

KEYNSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Bus Services Working Party meeting held on
Tuesday 24th September 2024 at 10.00 a.m.
in MakeSpace, 2 Riverside Terrace, Keynsham

PRESENT: Councillors A Beaumont, D Biddleston, E Cannon and A Greenfield

IN ATTENDANCE: Dawn Drury - Town Clerk and Cllr H MacFie

17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED:

That apologies be received and accepted from Councillor Martin Burton (substitute)

18. NOT PRESENT

To note that Cllr D Brassington was not present.

19. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

RESOLVED:

(i) That the minutes of the last meeting held on 13th August 2024 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

20. UPDATE ON KEYNSHAM BUS SERVICE SINCE LAUNCH ON 1ST SEPTEMBER 2024.

- *Infrastructure set up.*

The following was reported:

On Tuesday, 22nd August 2024, Neil Terry, Principal Traffic Management Engineer from B&NES Council met with Councillors Biddleston, Burton, Tom Druitt (Big Lemon Bus Operator) and the Town Clerk on site to consider suitable bus stops on the route around the estates of Charlton Road and the following was agreed in principle:

- The turning head at the end of the cul-de-sac in Alcina Way, adjacent to the proposed allotment site, will not be used by the bus service to turn around. Aside from the potential issues associated with minibuses manoeuvring in a residential road, this would have entailed passengers walking down the cul-de-sac to catch the bus, and then walking back after being dropped off. This would be counter-intuitive for passengers (walking along the bus route) and would create extraneous pedestrian footfall past other residents' properties.

- A temporary / trial bus stop will be introduced in Alcina Way in the now obsolete bus gate link heading towards Hercules Way.
- A temporary / trial bus stop will be introduced in Goldcrest Walk adjacent to the park / grassed area, which is owned and maintained by Keynsham Town Council.
- The route will be as follows and also agreed in an email from the bus operator (updated since the site meeting in terms of which stop will be served first):
 - Southbound on Charlton Road.
 - Turn left into Linnet Way.
 - Turn first left into Linnet Way (west).
 - Turn right into Goldcrest Walk.
 - Bus stop as described above.
 - Turn right into Linnet Way (east).
 - Turn right to return to the roundabout on Charlton Road.
 - Turn left at the roundabout.
 - Turn left into Alexander Road.
 - Turn Left into Alcina Way.
 - Through the now obsolete bus gate link towards Hercules Way.
 - Bus stop as described above.
 - Turn left into Aesop Drive.
 - Turn right to travel back along Charlton Road.
- Councillor Biddleston will share this information with residents in the immediate vicinity of the bus stops, emphasising that it is only a trial at this stage.
- Councillor Biddleston is negotiating with Barratt Homes regarding the use of Linnet Way by the bus service, as this development is not yet adopted. If agreement cannot be reached, the Linnet Way route will not be included at this stage.
- The Town Council will be providing the temporary bus stops – type agreed with B&NES Council.
- All enquiries regarding the bus service, route, and bus stops are to be directed to Keynsham Town Council.
- Tom Druitt is confident that the buses which will be used on the route will be able to negotiate the agreed route, and that the vehicles are sufficiently flexible to overcome any accessibility issues - they are able to 'kneel down', and also have access ramps. If access / kerbside alignment does become an issue in Goldcrest Walk, a bus cage may be an appropriate option.
- If the service is ultimately made permanent after the trial, appropriate bus stop infrastructure will need to be considered. Funding and future maintenance etc. for this was not discussed.

Confirmation was received from B&NES Council that they do a budget which could be used to supply and erect the bus stop flags for this trial service. Also a request was made by B&NES Council that it would be appropriate if the bus stops look more temporary in nature during the trial, otherwise any dissenting residents may not accept that it is a genuine trial. As I also mentioned at our meeting yesterday, if the route does become permanent, a

conversation will inevitably need to take place around the funding and resources required to introduce appropriate bus stop infrastructure.

With regard to the temporary bus stops it would be appropriate and effective, if they could be located off the public highway, perhaps on the adjacent grass verges.

If any temporary bus stop flags needing to be installed on lamp columns, would require approval should be sought from B&NES Street Lighting Team.

In respect of the above it was initially thought that only two temporary bus stops would be required, and these were purchased on 28th August 2024 for the sum of £328.00, payment was authorised by the Town Clerk as it was with her spending permission as per financial regulations.

It was discovered that a further 3 temporary bus stops were required, and these were purchased on 29th August for the sum of £490.00, the payment was authorised by the Town Clerk as it was with her spending permission as per financial regulations.

It was reported that one of the temporary stops had been moved to the opposite side of the road by a driver as this is the point that he was picking up and dropping off passengers. It was confirmed that this part of the route was not being followed correctly as the bus stop was in the correct position originally and the driver needed to follow the correct route along Alcina Way on the Alexander Road and through the dedicated bus gate on to Aesop drive. This matter has now been rectified and the temporary bus stop is back in the correct position and the driver is now following the correct route.

- ***Use of the Bus Service.***

The Chair of the Working Party reported that he had only heard good things regarding the K1 bus route. The Town Council have only received good comments to date and have had no complaints. Any Councillors receiving complaints should forward these to the Clerk so that she may liaise with the bus operator.

Other Councillors report that they had trialled the bus service and members of the community were making use of the service, especially students on route from Bilbie Green and Wellsway School. It was reported that it is being used by residents of Somerdale to take and collect their children to and from Castle Primary School.

At the moment, it is thought that the service was averaging about 5 passengers per trip. The Chair was asked to liaise with the bus operator and WECA to get more accurate bus usage data and bring this back to the next meeting.

The bus company drivers have reported that their team are really enjoying working on the K1 route and that they have all said how much they are enjoying meeting the residents of Keynsham.

A concern was raised that the drivers need training on accessibility to their buses for disabled travellers.

RESOLVED:

- *That the Chair of the Bus Working Party writes to the Bus Operator and WECA requesting more accurate bus usage data and bring this back to the next meeting.*
- *That the Chair of the Bus Working Party write to the Bus Operator requesting that their drivers undertake training on accessibility to their buses for disabled travellers, including use of the ramps.*
- **Promotion of the bus service.**

An email was received on the 30th August 2024, from the Marketing and Communications Officer of the West of England Combined Authority as follows:

‘To help launch the new WESTlocal services, we are offering free travel to everyone on this service until 16th September 2024. The cost of this offer is being funded by the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority and will not affect your grant payments. This will give passengers the chance to try the route for free to help get customers using these services in the first two weeks. From the 16th September, the usual fee will apply.

We are sending a press release with this information today so please don’t speak to the press about this or share this information publicly for now. If you are interested in appearing in our press release, we are looking for a quote from one of you to include, so please get in touch with me in the next hour about this.

We are producing social media assets for you all to highlight this offer and we plan to have those with you by the end of today. You can post them from the day of your launch to let people know they can travel on the bus for free for the first two weeks.

This offer is open to all new WESTlocal services. Passengers won’t need to show anything, they can board the bus as normal and will not be charged for travel. We will notify the bus operators about this offer and liaise directly with them to implement this with them’.

RESOLVED:

That the above information (which was received two days before the launch) be noted, including the fact that this Working Party or the Town Clerk had no say in the free travel period offered to the public.

On 2nd September 2024, a second email was received from the Marketing and Communications Officer of the West of England Combined Authority as follows:

‘We have created a social media asset which you can use on any social channels to launch your new WESTlocal service with the free travel offer. There are two options attached and you can use either, or both throughout the two-week period.

Please can you include a link to the travelwest site <https://travelwest.info/westlocal/> and mention in your post copy that 'terms apply'.

We have now shared this information publicly so you can start posting about this offer from today onwards".



The following email was received on 10th September 2024 from the Marketing and Communications Officer of the West of England Combined Authority as follows:

"On top of the leaflet delivery, we're also going to print 1000 to share directly with you so you can use them at any events or in local community hubs. Shall we send them to the town council address or somewhere else?"

We're also going to be making accessible digital versions of these leaflets which I can share with you in the near future. This means you'll have a digital copy which will have clickable links and can be read by people with disabilities such as visual impairment. I'll send that on once we have it".

As part of the promotional leaflet a photoshoot at very short notice (one day) was called by WECA. Councillors Beaumont, Biddleston and Burton as members of the Working Party were selected to be part of the photo shoot. However, Councillor Wait was unable to take part due to being on holiday.

From a Town Council point of view, once permitted promotion has included regular scheduled social media posts, an article in Keynsham Voice and promotion through The Week In.

Information regarding the service will be posted on the Town Council website.

Cllr Biddleston commented that buses now have the electronic displays on the front of them stating the buses are the K1 service. He also raised concerns that there was nothing on them to identify them as buses being run by the Town Council and funding secured by West of England Combined Authority.

RESOLVED:

- (i) To note how the Town Council was restricted in respect of promoting or controlling the promotion of the service.*
 - (ii) That Councillors are welcome to call into the office to assist staff in the distribution of the leaflets to Community Groups, Churches, Doctors Surgeries, Dentist waiting rooms and to businesses that can display and distribute.*
 - (iii) That the Chair of the Bus Service Working Group contact WECA's Communications and Marketing Officer and the bus operator to seek permissions to get such logos on the K1 buses.*
 - (iv) That the bus service be promoted regularly with the possibility of the introduction of use or loss it campaigns if it is felt needed.*
- *Finances relating to the bus service.*

Town Council expenditure so far in respect of the K1 service has only amounted to sums referred to above for the temporary bus signage together with a small amount of in-house printing of bus stop signs and timetables.

In respect of the bid this was submitted, after Cllr Burton and Alenshasy checked the Town Council side of the submission for promotional materials, advertising costs, infrastructure and staff time. It was submitted under delegated powers and resolved at the Extra Ordinary meeting of the Council on 30th May 2024, and approved and signed off by the Chair of Council at the Town Council meeting held on 18th June 2024.

Now that the service is running, we are able to divulge costs. The sum submitted was £20,196.94 for KTC costs and £169,220 for the bus operators' costs per annum, totalling £183,423.94. This figure was reduced as the cost for infrastructure from the Town Council's side of the bid was taken out as the WECA funding does not cover these costs. The annual figure for the submission was reduced to £177,643.94. The final figures and funding are yet to be agreed as further queries in respect of the Town Council's time were requested on 23rd September.

In addition to the queries, we were notified that we would soon be receiving the grant offer letter with associated conditions for signing which will be done at full Council, if possible or by the Town Clerk and Chair of Council. To date the only document that has been signed by the Town Clerk is a Due Diligence form.

For the bus income point of view this should be sufficient to covers its costs. Even bus passes that are used generate money that B&NES should give to the bus service operator. A request will be made to the bus operator to ensure that he is collecting this money and also for a

finance update for the next meeting. It is the intention of our Council to create a well-used bus service that does pay for itself. Potential bus stop infrastructure needs to be budgeted for and it was suggested that an EMR be set up for 2025 – 2026 to put some funds away as a cushion for future years. A future meeting will be arranged with Neil Terry to talk about permanent infrastructure requirements.

In respect of further funding our bus survey puts us in good stead as B&NES have commented on it having one of the best survey responses in B&NES.

It was suggested that if this route proves successful that a second route be thought about linking Keynsham and Saltford (the estates on the Hygge, Withies and Minsmere. (possible consultation with Cllr Duncan Hounsell and the Parish Clerk of Saltford Parish Council). This service would also assist workers from Pixash Lane Recycling Centre, other businesses and secondary school students getting to Wellsway from Saltford.

A meeting needs to be held with Neil Terry to discuss making the bus gate clear with signage, possibly getting an order for One Way to restrict the number of vehicles currently using this route as a cut through.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That Councillors MacFie and Biddleston have discussions with B&NES Council regarding the Persimmon's Sec. 106 funding.*
- (ii) That K1 service is regularly reviewed after 6 months in case adaptations need to be made.*

21. FUTURE FUNDING OF THE SERVICE

It was suggested that there would be future tranches of sec.106 monies for bus services and that the Town Council keep their eye on this together with any further funding opportunities from WECA.

The Council now knows that the service will be in the region of £177K to run annually.

22. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

That a Doodle poll be sent out to ascertain a date and time for the next Working Party meeting to be held in mid-November 2024.

The meeting finished at 11.08 a.m.

Signed (Chairman) Dated