

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

LOCAL COMMITTEE (ELMBRIDGE)

DATE: 19 DECEMBER 2016



LEAD OFFICER: PAUL MILLIN, GROUP MANAGER TRAVEL & TRANSPORT

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON CHANGES TO ABELLIO BUS SERVICES

DIVISION: ALL

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

On 2 September 2016 bus operator Abellio Surrey formally announced changes to bus services in the county from 31 December 2016. This decision was taken for commercial and operational reasons.

Abellio announced changes to two services it operates on a commercial basis. At the same time, Abellio sought to be released from Surrey County Council (SCC) contracts for nine services that are subsidised by the council, none of which are part of the ongoing Local Transport Review.

This report sets out the background and summarises the alternative bus services that SCC is securing to cover the services affected by Abellio's decision.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee (Elmbridge) is asked to note:

- (i) The report, including the alternative bus services to be provided from 31 December 2016, replacing the services Abellio has resigned from.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Abellio's decision has required SCC to secure alternative arrangements.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

1.1 Abellio are to resign from contracts from 31 December 2016 for the following services. Without remedial action by SCC the routes would disappear, as no commercial alternative offers have been received from alternative suppliers. All relevant services are listed, not just Elmbridge routes, as residents will likely use bus services in adjacent areas, for example, in making connections by bus to access key services:

- 81 Woking-Barnsbury (Sundays only, hourly)
- 436 Woking-Sheerwater-Byfleet-Brooklands (Sundays only, hourly)
- 458 Kingston-Esher-Walton-Shepperton-Staines (Daily, every 30 minutes, hourly evening and Sunday)

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- 513 Downside-Cobham-Oxshott-Esher-Weston Green-Kingston (two journeys each way, Monday to Friday)
- 514 Kingston-Surbiton-Thames Ditton-Molesey-Hersham-Weybridge-Brooklands-Addlestone (Mondays to Saturdays, generally every 75 minutes)
- 515 Kingston-Surbiton-Thames Ditton-Lower Green-Esher-Cobham-Ripley-Guildford (Daily, every 75 minutes, hourly on Sundays)
- 555 Heathrow-Hatton Cross-Stanwell-Ashford-Sunbury-Shepperton-Walton-Hersham (Daily, every 30 minutes, hourly on Sundays)
- 556 Woking-Sheerwater-Woodham-New Haw-Addlestone-Chertsey (Mondays to Saturdays, hourly)
- 557 Woking-Sheerwater-West Byfleet-New Haw-Addlestone-St. Peter's Hospital-Chertsey-Shepperton-Sunbury (Daily, hourly, but only Woking to Addlestone on Sundays)
- 663 Walton-Hersham-Esher High School (one journey each way on school days)

1.2 In addition, Abellio has decided to shorten two predominantly commercial services:

- 446 Woking-Ottershaw-St. Peter's Hospital-Chertsey-Staines-Ashford Hospital-Stanwell Moor-Heathrow T5 will be withdrawn between Staines and Heathrow
- 461 Kingston-Molesey-Walton-Weybridge-Addlestone-St. Peter's Hospital-Chertsey-Staines will be withdrawn between Addlestone and Staines

1.3 A new supported service 459 will be run by Abellio generally hourly on Mondays to Saturdays to provide a partial replacement for the 461 between Walton and St. Peter's Hospital via Weybridge and Addlestone.

1.4 The existing supported service 564 is to be withdrawn between Walton and Vicarage Fields Estate, but improved to run hourly between Whiteley Village and Walton. Vicarage Fields Estate will have links to Walton town centre, rail station and Walton Health Centre on new service 459 (above).

1.5 Abellio will continue to run one commercial service, plus 14 services under contract to SCC.

2. ANALYSIS:

2.1 Abellio state that their decision was not taken lightly and, although substantially downsizing the operation, is designed to secure a sustainable future for Abellio Surrey in respect of both financial return and punctuality outcomes. Whilst challenging now, it is hoped that this may allow scope to build a bigger business at some point going forward.

2.2 SCC tried to find a solution with Abellio. However, once Abellio's intention became clear, SCC's focus has been on making alternative arrangements to cover the services affected by this decision.

2.3 SCC recognises the importance of local bus services in enabling residents to access employment, education, medical appointments and other key services. With regard to older people, bus services can be a life line enabling them to live well and longer in their own home.

2.4 SCC has consistently and clearly stated that it would use all endeavours to secure the best possible outcome within the funding available.

3. OPTIONS:

3.1 The extent of the services listed above shows how much of the bus network would disappear in Elmbridge, Runnymede and Spelthorne, as well as parts of Woking and Guildford Boroughs if nothing were done. Thousands of residents would be unable to travel to work, school, college, access health care, carry out essential shopping, etc.

3.2 No commercial alternative offers have been received from alternative suppliers.

3.3 Replacing all services on a like for like basis is unaffordable within the existing budget, noting again that SCC has consistently and clearly stated that it would use all endeavours to secure the best possible outcome within the funding available.

3.4 Therefore, a number of replacement services have been designed by SCC. These have been structured to incorporate some changes to the current services to achieve the best possible integration with the remaining Abellio services and to avoid undue duplication. The planned replacement services have been set at a level in some cases that is more affordable than replicating the current arrangements.

3.5 Tenders were invited through the South East Shared Services Portal, from all 22 approved suppliers currently within the council's Dynamic Purchasing System. This has been followed by extensive and frequent engagement with SCC Officers.

3.6 A summary of the changes to Abellio bus services is set out in **Annexe 1**.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

4.1 Following Abellio's decision there was insufficient time to carry out a public consultation on the proposed replacement services. SCC has focused on securing replacement services.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 As a Surrey average, the net cost per bus in terms of subsidy, after revenue is taken into account is circa £100k to £120k pa. This is broadly in line with the costs of the proposed alternative services, which are felt to offer reasonable value for money.

5.2 The Council has worked extremely hard to obtain additional funding for the replacement services given the current very challenging budgetary position, aiming to secure the bus services residents rely on the most. The additional funding coupled with the ability of alternative operators to deliver the new

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services means that some compromises have been made. Overall, the best-used and strategic parts of the network have been largely secured. Contracts are being awarded until the end of August 2017, noting that all bus subsidy contracts will be reviewed during 2017.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

6.1 As noted above, some compromises have been made, yet overall, the best-used and strategic parts of the network have been largely secured. The impact on bus users would increase significantly if some or all services were not replaced. We have therefore sought to minimise the impact on residents by securing services at an affordable level.

7. LOCALISM:

7.1 The replacement services have by financial necessity required compromises. This will result in some withdrawals or reductions compared to the current network, including:

- Loss of inter-hospital link Ashford to St. Peter's
- 50% reduction in buses Woking-New Haw-Addlestone
- Virtual withdrawal of hourly service 514 from the Molesey area
- 50% reduction in buses in Thames Ditton village
- No direct buses from Walton/Shepperton/Sunbury/Ashford to T4, Hatton Cross and Heathrow Central Area
- 50% general reduction on service 555
- No buses between Addlestone and Brooklands M&S/Tesco stores
- No direct link between Hersham and Weybridge
- No buses to Xcel Leisure Centre, Walton

7.2 SCC is still working with providers to minimise the impact of service changes.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report.
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	No significant implications arising from this report.
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report.
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report.
Public Health	No significant implications arising from this report.

8.1 Whilst the replacement provision is not exactly like for like, the implications in the above areas should not be significant.

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

9.1 Despite the challenging situation, SCC has managed to maintain bus services to most localities within the affected area. The negotiations with alternative operators have been challenging due to financial limitations faced by the Council. Due to the rise in cost for essential services that the Council provides, coupled with a decrease in central Government grants, the Council faces substantial cuts in order to continue to live within our means. For these reasons, there have been some changes to routes, frequencies and timetables. This has proven essential to ensure that we can maintain bus provision to as many communities as possible, as far as the availability of subsidy funding allows.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 10.1 These changes will come into effect from 31 December 2016, and SCC's Local Bus Team will continue to monitor the services to ensure that Surrey is getting the best value for money.
- 10.2 Full details of the changes to services can be found at www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/buses-and-trains/bus-timetable-changes/forthcoming-bus-timetable-changes/changes-to-abellio-bus-services-31-december-2016.
- 10.3 Printed publicity material is being produced and will be widely circulated on buses, at bus stops and 'normal outlets', including Surrey libraries.

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Consulted:

Bus service users, the North West Surrey Bus Users Group, County Councillors and local bus operators have been informed. Detailed consultation on the proposed alternative services has not been possible due to time constraints in securing replacement provision by 31 December 2016.

Annexes:

1 - Summary of Changes to Abellio Bus Services

Sources/background papers:

None.

Summary of Changes to Abellio Bus Services

81 Woking-Mount Hermon Road-Barnsbury Estate. Half-hourly Monday-Saturday, hourly Sunday.

CHANGE: Will continue to be operated by Abellio Monday-Saturday at a similar level but with timing changes. Withdrawn on Sundays.

436 Woking-Sheerwater-West Byfleet-Byfleet-Brooklands-Mercedes Benz World-Weybridge. Generally hourly, Mondays to Saturdays, operated by Arriva, but hourly on Sunday between Woking and Brooklands only, operated by Abellio.

CHANGE: On Mondays to Saturdays Arriva will increase the service to run generally every 30 minutes between Woking and Weybridge, in order to maintain the overall three buses per hour currently running through Sheerwater, to/from Woking - see also service 456 below. Withdrawn on Sundays but service 456 will provide an alternative between Woking, Sheerwater and West Byfleet.

437 Woking-Maybury Estate-Warren Farm-Pyrford-West Byfleet-Byfleet-Brooklands-Mercedes Benz World-Weybridge. Generally hourly, Mondays to Saturdays, operated by Arriva.

CHANGE: Due to the change to service 436, Arriva will operate the 437 mainly between Woking and West Byfleet only, but with journeys starting or finishing at Byfleet at school times. There will also be an extension beyond West Byfleet in the morning to allow one hour forty minutes shopping time at Brooklands Tesco/M&S. In general, the 437 will run about every 90 minutes, with all journeys serving Warren Farm and Lower Pyrford rather than just some as at present. It is also intended that opportunities to travel into Woking from Oriental Road via Woking Community Hospital, will be provided.

441 Englefield Green-Egham-Pooley Green-Staines-Ashford Hospital-Stanwell-Terminal 5-Heathrow Central. Daily, half hourly but hourly in evening.

CHANGE: This commercially-provided service by Abellio will continue at the same level, but with some timing changes to improve reliability.

442 NEW SERVICE from Staines to Heathrow Terminal 5 – see service 446 below for details.

446 Woking-Bleak House-Ottershaw-St. Peter's Hospital-Chertsey-Penton Park-Staines-Ashford Hospital-Stanwell-Stanwell Moor-Terminal 5. Hourly, Monday to Saturday, hourly on Sunday between Woking and Staines only.

CHANGE: Still provided by Abellio, the 446 will continue to operate every day, hourly, but only between Woking and Staines. One journey each way will extend beyond Woking to Kingfield Green on college days. Will not divert to serve Penton Park (but see service 456 below). The section of route between Staines and

Terminal 5 via Stanwell Moor will be replaced by new service 442, operated by Carlone Buses, approx. every 90 minutes, Mondays to Saturdays. Some journeys on new service 442 will serve Explorer Avenue, Ravensbourne Avenue, Long Lane and High Street in Stanwell and Hithermoor Road in Stanwell Moor, in order to replace service 591.

456 NEW SERVICE running generally hourly on Mondays to Saturdays and operated by Abellio between Staines and Woking via Penton Park, Chertsey, Eastworth Road, Addlestone Moor, Addlestone, New Haw, West Byfleet and Sheerwater. On college days, one journey each way will be numbered **856** (morning by Abellio, afternoon by Cardinal Buses) from Upper Halliford, Shepperton and Chertsey and then along the 456 route to Woking (except it will run via Woodham Lane between New Haw Black Prince and Sheerwater) and on to Kingfield Green for Woking Sixth Form College. Last bus from Staines will be at 1925 and from Woking at 1945. Service 456/856 will replace part of existing services 556/557 (see below) and will supplement service 446 between Staines and Chertsey. On Sundays, 456 will also be operated by Abellio and will run hourly from Addlestone to Woking.

458 Staines-Laleham-Shepperton-Walton-Walton Station-Hersham Green-Esher-Portsmouth Road-Kingston. Half hourly, but hourly evenings and Sundays.

CHANGE: Will be run by Hallmark Connections over the current route, on Mondays to Saturdays once per hour from Staines to Kingston, but with additional buses between Staines and Walton town centre, so a bus runs every half hour between those two towns. Last buses from Kingston and Staines may be earlier than now. On Sundays, will run hourly Staines to Kingston.

459 NEW SERVICE running generally hourly, operated by Abellio on Mondays to Saturdays, from Walton to St. Peter's Hospital via Vicarage Fields Estate, Cottimore Lane, Ambleside Avenue, Rodney Road, Walton Station, Queens Road, Weybridge, Addlestone, Coombelands and Ottershaw. This will maintain a direct bus service between Walton, Weybridge and St. Peter's Hospital, to replace 461 and will replace service 564 between Vicarage Fields Estate and Walton town centre. It will also give a link from Vicarage Fields and north Walton to the health centre and hospital in Rodney Road, to St. Peter's Hospital and to Walton Station. The 459 will be the service that covers Queens Road between Sir Richard's Bridge and Temple Market (instead of 514), maintaining the link to Weybridge and offering new ones to Walton town and station, as well as St. Peter's Hospital.

461 Kingston-Hampton Court-Hurst Park-West Molesey-Field Common Entrance-Ambleside Avenue-Cottimore Lane-Walton-Oatlands-Weybridge-Addlestone-Coombelands-Ottershaw-St.Peter's Hospital-Chertsey-Staines. Mondays to Saturdays half hourly Kingston-St. Peter's Hospital, hourly through to Staines, but hourly throughout evenings and Sundays.

CHANGE: Route to be shortened (to improve reliability) and will operate only between Kingston and Addlestone, half hourly Mondays to Saturdays, but generally hourly evenings and Sundays. On Sundays, the 461 will continue to run through from Kingston to Chertsey, along the existing route. Alternative services will be

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available: Ottershaw-St. Peter's Hospital-Chertsey-Staines (446), Addlestone-Chertsey-Staines (456), Walton-Weybridge-Addlestone-Ottershaw-St. Peter's Hospital (459) and Addlestone-Ottershaw-St. Peter's Hospital-Chertsey (557).

513 Downside-Cobham-Stoke D'Abernon-Oxshott-Esher-Weston Green-Hampton Court-Kingston. Mondays to Fridays, two journeys each way.

CHANGE: Will be operated by Cardinal Buses, with a revised timetable but still with two journeys each way on Mondays to Fridays. Diverted between Weston Green and Kingston via Thames Ditton village, Winters Bridge, Portsmouth Road and Surbiton, to supplement revised services 514/515 (see below) and to provide a shopping link to Surbiton from Thames Ditton area.

514 Addlestone-Byfleet & New Haw Station-Brooklands-Byfleet-Weybridge-Queens Road-Walton Station-Hersham-Field Common Estate-West Molesey-High Street-Beauchamp Road-Molesey Park Road-East Molesey-Imber Court-Thames Ditton-Winters Bridge-Surbiton-Kingston. Mondays to Saturdays, generally every 75 minutes.

CHANGE: This service will be withdrawn, except for the following journeys which will be operated by Falcon Coaches: 0720 Kingston to Hersham Library (Monday to Friday and extended to Esher High School on school days): 0915 Hersham Library to Kingston, 1225 Kingston to Hersham Library (both Mondays to Saturdays) and 1510 Esher High School to Hersham and Kingston (school days only). These journeys will operate between Winters Bridge and Kingston via Portsmouth Road direct and not via Surbiton.

Field Common Estate and the Molesey Road from Field Common to Hersham Library will retain a link to Kingston by revised service 515 (below). The part of 514 between Walton Station, Queens Road and Weybridge will be served by 459 and the 436 runs between Weybridge, Brooklands and Byfleet. London Buses service 411 and Abellio service 461 offer alternatives from West and/or East Molesey into Kingston. Thames Ditton village will be served by the 514 journeys listed above and by the 513 and 515 (or 715 on Sundays).

515 Guildford-Burpham-Burnt Common-Ripley-Wisley-Cobham-Esher-Lower Green-Douglas Road-Ember Lane-Imber Court-Thames Ditton-Winters Bridge-Surbiton-Kingston. Mondays to Saturdays, generally every 75 minutes, Sundays hourly.

CHANGE: Will be operated by Falcon Coaches and revised to run from Field Common Estate to Kingston via Molesey Road, Hersham Library, Esher, Lower Green, Douglas Road, Ember Lane, Imber Court, Thames Ditton, Winters Bridge and Portsmouth Road (not via Surbiton). To operate Mondays to Saturdays, generally hourly, but with some exceptions such as when the 514 journeys listed above are running. The section of route between Esher and Guildford and the Sunday service via Lower Green and Thames Ditton will be transferred to new service 715 (below).

Two early morning journeys will also serve Addlestone, Weybridge, Queens Road and Walton Station, joining the main route to Kingston at Hersham Library, with one

early evening journey from Kingston leaving the route at Hersham Library to run through to Weybridge, all of these on Mondays to Fridays.

555 Hersham Green-Walton Station-Walton-Shepperton-Sunbury Village-Sunbury Cross-Sunbury Tesco-Ashford Common-Feltham Hill Road-Ashford-Ashford Hospital-Stanwell-Terminal 4-Hatton Cross-Heathrow Central. Daily, half hourly, but evenings and Sundays hourly.

CHANGE: This service will run hourly until mid-evening, seven days a week from Hersham Green to Heathrow Terminal 5, along the usual route through Walton, Shepperton, Sunbury, Ashford and most of Stanwell. However, Heathrow Terminal 4, Hatton Cross and Heathrow Central Area will no longer be served, but Central Area can be accessed from Terminal 5 by changing bus at no additional fare. The operator of the 555 will be First in Berkshire.

556 Woking-Sheerwater-Woodham Lane-New Haw-Addlestone-Addlestone Moor-Eastworth Road-Chertsey. Mondays to Saturdays, hourly.

CHANGE: This service will be withdrawn, but new service 456 covers the route, except for Woodham Lane between Sheerwater Road and The Black Prince, which will still receive Carlone Buses service 592. See also college day service 856 described above under 456.

557 Woking-Sheerwater-West Byfleet-New Haw-Addlestone-Green Lane-St. Peter's Hospital-Chertsey-Shepperton-Upper Halliford-Nursery Road-Sunbury Cross-Sunbury Tesco. Daily, hourly, but only Woking to Addlestone on Sundays.

CHANGE: Revised to run only from Addlestone to Sunbury Tesco, Mondays to Saturdays, generally hourly. To be operated by Cardinal Buses. Between Addlestone and St. Peter's Hospital, the 557 will run via Coombelands and Ottershaw instead of Green Lane and Little Green Lane. The part of the route from Addlestone to Woking will be replaced by 456.

564 Whiteley Village-Burwood Road-Hersham-Molesey Road-Ambleside Avenue-Walton Hospital-Bowes Road-Walton-Vicarage Fields Estate-Xcel Leisure Centre. Mondays to Saturdays, every 80 minutes.

CHANGE: Abellio will continue to run this service between Whiteley Village and Walton town centre along the current route. Frequency increased to every 60 minutes. Vicarage Fields and Carlton Road will be served by 459 (see above) but Xcel Leisure Centre will not be served.

591 Staines-Ashford Hospital-Explorer Avenue-Long Lane-Stanwell High Street-Stanwell Moor. Mondays to Fridays, four journeys each way.

CHANGE: This Carlone Buses service to be withdrawn but replaced by new service 442 (above).

663 Walton-Cottimore Lane-Ambleside Avenue-Molesey Road-Hersham Library-Esher High School. School days only, one journey each way.

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CHANGE: Instead of two single deck vehicles running in convoy, Cardinal Buses will run one double deck vehicle on this service. The overall number of students travelling should permit this. This will require the route to be restructured to avoid low bridges and Molesey Road between Hersham Station and Hersham Library would not be served. However, continuing journeys for Esher High School on service 514 (above) would cover that part of the route.

715 NEW SERVICE to be operated by Stagecoach between Guildford and Kingston via Burpham, Burnt Common, Ripley, Wisley, Cobham, Esher and Portsmouth Road, to replace service 515. On Mondays to Saturdays, will run hourly until early evening, with last bus from Guildford at 1900 and from Kingston at 1925. On Sundays, 715 will run every 90 minutes Guildford-Kingston and will divert between Esher and Winters Bridge via Lower Green, Douglas Road, Ember Lane, Imber Court and Thames Ditton, to give those areas a service on that day.

On Mondays to Saturdays an improved travel opportunity is offered between Guildford and Kingston, with a more direct route and with frequency restored to hourly.

NOTE: There will be NO CHANGE to Abellio bus services 39A, 39B, 39C, 40, 400, 438, 566/567, 570, 571, 572, 574, 637, 690 or 814 from 31 December 2016.