

Cabinet Meeting Resolution

**Executive
Forward Plan
Reference**

E2470

Award of Contracts for Supported Bus Services

Date of Meeting	13-Feb-13
The Issue	<i>Following an open tender round, it is proposed to award contracts for a range of supported bus services, including evening and Sunday services, Bath daytime contracted services and some rural services</i>
The decision	<p>(1) To AGREE that Appendix A is an exempt item and is not for publication, by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972;</p> <p>(2) To NOTE the tender prices received;</p> <p>(3) To AGREE the award of contracts as proposed;</p> <p>(4) To CONFIRM the continued support for enhanced frequency on service 6/7 to Larkhall and Fairfield Park; and</p> <p>(5) To CONFIRM the changes to contract services.</p>
Rationale for decision	<p>The award of contracts secure improvements in vehicle quality in advance of the deadlines set out in the Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations 2000 that require wholly low floor bus operation by January 2016. The additional costs of these improvements are considered to be good value. A failure to introduce low floor vehicles could result in the cancellation of the services in the future.</p> <p>The contracts secure cost savings for the Council in 2013/14.</p> <p>The continuation of support for the enhanced frequency on service 6/7 takes account of the increases in patronage generated so far by the improved frequency of service and the consequent reduction in cost to the Council. It is considered that there is further potential to increase usage of bus services in the area, and that this cost should diminish over time.</p> <p>The Council has limited resources available and has considered carefully how to use those resources on supported services having consulted widely on potential service reductions. The contract awards and service reductions prioritise access to employment opportunities and essential services above social and leisure activities. The introduction of peak journeys on service 12, the retention of late evening services to the RUH, and the continued commitment to links between rural communities and major centres all reflect this consideration of how support should be prioritised.</p>
Other options considered	<p>Not funding improvements in vehicle quality from April 2013, but awarding short term contracts using step entrance vehicles:</p> <p>This would defer vehicle improvements to 2014 at best, and potentially lead to a peak in additional costs at that time. This option was rejected because it was considered that the bids for contracts using low floor vehicles offered good value for money in 2013/14, and that these benefits should be secured for passengers at an earlier date.</p>

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Reductions or changes to a wide range of services:

Because of the changes to commercial services suggested by operators it was not necessary to implement larger withdrawals of service.

Upgrade the 683 service operating between Keynsham and Wells on Tuesdays only to operate with a low floor bus:

This would have cost an additional £3,000 compared to the proposed award and was considered unaffordable at this time. This will be retendered again in the next financial year.

Declarations of Interest

None

The Decision is subject to Call-In within 5 working days of publication of the decision