

**From:** Mike Whiting, Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste

Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport

**To:** Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 28<sup>th</sup> November 2018

**Subject:** Bus Summit – Big Conversation Update

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Past Pathway of Paper:** N/A

**Future Pathway of Paper:** N/A

**Summary:**

This report details the Bus Summit event where five pilots were announced and outlines the next steps for delivering each of the pilots. .

**Recommendation**

The Cabinet Committee is asked to note the report.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In June 2018 the Authority launched the ‘Big Conversation’ consultation to explore options for delivering better, more sustainable transport to rural communities not currently served by commercial operators.
- 1.2 The Big Conversation consultation ran for eight weeks until the 8 August 2018. The Authority received 2,335 responses to the consultation questionnaire. Lake Market Research was commissioned to analyse and report upon the responses to the consultation which has been incorporated into the development of pilot proposals.
- 1.3 The inaugural Bus Summit took place in the Council Chamber on the evening of the 30 October 2018. Over 100 individuals were invited from a range of stakeholder groups.

## 2. The Bus Summit

- 2.1 Between sixty and seventy individuals representing a range of stakeholder groups as well as 18 members attended the event. The summit was also web casted to ensure those unable to attend could view the event at a time that suited them. This is viewable for up to 12 months and can be accessed at [https://kent.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast\\_interactive/382871](https://kent.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/382871)

2.2 The panel comprised:

- Mike Whiting (Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste)
- Paul Carter (Leader of the Council)
- Phil Lightowler (Head of Public Transport)
- Robert Clark (Programme Manager)
- Stephen Pay (Planning and Operations Manager)
- Jo Simpson (Lake Market Research)

2.3 The summit was opened by the Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste (Chairman) and included a panel introduction and explanation of the topic areas that were to be presented.

2.4 Feedback on the summary of the consultation findings was presented by Lake Market Research. The formal report was subsequently published on [www.kent.gov.uk/bigconversation](http://www.kent.gov.uk/bigconversation) after the event.

2.5 Robert Clark, KCC Programme Manager, then gave a summary of how the pilots were developed and evaluated following the public consultation.

2.6 The Chairman announced the pilots that will be implemented subject to further development and formal approval by whom?. The five pilots were as follows:

- Dover Feeder Bus
- Maidstone Feeder Bus
- Sevenoaks Taxi Bus
- Tenterden Taxi Bus
- West Malling Feeder Bus

2.7 There was also a detailed summary of the next steps for the programme which included how and when the pilots will be implemented. There was then a Question and Answer session for attendees to ask questions to panel members about the topics discussed at the summit before the Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste closed the summit at 20:00.

### **3. Pilots**

3.1 The following pilots have been provisionally approved:

- Dover Feeder Bus
- Maidstone Feeder Bus

- Sevenoaks Taxi Bus
- Tenterden Taxi Bus
- West Malling Feeder Bus

3.2 These pilots demonstrated the following:

- Received a good response in the consultation which included support from the local Parish Councils
- Demonstrated greater service improvement through increased opportunity for residents to access public transport
- The local areas had a large number of residents and were not close to their nearest town
- Demonstrated a positive impact through additional journey frequencies
- They could be delivered by June 2019 and potentially brought forward to an April commencement date if a Brexit deal has been achieved.

3.3 All pilots are subject to formal approval and will be presented through the appropriate governance structure. Full business cases including commissioning processes will be developed throughout 2018.

#### **4. Next Steps**

##### *Pilot Development*

4.1 Between November and January, the Programme team will develop and finalise the pilot proposals which will require extensive engagement and planning of the services. This will include the following:

- Facilitate working groups which include local county members, town/parish councils and local community groups
- Explore commissioning opportunities with the local market
- Finalise pilot routes, connecting services and costings
- Submit business cases for approval

##### *Pilot Approval and Mobilisation*

4.2 Prior to pilots commencing, the Programme team will seek pilot approval in January 2019. Should the individual pilots be approved, they will be required to be commissioned, promoted and monitored. This will include the following:

- Commission the individual services
- Build the required infrastructure to support the pilots
- Promote the schemes in the local area – ‘Use it or Lose it’
- Monitor passenger numbers and conduct regular service reviews
- Evaluate pilot sustainability after 12 months

- Review the subsidised bus service expenditure and evaluate potential improvements

### Timescales

4.3 The timescales are as follows:

- Pilot Development – *November 2018 – January 2019*
- Pilot Approval – *January 2019*
- Pilot Mobilisation – *February – May 2019*
- Pilot Commencement – *1 June 2019*
- Pilot Review – *1 June 2019 – 31 May 2020*

## **5. Recommendation**

5.1 The Cabinet Committee is asked to note the report.

## **6. Appendices**

Appendix A – Pilot Summaries

## **7. Contact details**

Report Authors:

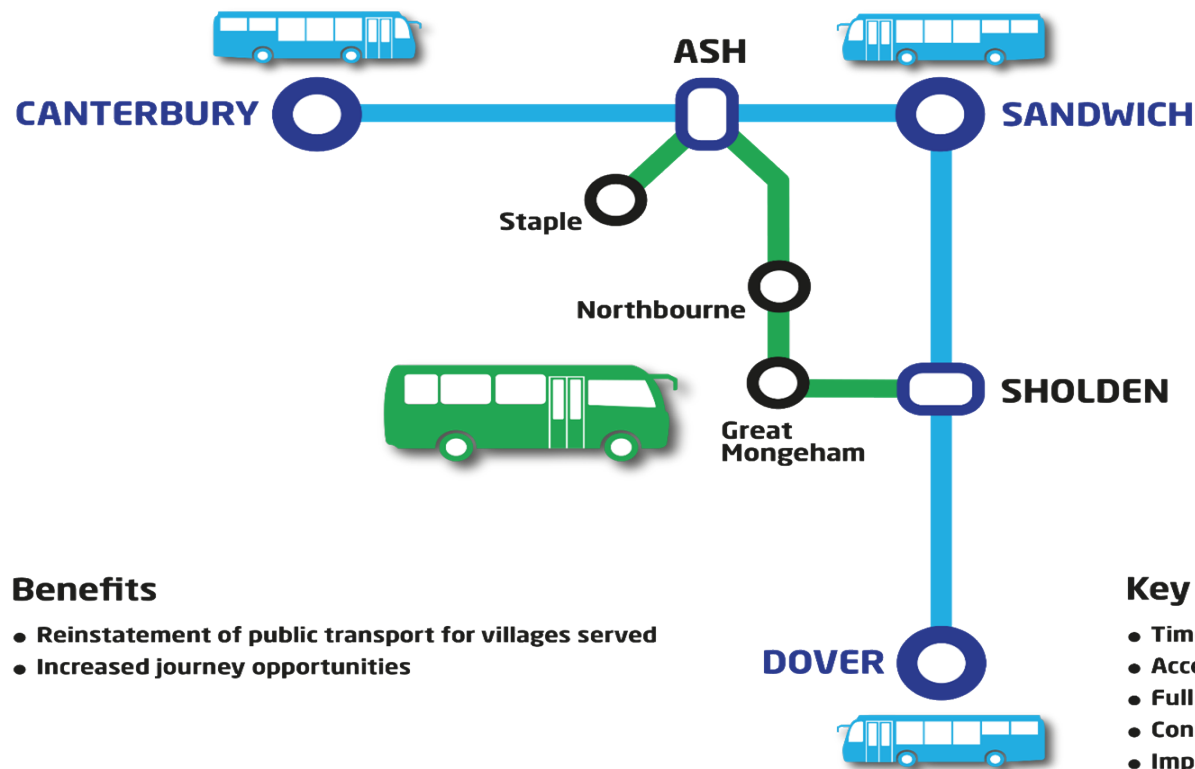
- Robert Clark – Commissioning Programme Manager  
[Robert.Clark@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Robert.Clark@kent.gov.uk) – ext. 415951

Relevant Director:

- Simon Jones – Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste  
[Simon.Jones@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Simon.Jones@kent.gov.uk) – ext. 411683

## DOVER Feeder Bus Service

New service for Northbourne, Staple and Mongeham re-establishing links with the commercial bus network



### Benefits

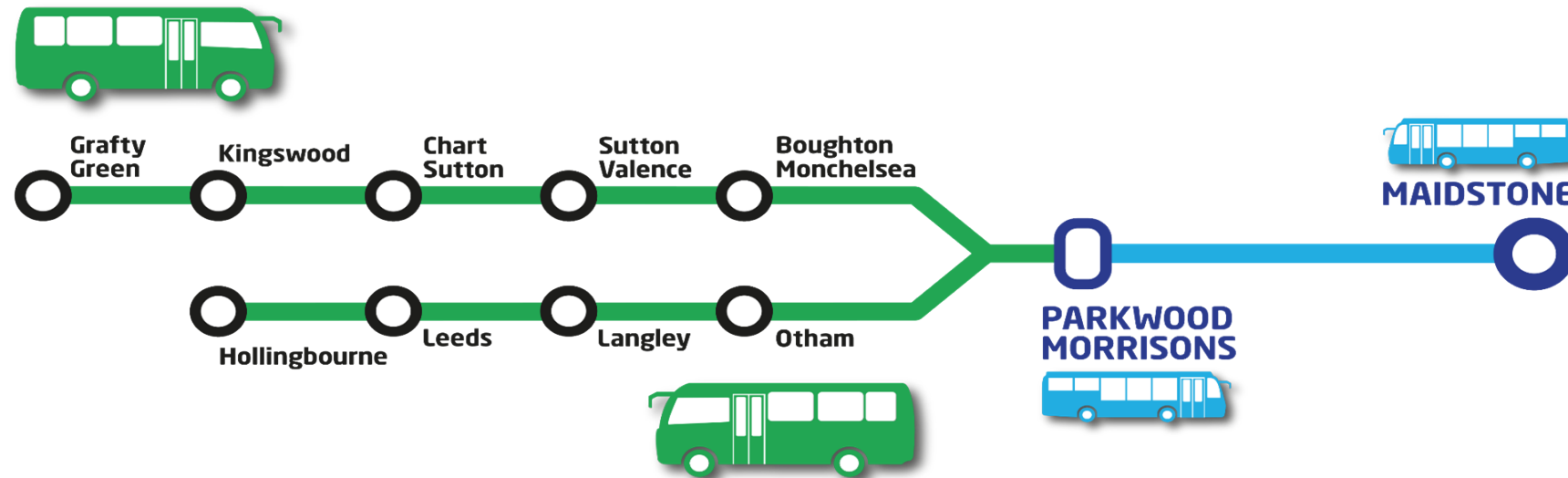
- Reinstatement of public transport for villages served
- Increased journey opportunities

### Key Features

- Timetabled service
- Accepts all bus passes
- Full sized, accessible vehicles
- Connections with frequent commercial bus routes
- Improved waiting facilities at interchange points

## MAIDSTONE Feeder Bus Service

New feeder services linking rural villages in the east of Maidstone with regular bus services to Maidstone and Tenterden



### Benefits

- Significantly improved frequencies for villages served
- Increased journey opportunities
- Modification of existing services improves sustainability
- New links to Tenterden

### Key Features

- Timetabled service
- Accepts all bus passes
- Full sized, accessible vehicles
- Connections with frequent commercial bus routes
- Improved waiting facilities at interchange points

## SEVENOAKS Taxi-bus Service

New Taxi Bus service for Fairseat, Stansted, West Kingsdown and East Hill



### Benefits

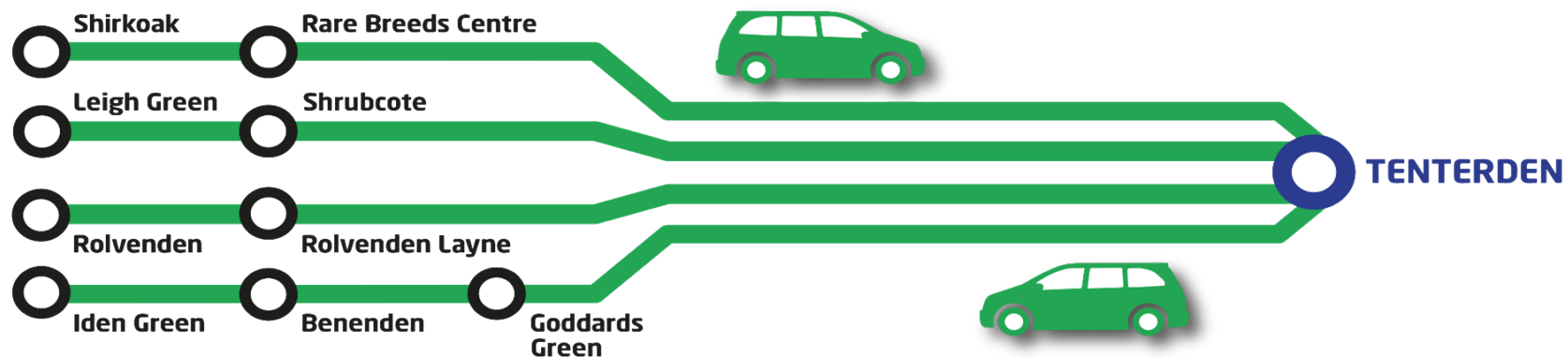
- New and improved links to Sevenoaks for outlying area
- Daily service for all areas linking to the local town

### Key Features

- Timetabled service
- Accepts all bus passes
- Accessible vehicles

## TENTERDEN Taxi-bus Service

New Taxi Bus network for the Tenterden area



### Benefits

- New and improved links to Tenterden for outlying area
- Daily service for all areas linking to the local town

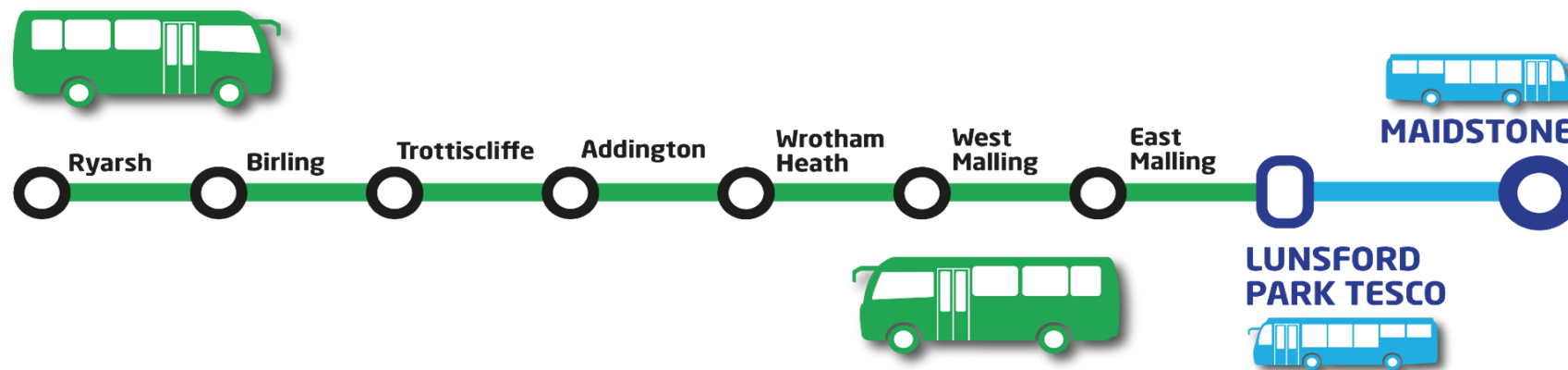
### Key Features

- Timetabled service
- Accepts all bus passes
- Accessible vehicles



## WEST MALLING Feeder Bus Service

Feeder service linking outlying area with West Malling and Lunsford Park, Tesco's for onward journey to Maidstone



### Benefits

- Improved frequencies for villages served
- Increased journey opportunities
- New link to Lunsford Park Tesco
- Builds upon existing service improving sustainability
- Enables use of developer funding

### Key Features

- Timetabled service
- Accepts all bus passes
- Full sized, accessible vehicles
- Connections with frequent commercial bus route
- Improved waiting facilities at interchange points