


Scrutiny Panel

5 July 2022

Item

16

Report of	Assistant Director 12pt	Author	Owen Howell
			282518
Title	Summary of previous Scrutiny Panel reviews into bus service provision		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents an overview of the work done to date by the Scrutiny Panel in its two reviews of bus service provision conducted in recent years.

2. Action Required

- 2.1 It is recommended that the appendices to this report be considered and that the Scrutiny Panel look to identify what tangible value a further review might be able to add, and therefore whether to scrutinise bus service provision further.

3. Reason for Scrutiny

- 3.1 At its meeting on 7 June 2022 the Scrutiny Panel received a request from Councillor Lee Scordis for the Panel to scrutinise bus service provision in the Borough of Colchester.
- 3.2 The Panel was informed that the Scrutiny Panel had, in recent years, conducted two reviews of bus service provision in the Borough. The Panel therefore requested a briefing report to brought to its meeting scheduled for 5 July to summarise what work the Panel had previously carried out in its reviews of this subject. The Panel would then decide whether to conduct a further review.

4. Background Information

- 4.1 The Scrutiny Panel has reviewed bus service provisions twice in recent years.
- 4.2 The Scrutiny Panel, at its meeting in September 2017, received a scoping report and agreed to review the bus services operating in Colchester, following a request for them to do so from Councillor Lee Scordis. This review concluded on 16 July 2019, when the Panel recommended that Cabinet consider the evidence collected and consider whether to use this as part of the basis for drafting a Public Transport Strategy. At its meeting on 4 September 2019 Cabinet resolved not to accept this recommendation and reiterated its commitment to working with Essex County Council [the local authority with responsibility for bus transport services in Essex]
- 4.3 At its meeting on 15 December 2020, the Scrutiny Panel considered and approved a second request from Councillor Lee Scordis to review the bus services operating in Colchester. The Panel noted that this could be used to find ways to support the 'Safer, Cleaner, Greener' agenda and agreed to Councillor Scordis' request. This review was conducted and concluded at the Scrutiny Panel meeting on 16 March 2021, at which the Panel made a number of recommendations which were accepted by Cabinet at its meeting on 9 June 2021. These recommendations can be found in Appendix B.
- 4.4 The details of the 2017-19 and 2020-21 reviews are summarised in the appendices to this report, which consist of the summary report and evidence received by Scrutiny Panel on 16 March 2021 [Appendix A], the relevant excerpt from the minutes of that meeting [Appendix B] and the relevant minute excerpt from the Cabinet meeting on 9 June 2021 [Appendix C].
- 4.5 It remains the case that Essex County Council is the Highway and Transport Authority for Essex and remains the local authority with responsibility over bus service provision in Colchester Borough. The Panel should note that Colchester Borough Council has extremely limited influence on bus operations.

5. Appendices

Appendix A: Review of Bus Service Provision [report from 16 March 2021]
Appendix B: Minute extract from Scrutiny Panel meeting on 16 March 2021
Appendix C: Minute extract from Cabinet meeting on 9 June 2021