

## **Local Bus Network Review Consultation August 2016**

- **Why are we doing this?**

In 2015 Essex County Council (ECC) began a thorough review of its financial support for those local bus services that it pays for across the County. This consultation is the start of the second part of the review and looks at 70 services across Essex where the current contract ends in 2017. We have grouped together services by geographical area of the County so it is easy to see whether your service is part of the review

We hope you will take this opportunity to comment on your services.

- **What about my area/does it matter where I live?**

We have grouped together services by geographical area so you will only need to comment on the questionnaire relating to the area that is relevant to you

The areas are:

- Basildon, Castle Point and Rochford
- Braintree
- Brentwood
- Chelmsford and Maldon
- Colchester
- Epping Forest
- Harlow
- Uttlesford

### **None of the services run through Tendring district.**

- **How long does the consultation last?**

The consultation will run for 8 weeks, from **Thursday 4th August 2016 until Wednesday 28 September 2016.**

- **Where is the consultation questionnaire on line?**

<https://surveys.essexinsight.org.uk/BusConsultation>

- **How do I get paper copies of the questionnaire?**

Call 0345 743 0430 or email [contact@essex.gov.uk](mailto:contact@essex.gov.uk)  
Don't forget to ask for the questionnaire for your area

Paper copies are also available in your local library,

- **If I have questions about the consultation, where can I get more information?**

You can contact Essex County Council on 0345 743 0430 or email [passenger.transport@essex.gov.uk](mailto:passenger.transport@essex.gov.uk)

- **What happens after the consultation finishes?**

We will collate the responses from the survey and summarise them as part of our report regarding the renewal of these contracts. Essex Insight will publish the findings of the consultation.

- **Will I see any differences with my specific bus service following the consultation?**

The County Council is looking at a range of options for the services under consultation, trying to reduce the cost of providing the services, while maintaining key transport links. This could mean no change at all, a change to the operator, reduced frequencies or reduced hours or days of operation or changes to routes. ECC also needs to manage the network in the light of changes to the commercial bus network (buses that are not funded by ECC), travel demand and changing corporate priorities over time. Bus services are non-statutory (not required by law), and the Council will always, quite rightly, have to fund the services it is legally required to provide (its statutory services) first.

- **When will the services change?**

Once this consultation is closed the outcomes will be considered and there may be further changes to the timetables and/or routes. The services will then be tendered: bus operators will be asked to bid for the work. For many of these services a number of options will be included.

The outcome will be available in Spring 2017 via the Transport & Travel communications and the information teams web page:

<http://www.essexhighways.org/Transport-and-Roads/Getting-Around/Bus/Bus-timetable-changes.aspx>

Changes to the services will commence from August 27th 2017.

### **Equality and Diversity Questions – why are they included?**

Our Equality Impact Assessment has highlighted some groups who may be affected by changes to our strategy. Questions are asked to ensure we have identified any specific issues for equality groups. It is not compulsory to answer these questions but it would be helpful in our analysis of the results.

- **How do I get a timetable?**

Travel information is provided by Traveline: [www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info) 0871 200 22 33

- **Are you changing the start times of the concessionary fares?**

No - currently a pass holder can travel for free in Essex from 09.00 Monday to Friday and all day at weekends and Bank Holidays anywhere in Essex. It also allows free travel after 9:30 anywhere in England or at any time on buses in London. Full information about the concessionary bus pass can be found at [www.canigetapass.org.uk](http://www.canigetapass.org.uk)

- **My child has free transport to school – will this be affected?**

Children who are entitled to free transport to school will still have their transport provided. In the longer term the way in which it is provided for some groups of children may possibly change (e.g. from a dedicated school bus to a public local bus). However, only students travelling on services included in this review are likely to be affected at present.

- **My child uses a local bus service to get to school – will this be affected?**

Most buses are commercial. Essex County Council supports a small number of school day only services and these are included in the review.

If your child is entitled to free school transport then transport will be provided, though this may be in a different way or a different provider compared to the current service.

- **Will my Community Transport be affected by this review?**

Community Transport has an important role to play in delivering services. We are considering its contribution, where and how it might grow, and how to get best value as part of these local reviews. We are not proposing any changes at present.

- **Park and Ride Services – are they part of the review?**

No. There are no proposals on the Chelmsford and Colchester Park and Ride schemes.

- **Why do many of the questions refer to the cost per passenger journey? What does this mean?**

The Council will not normally continue to support a service where it pays the operator £5.00 or more per single (one way), passenger journey. This is referred to as the Cost Per Passenger Journey (CPPJ).

- **Why is there more than one option for some services?**

A number of the services in this review were last tendered in 2009/10 and the price agreed then is therefore relatively low compared to prices today. As a result a number of bus services in this review are currently close to or exceeding the £5.00 CPPJ upper support limit and are very likely to exceed it after tender.

Given this position, the County Council is looking at a range of options for these services trying to reduce the cost of providing the services, while maintaining key transport links. This could mean reduced frequencies or reduced hours or days of operation or changes to routes. ECC also needs to manage the network in the light of changes to the commercial bus network, travel demand and changing corporate priorities over time.

- **Does this consultation relate to other current transport consultations?**

No. This is separate consultation and does not relate to:

The Passenger Transport Customer Satisfaction Survey. (This closed July 31<sup>st</sup> 2016).

The National Highways and Transport Survey:

<http://www.essex.gov.uk/News/Pages/Have-your-say-on-highways-and-transport-improvements-in-Essex.aspx>

The Transport for London survey on service 167. (This closed July 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016).