

MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

SAVING PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT

DIRECTORATE: Economy and Environment
SERVICE AREA: Infrastructure

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

SAVING PROPOSAL TITLE: Withdraw Raillinc 901 bus service

BUDGET AREA: Integrated Transport Unit

TOTAL BUDGET FOR THIS AREA: £564k

% OF TOTAL BUDGET IN SAVINGS PROPOSAL: 21%

TOTAL SAVING: £120k

Please provide a brief description of how the saving will be achieved:

Termination of the Blackwood to Ystrad Mynach Raillinc 901 contract as the highest subsidy per passenger at £13.43 (for the 12 months to October 2022). Requires a minimum of 12 weeks notice to be served on the contract.

Note the Covid pandemic has resulted in a substantial increase in the subsidy (along with many other bus contracts).

2. PUBLIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

PLEASE DESCRIBE HOW THE PROPOSED SAVING COULD IMPACT UPON THE PUBLIC:

Consider the 5 ways of working, in particular, *long-term* implications for future generations and *preventative services*. Recognising that savings now may be needed to secure future provision, or may secure provision in another area.

Long-term guidance: Consider the importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long-term needs.

The proposed service cuts would impact on communities in this area of the county borough and in particular, restrict access to employment, health care and other services and facilities.

The alternative service for these communities (service 7) has a longer travel time, is not guaranteed to dovetail with rail services and would incur approximately £3.30 per day additional travel costs for each individual. The proposal is likely to lead to a reduction in passengers using public transport that could take a long time to attract back (if at all) if the service were reinstated/ improved.

There could be an increase in demand for park and ride spaces at Ystrad Mynach if there is a transition from bus to car. The current Park and Ride facility is already over capacity. Consideration is underway of providing a new expanded Park and Ride at Ystrad Mynach.

Prevention guidance: Consider whether the proposed saving is affecting a preventative area that reduces future burdens and supports well-being.

The proposal is counterproductive to the Council's transport policy to increase the use of public transport and reduce the use of the private car.

It should be noted that this is the only dedicated Raillinc provision provided within the authority.

DOES THE PROPOSAL HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO IMPACT MORE GREATLY ON PEOPLE WITH PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS? (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation)

* Yes ☒ No ☐

DOES THE PROPOSAL IMPACT ON PEOPLE WHO FACE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGE? (low income/income poverty, low wealth/or no wealth, material deprivation, area deprivation, socio-economic background, cumulative impact – information on [Policy Portal](#))

* Yes ☒ No ☐

DOES THE PROPOSAL HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE WELSH LANGUAGE? (opportunities to use the language, promote the language and/or treating the Welsh language less favourably than the English language)

* Yes ☐ No ☒

NB * If **YES** to any of the above, please complete an [Integrated Impact Assessment](#) (IIA). For further advice and guidance please see the [Policy Portal](#). A Saving Proposal Template or an IIA, if relevant, must be submitted to be included as hyperlinks to all decision reports related to the proposed savings. IIAs are not required for nil impact proposals.

PLEASE DETAIL ANY CONSULTATION THAT HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN IN CONSIDERING THIS PROPOSAL. Summarise any feedback received.

Consider the 5 ways of working, in particular, *involvement*.

Involvement: Consider whether you have involved people who have an interest in the service area, including service users and potential service users.

The proposal was considered as part of the 2023/24 budget report.

The removal of subsidy for the rail link service was met with a mixed response. Residents felt that the level of subsidy was too high to be maintained, but suggested alternative routes may be more viable (nearest train station to Blackwood is Pengam) and suggested that the service could be opened up to non-rail users.

IS FURTHER CONSULTATION REQUIRED BEFORE THIS PROPOSAL CAN BE IMPLEMENTED?

Yes ☐ No ☒

Any alternative provision would require further investigation and associated consultation as necessary

NB* Please seek guidance from Corporate Policy, who can advise on whether a formal consultation is required and adherence to the Gunning Principles.

TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE ABOVE AND THE IMPACT RATING DEFINITIONS, PLEASE INDICATE THE PUBLIC IMPACT RATING APPLICABLE TO THIS SAVING PROPOSAL (please tick):

Nil ☐ Minor ☒ Moderate ☐ Significant ☐ Critical ☐

Any alternative provision would require further investigation and associated consultation as necessary

3. ORGANISATION IMPACT ANALYSIS

PLEASE DESCRIBE HOW THE PROPOSED SAVING COULD IMPACT UPON THE ORGANISATION:

The proposed service cuts would impact on communities in this area of the county borough and in particular, restrict access to employment, health care and other services and facilities.

The alternative service for these communities (service 7) has a longer travel time, is not guaranteed to time in with rail services and would incur approximately £3.30 per day additional travel costs for each individual.

It should be noted that there are no other similar services provided within the borough.

PLEASE DESCRIBE HOW THE PROPOSED SAVING WILL IMPACT UPON MEMBERS OF STAFF:

No impact on staff.

NUMBER OF FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) STAFF IN BUDGET AREA AFFECTED: Nil

NUMBER OF POSTS AFFECTED BY THE PROPOSED SAVING: Nil

PLEASE SPECIFY HOW THIS WILL BE MANAGED:

HOW MANY POST(S)(please state)

- ALREADY VACANT:
- VOLUNTARY SEVERANCE:
- RETIREMENT:
- REDEPLOYMENT:
- REDUNDANCY:

PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS OF WHEN THIS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED:

Once proposals have been accepted, there is a requirement to consult more widely with Community Councils and passengers affected by the proposals and the bus operator (as part of the MTFP timeline). The termination of the existing contracts requires 12 weeks notice to be given to the providers.

Changes anticipated to be implemented towards the end of Q1 of 2023/24, subject to the outcome of consultation.

WILL THE PROPOSED SAVING HAVE AN IMPACT ON ANOTHER DIRECTORATE, SERVICE AREA OR TEAM WITHIN THE COUNCIL? (please tick)

Yes ☒ No ☐

WILL THE PROPOSED SAVING HAVE AN IMPACT ON ANOTHER PUBLIC SECTOR PARTNER, OR VOLUNTARY SECTOR PARTNER? (please tick)

Yes ☒ No ☐

If **yes**, please consider the 5 ways of working, in particular *integration*.

DESCRIBE:

- THE AREA(S) AFFECTED; AND
- HOW THE PROPOSED SAVING WILL IMPACT

Integration guidance: Consider how the proposal will impact on other service areas, or partners, and their ability to meet their objectives.

Reduced access to employment for residents and Council employees and reduced access to Council services and facilities – may impact on staff getting to work and residents accessing facilities and healthcare with indirect consequences to other services the Council provides.

The reach of the rail network to Blackwood would be restricted unless Transport for Wales takes on this service. It may also lead to a reduction in ticket income for them if there is a modal shift by passengers to other modes of travel.

There is another service that can provide a connection from Blackwood to Ystrad Mynach rail station, but this is not as regular and is more expensive.

HAVE ANY OPTIONS BEEN CONSIDERED TO MITIGATE ORGANISATIONAL IMPACT?

PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS OF ANY MITIGATION (e.g. gradual reduction in service, income generation, transferrable skills of staff, commercialisation of the service etc.)

In addition, consider the 5 ways of working, in particular, acting in *collaboration* with other service areas or partners.

Bus operators of the other commercial services (in particular service 7) will be contacted to see if any amendments to the timetable could provide a reasonable alternative service.

TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE ABOVE AND THE IMPACT RATING DEFINITIONS, PLEASE INDICATE THE ORGANISATIONAL IMPACT RATING APPLICABLE TO THIS SAVING PROPOSAL (please tick):

Nil ☐ Minor ☒ Moderate ☐ Significant ☐ Critical ☐

4. LINKS TO POLICY AND CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

DOES THE SAVINGS PROPOSAL LINK TO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING?

If so, please specify and state what the implication may be.

POLICY AREA:

CORPORATE PLAN and WELL-BEING OBJECTIVES (please state which objectives)

WHAT IS THE LINK?

WB04: Promote a modern, integrated and sustainable transport system that increases opportunity, promotes prosperity and minimizes the adverse impacts on the Environment

WHAT WILL BE THE IMPACT?

A reduction in public transport users and an increase in travel by private car.

POLICY AREA:

STATUTORY DUTIES (including the requirement to provide services in Welsh)

WHAT IS THE LINK?

Provision of socially necessary bus services.

WHAT WILL BE THE IMPACT?

A reduction in public transport users and an increase in travel by private car.

POLICY AREA:

WELSH GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE or STRATEGY

WHAT IS THE LINK?

Wales Transport Strategy and carbon reduction strategy

WHAT WILL BE THE IMPACT?

As above plus an increase in carbon emissions.

5. OTHER RISK(S) AND SENSITIVITIES

HAVE ANY OTHER RISKS BEEN IDENTIFIED IN CONNECTION WITH THIS SAVING PROPOSAL?

Yes ☒ No ☐

IF **YES**, PLEASE SPECIFY BELOW:

The withdrawal of financial support for this service will impact on the core timetable for this route, as for some passengers, the loss of early morning or evening journeys may result in them abandoning the bus service altogether. It may even affect their ability to maintain their employment.

There is alternative provision available although this will be more expensive and less convenient.

PLEASE SPECIFY BELOW ANY OTHER MITIGATION:

Not all risks can be mitigated. Some may need to be tolerated in the context of budget pressures.

Discuss with bus operators of the other commercial services (in particular service 7) to see if any amendments to the timetable could provide a reasonable alternative service.

6. OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

PLEASE USE THIS SECTION TO PROVIDE ANY OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION WHICH YOU FEEL HAS NOT BEEN CAPTURED.

N/A

HEAD OF SERVICE: Marcus Lloyd

DATE OF COMPLETION: 14 February 2023