



The purpose of this Report is to summarise recent discussions on the future of the 31 Bus Service and ask Members to support a recommendation from the Town Council's 31 Bus Working Group.

No. DETAILS

1) BACKGROUND

- a) By Minute 67/21 of its meeting of 21 June the Town Council resolved to:
 - o establish a 31 Bus Working Group with the Terms of Reference attached to Report 52/21;
 - o subject to an agreement with an alternative service provider for the existing service by 30 June 2021, continue the service until 31 December 2021 with that provider;
 - o if that agreement is secured, give the current provider one month's notice of the end of the Town Council's existing agreement; and.
 - o appoint the Mayor and Councillors Brian Lucas, John Watkins, and Steve Cooper as Members of the Working Group.
- b) The Working Group met on 28 June and 3 August with meetings and/or discussions held with three potential alternative suppliers in between its two meetings.

2) SERVICE USE UPDATE.

- a) Report 52/51 for the Town Council meeting of 21 June included a table showing the service use statistics for the then previous quarter of March to May
- b) An updated version of that table that includes the statistics for June and July is provided here:

MONTH	SERVICE DAYS	ROUNDS	COST	PASSENGERS	INCOME	SUBSIDY/PASSENGER
MARCH	9	63	£810	119	£149	£6.81
APRIL	8	56	£720	130	£163	£5.54
MAY	8	56	£720	177	£221	£4.07
JUNE	9	63	£810	99	£124	£6.93
JULY	9	63	£810	199	£241	£2.86

- c) The cost is the charge invoiced by the supplier and the income is the £1.25 per passenger reclaimable from the Isle of Wight Council.

3) NEXT STEPS

- a) Although all three potential alternative suppliers showed initial interest in taking on the service all have also declined on further consideration.
- b) The regulations require the same processes and paperwork whether changing an operator or cancelling the service: 28 days' notice to the Local Authority and 42 days' notice to the Traffic Commissioner; the notice periods cannot run concurrently

4) RECOMMENDATION

The Town Council is recommended to:

- i) endorse the recommendation of its Working Group to terminate the service through the process identified in section 3(b) of this Report and to inform the supplier accordingly; and
- ii) ask its Working Group to continue to explore alternative arrangements for a Community Bus service.

