

CABINET MEMBER DECISION RECORD TEMPLATE

This form should be used to record Executive decisions taken by Cabinet Members

Decision Ref. No:	
Responsible Officer:	David Harrop. Passenger Transport Manager
Subject:	The discontinuation of up to £128,000 financial subsidy in respect of contracted bus services from 1 st September 2016.
Decision taken:	To discontinue the financial subsidy paid in respect of the following contracted bus services: Route 41 (£34,000), school bus Route 49 (£14,000), school bus Route 60 (£20,000), school bus Route 88 (£15,000). The withdrawal of this funding is expected to lead to the cessation of these services. To reduce the financial subsidy paid in respect of the following contracted bus services: School bus Routes 45, 46, 81 (£45,000). The incumbent contractor has indicated that these routes are sustainable with a reduced subsidy and a significant fares increase.
Reasons for the decision:	For a number of years the Council has worked in partnership with the bus operators to reduce the Council's financial commitment. However, continuing financial pressures mean that further savings are required from this budget from the 2016/17 financial year.
Call-in and Urgency:	This decision is subject to the Council's Call-In Procedure. The decision is urgent so that the bus operator can comply with statutory de-registration notice periods in order to implement the required changes by the start of the 2016/17 academic year.
Background:	<p>The amount of grant that Bournemouth Council receives from the Government towards the cost of local services has been reducing each year since 2010, with the Council already receiving 50% less than it did in 2010, further cuts in Government grant are expected. Against this background the Council is required to examine all items of non statutory expenditure with a view to achieving budget savings.</p> <p>Bournemouth is served by a comprehensive commercial bus network, 90% of all bus routes in Bournemouth are operated on a commercial basis. The remaining services are subsidised by the Council. The funded routes include both standard bus services and dedicated school bus routes running twice a day. For a number of years the Council has worked in partnership with the bus operators to reduce the Council's financial commitment. However, continuing financial pressures mean that further savings are required from this budget from the 2016/17 financial year.</p> <p>Under the Transport Act 1985 the Council has a duty 'to secure the provision of such public transport services as the council consider it is appropriate to secure to meet any public transport requirements...which would not in their view be met apart from any action taken by them for that purpose'. There is a specific duty for local authorities to</p>

undertake a process to ensure that service reductions are appropriate, fair and rational and for proper purposes.

All Council subsidised routes are operated by Yellow Buses; they have confirmed to officers that Routes 41, 49, 60 and 88 are unsustainable on a purely commercial basis. They believe that school bus Routes 45, 46 and 81 will be sustainable with a reduced subsidy if they increase the fares charged.

The Council has carefully looked at all of the bus services it supports and has had to consider making some difficult decision about which routes it can no longer afford to fund.

The following subsidised routes were prioritised as potential savings opportunities, the explanation for their selection is summarised below:

Network Route 41: Throop, Castlepoint, Queens Park, Springbourne, Boscombe, Boscombe Pier. Operates Mondays to Fridays - three return journeys a day. Patronage of this route is much less than other subsidised routes, the cost for each journey is the highest of all of the Council's supported routes at £2.90. It is proposed to withdraw Council funding from this route.

School Bus Route 49: Cooper Dene, Townsend, Queens Park Academies. Operates Mondays to Fridays (term time only) - two return journeys daily to coincide with school times. The entire route is within safe walking distance as defined by national guidance for travel to school. It is proposed to withdraw Council funding from this route.

School Bus Route 60: Wallisdown, West Howe, East Howe, Ensbury Park, Moordown to Bournemouth School and Bournemouth School for Girls. Alternative network services operate over the affected area, though a change of bus and/or a short walk may be required. It is proposed to withdraw Council funding from this route.

School Bus Route 88: Castlepoint, Castle Lane to St Peter's School Iford; continuing to Pokesdown and St Peter's School Southbourne. Alternative network services operate over the affected area, though a change of bus and/ or a short walk may be required. It is proposed to withdraw Council funding from this route.

School Bus Routes 45, 46 and 81: Three routes serving Winton, Moordown and Charminster to Avonbourne and Harewood Colleges. Yellow Buses have indicated that these services may be sustainable with a reduced Council subsidy subject to a significant increase in fares. It is proposed to reduce Council funding from this route.

The Council organised a period of public consultation from 25th April to 30th May 2016, to better understand the impact of these proposals. The outcome of these consultations and accompanying EINA's has informed the final recommendation.

Options - and reasons for rejection: Not to reduce funding: rejected as an option for the reasons set out elsewhere in this notice.

Consultations undertaken:

Discussions with RATP Yellow Buses about the viability of subsidised routes without Council funding.

Internal - Passenger Transport Officers, Transportation Services Manager,
Head of Service Unit, ward councillors.

External - Public Consultation including service users, the wider public, councillors in Affected wards and staff at affected schools. Each route under consideration had an individual questionnaire accessed from the Council website, in addition these were available copy from schools and libraries, and handed out directly to passengers on the affected routes.

This consultation was undertaken by the Council's consultation team, and a report produced which informed the final decision as set out in this notice.

Finance/Resource Implications:

The decision will deliver up to £128,000 of savings which are part of the overall savings required as set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and Budget.

Name: *A. Richards*

Signature: *(of Chief Finance Officer)*

Date: *23/6/16*



Legal implications:

The requirements of the Transport Act 1985 are set out above in the background to this decision. These require the Council to exercise its discretion when considering the amount of support to provide to deliver public transport services in its area. The Council has considered its options in respect of the future subsidies available to support bus routes, and taken into account the requirements of the Act when undertaking its detailed consultation exercise, and in considering the responses received. It has undertaken a rational approach to the decision making process, taking into account relevant factors including the views of those directly affected by the decision. This accords with the public law decision making requirements and the requirements of the Constitution.

Name: *Hanna Connor*

Signature: *(of Monitoring Officer)*

Date: *23/6/16*

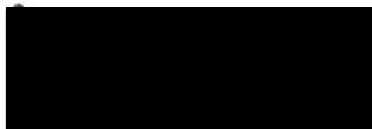


Risk assessment: Completed and attached

Name: David Harrop

Signature:

Date: 20 June 2016



Impact Assessments:

- Equality Impact Needs Assessments have been completed for each route and taken into account in making this decision.

Information for/not for publication:

For publication.

Background papers:

- Initial Risk Assessment.
- Equalities Impact Needs Assessment.
- Consultation report

Any conflict of interest declared by a Cabinet Member who is consulted by the Member taking the decision	Name of Cabinet Member	Nature of interest	Details of any dispensation granted by the Monitoring Officer

Decision taken by:

Councillor Mike Greene

Cabinet Portfolio *TRANSPORT*

Signed: 

Date of decision: *23/6/16*

Date of publication of record of decision: (to be inserted by Democratic Services)

24/6/16

Date decision effective - that is 5 working days after the date of publication of the record of decision unless the decision is called-in for consideration by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel: *1/7/16*