

<b>Briefing Note of:</b>	<b>Interim Head of Economic Development</b>
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**Economic Development and Town Centres Scrutiny Committee****4 April 2018****Transport Working Group****1 Purpose of Briefing note**

- 1.1 The purpose of this briefing note is to up date Members on the work of the Transport Working Group

**2 Key Issues**

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Committee on 4 July 2017 Members agreed to review transport provision in the district with an emphasis on bus services.
- 2.2 A separate smaller group of Members was established forming a Transport working Group to carry out a more in depth investigate into this area. This was call

**3 Detail**

- 3.1 The Transport Working Group has met on 3 occasions. Representatives from Staffordshire County Council and/or Arriva attended all of these meetings. This gave Members opportunity to receive information and gain further details of the provision of bus services in the District. Members were also able to question these representatives. .
- 3.2 The work of the Group was very influenced by actions being taken by Staffordshire County Council to reduce the subsidy they paid to bus service operators. Most of the work of the Group was therefore concentrated on this and the implications for services in the District. Appendix 1 lists the services that will continue to be subsidised and those that will no longer receive a subsidy.
- 3.3 SCC had previously consulted on options in relation to the reduction in subsidy and the option they decided to take forward was that which this Council had supported. This option maintained the largest number of local bus services. The Group were very concerned about the loss of services and the impact this could have on residents. Particular emphasis was made to the SCC representative on travel to employment sites, hospitals and shopping centres.

- 3.4 SCC advised that alternative funding streams and providers were being investigated as part of their process to obtain as much coverage as possible with the reduced funding which subsidised the commercial service.
- 3.5 Arriva is the primary bus operator in Cannock Chase District and their representatives attended two of the Working Group meetings. They commented that there was a general drop in usage of 4-6% and because of this commercial operators had to look at the services they provided. As a result of this and the subsidy reduction they had to liaise with Staffordshire County Council to consider whether it was commercially viable to operate any of the cut services.
- 3.6 Staffordshire County Council informed the Working Group that discussions took place with stakeholders in order to mitigate the impact of the agreed bus services changes on potential social isolation. This work included looking at home to school travel and adjusting provision in order that best value was secured along with providing social necessary travel. Consultation responses and patronage data was reviewed. Saturday services on supported bus routes were withdrawn and available funds used to ensure connectivity for essential journeys i.e. employment, education and health. Appendix 2 gives details of the bus services and operators in Cannock Chase District.
- 3.7 In February Arriva announced they were closing the Cannock depot on Sundays and ceasing all Sunday services. Arriva representatives informed the Working Group as a result of the subsidy removal consideration had been given to operating reduced timetables on Sundays as certain services were well used. However the projected revenue compared with the costs of running individual buses meant that it would no longer be economically viable to continue opening the Cannock depot on Sundays. The representative did assure Members that there is still a long term future for the depot.
- 3.8 Arriva and the operators of the Mill Green Designer Outlet Village have commenced discussion with regards to a bus service from the retail village to Cannock Town Centre via Cannock Railway Station. Arriva are currently putting together a proposal for the operator to consider. This will include a Sunday service.
- 3.9 The Cannock and Stafford 'saver – zones' have been merged. This allows passengers to use saver tickets over a wider area. Unfortunately this does not include Rugeley. Members expressed their disappointment with this and the Arriva representative gave an assurance that this would be considered in the future. A map showing the saver zone area is attached as Appendix 3

**4 Implications (if applicable)**

None

**5 Appendices**

Appendix 1

Staffordshire County Council Subsidised Bus Services Affected From April 2018

Appendix 2

Bus Services & Operators in Cannock Chase  
District From April 2018

Appendix 3

Cannock & Stafford Saver Zone Network Map

**Background Papers**