

ANGUS COUNCIL

INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE

3 MARCH 2009

SUBJECT: PUBLIC TRANSPORT UPDATE

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

Abstract: This report details local bus service issues including the cancellation of services, local bus service and school conveyance contract re-tendering exercises, measures taken to improve local bus service reliability for the public and contract price fuel related inflationary increases.

1 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee –

- 1 note the withdrawal of the Royal Mail Post Bus service from Glen Clova from 4 April 2009 and authorise the Head of Planning and Transport in consultation with the Convener of Infrastructure Services to enter into a short term emergency contract if value for money can be demonstrated;
- 2 note the withdrawal of funding by Dundee City Council for the Dundee to Liff/Fowlis Service 51 from the end of April 2009 and authorise the Head of Planning and Transport in consultation with the Convener of Infrastructure Services to enter into a short term emergency contract to meet the needs of Angus residents if value for money can be demonstrated;
- 3 note the local bus service contracts due for renewal in August 2009 and agree that in view of the ongoing review of public transport services, extensions are sought to March 2010;
- 4 note the school transport re-tendering exercise to be undertaken for the new academic session in the Forfar and Kirriemuir areas as well as for some contracts for children with additional support needs and agree that any implications to local bus service provision arising from this be reported to the June meeting of this Committee;
- 5 note the signing of the Dundee and Angus Bus Punctuality Partnership and agree that the results of the annual monitoring reports be brought back to this Committee; and
- 6 note the position regarding the payment of fuel related inflationary increases to operators and agree that in light of the significant reduction in fuel costs since November 2008 that no additional fuel related inflationary increases are made this financial year and that the interim arrangements put in place to deal with escalating fuel costs are suspended.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report details various local bus service issues including the withdrawal of the Post Bus service between Kirriemuir and Glen Clova and Travel Dundee service between Dundee and Liff/Fowlis, contract re-tendering exercises, the signing of a Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnership and a review of contract prices in respect of fuel related payments.

3 ROYAL MAIL POST BUS SERVICE 220: KIRRIEMUIR TO GLEN CLOVA

- 3.1 Royal Mail Post Bus has given notice to the Council of their intention to withdraw Service 220 which operates a morning and afternoon return journey between Kirriemuir and Acharn on Mondays to Fridays and a morning only return journey on Saturdays. This service is currently operated on a best value contract with Angus Council which is on 2 months notice of termination. It is the intention of Royal Mail to cease operation of this service from 4 April 2009.
- 3.2 Currently, Royal Mail receives £1500 per annum under a best value contract with Angus Council. The Royal Mail has informed the Council that they are experiencing significant losses on this route and have come to the decision 'which was not taken lightly' they can no longer maintain this service.
- 3.3 The Transport Team is currently undertaking surveys on this route to establish usage and identify any journeys which may not be required, thereafter tenders will be sought for a replacement facility which will be open to Royal Mail and other operators to bid for. Tenders will be sought on an emergency basis and authority is sought for the Head of Planning and Transport, in consultation with the Convener of Infrastructure Services, to award this contract provided value for money can be demonstrated.

4 TRAVEL DUNDEE SERVICE 51: DUNDEE TO LIFF/FOWLIS

- 4.1 Dundee City Council has informed Angus Council that they intend to withdraw their contract with Travel Dundee for the Dundee to Liff / Fowlis service from the end of April 2009. Prior to April 2008 Angus Council contributed £3,104 out of a contract cost of £55,751 but from that date had no longer been required by Dundee City Council to contribute towards this service. Angus Council had understood that funding had been withdrawn from April 2008 (Report 258/08 refers) and that the service was thereafter operated commercially, however, Dundee City Council has confirmed that this was not the case.
- 4.2 In order to establish usage of this service by Angus passengers the Council's Transport Team are currently conducting on-bus surveys and Travel Dundee are assisting in providing additional patronage information.
- 4.3 Initial discussions with Travel Dundee indicate that they consider none of the service to be commercial and therefore any replacement facility for Angus will have to be fully contracted. On the basis of the results of survey, tenders will be sought for an emergency contract. Authority is sought for the Head of Planning and Transport, in consultation with the Convener of Infrastructure Services, to award this contract provided value for money can be demonstrated.

5 LOCAL BUS SERVICE CONTRACTS

5.1 The following contracts are due to terminate on 16 August 2009:

- A172 ARBROATH TOWN SERVICE (MON - SAT EVENINGS)
- A173 ARBROATH TOWN SERVICE (SAT MORNING)
- A174 ARBROATH TOWN SERVICE (SUNDAYS)
- A175 ARBROATH TOWN SERVICE (CHURCH BUS)
- A176 KIRRIEMUIR - CORTACHY/LINTRATHEN (TUE & FRI)
- A177 DUNDEE - KIRRIEMUIR (MON-SAT PM)
- A178 DUNDEE - MONIKIE (DAILY)
- A179 ARBROATH TOWN SERVICES 37, 46, 49, 50 (MON - SAT)
- A180 MONTROSE TOWN SERVICE (SAT)
- A181 BRECHIN TOWN SERVICE (SCHOOLDAYS)
- A183 DUNDEE - FORFAR (SAT MORNING)
- A184 DUNDEE - FORFAR - KIRRIEMUIR (SCHOOLDAYS)
- A186 DUNDEE- FORFAR- KIRRIEMUIR (MON-FRI EARLY AM)
- A187 MONTROSE TOWN SERVICE (MON - FRI)

5.2 The outcome of the Special Service Committee Meetings on 19 February 2009, was that financial provision would be made in the provisional volume report to maintain the current levels of local bus service provision (Report 119/09 refers). This was on the basis of that this additional funding would be made available within the Planning and Transport 2009/10 revenue budget for one year only during which time a review of bus service provision in Angus would be taken forward. This review would be with a view to establishing a level of service provision which is affordable and sustainable into the future.

5.3 In light of this review of local bus service provision across Angus, it is considered that the contracts due for renewal should, if operators are agreeable, be extended until 26 March 2010. Should operators not agree to this extension then contracts will be re-tendered for August 2009.

6 SCHOOL TRANSPORT CONTRACT RENEWAL

6.1 School conveyance contracts are tendered throughout Angus on a three-year rolling programme with approximately one-third being re-tendered each year. This year contracts are due for renewal in the Forfar and Kirriemuir areas as well as a number of contracts for scholars with additional support needs. As in previous years, contracts will, where possible, be tendered to operate as local bus services thereby enabling adults and children not entitled to free home to school transport to travel on these vehicles, this policy has served well in recent years to increase travel opportunities particularly in rural areas.

6.2 Tenders will be sought in March and any implications of this re-tendering exercise on the local bus service network will be reported back to the June meeting of this Committee.

7 DUNDEE AND ANGUS BUS PUNCTUALITY IMPROVEMENT PARTNERSHIP

7.1 It was agreed at the 14 October 2008 meeting of this committee that Angus Council would enter into a Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnership with Stagecoach, Travel

Dundee and Dundee City Council with a view to working in partnership with the bus operators to drive up service standards and improve public transport services for bus users. The signing of this Partnership agreement took place on 26 January 2009.

- 7.2 Service provision on the routes covered by the agreement, which in Angus are on the Arbroath to Dundee corridor, will now be closely monitored and the partners will work together to identify measures which will enable services to operate reliably.
- 7.3 This is the first Punctuality Improvement Partnership in Scotland and the results will be closely monitored by all parties including the Scottish Government who is keen to see such schemes rolled-out across Scotland. Members will be informed at future meetings the outcomes of this Partnership working including the results of the annual monitoring report.

8 REVIEW OF CONTRACT PRICES – FUEL RELATED PAYMENTS

- 8.1 Members, at the Angus Council meeting on 26 June 2008, delegated authority to the Director of Corporate Services in consultation with the Director of Education and Director of Infrastructure Services to put in place a procedure for a quarterly review of contract prices in respect of rising fuel costs. It was agreed that quarterly reports summarising delegated decisions would be reported back to the appropriate committees (Report 651/08 refers). Details of the interim arrangements put in place in respect of fuel increases were presented to Members at the Infrastructure Services Committee on 26 August 2008 (Report 796/08 refers).
- 8.2 An inflationary increase of 1.66% was made to operators in respect of increased fuel costs for Quarter 1 for 2008/09. Calculations for Quarter 2 indicate that a 1.86% inflationary increase could be made, however, fuel costs have fallen significantly since November 2008 and it is possible that we may be in a situation where we have deflation for Quarters 3 and 4.
- 8.3 It is proposed therefore that no further inflationary increases are made in respect of fuel costs this financial year and that the interim arrangements currently in place are suspended. A report will be brought before Members at the August meeting of this committee detailing the inflationary increases due to operators from 1 July 2009 which will take into account all increases in expenditure for the:

- Purchase of motor vehicles;
- Maintenance of Motor Vehicles;
- Fuel;
- Vehicle Tax and Insurance; and
- Salaries

during the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009. This calculation will take into account the fuel related payment already made.

9 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The provision of a replacement contract on the Kirriemuir to Glen Clova and Dundee to Liff/Fowlis routes will be subject to being able to demonstrate best value. Contracts will only be entered into on a short term basis while a review of all tendered service provision is undertaken to identify how this budget can be managed.

10 SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

10.1 This report contributes to the following local outcome contained within the Single Outcome Agreement for Angus:

15. Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

11 CONSULTATION

11.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services, Head of Finance and Head of Law & Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

12 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

13 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The issues dealt with in this report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective (as required by legislation). An equalities impact assessment is not required.

ERIC S LOWSON
DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

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.

P&T/LEM/IAL
9 February 2009