

**Open**

# **Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

## **Agenda**

**6.00pm**  
**Thursday, 19th December 2013**  
**Council Chamber**  
**Wyre Forest House**  
**Finepoint Way**  
**Kidderminster**



## Overview & Scrutiny Committee

### Members of Committee:

**Chairman: Councillor H E Dyke**  
**Vice-Chairman: Councillor T Ingham**

**Councillor G W Ballinger**  
**Councillor N Gale**  
**Councillor D C H McCann**  
**Councillor J Phillips**  
**Councillor C Rogers**

**Councillor C Brewer**  
**Councillor V Higgs**  
**Councillor T L Onslow**  
**Councillor M Rayner**  
**Councillor A M Sewell**

**Would Members please note that, to ensure continuity in scrutiny, substitutes should only be appointed for the Scrutiny Committee in exceptional circumstances.**

### Information for Members of the Public:

**Part I** of the Agenda includes items for discussion in public. You have the right to inspect copies of Minutes and reports on this Agenda as well as the background documents used in the preparation of these reports.

**Part II** of the Agenda (if applicable) deals with items of “Exempt Information” for which it is anticipated that the public may be excluded from the meeting and neither reports nor background papers are open to public inspection.

### **Declaration of Interests by Members – interests of members in contracts and other matters**

Declarations of Interest are a standard item on every Council and Committee agenda and each Member must provide a full record of their interests in the Public Register.

In addition, alongside the Register of Interest, the Members Code of Conduct (“the Code”) requires the Declaration of Interests at meetings. Members have to decide first whether or not they have a disclosable interest in the matter under discussion.

Please see the Members’ Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of this constitution for full details.

### **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) / Other Disclosable Interest (ODI)**

DPI’s and ODI’s are interests defined in the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the District.

If you have a DPI (as defined in the Code) in a matter being considered at a meeting of the Council (as defined in the Code), the Council’s Standing Orders require you to leave the room where the meeting is held, for the duration of any discussion or voting on that matter.

If you have an ODI (as defined in the Code) you will need to consider whether you need to leave the room during the consideration of the matter.

### **Co-opted Members**

Scrutiny Committees may wish to appoint Co-Opted Members to sit on their meetings in order to add value to the scrutiny process. To appoint a Co-Opted Member, a Committee must first agree to appoint either a specific person or to approach a relevant organisation to request that they put forward a suitable representative (e.g. the local Police Authority). Co-Optees are non voting by default but Committees can decide to appoint voting rights to a Co-Optee. The Co-Option of the Member will last no longer than the remainder of the municipal year.

Scrutiny Committees can at any meeting agree to terminate the Co-Option of a Co-Opted Member with immediate effect. Where an organisation is appointed to put forward a Co-Opted Member, they are able to send a substitute in exceptional circumstances, provided that they notify Democratic Services in advance. Co-Opted Members must sign up to the Members Code of Conduct before attending their first meeting, failure to sign will mean that they are unable to participate. This also applies to substitute Co-Opted Members, who will need to allow sufficient time before a meeting in order to sign the Code of Conduct.

The following will apply:

- i) The total number of voting co-opted members on any Scrutiny Committee will not exceed 25% at any one time.
- ii) The total number of voting Co-opted Members on any Review Panel will not be limited.
- iii) Those Co-opted Members with voting rights will exercise their rights in accordance with the principles of decision making set out in the constitution.

**For Further information:**

**If you have any queries about this Agenda or require any details of background papers, further documents or information, you should contact Louisa Bright, Committee and Member Services Officer, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF. Telephone: 01562 732763 or email [louisa.bright@wyreforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:louisa.bright@wyreforestdc.gov.uk)**

Wyre Forest District Council

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 19th December 2013

Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster

Part 1

Open to the press and public

<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Page Number</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Appointment of Substitute Members</b>  To receive the name of any Councillor who is to act as a substitute, notice of which has been given to the Solicitor of the Council, together with the name of the Councillor for whom he/she is acting.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Declarations of Interests by Members</b>  In accordance with the Code of Conduct, to invite Members to declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI's) and / or Other Disclosable Interests (ODI's) in the following agenda items and indicate the action that they will be taking when the item is considered.  Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council's Constitution for full details.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Minutes</b>  To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on the 5th December 2013.	6
<b>5.</b>	<b>Worcestershire County Council Subsidised Bus Services Review 2013</b>  To consider a report from the Policy and Monitoring Officer on the County Council's proposed withdrawal of subsidy from a number of bus services currently operating in Wyre Forest District.	10
<b>6.</b>	<b>Press Involvement</b>  To consider any future items for scrutiny that might require publicity.	
<b>7.</b>	<b>To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor of the Council before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.</b>	

8.	<p><b>Exclusion of the Press and Public</b></p> <p>To consider passing the following resolution:</p> <p>“That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of “exempt information” as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act”.</p>	
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## Part 2

Not open to the Press and Public

9.	<p><b>To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor of the Council before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.</b></p>	
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WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

THURSDAY, 5TH DECEMBER 2013 (6PM)

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**Present:**

Councillors: H E Dyke (Chairman), T Ingham (Vice-Chairman), G W Ballinger, C Brewer, N Gale, D C H McCann, B McFarland, T L Onslow, J Phillips, M Rayner, C Rogers and J A Shaw.

**Observers**

Councillors J-P Campion, I Hardiman and A T Hingley.

**OS.55      Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors V Higgs and A M Sewell.

**OS.56      Appointment of Substitutes**

Councillor B McFarland was appointed as a substitute for Councillor A M Sewell. Councillor J A Shaw was appointed as a substitute for Councillor V Higgs.

**OS.57      Declarations of Interests by Members**

Councillor N Gale declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in agenda item number 9 – Sustainable Communities Act Proposed Levy on Large Retail Outlets, as members of her family work for Tesco Supermarket and are in receipt of staff discounts.

Councillor T Ingham declared a DPI in agenda item number 10 – New Leisure Centre Update, as his family own land next to Stourport Sports Centre.

**OS.58      Minutes**

**Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 7th November 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**OS.59      Annual Crime and Disorder Review**

The Committee received a report from the Community Safety and Partnerships Officer which provided an update on the progress of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (CSP).

Councillor T L Onslow entered the meeting at this point, (6.04pm).

Members were led through the report and reminded that following the merger of the

#### **Agenda Item No. 4**

three district CSP's in Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest to form a North Worcestershire CSP, the District Operational Groups were maintained at a local level and were now identified as Safer District Groups, e.g. Safer Wyre Forest Group.

Councillor D C H McCann entered the meeting at this point, (6.08pm).

In response to questions from Members, the Community Safety and Partnerships Officer confirmed that the Safer Wyre Forest Group worked with the Street Pastors and meetings were regularly held with the Co-ordinator and a representative from the Group sat on their Steering Group.

The Committee considered each of the appendices in turn, and requested further clarification on several points, including definitions for categorising incidents of anti-social behaviour recorded by the Police. The Community Safety and Partnerships Officer agreed to circulate the information to Members of the Committee.

#### **Agreed:**

- **The update report be noted.**
- **The Community Safety and Partnerships Officer to circulate the additional information requested to Members of the Committee.**

#### **OS.60**

#### **How Are We Doing? Performance Update**

The Committee received an update report on the performance of the Council for quarter 2, from 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013.

The Business Improvement Officer led Members through the report and advised that none of the projects appeared to be at risk of not being completed.

In response to a Members question regarding community asset transfers, the Director of Community Well-being and Environment confirmed the Council were working with several Parishes to take over tasks such as emptying bins and litter picking. Football clubs and leagues were also being contacted regarding playing pitches.

The Director of Economic Prosperity and Place clarified a couple of points raised by Members relating to the Business measures.

#### **Agreed: The progress in performance for quarter 2 be noted.**

#### **OS.61**

#### **Council Tax Discount Scheme and the Impact of the Welfare Reform Act**

The Committee received an update report on the Council Tax Discount Scheme and the impact of the Welfare Reform Act.

Members were led in-depth through the report by the Welfare Reform Manager, who was thanked for providing an informative and detailed update.

#### **Agenda Item No. 4**

The Chairman confirmed an additional meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was scheduled to take place on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2013, to discuss a proposal for the future delivery of the service area.

**Agreed: The update report be noted.**

#### **OS.62 Local Welfare Scheme Update**

The Committee considered a report from the Corporate Customer Development Manager which provided an update on the Council's local welfare scheme.

The Corporate Customer Development Manager led Members through the report and advised that all applications for the local welfare scheme were made in person. This allowed the dedicated welfare team of Customer Service Advisors to understand customers needs more than a paper based application would allow.

The Leader of the Council acknowledged the hard work undertaken by the teams in changing the lives of people within the district using the systems thinking process.

**Agreed: The progress on the provision of the Local Welfare Scheme be noted.**

#### **OS.63 Sustainable Communities Act – Proposed Levy on Large Retail Outlets**

The Director of Economic Prosperity and Place presented a report on behalf of the Chief Executive which sought agreement from the Committee on a recommendation to Council on whether or not to back a campaign to introduce a levy on large retail units.

Councillor J A Shaw outlined the background to the campaign and urged Members to support a recommendation to Council to back the campaign as the income received from the levy would be beneficial to the district.

Councillor N Gale declared her DPI at this point.

A debate ensued and several Members expressed concern that if the Council backed the campaign it may make the district less attractive to any future large retailers who may consider moving into the area. However, it was noted if the Government decided to introduce a levy, it would apply throughout England.

Following a show of hands, the Committee agreed the recommendation.

**Agreed: The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends that Wyre Forest District Council should back the campaign for a levy on large retail outlets.**

Councillor J Phillips left the meeting at this point, (8.06pm).

#### **OS.64 New Leisure Centre Update**

The Committee received a report from the Cultural Services Manager which summarised the progress made on the new leisure centre.

The Cultural Services Manager led Members through the report and advised that the PQQ (Pre qualification questionnaire) had been re-advertised due to the change of site. An amended timetable for the project had been drafted and would be presented at the January 2014 meeting of the Committee.

Members discussed the funding options and disposal of the existing leisure centre sites. Councillor T Ingham declared his interest at this point.

**Agreed: The update report be noted.**

**OS.65 Recommendations from the Local Development Framework Review Panel**

The Committee considered the recommendations from the Local Development Framework (LDF) Review Panel regarding the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) Spatial Plan for Recovery and Growth Consultation.

The Planning Policy Manager presented the recommendations and advised that the draft plan had been fully scrutinised by Members of the LDF Review Panel at their meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2013. The Planning Policy Manager highlighted the comments made by the Panel which had been incorporated into the draft consultation response.

**Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet:**

- **The Draft Consultation response, as attached at Appendix A to the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to the Draft Spatial Plan for Recovery and Growth be endorsed.**

**OS.66 Feedback from Cabinet**

**Agreed: The content of the Cabinet action list following consideration of the recommendations from the meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2013 be noted.**

**OS.67 Work Programme**

**Agreed: An additional meeting of the Committee to be held on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2013 to discuss the proposal to transfer services to Civica's South Worcestershire Partnership and the Worcestershire County Councils subsidised bus consultation.**

**OS.68 Press Involvement**

There were no future items for scrutiny that might require publicity.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8.28pm.



## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### Briefing Paper

Report of: Heather Stone, Policy and Monitoring Officer

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> December 2013

Open

### Worcestershire County Council Subsidised Bus Services Review 2013

#### 1. Summary

- 1.1 This report considers the County Council's proposed withdrawal of subsidy from a number of bus services currently operating in Wyre Forest District. It presents options for the Committee's consideration regarding its response to the proposals currently out for public consultation.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 Worcestershire County Council supports the provision of local bus services to enable access to facilities by subsidising non-commercial routes. In Wyre Forest, the County Council currently subsidises 15 different bus routes together with school services to Wolverley C of E Secondary School. Subsidies per passenger range from £0.34 on bus service 192 (Stourport-Kidderminster-Halesowen) to £3.11 on bus service 291 (Kidderminster to Tenbury Wells via Rock and Clows Top). With additional funding reductions indicated in the Government Comprehensive Spending Review June 2013, further savings will need to be made in the County Council's budget. A reduction of £3 million in the subsidised bus service budget is now being proposed.
- 2.2 The County Council are consulting on a proposed reduction of bus services until January 17<sup>th</sup> 2014. There are a number of strands to this consultation – to identify passenger travel information in terms of the services used, frequency and purpose of journey; to identify the impacts of service reductions on customers; to ascertain if bus fares should increase in order to reduce subsidy and to receive any further comments.

#### 3. Proposals

- 3.1 A table of at risk bus routes is shown at appendix 1. A number of areas, both urban and rural, are in danger of losing bus services. This is of particular concern in those areas with high numbers of elderly

people and low car ownership. The following areas of the district could potentially lose their bus service:

- Kidderminster – Hurcott Road, Birmingham Road, Offmore Road, Chester Road South, Sion Hill, Wolverley Road, Hayes Road, Franche Road (Wolverley).
- Stourport – Wilden, Hartlebury Park, Power Station Estate, Baldwin Road, Timber Lane Estate, Pearl Lane, Lickhill Road, Burlish Estate, Bewdley Road.
- Bewdley – Stourport Road, Cleobury Road, Long Bank.
- Villages – Low Habberley, Trimpley, Churchill, Blakedown, Hackman's Gate, Harvington, Bluntington, Rushock, Wolverley, Kingsford, Shatterford, Arley, Bliss Gate, Rock, Clows Top.

- 3.2 These routes are also shown on the map at Appendix 2 with bus routes that could potentially lose all services shown in red and those which could have a reduced service shown in orange.

#### **4. Implications**

- 4.1 The potential loss of a regular bus service will particularly hit the elderly, especially those in sheltered accommodation who are less likely to own a car. There are approximately 70 sheltered dwellings in Fairfield which at present is served by bus routes 4A (to Kidderminster town centre via Franche), route 7 (to Kidderminster town centre via Sion Hill and Hurcott Road) and route 580 (runs between Kidderminster and Kinver). All of these routes are at risk. Other concentrations of sheltered housing near affected routes include Broomy Close (routes 192/294) and Sarah Seagar Close (route 15) in Stourport, George Street/Offmore Road (route 7A) and Deansway House off Hurcott Road (route 7) in Kidderminster, Sculthorpe Road area in Blakedown (currently served by route 197), Orchard Close in Bliss Gate (route 291), and small groups of dwellings in Harvington, Briar Hill and Hemming Way, Chaddesley Corbett (served by route 133).
- 4.2 Population mid-year estimates from 2011 show particularly high numbers of elderly people (65 or over) in Wolverley (29%), Rock (26%) and Lickhill (24%) wards. Unfortunately, data from the 2011 Census is not yet available at Lower Super Output Area level so a detailed analysis cannot be made at this time. The caravan park at Kinverdale is known to have a large elderly population and many households may rely on bus service 580 into Kinver and Kidderminster for access to services.
- 4.3 These potential reductions in bus services also have implications for a number of development sites which have recently been allocated in the adopted Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan. The map at Appendix 2 shows those routes which could potentially be lost (in red) and those which could lose off peak journeys (Kidderminster to Ludlow route 292) or afternoon journeys (route 5 Puxton to Kidderminster circular) (shown

in orange). Sites affected include SAL.RS2 Land at Clows Top, SAL.WS1 Former Midland Industrial Plastics Site, SAL.EA5 Baldwin Road, SAL.EA4 Worcester Road Garage, SAL.EA3 Parsons Chain (all in Stourport) and SAL.KSS1 Chester Road South Service Station and Broadwaters Community Centre in Kidderminster. The impact on the sustainability of the Clows Top site is particularly worrying.

- 4.4 The threatened loss of buses serving villages west of Bewdley is of great concern as there will be no buses outside of peak times even along the main A456. At the moment, route 291 allows youngsters from the villages of Clows Top, Rock and Bliss Gate to access Bewdley School. This route carries the highest subsidy of any routes within the district at £3.11 per passenger. The potential loss of off-peak services west of Bewdley will mean that the Wyre Forest cannot be accessed by public transport and thus reduce the potential for sustainable tourism.
- 4.5 Blakedown is also threatened with the loss of the two routes serving the village, route 192 to Halesowen and route 197 to Hagley via Churchill. However, the main part of the village is within reasonable walking distance of the rail station with regular trains to Kidderminster and Stourbridge. Chaddesley Corbett village will still have an hourly bus service along the A448 but the service which runs through the village via Harvington and Bluntonington may be cut (route 133).
- 4.6 Fairfield and Wolverley could potentially lose their bus service with the withdrawal of routes 7, 4A and 580. As already mentioned, there are high levels of elderly people, many without access to their own cars. There are limited facilities on Fairfield estate and high numbers of social housing.
- 4.7 Data from 2011 Census is now available at a ward level and this shows that in many of the wards worst affected by these potential bus service cuts, car ownership is low. In Broadwaters, which includes the Sion Hill estate, 1 in 4 households do not have a car. This implies that large numbers of households are likely to be reliant on the bus service for access to employment, shops and health services as well as for leisure. The estate, although within reasonable walking distance of the town centre, is on a very steep hill and it is not practicable to expect people to walk the route. The Sion Hill estate also falls within the 20% most deprived in England according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010.
- 4.8 A number of the 'at risk' bus services are school services including buses serving Wolverley School. This school has very poor pedestrian access along narrow lanes and, as a faith school, serves a large catchment area. The number 15 bus also serves Stourport High School from Wilden Top and runs through the west of Stourport on to Bewdley School. The issues for children accessing Bewdley School from Rock Parish have already been highlighted earlier in this report.

- 4.9 It is also worth highlighting issues with the bus service in Franche in north Kidderminster. If services 4 and 4A are withdrawn, Wilton Avenue and Ferndale will be left without a service into the town centre. The remaining service, Route 12, is a weekday Dial-a-Ride service to the new medical centre at the rear of the hospital.

**5. Conclusion**

- 5.1 In summary, the potential loss of these bus services has serious implications for many parts of Wyre Forest District. Of particular concern is the impact on the Fairfield and Sion Hill Estates if service 7 is withdrawn and Wilden if the number 16 and 295 services are withdrawn. In Stourport, routes serving Burlish and Lickhill are also at risk. Outside of the urban areas, rural routes also at risk include those serving villages west of Bewdley as well as Blakedown.

**6. Options**

- 6.1 The committee may wish to:
- 6.2 Consider and endorse the Draft Consultation response as attached at Appendix 3 to this report to the Cabinet.
- 6.3 Provide further comments and amendments to the Draft Consultation Response for the Cabinet's consideration.

**7. Next Steps**

- 7.1 Following the Committee's consideration of the Draft Response, it will be subject to Cabinet Member approval prior to its submission to Worcestershire County Council by the 17<sup>th</sup> January 2014.
- 7.2 It is understood that Worcestershire County Council will be reporting all responses to its Cabinet in February 2014.

**8. Consultation**

N/A.

**9. Related Decisions**

N/A.

**10. Relevant Council Policies/Strategies**

Adopted Core Strategy (December 2010).  
Adopted Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan (July 2013).  
Adopted Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan (July 2013).

**11. Implications**

- 11.1 Resources: N/A.
- 11.2 Equalities: N/A.
- 11.3 Partnership working: N/A.
- 11.4 Human Rights: N/A.
- 11.5 E-Government: N/A.
- 11.6 Transformation: N/A.

**12. Wards affected**

- 12.1 District –wide impact.

**13. Appendices**

Appendix 1: Subsidised bus services at risk serving Wyre Forest District.  
Appendix 2: Map of bus routes at risk (not including Wolverley School).  
Appendix 3: Draft Response to consultation.

**14. Background Papers**

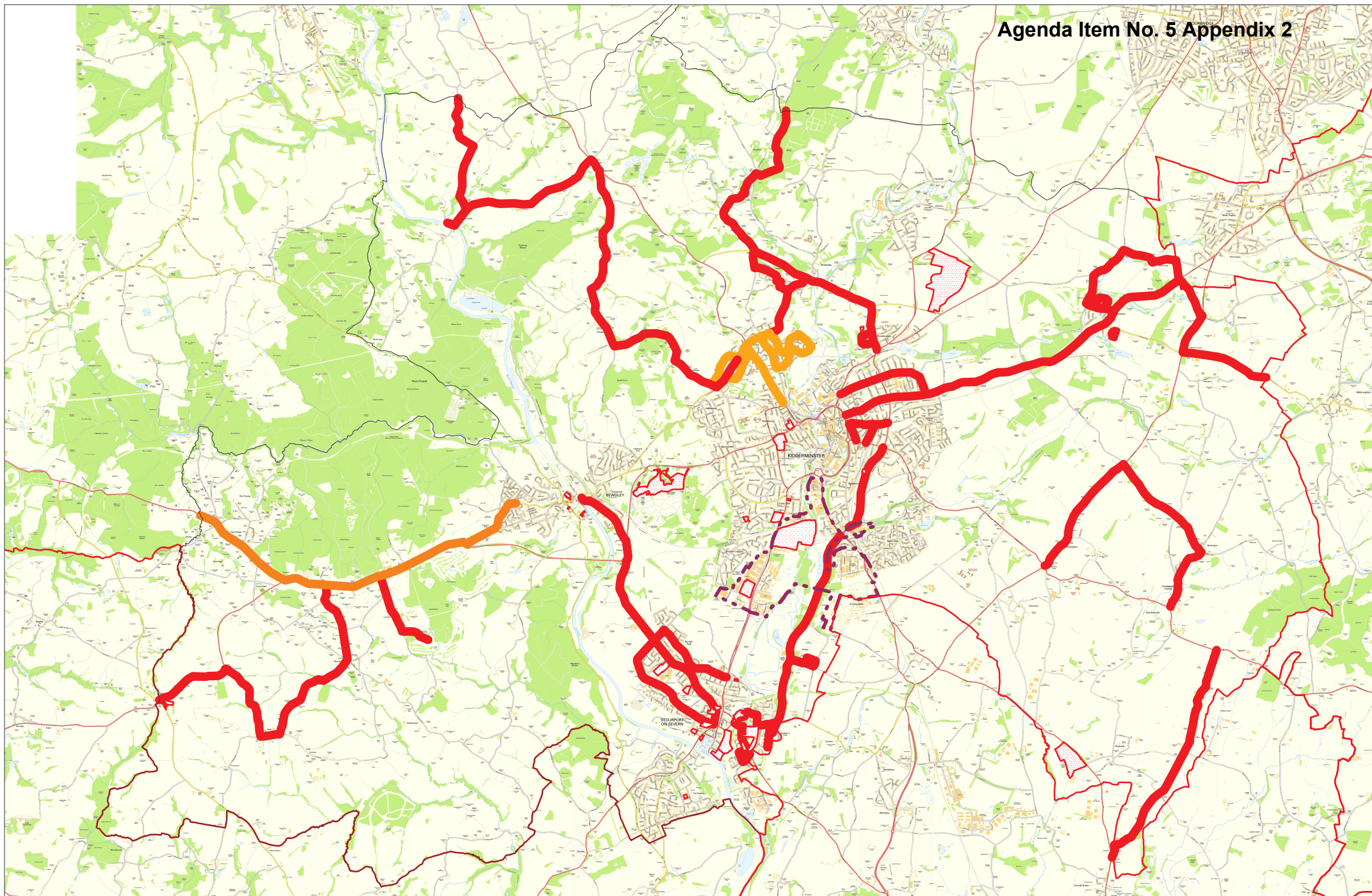
<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/pdf/2013-11-05%20Questionnaire%20v14.pdf>

**Officer Contact Details:**

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### Subsidised bus services at risk serving Wyre Forest District

Service No.	Operator	Route description	Days	Comments
4 / 4A	Diamond Bus	Fairfield to Kidderminster via Puxton Drive, Franche and Ferndale	Mon-Sat	All routes connecting Fairfield, Ferndale and Wilton Avenue with town centre are at risk
5	Diamond Bus	Kidderminster to Puxton Drive circular	Mon-Sat	Afternoon journeys at risk
7	Whittle Coach and Bus	Kidderminster to Fairfield via Greenhill, Sion Hill	Mon-Sat	All routes serving Fairfield, Sion Hill and Hurcott Road at risk
7A	Worcestershire County Council	Kidderminster to Offmore Road circular	Mon-Fri	3 journeys a day
15	Whittle Coach and Bus	Kidderminster to Stourport and Bewdley via Wilden, Baldwin Road, Power Station estate and Bewdley Road	Mon-Sat	Also school service from Wilden Top to Stourport and Bewdley High School
133	Diamond Bus	Kidderminster to Droitwich via Chaddesley Corbett	Mon-Sat	Only route serving Harvington and Rushock
192	Whittle Coach and Bus	Stourport to Kidderminster to Halesowen via Burlish	Mon-Sat	Only route along A456 Birmingham Road. All routes serving Burlish and Lickhill at risk.
192	Whittle Coach and Bus	School service from bus station via Horsefair to Wolverley	Mon-Fri	School bus
197	Worcestershire County Council	Hagley to Kidderminster via Hackman's Gate, Churchill, Blakedown and Offmore Road	Mon-Fri	Only route serving Broome and Churchill
291	R & B Travel	Tenbury Wells to Kidderminster via Clows Top, Rock and Bliss Gate	Mon-Sat	Only route serving Clows Top, Rock and Bliss Gate
292	Diamond Bus	Kidderminster (Rail station) to Ludlow via Bewdley and Cleobury Mortimer	Mon-Sat	Off peak journeys at risk – serves Cleobury Road, Callow Hill and Far Forest
294	Diamond Bus	Kidderminster to Worcester via Burlish, Lickhill, Astley	Mon-Sat	2 journeys a day serving University. All Burlish and Lickhill buses at risk.
295	Diamond Bus	Kidderminster to Worcester via Wilden, Stourport, Astley	Mon-Sat	All routes serving Wilden at risk
297	Arriva	Kidderminster to Bridgnorth via Arley and Alveley	Mon-Sat	Only route serving Low Habberley, Shatterford and Arley
580	Whittle Coach and Bus	Kidderminster to Kinver via Sion Hill and Fairfield	Mon-Sat	Only route serving Kingsford Caravan Park. 2 buses each way.
830	Whittle Coach and Bus	Caunsall – Cookley – Wolverley School	School days	School bus
831	Whittle Coach and Bus	Franchise to Wolverley School	School days	School bus
833	Whittle Coach and Bus	Chaddesley Corbett to Wolverley School	School days	School bus
834	Whittle Coach and Bus	Sion Hill to Wolverley School	School days	School bus
835	Whittle Coach and Bus	Marlpool Lane to Wolverley School	School days	School bus



**Draft Response to Transport Review 2013: Consultation on Subsidised Bus Service Withdrawals**

Wyre Forest District has fully considered the consultation documents and wishes to make the following comments:

- 1 The potential loss of a regular bus service will particularly hit the elderly, especially those in sheltered accommodation who are less likely to have access to a car. There are high numbers of rented sheltered units along a number of 'at risk' routes including those serving Fairfield (bus routes 4A, 7 & 580), Lickhill (bus routes 15, 192 & 294), George Street / Offmore Road (bus route 7A), Deansway (bus route 7), Blakedown (bus route 197) and Bliss Gate (bus route 291), together with small developments around Chaddesley Corbett parish (bus route 133).
- 2 The Sion Hill Estate is amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England and car ownership within the ward is only around 1 in 4 households (2011 Census). Two of the at risk bus routes serve this community, numbers 7 and 580. This estate is situated up a very steep hillside and access to services in the town centre by foot is not really practicable for most residents.
- 3 The Council is very concerned about the potential loss of a number of school services, both those bringing children in from the rural areas (routes 15 and 291) and those providing access to Wolverley School (routes 830, 831, 833 834 & 835). It also expresses concern about the potential loss of routes connecting with Halesowen College and Worcester University (routes 192 and 294). Reduced bus services also implications for students accessing Kidderminster College and the Kidderminster Academy.
- 4 The potential loss of off-peak services through Callow Hill has implications for sustainable tourism initiatives at the Wyre Forest itself and could therefore have an adverse impact on the local economy.
- 5 A number of sites recently allocated for development through the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan lie along 'at risk' routes. Sites affected include those along route 15 (SAL.WS1 Midland Industrial Plastics, SAL.EA3 Parsons Chain, SAL.EA4 Worcester Road Garage, SAL.EA5 Baldwin Road and SAL.KSS1 Chester Road South Service Station), the Broadwaters Community Centre SAL.KSS1 (routes 7 & 580) and SAL.RS2 at Clows Top on route 291. The impact on the site at Clows Top is especially concerning as this is intended to be an affordable housing development.
- 6 A number of the 'at risk' routes are presently subject to minimal subsidies of less than 50p. A small increase in fares would potentially aid the retention of a number of services including those serving Sion Hill, Fairfield, Halesowen and Wolverley School.

- 7 To conclude, Wyre Forest District Council wishes to express its concern at the potential losses of key bus routes, many of which serve communities which have low car ownership and high numbers of elderly people and also suffer from high levels of multiple deprivation. It is considered that this will have severe impacts on accessibility levels across the district.