

**All Committee meetings were cancelled with effect from 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2020 due to the COVID-19 emergency.**

**The recommendations in this report were approved by an Executive Director of the Council, acting under delegated authority in terms of paragraph 2.1.1 of the Council's List of Officer Powers**

1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 (CANCELLED)

Approved by Executive Director, Communities – 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2020

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## Supporting the Levenmouth Local Community Plan – Bus Service 13/L3

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Report by: Paul Vaughan – Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods

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Wards Affected: Ward 21, 22

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### Purpose

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This report is to update members on the locally funded L3/13 bus service and request interim funding up until August 2020 to allow this service to continue to a point where it is funded under mainstream subsidy funding.

### Recommendation(s)

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Members are asked to:

- Note the usage figures between August 2018 and February 2020
- Agree to continue funding this service up to August 2020 from Area Budget. This will be £10500 in total
- Note the move to mainstream subsidy arrangements from August 2020 onwards.

### Resource Implications

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The resource implications will result in a spend from the local area budget of £10500, to maintain the service in the period between April 2020 and August 2020.

### Legal & Risk Implications

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There are no legal or risk implications for Fife Council inherent in this report. The tender process to contract out the service noted in this report was carried out under the policy framework agreed by the Council. The provision of the service by the chosen contractor is covered by the relevant insurances required by the contractor and will meet all current legal requirements.

### Impact Assessment

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An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required because the report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

It is however felt that the introduction of this service is helping a range of customers who have found it difficult to access direct service provision. The route taken by the 13/L3 has reconnected areas that are furthest away from the main route bus services.

## Consultation

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The request to find a solution to disenfranchised parts of the local community in terms of bus service provision have been the subject of discussion locally for a number of years. The reconfiguration of the Service 13 in 2013 caused concern for a number of residents in East Wemyss, West Wemyss and the Birds Scheme in Methil, in that they felt they had less travel opportunities to and from Leven and Kirkcaldy, both for shopping and employment reasons.

This proposal has been strongly supported by both the East Wemyss and McDuff Community Council and the newly formed Buckhaven and Denbeath Community Council

## 1.0 Background

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- 1.1 Members will be fully aware of the history relating to the loss of a bus service which covered the areas around West Wemyss, Lower East Wemyss, McDuff and the Birds scheme which went back to a decision to rationalise services in the Levenmouth area taken in 2012
- 1.2 Since that time there was considerable pressure from local residents to re-introduce this service, unfortunately due to financial pressures on the Council, and a decision by the main bus providers that the route was not economically sustainable, we were unable to satisfy those requests.
- 1.3 The proposal to reintroduce a service to cover the areas noted in para 1.1 was revisited in early 2018 at the request of local members in Ward 22. The proposal was reassessed in the light of new entrants into the marketplace who were willing to look a range of routes, and within their own business model trial these to see if they could be sustainable.
- 1.4 Members agreed in the summer of 2018, during the Area Committee recess, to financially support a trial of a new service which is known as the 13/L3 – on the basis (with some modifications) of the timetable that can be found [here](#).
- 1.5 The proposal was fully ratified at the August 2018 meeting of the Levenmouth Area Committee, the agreement noted for that report is shown below for member's reference:

The Committee -

(1) Agreed to a total of £23,179 to be used to fund a pilot approach to running a new bus service in the Levenmouth area. This agreement is in retrospect following email agreement from members on 21st June, 2018;

(2) noted the agreed timetable and extent of the service to be provided;

(3) Agreed to assist with the promotion and advertising of the new service to local constituents, to ensure the viability of the extra provision; and

(4) Noted that subsequent funding to maintain this service may be required.

- 1.6 The purpose of this report is to advise members of the up to date usage figures for this service, and to ensure members are comfortable to continue funding to allow the continuation of this service up to the end August 2020.
- 1.7 The Community Manager has been given assurances that from August 2020, the L3/13 service will become part of the mainstream subsidised services covered through Transportation funding, this is welcome news as it is seen as an essential part of the local transport infrastructure in the Levenmouth area, especially for older people.

## 2.0 Project Detail

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- 2.1 The contractor for this service, Bay Travel, have been keeping our colleagues in Transportation Services updated on the usage figures for this service. The raw figures are shown in table 1 below. Some months have been omitted for brevity but the total figure shows all journeys made between August 2018 and February 2020.

**Table 1**

Month	Passenger Numbers
August 18	636 (start date 15 <sup>th</sup> August)
September18	925
October18	1223
November18	1158
December18	1072
January 19	1151
February 19	1221
March 19	1255
April 19	1437
May 19	1446
June 19	1253
July 19	1677
October 19	1716
January 20	1422
February 20	1276
Total	24635

- 2.2 It is the feeling of the service provider that these figures are in excess of their original estimates, a fact which supports the initial proposal to reintroduce the service.
- 2.3 In discussion with the provider they have confirmed that the age profile of the users of the service is reasonably mixed and is being used to facilitate a range of travel requirements, including travel to work, shopping and leisure activities.
- 2.4 Early indications do however show that there are significant numbers of older users who appreciate the fact that they are not required to walk long distances to access the service, their ability to do shopping and be dropped off closer to their home has also been cited as a positive.
- 2.5 Over the next few months we will look to canvass the users of the service further to get a more detailed picture of the user base.

## 3.0 Conclusions

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- 3.1 This approach aligns with a specific statement in our local community planning research via the strategic assessment process in terms of improving travel connectivity within Levenmouth and to connections out with.

### List of Appendices

- None

### Background Papers

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973:

- None

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