

COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL COMMITTEE FOR SOUTH LAKELAND
Meeting date: 4 April 2011
From: Corporate Director – Environment

REVIEW OF COUNTY COUNCIL SUPPORTED BUS SERVICES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 *The report sets out the effects on bus services in the South Lakeland area of a reduction in funding for local bus services across the County of £340,000.*
- 1.2 *It sets out the services affected in the South Lakeland area and the reasons why they were chosen and examines alternatives that may be available for those who currently travel on the services being withdrawn*

2.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 *The transport policies of the County Council are set out in the Local Transport Plan (LTP), the statutory policy document for transport, these include those relating to passenger transport, road safety, travel to work etc.*
- 2.2 *The changes will see a reduction in the level of service provided to residents in a number of sparsely populated rural areas. Alternative provision will be available in most cases through the Rural Wheels scheme, but there are restrictions to this scheme and free travel for concessionary pass holders is not available.*

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 *Members note the effect of the changes to bus services in the South Lakeland area.*

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Consequent on the Comprehensive Spending Review the Rural Bus Subsidy Grant (£1.7m) was withdrawn by Central Government. The County Council, has reduced the budget available to support local bus services across the County by £340,000.
- 4.2 The County Council consulted widely on council priorities and budget options between 22 November 2010 and 31 January. The "Have your Say" document provided information on what the Council does and gave financial information on existing funding and future funding following the reduction in grants available from government. The reduction in grant funding included a reduction in the allocation from the Department for Transport in relation to Rural Bus Subsidy Grant. The responses to the consultation were made available to members prior to the decisions made regarding the Council's budget.
- 4.3 All services currently supported by the County Council, meet the criteria agreed by Cabinet in March 2008. So additional criteria were developed to assess all services to indicate which offered the best outcome for the funds invested.
- 4.4 All County Council's local bus service contracts were therefore evaluated against the following criteria :
- Cost per passenger Journey
 - Average daily patronage
 - Availability and cost of alternative services
 - Population of settlements on the route (excluding Key Service Centre levels
 - The proportion of Gross Cost covered by Revenue
- 4.5 Contracts were scored and an aggregate score from the five categories was used to determine the overall position of all contracts. On the basis of this ranking, nineteen contracts were required to be withdrawn to provide the required saving of £340,000.
- 4.6 Following the decision made at Full Council to reduce the funding being made available to support bus services information was sent out regarding the changes to the relevant County Councillors and Parish Councillors. Information on all changes in the area were also sent to the Chair of the Local Committee and the District Council. The operators were also informed of the decision and given the statutory 56 days notices. The contracts come to a finish at the end of April 2011.
- 4.7 Five of these contracts operate in the South Lakeland area. Those affected are:-

10 : Barrow – Ulverston via Leece, Gleaston, Stainton, Little & Great Urswick

This service operated by Blueworks Private Hire currently provides six journeys a day in both directions, Monday to Saturday. All journeys are

being withdrawn.

The commercially provided Stagecoach Service 6 from Barrow to Ulverston via Dalton and the County Council supported Blueworks Service 11 between Barrow and Ulverston via Baycliffe and Aldingham, will both continued to operate as normal.

Rural Wheels will take passengers to Barrow or Ulverston whichever is the nearest.

The contract costs £84,700 per annum with 73% of this been funded through a subsidy at a cost of £4.24 per passenger journey.

**511 : Broughton in Furness – Ulverston including Service 60 :
Ulverston – Canal Head**

This service provides three trips a day Monday to Saturday, between Broughton in Furness and Ulverston and additional provides four trips a day to the Canal Head area of Ulverston. All journeys are being withdrawn. The service is currently provide by Lecks Travel.

Rural Wheels will take passengers to Ulverston.

The contract costs £53,300 per annum with 83% of this been funded through a subsidy at a cost of £4.74 per passenger journey.

**541 : Bowness/Winster – Kendal via Underbarrow, Crosthwaite and
Brigsteer
(Tuesday and Thursday only)**

This service being withdrawn provides one return trip, twice a week to Kendal from a number of villages to the West of the Town. It is currently provided by Lecks Travel.

Rural Wheels will take passengers to Bowness or Kendal, whichever is the nearer for onward connections.

The contract costs £9,700 per annum with 78% of this been funded through a subsidy at a cost of £7.83 per passenger journey.

**550 : Silverdale - Beetham – Kendal via Hincaster, Sedgwick and
Natland**

This service provides four trips a day from Beetham to Kendal Monday to Saturday with two trips extended to Silverdale with funding from Lancashire County Council. All journeys are being withdrawn. The service is currently provided by Kirkby Lonsdale Coaches .

The Stagecoach Service 555 provides an hourly service between Milnthorpe and Kendal.

Rural Wheels will take passengers to Milnthorpe or Kendal, whichever is the nearer, for onward connections.

552 : Levens – Kendal / Milnthorpe Diversion)

This contract provides a diversion to serve Levens village, of the commercially provides Stagecoach Service 552, on four journeys Monday to Friday and five journeys on a Saturday.

The rest of the Service 552 will continue to operate as normal.

An hourly service is provided from Levens Bridge to Kendal and Milnthorpe by the Stagecoach service 555.

Rural Wheels will take passengers to Milnthorpe or Kendal, or the nearest bus stop for onward connections.

The contract costs £17,300 per annum at a cost of £8.62 per passenger journey.

564 : Kendal – Sedbergh (Monday – Friday : 17:40)

The journey being withdrawn provides a single late afternoon trip to Sedbergh, which supplements the daytime Kirkby Lonsdale Coaches and Woofs of Sedbergh service 564 which are both unchanged. This journey is provided by Woofs of Sedbergh.

The last trip from Kendal to Sedbergh will become 16:25 on the Kirkby Lonsdale Coaches service.

The contract costs £12,600 per annum with 90% of this been funded through a subsidy at a cost of £9.41 per passenger journey.

564A : Cowgill - Dent – Sedbergh - Kendal (Saturdays)

This service being withdrawn provides a single return trip to Kendal on a Saturday for villages to the east of Sedbergh. It is currently provided by Apollo 8 Travel.

The Wednesday service, on the same route, provided by Woof's of Sedbergh, which is provided without a subsidy from the County Council, is not affected and will continue to operate as normal.

Voluntary Car Schemes provided by volunteer drivers also exist in a number of the area, and may be able to help with transport.

The contract costs £10,000 per annum with 79% of this been funded through a subsidy at a cost of £5.60 per passenger journey.

618 : Barrow – Ulverston - Newby Bridge – Windermere – Ambleside

The journeys on this service which are being withdrawn are the late night service at 21:45 from Barrow and return at 23:00 from Ambleside, plus the whole of the Sunday service. The service is provided by Travellers Choice.

The early morning and daytime service on the route are unaffected by these changes and will continue as normal. A late evening and Sunday timetable is provided between Barrow and Newby Bridge by the Service X35 and Service 6. Services are provided in the evening between Bowness and Ambleside by the Service 555, and on Sundays by the 599 in Summer and 505/516 in Winter.

- 4.8 Since the announcement of the reductions in the service there has been particular concern about specific routes and in that respect the Passenger Transport team are working closely with the community and elected members to advise regarding alternative ways for people to travel.
- 4.9 The total value of the services above is £220,399 of the £340,000 countywide savings being made. This amount reflects the relatively high subsidy paid to bus services in South Lakeland as a percentage of the budget.
- 4.10 “Rural Wheels” is a Demand Responsive service funded by the County Council, which arranges transport, usually through local taxi operators, with the passenger contributing 35p a mile. Transport is provided for agreed purposes, where bus services are not available. Currently only two return journeys a week can be made, and concessionary travel passes are not valid for free travel. Trips should be pre-booked two working days in advance. Travel can take place between 09:00 and 17:00 Monday to Friday.

5.0 OPTIONS

- 5.1 Members may wish to consider if they want to offer any financial support to any of the above services and if so request a more detailed report in this regard.

6.0 RESOURCE AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct financial consequences to the Local Committee arising from this report.
- 6.2 The exception to this would be if Members choose to offer support to the services identified to be removed, or to passengers seeking alternative transport, in which case the type of support to be offered will need to be identified before the likely cost to the Committee can be calculated.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 As a result of decisions on the budget some supported bus services are required to be withdrawn. If funding can be found from other sources without jeopardising the required savings, the provision of local travel solutions can be explored.

Andrew Moss
Assistant Director Highways & Transportation

18 March 2011

APPENDICES

No appendices

Electoral Division(s): All in South Lakeland Local Committee Area

** Please remove whichever option is not applicable*

Executive Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If a Key Decision, is the proposal published in the current Forward Plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision exempt from call-in on grounds of urgency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If exempt from call-in, has the agreement of the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee been sought or obtained?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has this matter been considered by Overview and Scrutiny? If so, give details below.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has an environmental or sustainability impact assessment been undertaken?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has an equality impact assessment been undertaken?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PREVIOUS RELEVANT COUNCIL OR EXECUTIVE DECISIONS *[including Local Committees]*

No previous relevant decisions.

CONSIDERATION BY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Not considered by Overview & Scrutiny.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers.

REPORT AUTHOR

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