

ANGUS COUNCIL

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT POLICY COMMITTEE

2 MAY 2002

SUBJECT: PUBLIC TRANSPORT UPDATE

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

Abstract: This report updates Members of recent and proposed changes to local bus services in Angus. An update is also given in respect of the Travel Concession Scheme arrangements.

1 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee -

1. note the recent changes to local bus services in Angus;
2. homologate the award by the Director of Planning and Transport of a de minimis contract to Strathtay Scottish Ltd. for the continuation of evening journeys between Montrose and Arbroath from 27 May 2002;
3. note the de-registration of the local bus service between Fowlis, Liff and Dundee by Strathtay Scottish Ltd. from 13 May 2002 and the discussions underway with Dundee City Council to secure alternative service provision initially on an emergency basis;
4. note the contract renewal exercise currently on-going and agree that the Director of Planning and Transport award these contracts under his delegated powers and report back to the next meeting of this Committee for homologation;
5. note the agreement by ScotRail for the continuation of the current Concessionary Travel Scheme agreement from 1 April 2002;
6. note the additional funding being made available by the Scottish Executive to enable the introduction of free travel for senior citizens and disabled persons from 1 October 2002 and the on-going negotiations with operators in this regard.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report updates Members of recent and proposed changes to both commercial and tendered local bus services in Angus. Members are also informed of the continuation of the Concessionary Travel Scheme arrangement with ScotRail until March 2003 and of progress towards the introduction of free travel for Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons from 1 October 2002.

3 SERVICE 28/29 MONTROSE - CRAIGO - LAURENCEKIRK - EDZELL - BRECHIN

- 3.1 From 27 February 2002, Strathtay Scottish Ltd. revised the route of their Montrose, Laurencekirk to Brechin services to cease serving Craigo Village. Strathtay Scottish Ltd's buses continue to serve Craigo Road End while Craigo Village itself is still served by M W Nicoll's hourly service operating between Montrose and Laurencekirk.

4 SERVICE 40A / 40X MONTROSE - ARBROATH - DUNDEE

- 4.1 Strathtay Scottish Ltd. informed the Council of their intention to cease to operate evening services on the above route from 18:10 onwards on Mondays to Saturdays from 27 May 2002. This service requires two buses to operate the timetable.
- 4.2 On-bus surveys were undertaken interviewing passengers and regular usage of all the journeys was identified. In order to maintain service provision for passengers, tenders were sought from four operators for the continuation of the evening services. Three operators submitted bids the highest being £294 per day (£91,728 per annum) and the lowest £85 per day (£26,520 per annum). A de minimis contract on two months notice of termination was awarded to Strathtay Scottish Ltd. the lowest tenderer for the continuation of the journeys withdrawn. The contracted service meets the Council's subsidy per passenger and subsidy per mile criteria.

5 SERVICE 43/44 ARBROATH TOWN SERVICE

- 5.1 From 27 May 2002, Strathtay Scottish Ltd. will re-time the 07:10 departure from Kirkton, Glebe Road to Arbroath Bus Station to operate 5 minutes earlier. This journey will now operate as a through bus to Dundee and Ninewells Hospital.

6 SERVICE 51 DUNDEE - LIFF - FOWLIS

- 6.1 Strathtay Scottish Ltd. have de-registered the Dundee - Liff - Fowlis service which operates approximately hourly. This service is operated under contract to Dundee City Council, however following the reduction of health services at Liff Hospital patronage and indeed revenue has declined significantly. Over a 30% reduction in passenger usage has taken place over the last two years and Strathtay Scottish Ltd. accordingly have advised Dundee City Council that they wished to withdraw from the current contract from 13 May 2002.
- 6.2 Discussion are ongoing with Dundee City Council with a view to Dundee tendering an emergency contract for a replacement facility for a three month period pending further investigation of transport requirements on this cross boundary service. Members will be kept advised of the arrangements made to take account of the transport requirements of Angus residents on this corridor.

7 SERVICE 120 KIRRIEMUIR - LINTRATHEN - KIRRIEMUIR

- 7.1 From 7 May 2002, Meffans Coaches will re-route Service 120 to operate via Little Kenny and Wardend to Kingoldrum. This route revision is at the request of the Transport Team following requests from local residents.

8 SERVICE 121 KIRRIEMUIR - CORTACHY - MEMUS - KIRRIEMUIR

- 8.1 From 7 May 2002, Meffans Coaches will amend the timetable for this service to reflect the actual journey times. This is at the request of the Transport Team and will adjust the service to more closely meet passenger demand.

9 SCOTTISH CITYLINK SERVICES

- 9.1 From 27 May 2002, Scottish Citylink will introduce their summer timetable. Services have been revised and there will be one less journey operating on the coastal corridor between Dundee, Arbroath, Montrose and Aberdeen. On the inland corridor between Dundee - Forfar - Brechin and Aberdeen there will still remain one bus in each direction however these will be re-timed to permit a day trip to Aberdeen.

10 LOCAL BUS SERVICE CONTRACT RENEWAL

- 10.1 The following contracts are due for renewal from August 2002:

Service 138 : Downfield - Auchterhouse
Service 370 : Murroes - Inveraldie

Service 115 / 116 : Friockheim - Montrose (Tuesday, Thursday and Friday)

Service 118 : Forfar - Tannadice (Wednesday and Friday)

Service 119 : Forfar - Tannadice - Brechin (Tuesday and Thursday)

- 10.2 On-bus passenger surveys have been undertaken on all journeys and passengers have been invited to comment on any changes they would wish to see to the current service provision. Consultation is currently ongoing with local Members, Community Councils and other interested parties with regard to any changes or improvements they would wish to see to these services.
- 10.3 The only significant changes proposed are on the Downfield - Auchterhouse / Murroes - Inveraldie services. As a consequence of the imminent closure of Strathmartine Hospital, patronage on the Downfield - Auchterhouse corridor has reduced significantly, the replacement tender proposals take this into account. A slight reduction in services on the Auchterhouse corridor is proposed together with a commensurate improvement in the service provision on the Murroes - Inveraldie corridor where patronage levels have increased and there are requests for additional service provision. Detailed consultation is on-going with local Members and Community Councils with regard to the proposals.
- 10.4 Because of the timescale involved in registering services with the Traffic Commissioner, it will not be possible for this Committee to agree the award of tenders at the next meeting of this Committee and have the new contracts in place for their start date in August 2002. It is therefore recommended that the Director of Planning and Transport approve the award of these contracts under his delegated powers and report the results back to the next meeting of this Committee for homologation.

11 TRAVEL CONCESSION SCHEME AGREEMENT WITH SCOTRAIL

- 11.1 It was reported to the 24 January 2002 meeting of this Committee that the Angus Council Travel Concession Agreement with ScotRail was due to terminate on 31 March 2002 (Report 95/02 refers). ScotRail have now formally entered into an extension of this Agreement with the Council. The existing Travel Concession arrangements will now continue until 31 March 2003.

12 FREE TRAVEL CONCESSIONS FOR ELDERLY AND DISABLED PERSONS

- 12.1 Members were informed at the meeting of this Committee on 24 January 2002 of progress being made towards agreeing with Operators re-imbursement in respect of introducing free travel for senior citizens and disabled persons from 1 October 2002 (Report 138/02 refers).
- 12.2 Operators throughout Scotland have been reluctant to negotiate with local authorities over the financial arrangements as it was considered that there was insufficient funding, particularly in the city authorities, to meet the costs of providing free travel. The Scottish Executive have acknowledged this and an additional £5 million is to be made available to local authorities for 2002 - 2003, this will be split in line with the original GAE allocation. On this basis Angus Council will receive an additional £116,000 in the current financial year. For 2003 -2004 an additional £10 million is to be made available to the Scheme, however the Scottish Executive are reserving the right to review the allocation of this additional funding.
- 12.3 Negotiations are still ongoing with Strathtay Scottish Ltd. to agree reimbursement for their participation in the new Scheme. It is hoped that these negotiations will be concluded in the near future and that these arrangements can then be put before other operators for their agreement.

13 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The replacement of the Service 40A / 40X journeys between Montrose, Arbroath and Dundee will cost £26,520 in a full financial year. This expenditure can be contained in the Planning and Transport Revenue Budget for 2002/3.
- 13.2 The additional funding of £116,000 together with the original allocation of £466,000 to implement the free travel concession arrangements for senior citizens and disabled persons in 2002 - 2003 is welcomed. It is anticipated that the new arrangements can be introduced in Angus within the funding provision available.

14 CONSULTATION

- 14.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Director of Law & Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

15 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

16 CONCLUSION

- 16.1 The local bus service network continues to be kept under review and changes made to tailor this to the demand identified.
- 16.2 The additional funding towards the introduction of free travel concession provision for senior citizens and disabled persons is welcomed and negotiations regarding reimbursement arrangements to Operators are still on-going.

NOTE

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

AA/LEM/KW
25 April 2002

Alex Anderson
Director of Planning and Transport