

ANGUS COUNCIL

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT POLICY COMMITTEE

28 JANUARY 1999

SUBJECT: PUBLIC TRANSPORT UPDATE

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

Abstract: This report updates Members of recent changes to both commercial and contracted local bus services in Angus.

1 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee -

1. Note the changes to commercial services as outlined in this report.
2. Note the request for a contribution towards the cross-boundary contract awarded by Perth and Kinross Council for evening journeys on Service 57 between Dundee, Birkhill, Muirhead, Newtyle, Alyth and Perth as outlined in this report. Agree that surveys be undertaken to determine usage of these journeys and therefore establish whether or not they meet the Council's subsidy per passenger and subsidy per mile criteria. These findings will be reported back to the next meeting of this Committee for a decision.
3. Note the revision to Bruce of Forfar's Service 118 journeys operated under contract to Angus Council to serve Inshewan Road End following a request for the service to be diverted.
4. Note the withdrawal of funding by Perth and Kinross Council towards cross-boundary contracts on the Kirriemuir - Meigle - Glamis (Service 125), Kirriemuir - Alyth - Blairgowrie (Service 128) and Kirriemuir - Alyth - Dundee (Service 129) corridors.
5. Homologate the award by the Director of Planning and Transport of an Emergency contract between Kirriemuir and Alyth to replace the previous Service 128 contract as outlined in this report.
6. Homologate the decision by the Director of Planning and Transport not to provide a replacement facility for passengers within Angus on the Kirriemuir to Alyth corridor on Service 129 due to lack of demand.
7. Homologate the decision of the Director of Planning and Transport for the award of Emergency contracts on Services 130 and 131 and agree that an early review be undertaken of these services to ensure that they are meeting the travel requirements of the public and providing value for money to the Council.
8. Note the admission of Glen Esk Travel into Angus Council's Travel Concession Schemes from 5 February 1999.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report outlines recent changes to local bus services in Angus both as a result of commercial alterations by Operators and the withdrawal of subsidy by Perth and Kinross Council on certain cross-boundary services.

3 SERVICE X26 - FRIOCKHEIM - LETHAM - KELLAS - DUNDEE

- 3.1 The monthly shoppers bus operated commercially by Strathtay Scottish Ltd. between Friockheim, Letham and Dundee will be withdrawn from 3 February 1999. The new hourly service to be introduced on that date between Arbroath, Friockheim, Letham and Forfar will give passengers a frequent service to Forfar with connections to/from Dundee, therefore this service will no longer be required.

4 SERVICE 24 - BRECHIN - STRACATHRO HOSPITAL - STONEHAVEN

- 4.1 M W Nicoll revised timings on Service 24 between Brechin and Stonehaven from 11 January 1999 in order to maintain connections at Stonehaven with Bluebird Buses Ltd's Aberdeen to Montrose service when a new timetable was introduced. The re-timings are all within 10 minutes of existing journey times and no action by the Council is therefore required.

5 SERVICE 27 - FORFAR - LETHAM - FRIOCKHEIM - ARBROATH

- 5.1 A contract has been awarded to Strathtay Scottish Ltd. for an hourly daytime service on Mondays to Saturdays between Forfar and Arbroath and on Mondays to Fridays for evening journeys timed to permit residents from the Forfar, Letham and Friockheim areas to access Angus College. On Sundays a two-hourly daytime service will be provided. This new contract is being funded from the Rural Transport Grant allocation to the Council, full details of which are given in Report 89/99 to this Committee. Strathtay Scottish Ltd. incorporated into their tender contracts A33 and A34 for Saturday journeys between Forfar and Letham therefore from commencement of the new timetable these contracts will be withdrawn. The costs for the journeys previously operated will continue to be met from the Planning and Transport Department's Revenue Budget while the new journeys on this corridor will be paid for from the Rural Transport Grant allocation. The savings achieved through the integration of contract A33 and A34 into the new timetable are £2100 per annum. Against this the retention of two evening peak journeys (Monday to Friday) between Forfar and Letham not incorporated into the Rural Grant Tender will cost £3,150 per annum.

6 SERVICES 40, 73 - 76 TAYWAY CORRIDOR

- 6.1 Strathtay Scottish Ltd. introduced minor timetable changes to the Tayway services with effect from 4 January 1999. These alterations within Angus included the withdrawal of duplicate vehicles on the route and extension of some journeys to the Technology Park and Ninewells Hospital.

7 SERVICE 57 - DUNDEE - ALYTH - PERTH

- 7.1 It was reported to this Committee on 6 June 1996 (Report 452/96 refers) that Perth and Kinross Council intended to award an Emergency contract for the provision of evening services on the Dundee - Alyth - Perth corridor until formal tendering was

undertaken. Perth and Kinross Council have now undertaken this retendering exercise and have approached Angus Council for a contribution towards this contract which provides an evening service for Birkhill, Muirhead and Newtyle.

- 7.2 The contract cost is £51,626 with the proportion being sought from Angus Council being 15.24% based on the proportion of the mileage operated within Angus this equates to a contribution of £7868 per annum.
- 7.3 Perth and Kinross Council have no survey information for these services therefore the subsidy per mile and subsidy per passenger cannot be calculated. It is therefore recommended that no decision be made regarding contribution towards these services until Angus Council have completed their own on-bus surveys to determine usage. The results of this exercise will be reported to the next meeting of this Committee for a decision regarding contribution.

8 SERVICE 107 - MONTROSE - STONEHAVEN - ABERDEEN

- 8.1 Minor changes were introduced on the Montrose - Stonehaven - Aberdeen route by Bluebird Buses Ltd from 11 January 1999. These involve minor timetable alterations to evening journeys, however, no action is required by the Council in respect of these.

9 SERVICE 118 - FORFAR - FERN - TANNADICE - FORFAR

- 9.1 A request was received from a resident for the Forfar - Tannadice circular service to be re-routed to serve Inshewan Road End. Following discussions with the Operator, Bruce of Forfar agreement was reached to re-route the service which is operated under contract to the Council at no additional cost. Accordingly the Company have submitted a registration to the Traffic Commissioner to introduce this change with effect from 3 February 1999. Angus Council will meet the cost to the Operator of varying the registration with the Traffic Commissioner this being a £38 fee, this alteration fee will be met from the Rural Transport Fund monies allocated to the Council.

10 SERVICE 125 - KIRRIEMUIR - MEIGLE - GLAMIS SERVICE 128 - KIRRIEMUIR - ALYTH - BLAIRGOWRIE SERVICE 129 - KIRRIEMUIR - ALYTH - DUNDEE

- 10.1 It was reported to this Committee on 11 June 1998 that Perth and Kinross Council were reviewing all their cross-boundary transport arrangements. Within Angus the affected contracts were Service 125 between Kirriemuir and Glamis, Service 128 between Kirriemuir and Blairgowrie and Service 129 between Kirriemuir, Alyth and Dundee. Perth and Kinross Council have confirmed that from 4 January 1999 they would cease to contribute to each of these contracts.

i Service 125 - Kirriemuir - Meigle - Glamis

- 10.2 Perth and Kinross Council previously met 5% of the £9,000 cost for operating Service 125 between Kirriemuir, Meigle and Glamis. It is intended that a full review of bus services on this corridor will be undertaken in 1999, this will involve local consultation, on-bus surveys etc. to identify the transport needs of the area. In the meantime the full costs of operating this contract will be met by Angus Council which will result in an additional expenditure of £450 per annum.

ii Service 128 - Kirriemuir - Alyth - Blairgowrie

- 10.3 Perth and Kinross Council previously met 50% of the total contract price of £6,600 for the Kirriemuir to Blairgowrie Service 128. Within Perth and Kinross there is a commercial service between Blairgowrie and Alyth operating on an hourly basis beyond Alyth Perth and Kinross Council have made no provision for a replacement service. Within Angus it has been identified that there is significant passenger demand between Kirriemuir and Alyth with a small number of passengers continuing to Blairgowrie. Angus Council has therefore been required to make provision for its passengers. Because of the short timescale of notification by Perth and Kinross of their withdrawal of subsidy it has not been possible to undertake a major consultation exercise to assess the transport requirements on this corridor or seek formal tenders for a replacement service. Therefore, in line with the Council's Standing Orders three prices were sought for an Emergency Contract and it was awarded to the lowest tenderer Meffans Coaches Ltd at a price of £17,300 per annum. This Emergency Contract is for an approximately two hourly service between Kirriemuir and Alyth providing connections to Strathtay Scottish Ltd's Service 57 at Alyth for passengers wishing to travel to Blairgowrie and Perth. Through fares will be available. The subsidy per passenger and subsidy per mile are £1.10 and £0.25 respectively which meet the criteria for award as outlined in the Council's Public Transport Policy Statement of £2.50 per passenger and £1.25 per mile as approved by this Committee on 25 April 1996 (Report 261/96 refers).
- 10.4 One benefit from the award of the Emergency Contract between Kirriemuir and Alyth is that as the vehicle is not operating through to Blairgowrie it has been possible to operate additional journeys on this service and also provide additional journeys between Kirriemuir and Glamis. These cost of these additional journeys, £8,825 per annum, will be met from Rural Transport Grant. Full details in respect of this Rural Transport Grant expenditure are detailed in Report 89/99 to this Committee.
- 10.5 The new timetable introduced under the Emergency contract will be fully assessed together with the existing 125 service when drawing up a new long-term contract for that corridor.

iii Service 129 - Kirriemuir - Alyth - Dundee

- 10.6 Meffans Coaches Service 129 was operated under a de-minimis contract at a cost of £5,450 per annum, with Perth and Kinross contributing 45% towards the operating costs based on mileage undertaken within that Authorities area. Perth and Kinross decided to cease contributing towards this service but introduce their own Alyth to Dundee service. Surveys were carried out to identify any passengers not catered for by alternative services within Angus and established there was only one passenger who travelled very occasionally to Dundee to shop. Perth and Kinross awarded their replacement service to Meffans Coaches, that Company was therefore approached to operate from Kirriemuir via Kingoldrum and Lintrathen on their replacement service. The Company requested £18 per day for this additional operation, however bearing in mind the maximum useage identified of one passenger who had no alternative means of transport the subsidy per passenger would be £9 which greatly exceeds the maximum criteria laid down by the Council of £2.50. Therefore it was decided that no replacement contract should be entered into.

**11 SERVICE 130 - DYKEHEAD - KIRRIEMUIR - GLAMIS - DUNDEE
SERVICE 131 - KIRRIEMUIR - FORFAR - STRACATHRO - HILLSIDE**

- 11.1 The contracts for these services together with Service 129 between Kirriemuir - Alyth - Dundee were provided under a de-minimis arrangement with Meffans Coaches. Following the withdrawal from Service 129 by Perth and Kinross Council it was decided to enter into new Emergency Contracts with Meffans Coaches to operate Services 130 and 131, these new contracts being subject to two months notice of termination. It is intended that these contracts be reviewed at an early date to establish any alterations which can be made to these services to promote passenger useage and ensure value for money to the Council.

12 ADMISSION OF GLEN ESK TRAVEL INTO THE COUNCIL'S TRAVEL CONCESSION SCHEMES

- 12.1 Glen Esk Travel have been admitted into the Council's Travel Concession Schemes with effect from 5 February 1999. The Company will therefore receive reimbursement from the Council to ensure that they are "no better and no worse off" as a result of their participation in the Scheme.

13 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The additional cost to Angus Council following the withdrawal of subsidy by Perth and Kinross Council from cross-boundary services will be £2,650 per annum. In addition the retention of two evening peak journeys between Forfar and Letham (Monday to Friday) affected by the new Rural Transport Grant services will cost £3,150 per annum. This will however be partly offset by savings of £2100 per annum achieved by incorporating contracts A33 and A34 into the new Rural Transport Grant funded contract A(R)62 for the Forfar - Arbroath corridor. The overall additional cost to the Council is therefore £3,700 per annum which can be met from the Planning and Transport Department's Revenue budget for 1998/99. The £8,825 per annum cost for additional journeys on the Emergency contract on the Kirriemuir - Alyth and Kirriemuir - Glamis corridors will be met from the Council's Rural Transport Grant allocation for 1998/99.

14 CONSULTATION

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

15 CONCLUSION

- 15.1 The local bus service network continues to change and is therefore constantly monitored in order to fill any gaps in service which are not catered for commercially.
- 15.2 In cases where emergency replacement facilities have been introduced at short notice, the full service requirements will have to be assessed. This will involve both on and off bus surveys and full public consultation in order to draw up long term contracts to meet the needs of residents and visitors and ensure value for money to the Authority. The results of these investigations will be reported back to this Committee.

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/IAL
18 January 1999

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