

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

REPORT AND DECISION NOTICE OF OFFICER KEY

DECISION TAKEN ON 19 JUNE 2026

PUBLISHED ON 22 JUNE 2026

PROCUREMENT OF £2 CAPPED FARE SCHEME

This **Key Decision** was taken by Dean Sargeant, being the appropriate Officer under Delegated Powers in compliance with the Council's Constitution.

The **Key Decision** related to the following identified item contained within the Council's **Notice of Key Decisions** as published on 19 June 2026.

INFORMATION

In October 2021, Cabinet approved the creation of an Enhanced Partnership (as required by the National Bus Strategy) while at the same meeting receiving an update on the development of a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).

As set out at the 6 January 2025 Cabinet meeting, a £2 fare cap has been delivered on Travel Telford routes only which aligns with the aspirations of the Bus Service Improvement Plan.

As part of the Council's commitment to delivering affordable, reliable and well-connected bus network across the Borough, the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 - 2029/30 (as approved by Full Council at its 26 February 2026 meeting) approved the principal of a £2 fare cap for all bus routes that start and end in the borough.

This council is seeking to formalise and complete the legal agreement that will reimburse bus operators in the borough for revenue forgone when participating in the £2 fare cap scheme.

This £2 fare cap scheme has been developed and implemented in partnership with the primary operator Arriva; other operators can join where they operate in the borough. The process is similar to the existing concessionary travel scheme where an amount is reimbursed to the operator for every ticket sold at the new capped price (£2). Reimbursement is agreed on a monthly basis based on agreed data from the operator(s).

The Director: Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services has delegated authority in accordance with the Council's Constitution to exercise their Chief Officer powers to enter into this scheme. This decision is made in

conjunction with the Director: Finance & People and in consultation with the Cabinet Member: Jobs, Transport and Digital Connectivity.

The total cost of the contract, which as set out above, is within budget as outlined in the MTFs as approved in February 2026, for the period is exempt from release for the reasons set out in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 – information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The Proper Officer is satisfied that, in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing this information and has determined that the legal agreement is exempt from publication pursuant to s100I and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Urgency of Decision

The £2 fare cap scheme already operates for Travel Telford bus services and has been implemented through the adopted Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Partnership.

Expansion of the £2 fare cap across all bus services that start and end in the borough has operated for an initial period. As such, the legal agreement is needed to ensure that the correct reimbursement methodology is in place to pay operators who operate the fare cap scheme but also ensure that the payment is correct and auditable.

Due to the period of time it has taken to finalise and agree details of the fare cap scheme, the Council has had insufficient time to follow the standard process for considering Key Decisions included on the Notice of Key Decisions and must bring this decision forward under special urgency provisions. All legal requirements, including notification to, and consent of, the Chair of Scrutiny Management Board to disapply call-in due to urgency, have been undertaken prior to the decision being taken, the Chair being satisfied that this decision is a case of special urgency.

Legal Implications

The Director; Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services has authority under the Council's Constitution to take this decision. All legal requirements, including notification to, and consent of, the Chair of Scrutiny Management Board to disapply call-in due to urgency, have been undertaken prior to the decision being taken.

This decision is a case of special urgency. Given the date by which the scheme will be committed until 31 March 2027, in accordance with the Bus Service Improvement Plan, to fairly reimburse operators, compliance with Regulation 10 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 is impractical.

Legal advice has been sought in relation to subsidy control which does not apply to this fare cap scheme given any bus operator that operates in the borough can join the scheme if they wish.

Financial Implications

The cost of the scheme will be met from existing revenue budgets allocated for bus services and costs have been accounted for within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

Insurance costs will continue to be monitored throughout the duration of the contract in line with the Council's financial management and budget monitoring processes.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- Delay approval: this is not a viable decision as to do so would leave the suppliers without revenue lost as a result of operating the scheme;
- Continue previous cover: this is not a suitable alternative option as the cover ended on 31 March 2026 and is not capable of extension.

DECISION – Having considered the contents of this report and the exempt Appendix attached hereto, the contract for the provision of reimbursement of the £2 fare cap scheme for the period 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027 be agreed.

Further Information/Contact –

This decision is a case of special urgency. Given the date by which this key decision must be made, compliance with Regulation 10 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 is impractical. Having obtained the agreement of Councillor Mark Boylan, the Chair of the Scrutiny Management Board, in accordance with Regulation 11, the decision will take effect on 12 June 2026. In light of the circumstances described above, the Chair also agreed to waive call-in in respect of this decision.

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Signed:

Dean Sargeant

Director: Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services

Dated: 19 June 2026