

REPORT FROM: HOUSING, HEALTH AND ENGINEERING MANAGER

TO: WEST CRAVEN COMMITTEE

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**FOR INFORMATION:
PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN THE WEST CRAVEN AREA**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

Following a resolution of this Committee on 6 October 2020 that Transdev, the local bus company, be asked to provide information regarding late and cancelled services for the West Craven area, this report provides a response from both Transdev and Lancashire County Council (LCC).

RECOMMENDATION

- (1) That members note the response from Transdev and the suggestion from LCC is considered.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) To inform members of the reasons supplied by Transdev and LCC.

BACKGROUND

1. A discussion was held by members of this Committee on 6 October 2020 regarding the unreliability of Transdev buses during peak travel to work periods and the failure of buses to turn up at peak times affecting school children and people getting to work. It was also noted that a number of people worked in the hospitality sector in Skipton and were finding it difficult and expensive to get home in the evening after the last bus at 8pm.
2. It was therefore resolved:
 - (1) That Transdev be asked to provide information on the number of services that were late or had been cancelled in recent weeks, on the capacity and occupancy levels of services used by pupils and for this to be reported back to a future meeting.
 - (2) That County Council be asked to consider subsidising a late night bus service from Skipton to Barnoldswick.

REASON

To try to improve public transport for the benefit of local residents.

ISSUE

3. Responses from Transdev's Commercial Manager (Steve Ottley) and General Manager (Paul Turner) and LCC's Principal Transportation Officer – Bus Services & Development (Ashley Weir) are provided below.

Response from Transdev to Question 1 – Steve Ottley

4. Upon looking at the Skipton to Burnley service 'Wizz' from the start of September until and including Friday 23 October, we have unfortunately let ourselves down by not fully operating the service on three separate occasions. On 14 September our vehicle developed a mechanical fault while it was at Skipton; it was scheduled to depart at 18.10. And again on 23 September departing at 16.20, also from Skipton.

On 22 September, a third party collided with our vehicle, and the service failed to operate from Burnley to Barnoldswick at 08.05.

The service reliability is captured by an independent company known as VIX. Our real data is showing that we are running this service 96% on time, 3% operating late.

The last few nights Boundary Mill/M65 has been closed due to road works. As a result, we have been diverting via Reedyford Road, which has been affecting the last service from Skipton at 19.00.

Regarding capacity, we are complying with the government guidelines by allowing the bus to operate to half capacity of that vehicle type.

Response from Transdev to Question 2 – Paul Turner

5. This is for LCC rather than ourselves to consider. In this context though, LCC may not be aware that you recently cancelled payments for the evening bus to Barnoldswick from Colne. This is currently still operating while we are in receipt of funding from the DfT to maintain services, but will be discontinued once this funding ends.

Response from LCC Section 2 – Ashley Weir

6. The County Council's current policy is to continue with our identified priorities to sustainably link communities, particularly in rural areas where many people rely on public transport services, and to increase the frequency of a number of services where there is most demand. It is recognised sustainably funding every conceivable public transport need is not possible, such as providing late evening journeys, therefore maintaining and supporting our daytime bus service network is deemed to be a higher priority.

The County Council does contribute to some late evening journeys in Chorley where, in partnership with the local district council, we contribute to the operation of these services. The agreed cost share arrangement for such extra services is that Chorley Borough Council contributes 75% of the cost of the service provision with the County Council meeting the other 25%. I believe the offer of this arrangement to other authorities still stands. Therefore if Pendle Borough Council or West Craven Committee have funding available then this is something we can look into. Although just taking account Transdev's comments, it would appear this type funding is being or has been removed.

CONCLUSION

7. That the response from Transdev is noted and that consideration is given to the suggestion from LCC.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: None arising directly from the report.

Financial: None arising directly from the report.

Legal: None arising directly from the report.

Risk Management: None arising directly from the report.

Health and Safety: None arising directly from the report.

Sustainability: None arising directly from the report.

Community Safety: None arising directly from the report.

Equality and Diversity: None arising directly from the report.

APPENDICES

None.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.