

## Appendix 1

### Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston Bus Services Meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2017

The meeting was attended by 40 residents; Pete Woodhouse, BCC Group Manager, BCC Sustainable Transport; Councillor Jo Sergeant; Keith Houghton, A&LW NP Co-ordinator; Tracy Edwards-Brown, A&LW Neighbourhood Officer

- Apologies from First Bus – illness has prevented them from attending this meeting
- Wessex were unable to attend. Subsequent enquiries clarified that the two managers who'd committed to attend were diverted late to an incident in Somerset which had to take priority

**1. Metrobus:** Pete Woodhouse, Metrobus is supported by North Somerset; Bristol and South Gloucester

- There are 3 projects under the Metrobus programme:
  - The South Bristol Link
  - Ashton Vale to Temple Meads
  - North Fringe to Hengrove
- There are wider impacts arising from these projects.
- In the City Centre improved bus priorities will improve every bus service going through the city centre
- It will bring speeded-up ticketing
- There's no impact of Metrobus on BCC resources supporting its bus services or infrastructure work
- Metrobus is funded from Central Government

Question: 'why has the Council removed £450k from the budget that subsidises bus services?'

PW: because it's a contribution to the £92 million saving which the Council has to make across the board over its budgets for the next 5 years. The budget proposal hasn't happened yet

### **2. Service 18/18a issues & removal of Service 501/502**

Comment: Kingsweston Lane is isolated

Comment: 501/502 – subsidy has been removed

PW: 501/502 change to 18/18a. BCC used to subsidise the 501/502 service. When First Bus introduced the 18/18a it duplicated much of the route of the 501/502 service. This meant that the Council couldn't legally subsidise the 501/502 anymore (the regulations state that you can't subsidise a route that substantially will compete with a commercial route).

- BCC did take the opportunity to extend the 508 into Cotswold Road – some of the saving on the 501/502 did subsidise the extension of the 508 service.

Question: 'couldn't the 18/18a do a detour to cover the gap along Kingsweston?

Comment: Loss of 501/502 – there's now a gap in accessing Southmead Hospital

Comment: Lots of upheaval in traffic routes in Bristol

Comment: BCC should have informed people better on closure of the 501/502

Question: Why did BCC allow 501/502 to be replaced by the 18/18a?

PW: First Bus decided to operate the 18. Any commercial bus company can register to run a service.

Question: 'Why does the 18 go up to Henbury and not come back?'

Question: Why does the 18a stop in the evening?

Comment: Sheltered Housing residents are suffering from the gap and other people. Getting up the hill is the problem.

Comment: There's duplication between service 3 and 18 along some parts of their routes.

### **Kingsweston Lane to Southmead is the missing gap now following introduction of the 18/18a service.**

Keith H: described work in Southmead to address a similar situation when First Bus withdrew the no. 36 service. This left a similar gap between Westbury and along Greystoke Avenue, cutting off lots of people from accessing banking etc. The NP co-ordinated some meetings with First Bus, who explained that they needed to run a commercially viable service and that they needed some evidence that there's a market for a service along that route. We distributed questionnaires to 1000 households and go 150 back to send on to First Bus. As a result they re-routed the 77 to cover the gap.

### **The meeting agreed that they would like to explore this conversation with First Bus**

#### **3. Severside Flyer:**

Question: 'how is it doing'?

#### **4. Avonmouth issues:**

Comment: Lack of evening service – only one an hour in the evening

'Why was the no 3 removed on Boxing Day?'

## 5. Drivers, bus pass registration and reporting of issues

Comment: Drivers are not registering bus passes – ‘they just wave you on’

PW: operators submit their figures each month and are reimbursed

Question: How do people report issues?

PW: Vix – they are the provider of real time information. It does rely on the driver inputting information. Reports of issues can go to Customer Services at First Bus or Wessex or to Bristol City Council

## 6. Buses and heating

- Buses are often cold – could drivers turn the heating up?
- Some people have heard that drivers can't change the heating settings?  
**Check whether drivers can alter heating once in transit?**
- Question about old buses serving the North: **check with First Bus and Wessex for their responses**

7. **508 service**: they never run on a Sunday. BCC decide whether to support this service

## 8. Bus shelters & raise kerbs

Question: what's the cost for a shelter? Can redundant shelters be taken out?

Issue: buses not getting close enough to raised kerb at bus stops – opposite Avonmouth Community Centre and at Broadmead Union Street

PW: Will be better in September. Union Street has a particular issue with the number of bus stops and the number of services dropping on and off at them

## 9. Changing Bus Services

PW: It takes 56 day to de-register a service with the Traffic Commissioner. Companies have to report when they are taking a route off.

## 10. Agreed Next Steps

- Idea – Jo Sergeant and her proposed Transport Group
- Agreed to send contact details of attendees at the meeting to Jo Sergeant
- Meet with First Bus for detailed conversation about the 18/18a service about the Kingsweston Gap. Offer of free meeting space from Shauna Sedgman at the Guinness Trust.

# Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston Bus Service meeting – Questions and Responses from First Bus

## Buses Arriving Too Early

1. Issue of buses arriving too early and leaving the stop before the time it is due. Experienced buses leaving (or driving passed) their stop as much as 5 minutes before they are due.
2. Residents have experienced First No. 3 leave its stop early, drive quickly along its route to Blackboy Hill or, sometimes the stop before, then for the driver to sit reading his paper for 5 minutes while his bus comes back in line with the timetable. Question: Please ensure that buses never leave their stops ahead of the timetable and keep to time.
3. **Any early operation is unacceptable. If you could provide specific details we will happily investigate, respond and take whatever action deemed appropriate**

## Real Time Bus Predictions

1. The system can be unreliable.
2. Why does the arrival of buses at bus stops rarely match the real time display at some bus stops or in your app? This applies to service 3, 4, 18 and new Port service. As the tracking doesn't work this resident cannot rely on real time predictions to plan their journey.

**There are occasional issues with the technology. There is a process where faults are reported to Vix although repair times can vary.**

## Sunday Buses

1. Buses are too infrequent.  
Action: The Sunday service timetable should be the same as for Saturdays. Or add a No 3 service at 8:04 between 6:52am and 9:04am service  
**Will pass this onto our commercial team to see if operating services at these times are viable. I have to say it is doubtful operating the same schedule as on a Saturday will be viable given the early buses are rarely full.**

## Cross-Town Service

1. At the moment there are no direct buses between Sea Mills and nearby Henleaze, nor direct to the Gloucester Road shopping area, nor direct to IKEA. Action: Suggestion of a cross-town bus linking these, and other, places.  
**Again, the viability of such a service would need to be investigated. All new and all current services must be commercially viable to operate.**

**The service 3 operates from Shirehampton to the White Tree Roundabout where there is a link to Henleaze, service 2.**

**Services 18, 18A operate to part of Gloucester Road where there is again a link to the rest of Gloucester Road. So it is doubtful this request could be accommodated.**

### **Drivers**

1. Request to say thank you to the drivers, especially First drivers, for their courtesy, professionalism and helpfulness. Whilst also a concern regarding the attitude of some drivers not very customer friendly.

**Driver are given customer service training at the outset and continually throughout their careers with us via the now required NVQ qualification.**

### **Old verses New Buses**

1. The older buses are too cold in the winter, especially upstairs but also on more modern buses. Question: Could the drivers be asked to turn the heating on, or, if it is on, to turn it up? Drivers may not be aware of how cold it is in the rest of the bus. There should be a feedback system which allows drivers to know the temperature in the passenger areas and to have a target temperature to keep the bus at.

**Will feed that back to our maintenance teams but we need specific information particularly the bus number. If the information can be posted on our Twitter feed our customer services team will feed that back to the appropriate depot**

2. Are new buses planned for use on all First Bus routes through Avonmouth, Shirehampton, Sea Mills and Lawrence Weston routes? They feel second class compared to other routes such as 1 and 2. Lighting often doesn't work properly and heating rarely works upstairs in winter or overheats the downstairs in summer.

3. Are buses cleaned on a regular basis inside and out?

**All buses are swept out and go through our bus wash each night. Then every bus is given a deep clean and service every 28 days.**

### **No: 18/18A**

1. Improvements needed to this service. Half-hourly is not frequent enough. Action: suggest it becomes every 15 minutes.
2. Alternatively if we no longer have Wessex 501 & 502 to Southmead Hospital, please could First Bus assure us that the No 18 service to Southmead Hospital will become reliable, as appointments can be missed when a bus is taken off?
3. No.18 bus route from Henbury to Lyde Green (an hourly service from Lawrence Weston). As it goes past Longcross on its way to Henbury on the

morning service (8.40 or later), it will be doing the return journey via Lawrence Weston to Lyde Green due at approximately 9.11am Badenham Grove bus stop. Then it disappears and does not return...where does it go? Complaint: Mrs Lamoon had to wait for the next bus at 10.11am. Her husband missed his hospital appointment at 10.30am on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2017. She did ring first bus and supported by a man who used his lap top to source the next available bus. It didn't turn up. On a separate occasion Mrs Lamoon did try to catch the No: 18A from Avonmouth on Monday the 16<sup>th</sup> (again another hospital appointment) and yes we know there was chaos on many bus routes around Bristol but we were on our bus stop at 9a.m. no bus and so caught a No. 4 bus to Shirehampton and waited until 10.45am when we gave up and went home having seen two No.18 buses and two No. 18A buses pass us going to Henbury/Avonmouth. Question: Where do these buses go?

**The 18/18A as with many other services has suffered greatly whist the closure of Stoke Lane was in place. Now Stoke Lane has reverted to a 2-way operation, delays, which at their worst have reached 75 minutes have decreased.**

**Making this service 15 minutes is not a viable option as passenger number don't stack up to increase the frequency the same applies to the 501/502**

#### **No: 508**

1. Very reliable service.

Action: Suggest run more frequently and on a Sunday.

#### **Bus Shelters**

1. Who pays for the bus shelters?
2. Why were Three Electronic Shelters installed in Kingsweston Lane, just months before the Wessex 501 & 502 service was stopped?
3. Can all bus shelters provide internet access for computers?

**All bus stop infrastructure and information comes under the remit of the appropriate local authority**

#### **No: 501 & 502**

1. Can we have either the 501 or the 502 service back? If not why not?

#### **No: 3**

1. There seems to have been a change in the service on St Andrews Road (around the park) the buses are now travelling and parking (especially on weekends) on the side of the park that falls on the back of St Andrews Church increasing the flow of buses.. Buses are constantly sat waiting (sometimes up to an hour on a Saturday and Sunday). Complaint: A resident has also

experienced buses parking on their driveway to let passengers off (St Andrews Rd).

**Again specific instances need to be reported to our customer services teams there could be multiple reason for a bus not stopping at the correct stop; Inconsiderate parking, roadworks on the stops or passengers failing to ring the bell in time. If it is not reported at the time we cannot investigate and thereby action accordingly.**

2. Has a risk assessment been carried out on this service through the industrial area of Avonmouth? Part of the road is unlit, bendy, 40mph (though it feels buses go much faster trying to catch up to timetable), with water-filled ditches close to the edge of the road with no barriers.

**No safety issues have been reported for this area by our drivers.**

**Understand there has, and continues to be a multitude of roadworks on St Andrews Road, this linked with ongoing works on Bristol City Centre has caused disruptions to this service.**

#### **No: 3 and 4**

1. Can the reliability of service 3 and 4 be improved? A delay or missed bus has a massive knock on effect as well as a crowded bus.
2. The bus timetable for 3 and 4 shows they run from Henbury to Long Cross Layby about 2 mins apart. Is there any chance of spreading the time out to reduce gap or is that to benefit Shirehampton users so 3 and 4 spaced out?  
**The city centre works are 'currently' scheduled to be in place until September with two major changes to the lay-out taking place on the 5<sup>th</sup> February and the second of April. The route will not change but may be affected by initial associated congestion the levels of which are not known at this time**

#### **Park and Ride Service**

1. Can First Bus tickets be used on the park and ride service, if not, can you explain why?
2. Can the reliability of Portway Park and ride be improved? Residents experience buses rarely operate to timetable in morning peak times.  
**BCC will be able to answer this**

#### **Routes**

1. As lots of buses travel down Whiteladies Road, has any consideration been given to running circular buses that connect say at Blackboy Hill? That might reduce congestion in the centre and help outlying buses to keep to time while people can connect (with suitable through tickets) to other regular services.  
**Will pass this comment onto our commercial team for their consideration**

#### **Feedback forms**

1. Has the representative for First bus ever tried filling in the feedback form in the app? Fields are not marked compulsory and if you don't enter say a phone number everything in the comments box is cleared. A resident has tried to report this but not had much success with customer services understanding their perspective.

**Will pass this comment onto our Customer services manager.**