

**REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER
FOR ECONOMY AND TOURISM
TO THE MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL
ON WEDNESDAY, 8 JULY 2015**

Subsidised and Community Buses

Members will be aware that dialogue has taken place with Southern Vectis about the council's withdrawal of funding for these buses on routes which it considered to not be commercial. This is consistent with the decisions taken by Full Council when it agreed the medium term financial strategy in February this year. These changes will include the withdrawal of services 33, 34, 34A & 35 and a reduction in the following network services from 6 September 2015:

- There will be some reductions to frequency on early mornings and late evening journeys, particularly on weekends, on routes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9.
- During the winter the frequency on route 6 will be reduced to two hourly Monday to Saturday. The winter Sunday service will be withdrawn.
- During the summer the frequency on route 6 will be retained, running every hour Monday to Saturday and two hourly on Sundays.
- On route 12 the evening journeys after 5.40pm will be withdrawn. On Saturdays the first return journey in the morning will be withdrawn.
- On winter Sundays journeys on route 12 will be withdrawn. On summer Sundays route 12 will run as present.
- Community bus routes 22, 24 and 32 will be retained with some changes to journey times.
- Community bus route 23 will be redesigned, with one return journey from Newchurch and Alverstone Garden Village a day, running four days a week instead of the current two days per week.

This is one of the many discretionary areas that we would all wish to continue funding but which are having to be reduced in response to the national austerity agenda which is leading us to focus our reducing resources to statutory services such as adult social care and children's services.

Shanklin Lift

Works are progressing to complete the installation of a temporary bridge to the lift with a target date for completion (subject to no unforeseen difficulties following the removal of the old bridge) of 21 July, in time for the school holidays.

Visit Isle of Wight (VIOW)

It is really pleasing that the council has been able to support VIOW in relocating its office base to the Guildhall in Newport which not only helps us ensure the asset is put to best use but has also meant a new visitor information point in the town. This will be staffed by travel ambassadors employed by VIOW funded from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund secured by the council.

Works continue to consider the feasibility of a destination business improvement district to raise funds for investing in the Island's tourism product. I hope to be able to provide a more detailed report on this project in the very near future.

Libraries

I would advise Members that the Council has now launched its formal consultation on proposals to change the way in which it delivers its library service. This comes as a result of the decisions taken by the Full Council in respect of its medium term financial plan. The consultation is available on the Council's website and covers three main areas:

- Community supported libraries
- Reduction in opening hours in three proposed new community supported libraries
- Changes to the mobile library service

The consultation will continue to 6 September.

Councillor Shirley Smart
Executive Member for Economy and Tourism