

Report Title:	Public Bus Services in the Royal Borough
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information?	Part I except for YES - Appendix A is Part II and not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.
Member reporting:	Cllr Bicknell, Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Highways & Transport, Cllr Sharma, Deputy Lead Member – Bus Champion
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet - 27 April 2017
Responsible Officer(s):	Andy Jeffs, Interim Executive Director, Ben Smith, Highways, Parks & Countryside Manager
Wards affected:	All



REPORT SUMMARY

1. The Royal Borough is committed to supporting local bus services against a background of a national decline in passenger numbers, as they are essential in supporting the objectives of the Borough Local Plan; providing travel options for schools; supporting town centres and other services, and providing our residents with flexibility around mobility.
2. A competitive tendering exercise for the provision of bus services on routes 4/4A, 5/5A, 8, 16/16A, 238/239 and the 305 has been completed. The results are under review with the outcomes expected in early May 2017.
3. This report requests that Cabinet approves £153,000 in additional annual expenditure for five years from 2017-18 to enable the continuation of the existing bus network.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That the Cabinet notes the report and:

- i) Approves additional annual expenditure of £153,000 for five-years from 2017-18 for the continuation of the operation of the existing network of bus services from 1 May 2017.
- ii) Provides delegated authority to the Interim Executive Director in conjunction with the Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Highways and Transport, and the Deputy Lead Member – Bus Champion to award contracts for the tendered bus services from 1 August 2017.

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Royal Borough is committed to supporting local bus services as they are essential in supporting the objectives of the Borough Local Plan; providing travel options for schools; supporting town centres and providing our residents with flexibility around mobility.

- 2.2 Bus patronage has fallen across two thirds of English councils, and since deregulation has fallen by 18% in non-metropolitan areas. The national decline in bus patronage is currently 2%, but 3% in the borough.
- 2.3 Over the same period public funding into bus operations, in some form or another, is now 30-50% in non-metropolitan areas.
- 2.4 A competitive tendering exercise for the provision of bus services on the routes in the Borough has just concluded. The results are under review with outcomes expected in early May 2017. The council will continue working with bus operators to increase patronage over the period of the new contracts. The routes include:
- **Service 305:** Operating in the south east of the Borough connecting Wraysbury, Horton and Hythe End with Poyle, Colnbrook and Staines.
 - **Service 8:** Operating in west and east Maidenhead, including maintaining provision of service for the Boulton Lock and Riverside areas.
 - **Service 16/16A:** Operating from Windsor to Maidenhead.
 - **Service 4/4A and 238/239** - Maidenhead Rural Services
 - **Service 5/5A:** Providing an evening service in Furze Platt, Pinkneys and Belmont Wards.

Table 1: Public Bus Services - options

Option	Comments
Do nothing. Not recommended	Bus services where operators have notified us that services would be withdrawn at the end of April 2017 would cease.
Reduce current service levels. Not recommended.	This would reduce the current bus services offered within the borough.
Extend Services for three months from 1 May to 31 July 2017 on the de-registered routes by direct negotiation with the current operator. The recommended option	Services would continue to the point that new contracts could be awarded.
Award contracts for Services 305, 8, 16/16A, 4/4A, 238/239, 5/5A from 1 August 2017. The recommended option	Retains existing bus service network until 31 July 2022 supporting the operation of local bus services; provision of home to school transport; promoting accessibility and offering wider travel choices.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The key implications are set out in table 2.

Table 2: Public Bus Services – Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Let new bus services contract	Later than 01/08/17	By 01/08/17	By 15/08/17	By 31/07/17	01/08/17

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

Revenue budget

- 4.1 The current annual public transport support budget is £635,000. In addition the council receives an annual Bus Service Operators Grant of £50,000, taking the current annual budget to £685,000.
- 4.2 The projected annual spend, including the new contracts is 838,000. Consequently an additional £153,000 annual expenditure is required to deliver the existing bus service routes.

Table 3: Financial impact of report's recommendations

REVENUE	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Addition	£153,000	£0	£0
Reduction	£0	£0	£0
Net impact	£153,000	£0	£0

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council has the power to secure these bus services initially in the short term by direct negotiation ('de minimis') and in the longer term by letting contracts through a formal procurement process.
- 5.2 The contract term in the tender process that has just concluded is 5-years however notice can be given at any point during the term. Results of the tender process are under review and the outcomes are expected in early May 2017.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 **Table 4: Public Bus Services – Risk Management**

Risks	Uncontrolled Risk	Controls	Controlled Risk
Loss of funding	Medium	Council to retender existing bus services, cease or reduce services or fund shortfall.	Low
Services are no longer commercially viable.	Medium	Council to retender existing bus services, cease or reduce services or fund shortfall.	Low
Neighbouring local authorities decide not to fund public bus services.	Medium	Council to retender existing bus services, cease or reduce services or fund shortfall.	Low

Risks	Uncontrolled Risk	Controls	Controlled Risk
Other services, not contained in this report, become commercially non-viable.	Medium	Council to retender existing bus services, cease or reduce services or fund shortfall.	Low

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

7.1 No issues were identified by the equalities impact assessment initial screening exercise.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 None.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 Table 5 contains the implementation timetable.

Table 5: Public Bus Services - timetable for implementation

Date	Details
April 2017	Funding approval by Cabinet with delegated authority to award contracts.
May 2017	Continuation of existing bus services under de minimis funding.
May – July 2017	Formal contracts issued to continue bus services.

9.2 Implementation date if not called in: Immediately.

10. APPENDICES

10.1 Appendix A: PT50 Contract Cost 17_18. This Appendix is **Part II and not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.**

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

11.1 None.

12. CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Commented & returned
Cllr Bicknell	Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Highways and Transport	06/04/17	06/04/17
Cllr Sharma	Deputy Lead Member - Bus Champion/Chairman, Highways Overview and Scrutiny	06/04/17	
Alison Alexander	Managing Director	06/04/17	12/04/17
Russell O'Keefe	Executive Director	06/04/17	
Andy Jeffs	Interim Executive Director	06/04/17	12/04/17
Rob Stubbs	Section 151 Officer	06/04/17	
Terry Baldwin	Head of HR	06/04/17	
Mary Kilner	Head of Law and Governance	06/04/17	

REPORT HISTORY

Decision type: Key decision	Urgency item? Yes - This report, relating to Public Bus Services in the Royal Borough, is urgent as a number of routes would have services withdrawn at the end of April 2017 if a decision is not made by Cabinet on bus services before that date.
Report Author: Ben Smith, Highways, Parks & Countryside Manager	