

EXECUTIVE DECISION DAY NOTICE

Executive Lead Member for Universal Services Decision Day &
Executive Member for Countryside and Regulatory Services
Decision Day

Date and Time Monday 13th March, 2023 at 3.30 pm

Place Remote Decision Day - Remote

Enquiries to members.services@hants.gov.uk

Carolyn Williamson FCPFA
Chief Executive
The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UJ

FILMING AND BROADCAST NOTIFICATION

This decision day is being held remotely and will be recorded and broadcast live via the County Council's website.

AGENDA

Executive Lead Member for Universal Services

Deputations

To receive any deputations notified under Standing Order 12.

KEY DECISIONS (NON-EXEMPT/NON-CONFIDENTIAL)

**1. PROJECT APPRAISAL: A3057 NURSING AND ROWNHAMS
JUNCTIONS IMPROVEMENTS (Pages 3 - 16)**

To consider a report of the Director of Universal Services seeking approval for the A3057 Nursing and Rownhams junctions scheme (at an estimated cost of £2.9million) and to progress and implement the scheme as detailed in the report.

**2. CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT 2023/24 UPDATE
(Pages 17 - 24)**

To consider a report of the Director of Universal Services seeking an amendment to the draft Concessionary Travel Scheme, published on 1 Dec 2022, for 2023/2024.

NON KEY DECISIONS (NON-EXEMPT/NON-CONFIDENTIAL)

3. BUS CONTRACT – BISHOPS WALTHAM/HEDGE END TO EASTLEIGH (Pages 25 - 32)

To consider a report of the Director of Universal Services regarding the outcomes of the tender to provide a bus service between Waltham Chase/Bishops Waltham/Hedge End and Eastleigh. If approved, the contract due to be funded from the Public Bus budget, at an annual maximum cost of £153,200 will be awarded for a four-year duration at a total maximum cost of £612,800.

Executive Member for Countryside and Regulatory Services

Deputations

To receive any deputations notified under Standing Order 12.

Exclusion of the Press and Public

That the public be excluded from the meeting during the following item of business, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the report.

NON KEY DECISIONS (EXEMPT)

4. PROPERTY SERVICES ASSET DECISIONS (Pages 33 - 44)

To consider an exempt report from the Director of Universal Services, which asks the Executive Member for Countryside and Regulatory Services the Executive Member for Countryside and Regulatory Services to approve several asset transactions.

ABOUT THIS AGENDA:

On request, this agenda can be provided in alternative versions (such as large print, Braille or audio) and in alternative languages.

ABOUT THIS SESSION:

The press and public are welcome to observe the public sessions of the decision day via the webcast.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Universal Services
Date:	13 March 2023
Title:	Project Appraisal: A3057 Nursling and Rownhams Junctions Improvements
Report From:	Director of Universal Services

Contact name: Gemma Cook

Tel:

Email: Gemma.cook1@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the A3057 Nursling and Rownhams junctions scheme and to progress and implement the scheme as detailed in this report.

Recommendations

2. That the Executive Lead Member for Universal Services approves the Project Appraisal for the A3057 Nursling and Rownhams Junctions Improvements, as outlined in this report.
3. That approval be given to procure, spend and enter into the necessary contractual arrangements, in consultation with the Assistant Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer, to implement the proposed improvements at an estimated cost of £2.9million to be funded from local development contributions.
4. That authority to make the arrangements to implement the scheme, including minor variations to the design and contract, be delegated to the Director of Universal Services.
5. That the Executive Lead Member for Universal Services delegates authority to the Director of Universal Services, in consultation with the Assistant Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer, to progress any orders, notices or statutory procedures and secure any consents, licences, permissions, rights or easements necessary to enable implementation of the scheme.

Executive Summary

6. This report seeks approval for the A3057 Nursling and Rownhams Junctions Improvements scheme to address the planning requirements for the junction in order to mitigate future traffic growth, provide better connectivity and opportunities for active travel, and journey time improvements.
7. The scheme comprises the following elements:
 - improvements to the layout and the installation of traffic signals and pedestrian and cycle crossings at the A3057, Redbridge Lane and Bakers Drove junction; and
 - upgrading of the existing traffic signals at the A3057, Horns Drove and Nursling Street junction to maximise traffic flows across both junctions and provide bus priority technology.
8. Funding has been secured from local development contributions to make improvements to the walking, cycling and traffic infrastructure at the A3057 junctions. A total of £2.9million is available to carry out the scheme.
9. The measures of success for the scheme will be improved journey times across the junctions, and improved crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.
10. The scheme aligns with the County Council aims to:
 - reduce carbon emissions in line with the climate change strategy;
 - support wellbeing by providing safer active travel options;
 - promote a greener and healthier Hampshire; and
 - promote walking and cycling to provide a healthy alternative to the car for short journeys to work, local services and school.

Contextual Information

11. The A3057 Romsey Road junctions at Bakers Drove and Redbridge Lane lies on the boundary of Hampshire County Council, the borough of Test Valley and Southampton City Council. There has been significant development in the area over the last ten years, including major employment sites and a large housing estate.
12. Originally, Section 106 contributions were collected cumulatively against a package of developments towards offsetting the expected traffic impact on the highway network and maintaining traffic movement through the surrounding area by signalling this junction. A further development in Southampton on the southern side of the junction, (the upgrade of the local school to an academy, Oasis School in Lordshill), has had a significant additional impact on the existing road network, which has exacerbated the current queues and delays.
13. A number of improvement options were considered at this junction to accommodate the additional traffic demand and active travel improvements, and the selected scheme is considered to best meet these needs.

14. An on-going liaison has taken place with Southampton City Council throughout the development of the scheme and a Section 8 agreement between the authorities is being agreed to help facilitate cross-boundary working during the scheme construction.
15. Public engagement has also taken place and a summary analysis of the findings is included within this report.
16. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and the findings are summarised in the appendices.

Finance

17. Developer contributions have been identified and are available to meet the current estimated project cost of £2.9million.
18. The pre-tender cost estimate has been carried out and is considered robust for determining the scheme cost to inform the decision stage and includes a quantified risk assessment including allowance for inflationary impact. Should the tendered costs vary significantly from the estimate, a further report will be brought to the Executive Member for consideration.
19. Historic spend for design optioneering and client fees and ecological and environmental assessment charges are included within the overall £2.9million spend. Current spend to date for design and client fees including investigation works and surveys at time of this report are circa £550,000.

<u>Estimates</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>% of total</u>	<u>Funds Available</u>	<u>£'000</u>
Design Fee	512	17%	Development Control (Section 106)	2,900
Client Fee	220	8%		
Supervision	200	7%		
Construction	1,968	67%		
Total	<u>2,900</u>	<u>100</u>	Total	<u>2,900</u>

<u>Maintenance Implications</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>% Variation to Committee's budget</u>
Net increase in current expenditure	10	0.008%
Capital Charge	279	0.164%

Programme

21. The scheme is expected to be fully delivered by Spring 2024.

G3	Tender	Construction	G4
March 2023	April 2023	Autumn 2023	Spring 2024

Scheme Details

22. The scheme plans to include the following elements:

- improved walking and cycle infrastructure, by implementation of widening of existing footway at the Bakers Drove / Redbridge Lane junction, designated crossing areas across the junction arms to improve pedestrian safety;
- new signalisation of the junction of Redbridge Lane and Bakers Drove with the A3057 Romsey Road including bus priority technology and upgraded signal technology to improve traffic capacity at peak times, straightening of the junction to improve safety and efficiency; and
- upgraded signals and improved road layout at the junction of Horns Drove and Nursling Street with the A3057 Romsey Road, including widening of existing footway and upgraded adaptive signal technology to improve traffic flows across the A3057.

The general arrangement drawings for both junctions are included in Appendix 1.

23. The new cycle infrastructure has been designed in accordance with the principles of the Department for Transport Local Transport Note 1/20 – Cycle Infrastructure Design guidance document for local authorities for designing high-quality cycle infrastructure.

24. The scheme will result in the loss of nine trees, which is assessed as a minor impact with respect to the number of trees lost and minor/moderate impact with respect to the quality of trees lost. Mitigation proposals are being drawn up to account for the replacement of lost trees and replanting will be undertaken following the completion of the works for the scheme. The planting will include native tree species to replace lost canopy cover, with an additional provision to ensure net gain.

Departures from Standards

25. No departures from standards have been identified at the time of reporting.

Engagement and Equalities

26. An online public survey was launched on 18 November 2022 until 8 January 2023 and attracted 222 responses. Full results are available at [A3057 Junction Improvements; Redbridge Lane/Bakers Drove & Nursling](#)

[Street/Horns Drove | Transport and roads | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk) with the headlines summarised below.

27. The survey responses identified the following:
- most of the 222 respondents agreed the proposals would improve the travel experience of transport, particularly for those travelling by car/ van (67%), on foot (65%), bicycle (44%), bus (48%) and motorcycles (51%);
 - almost three quarters of respondents agreed that the proposals will help with the issue of safety for pedestrians crossing the road (73%), whilst around half felt that they would ease the issues of traffic congestion (55%) and access to schools (49%);
 - traffic congestion was cited as the main issue on the A3057 (35% of respondents) and 51% of respondents reported using a car to travel at the two junctions;
 - 27% of respondents felt a lack of safe pedestrian crossing facilities was an issue and 29% of respondents travel at the junctions on foot; and
 - the majority of the respondents lived locally (90%) and used both junctions three or more days a week (over 70%).
28. Local Councillors for Test Valley Borough Council and Southampton City Council support making improvements to the junctions, however; opinions vary on the best method for doing so. The options included: implementation of a full-sized roundabout, a double roundabout, or a part time signal operation. All options have been reviewed for potential impact on ecology, habitats and environment, traffic capacity, additional land requirement and active travel benefit within the available space. These options were subsequently discounted as not viable for delivering benefit to active travel modes, traffic capacities improvements or proved a negligible impact on the local ecology/ environment as detailed within the survey presentation.
29. The scheme aims to encourage active travel in the forms of walking and cycling, improve access to and safety around schools, and to promote public transport. It will address road safety concerns by making improvements to walking and cycling routes, by installing pedestrian crossings and performing carriageway widening. The survey responses received showed a low number that indicated issues with mobility or that declared disabilities. The survey was sent out in multiple formats to ensure accessibility. However, the scheme is expected to have a positive effect on the following demographics: poverty, pregnancy and maternity, disability, and age. The scheme is expected to have a neutral effect on the following demographics: rurality, marriage and civil partnerships, sexual orientation, sex, religion, race, gender reassignment.

Climate Change Impact Assessments

30. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets for being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C

temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.

Climate Change Adaptation

31. Heavy rainfall has been considered when designing this project, and a drainage system devised to counteract this risk. Various materials have been considered during design to reduce the likelihood of this climate change impact. The project is not located near the coastline, does not include any building infrastructure. As such other forms of climate variable mitigation have not been considered.
32. Carbon emissions from this project arise from the use of highway materials to construct their schemes, e.g., concrete and steel and from plant and equipment needed to undertake the work.
33. The scheme has been designed to allow for lower material and handling costs from the use of standard materials, low energy use street lighting and planting of trees to replace losses from a recent fire. As part of the tender process, it requires contractors to provide evidence of environmental accreditations as part of their returns and scores obtained based on these factors.

Carbon Mitigation

34. Carbon emissions will be mitigated by sourcing construction materials and plant locally wherever possible and prioritising the use of recycled materials where practical. On completion, the schemes will encourage a modal shift toward active travel for journeys, bringing benefits in terms of reduced local congestion and associated air quality, and environmental benefits, including reductions in carbon emissions from vehicles.
35. The following steps have been taken to mitigate the scheme's carbon footprint:
 - improved local bus infrastructure, allowing for shorter journey times. This will reduce the overall carbon impact of the project, as it will encourage the use of public transportation and reduced car usage;
 - improved pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, increasing the opportunities for walking and cycling, reducing vehicle use and reduced emissions from fossil fuels; and
 - replacement tree planting to offset and mitigate the loss of vegetation.

Statutory Procedures

36. The scheme will not impact on any public rights of way, is not in or near a nature conservation area, and has no foreseeable impact on any areas of ecological, archaeological or environmental significance.

37. No planning consents are required for the delivery of the scheme, as all works are to be carried out as permitted development within the existing highway boundary.
38. Formal traffic regulation orders (TROs) are not required to implement the above improvements.
39. A Section 8 agreement is required for carrying out the works within Southampton City Council's highway boundary, and to allow future maintenance of the traffic signal equipment. This is currently being drafted by legal services, with ongoing discussion with Southampton City Council.
40. The footways designs will be progressed in accordance with the provisions of Sections 65 and 66 of the Highways Act 1980.
41. Under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 and road space bookings legislation all forward planning notices have been completed.

Land Requirements

42. No land requirements are needed in order to complete this scheme, because all works are within the existing highway boundary.

Maintenance Implications

43. There will be an increase in the long-term maintenance liability due to the new traffic lights, the carriageway widening and cycle/ pedestrian infrastructure. The surfacing works as part of the scheme will remove the need to do any surface maintenance works in the short and medium term, and with the improved drainage system, existing maintenance issues will be remedied. The net generated increased maintenance has been calculated at approximately £10,000 per annum and should be considered when setting future annual highway maintenance budgets.
44. The materials that will be used in the construction of the scheme are standard highway materials and will match those existing to the site. As part of the processes involved in developing the scheme, internal consultations have taken place with representatives from the Asset Management team. The Asset Management team has been consulted on the proposals and are content with the materials specified. Using robust materials and redesigning elements of the kerbing gully and pipework will reduce future maintenance liabilities.

LTP3 Priorities and Policy Objectives

3 Priorities

- To support economic growth by ensuring the safety, soundness and efficiency of the transport network in Hampshire
- Provide a safe, well maintained and more resilient road network in Hampshire
- Manage traffic to maximise the efficiency of existing network capacity, improving journey time reliability and reducing emissions, to support the efficient and sustainable movement of people and goods

14 Policy Objectives

- Improve road safety (through delivery of casualty reduction and speed management)
- Efficient management of parking provision (on and off street, including servicing)
- Support use of new transport technologies (i.e. Smartcards; RTI; electric vehicle charging points)
- Work with operators to grow bus travel and remove barriers to access
 -
- Support community transport provision to maintain 'safety net' of basic access to services
- Improve access to rail stations, and improve parking and station facilities
- Provide a home to school transport service that meets changing curriculum needs
- Improve co-ordination and integration between travel modes through interchange improvements
- Apply 'Manual for Streets' design principles to support a better balance between traffic and community life
- Improve air quality
- Reduce the need to travel, through technology and Smarter Choices measures

- Promote walking and cycling to provide a healthy alternative to the car for short local journeys to work, local services or school
- Develop Bus Rapid Transit and high quality public transport in South Hampshire, to reduce car dependence and improve journey time reliability
- Outline and implement a long term transport strategy to enable sustainable development in major growth areas

Other

Please list any other targets (i.e. National Indicators, non LTP) to which this scheme will contribute.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

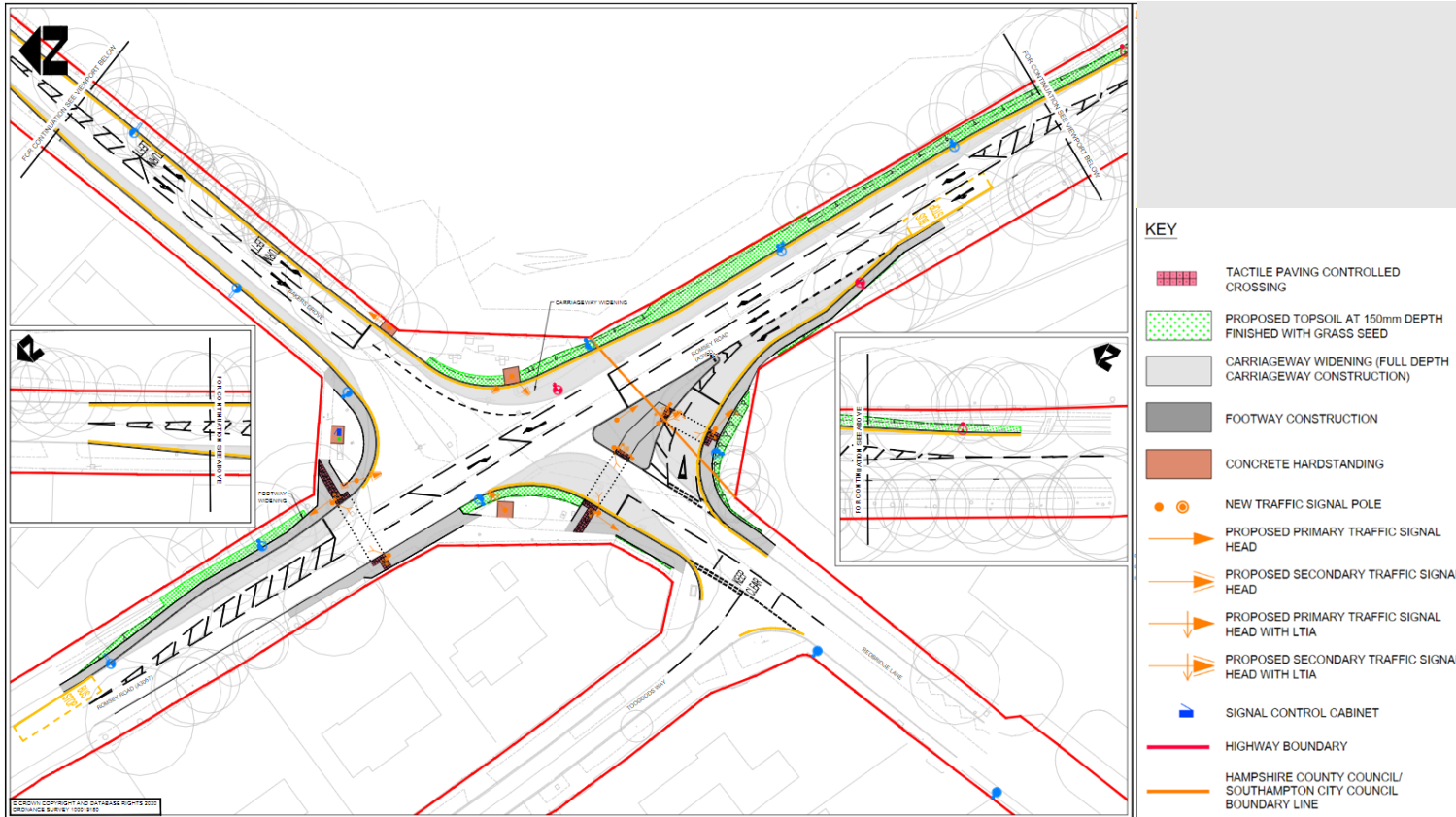
- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

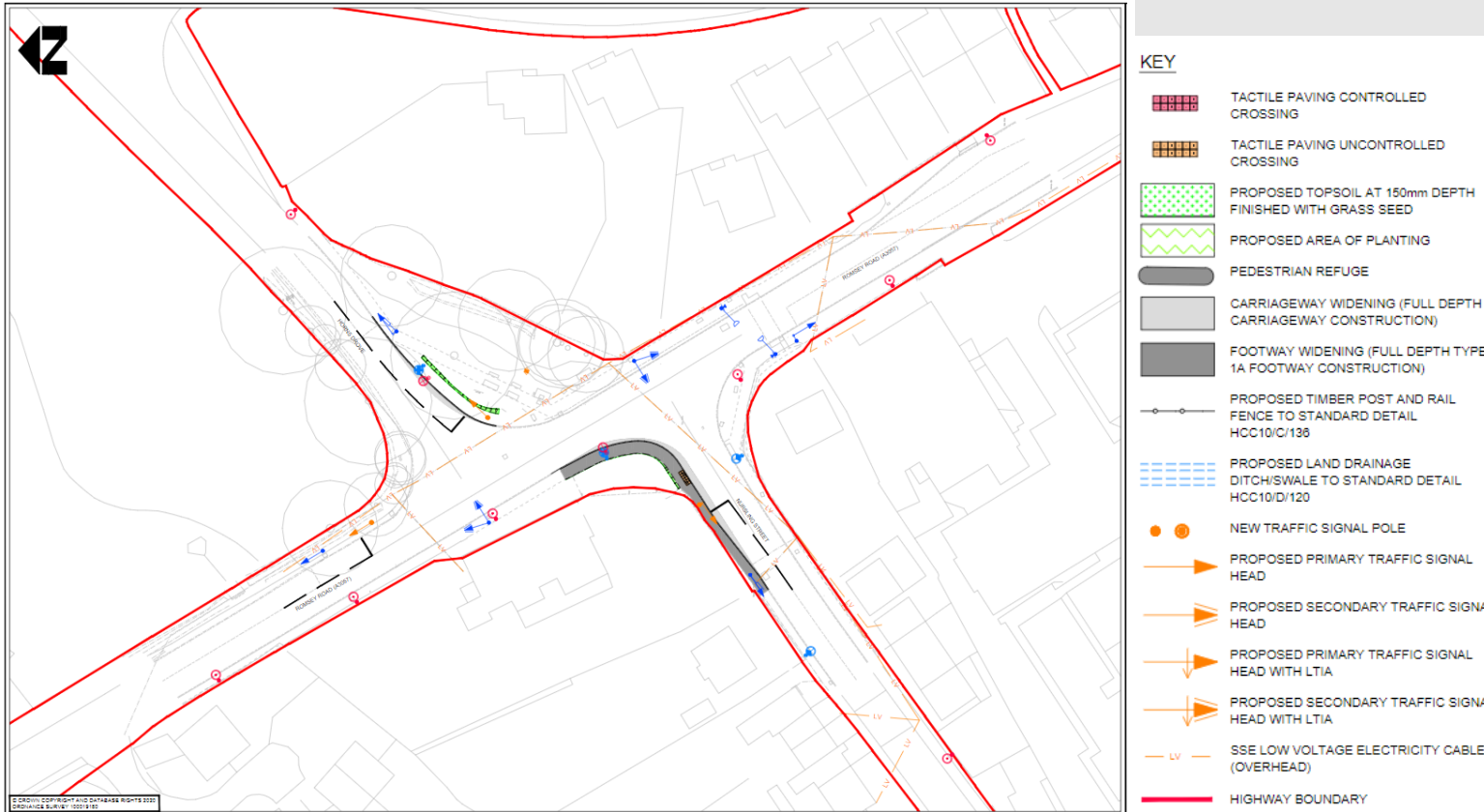
The scheme aims to encourage active travel in the forms of walking and cycling, improve access to and safety around schools, and to promote public transport. It will address road safety concerns by making improvements to walking and cycling routes, by installing pedestrian crossings and performing carriageway widening. The scheme is expected to have a positive effect on the following demographics: poverty, pregnancy and maternity, disability, and age.

The scheme is expected to have a neutral effect on the following demographics: rurality, marriage and civil partnerships, sexual orientation, sex, religion, race, gender reassignment.

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Bakers Drove/ Redbridge Lane General Arrangement



Appendix 2 – Nursling Street/ Horns Drove General Arrangement



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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Universal Services
Date:	13 March 2023
Title:	Concessionary Travel Reimbursement Update
Report From:	Director of Universal Services

Contact name: Caroline Mekky

Tel: 03707 794627

Email: caroline.mekky@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek an amendment to the draft Concessionary Travel Scheme, published on 1 Dec 2022 for 2023/2024.

Recommendations

2. That the Executive Lead Member for Universal Services approves a revised approach to concessionary fares reimbursement for local bus operators from 1 April 2023 until 31 March 2024, where reimbursement levels are based on the percentage of pre-COVID bus network that operators provide.
3. That the Executive Lead Member for Universal Services approves that up to £1.2 million per annum in 2022/23 and 2023/4 of the expected concessionary fares underspend be ringfenced to be used to support local bus services and related infrastructure in Hampshire.
4. That the Executive Lead Member for Universal Services delegates authority to the Director of Universal Services, in consultation with the Executive Lead Member of Universal Services and the Assistant Director for Legal Services and Monitoring Officer to determine the specific mechanisms through which the ringfenced sums are allocated to support local bus services and related infrastructure in Hampshire, based on the principles outlined in this report.

Executive Summary

5. This paper seeks to set out the rationale for proposing to amend the approach to concessionary fare reimbursement payments for local bus operators between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024 that was approved by the Executive Member for Highways Operations on 7 November 2022.
6. The proposed amended approach would see the County Council reverting to reimbursing bus operators based on the percentage of pre-COVID bus network they provide. This is the same approach as the Council has taken in 2021/22 and 2022/23

7. Consistent with DfT guidance issued on 29 November 2022, the proposed amended approach would also see the County Council potentially ringfence up to £1.2million per annum in 2022/23 and 2023/24 of the expected concessionary fares underspend to provide additional funding to Hampshire's local bus operators within existing County Council budgetary resources, to allow time for patronage levels to further recover and seek to protect as much of the existing bus network from further contraction as is possible.
8. This potential ringfenced funding would help protect Hampshire's bus network from the worst impacts of the current challenging financial environment. The aim of the funding would be to assist operators to maintain as much of the existing network as is possible to continue to grow back patronage. This funding would be especially impactful for the existing 'at risk' bus services for which additional short-term funding will provide time for patronage to increase, making it likely that the bus service will return to commercial viability once more.
9. This potential ringfenced funding would also allow operators to capitalise on any growth in patronage generated by the Government's £2 fare cap initiative, mitigate the impact of inflationary pressures, and allow operators more flexibility to address industry wide driver shortages.

Contextual information

10. In 2022/2023, the Hampshire Scheme reimbursed operators based on the percentage of pre-COVID bus network an operator provides in line with the DfT guidance, as outlined in the Decision Day report on 12 May 2022: Concessionary Fares Reimbursement 2022/23 Update.
11. On 7 November 2022, the Executive Member for Highways Operations approved the publication of the draft Concessionary Travel Scheme, which outlined, that in the absence of new DfT guidance, the Scheme would revert to normalising operator reimbursement payments for concessionary travel in 2023/24.
12. Local Transport Authorities have now received revised guidance from the DfT (29 November 2022) in which the DfT asks 'Local Transport Authorities to continue to pay concessionary fare payments to operators at pre-Covid levels, until the end of the 2023/24 financial year', or that where this is believed not to be appropriate, that Local Transport Authorities 'retain the funding within the wider supported bus sector – for example through greater support for tendered bus services.'
13. DfT has also indicated that it plans to lay a Statutory Instrument, to extend the removal of the 'no better and no worse off' element from the concessionary reimbursement regulations until March 2024. This key principle means that operators are no better and no worse off as a result of the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme. This will allow Local Authorities discretion in reimbursing operators above actual patronage levels for the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) for a further year.
14. The proposed amended approach would see the County Council reverting to reimbursing bus operators based on the percentage of pre-COVID-19 bus network that an operator provides. As an example, this would see an operator running 80% of the services which they were providing during 2019/20 receiving

80% of the concessionary fares reimbursement which they received during 2019/20.

15. This is the approach to reimbursement adopted by the Council in 2021/22 and 2022/23. This is an equitable approach to operator reimbursement, however current forecasted spend for 2022/23 identifies that this is expected to result in a budgetary underspend, which will not 'retain the funding within the wider supported bus sector'.
16. It is forecasted that for 2022/23 this underspend will amount to around £1.2million. Given that this is a demand led budget, the final underspend will not be determined until year end. It is for this reason that this report proposes to ringfence up to £1.2million rather than a specific figure.
17. This underspend has occurred where the reimbursement payments made to bus companies in Hampshire for the use of concessionary bus passes on their services have reduced as a result of the pandemic. This is because some bus operators are operating less service than they were pre-Covid-19 and the Council reimburses bus companies for use of concessionary passes based on the percentage of pre-covid network miles they operate.
18. This report proposes that this mechanism of reimbursement continues into 2023/24 and therefore it is reasonable to assume that, even with an allowance made for gradual patronage recovery, there will also be an underspend in 2023/24. It is anticipated that the underspend in 2023/24 will be lower than that of 2022/23 due to this patronage recovery and the measures that would be taken should the underspend be ringfenced.
19. Funding for the concessionary fare scheme in Hampshire is deemed to be part of the Council's wider annual Local Government Finance Settlement and therefore there is not specific grant funding. However, the DfT has indicated that a decline in concessionary bus usage could potentially be reflected in the long-term in a decline in this Settlement, although there has been no indication of how this would be done. Utilising the full budget allocation to support the Hampshire bus network in 2023/24 would aid operators to grow back patronage lost through the impacts of the pandemic.
20. With a view to this, it is proposed that up to £1.2million per annum in 2022/23 and 2023/24 of the expected concessionary fares underspend is ringfenced and used to support local bus services and related infrastructure in Hampshire.
21. Exact details of the mechanism by which this would be spent would be delegated the Director of Universal Services, in consultation with the Executive Lead Member of Universal Services and Assistant Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer.
22. It is proposed that the mechanism would follow the principles below;
 - a. The ringfenced sums would only be used for services, projects, schemes and infrastructure that meet the aims and objectives set out in Hampshire's Bus Services Improvement Plan and therefore could be proven to provide a direct benefit to bus users in Hampshire.
 - b. Any spend would be focused on retaining commercial bus services that would otherwise be lost from the network, or those which are at risk of being

reduced. Spend in this area would include any activity which would increase patronage including but not limited to, promotion, improvements to bus related infrastructure and information, and providing stability within the network.

- c. Recognising that as any potential underspend from the Concessionary Fares budget is short term due to its demand led nature, spend from the ring fenced pot would only be able to be used to support short term or one-off projects, schemes or infrastructure.

23. For robustness, any mechanism developed to allocate this funding would be reviewed by the County Council's Audit Officers.

Finance

24. Operator re-imburement payments account for the most significant part of the Concessionary Fares budget and are made by the County Council as advised by consultants who process these claims from operators in accordance with the scheme detail on behalf of the Council. The forecasted demand for concessionary travel for 2023/24 remains lower than pre-covid levels and is affordable within the existing concessionary fares budget allocation.

25. As this is a demand led budget, it is proposed that the actual underspend for 2022/23, up to a maximum of £1.2million, is ringfenced for spend in 2023/24, and similarly the actual underspend for 2023/24, again up to a maximum of £1.2million, is ringfenced for spend in 2024/25.

26. The recovery of bus patronage by concessionary pass holders is currently between 60-80% of pre-covid levels, which is reflected in the lower scheme budget for 2023/24 compared with previous years. The budget could not be further reduced as the demand on this budget is expected to increase over the next few years and therefore the forecast underspend is expected to be short-term. Any recovery of concessionary pass holder usage of the bus network would reduce the underspend available to be ringfenced for reinvestment, but would instead play an important role in directly helping to support the wider bus network and benefits thereof.

Consultation and Equalities

27. The proposal to make changes to the scheme is intended to support the wider bus network thus mitigating some of the impacts raised previously in the Concessionary Fares and Community Transport Contract Payments report approved by the Executive Member for Highways Operations on 27 January 2022.

28. Specifically, this seeks to minimise the reduction in local bus provision which could have a negative impact on groups with the protected characteristics of age, gender, disability and race, that are proportionally more reliant on off-peak and rural bus networks for accessing services. The proposals will also minimise the impact on the characteristic of religion or belief, which might have been

impacted in relation to attending a place of worship on a Sunday, when bus services may be more limited.

Climate Change Impact Assessments

29. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.
30. The tools to assess specific impacts on climate change adaption and mitigation were not considered applicable to the publication of the Concessionary Travel Scheme 2023/24 as it has no physical infrastructure component and is focused solely on the concessions that are to be provided to bus pass holders rather than delivery. However, the Concessionary Travel Scheme administered by Hampshire County Council is a mechanism which incentivises eligible individuals to make journeys using local bus, which when undertaken as an alternative to using a private vehicle is considered an effective approach towards carbon reduction.

Conclusions

31. The recommendations within this report would contribute towards maintaining as much of the existing bus network in Hampshire as is possible which would allow some time for bus patronage to recover towards pre-pandemic levels.
32. The recommendations set out in this report would provide continued support to the bus industry in Hampshire promoting the longer-term resilience of this sector contributing to the economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The recommendation is consistent with the latest advice from the DfT and would be within existing budgetary provision. By continuing to provide vital support to the bus industry at this time, the County Council is maintaining positive and productive partnership working between transport operators and Hampshire County Council.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u> Concessionary Fares Reimbursement 2022/23 Update	<u>Date</u> 12 May 2022
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

The proposal to make changes to the scheme is intended to support the wider bus network thus mitigating some of the impacts raised previously in the Concessionary Fares and Community Transport Contract Payments report approved by the Executive Member for Highways Operations on 27 January 2022.

Specifically, this seeks to minimise the reduction in local bus provision which could have a negative impact on groups with the protected characteristics of age, gender, disability and race, that are proportionally more reliant on off-peak and rural bus networks for accessing services. The proposals will also minimise the impact on the characteristic of religion or belief, which might have been impacted in relation to attending a place of worship on a Sunday, when bus services may be more limited.

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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Universal Services
Date:	13 March 2023
Title:	Bus Contract – Bishops Waltham/Hedge End to Eastleigh
Report From:	Director of Universal Services

Contact name: Mike Griffin-Thorn

Tel: 0370 7798405

Email: Mike.griffin-thorn@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to detail the outcomes of the tender to provide a bus service between Waltham Chase/Bishops Waltham and Hedge End. The service has been tendered via the Public Bus Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS). If approved, the contract, due to be funded from the Public Bus budget at an annual maximum cost of £153,200, will be awarded for a four-year duration at a total maximum cost of £612,800. It is proposed that this contract would have the option to extend for a further two years.

Recommendation

2. That the Executive Lead Member for Universal Services gives authority to procure, spend and enter into any necessary contractual arrangements in consultation with the Assistant Director for Legal Services and Monitoring Officer for a new contract for the 49 service, as set out in the supporting report, to commence from 3 April 2023 for a period of 4 years, with the option to extend for a further two years, at an annual maximum cost of £153,200.

Executive Summary

3. This paper seeks to propose a course of action to ensure that transport services continue to support access to work, education, retail, and health for the widest section of the community, thereby supporting quality of life and wellbeing while achieving value for money.
4. The proposed tender retains an affordable level of service and takes account of any known changes to the commercial network.

Contextual information

5. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on all passenger transport services in Hampshire, from rail, to ferry, to bus to community transport. Patronage on these services dropped sharply at the outset of the pandemic and, due to a number of factors, including changes in the way people work, shop and

choose to travel, patronage levels have not recovered. This is especially the case for passengers who hold either an Older Persons' or Disabled Persons concessionary bus pass and therefore might be more hesitant to return to using public and community transport services.

6. This reduction in patronage has led to a fall in fare revenue for all passenger transport services which means it is now more expensive than pre-covid to provide these services. Severe driver shortages and inflationary pressures through rises in living, energy, staff and fuel costs have increased these costs.
7. The number 49 route was previously known as the X9/X10 and operated by Xelabus. This service provided journey opportunities between Waltham Chase, Bishops Waltham, Hedge End and Eastleigh.
8. Xelabus approached the Council in May 2022, to give notice on this contract. This came, despite previous conversations about the future of these services and the County Council's desire to extend the contracts for a further year without any change, other than an inflationary increase, in contract value until at least October 2023. Hampshire County Council offered additional funding, sourced from the one-off government Local Transport Fund grant, to retain the service.
9. Following this, it was negotiated that Xelabus would continue with the service at the same contract value but at a halved frequency. Given that this situation represented poorer value for money for the Council, plans were put in place to re-tender this service in the Spring of 2023.
10. In January 2023, Xelabus again approached the County Council to give notice on this contract with the last operational day being 31 March 2023.

Procurement

11. Contracts were put out on the Public Bus DPS and five tenders were received.
12. In order to ensure the Council received an affordable response, a number of options were included within the contractual information including:
 - A) Lot 1 was a like for like tender of the existing timetable currently provided by the incumbent operator. This included serving Eastleigh, Colden Common, Fair Oak, Horton Heath, Durley, West End, Hedge End, Botley, Bishops Waltham, Waltham Chase and Swanmore. This also included journeys at school times that conveniently fitted with the existing timetable specifically designed to meet the flows of passengers from and to Swanmore College.
 - B) Lot 2 was a heavily reduced timetable focused on off-peak times with two PM peak journeys, one being a partial 'request only' journey. This route was based on a circular design allowing users to connect with onward commercial services at a centralised hub, namely Hedge End Superstores. Areas covered in this lot included Bishops Waltham, Swanmore, Waltham Chase, Durley, West End, Botley and Hedge End. This also included journeys at school times (am and pm journeys) for eligible students only. These are students identified as eligible within the Council's Home to School Transport Policy.
 - C) Lot 3 is identical to the details in Lot 2 but with the addition of one daily roundtrip for residents impacted by the cessation of the X15 service,

previously operated by Xelabus. Despite the Council's attempts to tender an alternative service, those passengers previously using the supported X15 have been left with no service to Hedge End following Xelabus giving notice on this route in September 2022. This roundtrip would allow residents from Hamble, Bursledon, Netley and Butlocks Heath to benefit from a daily journey for shopping and onward travel.

D) Lot 4 includes the same details of that in Lot 2 and Lot 3 with a further addition of an AM peak journey to compliment the PM peak journeys. This journey would allow commuters to connect to onward journeys.

13. The tender returns for the route in Lot 1 exceeded the budget available. This was expected considering financial pressures facing the bus industry at this time.
14. Affordable bids were received for Lots 2 to 4. This paper recommends that Lot 4 is the preferred option as it offers the County Council the best value for money for the levels of service provision that would be provided. In addition, Lot 4 incorporates as much of the feedback received from both users and Parish Councils as was possible.

Performance

15. If approved this service would offer five roundtrip opportunities to Bishops Waltham, Swanmore, Waltham Chase, Durley, West End, Botley and Hedge End. Including one daily roundtrip for eligible children under the Council's Home to School Transport policy attending Swanmore College and one daily roundtrip for residents of Hamble, Bursledon, Netley and Butlocks Heath.
16. The timetable has been designed to allow for users to connect to onward journeys to Winchester, Eastleigh, Fareham and Southampton by using the wider commercially operated bus network.
17. Passengers who wished to travel further afield could access the rail station at Botley.

Finance

18. The existing annual contract cost for the X9/X10 service is £132,740.
19. If approved, Children's Services agreed to make a maximum annual contribution towards the 49 service of £43,400 through the Council's Home to School Transport budget.
20. The remaining contract cost will be met through the public bus budget up to a total maximum annual cost of £153,200.
21. The award of this contract results in an underspend against the public bus budget available, and this will be prioritised for spend in the Eastleigh area. If this were not possible, any potential underspend would be recycled into the local bus budget to help mitigate the impact of increased tender prices that the Council expects to receive over the next twelve months.
22. The contract value declared within this report includes an allowance for potential annual inflationary increases in line with the local bus terms and conditions.

Consultation and Equalities

23. The County Council undertook a Countywide consultation with residents specifically focussing on seeking views on how the County Council should implement the £800,000 proposed savings from support for passenger transport services. The consultation ran from 30 May until 24 July 2022, and in total 2,596 responses were received, of which 71 came from organisations. The sample size indicates that the consultation has reached a large number of people who might be impacted by the changes and can be considered robust.
24. Respondents showed a preference to retain the number of destinations they could travel to and instead of seeing a reduction in the number of journeys they could make. Respondents also showed a preference to retain the spread of the week services operated and instead, see a reduction to the number of times per day a service runs.
25. These principles were used when creating the timetable for the 49 service.
26. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken. Running the 49 service has a positive impact on people who fall under the following protected characteristics: Age, Disability, Gender, Pregnancy & Maternity, Race, and Poverty. This is because people with these characteristics are more likely to use public transport. Therefore, the provision of this service will be a benefit to them.
27. A neutral impact has been assessed for people who fall under the following protected characteristics: Gender Reassignment, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Marriage & Civil Partnership, and rurality. This is because there is no evidence to suggest that people with these characteristics are more likely to use public transport than those without. In the case of Rurality, the proposed route does not operate in a rural area and therefore this does not apply.

Climate Change Impact Assessments

28. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.
29. These tools were not used in relation to this report as the emissions for the provision of public transport services are not included within the tools.

Carbon Mitigation

30. Shared transport reduces carbon emissions, therefore approving the award of this contract would contribute towards the mitigation of emissions from private transport modes.

Conclusions

31. Approval to spend and enter into contractual arrangements for the contract identified within this report, with a new contract in place for 3 April 2023, would ensure the community retains this transport link.
32. The approval to spend and enter into contractual arrangements for this contract would provide the highest level of service that is affordable within the County Council's available budget.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

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