

KEYNSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Bus Services Committee meeting held on
Thursday 9th January at 10.00 a.m.
in MakeSpace, 2 Riverside Terrace, Keynsham

PRESENT:

Councillors S Alenshasy, D Brassington, D Biddleston, M Burton and E Cannon.

Councillor A Greenfield substitute for Councillor Alex Beaumont

Councillor C Davis substitute for Councillor H MacFie

IN ATTENDANCE: Dawn Drury - Town Clerk

1. INTERIM CHAIR FOR THIS INAUGRAL MEETING OF THE BUS SERVICES COMMITTEE

Cllr Cannon as interim Chair commenced the first meeting of the Bus Services Committee by feeding back on action points from the last Bus Services Working Party meeting on 19th November 2024 as follows:

Action points were revisited and the following reported: -

- (i) The Bus Operator was contacted, and more accurate bus usage data will be brought back to each meeting.
- (ii) The Bus Operator has been contacted, and it has been confirmed that their drivers do undertake training on accessibility for disabled users of their buses, including how to use the ramps. If there are in future incidents of disabled users having issues this should be reported to the Clerk and will be pursued further.
- (iii) WECA and the Bus Operator have been contacted regarding seeking permission to get logos on the K1 bus. This is being considered by WECA along with other social media communications and marketing pieces that also require logos. There has been a delay in this due to staff sickness in the Town Council office and at WECA together with the Christmas break.
- (iv) The Chair reported on the item of funding for free bus passes as follows. Funding for bus passes comes from Central Government via the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. They transfer the funds to the Travel Concessions Authority, in our case Bath and North East Somerset Council. B&NES must then reimburse the Bus Operators. There is a formula to allow for revenue foregone and additional net costs. The Clerk



confirmed that the funds that B&NES receive are used to produce the bus passes and pay staff costs for the administration of the bus pass scheme. The Chair said that he would also do some further investigations and report back.

- (v) The Clerk reported that she had contacted WECA to find out what criteria in the six-month review will be measured against. A response is awaited to this question.

2. ELECTION OF A CHAIR FOR THE BUS SERVICES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED:

That Councillor E Cannon be appointed as Chair for the Bus Services Committee until May 2025.

3. ELECTION OF A VICE CHAIR FOR THE BUS SERVICES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED:

That Councillor H MacFie be appointed as Vice Chair for the Bus Services Committee until May 2025.

4. MEMBERSHIP OF THE BUS SERVICES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED:

To note that Councillors Souzan Alenshasy, Alex Beaumont, Dave Biddleston, David Brassington, Martin Burton, Edmund Cannon and Hal MacFie (substitutes Cllrs Chris Davis and Alan Greenfield) are the appointed members of the Committee until May 2025, as agreed at the Meeting of the Town Council on 19th November 2024.

5. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED:

That apologies be received and accepted from Councillors Alex Beaumont and Hal MacFie.

6. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the last meeting of the Bus Services Working Party held on 11th November 2024 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Councillor A Greenfield expressed his thanks to all the Members of the disbanded Bus Services Working Group for the good work that they did.

EC.

7. TERMS OF REFERENCE

NAME OF WORKING PARTY	BUS SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEMBERSHIP WITH VOTING RIGHTS	7 Members of the Town Council (2 substitutes)
MEMBERSHIP WITHOUT VOTING RIGHTS	B&NES Transport Officer Dial-A-Ride Representatives WECA Representatives Other community representatives Big Lemon (to be invited as required)
TERMS OF REFERENCE	(i) To consider transport solutions to maintain and extend the K1 Community Bus Service (when time permits) and introduce a second K2 service, if finances permit. Also, to look at possible improvements to existing services. (ii) To make recommendations to the Town Council on future community transport arrangements in Keynsham
DELEGATED POWERS	None – reports and makes recommendations to full Town Council for voting.
QUORUM	3 Town Councillors.
FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS	Bi-monthly meetings

A question was asked as to whether the Council were having regular formal contract meetings with the Bus Operator. The Clerk confirmed that this had not happened to date but such meetings would be arranged.

A motion was made by Councillor Alenshasy that the Terms of Reference be amended so that Big Lemon either be asked to attend or dial in to every single Committee meeting to answer questions that members may have. This was seconded by Councillor Alan Greenfield and a vote taken. The recommendation of this Committee will be presented to full Council at the January meeting for decision.

EC.

RESOLVED:

- (i) *That a recommendation be put before Council that the Terms of Reference be amended that Big Lemon either be asked to attend or dial in to every single Committee meeting to answer questions that members may have.*
- (ii) *That Council note that this motion was put before the Bus Services Committee and the voting went against the motion.*

IMPORTANT NOTE.

A note will be added to the Town Council agenda reminding Council of Standing Order No.7.

STANDING ORDER NO. 7 - PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

- a A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least 8 Councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

RESOLVED:

To receive and note the Terms of Reference for the Bus Services Committee approved at the Town Council meeting on 19th November 2024.

8. UPDATE ON KEYNSHAM K1 BUS SERVICE SINCE THE LAST WORKING PARTY MEETING ON 11th NOVEMBER 2024

Infrastructure issues.

The Clerk reported that there had been no infrastructure issues reported to Council that she is aware of.

Cllr Biddleston reported that he had been contacted by a resident of Bilbie Green who is still very keen on the instigation of the making the bus gate at the beginning of the bus terminus more formal. The difficulty is not with our Bus Service using the gate but that of the continued use of the bus gate by other road users for access. The Clerk asked whether it was just a case of requesting that B&NES Council mark up and put the correct signage in place required for a bus lane? Councillor Biddleston confirmed that Cllr MacFie was seeking Sec 106 funding to achieve these works.

Cllr Alenshasy asked whether the Committee should be asking WECA to fund this work. The Clerk reported that it has already been confirmed to Council that WECA will not pay for infrastructure (including bus stops, bus shelters, road markings etc.) from the grant's funds awarded.



Cllr Biddleston reported that his understanding from B&NES Council was that when the money was devolved, some of it to WECA some of it to B&NES, that they returned some it, including monies for infrastructure.

It was confirmed that the previous scheme, in respect of WECA looking after all the bus stops, had not proceeded and that this was not going to happen.

Cllr Biddleston stated that he thought that he had sent the Clerk a B&NES PowerPoint following the devolving of the funds, which could be sent to all Committee members so that they could have a clear understanding of what was devolved. The Clerk said that she would try and find the PowerPoint and requested that Cllr Biddleston also look for the same and send another copy to her just in case she cannot find the original one sent.

Cllr Alenshasy said that there was an assumption that Council was going to request that Sec. 106 funds be used to pay for the bus gate infrastructure, and, if so, it would not be prudent to assign the Sec 106 monies now but to hold a full discussion on how Council will spend it. The Clerk reported that we do not have the Sec. 106 monies, and that Cllr MacFie was enquiring whether they would spend some of the Sec 106 monies that they hold on the bus gate works.

The Chair said that this matter would be discussed at a future meeting, once Cllr MacFie has received a response to his request that B&NES use Sec. 106 funding be used to undertake the bus gate works.

Cllr Biddleston added that the infrastructure works were to do with a highways matter and not the Town Council's Bus Service and the fact that there is a bus gate for residents in Bilbie Green is a delineation from what should happen where cars are using it to drive through.

Use of the Bus Service

The Clerk reported that she had received no feedback on the use of the bus service from Councillors or members of the public. The only feedback that she had received was in written data received from the Bus Operator.

There have been no complaints or compliments received to add to the spreadsheet.

Data in respect of the bus service not being able to run, for any reason, will be presented as part of the agenda papers for each meeting.

Cllr Greenfield reported that from speaking to residents at the Winter Festival they had complimented the service.

Cllr Burton reported that he did check out First Buses performance in terms of being on time (arriving between 1 minute early and 6 minutes late of the scheduled arrival time) and this is around 82% whereas the Council's bus service is hitting 93% in all the months that the data

covered. As First Bus is considered a very good service, the Town Council's bus service results are excellent as a comparison.

Cllr Burton asked in terms of usage he would like to see how the other WECA funded services (e.g. Chew Magna, Paulton, North Common) are doing, to see if we can learn anything from them, and ultimately see whether our results are good or bad. The Clerk was asked to ascertain this information from WECA and bring it back to the next meeting. If the information is not forthcoming from WECA the Clerk will contact the Clerks from those Parishes new to running a WECA funded bus service.

It was reported that in 2026, WECA will assess the K1 Service and if funding is available could possibly offer further funding, so it important to have such data.

Cllr Biddleston reported that as a comparison Dial-A-Ride in November, with all of their buses, did 9000 journeys and the K1 Service did in excess of 9000 journeys in the same period. He added that he felt that as Council part fund the Dial-A-Ride service we should receive regular journey usage figures from Dial-A-Ride, either recorded at this meeting or full Council.

The Chair said that there was no doubt the Council would want the K1 service to continue beyond 2026, hence it was essential that as much data as possible be collected to show that Keynsham Town Council are running a good service.

In respect of the possibility of there being further WECA money available and the public requests for a second service (K2) to serve areas such as Keynsham East, a question was asked whether it may be prudent to start looking at this sooner rather than later. It was suggested that a K2 service be explored at the March meeting. The Clerk suggested also looking at possible amends to the current K1 service should there not be any future funds available from WECA, for example perhaps pulling the stops that are not used or have limited use on the existing service and changing the route to accommodate additional stops in Keynsham East.

Cllr Alenshasy reported that she had looked at the numbers together with Destination Report (the latter that she felt was a good report). She challenged Cllr Burton's earlier figure in respect of K1 service performance in terms of being on time (arriving between 1 minute early and 6 minutes late of the scheduled arrival time) hitting 93% in all the months. According to the data that she had analyzed the figure was only 46% on average for being on time. Cllr Burton clarified that the national definition of being on time is arriving between 1 minute early and 6 minutes late of the scheduled arrival time, and if you add the four percentages within this data bracket it equates to around 93%. Cllr Alenshasy responded that if she had included 1 – 6 minutes it would be in the region of 72% and that she felt that the service could do better than this.

She stated that to understand this better the Committee need to know where the buses were delayed and where the Committee can look at the numbers of passengers affected. Looking at her analysis, she reported that there were two destinations that were very important which are Lays Farm and the Chocolate Quarter, half of the bus users were on concessions so no money is made from these travellers, so this is why on average its cost is about between

£13,000 - £14,000 pounds for the service and we are averaging 1500 users per month. So, there will come a point when we decide whether to continue the service or not.

The Chair reminded Committee members that there would be a 6-month review in March 2025. He added that he was wary about putting too much weight on the December figures as December is often a difficult month for bus companies due to reduced usage during the Christmas holiday period. Also, thinking about the first few months of limited publicity it would have taken time for the community to become aware of the service.

Cllr Alenshasy requested the Originator Destination Reports for November 2024, December 2024 and January 2025 as she is using these to identify which stops are least used. The Clerk confirmed that the December data had yet to be received from the Bus Operator and the January data could not be provided until after the month end when it is supplied to the Council with all the other documentation required for invoicing. In respect of the November report the Clerk will request a copy from the Bus Operator.

Cllr Biddleston commented that to measure the K1's % of arrival and departures on time in the way that we have done, is difficult compounded by the fact that there are additional stops within the 1 – 6 minutes, because it is not a normal bus service. There is the option to hail the bus to stop but not at a designated stop which of course can delay journeys. This is the type of service that was agreed so that it meets the need of those that are disabled and can hail the bus to stop at any safe place convenient to the start of their journey.

Cllr Burton asked for an agreed standard list of reports to be presented at each meeting. The Clerk said that she would do this where possible depending on when the date of the meeting is arranged for, the middle of a month being a better time. These documents to be distributed with the meeting agenda. The Chair added that from what he had heard, apart from the few absent documents, the Committee is receiving all the documents that they require.

Cllr Davis asked for clarification as to what is the criteria and benchmark for success of the Town Council's service. This information is already being sought.

The Clerk said that she thought the best way forward was to keep analyzing the data as discussed, and wait for WECA to undertake their 6-month review. Once we receive clarification from WECA that they are happy with the K1 service, at that point if any changes are required, present our data stating why we need a change and detailing how the service can be improved (providing our data to back up any request).

The Chair stated that the Town Council should do its own review in March and that the timing of the March meeting may be crucial in respect of requesting any change and also getting the information to full Council for agreement. The Clerk reminded the Committee that by the March meeting, we would not have received the March data only that of the month before February (six months data – start of September 2024 – end of February 2025) The Chair said that he would discuss an appropriate date for the March meeting with the Clerk and he would email out the Committee to give them notice.



The Clerk will seek from WECA details of the latest date by which Keynsham Town Council could request any minor changes to the K1 service, following our 6-month review.

Cllr Biddleston suggested that members come to the March meeting with ideas about setting up an additional service as it is important that Council start to consider this sooner rather than later.

Cllr Alenshasy made the suggestion that the Committee design a Keynsham East Survey for approval by full Council, to be circulated in order with data that would assist with the planning of an additional service. Cllr Biddleston responded by stating that we had already undertaken an extensive survey and that we should revisit the data from this survey rather than conduct a new survey. The task ahead is for the Committee to identify the most productive route.

The Clerk referred the Committee to an email that she had received from WECA on 8th January 2025, this was in respect of a request that a quarterly Highlight Report and Change Request Form be completed by Council and return to WECA by the 24th January 2025 (copies of the blank report form were circulated). It was agreed that the Clerk would contact other Parishes with WECA funded bus services asking if they would mind sharing an example of their previously submitted reports. Cllr Alenshasy and Burton said that they would be happy to work with the Clerk to complete the form.

The Clerk will seek clarification when the report is completed, as to what changes may be requested quarterly via the report and those that can only be requested in April and October.

In respect of changes or introductions of an additional service to include Keynsham East it may be conceivable to include Saltford and possibly get that Parish involved, but this is something to consider at a future meeting. This would probably require further consultation.

Promotion of the Bus Service

The Clerk reported that the Town Council's Community and Marketing Officer is working with an officer of WECA on a new social media campaign and publicity package. WECA has recently published an article in local papers regarding the K1 service.

A question was asked why some of the buses do not have K1 displayed. It was reported that the original K1 buses had been changed to electric buses, and this may be why there was a period of no K1 signage being displayed. Also, following a bus failure a replacement bus may have been sent out from the depot without displaying K1. A question was asked whether it would be possible for all the buses to display a vinyl K1 bus signage in the window of each bus. The Clerk will contact the Bus Operator to ask if this is possible.

Cllr Burton requested that any missing bus timetables be replaced as soon as possible. The Clerk will action this.

The Clerk to ask Big Lemon for any case studies that could be used to promote the service, e.g. customers that have commented on how the bus service has changed their life. All Town Councillors should be requested to encourage members of the public to write to the Town Council or call into the Town Council office with their human-interest stories about the K1 service. Also, from conversations that arise from discussions at Town Council stalls at the Farmers Market. All need to be mindful of GDPR rules and collecting personal data.

RESOLVED:

That the above information be noted.

9. EMAIL FROM WEST OF ENGLAND – DATED 31st DECEMBER 2024 – 3.17 P.M.

Councillors asked for more information to be able to make a decision in respect of item 9 (i) below. The Clerk will contact other Parishes with WECA run bus services for examples of what they do.

- (i) *To recommend to full Council that the Council does/does not impose financial penalties on the Bus Operator where any journey or part of a journey does not operate for reasons within the Bus Operator's control.*

RESOLVED:

- (ii) *To note that the single fare cap is rising from £2.00 to £3.00 on 1st January 2025. As the WESTlocal schemes are funded by BSIP the £2.00 fare cap will remain, and the Council and the Bus Operator will not need to make any changes.*

10. REPORT FROM THE BUS OPERATOR

RESOLVED:

That the Bus Operator report papers, circulated prior to the meeting, be received and noted.

11. COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS LOG

RESOLVED:

To note that there have been no additional complaints or compliments logged since the last meeting.

12. FINANCIAL DATA SUBMITTED TO WECA IN RESPECT OF OCTOBER & NOVEMBER INVOICE

Cllr Alenshasy asked why the Clerk was charging WECA for her time to attend meetings. The Clerk confirmed that the request for administration funding was permitted and agreed charges as part of the WECA funding and all monies received were going into the Council funds and

not to pay her personally. She also confirmed that the funds were going into a dedicated Bus Income code, in order to keep the K1 bus financials clear for the Town Council's Auditor.

RESOLVED:

- (i) To receive and note the information.*
- (ii) To note that the monthly financial information will be presented at every Bus Services Committee meeting going forward for noting only.*

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

To note that the Chair and Clerk will work together to come up with the best date for the next Bus Service Committee meeting, probably mid-March that allows for the necessary business to be dealt with appropriately. Councillors will be informed of the proposed date.

The meeting finished at 11.30 a.m.

Signed (CHAIRMAN: 

Date: 12 Feb. 2025