

# HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## Executive Decision Record

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Executive Lead Member for Transport and Environment Strategy
<b>Date:</b>	7 November 2022
<b>Title:</b>	Passenger Transport SP23 Savings Proposals
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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### 1. The decision:

- 1.1. That the Executive Lead Member for Transport and Environment Strategy notes the outcome of the 2022 Passenger Transport Consultation.
- 1.2. That the Executive Lead Member for Transport and Environment Strategy approves the approach for the removal of £800,000 budget provision for Passenger Transport services as detailed within the supporting report and based on the results of the Consultation.
- 1.3. That approval be given to revise supported services in line with the detailed proposals set out in the supporting report and appendices.
- 1.4. That approval be given to remove the specified enhancements to the Concessionary Travel Scheme in Hampshire as set out in the supporting report.
- 1.5. That authority is delegated to the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment to take all necessary steps, including entering into contractual arrangements in consultation with the Head of Legal Services, and fulfilling procurement requirements, to implement the proposed changes to bus subsidies and passenger transport expenditure as set out in the supporting report.
- 1.6. That authority is delegated to the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment, in consultation with the Executive Lead Member for Transport and Environment Strategy, to make minor variations in subsidy arrangements on specific passenger transport services provided overall budget savings are maintained and changes are consistent with the approach set out in the supporting report.
- 1.7. That approval be given to cease the ongoing revenue funding of £11,918pa towards the 76 service between Basingstoke and Andover.
- 1.8. That approval be given to cease the ongoing revenue funding of £32,112pa towards the 41 service between Farnborough and Tongham.
- 1.9. That approval be given to cease the ongoing revenue funding of £30,848pa which supports cross-boundary bus services.

## **2. Reasons for the decision:**

- 2.1. Due to the increasing demand for core public services, and the absence of a multi-year funding settlement from the Government, the County Council faces a budget shortfall of at least £80 million over the next two years (2022/23 and 2023/24). The Authority, therefore, must find savings from its discretionary spend in order to meet the shortfall and deliver a balanced budget.
- 2.2. Following the Council's countywide Balancing the Budget consultation carried out in 2021, a contribution from passenger transport budgets of £800,000 towards this overall shortfall has been identified. A further detailed consultation has been carried out on how this could be removed from supported passenger transport services.
- 2.3. For the purposes of recommendation 1.6, minor recommendations refers to any individual changes to the subsidy arrangements within this report and its appendices. The reason for this recommendation, and thus decision, is to ensure service continuity during a period of unpredictable changes in market forces. The recommendation is designed to provide flexibility to respond to these changes where the interests of the passengers are best met with a timely response.
- 2.4. Amendments to funding of cross boundary bus services is being requested as these represent a pressure on the local bus budget which could no longer be met in the context of other savings. Also requested is reduction of contributions to the Stagecoach 76 and 41 services as the funding streams used for these services will end on 31 March 2023.

## **3. Other options considered and rejected:**

- 3.1. Not to make savings from passenger transport services. This option was rejected as the County Council has a legal responsibility to deliver a balanced budget each year. With many services provided on a statutory basis, the Council has limited jurisdiction over many areas of spend therefore needs to make necessary savings from discretionary budgets such as that for Passenger Transport services.
- 3.2. To make £1.5million savings from Passenger Transport Services. This option was rejected, and the savings required from this area reduced to £800,000 following feedback received in the Council's Balancing the Budget consultation.
- 3.3. To remove the full £800,000 from the £2.08million of County Council funding spent on local bus services each year. This option does not meet the County Council's ambitions in its Bus Service Improvement Plan, proposed Local Transport Plan 4 or decarbonisation.
- 3.4. To remove all enhancements to the Concessionary Travel Scheme in Hampshire. At this time, the decision has been made not to remove free all day travel for holders of a disabled persons bus pass, the provision of a companion pass for disabled pass holders who cannot travel alone and the use of passes before 9:30am on services the County Council categorise as infrequent.

## **4. Conflicts of interest:**

- 4.1. Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker:

4.2. Conflicts of interest declared by other Executive Members consulted:

**5. Dispensation granted by the Conduct Advisory Panel: none.**

**6. Reason(s) for the matter being dealt with if urgent: not applicable.**

**7. Statement from the Decision Maker:**

I thank the Select Committee for pre-scrutinising the proposals and note and appreciate the concerns raised in making the decision. I also thank Councillor Rod Cooper for attending my Decision Day to speak on this item.

**Approved by:**

**Date:**

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**7 November 2022**

**Executive Lead Member for Transport and  
Environment Strategy  
Councillor Edward Heron**