

Bristol City Council Full Council 11 November 2014

BaNES Transport Committee 11 November 2014

South Gloucestershire Planning and Transport 12 November 2014

BaNES Cabinet 12 November 2014

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Bus Service Review

We are concerned about the proposed reductions to bus subsidies across the Greater Bristol Network which will result in the loss of evening and Sunday services. Last year's changes to the subsidy structure in Bristol have proved to be a great success and are starting to bring the bus network into full public acceptance. Given this progress, we need now to protect the core network and in particular the advances which have been made to off-peak, Sunday and night services. This along with Residents Parking Schemes and improvements to rail services has led to a growth of 17% in public transport uptake, which represents one of the greatest modal shifts in Bristol transport over the last fifty years.

If significant savings have to be made, they should most certainly not be made at the expense of perceived accessibility (which is closely related to service level). We would recommend instead that the Council look at privatisation of the city's Park and Ride services which could indeed provide valuable additional services along major corridors. There is good evidence to suggest that privatisation would be financially viable as it has been in other cities.

It would be devastating and highly embarrassing to the city to be seen to be cutting public transport during its tenure of the European Green Capital

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award, At this time we are going to demonstrate hybrid buses, special trains on the Henbury loop and Portishead line, a tourist trail with Shaun the Sheep, Keep Sunday Special events with public transport and cycling themes and a cheaper ticket on the bus and rail network over the school holidays.

We are especially concerned about the secondary bus network (the routes which feed into and out of the trunk network), and which exists mainly on the support of local authority and UWE finance.

Loss of the following services has been and will be a serious blow to the communities who rely on them.

- The 25 (which has cut St Paul's, Montpelier and St Werburgh's off from Bedminster, Southville and Lockleaze/Horfield—a catastrophe in view of the RPS implementation in the pipeline—though some reinstatement is planned once the Romney Avenue BusGate eventually opens
- The forthcoming cancellation of service 20 (withdrawing services from Golden Hill, Henleaze, Southmead, and the BRI Oncology Centre, now partly replaced by limited services on 520, 508 and HospitalLink, but without Sunday and evening provision)
- Withdrawal of Service 15, again disconnecting Henleaze, Golden Hill and other parts of North Bristol.

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The new 72 is only a partial replacement for the 15 and 20, and is clearly more targeted on students specifically rather than as part of the wider Bristol community.

- 11 which is now rerouted via Cumberland Road, removing connection from Temple Meads, Bedminster and Southville (the new 12 perversely covers a similar route but is curiously dispatched along Hotwell Road, again avoiding both Temple Meads and Southville).
- 312 Thornbury to Fishponds via Bristol Parkway and UWE (proposed withdrawal January 2015), partly replaced by Service 83, but without early morning or evening provision.
- 207 Thornbury to Dursley: now a limited community transport service, with no provision for disabled access.

These plans need to be urgently reviewed in conjunction with First and Wessex, UWE, The University of Bristol Hospital Trust and North Bristol NHS Trust.

Further subsidy cuts (unless cut from Park and Ride) will further exacerbate these problems and spread the disconnection across other areas of the city at a time when bus services are being radically improved by the operators (and in the shadow of MetroBus). We are also aware that there are proposals to cut the neighbourhood policing team at BTP covering the

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rail and bus networks in the Greater Bristol area, which is a matter for further concern.

Furthermore, we simply cannot cut bus services and passenger route options at the same time as bringing in RPS across the city.

Service and Infrastructure Investment

Upgrades are required in Weston-super-Mare, Bath, service 21 (Weston-Taunton First Somerset), South Gloucestershire and Gloucestershire services, services 5, 6, 7, 17, 40, 41, 78 and 79.

Better connections are needed at Avonmouth station (and for future reference, Portway Park and Ride) with the 41 bus service. The loss of the station buildings at Avonmouth (promoted by Network Rail as a safety issue), should be resisted so that they could be adapted for passenger interchange use on the Henbury Loop

There has been no marketing of the new services in Bath, Kingswood, Gloucestershire/South Gloucestershire from 2 November, by the Councils, or First Group.

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Bus stops and bus shelters still have outdated information across the whole of the network. Graffiti is also an issue which needs to be given increased vigilance

Bus Priority in Old Market and Temple Meads (Bristol), Eastville Interchange, Avon ring road, Cribbs/Patchway new neighbourhood, Bath, Filton and Patchway (A38)

The Bristol-Gloucester corridor needs investment and a coherent service as do Bristol-Street/Shepton Mallet and Bath-Street/Shepton Mallet

Governance of transport policy in the city region needs full public consultation with the aim of establishing a body with the expertise and clout to be taken seriously by civil servants, ministers, and government with better prospects for funding and finance. This can be based on turning the West of England Transport Board into a fully-fledged delivery authority along the lines of Centro and Transport for Greater Manchester.

Interchanges:

The city region needs to develop a range of passenger-friendly, efficient and comprehensible intermodal interchanges. In the recently-published plan for Temple Circus, there is almost no acknowledgement of Temple Meads' significance as one of the most important interchanges in the

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whole of the South West. Almost all bus stops are retained in their current positions, except for two in the Friary. This provision needs to be modelled on the access levels achieved at Liverpool Street or Bath. A fully-worked interchange next to and incorporated with the undercroft is surely a basic requirement for such a focal transport hub. Further provision should be made in front of the Bristol and Exeter building, which not only provides space for effective interchange, but also offers a very public image of how different transport modes meet and work together.

Other interchange points are: Weston-super-Mare station, Bath bus station (which needs improvements to signage and the café), Bristol Parkway, Filton Abbey Wood (needs bus provision and signage to the retail park), Cribbs Causeway Bus Station, Henbury and Filton North stations, Yatton, Bedminster and Parson Street, East of Bath Parkway, Kingswood town centre, Keynsham station, South Bristol Hospital, Yate Park and Ride (new MetroBus extension), Clevedon town centre, Portishead station, Radstock station and UWE Bus Station.

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