

Lancashire County Council

Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday, 13th May, 2016 at 12.00 pm in Cabinet Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Bill Winlow (Chair)

County Councillors

C Crompton	C Pritchard
G Driver	J Shedwick
S Holgate	R Shewan
Mrs L Oades	D Watts
D O'Toole	G Wilkins
M Parkinson	

County Councillor Geoff Driver replaced County Councillor Vivien Taylor and County Councillor Steven Holgate replaced County Councillor Alyson Barnes for this meeting.

1. Apologies

None were received

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Interests

County Councillor Bill Winlow declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 3 as he was a member of the Cabinet Working Group for Bus Services.

3. Bus Service Replacement Proposal for Sabden

The Committee considered the request made by five Members of the County Council that the decision made by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport on 11 May 2016 on the Bus Service Replacement Proposal for Sabden, be "Called In".

The Committee welcomed County Councillor Geoff Driver CBE presenting his reasons for the decision to be reconsidered.

In presenting the case for the Call In, it was noted that the proposal had been accepted by the members of the Bus Service Cabinet Working Group, and that there was sufficient funding available. It was felt that the need for the service had been sufficiently justified, and that it would be reasonable in the circumstances to accept that a special case could be made for Sabden without setting a general precedent.

County Councillor John Fillis, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, spoke in response. It was highlighted that, whilst the position of the residents of Sabden was understood, there had long been an approach in Lancashire of not taking on withdrawn commercial services. Concern was expressed at the precedent this would set, both for other communities which had lost or were losing their bus services, and also for commercial operators, who may seek to withdraw from further services if it was believed that the County Council was prepared to step in. Alternative models of delivery in Chorley and Longton were noted, and the county council's willingness to work with the community was confirmed. The Cabinet Member confirmed the commitment to the development of a clear agreed policy for the County Council in relation to the withdrawal of commercial services.

In the debate which followed, committee members expressed sympathy with Sabden residents, but recognised other areas where a demand for a similar subsidised service could exist, and the dangers outlined of setting a precedent for other areas and operators.

It was proposed and seconded that the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport's decision on 11 May 2016 in relation to the Bus Service Replacement Proposal for Sabden should not be called in. On being put to the vote, the motion was won and it was therefore:

Resolved: That the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport's decision on 11 May 2016 in relation to the Bus Service Replacement Proposal for Sabden should not be called in

4. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business

5. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee will take place on Friday 22nd July 2016 at 10.00 in Cabinet Room B (The Diamond Jubilee Room) at the County Hall, Preston.

I Young
Director of Governance, Finance
and Public Services

County Hall
Preston