

Andrew Wood
Chairman
SWestrans
Militia House
English Street
DUMFRIES
DG1 2HR

Please ask for: **Mr Timothy Stephenson**
Ext 5182

Our Ref:

Your Ref: **LTR001-SBCE-DK-KD**

E-Mail: **timothy.stephenson@scotborders.gov.uk**

Date: **26 April 2018**

Dear Mr Wood

SERVICE 101/102 DUMFRIES TO EDINBURGH

Thank you for your letter of 20 April 2018.

I understand that the contract for this bus service, which was organised by a partnership of SWestrans, Scottish Borders Council, SPT and Midlothian Council, comes to an end in August 2018.

Officers from Scottish Borders Councils transport team have met with the partners and discussed our intention to not continue to fund this service at our current rate of £135,280 per annum.

Scottish Borders Council transport team is tasked with finding £300,000 of savings in 2018/9. To achieve this, a complete review of the supported transport network has been undertaken. All bus services the Council currently subsidises have been reviewed and the passenger data has been analysed.

It is not our intention to make wholesale bus service cuts. Wherever possible we plan to preserve links and in the case of the 101/102 we have identified an alternative solution for Borders based travellers. It is possible to divert an existing subsidised bus service to serve stops of Carlops and West Linton and connect with another Borders based bus service in Penicuik. This would give onward travel in to and from Edinburgh. We believe we can achieve this for approximately £35,000 per annum and this would release around £100,000 towards our current savings target.

I understand that the remaining partners have decided to put out a tender for the current route to operate from August 2018. I can confirm that Scottish Borders Council is prepared to hold off arranging its alternative service until that exercise is complete and therefore the contribution of £35,000 is still available to the partnership should it be required.

Our decision to reduce funding towards the 101/102 was not taken lightly and my Officers assure me that they have been totally transparent about their intentions from the meeting of the partnership on 25 October 2017 through to the telephone conference of 28 February 2018.

I am aware that our removing our current funding of £135,280 could potentially put the future of this bus service at risk however, in mitigation, I am sure you can appreciate that we cannot ignore viable alternative service options that may provide much better value and help us to achieve the necessary budget savings.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

As things stand if the partners are successful in awarding a contract that operates along the same route and timetable then a contribution of £35,000 remains available to the partnership. I would be grateful if your Officers could liaise with Timothy Stephenson of Scottish Borders Council transport team on this matter.

Thank you again for your letter, I hope my explanation has helped clarify why we have taken this action.

Yours sincerely

BRIAN FRATER
SERVICE DIRECTOR REGULATORY SERVICES