



<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	Agenda Item
<b>18 September 2023</b>	<b>7</b>

Title:	Bus Network Review
Report of:	Neal Byers
Lead Member:	Cllr Anna Smith
Public Report:	Yes
Key Decision:	N/A
Voting Arrangements:	Simple majority of members voting

**Recommendations:**

A	<i>To note and provide comments on the Bus Network Review</i>
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**Strategic Objective(s):**

The proposals within this report fit under the following strategic objective(s):

	Achieving ambitious skills and employment opportunities
	Achieving good growth
x	Increased connectivity
	Enabling resilient communities
	Achieving Best Value and High Performance

**1. Purpose**

1.1	The Combined Authority and its partners are seeking an approach to provide the 'best possible' tendered bus network within the funding available. The previous approach was limited as decision makers did not have a clear process and sufficient data. The Bus Network Review is required to enable the CPCA Board to make future decisions on a more structured and balanced basis.
1.2	The CPCA Board paper appended to this report provides the detail of the recommendations and considerations for the bus network review.

**2. Proposal**

2.1	There is a medium-term vision to explore the best delivery model to recast the network and people's experience of it through Bus Reform i.e., Enhanced Partnership or Franchising. An immediate decision was taken to secure the existing network and retender services during 22/23 and 23/24. Over the 23/24 financial year, the Bus Network Review workstream was established. The approach will enable
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	Leaders to make decisions for the 24/25 financial year for tendered services on a more structured and balanced basis. The Bus Network Review focuses on the tendered bus services. Bus Reform will provide a more strategic and ambitious response to the challenges faced by the bus system.
2.2	Members of the TIC had previously considered the Local Bus Service Assessment Framework which sets out the approach to be followed for the bus network review. This approach set out five stages to assess the network and provide recommendations. The framework had been updated to reflect the new Bus Strategy and recent feedback on the approach. This feedback included that the framework needs to consider both the need and affordability of service to establish value for money. The framework also needed to account for differences between urban and rural services. A key first step in the assessment framework is to understand if there is a need for intervention. This requirement remains to help ensure the limited budget is focused on supporting communities which would otherwise have no alternative bus service.
2.3	Members are asked to note and provide comments on the Bus Network Review to support decision by the CPCA Board and next steps for the work.

### 3. Background

3.1	The background to the report and recommendations are set out in the Appendix to this report.
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### 4. Appendices

4.1	<i>Appendix A - Bus Network Review report for Transport and Infrastructure Committee 13 September 2023 with recommendations for CA Board 20 September 2023</i>
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### 5. Implications

#### Financial Implications

5.1	The recommendation for extending 51 of the bus service contracts for 12 months from April 2024 and to extend the Ting contract until March 2024 is within the agreed MTFS.
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#### Legal Implications

6.1	<p>The extension of contracts has already been provided for within the contracts agreed with bus service providers. Some of the existing contracts under consideration include annual break point and the option to extend for a further year. Where services need to be retendered, this will be undertaken to enable services to continue.</p> <p>Procurement process will be carried out according to CPCA's Procurement Policy and guidance and relevant legislation.</p> <p>Decisions will follow the process laid down in the Bus Service Act 2017 and associated guidance</p>
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#### Public Health Implications

7.1	There is no significant Public Health Implications of the recommendations in this paper.
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#### Environmental & Climate Change Implications

8.1	Bus services play a pivotal role in mitigating environmental and climate change. When effectively utilised, buses reduce the number of single-occupancy vehicles on the roads, leading to decreased traffic congestion and, consequently, reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Buses present a more sustainable mode of transportation, emitting fewer pollutants per passenger compared to cars. Encouraging the use of public buses can significantly contribute to our efforts to combat climate change, improve air quality, and reduce the carbon footprint of transport.
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#### Other Significant Implications

9.1	There are no other significant implications associate to the recommendations in this paper. Future implications of decisions on bus reform will be presented to the Board as required.
Background Papers	
10.1	Bus Update, including Framework, 18 January 2023 <a href="#">TIC Paper</a>