

SAVE OUR 6-7 BUSES!



Statement to B&NES Cabinet, 14th Nov 2012

Pamela Galloway

When we registered to speak here today, we were set to campaign again until March. Let me explain why. In June, we were horrified to hear on good authority, and I quote: "that in light of the many difficult financial decisions facing B&NES Council next year, it was going to be very hard for Councillors to justify continuing to subsidise the 6&7 Buses." That was followed by months of repeated statements by the Executive Member and other councillors that no commitment could be made until at least February to continue our bus subsidy. One councillor has recently termed our campaign "scare-mongering". What would you have done in our position? We felt we had to re-launch the campaign to preserve the vital 30 minute frequency to keep our community vibrant and our elderly from becoming isolated.

As you know, the original subsidy of £85,000 was reduced to £75,000 for a cheaper bus. And we are now pleased to hear because of increased ridership and skilled negotiations on the part of the executive councillor & officers, this has been reduced to £46,000.

Therefore it is with great relief that we learned at last week's Budget Fair, that a "myth was being dispelled" and that bus subsidies would not be cut, so we are very grateful to the Cabinet for relegating one aspect of the threat to a myth.

Since the Budget Fair we have had further assurances that the subsidy for our bus service is included in the Cabinet's proposed public transport budget, and we are delighted to hear this news. We do realise that, as other bus services are affected, this is subject to a Consultation but we & members of the community, as stakeholders, look forward very much to giving our input to this Consultation.

We also had assurances at the Budget Fair, and these have been repeated again since, that the cabinet feel their proposed public transport budget is not under threat from any Central government cuts that might be announced in Dec. We are very encouraged that public transport is being seen as a high priority

At a well attended public meeting last week we were able to update the community about these new developments, and they were united in expressing their a[[recitation for the Cabinet's support for the 30 min frequency.

We would like to thank the councillors and officers who have worked so hard to allocate funds within a limited budget and yet to make public transport such a high priority. We realise there are a few hurdles yet to be overcome but we sincerely hope that the campaign will not have to be revived again between now & February, or yet again in a year's time.

Save Our 6-7 Buses campaign team

Pamela Galloway
17 Baytree Road
Fairfield Park
Bath, BA1 6NB