

**RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN UNDER
DELEGATED AUTHORITY FROM
EXECUTIVE/COUNCIL/COMMITTEE
DELEGATED POWERS OUTLINED IN
THE CONSTITUTION**



DELEGATED OFFICER DECISION TAKEN BY:	Strategic Director of Growth & Development
DELEGATED BY:	Executive (March 2024)
IN CONSULTATION WITH:	Executive Member
PORTFOLIO AREA:	Growth and Development

SUBJECT: Contract Award for the Flexibus Service

1. DECISION

Approve the contract award of the Flexibus Service to Travel Assist for a 12 month period with the option to extend for up to a further 2 years should additional funding become available.

2. REASON FOR DECISION

As part of the further bus service improvements for the BSIP programme new routes were approved by the Executive Board in February 2024. This Flexibus Service was one of those routes approved and a tender process has now been undertaken.

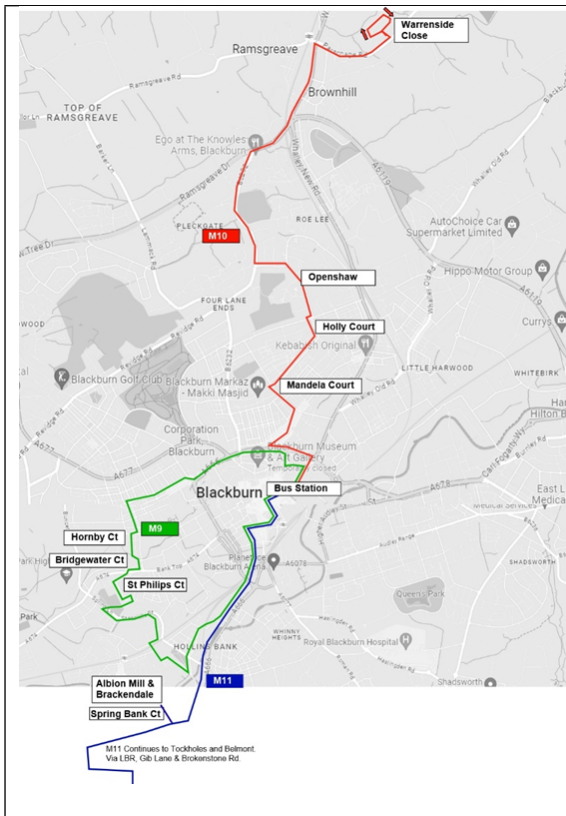
Travel Assist were the only operator who bid for this bus service and therefore the contract is to be awarded to them.

3. BACKGROUND

In 2015/16 services linking sheltered accommodation with Blackburn town centre were removed due to funding being restricted for bus services. Many complaints have been received from residents living in sheltered accommodation about the lack of a bus service provision into Blackburn where they can use their bus pass, (Bus passes cannot be used on dial-a-ride services) It was therefore approved to re-introduce a service linking –

- Warrenside Close, Openshaw, Holly Court, Mandela Court and Blackburn Bus Station;
- Hornby Court, Bridgewater Court, St Phillips Court and Blackburn Bus Station;
- Blackburn Bus Station with Spring Bank Court, Albion Mill & Brackendale, Tockholes & Belmont.

The Flexibus route is detailed below:



4. KEY ISSUES AND RISKS

There are no identifiable key issues or risks associated with the decision to award this contract. The Council have received many complaints from residents living in the sheltered accommodation so the provision of this service is a positive step forward to giving them access to Blackburn Town Centre.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The annual cost of providing this service is £134,500 and can be met from funding provided by the Government in support of the Bus Service Improvement Plan. At this stage, there is sufficient funding for the service to be provided up to 31st March 2026.

There is currently no funding allocation from Government beyond March 2026 and so in considering the option to extend the contract for this service, consideration will need to be given to the sustainability of the service, if it is to be continued.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The procurement process has been carried out in accordance with the Council's Contract and Procurement Procedure rules and the Public Procurement Regulations.

The tender was advertised through an FTS (Find a Tender Service) open process which gave every operator the ability to bid. The tender was then evaluated in accordance with the following criteria;

- 85% - Price
- 15% - Social Value

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Resources needed to undertake the work associated with the development and delivery of this programme of works will be provided by the Council's Highways team and supported by the DfT and delivered through the Enhanced Partnership with bus operators.

8. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

No other options were considered, as the proposed bus service was included in the Executive Board Report – Bus Service Improvement Plan, which was approved by Executive Board and the contract has been procured through a tender process.

9. CONSULTATIONS

This proposal was subject to detailed consultations with bus services operators through the Enhanced Partnership, together with other stakeholders, emergency services and the wider community.

10. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of the officer with delegation and any Member who has been consulted and note of any dispensation granted should be recorded below: None.

VERSION:	1
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CONTACT OFFICER:	Carmel Foster-Devine/Joanne Byrne
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DATE:	10 October 2024
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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:	Executive Member Decision – Procurement Process for New Routes as part of BSIP Executive Board Report – Bus Service Improvement Plan – 08/02/2024
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