

DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, STREETSCENE AND BROADBAND – CLLR JOHN THOMSON

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SERVICE

OFFICER CONTACT: Ian White 01225 713322 email: ian.white@wiltshire.gov.uk

REFERENCE: HSB-010-13

**PROPOSAL FOR CHANGES TO THE ZIG ZAG BUS SERVICE
(TROWBRIDGE – BRADFORD – MELKSHAM – CORSHAM –
CHIPPENHAM)**

Purpose of Report

To seek Cabinet Member approval for proposed changes to the Zig Zag bus service, in order to achieve financial savings as agreed by the Council in its financial plan for 2013/14.

Consultation

Consultation has been carried out to seek the views of users and other interested parties on proposed changes to the Zig Zag service:

- 107 responses were received to a bus user questionnaire (**Appendix 1**) that was handed out on the bus and which was available on the Council's website.
- 13 written responses were received to a letter (**Appendix 2**) that was distributed by the Area Board managers to affected town and parish councils in their area, local members, and other local contacts. Copies were also sent to a number of groups representing bus users, older people, and those with disabilities, and to local community and voluntary transport schemes. The consultation letter and information sheet was also available on the Council's website.

The main points raised by the written responses are summarised in **Appendix 3**, and the responses to the user questionnaire in **Appendices 4A and 4B**.

Options Considered

The consultation was designed to identify any significant impacts on the travel and access needs of current users of the service that would result from the proposed changes. Whilst it is not possible in a situation where resources are limited to cater for the needs of everyone (even the existing service is far from being able to achieve this), every effort has been made to look for affordable ways of revising the proposals to address the main issues raised:

- (i) A number of changes have been made to the proposed timetable, as identified in the main report, to meet some of the main needs that respondents said would not be met under the original proposals.

- (ii) A suggestion was received through the consultation for an alternative approach involving the revision of other (commercially operated) bus services in the area so as to replace the south end of the Zig Zag service with a regular service running Trowbridge – Bradford - Holt – Melksham – A350 – Chippenham, and the north end with a regular service running Bath – Corsham – Whitley- Melksham – Bowerhill. This could only be achieved with the agreement and active co-operation of the operators of the commercial services, and although meetings were held, this was not forthcoming. An option will however be included in the Zig Zag tender for operators to propose alternative ways of delivering the proposed Zig Zag service, which could include diverting or amending their commercial services.
- (iii) Discussions are taking place with community and voluntary transport operators, with the assistance of the community transport team at Community First, to see if community or voluntary transport is able to meet some of the other needs that have been identified through the consultation. These discussions will continue, and any appropriate and affordable opportunities that are identified will be pursued.

Reason for Decision

It is considered that the revised proposals offer the most acceptable balance between meeting the needs of users and ongoing affordability for the Council.

DECISION MADE

I approve that:

- (i) The original proposals that formed the basis for the consultation be amended to incorporate the changes referred to in paragraph 7 of this report, and that, subject to the outcome of the tendering exercise that is currently in progress, be adopted as the basis for the changes to the service that will be introduced in January 2014.
- (ii) Discussions continue with community and voluntary transport groups to see whether appropriate and affordable ways can be identified of meeting some of the remaining needs that will not otherwise be met.

This decision was published on 17 October 2013 and will come into force on 25 October 2013.

The following supporting documents are attached:

HSB-010-13 - Report
HSB-010-13 Appendix 1 Copy of bus user questionnaire
HSB-010-13 Appendix 2 Copy of letter and information sheet sent to consultees
HSB-010-13 Appendix 3 Summary of main points raised by written responses

HSB-010-13 Appendix 4a Summary of user questionnaire analysis
HSB-010-13 Appendix 4b Summary of user questionnaire analysis
HSB-010-13 Appendix 5 Guidelines for Funding of Supported Services
HSB-010-13 Appendix 6 Revised timetable proposals

The following supporting documents are available from the officer named above:

Full responses to the consultation

Date: 15 October 2013

Cllr John Thomson

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for
Highways, Streetscene and Broadband