

Appendix 1 - Matters Arising update

Sheppey Bus Service provision – briefing to Members

Dear Member(s)

I wrote to you on 31st March this year advising that Arriva were looking to close their Sheppey depot and as such would be de-registering a number of services on the Island including the 360, 361 and 362. I can now confirm that Arriva have completed their consultation with staff and these plans are moving ahead as planned with the last day of operation being 11th July.

KCC has been talking to a number of other local operators in the district to see if there is any interest in taking these services on a commercial or part commercial basis. We have received interest from a number of operators and I can now advise you that a local company Chalkwell have come forward and have registered replacement services on a broadly like for like basis.

These replacement services will largely mirror the current Arriva network albeit with a few tweaks to timings to better connect with train times etc. Final versions of the timetables are currently being finalised by Chalkwell and come into effect from 12 July and will be available on their website in due course. Please note that the Sunday 360 service is not included, Chalkwell were unable to take this on commercially so the Council has issued a tender to replace this service on a subsidised basis, the results should be known within the next couple of weeks.

We understand that for a while now there has been an aspiration to simplify and improve services on the Isle of Sheppey. We are confident that Chalkwell will bring a renewed enthusiasm and focus for service provision in the area, but we have also gained a commitment from them to work with the Council and local representatives to review the network in the medium to long term to ensure that it best reflects the aspirations of bus users and local residents and will give this consideration when forming the Councils Bus service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Partnerships as part of the recent National Bus Strategy. In the meantime, I hope that I have provided an assurance that the needs of bus users will continue to be met and if I can answer any questions please let me know.

Kind Regards

**Steve Benjamin | East Kent Public Transport Planner
Public Transport Unit | Kent County Council**