

Key Decision Required	No	In the Forward Plan	No
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CABINET

23 JANUARY 2015

**REFERENCE FROM COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE OF 8 DECEMBER 2014**

A.4 PUBLIC TRANSPORT PROVISION WITHIN TENDRING

(Report prepared by Colin Sweeney)

BACKGROUND

At its meeting held on 8 December 2014, the Committee received two presentations from Abellio Greater Anglia and First Group.

Abellio Greater Anglia

Mr Paul Oxley, Stakeholder Manager with Abellio Greater Anglia, provided an update on Abellio's performance since being awarded the rail franchise and in its single tender award. Mr Oxley also highlighted cycle enhancements at Clacton Station and the Department for Transport's cycle bids as well as looking to the future.

In terms of performance, Mr Oxley advised Members that this was a particularly difficult period, mainly due to infrastructure failures, engineering work over-runs, severe weather and fatalities (up over 50% on 2013), especially on the Great Eastern Main Line and Southend Metro routes. Overall, Abellio was recently voted ninth out of 22 UK train operators and third out of the eight in the wider East of England region, which, by comparison was down on last year.

With regard to the single tender award, Mr Oxley advised the Committee that Abellio's single tender award commenced in July 2014 and would run until October 2016. Mr Oxley said that an additional £10m investment had been announced in November, which would pay for a refresh of some existing stock (trains); additional intercity trains leased to improve service consistency during the refresh period; additional cleaning, catering, customer service and maintenance staff and standby bus provision, where required.

Mr Oxley spoke of Abellio's improvements to the cycle park within Clacton Station. He said that the upgraded facilities, "CyclePark+", provided more secure cycle parking, with gated areas that could only be accessed via a key fob for which, there was a refundable deposit of £25 charged for the use of the facility. In addition, Abellio had also launched a "Bike and Go" facility, which allowed customers to hire bicycles for a small fee.

Members were advised that, on 31 October 2014, Abellio had submitted 14 bids for the latest round of Department for Transport cycle parking funding of £15m nationally in an attempt to provide more cycle spaces at Frinton, Harwich Town, Kirby Cross, Thorpe le Soken and Wivenhoe. The outcome of this bid, together with a further bid for additional cycle CCTV coverage at a number of stations would be announced early in 2015.

In conclusion, Mr Oxley said that the franchise re-letting process was due to start early next year, with consultation process on franchise specification commencing week beginning 8 December 2014. He stressed the importance of all stakeholders working with Network Rail and by responding to its Anglia Route Study consultation.

First Group

Mr Lee Berry, Manager with First Group Depot (Clacton), spoke on the bus service provision within Tendring, frequency of routes, free bus pass provision and price-setting, timetable management and the condition of vehicles used. Mr Berry said that there were areas within Tendring, which simply were not accessible by bus due to narrow roads and that where this was so, care was taken to position routes as close to those areas as possible where accessibility allowed for this.

Mr Berry advised Members that the frequency of routes were determined by demand for these and that approximately 90% of the First Group service was used commercially with some evening and Sunday services being contracted out to private hires.

In respect of free bus passes, Mr Berry said that First Group, and other operators, received a small percentage of the normal fare on all routes with a larger percentage being received on more popular routes. He added that all price-setting was done by each individual operator and that timetables were not produced in large quantities since these changed, often at short notice, and many users preferred to access these online.

Mr Berry said that, due to buses not being used as often as they were in the past, some depots (e.g. Harwich) had become financially unviable and forced to close. He referred specifically to Harwich and said that whilst there was the will to reinstate or provide a new depot, there was insufficient revenue there to support this wish.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS TO CABINET

Cabinet is now asked to consider the comment of the Community Leadership and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee and determine its response if any:

The Committee **RECOMMENDS TO CABINET** that:

1. With regard to the contribution made by Abellio Greater Anglia, its Stakeholder Manager arrange to meet with Essex County Council to address traffic and congestion-related concerns at Manningtree Station and that the local ward Member and Parish Council be invited to take part in that meeting;
2. Cabinet participates in both the franchise and Network Rail consultations;
3. Given that planning permission and associated funding had already been approved, Cabinet urge that disability provision works at Manningtree Station be carried out and that the Council be notified as to when such works would commence; and
4. With regard to the contribution made by First Group, Cabinet looks at the Transport Plan for Tendring in terms of strategic planning and that this Council actively involves itself in its input and how the outcomes are to be achieved.

PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

Comments will be provided directly at the meeting.