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**SUPPORTED BUS SERVICES IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor David Lyonette, Transport Portfolio**

**Responsible Director – Richard Alty, Director of Place**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To correct the detail of how to implement the MTFP budget decision to withdraw funding for supported bus services.

**Summary**

2. Cabinet agreed to withdraw funding from all supported bus service contracts at their meeting on 22 February 2012. Members chose to do this by withdrawing early morning services from 3 June 2012 and rural area services from 31 December 2012.
3. This decision followed an extensive engagement process to understand its impact. Recorded impacts include loss of independence, travelling less often, social isolation and even having to move house. The recorded impacts indicate that bus users in the rural areas of the Borough have less alternative travel options, than those living within the town, due in part to the longer average trip distances and absence of commercially operated routes.
4. In drafting the report for the meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, one contract for the diversion of the otherwise commercial route 14a via the Glebe Road area, was omitted in error from the resolution, although not from the analysis set out in the report. Payments made to Durham and North Yorkshire County Councils for contracts they provide, were also omitted in error, although these were also included in the analysis. The purpose of this report is to correct these omissions in the resolution.

**Recommendation**

5. It is recommended that Members agree to the withdrawal of contract DBC0919-23 serving the Glebe Road area from 3 June 2012, and cease all financial contributions towards contracts provided by neighbouring Councils as soon as is possible, as part of the budget decision to withdraw funding from supported bus services.

## Reasons

6. The recommendation is supported in order to achieve the budgeted MTFP savings.-

**Richard Alty**  
**Director of Place**

## Background Papers

No Background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

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S17 Crime and Disorder	No implications
Health and Well Being	Residents of Glebe Road will still be able to use local bus services serving North Road and Salters Lane South to access facilities.  Buses provided by Durham & North Yorkshire County Councils will still operate within the Borough.
Carbon Impact	Provision of supported bus services contributes to the ability of local people to choose to travel more sustainably
Diversity	No implications
Wards Affected	Harrowgate Hill
Groups Affected	Bus users
Budget and Policy Framework	The budget savings are incorporated into the Medium Term Financial Plan
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	No
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	Supported bus services contribute to the sustainable transport network work strand within the Greener Darlington theme
Efficiency	No new implications

## MAIN REPORT

### Information & Analysis

7. Cabinet agreed to withdraw funding from all supported bus service contracts at their meeting on 22 February 2012. Members chose to do this by withdrawing early morning services from 3 June 2012 and rural area services from 31 December 2012.
8. This decision followed an extensive engagement process to understand its impact. Recorded impacts include loss of independence, travelling less often, social isolation and even having to move house. The recorded impacts indicate that bus users in the rural areas of the Borough have less alternative travel options, than those living within the town, due in part to the longer average trip distances and absence of commercially operated routes.
9. A feasibility study is currently being undertaken into the potential for financially self-sustaining accessible taxi and accessible community transport within the Borough.
10. In drafting the report for the meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, one contract for the diversion of the otherwise commercial route 14a via the Glebe Road area was omitted in error from the resolution, but not from the background analysis set out in the report. This was because the contract is for daytimes, Monday to Saturday and does not fit in either category set out the resolution. The purpose of this report is to correct this omission and seek Cabinet's authority to withdraw funding for the diversion from 3 June 2012. The remainder of the route from Skerne Park to Harrowgate Farm and Albert Hill is operated commercially by Arriva North East.
11. Similarly, the financial contributions to Durham & North Yorkshire County Councils for buses that they provide coming into Darlington were included in the analysis, but were omitted in error from the resolution. These services are early morning and/or daytime services 1b, 7 & 29.

### Financial Impact

12. The contract and financial payments need to be withdrawn in order to contribute to the budget savings set out in the MTFP for the period 2012 until 2016.

### Outcome of Consultation

13. There has been an extensive engagement process as part of the equalities impact assessment for this budget proposal and the results from this were set out in the reports presented to members of Cabinet on 22 February 2012 prior to their decision. The process included on-bus interviews with bus users from the Glebe Road area, as well as on buses provided for by Durham and North Yorkshire County Councils.