

Part I

Electoral Divisions affected:
Chorley Rural East; Chorley
Rural West; Chorley South;
and Chorley West

**Revision of Tendered Bus Services to Maintain Public Transport Service in
Charnock Richard**
(Appendix 'A' refers)

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Executive Summary

This report recommends revisions to the tendered bus services in Chorley West to maintain public transport service provision in Charnock Richard.

Recommendation

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport is asked to:

- (i) Approve the proposed revisions to the tendered bus service 347 as set out at Appendix 'A'; and
- (ii) Request that officers undertake the necessary contract variation process to allow the service revisions to commence at the earliest opportunity.

This decision should be implemented immediately for the purposes of Standing Order 34(3) as any delay could adversely affect the execution of the County Council's responsibilities. The reason for this is to ensure that the bus service provision is maintained for the village of Charnock Richard.

Background and Advice

Stagecoach in Merseyside and South Lancashire is making a number of revisions to its commercial local bus services throughout their Preston, South Ribble and Chorley operational areas from Sunday 5 February 2017.

One of these revisions is the withdrawal of Service 7 operating between Croston, Chorley and Lower Adlington as follows:

Service 7 Croston – Charnock Richard – Chorley – Adlington

All journeys on this service will be withdrawn. Certain areas will continue to be provided with a bus service as follows:

- Croston – will be served by the revised Service 113 route, restoring the requested direct link to Leyland and offering a service to Preston and Wigan, however the direct link to Chorley will be withdrawn. Connections can be made at Leyland for through journeys to and from Chorley. Croston is also served by a train service to Preston and Ormskirk.
- Ecclestone – will continue to be served by the Service 113 route, maintaining the direct link to Leyland and offering a through service to Preston and Wigan, however the direct link to Chorley will be withdrawn. LCC's tendered bus Service 347 provides a partial alternative for through journeys to and from Chorley.
- Charnock Richard - will no longer be served by a public transport service.

The Eaves Green Road, Collingwood Road, Walgarth Drive, Harrison Road and Kirkstall Road areas of Chorley - will no longer be served by a bus service.

- Adlington - will continue to be served by the regular core Service 125, however Castle Drive and Lower Adlington will be served by the Tuesday and Friday Service 8A return journey (see below for details). The area is also served by regular train services to most key destinations.

Service 8A Blackrod – Adlington – Limbrick – Chorley

The route and timetable will be revised, adjusting the route to additionally serve Adlington Castle Drive to maintain a link with Chorley on Tuesdays and Fridays, offering a partial replacement for the withdrawn Service 7.

Service 113 Preston – Bamber Bridge – Leyland – Standish – Wigan

The route and timetable will be revised, adjusting the route and timetable as follows:

- Higher Walton and Gregson Lane – will be additionally served partially replacing the withdrawn Services 150/151 and offering a new direct link to Lostock Hall and Leyland;
- Croston – will be additionally served restoring the direct link to Leyland and offering a service to Preston and Wigan. Connections can be made at Leyland for through journeys to and from Chorley.

The Service 113 timetable will be revised to incorporate these additional sections of route, and continue to operate hourly during Monday to Saturday daytime.

Impacts to LCC Tendered Bus Services

There is no impact on current LCC Tendered bus services.

Impact on Lancashire Residents

There will be significant impact to Chorley residents with the withdrawal of Service 7 and subsequent loss of whole Public Transport Service in certain areas as well as the removal of direct links.

Assessment and Priority

According to ticket machine data and on-bus surveys there are approximately 33,000 annual passenger trips made (average 110 per day) to and from Eccleston, Charnock Richard and The Eaves Green Road, Collingwood Road and Walgarth Drive areas of Chorley.

A further 15,000 annual passenger trips are made (average 50 per day) between Croston and Chorley. Whilst Croston will continue to be served by the alternative commercial bus Service 113, the direct link to Chorley will be withdrawn, resulting in customers having to travel via Leyland for connecting services to make these journeys. Croston is also served by regular rail service to Preston and Ormskirk.

Whilst there are a high proportion of the total passenger trips made by English National Concessionary pass-holders (approximately 60%), the other passenger classes are a mixture of both adults and students using the service for accessing Chorley.

It has been assessed that a Public Transport Service (PTS) is in principle needed for those areas without access to any form of PTS, such as Charnock Richard. Based on the current level of passenger journeys accessing the bus service on these withdrawn sections, a replacement service would also rank as a high priority for the consideration of a supported PTS.

No other bus operators are willing to provide any commercial replacement services on any of these routes.

Community Transport is available in the affected areas, however they are not in a position to substantially increase their operation to cater for the majority of passengers.

Proposal

Lancashire County Council currently provide Service 347, which operates between Chorley and Southport via Euxton, Eccleston, Mawdesley, Rufford, Holmeswood and Banks. The single vehicle is currently provided with the Monday to Saturday frequency being generally every 2¼ hours, at a forecast annual net cost of £69,000. This is based on annual revenue of £31,000 with 25,000 passenger trips made.

The council is proposing to revise the route and timetable of Service 347 to operate via Charnock Richard and The Eaves Green Road, Collingwood Road & Walgarth Drive areas of Chorley, between Chorley and Eccleston but no longer serving Euxton.

This will provide a partial replacement for those areas being left without any access to a PTS as well as continuing to link Ecclestone with Chorley. In the current financial position the council is unable to provide a full replacement service.

Revising the route, such that it no longer passes through Euxton, would result in the section of Dawbers Lane through Shaw Green no longer being served by a PTS. However, according to ticket machine data, there are approximately 750 passenger trips (average 2.5 per day) made on this section of route. There are a similar number of passenger trips made within Euxton and as well along Southport Road in Chorley, mainly to access Southport for leisure purposes, however there are alternative commercial PTS available.

These revisions will be accommodated within existing resources. Whilst there is an increase in contract cost of £20,000 per annum, it is projected this will be covered by the projected increase in fares income of £22,500 from the significant uplift in patronage on the route.

The proposed new route and timetable for Service 347 is shown in Appendix 'A'.

Consultations

The relevant divisional County Councillors have been advised of the proposed revisions to the tendered bus service 347 to maintain public transport service provision in Charnock Richard, and their responses have been taken into account in these proposals.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

Without the proposed revision to tendered bus service 347, it would not be possible to provide a public transport service for Charnock Richard.

Financial

These revisions will be accommodated within existing resources. Whilst there is an increase in contract cost of £20,000 per annum, it is projected this will be covered by the projected increase in fares income of £22,500 from the significant uplift in patronage on the route.

Procurement

A framework agreement is in place for the procurement of Local and School Bus Services in Lancashire. All contracts are procured under this Framework by mini-competitions. This revision will be contained within an agreed individual contract variation in accordance with the terms of the Framework Agreement.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
Report to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport – 'Assessment and Priority Policy for Public Transport Services in Lancashire'	12 December 2016	Dave Gorman/ (01772) 534261

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A