

Report of	Assistant Director of Policy and Corporate	Author	Jonathan Baker
Title	Bus Review		 282207
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Panel at its meeting in September 2017 agreed to review the bus services operating in Colchester. As part of this review the Panel have invited bus companies, Essex County Council and a Community Transport provider to this meeting as part of an information gathering session.
- 1.2 The review will follow the objectives as agreed at the September meeting. These are included below -
 - To understand the strategic role and benefits of bus operation and how it can best serve the community.
 - To investigate and scrutinise what bus companies are doing to;
 - Improve the punctuality of services
 - Increase bus usage
 - Reduce emissions
 - Make buses more accessible
 - Communicate with passengers when services are cancelled or altered.
 - To improve the dialogue between bus companies that operate in the Borough and Colchester Borough Council, Councillors and Residents.
- 1.3 This meeting has been arranged following the postponement, due to severe weather, of the original bus review date in February.
- 1.4 Following on from the review, the Panel may wish to schedule a further discussion at an upcoming meeting to decide the next steps of the review.

2. Action Required

- 2.1 To undertake an information gathering session, in line with the bus review objectives prior to deciding on the next steps.

3. Reason for Scrutiny

- 3.1 The Panel received a request from a member of the Panel to review bus services in Colchester. Following the creation of a scoping document, the Panel agreed for a review to be added to the Scrutiny Panel work programme.

4. Background Information

- 4.1 Councillor Lee Scordis submitted a scoping document to the Scrutiny Panel in July 2017 regarding the possibility of reviewing the bus companies that operate in Colchester.
- 4.2 A formalised scope for a review of bus services in Colchester was subsequently agreed at the September Scrutiny Panel meeting. A copy of the original scope is attached in **Appendix A**.
- 4.3 Prior to the review taking place a brief survey was distributed to the bus companies, Essex County Council and Community360 requesting information in-line with the objectives. Responses received are included in the appendix.

5. Information Gathering Session

- 5.1 The following attendees have confirmed their availability for the information gathering session.
 - Arriva – Anthony Comber - Business Development Lead
 - Community 360 – Tracy Rudling, CEO
 - First – Julian Elliott – Commercial Manager, Steve Wickers – First Essex Managing Director.
 - Essex County Council – Deborah Fox - Head of Commissioning (Passenger Transport), Chris Seaman - Project Manager Colchester & Chelmsford Bus City Project
 - Go-East (Chambers/Heddinghams/KonectBus) – Jeremy Cooper, Managing Director
- 5.2 It is intended that questioning during the session be focused on the objectives outlined in the agreed scope, and that questions are taken thematically during the meeting.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 Following on from the information gathering session, the Panel will need to establish the next steps they wish to take. A further discussion on the bus review had been provisionally scheduled for the Scrutiny Panel meeting on 27 March 2018, however due to the rescheduling of the bus review this would take place, if agreed, during the next municipal year.
- 6.2 The Panel will also need to establish whether further information is required to meet the scope and objectives of the review, and what steps they wish to take to obtain the information.
- 6.3 The Panel may also wish to schedule further bus reviews during the 2018-19 municipal year.

7. Standard References

- 7.1 There are no particular references to the Strategic Plan; consultation or publicity considerations or financial; community safety; health and safety or risk management implications.

Appendices

Appendix A – Original Scrutiny Panel Scoping Document
Appendix B – Bus Review Response – Arriva
Appendix C – Bus Review Response – Community360
Appendix D – Bus Review Response – Essex County Council
Appendix E – Bus Review Response – First
Appendix F – Bus Review Response – Go-East
Appendix G – Bus Review Response – Ipswich Buses
Appendix H – Bus Review Response – Panther Travel

Sources of further information;

Department for Transport – Statistical Release – Annual Bus Statistics 2016/17 -
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/666759/annual-bus-statistics-year-ending-march-2017.pdf

Local Bus Passenger Journeys information datasets
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/bus01-local-bus-passenger-journeys#table-bus0103>

Transport Focus – Bus Passenger Transport Survey – March 2017
<https://www.transportfocus.org.uk/research-publications/research/bus-passenger-survey/>

Transport Focus – Bus Passenger Transport Survey – March 2018
<https://www.transportfocus.org.uk/research-publications/publications/bus-passenger-survey/>

Essex County Council Bus Information
<http://www.essexhighways.org/getting-around/bus.aspx>

Getting Around in Essex – A Bus and Passenger Transport Survey
http://www.essexhighways.org/uploads/files/DS14_4705_Bus_Strategy_WEB.pdf

Concessionary Fares in Essex
<http://www.essexhighways.org/bus/Fares-and-bus-passes/concessionary-fares.aspx>

Colchester Travel Plan Club
<http://www.colchestertravelplanclub.co.uk/>

Colchester Bus Users Support Group
<https://colchesterbususers.wordpress.com/>