



## FINANCE, ASSETS, INVESTMENTS AND RECOVERY COMMITTEE

12 JULY 2023

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Greater Anglia's Public Consultation on Train Ticket Office Closures
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Greg Campbell, Director of Policy and Delivery

### REPORT SUMMARY

The following report has been brought together following the announcement of a consultation being undertaken by Greater Anglia Train operators along with other train operators on changes to the way tickets are sold in the future. This consultation includes the proposal to close the ticket offices at Shenfield and Ingatestone.

The consultation was announced on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and closes on the 26<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

Due to the timing of this announcement and the committee dates this item is before members as an urgent item and asks for consideration to make a response to the consultation on behalf of the Council.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. That the Committee note the information and agree to respond to the consultation raising the Council's concern and objections to the proposals to shut the ticket office at Shenfield and Ingatestone stations as set out below:**

**"Brentwood Borough Council recognises, and generally shares the concerns raised by local rail users, community, disability and access groups surrounding safety, customer service, support for disabled users, anti-social behaviour and security regarding the proposed closure of the Shenfield and Ingatestone Railway Station Ticket Offices.**

**Alongside these shared concerns, we would like to highlight our objection to the very short consultation period which does not permit detailed engagement with our residents and businesses or give such representatives the chance to effectively respond in their own right.**

**We would also highlight that the negative effect any measure that makes our travel hubs less desirable will be highly significant to the Borough of Brentwood's economic development, and therefore will directly impact on our wider plans for investment in our local economy, housing development and community building efforts"**

## **SUPPORT ING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

Brentwood Borough Council believe the proposals by Greater Anglia will have a detrimental impact on members of our community who travel by rail from Shenfield and Ingatestone Stations, particularly those people with protected characteristics who may need additional support.

### **2.0 Background Information**

Greater Anglia, along with most other train operators, is proposing changes to the way tickets are sold and customer service is provided at stations. A public consultation on these proposals started on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and closes on the 26<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

Greater Anglia have set out the following key elements to their proposal as follows:

- The plans would provide a more modern and flexible service for customers
- There would still be someone to help with ticket queries and information at all the stations covered by the proposals (with specific hours varying by station) and the ability for customers to speak direct to the Greater Anglia Customer Contact Centre in Norwich via a ticket machine for guidance or advice
- Passenger Assist arrangements would still apply, with additional mobile assistance teams providing extra support
- No station would become unstaffed as a consequence of the proposals and other station facilities, such as waiting rooms and toilets, would be unaffected.

Further they have informed the public of the detail and consequences of their proposal for Ingatestone and Shenfield which are set out below:

#### **A, Ingatestone**

Greater Anglia's proposal is that all ticket office windows at this station would close, with staff moving to other station areas, where they would be better placed to help customers buy tickets and provide expert travel advice and information.

Customers would still be able to buy tickets from the ticket machine and online (via our website and app), and colleagues would still be available at the station to help customers at certain times (as outlined below). Ticketing assistance would also be available directly from staff in Greater Anglia's Customer Contact Centre in Norwich, contactable via the ticket machine (24 hours a day).

Customer Information Centres at Chelmsford, and London Liverpool Street stations would sell a full range of products, as well as providing help with more complex transactions. Greater Anglia further propose that there would be a change to the hours staff would be available, with their presence focused on the busiest times. The proposed changes to hours would be as follows:

Days	Current Ticket Office Hours	Proposed station staffing hours
Monday to Friday	06:00 – 19:40	05:50 – 12:50
Saturday	06:00 – 12:45	05:50 – 12:50
Sunday	07:30 – 15:30	07:15 – 14:15

Station opening times would not change and customers would still have access to the same station facilities they do today.

Greater Anglia have confirmed that they would continue to meet all their commitments on providing accessibility for passengers, including passengers with reduced mobility and people requiring in-person assistance. Greater Anglia would also create additional mobile assistance teams, offering greater flexibility and support in providing assistance.

## **B, Shenfield**

Greater Anglia propose that all ticket office windows at this station would close, with staff moving to other station areas, where they would be better placed to help customers buy tickets and provide expert travel advice and information.

Customers would still be able to buy tickets from the ticket machine and online (via our website and app), and colleagues would still be available at the station to help customers at certain times (as outlined below). Ticketing assistance would also be available directly from staff in Greater Anglia's Customer Contact Centre in Norwich, contactable via the ticket machine (24 hours a day).

Customer Information Centres at Chelmsford, and London Liverpool Street stations would sell a full range of products, as well as providing help with more complex transactions.

There would be no change to the hours that staff would be available, with a staff presence throughout the day. Those hours would therefore be as follows:

Days	Current Ticket Office Hours	Proposed station staffing hours
Monday to Friday	06:10 – 20:00	24 hours
Saturday	06:10 – 20:00	24 hours
Sunday	07:10 – 20:10	24 hours

Station opening times would not change and customers would also still have access to the same station facilities they do today.

Greater Anglia also state they would continue to meet all their commitments on providing accessibility for passengers, including passengers with reduced mobility and people requiring in-person assistance. Greater Anglia would also create additional mobile assistance teams, offering greater flexibility and support in providing assistance.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer**  
**Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk**

There are no direct Financial implications from this report.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Claire Mayhew, Acting Joint Director – People & Governance & Monitoring Officer**  
**Tel & Email 01277 312500 / claire.mayhew@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk**

N There are no direct Legal implications from this report.

#### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

None at this point

#### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

None at this point

#### **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

None at this point

#### **9.0 EQUALITY & HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager - Communities, Leisure and Health**  
**Tel & Email 01277 312500 kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk**

The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

Greater Anglia state that Passenger Assist arrangements would still apply, with additional mobile assistance teams providing extra support

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Phil Drane, Director - Place**

**Tel & Email 01277 312500 / phil.drane@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk**

There are no direct implications at this point.

### **REPORT AUTHOR:**

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### **APPENDICES**

**None**

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**None**