



**Report of the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement
& Infrastructure Management
To
Scrutiny Working Group
7th July 2021**

BUS SERVICES AND COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Purpose	To inform Councillors about the provision of bus services and community transport in Swansea.
Content	This report includes details of the legislative framework, parties responsible for provision, funding and network coverage.
Councillors are being asked to	Consider the information provided, ask questions, and make comments and recommendations to the Cabinet Member as necessary
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor Mark Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management
Lead Officer(s)	Martin Nicholls, Director of Place
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1.0 Background Information

1.1 The Transport Act 1985 introduced deregulation into the bus industry outside London. Since the implementation of the Act in 1986, bus operators have been able to determine which services they wish to provide, based on their commercial judgement. The services have to be registered with the Traffic Commissioner at least 56 days before the proposed start date giving details of the route, stopping places and timetable. Registered services can be amended also giving 56 days' notice. Bus companies must send copies of their registration

documents to the local authorities through which the service is to operate at the same time as they submit them to the Traffic Commissioner.

- 1.2 The legislation gives local authorities powers to financially support bus services which they consider to be socially necessary. The local authorities monitor the bus network provided commercially by operators and identify gaps where there are communities who would not have a service, a very poor service or service only at certain times of day or day of the week. Local authorities can then decide, subject to available finance, whether they wish to fund services to fill these gaps.
- 1.3 Services funded by the Council have to be procured through an open tendering procedure. The local authority draws up the timetable, route and vehicle specification for the service and bus companies submit tender prices to operate them. Services funded by the Council must not compete with or abstract revenue from, those services provided on a commercial basis.

2.0 Bus Services in Swansea

- 2.1 The majority of bus services in Swansea are operated commercially, primarily by First Cymru. At least 80% of services are commercial and the Council therefore has very little input into when and where they operate. The commercial services tend to be focussed in urban areas and on main transport corridors. Frequencies of service are highest during the daytime on Mondays to Saturdays with lower frequencies in the early morning, evening and on Sundays and public holidays. The fares charged are set by the bus operators and due to the competitive market, tickets issued by one company are not accepted for travel on services operated by another company. The monitoring of bus service operation and standards is carried out by bus monitoring staff on behalf of the Traffic Commissioner
- 2.2 The services subsidised by the Council are in areas and at times where operators do not consider services to be commercially viable. They are therefore mainly in rural areas, to housing estates away from main corridors, in the early morning, evenings and on Sundays/ Public holidays. Details of the services currently subsidised by the Council are shown in **Appendix A**.
- 2.3 The contracts for most subsidised local bus services were tendered in 2019 and contracts awarded for a period of 4 years with an option to extend for a further 1 year. Contract payments are indexed annually to reflect changes in Transport cost indices.
- 2.4 All contract vehicles must be less than 12 years old, single decked and comply with the Welsh Government's Voluntary Bus Quality Standards. Checks are carried out by Council monitoring staff to ensure that

services provided comply with the contract specifications and to confirm passenger usage and satisfaction.

3.0 Community Transport

3.1 There are 5 Community Transport Schemes in the Swansea area. These provide transport to those people who are not able to use conventional bus services mainly because there is no bus service near where they live or at times they need to travel, they are elderly or have limited mobility. The majority of clients use community transport to access medical appointments, personal care appointments, shopping and social activities such as lunch clubs. Clients pay a charge per mile for using the service and journeys must be booked in advance. The journeys provided are more door to door than bus services and the drivers often provide additional assistance to passengers such as helping with walking aids and carrying shopping.

3.2 The Community Transport schemes in Swansea are:

Gower Voluntary Transport
Pontarddulais and District Community Transport
Gorseinon Community Transport
DANSA (covers all of Swansea)
Cae Rowland Community Transport (based at St John's Day centre,
Cwmbwrla)

All schemes, apart from DANSA, are car schemes run primarily by volunteers who provide transport using their own cars. Some schemes have purchased a wheelchair accessible car that the volunteer drivers can use for specific journeys. DANSA own a fleet of minibuses, based mainly at their operating centre in Crynant with some based at Landore park and ride car park for the Swansea service. DANSA also employ professional drivers. All schemes have a Coordinator who deals with the transport requests and allocates the work to the drivers.

3.3 The Council provides support to the community transport sector in the form of a grant which Schemes apply for each year. The grant assists them with the expenses paid to volunteers and other running costs such as premises, insurance, etc that are not covered by the fares charged. The Council also undertakes DBS checks on volunteer drivers on behalf of the Schemes.

3.4 In addition to the Community Transport Schemes, The Council also provides 2 community bus services which are operated by Client Transport Services using the adapted community minibus from the Council's fleet. These services utilise the vehicle during the daytime when it is not required for social care or home to school transport. One return journey is provided to Fforestfach Retail Park from :

Craig Cefn Parc / Clydach on Tuesdays
Penclawdd, Gowerton and Waunrlwydd on Thursdays.

The services are demand responsive with customers having to book at least 24 hours in advance. The customers are almost all concessionary bus pass holders and if there are no bookings, the services do not operate.

4.0 Funding

- 4.1 The Council has allocated revenue funding of £1.6m this year to support bus and community transport services. Of this, just over £0.5m comes from the regional allocation of Welsh Government Bus services Support Grant.
- 4.2 In addition to revenue support for contracted services from local authorities, bus operators also receive funding from the Welsh Government for each kilometre of 'live' mileage that they operate on local bus services. This Live Kilometre Support Grant (LKSG) is administered on a regional basis and is to help bus operators with fuel costs.
- 4.3 During the Covid pandemic the Welsh Government has provided additional funding to support Bus Operators in the form of the Bus Emergency Scheme to keep operators afloat at times when the general instruction was to only travel for essential purposes and to work from home where possible. This funding has meant that LKSG and concessionary bus pass travel payments have continued to be made at pre Covid levels. It has also provided 'ramp up' funding to enable operators to bring back services even though passenger numbers have been low and social distancing remains in place. This ramp up funding is administered by Swansea Council on behalf of the S W Wales region. Operators have also continued to receive payment for their contracted services from the Council throughout the Covid pandemic.

5.0 Integration with other forms of transport

- 5.1 The Council owns and manages Swansea City Bus Station. Bus operators are charged a fee for each departure from the bus station which assists with the running costs of the complex. Almost all bus services in the City use the Bus Station. This assists travellers who have a single point for interchange between services in the city centre.
- 5.2 The Bus Station acts as a gateway to the S W Wales Region for bus and Coach services. In addition to the 23 bus service departure bays, there is a separate waiting area and 3 bays for coaches which are open 24/7. Adjacent to the coaching area is a taxi rank and a short stay pick up and drop off area for private cars. The Swansea Mobility Hire

office is also located within the Bus station where customers with mobility problems can hire scooters for use within the city centre area.

5.3 Although the bus and railway station are not co-located, there are frequent bus services linking the two and these are indicated as providing that facility on the electronic information screens in the Bus Station. There are also electronic screens inside the railway station forecourt and immediately outside, which give details of bus services in the vicinity.

5.4 The Council has been awarded Transport Grant capital funding this year from Welsh Government to look at the feasibility of improving the interchange facilities between bus services and rail at Gowerton and Pontarddulais. Currently bus services are not able to stop in close proximity to the railway stations in these communities.

6.0 Future arrangements

6.1 In 2018, the Welsh Government set out legislative proposals in the Improving Public Transport White Paper for reforming the planning and delivery of local bus services. The aim was to create a modern public transport system which should be accessible, affordable and integrated across Wales, providing choice and a viable alternative to the private car. The proposals included:

- Joint Transport Authorities
- Enhanced Quality Partnerships
- Franchising
- Local Authority run Bus Services
- Eligibility age for mandatory concessionary fares
- Public Transport information and monitoring.

Following the consultation the Welsh Government Bus Services (Wales) Bill was presented to the Senedd in March 2020 however this was withdrawn in July 2020 with the focus since on supporting the sector through the pandemic, recovery and establishing an approach for the future. Transport for Wales and the Welsh Government are working with local authorities to look at how this can be taken forward.

7.0 Legal Implications

7.1 There are no legal implications from this report.

8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications from this report.

Appendices: Appendix A –Bus services subsidised by the Council.

Appendix A

BUS SERVICES SUBSIDISED BY THE COUNCIL

Service No(s)	Route(s) or Section(s) of Route(s) funded by the Council	Time(s) of Day when funded by the Council	Operator(s)
3A	Swansea City Bus Station to Oystermouth	Sunday Evenings	First Cymru
4A	Swansea City Bus Station to Morryston Hospital	Sunday Evenings	First Cymru
5	Swansea City Bus Station to Cwmdonkin	Mon to Sat Daytime	South Wales Transport
6	Swansea City Bus Station to Port Tennant	Sunday Daytime & Evenings	First Cymru
7/44	Marina to Swansea City Bus Station	Mon to Sat Daytime	First Cymru
8	Fabian Way Park & Ride to Swansea City Bus Station	Mon to Sat Daytime	First Cymru
12	Swansea City Bus Station to Townhill	Sunday Evenings	First Cymru
14 & 14A	Swansea City Bus Station to Pennard	Mon to Sat Evenings & Sundays	New Adventure Travel
15	Wauarllwydd to Swansea City Bus Station	Mon to Fri Daytime	First Cymru
16	Pontarddulais to Swansea City Bus Station	Mon to Sat Evenings	New Adventure Travel
16	Swansea City Bus Station to Penclawdd	Sunday Daytime	First Cymru
19	Swansea City Bus Station to Uplands	Mon to Sat Daytime	First Cymru
20	Swansea City Bus Station to Derlwyn	Sunday Evenings	First Cymru
22	Swansea City Bus Station to Three Crosses	Mon to Sat Daytime	First Cymru
24	Caemawr to Morryston Hospital	Mon to Sat Daytime	South Wales Transport
25	Blaen-y-Maes to Swansea City Bus Station	Mon to Fri Early Mornings and Sunday Evenings	First Cymru

26	Fforesthall to Swansea City Bus Station	Monday & Thursday Daytime	DANSA
28	Penplas to Swansea City Bus Station	Mon to Sat Evenings	First Cymru
30	Trallwn to Swansea City Bus Station	Mon to Fri Daytime	First Cymru
31	Birchgrove to Morriston Hospital	Mon to Sat Daytime	First Cymru
31	Swansea City Bus Station to Birchgrove	Sunday Evenings	First Cymru
31	Swansea City Bus Station to Morriston	Mon to Fri Early Mornings	First Cymru
34	Landore Park & Ride to Swansea City Bus Station	Mon to Sat Daytime	First Cymru
35	Llangyfelach to Swansea City Bus Station	Mon to Sat Daytime	New Adventure Travel
36	Swansea City Bus Station to Morriston	Sunday Evenings	First Cymru
37	Sketty Park to Oystermouth	Mon to Sat Daytime	South Wales Transport
41 & 42	Morriston to Swansea Bus Station	Mon to Sat Early Mornings	First Cymru
43	Swansea City Bus Station to Morriston Hospital	Mon to Sat Daytime	New Adventure Travel
45	Swansea City Bus Station to Morriston Hospital	Mon to Sat Daytime	New Adventure Travel
46	Morriston to Gorseinon	Mon to Sat Daytime	New Adventure Travel
49	Swansea City Bus Station to North Hill	Mon to Sat Daytime	South Wales Transport
53	Tircoed Forest Village to Swansea City Bus Station	Mon to Sat Daytime	DANSA
54	Swansea City Bus Station to Parc Llewellyn	Mon to Sat Daytime	South Wales Transport, DANSA & New Adventure Travel
111	Swansea City Bus Station to Llanelli	Mon to Sat Evenings	First Cymru
111	Swansea City Bus Station to Loughor	Sunday Evenings	First Cymru

115	Llangennith to Port Eynon	Mon to Sat Daytime	New Adventure Travel
116	Swansea City Bus Station to North Gower	Mon to Sat Daytime and Summer Sundays	New Adventure Travel
116	Gowerton to North Gower	Mon to Sat Evenings	DANSA
117	Killay to South Gower	Mon to Sat Daytime	New Adventure Travel
118 & 119	Swansea City Bus Station to Rhossili	Mon to Sat Daytime and Summer Sundays	New Adventure Travel
142	Morrison to Garnswllt	Mon to Sat Daytime	DANSA
X6c	Craig Cefn Parc to Graig Felen	Mon to Sat Daytime	South Wales Transport and New Adventure Travel
X13	Llandybie to Swansea City Bus Station	Mon to Sat Evenings	First Cymru