

Eastern Area Committee	
Meeting Date	28 September 2023
Report Title	Bus Consultation Project
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Joanne Johnson, Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property and Interim Head of Planning
Lead Officer	Christopher Blandford, Programme Delivery Co-ordinator
Classification	Open
Recommendations	1. To note the findings of the bus consultation report prepared by Project Centre Ltd (appendix I).

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The covering report provides the background to the attached *Bringing better bus services to Swale* report, which details the findings of the recent bus consultation in the Eastern area of Swale. The consultation was delivered by Project Centre Ltd between 28 March 2023 and 27 April 2023.
- 1.2 The aim of the consultation is to help inform discussions with Kent County Council and local bus companies when they are reviewing and developing bus services in the future.

2 Background

- 2.1 Eastern Area Committee members agreed on the 3 February 2023 to award £10,000 to undertake a public consultation on local bus services. There was a slight delay in launching the consultation due to a lack of resource at the time within the Regeneration, Economic Development and Property Department.
- 2.2 Preparation commenced in September 2022 with discussions undertaken with key stakeholders including members and Kent County Council, to help shape the project brief. Quotes were requested from a range of organisations in December 2022 and Project Centre Ltd was commissioned in February 2023 to carry out the consultation.
- 2.3 The project brief was to design and manage a public consultation to find out what residents would like to see from local bus services and produce a summary report on the findings of the consultation.
- 2.4 Kent County Council has statutory responsibility for bus services in the county. Swale Borough Council has limited influence over the bus services in the borough but can provide a consultative and lobbying role to the County authority and bus

companies as they design services in the future. Swale Borough Council also has a role as the local planning authority.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The Eastern Area Committee is invited to note and discuss the findings of the bus consultation (appendix I).

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 4.1 None identified at this stage.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The *Bringing better bus services to East Swale* (appendix I) report outlines the consultation which was held as part of the project.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The findings of the consultation will help to achieve Priority 1: building the right homes in the right places and supporting quality jobs for all, and Priority 3: tackling deprivation and creating equal opportunities for everyone.
Financial, Resource and Property	The findings of the consultation will require funding to address, but this is out of budget and largely out of scope for Swale Borough Council.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	None identified at this stage.
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	The findings of the consultation could be used to help improve bus travel, and potentially encourage an increase in the number of people using the bus. An increase in people using bus services could help to improve air quality by reducing the number of cars on the road and their subsequent emissions.
Health and Wellbeing	None identified at this stage.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	None identified at this stage.

Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	A privacy impact assessment was completed by officers at Swale Borough Council, and as a result a data processing agreement was agreed between the contractor and the Council to ensure that the consultation was compliant with the law. The Council also created a privacy notice which was displayed prominently on the consultation webpage so that the public were aware of how their data would be used.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: *Bringing better bus services to East Swale*

8 Background Papers

8.1 Update in [Matters arising from previous meeting report](#) at the Eastern Area Committee held on 3 Feb 2022

8.2 Minute item 708 and report [Bus Consultation Project](#) at the Eastern Area Committee held on the 22 March 2022.

8.3 Update in [Matters arising from previous meeting report](#) at the Eastern Area Committee held on the 16 June 2022.

8.4 Update in [Matters arising from previous meeting report](#) at the Eastern Area Committee held on the 29 September 2022.

8.5 Update in [Matters arising from previous meeting report](#) at the Eastern Area Committee held on the 15 December 2022.

8.6 Update in [Matters arising from previous meeting report](#) at the Eastern Area Committee held on the 28 February 2023.

8.7 Update in [Matters arising from previous meeting report](#) at the Eastern Area Committee held on the 15 June 2023.