

Transport, Economy & Environment O&S Committee – Public questions regarding proposed reduction in bus subsidy: 14/10/15

In order received:

DISTRICT	QUESTIONER	WRITTEN NOTICE OF QUESTION/STATEMENT	ATTENDING
1. Scarborough/ Ryedale	Bill Breakell	<p>NATURE OF STATEMENT: “To highlight some significant flaws in the original proposals and the consultation process and to seek reassurance that new proposals which have emerged since the original report will be subject to genuine consultation with users during the next two months.</p> <p>I will refer to a number of services in the east of the county, but only as exemplars of the issue raised in the question - the services to which I will refer are: DR10, DR18, 99, 840, 31X and 180/181. (And all within 2 minutes and 59 seconds!!!)”</p>	Yes
2. Scarborough/ Ryedale	Ruth Breakell	<p>"My concern today is the threat to the independence of NYCC council tax payers who do not drive or are unable to drive for health or economic reasons and wish to leave their homes to conduct their business, health or leisure interests without being reliant on the goodwill of others.</p> <p>We often hear that North Yorkshire is a rural area and travelling distances are greater, whether to doctors, dentists, banks, post offices, railway connections, choice of shopping, theatres, etc.</p> <p>Any further curtailment of bus services will make active participation virtually impossible at a time when many have given years of service in and for NYCC."</p>	Yes
3. Not known	Eden Blyth	<p>“Bearing in mind the public interest that is being generated by item 3 and the difficulty in reaching the meeting from rural areas by public transport, can your Council explain why this public meeting has been held at 10am on a weekday, ensuring it is inaccessible</p>	Yes

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		by most who would want to attend.”	
4. Scarborough	Jackie Fearnley/Cllr Rob Barnett/Cllr Paul Tulloch and Cllr Keith Jeffery	<p>Whitby and North Yorkshire Moors Area Public Transport Group.</p> <p>“When it first came to light that a consultation process was going on with regard to buses in the Whitby, Pickering and Esk Valley area, a group of concerned residents and councillors began to have meetings and did all that we could to alert bus users to the draconian measures suggested by officers, which, if adopted, would see the complete removal of bus services that were lifelines to rural dwellers.</p> <p>We are relieved to know that it seems likely that for the time being measures have been suggested which would mean these vital services continuing to run. The time since these proposals first came to our knowledge, has been very worrying to those of us without cars, leading to questions of whether we should even think about moving from our much loved villages.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1. WE ARE GLAD OF THE OUTCOME OF THE CONSULTATION BUT WOULD LIKE TO KNOW HOW SECURE OUR BUSES WILL BE IN FUTURE.</p> <p>For us in Goathland this is now the third time we have had to fight for the retention of a sustainable and predictable means of getting in and out of our village and none of us here, or in the area around now feels we can take for granted these basic services as we feel that this current recommendation is only a reprieve and that we could still face further threats if more cuts were required from local authorities. We would like to know how secure, and for what period of time, the services in question will be.</p> <p>We are also aware that as a result of the way public transport is now organised, the minute examination of passenger numbers and income generated from particular journeys is far more of an issue than it was before the provision of transport was privatised, when losses on</p>	Yes

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		<p>particular routes or at particular times of the year were able to be compensated for by profits in another area. On this occasion a bus company has accepted to run the same timetable but with a lower subsidy, but for them economic judgements could well lead in future to a change in policy.</p> <p>2. WE WOULD LIKE TO SEEK ASSURANCE THAT KEY POLICIES OF NYCC WILL CONTINUE TO INFORM DECISIONS – IN PARTICULAR THE HEALTH AND WELL BEING STRATEGY, EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND LOCAL TRANSPORT PLANS MADE FOR THE FUTURE.</p> <p>We accept that to some extent these economic judgments are mitigated by NYCC’s recognition of their own policy aims with regard to the needs of vulnerable people but we would like to register the fact that even making proposals that could lead to loss of services in our area has led to a great deal of stress and anxiety amongst those who would be affected. In particular we would want to remind officers and councillors of their duties under their Health and well being strategy and in the light of the Local Transport Plan. Reliable and predictable transport is absolutely vital for people’s ability to access all kinds of services and for them to be able to be as self reliant and independent as possible.</p> <p>3 WE AS A GROUP WOULD LIKE TO BE ASSURED THAT WE WOULD BE CONSULTED AT AN EARLY STAGE IN ANY FUTURE PLANS AFFECTING ANY OF THE BUSES IN OUR AREA, AS WE IDENTIFIED MANY FLAWS IN THE CONSULTATION PROCEDURE AND WOULD WANT TO KNOW THAT LESSONS HAVE BEEN LEARNED.</p> <p>Our group did as much as we could to encourage people to fill in the questionnaires and to provide paper versions to those without access to the internet. Our county councillor accepted invitations to meetings where we were able to express our concerns and she promised to pass them on. But none of this would have happened if we had not found out by</p>	

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		<p>chance what was proposed. The arranging of drop in sessions with a chance to question officers in locations accessible by public transport would have helped the situation as would the reliable sending out of information, with follow up reminders, in plenty of time to village and town councils, who often meet only once a month and are then on holiday in August. This consultation needed to capture the views not only of residents but of those who use the bus to get to our area, where they contribute both through voluntary work (e.g on the Steam Railway) and by spending their money locally. Information at bus stops and on buses and other places such as Tourist Information, Rail and bus ticket offices would have been an obvious first step in the process.</p> <p>We would like to be assured that if any changes are proposed in future, our group, which will continue in existence, should be seen as a body to be consulted and if any future survey were planned, we would like to play a part in its design and publicity.</p> <p>4 IN SOME OF OUR VILLAGES COMMUNITY TRANSPORT WAS PROPOSED AS A SOLUTION TO ANY FUTURE LACK OF BUS SERVICE. PEOPLE WOULD LIKE ASSURANCES THAT NOTHING LIKE THIS WOULD BE PROPOSED IN FUTURE WITHOUT THE RELEVANT RESEARCH AND MEANINGFUL CONSULTATION HAVING BEEN CARRIED OUT BEFOREHAND.</p> <p>We are concerned that the agenda of the Government, through local authorities, is to produce solutions to public transport problems through the funding of what they call community transport schemes. It is our contention that not enough research was done into this idea before suggesting it as a solution in some of the areas that we cover.</p> <p>We would like the council to acknowledge that such schemes are not an adequate replacement for public service buses in many areas, particularly in rural areas where long journeys have to be undertaken to access main hospitals or proper transport links to the rest of the UK. Many people consulted will have mentioned the enormous difficulty of recruiting drivers and the problem of volunteer fatigue and with an ageing population, this scenario is not likely to improve.</p>	

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		<p>5. ASSURANCE SOUGHT AS TO EFFECTIVE SUPPORT OF A TRULY INTEGRATED AND EFFICIENT PASSENGER TRANSPORT SYSTEM.</p> <p>It is our perception that NYCC spends less per head on the support of buses than other areas, even though public transport is so vital to rural areas. We would like to be clear that this is one area where we would like our council tax to be spent, pointing out that for many people being able to get on a bus is more important than faster broadband. We do not want funds to be sucked into such schemes as the Northern Powerhouse, without the outer rural areas being able to be brought into the picture.</p> <p>We think that it would help locals and visitors alike if the council could fund timetables that include all transport available, which would generate more customers for the existing routes.</p> <p>We hope that in future Passenger transport will not be seen as an add on which is there just for minorities, but as a vital component in encouraging and supporting sustainable and healthy village life, helping to combat rural isolation, and linking villages to the outside world. For this to happen we need systems that are viable, reliable and visible.”</p>	
5. Ryedale/ Scarborough	Helen Gundry	<p>Moorsbus Community Interest Group:</p> <p>I would like the opportunity to speak at the Scrutiny Committee on 14th October regarding the cuts to bus subsidy funding.</p> <p>My question will cover the following points:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The impact that reduction in the 31X service would have on local people including the young, old, and working 	

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		<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="696 316 1877 387">2. The impact on tourism of reduced services from York, both 31X and 840, and connecting services<li data-bbox="696 435 1451 467">3. The further consultations proposed for the 31X and 840<li data-bbox="696 515 1794 547">4. Local possibilities of Community Transport as a way of enabling access to services<li data-bbox="696 595 1384 627">5. The wider implications of these funding reductions	