the service is fundamentally impractical. The journey takes approximately one and a half hours from Penarth and operates only between 10am and 4pm on weekdays.

A bus service which runs only between 10am and 4pm, five days a week, cannot meet the needs of residents. It also fails those wishing to visit family and friends and does nothing to encourage people to rely on public transport.

With no meaningful consultation and no proper consideration of residents' needs, this area has become one of the most poorly served in Penarth. Not everyone has access to a car, nor is everyone able to walk to alternative bus stops.

Based on my experience, it is clear that the current provision does not adequately reflect the needs of the local community.

I strongly support the reinstatement of the 93 bus service through Poets Corner.

Declaration:

This statement is true to the best of my knowledge and reflects my personal experience.

Signed: [REDACTED]

Date: 15/4/26

3 - STATEMENT

Resident Impact Statement – Bus Service 93 (Poets Corner, Penarth)

Name: [REDACTED]

Address: Penarth

Age: [REDACTED]

I have lived in Penarth for most of my life and rely on public transport as I do not drive.

The 93 bus service was extremely important to me. I used it regularly to travel to Barry, including visits to the Memorial Hall as a blood donor and for shopping at Morrisons.

Since its removal, I now have to walk approximately 15 minutes to reach alternative bus stops on Windsor Road or Stanwell Road. This is particularly difficult when carrying shopping, especially as I suffer from chronic foot pain.

The replacement No. 7 service does not meet my needs. It does not serve key destinations and does not operate at weekends.

The withdrawal of the 93 service has had a clear negative impact on my daily life and independence.

Declaration:

This statement is true to the best of my knowledge and reflects my personal experience.

Signed: [REDACTED]

Date: 15/4/26

[REDACTED] - STATEMENT

Resident Impact Statement - Bus Service 93 (Poets Corner, Penarth)

Name: [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED] Penarth

I live in [REDACTED] Road, Penarth and operate a local residents' WhatsApp group covering the surrounding area.

Through this group and direct contact with neighbours, I have gathered feedback regarding the withdrawal of the 93 bus service. The response has been overwhelmingly supportive of reinstating the 93 route.

Many residents have raised concerns about the limited availability and unsuitability of the replacement No. 7 service, including longer journey times and increased walking distances.

A significant number of residents have supported the petition calling for the return of the 93 service. This reflects strong and consistent community concern about the impact of the current transport arrangements.

Declaration:

This statement is true to the best of my knowledge and reflects my personal experience.

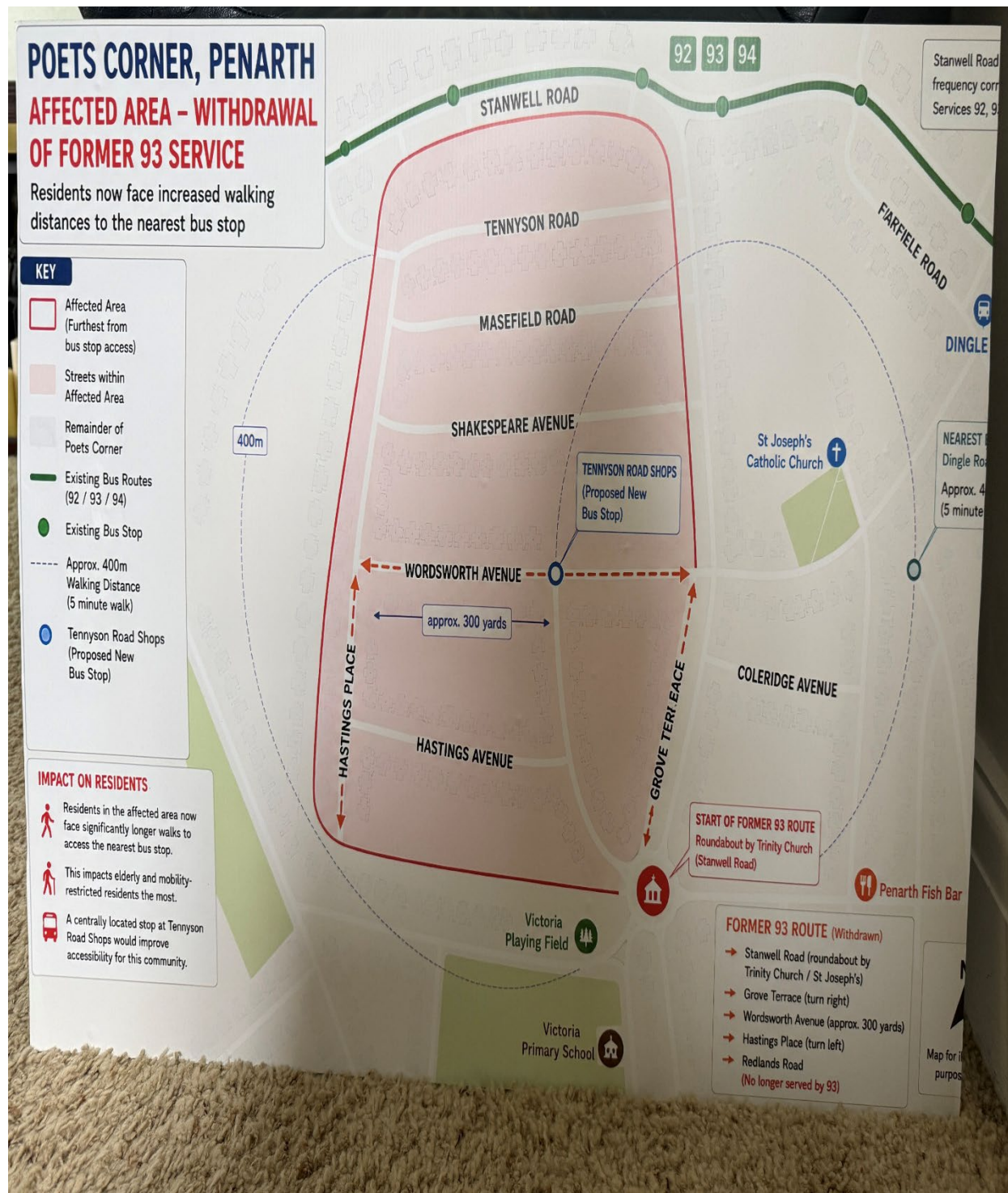
Signed: [REDACTED]

Date: 15.04.26

Dear Mark,

Further to my previous correspondence regarding the forthcoming Place Scrutiny Committee meeting on 2nd June, I wished to update you concerning additional supporting material and appendices relating to the former 93 bus service and its withdrawal from the Poets Corner area.

I attach a photograph of an enlarged illustrative display board (approximately 80cm x 55cm) which I intend bringing to the meeting for the benefit of Members.



The display board identifies:

- the previous 93 route via Grove Terrace, Wordsworth Avenue and Hastings Place;
- the residential areas most affected by the withdrawal of the former 93 service;
- the increased walking distances now faced by residents accessing alternative services;
- the location of nearby alternative bus stops;
- the concentration of existing services operating along Stanwell Road;
- and the proposed location of a centrally positioned stop near the Tennyson Road Shops area.

The purpose of the enlarged illustration is to assist the Committee in understanding the geography of the affected area and the practical accessibility impact upon local residents, particularly elderly and mobility-restricted residents.

In addition, from examination of the existing bus timetables operating via Stanwell Road, there are approximately 400 bus movements weekly in one direction alone using Services 92, 93 and 94, with a similar volume operating in the opposite direction.

This information is intended to assist the Committee in considering whether a more balanced redistribution of service provision through parts of Poets Corner may still be practically achievable through relatively modest route adjustments.

I hope the additional material and appendices will assist Members in their consideration of the matter.

Kind regards,

Paul

POETS CORNER, PENARTH

AFFECTED AREA – WITHDRAWAL OF FORMER 93 SERVICE

Residents now face increased walking distances to the nearest bus stop

KEY

-  Affected Area (Furthest from bus stop access)
-  Streets within Affected Area
-  Remainder of Poets Corner
-  Existing Bus Routes (92 / 93 / 94)
-  Existing Bus Stop
-  Approx. 400m Walking Distance (5 minute walk)
-  Tennyson Road Shops (Proposed New Bus Stop)

IMPACT ON RESIDENTS

-  Residents in the affected area now face significantly longer walks to access the nearest bus stop.
-  This impacts elderly and mobility-restricted residents the most.
-  A centrally located stop at Tennyson Road Shops would improve accessibility for this community.

