

11 March 2011

Department of Neighbourhood & Planning
County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 8JN

To:

Your ref:
Our ref: IW/LMW/

Dear

Proposed changes to bus services

As a result of significant reductions in local authority funding, and the Government's insistence that a high proportion of the savings are achieved in the first year, Wiltshire Council has had to make difficult decisions in setting its budget for the 2011/12 financial year. As far as is possible, it is seeking to make savings from improvements in efficiency and procurement, and has also reviewed its charging policies (for example, car parking charges have been increased to provide additional funding to support bus services). However, despite this it will still be necessary to make some reductions in front line services in order to meet the Government's requirements for reduced spending in the forthcoming year.

As a part of this, a package of bus service reductions is proposed that is intended to deliver a saving of £600,000 (around 10% of the existing budget). These will need to be implemented as soon as possible in order to make the required saving during the 2011/12 financial year.

The proposed reductions have been identified according to the Council's published Guidelines for funding of supported services, which were the subject of recent consultation as part of the third Local Transport Plan. The intention behind the proposals is to minimise the impact on users as far as is possible, by spreading the reductions across the county and withdrawing services or journeys where alternatives are available, or which are relatively poorly used or expensive to run per passenger carried.

Although we have to make the required saving, we are confident that the proposals represent the best way of achieving this with the minimum of hardship. Nevertheless, we recognise that reducing services will inevitably have an impact on users, and want to give communities the opportunity to respond if they are aware of particular difficulties that will result. We have therefore made allowance for funding a limited alternative

/Continued Overleaf....