

**CABINET MEMBER BRIEFING NOTE****INTRODUCTION OF AN ADMINISTRATION FEE FOR THE SUSPENSION OF BUS STOPS****1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This decision is to allow Plymouth City Council to introduce an administration fee relating to the temporary suspension of bus stops in Plymouth.

Council officers can spend a significant amount of time liaising with the relevant stakeholders on the suspension of a bus stop and the fee will allow appropriate remuneration for the administrative costs incurred.

It is forecast that the introduction of this new administration fee will generate an income of circa £5,000 per annum.

**2. BACKGROUND**

Plymouth City Council does not currently charge any contractor to suspend bus stops. The current process is as follows:

1. Contractors are advised to contact the Sustainable Transport Team via email with the request to suspend a stop.
2. This request is then forwarded onto the relevant bus operator(s) to advise them of the closure and to ask if a temporary stop is required at an alternative location. This is dependent on the nature and duration of the works.
3. If a temporary stop is required, the Sustainable Transport Team then email the contractor with permission and details of where any temporary stop needs to be located. For major works a site visit with the contractor and bus operators might be arranged.
4. The contractor is required to close the permanent stop and provide and install the temporary infrastructure in the agreed location
5. Once the work is complete the contractor is also required to remove the temporary infrastructure and re-open the permanent stop.

The Sustainable Transport Team have been recording the number of requests that are made for bus stop suspensions. Between November 2022 and September 2024, the requests were for 240<sup>1</sup> bus stops to be suspended for a total of 971 days.

**3. PROPOSED CHANGES AND REASONS**

The proposals set out in this document have been discussed with the Council's Highways department to ensure that any outcomes do not replicate anything they do or conflict with their requirements.

**3.1 Proposed Changes**

Council officers can spend a significant amount of time liaising with the relevant stakeholders on the suspension of a bus stop. It is therefore proposed that an administration fee is introduced to allow appropriate remuneration for the administrative costs incurred.

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<sup>1</sup> This figure excludes closures due to the bus shelter replacement work

The fee proposed is £50.59 + VAT.

For internal Plymouth City Council (PCC) projects it is proposed that a budget code is requested for the cost to be charged to from the requesting Team.

For external projects, PCC's Highways Team will provide all developers and contractors who wish to suspend bus stops/shelters the Public Transport email address. The Sustainable Transport Team will then provide the organisation with the relevant form (Appendix Two). Upon receipt of the completed form, the Sustainable Transport Team will then copy Highways into the final response to the organisation where approval to suspend the stop(s) in question would either be given or refused.

The administration fee would also be charged upfront to external parties.

It is also proposed that the fee is waived for any work benefiting bus services, both those delivered by an internal PCC Team and those delivered by an external party, with the Sustainable Transport Team making the decision whether or not the works benefit bus services.

### **3.2 Market research of other Local Transport Authorities**

A benchmarking exercise has been undertaken with other Local Transport Authorities to identify areas where bus stop suspension charges are implemented. This was done via ATCO (Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers), with Local Authorities being asked

- If they charged for the suspension of a bus stop, and if yes,
- What they charged for
- The fee and

4. The justification for it.

A summary of the results of this engagement can be found in Appendix One. The proposed Bus Stop Suspension administration fee is felt to be in line with what other Local Transport Authorities charge because currently the onus is on the contractor to close the affected bus stop, implement a temporary stop if required and reopen the stop on completion of the works, Plymouth City Council are only responsible for the administration work and liaising between contractors and bus operators, hence an administration fee, only, is appropriate.

## **5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

The following option has been considered and rejected:

### **4.1 Option 1: Do not implement an administration fee**

This option has been rejected due to the amount of time council officers can spend liaising with the relevant stakeholders on the suspension of a bus stop. This administration fee will allow appropriate remuneration for the administrative costs incurred and allow the funds to be reinvested within the Sustainable Transport Team.

### **4.2 Option 2: Implement an administration fee and charge for the installation of any required temporary bus stop infrastructure**

This option has been rejected due to the fact that the installation of any required temporary stop is currently carried out by the developer and or contractor at nil cost to the Council. Plymouth City Council do not have the resources to be able to deliver this function.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISK**

The introduction of an administration fee will generate a revenue income for the Council which has been forecast at £5,000 per annum based on the number of temporary bus stop suspension requests over the last two years and a charge of £50.59 + VAT. In 25/26 the estimated income would be £2,500 based on implementation from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025.

The fee will be added to the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure fees and charges policy

There is a risk that should the decision not be implemented that the income target for this budget will not be achieved.

## **7. TIMESCALES**

Should this Decision be approved then it would be implemented from 01 October 2025, in order to advise internal and external teams to be notified of the new administration fee for the suspension of bus stops.

## **8. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport:

9. Approves the implementation of an administration fee for the suspension of bus stops in the city.

**APPENDICES****Appendix One - Examples of other local authority charges – information correct as of October 2022**

<b>Authority</b>	<b>Charge</b>	<b>Justification</b>
Suffolk County Council	£130 per day	Suffolk County Council undertake all of the administration work and the manual work in regard to the closure.
Halton Borough Council	£192 per bus stop closure	Halton Borough Council commission the temporary stop resulting in more staff time required
Central Bedfordshire Council	<p>Only charge if the contractor is unable to suspend the stop themselves.</p> <p>Up to and including 20 miles by road from Dunstable: <b>£162</b></p> <p>21 to 30 miles by road from Dunstable: <b>£220.87</b></p> <p>31 to 40 miles by road from Dunstable: <b>£279.74</b></p>	Charges are based on the mileage cost from the office base and the amount of time it would take for an officer to suspend the stop and then remove the suspension.
West Berkshire	<p>£150 for a single bus stop</p> <p>£180 for a pair</p>	The charge covers the notice that is put on the stop and any temporary stop that is required.
Thurrock	£150 per stop per day + VAT capped at a maximum charge of 2 days £300 per stop.	<p>Printing and adding a notice to the affected stops prior to the suspension and subsequent removal of this notice</p> <p>The cost of displaying any message on RTPI</p> <p>Notifying operators</p> <p>Administration time and mileage covered for the notices</p>

**Appendix 2****Draft Contractor Form Template**



**Sustainable Transport**  
**Strategic Planning & Infrastructure**  
**Bus Stop Suspension Application Form**

This form must be completed in full prior to any work commencing. For work in which the duration is expected to be more than one week, a site visit with the relevant operator may be required.

Exact location of affected bus stops	
Bus Stop Number(s)/Nam(s)	
Nature of the work	
Proposed start date	
Street works permit number	
Proposed works duration and hours of work	
Proposed location of temporary bus stop	
Contractor details and Contact Details	

This application should be sent via e-mail to the Sustainable Transport Team at [publictransport@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:publictransport@plymouth.gov.uk)

Enquires should also be made email to [publictransport@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:publictransport@plymouth.gov.uk)

Please note that approval will not be granted without a street works permit number.

**Bus Stop Closure Rates**

£50.59 + VAT admin fee per bus stop

If this application is approved an invoice will be processed by Plymouth City Council, please provide the following details:

Company Name	
Invoice Address	
Email Address	
Contact Number	
Purchase Order Number	