

Cabinet



Forest Heath
District Council

Title of Report:	Report of the Extraordinary Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 20 October 2016	
Report No:	CAB/FH/16/052	
Report to and date:	Cabinet	13 December 2016
Chairman of the Committee:	Simon Cole Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Tel: 07974 443762 Email: simon.cole@forest-heath.gov.uk	
Portfolio Holder:	Lance Stanbury Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth Tel: 07970 947704 Email: lance.stanbury@forest-heath.gov.uk	
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Purpose of report:	On 20 October 2016, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held an Extraordinary meeting to consider the following item: (1) Transport Links for Rural Villages in Forest Heath.	
Recommendation:	The Cabinet is requested to <u>NOTE</u> the contents of Report CAB/FH/16/052, being the report of the Extraordinary Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	
Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i>	<i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>(Report for information only)</i>	

Consultation:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Reports listed under background papers below 	
Alternative option(s):		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Reports listed under background papers below 	
Implications:			
<i>Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Reports listed under background papers below 	
<i>Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Reports listed under background papers below 	
<i>Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Reports listed under background papers below 	
<i>Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Reports listed under background papers below 	
<i>Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Reports listed under background papers below 	
Risk/opportunity assessment:		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
See Reports listed under background papers below			
Wards affected:		All Wards	
Background papers:		See links in paragraph 1.1.3 of this report to Report No OAS/FH/16/028 and Appendices 1 and 1A.	
Documents attached:		None	

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation

1.1 Transport Links for Rural Villages in Forest Heath (Report No: OAS/FH/16/028)

- 1.1.1 The Committee held the second in a series of meetings looking at the disjointed and unpredictable way of public transport connections in Forest Heath, particularly in the case of Red Lodge.
- 1.1.2 For this meeting, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in consultation with Councillor Lance Stanbury Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth selected four public transport operators to invite to the meeting to discuss transport issues affecting Red Lodge (Abellio Greater Anglia; Coach Services Limited; Mulleys Motorways Limited and Stephenson's of Essex).
- 1.1.3 Each of the four providers were also asked in advance of the meeting to respond to a series of questions. Responses were received from three of the transport providers and were attached at [Appendix 1](#) to Report No: [OAS/FH/16/028](#) (Abellio Greater Anglia; Coach Services Limited and Stephenson's of Essex). Attached at [Appendix 1A](#) to the report was a late response to the questions submitted by Mulleys Motorways Limited on 17 October 2016.
- 1.1.4 The aim of the meeting was to hear from the transport providers regarding the rural transport services they provide; their integration in Red Lodge, and for the Committee to discuss its concerns.
- 1.1.5 The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Dean Robbie, Service Delivery Manager from Stephenson's of Essex. Dean explained the history of Stephenson's of Essex; his role in the company as Service Delivery Manager and previous transport roles held. The aim of Stephenson's of Essex was to integrate services where possible. The company tried to liaise with train companies, but the trains did not often co-ordinate with schools. 95% of the time the company did get it right, and tried to improve where it was not so good such as trying to improve communications and the selling of services, which was a joint venture between the buses and local authority. The company was trying to achieve growth on the 16-16A bus route, which ran an hourly service from Newmarket via Red Lodge to Bury St Edmunds. The company wanted to sell its service with reliable and decent buses to grow the business further into Suffolk.
- 1.1.6 The Committee discussed issues around multi-ticketing; timetabling on mobile phone apps; bus passes and reimbursement; customer experience; monitoring bus route reliability; SCC routes and tendering; bus stations and bus stops, to which Dean provided comprehensive responses.
- 1.1.7 The Cabinet Member for Planning and Growth questioned whether there was an opportunity to see if the 16/16A bus route could be used as a pilot with Forest Heath District Council; Suffolk County Council and officers to work with Stephenson's of Essex to really try and get the route going. In response Dean stated that the company aimed to work with everybody, and that the company as a business wanted to grow its brand from Stephenson's of Essex into Stephenson's of Suffolk.

- 1.1.8 The Committee expressed its disappointment in that only one of the transport providers had attended the meeting, but noted that Abellio Greater Anglia (ABA) had sent apologies, and indicated that AGA would be happy to speak or meet with officers or councillors after the meeting, giving the Committee the opportunity to ask any further questions or to discuss the outcome of the meeting.
- 1.1.9 The Committee also considered other responses received from Abellio Greater Anglia; Coach Services Limited and Mulleys Motorways Limited (Appendix 1 and 1A). Members discussed bus contracts and questioned how long contracts were awarded for and whether there were any key performance indicators on the contracts and penalties incurred; needing a better understanding of the tendering process; whether S106 monies were being spent wisely; and the prospect of devolution which would hopefully help in improving infrastructure and transport in the future.
- 1.1.10 The Committee suggested that the next step would be for the Cabinet Member for Planning and Growth to meet transport providers individually, particularly Dean Robbie from Stephenson's of Essex, to discuss further the operation of the 16/16A bus route to see what could be done, working with Suffolk CC as well, to improve the integration and advertising of this service. It was further suggested that the Cabinet Member for Operations liaises with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Growth regarding future meetings of the Joint Suffolk County Council/West Suffolk Cabinet Member Meeting (Highways and Transport).
- 1.1.11 The Committee **Recommended**, that
- 1) The Cabinet Member for Planning and Growth be asked to further progress discussions with transport operators, in particular Stephenson's of Essex, to see how services could be improved in terms of delivery and promotion.
 - 2) The Cabinet Member for Operations liaises with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Growth regarding future meetings of the Joint Suffolk County Council/West Suffolk Cabinet Member Meeting (Highways and Transport).