

REPORT TO: POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 21 FEBRUARY 2019

REPORT ON: REVIEW OF PASSENGER TRANSPORT SERVICES

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CITY DEVELOPMENT

REPORT NO: 71-2019

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report details a proposal to reduce the on-going revenue support to the local bus network and instead develop and expand the provision of in-house transport services for elderly and disabled passengers in Dundee.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee approves the expansion of the Blether Bus model to parts of the city previously served by the subsidised local bus network.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The replacement of the most costly supported local bus service with a Blether Bus operation will save £20k in 2019/20 and £40k per annum in a full financial year.

4 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Blether Bus is a service introduced on two discrete routes in March 2018 to provide local community links for older passengers (people over 60) within their local communities. The routes and timetables were agreed/developed by the Sustainable Transport team - addressing areas of need. The minibuses and drivers are provided by Fleet Management. The cost of operation is met by Sustainable Transport's revenue budget (supported services).
- 4.2 From the same revenue budget, a small number of local bus services are supported. These are 'socially necessary' services and provide a bus service in parts of the city where there is no (or limited) commercial service operated.
- 4.3 Four contracts are due to expire in August 2019 and it is proposed that one of these four bus services would be 'converted' to a Blether Bus operation. The three remaining contracts could be extended for a further two years to August 2021.
- 4.4 From a financial/saving perspective, the choice of bus service to be converted to the Blether Bus is best determined by the cost of the on-going subsidy required should it continue in its current format (as a local bus).
- 4.5 It is more difficult to measure and compare the social value of a service to its users, but one could look at the demographics of the area or the availability of alternative bus services that operate nearby. To an extent, these factors will already determine the level of patronage on the supported service.
- 4.6 Of the four supported service contracts to expire in August 2019, the Service 204 has the highest level of per capita subsidy.

Table 1 – Passenger Subsidy per Trip (October 2018) and Annual Subsidy

	Service 202	Service 204	Service 206	Service 236
Subsidy per trip in Oct 2018	£0.81	£2.01	£1.94	£0.76
Passengers in October 2018	4065	2548	2470	4886
Annual Net cost to DCC	£34k	£62k	£58k	£39k

- 4.7 Each month, the passengers numbers on the supported services are shared with the Council. This allows us to see the 'demographic' make up of the passengers. The table below shows that the vast majority of passengers using the supported services are elderly or disabled and use the NEC (bus pass).

Table 2 – Total Passengers in the Month of October 2018

	Service 202	Service 204	Service 206	Service 236
Total	4065	2548	2470	4886
NEC (Over 60 and Disabled)	3729 – 91.7%	2095 - 82.2%	2246 – 90.9%	3263 – 66.8%
Child (5-15)	45 – 1.1%	66 - 2.6%	29 – 1.2%	473 – 9.7%
Adult (16-59)	291 – 7.2%	388 - 15.2%	195 – 7.9%	1150 – 23.5%

- 4.8 If converting to a Blether Bus operation, the service could no longer be used by Adult and Child passengers. The Blether Bus is operated using a Section 19 permit that requires the passengers to belong to a membership group and the permit does not allow for the carriage of 'members of the general public'. It would be reasonable to assume that the majority of adult and children would be fit enough to access other bus services (albeit with short walk). If this group of passengers had a disability that limited their mobility, then it is more likely that they would have applied for a disabled bus pass at some point and would therefore be recorded the NEC (bus pass) grouping.
- 4.9 Specifically relating to the Service 204, from anecdotal evidence and surveys it is thought that the relatively high number of adult passengers is due to the tendency of adult passengers to board 'the first bus that comes along' when the bus (Service 204) operates along stretches of the Perth Road.

5 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report has been subject to an assessment of any impacts on Equality and Diversity, Fairness and Poverty, Environment and Corporate Risk. A copy of the Integrated Impact Assessment is attached to this report.

6 CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1 All members of the Council Management Team have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None.

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February 2019



Committee Report No: 71-2019

Document Title: Passenger Transport Review

Document Type: Policy

New/Existing: New

Period Covered: from 12 August 2019

Document Description:

Committee report seeking approval to re-organise passenger transport services.

Intended Outcome:

Reallocation of resources from local bus to other transport services.

How will the proposal be monitored? N/A

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A. Equality and Diversity Impacts:

Age:	Negative
Disability:	Negative
Gender Reassignment:	No Impact
Marriage and Civil Partnership:	No Impact
Pregnancy and Maternity:	No Impact
Race/Ethnicity:	No Impact
Religion or Belief:	No Impact
Sex:	No Impact
Sexual Orientation:	No Impact

Equality and diversity Implications:

Supported local bus services in Dundee are predominantly used by older and disabled passengers.

Proposed Mitigating Actions:

There is a continuing project of re-organisation of Dundee City Council vehicle and staff resources to ensure the Council is in a position to deliver more transport services for those most in need.



From August 2019, Dundee City Council will introduce a new minibus service targeted at people with restricted mobility serving parts of the city that were previously served by local bus

services subsidised by the Council. These services will therefore operate in areas of the city that have been identified as having higher levels of unmet travel demand.

Is the proposal subject to a full EQIA? : No

B. Fairness and Poverty Impacts:

Geography

Strathmartine (Ardler, St Mary's and Kirkton):	No Impact
Lochee (Lochee/Beechwood, Charleston and Menzieshill):	No Impact
Coldside (Hilltown, Fairmuir and Coldside):	No Impact
Maryfield (Stobswell and City Centre):	No Impact
North East (Whitfield, Fintry and Mill O' Mains):	No Impact
East End (Mid Craigie, Linlathen and Douglas):	No Impact
The Ferry:	No Impact
West End:	Negative

Household Group

Lone Parent Families:	Minimal impact
Greater Number of children and/or Young Children:	Minimal impact
Pensioners - Single/Couple:	Minimal impact
Single female households with children:	Minimal impact
Unskilled workers or unemployed:	Minimal impact
Serious and enduring mental health problems:	Minimal impact
Homeless:	Minimal impact
Drug and/or alcohol problems:	Minimal impact
Offenders and Ex-offenders:	Minimal impact
Looked after children and care leavers:	Minimal impact
Carers:	Negative

Significant Impact

Employment:	No Impact
Education and Skills:	No Impact
Benefit Advice/Income Maximisation:	No Impact
Childcare:	No Impact
Affordability and Accessibility of services:	Negative

Fairness and Poverty Implications:

The availability of other local bus services within short walking distance of the withdrawn route should mean that there is minimal impact on ambulant passengers – adults and children.

Proposed Mitigating Actions:

With low levels of car ownership and the absence of alternative public transport options (train/subway etc), we believe that Dundee is the most bus-dependant local authority in Scotland. The Council will work with bus operators, as funding allows, to support and sustain



a responsive, affordable and extensive local bus network in Dundee. The Council will work with bus operators to support a responsive and sustainable local bus network in Dundee.

C. Environmental Impacts

Climate Change

Mitigating greenhouse gases: No Impact

Adapting to the effects of climate change: No Impact

Resource Use

Energy efficiency and consumption: No Impact

Prevention, reduction, re-use, recovery or recycling waste: No Impact

Sustainable Procurement: No Impact

Transport

Accessible transport provision: No Impact

Sustainable modes of transport: Positive

Natural Environment

Air, land and water quality: No Impact

Biodiversity: No Impact

Open and green spaces: No Impact

Built Environment

Built Heritage: No Impact

Housing: No Impact

Is the proposal subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment

No further action is required as it does not qualify as a Plan, Programme or Strategy as defined by the Environment Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

Proposed Mitigating Actions:

N/A

Environmental Implications:

None

D. Corporate Risk Impacts

Corporate Risk Implications:

Corporate Risk Mitigating Actions: