Supported Bus services Yvonne Constance 20200305

Dear Parish/Town Councils

As you may know, a few weeks ago Oxfordshire County Council was given the opportunity by the Department for Transport to secure a £588,000 investment in public transport services.

The Supported Bus Services Fund is available in 2020/21 for local authorities as revenue support to help provide more bus services in their area. The Government expects the funding to be used to improve the provision of local bus services in one or more of the following ways:

* restore lost services where most needed;
* improve current services; and/or
* support new services or extensions.

I am pleased that the Government is choosing to put money into public transport services and there has been a high level of interest in these funds amongst parish transport representatives, the general public and local transport operators.

And while the funding is welcome, it should be noted that it represents a small proportion of the resources available to the council previously for bus services. It will allow us to make some real improvements to the county’s public transport network, but we will have to carefully target the money to get the most out of it. For this reason we have worked hard to distribute the money so that its benefit will be felt across the county. To achieve this, consultation has been undertaken with Parish Transport Representatives, Bus Users Oxford and Oxfordshire MPs.

My officers have worked hard in just a few short weeks to pull together the statement of intent that I will be considering on 12 March. The report, which includes the statement of intent and full details on where we would spend the money if our submission is successful, is available for you to read online here: <https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=931&MId=6260&Ver=4>

The level of interest shown has assisted us in developing a submission to the government for this funding. I sincerely hope that the spending of the SBSF on supported bus services will help to encourage more travel by bus, thereby reducing traffic and congestion. Fewer vehicles on the road would reduce traffic emissions, contributing to better air quality and reducing the impact on climate change.

Kind regards.

Yvonne

Cllr Yvonne Constance

Cabinet Member for the Environment (including Transport)

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