

COUNCIL AGENDA ADDENDUM

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

27 March 2024

BOOK 4

ADDENDUM ITEMS

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Community Shuttle Buses

Strategic Objective	Healthy, Inclusive, Engaging Support an inclusive community by fostering access and equity for all
File Ref	093090.2024
Report By	Craig Lambeth - Manager Community Recreation
Approved By	Tina Bono - Director Community & Lifestyle

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2010 Council established a Community Shuttle Bus service. The service was originally established to provide transport linkages from Collimore and Whitlam Leisure Centre parking for Council staff working in the Moore Street Offices. At a later date, access to the service was expanded to allow to access any member of the community.

At the September 2022 Council Meeting, Questions Without Notice were raised that related to the intention to continue the Community Shuttle Bus service. In response, Council Officers undertook investigations to assess the current and predicted value of the shuttle bus service.

Those investigations indicated that the use of the Community Shuttle Bus service was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Assessment of passenger trips undertaken, post-Covid indicates some significant recovery in numbers from the previous years.

Following this at the August 2023 Council meeting, a further report was provided to Council that outlined the use of the Shuttle Bus service. In response to that report resolved to:

1. *Receive and notes the report;*
2. *Support the extension of the Community Shuttle Bus service contract with Big Bus Company until 1 July 2024;*
3. *Support the implementation of a marketing campaign to maximise awareness of the shuttle bus service;*
4. *Provide a further report in early 2024 outlining use of, and awareness of the Shuttle Bus Service and recommendation for continuance.*

Since the August 2023 Council Resolution there has been a significant increase in the number of recorded passenger trips utilising the Shuttle Bus service. The number of quarterly passenger trips has increased by approximately 40% in the last 12, to approximately 3500 passenger trips per quarter. Indicative data suggests that Hospital and Council staff and commuters represent the primary beneficiaries of the service.

In addition with the relocation of Council Offices to Civic Place and the continued expansion of Liverpool, it is likely that there will be a continued reliance on the Shuttle Bus service as a transport link.

Retention of the shuttle bus service will demonstrate Councils ongoing commitment to improving the Liverpool CBD as a location of choice for employment, education and industry, and will further demonstrates its commitment to its staff during a period of immense change.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. That Council receives and notes this report;
2. That Council supports the continuation of the community shuttle bus service for an additional three (3) years; and
3. Instructs the CEO to commence the tendering process for continuation of the shuttle bus service.

REPORT

CBD's primary community car parks located at Collimore Park and Whitlam Leisure Centre with the Liverpool train station, TAFE, Liverpool Hospital, Westfield and Council Offices. A copy of the current time table is indicated below. The current shuttle bus services are provided by Big Bus Company, with the contract commenced in 2020 and is due to expire in July 2024. The costs to Council for these services is \$116,991 per year (paid monthly).

MORNING (DEPARTURE TIMES)				
Whitlam Centre, Memorial Ave	7:32	8:02	8:32	9:02
Collimore Park, Moore St	7:40	8:10	8:40	9:10
Liverpool City Council Offices, Moore St	7:44	8:14	8:44	9:14
TAFE, Corner of Bigge and Moore St	7:46	8:16	8:46	9:16
Liverpool Hospital, Elizabeth St	7:48	8:18	8:48	9:18
Westfield, Elizabeth St	7:50	8:20	8:50	9:20
Liverpool City Council Offices, George St	7:52	8:22	8:52	9:22
George St before Scott St (Bus Stop)	7:54	8:24	8:54	9:24
Whitlam Centre, Memorial Ave	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30

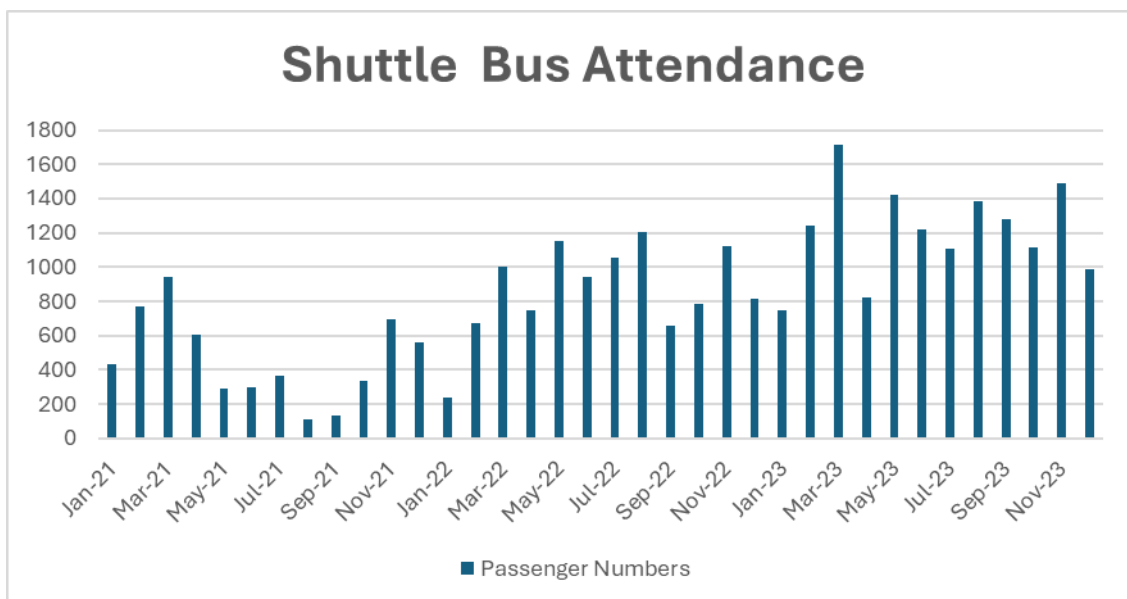
AFTERNOON (DEPARTURE TIMES)				
TAFE, Corner of Bigge and Moore St	-	16:34	17:04	17:34
Liverpool Hospital, Elizabeth St	-	16:36	17:06	17:36
Westfield, Elizabeth St	-	16:38	17:08	17:38
Liverpool City Council Offices, George St	16:10	16:40	17:10	17:40
George St before Scott St (Bus Stop)	16:12	16:42	17:12	17:42
Collimore Park, Moore St	16:16	16:46	17:16	17:46
Whitlam Centre, Memorial Ave	16:18	16:48	17:18	17:48

Figure 1 - Shuttle Bus Time Table (Feb 2024)

Usage and Demand

Passenger numbers are reported by Big Bus Company each month. In undertaking an assessment

- There has been an ongoing increase in passenger numbers since the commencement of reporting in January 2021; of the uptake of the Shuttle Bus Services since January 2021:
- In the 12 months January to December 2023, 14,532 passengers utilised the shuttle bus service. This is a marked increase from the COVID affected period of 2021-22 that attracted 6,955 passengers and an increase of 4,129 passenger trips (39%) from 2022;
- The number of passenger numbers substantially decreases during Easter and the Christmas period;



- The current number of passenger trips has increased from approximately 30 persons per day to 40 per day;
- The subsidy payable by Council regarding this service is approximately \$8 per trip; and
- There is a far greater uptake on use by females than males. Almost 75% of users are female.

The bus route acts to connect commuter parking stations with the CBD. The most popular pick-up locations are indicated in the table below, suggesting that hospital staff, commuters, and Council staff may represent the greatest users of the shuttle bus service.

	Pick Up Location	Destination
Morning	Collimore Commuter Carpark Whitlam Leisure Centre	Liverpool Hospital Liverpool TAFE Moore Street (Council)
Evening	Liverpool Hospital Westfield George Street (Council)	Collimore Whitlam Leisure Centre

Proposed Way Forward

The Big Bus Company has reported a substantial increase in the number of passengers utilising the shuttle bus services throughout the last twelve (12) months. While the service relies on an ongoing subsidy from Council, the service plays a vital role in connecting the CBD’s primary commuter carparks with the hospital, public transport links and Council offices.

Considering the major pick up and drop off points, and the expected increase in demand that will result from the relocation of Council offices, the expansion of the Liverpool hospital and the growth in University enrolments, an amended bus route that provides faster connections via immediate connection from Whitlam Leisure Centre carpark to Civic Place, train station and Liverpool Hospital.

Awareness and utilisation of the shuttle bus service would benefit from ongoing and promotion from Council which will be further developed following a revised route.

The community shuttle bus is a valuable service to the community. During a period of immense change for Council staff, the continuation of the service will have a greater positive organisational impact and provide a positive message to the community of Council's continued commitment to the wellbeing of its staff. Retention of the shuttle bus service demonstrates Council's ongoing commitment to defining the Liverpool CBD as a location of choice for employment, education and industry.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Costs associated with this recommendation have been included in Council's budget for the current year and long-term financial plan.

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Operating budget / LTFP impact	\$118,000	\$124,000	\$131,000	\$140,000

CONSIDERATIONS

Economic	<p>Further develop a commercial centre that accommodates a variety of employment opportunities.</p> <p>Encourage and promote businesses to develop in the hospital health and medical precinct (of the City Centre).</p> <p>Provide efficient parking for the City Centre.</p> <p>Facilitate economic development.</p>
Environment	<p>Support the delivery of a range of transport options.</p>
Social	<p>Support access and services for people with a disability.</p> <p>Deliver high quality services for children and their families.</p>

Civic Leadership	There are no civic leadership and governance considerations.
Legislative	There are no legislative considerations relating to this report.
Risk	There is no risk associated with this report.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil