

Please ask for:

Lisa Young

Direct dial:

(023) 9254 5340

E-mail:

Lisa.young@gosport.gov.uk

6 January 2015

S U M M O N S

MEETING: Extraordinary Policy and Organisation Board
DATE: 14 January 2015
TIME: 6.00 pm
PLACE: Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Gosport
Democratic Services contact: Lisa Young

LINDA EDWARDS
BOROUGH SOLICITOR

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

The Mayor (Councillor Gill) (ex officio)
Councillor Hook (Chairman)
Councillor Burgess (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Chegwyn	Councillor Philpott
Councillor Hicks	Councillor Ronayne
Councillor Jessop	Councillor Mrs Wright
Councillor Langdon	Councillor Wright

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

(To be read out by the Chairman)

In the event of the fire alarm sounding, please leave the room immediately. Proceed downstairs by way of the main stairs or as directed by GBC staff, follow any of the emergency exit signs. People with disability or mobility

issues please identify yourself to GBC staff who will assist in your evacuation of the building.

This meeting may be filmed or otherwise recorded. By attending this meeting, you are consenting to any broadcast of your image and being recorded.

Please note that mobile phones should be switched off or switched to silent for the duration of the meeting.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

- If you are in a wheelchair or have difficulty in walking and require access to the Committee Room on the First Floor of the Town Hall for this meeting, assistance can be provided by Town Hall staff on request

If you require any of the services detailed above please ring the Direct Line for the Democratic Services Officer listed on the Summons (first page).

AGENDA

PART A ITEMS

RECOMMENDED
MINUTE FORMAT

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members present are required to declare, at this point in the meeting or as soon as possible thereafter, any disclosable pecuniary interest in any item(s) being considered at this meeting.

3. DEPUTATIONS – STANDING ORDER 3.5

(NOTE: The Board is required to receive a deputation(s) on a matter which is before the meeting of the Board provided that notice of the intended deputation and its object shall have been received by the Borough Solicitor by 12 noon on Monday 12, January 2015. The total time for deputations in favour and against a proposal shall not exceed 10 minutes).

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – STANDING ORDER 3.6

(NOTE: The Board is required to allow a total of 15 minutes for questions from members of the public on matters within the terms of reference of the Board provided that notice of such Question(s) shall have been submitted to the Borough Solicitor by 12 noon on Monday, 12 January 2015).

5. BUS SERVICES
CROSS REFERENCE FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE (4 DECEMBER 2014)

PART II

Consideration of the Report of the Bus Services Working Group.

6. STAFFING REVIEW
The purpose of the report is to recommend the creation of the new post of Technical Officer within the Streetscene section of the Chief Executive's Unit.

PART II
Contact: Ian Lycett
EX: 5201

7. ANY OTHER ITEMS

Which the Chairman determines should be considered, by reason of special circumstances, as a matter of urgency.

**GOSPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL
REFERENCE**

**TO: EXTRAORDINARY POLICY AND ORGANISATION BOARD –
14 JANUARY 2014**

FROM: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 4 DECEMBER 2014

TITLE: BUS SERVICES

AUTHOR: BUS SERVICES WORKING GROUP

Attached is an extract of the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 4 December 2014 (Appendix 'A') and a copy of the report that was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 4 December 2014 (Appendix 'B').

Minute No. 25ii**BUS SERVICES WORKING GROUP**

The Committee were advised that report of the Working Group would be referred to the Policy and Organisation Board for approval.

Members were advised that the Group had found a number of key points over the duration of the Scrutiny, these included:

- That First Bus are a commercial company and that unprofitable routes can not be run
- That the introduction of the busway had changed the approach to bus services in the Borough
- That the Eclipse service had increased the number of passengers using buses in the Borough
- That services had improved for some residents in the Borough, but that when changes are made often the only publicity received was negative.
- That Bus Service providers preferred a simpler network with more frequent services with less reliance on timetables, similar to the tube services
- That improvements were being made to buses, with the introduction of hybrid buses, Wi-Fi and next stop displays
- There had been cuts in the subsidy of buses by Hampshire County Council
- That concessionary bus passes damage the viability of services, they are often unviable due to the small amount of recompense received for concessionary bus passengers

Members recognised that the document providing details of alternative transport services was useful and requested that it be made available to members of the public; Members also welcomed further promotional material to aid residents of Bridgemarket.

The Committee recognised the willingness of first bus to engage with the working group and the ongoing engagement with members of the public.

RESOLVED: That;

The Committee regard the recent Hampshire County Council reductions in subsidy to local services as regrettable and encourage those with authority in this matter to resist further reductions;

The issues identified at 4.2 and 4.15 be addressed it is recommended that the Council host a meeting with the voluntary sector designed to develop a better understanding of how they can work alongside commercial and subsidised services and explore ways of providing enhanced services to those at risk of isolation;

The Working Group endeavour to report back their findings and recommendations to members of the public who have participated in the

Scrutiny;

Gosport Borough Council, Hampshire County Council and First Bus continue to explore ways of improving communication and sharing information;

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee ask First Bus to clarify the issues raised at 4.5 of the report; and that

The report of the Bus Services Working Group be referred to the Policy and Organisation Board for consideration.

GOSPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4th December 2014

TITLE: BUS SERVICES

AUTHOR: BUS SERVICES WORKING GROUP

1 Reasons for the Scrutiny

- 1.1 The decision to undertake the scrutiny of Gosport bus services was taken at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 24 June 2014 and followed the receipt of representations to the committee by the Gosport Older Persons' Forum and a Vice-Principal of St Vincent College regarding the declining standards of some bus services. These representations were received at an extraordinary meeting held on 31 March 2014.
- 1.2 Much concern has also been expressed by local residents about local provision and the frequent changes that have taken place. This is evidenced by the number of complaints received by members as well as frequent coverage in the local press. There have been at least five petitions launched in the Borough.
- 1.3 Many Members were aware that they were insufficiently informed about local services and the factors influencing provision.

2 The Working Group

- 2.1 This comprised Councillors Farr, Scard, Beavis and Forder.
- 2.2 Lisa Young (Democratic Services Officer) and David Duckett (Head of Transport and Traffic) serviced and advised the Working Group.

3 Progress of the Scrutiny

- 3.1 There were five meetings of the Working Group as well as many informal contacts by email, telephone and face-to-face. Notes of these meetings are attached as appendices.

- 3.2 The five formal meetings were as follows:
- 3.2.1. 8 July 2014.
The parameters of the scrutiny were agreed.
- 3.2.2 28 July 2014.
A presentation was received from Peter Shelley, Head of Passenger Transport, Hampshire County Council, who was also questioned on his evidence. Following this meeting all Gosport Borough councillors were invited to forward their constituents feedback or concerns to the Working Group and a number did.
- 3.2.3 2 September 2014
In the light of the evidence received the Working Group considered a draft of the conclusions to be drawn and also considered some research undertaken by national authorities.
<http://www.ippr.org/publications/greasing-the-wheels-getting-our-bus-and-rail-markets-on-the-move>
- 3.2.4 14 October 2014
Peter Shelley, Head of Passenger Transport, Hampshire County Council and Councillor Peter Davies (Fareham Borough Council) also attended this meeting and gave their reactions to some provisional findings.
Following this meeting Councillor Forder contacted Councillor Sean Woodward, Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment to acquaint him with the Working Group's provisional findings and received a reply. See Appendix 6.
- 3.2.5 25 November 2014.
The Working Group's initial conclusions were presented to Marc Reddy, Managing Director of First Bus and he answered these in detail. See Appendix 5.
- 3.2.6 A member of the Working Group compiled a list of transport alternatives available from the voluntary sector. See Appendix 1.

4 Main findings

- 4.1 The past couple of years have seen changes to bus services in the Borough. In particular, the introduction of the busway has been highly successful in increasing levels of service and patronage on the new Eclipse routes which have won national and local awards. There has also been substantial investment in new buses (including micro-hybrids) and other technical improvements to benefit customers, such as Wifi, next stop audio and visual announcements and smart card and mobile ticketing. See Appendix 5.
- 4.2 All commercial services in Gosport are operated by First Bus, two of which are subsidised by Hampshire County Council. During the course of the

scrutiny members of the Working Group became aware of a change of philosophy by the operator. Frequent “Turn Up and Go” services on a simpler network are now favoured and are believed to be more viable and successful in growing patronage than less frequent services with circuitous routes. However the resulting far reaching changes to routes and frequencies has had a cost for potential customers who live some distance from the main routes. Unfortunately, these individuals are often older, more vulnerable and dependent on bus services. As such they are at an increased risk of isolation.

4.3 Members of the Working Group became aware of unfortunate and unintended outcomes arising from the concessionary travel scheme currently providing free travel for older people. The sums received by the bus companies can be too small to make services viable, particularly in areas with a low demand from paying passengers, such as Anglesey and Lee-on-the-Solent.

4.4 Two services, the 11 and 21, are currently subsidised by Hampshire County Council. Regrettably the subsidy for these two routes will be cut from £96,785 to £87,112 effective from 5th January 2015 meaning that the No. 11 Saturday service will be removed and the No. 21 route will be altered so that Lee-on the-Solent is no longer served. The only service remaining which serves Lee-on-the Solent will be the X5. We regard these reductions as regrettable particularly as Gosport receives relatively little in the way of subsidies compared to other parts of the County.

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/transportconsultation2014>

4.5 In March 2013 the 85 and 88 services were replaced with the 9 and 10 on revised routes. This has brought improvements for some residents, although Tukes Avenue residents no longer have a service to the shops in Nobes Avenue. First Bus advise that these difficulties can be overcome by residents changing between the No. 9 and 10 services. Alternatively the 9 provides a 15 minute service to the Rowner Health Centre and the shops in the Carisbrooke Precinct and Rowner Lane. It may well be that local residents are not aware of these alternatives. First Bus indicated that they would be willing to clarify this for residents.

4.6 The service through Anglesey along Clayhall Road has greatly deteriorated as a result of changes implemented in January 2014 and subsequently. The old No.9 service, partially subsidised by Hampshire County Council formerly offered a half-hourly service well into the evening and at weekends. The new No. 11 provides just six buses a day with no service at weekends or on public holidays.

4.7 Residents of Peel Common have suffered a reduced services and lost links to Newgate Lane since the removal of the 87 and 87A services along Rowner Road in March 2013.

- 4.8 Lee-on-the-Solent residents have expressed widespread concern about the lack of services in Lee.
- 4.8.1 A Lee resident has raised a number of issues about the revised X5 service (Gosport–Fareham-Locks Heath-Southampton) and collated a number of complaints and collected a petition. Although the service now operates half-hourly (rather than hourly) the total journey time from Gosport to Southampton is now nearly 2 hours and from Lee about 1 hour 40 minutes. First Bus advise that the complete journey to Southampton is only made by 3% of passengers. Further, this will be the only remaining service from Lee to Fareham College, the railway station and the shopping centre following the removal of the 21 service from January 2015.
- 4.8.2 There have been a number of complaints about X5 unreliability and local shop and business owners have complained about the impact of this on their businesses. It seems that this is in large part due to the length of this route making it more susceptible to delays which make it difficult to adhere to the timetable
- 4.8.3 There is no bus service along Marine Parade East where a significant number of elderly residents live.
- 4.9 Many frequent radical changes have created confusion and may have reduced custom. It is understood that a radical restructuring of services was required as in the wake of the introduction of the Eclipse services and reduction in subsidised services. Having said that, it is hoped that we may now be entering a period of greater stability once the issues identified above have been assessed.
- 4.10 Some services terminate too early to be of use to commuters. Examples are:
- No. 10 – last service from Gosport ferry at 1635 and Fareham Bus Station at 1545.
 - No. 11 – leaving Fareham at 1735 and Gosport Ferry for Alverstoke at 1806
- 4.11 The development of through ticketing would be most welcome. We are therefore encouraged to learn of the introduction of a smart card (SolentGo) and other on-going developments which include the Gosport Ferry.
- This link explains more <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/tfsh/tfsh-better-connected-project.htm>
- 4.12 In some cases new bus shelters do not serve bus routes and stand as public reminders of what is perceived as a decline in services. However we also understand the reluctance to remove shelters until revised routes are firmly imbedded given past experience of changes being instigated and then reversed.

4.13 We are encouraged to learn of First Bus's plans to establish new customer panels for South Hampshire, one of which will be for Fareham and Gosport.

4.14 The need for a direct bus service to Queen Alexandra Hospital has often been mentioned but has proved impractical. Currently it is possible to interchange at Gosport bus station (and use the ferry to cross to the Hard) or Fareham bus station.

This link provides some detailed information about ways of getting to QA

[http://www.leeresidents.org.uk/GettingtoQueenAlexandraHospital\(updatedAugust2014\).pdf](http://www.leeresidents.org.uk/GettingtoQueenAlexandraHospital(updatedAugust2014).pdf)

4.15 It is apparent that commercial operators are unlikely to be able to offer a level of service which many members of the public expect and need. Consequently we are of the opinion that there is a need to engage with the voluntary sector and others to find a way forward. See Appendix 1.

5.0 Recommendations

5.1 We regard recent Hampshire County Council reductions in subsidy to local services as regrettable and would encourage those with authority in this matter to resist further reductions.

5.2 To address the issues identified at 4.2 and 4.15 it is recommended that the Council host a meeting with the voluntary sector designed to develop a better understanding of how they can work alongside commercial and subsidised services and explore ways of providing enhanced services to those at risk of isolation.

5.3 That the Working Group endeavour to report back their findings and recommendations to members of the public who have participated in the Scrutiny.

5.4 That Gosport Borough Council, Hampshire County Council and First Bus continue to explore ways of improving communication and sharing information.

5.5 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee ask First Bus to clarify the issues raised at 4.5.

Appendices/Enclosures:	
Appendix '1'	List of voluntary sector transport providers
Appendix '2'	Notes of the meeting of the Bus Services Working Group held on 8 July 2014
Appendix '3'	Notes of the meeting of the Bus Services Working Group held on 28 July 2014
Appendix '4'	Notes of the meeting of the Bus Services Working Group held on 2 September 2014
Appendix 5	Notes of the meeting of the Bus Services Working

	Group held on 14 October 2014
Appendix '6'	Notes of the meeting of the Bus Services Working Group held on 25 November 2014
Appendix '7'	Email correspondence between the Chairman of the Committee and HCC Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6

Board/Committee:	EXTRAORDINARY POLICY & ORGANISATION BOARD
Date of Meeting:	WEDNESDAY 14 TH JANUARY 2015
Title:	STAFFING REPORT - STREETSCENE
Author:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Status:	FOR DECISION

Purpose

The purpose of the report is to recommend the creation of the new post of Technical Officer within the Streetscene section of the Chief Executive's Unit.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board approves the creation of a new post Technical Officer Grade 6 (subject to Job Evaluation) with immediate effect.

1 Background

- 1.1 The Council is continuing to undertake a programme of improvements and replacement of its facilities.
- 1.2 In addition, the development of the Alver Valley Country Park is progressing well and is attracting significant external funding to deliver improvements and additional attractions across the Country Park.
- 1.3 These projects are delivered within the Parks & Landscape team of Streetscene and, in recognition of this increase in workload, it is recommended that a new post is created within the team to provide additional capacity.

2 Post Title

- 2.1 The new post, Technical Officer, will be responsible to the Principal Parks and Landscape Officer and will provide support across the delivery of specific projects, maintenance schemes, the supervision of the Council's grounds maintenance contract and the provision of the allotment service.
- 2.2 The post is likely to be Grade 6 (£22,937 - £25,440) subject to Job Evaluation.

2.3 It is proposed that the post would be advertised immediately if supported by the Board.

3 Financial Implication

3.1 The post is considered vital in the delivery of the Council's objectives and will be included within the Council's Budget for 2015/16.

Financial Services comments:	As detailed in the report
Legal Services comments:	None
Crime and Disorder:	N/A
Equality and Diversity:	N/A
Service Improvement Plan implications:	Post will help meet planned requirement
Corporate Plan:	Post will help meet planned requirement
Risk Assessment:	N/A
Background papers:	None
Appendices/Enclosures:	
Appendix 'A'	
Appendix 'B'	
Report author/ Lead Officer:	Ian Lycett