

Wards Affected:

ALL WARDS

7 FEBRUARY 2012**LOCAL BUS SERVICE TENDERS - AWARD OF CONTRACTS**

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Executive Summary:

This report seeks approval to award local bus contracts listed in Annex A that will commence 22 April 2012.

The Cabinet meeting of 9 November 2011 gave approval to tender for those local bus contracts to replace contracts that expire in April 2012.

Under the Transport Act 1985, the Council has a duty to consider whether there are gaps in the commercial network and if it thinks appropriate, fill those gaps to meet unmet social needs.

This is a key decision.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That the public and press be excluded from the meeting by virtue of Paragraph 3 (Information Relating to the Financial or Business Affairs of the Authority) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 during consideration of the **Annexes** to the report.
- 1.2 That the contracts for the local bus services shown in Annex A using the MEAT (Most Economically Advantageous Tendering) process be approved.
- 1.3 That the variation and/or termination of the local bus contracts listed in Annex B be approved.

2. Issues

- 2.1 Under the Transport Act 1985, the Council has a duty to consider whether there are gaps in the commercial bus service network and if it thinks appropriate, fill those gaps to meet unmet social needs.
- 2.2 The Cabinet meeting of 9 November 2011 gave approval to tender for local bus contracts to replace contracts that expire in April 2011. Tenders have been received and contract awards are proposed as indicated at Annex A
- 2.3 The estimated cost of local bus services for 2012/13, based on the proposals set out in Annexes A and B is £3.149m which can be accommodated within the available budgets, including s106 and Tariff funding where applicable.

3. **Alternative Options**

3.1 The “do nothing” option would mean that:

The contracts would expire without replacement, with the consequent reduction in local bus service provision. While this would meet potential requirements for budget saving, there would have been no consideration of whether or not these were the most appropriate contracts to cut.

The end result would be a negative impact on the delivery of the policies noted below and greater risk of adverse comment from members and public alike.

3.2 The “do something” option is as outlined above and detailed in Annexes A and B.

4. **Implications**

4.1 Policy

Provision of subsidised bus services is consistent with a range of existing approved and adopted policies as outlined in the background papers.

If services are not secured there will be a reduction in local bus service provision. This will have a negative impact on the delivery of the policies noted above, will reduce the ability of the Council to meet its targets for bus patronage and will severely restrict the ability of non-car drivers to access essential services.

4.2 Resources and Risk

The new or varied contracts replace existing contracts which come to an end in April 2012.

The estimated cost of local bus services for 2012/13, based on the proposals outlined here and detailed in Annexes A and B is £3.149m which can be accommodated within the available budgets, including s106 and Tariff funding where applicable.

N	Capital	Y	Revenue	N	Accommodation
N	IT	N	Medium Term Plan	N	Asset Management

4.3 Carbon and Energy Management

The enhancement of local bus services fits in with the Carbon & Energy Management policy which includes an action (9) “Use vehicles with low fuel consumption and pollution-reducing technology and ensure their regular servicing and energy conscious operation. Promote and facilitate the use of alternative modes of transport”.

4.4 Legal

The Council is exercising its powers under the Transport Acts 1985 and 2000, and the Local Transport Act 2008, to secure passenger transport services in order to meet public transport requirements within the Milton Keynes Council area that would otherwise not be met.

4.5 Other Implications

The Core Strategy outlines the Council's vision for the sustainable growth of Milton Keynes in the next 30 years. Failure to secure an adequate local bus service network will have a direct impact on the ability to deliver sustainable growth and will result in increased carbon emissions from private car use.

This decision is not significant and/or relevant in regard to equality issues

An Equality Impact Assessment was completed in relation to the November 2011 Cabinet report and recommended that no change should be made.

Details of equality issues can be found at <http://bit.ly/EqIA2011-13>.

N	Equalities/Diversity	Y	Sustainability	N	Human Rights
N	E-Government	Y	Stakeholders	N	Crime and Disorder

Background Papers:

Cabinet Report Local Bus Service Tendering (2012-13)

Bus Strategy (December 2008)

Report of the Milton Keynes Citizens' Advisory Group on Transport (the CAGoT Report) (October 2008)

The Transport Vision & Strategy for Milton Keynes (LTP3)