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Dial M for Moray

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Under threat bus service saved by Moray Council

Moray councillors today stepped in to save a local bus service due to be taken off the road next month.

Stagecoach has intimated its intention to withdraw the 34 service – linking Elgin with Lhanbryde, Urquhart, Garmouth and Kington – from April 16.

The current timetable provides seven return journeys on weekdays and six on a Saturday.

Today Moray Council's economic development and infrastructure services committee agreed to launch a council-run service from Monday, April 18, with five return journeys operating Monday to Friday.

The existing route will be modified to take in the Bain Avenue area of Elgin.

A report to committee said: "The level of current usage indicates that there will be sufficient passenger uptake to sustain a modified bus timetable from Kingston, Garmouth and Urquhart to Elgin."

Councillors were told that the villages were classified in the council's current Local Development Plan as third-tier communities and that the loss of the bus service would substantially increase their degree of social isolation.

The replacement service will also continue to include Robertson Road in Lhanbryde.

The committee agreed that the service would be reviewed annually and would be subject to constant performance monitoring to assess ongoing viability.

The committee also agreed to a one-year trial for a new twice-weekly bus service between Marypark, Knockando, Archiestown and Elgin.

The three Speyside communities currently have no timetabled bus service and are dependent solely on the council's award-winning Dial A Bus service.

Moray Council area stretches from Tomintoul in the south to the shores of the Moray Firth, from Keith in the east to Forres in the west. The council and its 4,500 employees respond to the needs of 92,500 residents in this beautiful part of Scotland, which nestles between Aberdeenshire and the Highlands.

Famous for its colony of dolphins, fabulous beaches and more malt whisky distilleries than any where else in Scotland, Moray is a thriving area and a great place to live.

Headquartered in Elgin, the administrative capital of Moray.

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