

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

David Brazier, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

DECISION NO:

22/00052

For publication

Key decision: YES

Subject Matter / Title of Decision: KCC Supported Bus Funding Review

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, I agree to withdraw funding support from 39 supported bus services.

Reason(s) for decision:

The financial support of public bus services is a discretionary activity with the only obligation on Local Transport Authorities to consider funding (but not to actually fund) bus services in this way. From April 2022, the net budget for supported bus services has reduced from £6m to £3.8m to support the Council achieve a balanced budget in 2022/23.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The issue has been discussed by Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee (ETCC) Members on:

- 18 February 2022
- 19 May 2022

The proposed decision is to be discussed on 6 July 2022 by ETCC Members.

A public consultation ran for eight weeks from 24 February to 20 April 2022 and was supported by a comprehensive communications campaign. 2,562 responses were received along with 55 letters and emails sent to the Public Transport team. In addition, the Council has also received three petitions, focussed surveys conducted by Kent Karrier operators and a Parish Council, four MPs letters and a focussed report by Compaid the operator of west Kent Karrier schemes regarding the impacts of the withdrawal of these services.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

To use funding from the Bus Service Improvement Funding however the funding conditions preclude KCC from using the revenue funding element to support existing commercial / supported services; its focus is on future developments.

Frequency reductions and sharing resource however the opportunities for these types of savings have largely been previously deployed with limited scope for further adjustments; and the saving required was too great as a proportion of the overall budget to allow for this approach.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

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signed

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date