

# ENVIRONMENT CABINET MEMBER MEETING

## Agenda Item 16

Brighton & Hove City Council

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Supported Bus Services: Area Network Review Consultation</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>26 May 2011</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Strategic Director, Place</b>		
<b>Contact Officer: Name</b>	<b>Paul Crowther</b>	<b>Tel:</b>	<b>292479</b>
	<b>E-mail: paul.crowther@brighton-hove.gov.uk</b>		
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>		
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

### FOR GENERAL RELEASE

#### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 Under the 1985 Transport Act, local authorities are empowered to contract with bus operators for the provision of bus services which meet the needs of the general public, but which are not provided commercially.
- 1.2 The current batch of contracts was let following an Area Network Review carried out during 2007/8. These contracts expire in September 2012.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet Member approval to start the Area Network Review process for new contracts to start in September 2012, and to undertake a full consultation process with elected members, user groups, and community groups.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member authorises a full consultation exercise to inform the Area Network Review.
- 2.2 That a report be brought to a future Cabinet Member Meeting, once the results of the Area Network Review consultation have been collated, tenders from prospective contractors have been analysed, and recommendations for the future Supported Local Bus Network have been formulated.
- 2.3 That the Cabinet Member approves the enhanced vehicle emission standards specified.

#### 3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- 3.1 Using powers under the Transport Act 1985, the city council contracts with bus operators, following a competitive tendering exercise, for the provision of bus services which are necessary to meet the needs of the community, but which are not provided commercially. The current batch of contracts was let in September 2008, and expire in September 2012.

3.2 These supported bus routes comprise a number of complete routes, the extension of some commercial routes to operate during the evening or at weekends, and some diversions of commercial routes to serve particular communities. A complete list of the current Supported Bus Network is attached as **Appendix 1**.

3.3 In preparation for the next batch of supported bus network tenders, the city council is to undertake an “Area Network Review”. This will consist of the consultation process outlined below, together with a detailed analysis of the current commercial network, to identify any missing links. At the same time a review will be undertaken of those requests made by passengers for changes to routes, timetables and times of operation.

3.4 The proposed timetable for the Area Network Review is :

Draft network design begins	May 2011
Discussions with Procurement team	June 2011
Meet with bus operators to discuss commercial network	June 2011
Report to CMM seeking approval for retendering process to begin	July 2011
Consultation	July 2011
Analyse Consultation response	August 2011
Advert for Tenderers List	August 2011
Advert in European Journal	August 2011
Begin preparation of Tenders	August 2011
Tenders issued	November 2011
Closing Date for Tenders	December 2011
Analysis of Tenders	January 2012
Committee / Board / Cabinet decision	April 2012
Tender Award decisions to operators	April 2012
Consultation / information document	May 2012
Operators to register services	June 2012
New services commence	(Schools) 3 September 2012 (Other) 16 September 2012

3.5 The city council’s contract documents specify minimum exhaust emission standards for vehicles. For the current contracts the minimum specified is EURO 3. For the new contracts it is proposed to raise this to EURO 4 (or equivalent), in support of the city council’s Air Quality Action Plan.

3.6 Tenders let under this process will be in accordance with the city council’s Standing Orders for procurement. In view of the value of the contracts to be let, this will involve the European Union procurement procedures, and the contracts will be advertised through the European Journal, as well as locally. Fuller details of the procurement process will be given in the consultation document proposed for circulation in late July 2011. The contract will be advertised in Lots (individual or groups of routes and a combined City Lot) so as to enable smaller operators the opportunity to bid.

**4. CONSULTATION:**

4.1 The city council’s Public Transport Team maintains a database of consultees on matters relating to public transport. There are 380 entries on this list, comprising resident’s associations, community groups, affinity groups, ward councillors,

MPs, and user groups. The input from these groups will be sought to inform the Area Network Review.

- 4.2 The city council will consult with neighbouring local authorities, to investigate possibilities of joint working on cross-boundary services.
- 4.3 The city council will liaise with all commercial bus operators serving the city, in order to ensure that the supported bus network supplements and enhances the commercial network, to provide the best possible journey options for residents and visitors.

## **5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

### Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The full cost of the consultation exercise will be met from the existing Public Transport revenue budget.
- 5.2 The extent of the future Supported Bus Network will be dependant upon the available budget at the time. A further report will be brought to Cabinet for approval after the completed tenders have been analysed and officer's recommendations made.

*Finance Officer consulted: Karen Brookshaw*

*Date: 21/04/11*

### Legal Implications:

- 5.3 With regard to the provision of subsidised bus services, the Transport Act 1985 imposes a duty on the council:
  - (i) to have regard to the transport needs of members of the public who are elderly or disabled; and
  - (ii) when entering into agreements for the provision service subsidies, to have regard to the interests of the public and of persons providing public passenger services in the Brighton & Hove area.

*Lawyer consulted:*

*Oliver Dixon*

*Date: 08/05/11*

### Equalities Implications:

- 5.4 The city council's consultation database includes representatives of minority communities, to ensure that the needs of these communities are taken into account in planning the future supported bus network. The city council's contracts specify that vehicles must be wheelchair accessible, in support of the city council's Equalities Policies, and the city council's obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act and the Equalities Act 2010.

### Sustainability Implications:

- 5.5 Sustainability Implications are dealt with in Paragraph 3.5.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.6 It is not considered that there are any Crime & Disorder implications associated with the proposed consultation exercise.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.7 It is not considered that there are any Risk and Opportunity Management Implications associated with the proposed consultation exercise.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 The consultation exercise will be citywide, and will inform the future corporate strategy for the supported bus service network.

**6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):**

- 6.1 Legislation now permits Tendered Bus Contracts to run for a maximum of eight years. The existing contracts could be extended for this period. However, it is felt that this option would not allow a full evaluation of current travel needs, bearing in mind changes to the commercial network.

**7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 7.1 The recommendations for which consideration and approval are sought are to commence the consultation stage of the Area Network Review.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Appendices:**

1. List of current tendered contracts

**Documents in Members' Rooms:**

None

**Background Documents:**

None