

B&NES RURAL TRANSPORT GROUP - PROGRESS REPORT 2.1 AS AT 23 Jul 19

<p>OBJECTIVE 1 The Group is to develop a coherent, effective and visible Group structure to define the bounds of its intent and competence</p>	
<p>OUTCOME The Group will own and publish a BANES Rural Transport Action Plan to address rural transport issues across BANES. The plan will draw together all the existing strands of un-coordinated activity relating to the solution of rural transport issues and the development of strategies for the future</p>	
<p>ACTION Create Draft Action Plan and send to stakeholders for comment</p>	<p>LEAD Management Committee</p>
	<p>TARGET DATE 29 Jul 19 (as below)</p>
<p>PROGRESS REPORT</p>	<p>DATE</p>
<p>1. <u>Membership of the Full RTG.</u> Following the meeting on the 10th 2 questions had arisen about the membership of the full RTG:</p> <p>a. A letter from the MD of Citistar had been published in The Journal expressing disappointment that the company was being excluded from the Group. This was not the case, and it was first thought that Citibus should be invited on to the RTG. However, it was decided that (to ensure no other stakeholders were inadvertently missed) David Orme would engage with B&NES to determine which companies were involved in tendering for rural bus services and therefore might be invited on to the RTG in accordance with the Constitution.</p> <p>Update: Meeting arranged with Cllr Butters for 29 Jul 19.</p> <p>b. Rosemary Naish and David Orme had attended an “Off the Record” youth event in the Guildhall on the 17th June. They heard that representatives of the Youth Parliament were in conversation with First and others about transport services and ticket pricing. It was agreed that it would be mutually beneficial to ensure we were working together on such issues and to invite a Youth Representative on to the Full RTG. David Orme would maintain contact with Niall Bowen in the first instance.</p> <p>Update: Done, no further action required at the moment</p>	<p>Action opened: 18 Jun 19</p> <p>18 Jul 19</p> <p>Action opened: 18 Jun 19</p> <p>Action closed TFN: 18 Jul 19</p>
<p>2. <u>RTG Finance.</u> It was recognised that costs would be incurred for room hire for RTG meetings, for creation and support of a website and the survey (see action below.) To enable appropriate financial management it was proposed by Rosemary Naish and seconded by Sarah Williams that:</p> <p>a. The Group open a bank account with Metrobank.</p> <p>b. The signatories for the bank account should be Sarah Williams, David Collett and David Orme.</p> <p>c. Rosemary Naish would contact Parish Councils seeking a</p>	<p>Action opened: 18 Jun 19</p>

<p>s137 grant of £200 from each to “prime the pump”. Any cash remaining when the RTG wound up would be returned to PCs.</p> <p>Update: action open, in hand with Rosemary</p> <p>3. <u>Adoption of an RTG Action Plan.</u> The draft action plan, presented to the full RTG meeting on 10 June, was adopted by the Management Committee as v1.0 dated 18 Jun 19. The plan is attached to these minutes and comments are and will be welcome.</p> <p>Update: no further comments received but always welcome – progress against the action plan will be reviewed and reported monthly TFN</p>	<p>18 Jul 19</p> <p>Action opened: 18 Jun 19</p> <p>Report v2.0 18 Jul 19</p>
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<p>OBJECTIVE 2 The Group is to drive a review of extant and emerging rural transport strategies to determine their status, credibility and coherence across BANES (and on into WECA)</p>	
<p>OUTCOME The status of the extant rural transport strategies (eg for the Somer and Chew Valleys) will be clarified, and they will through the Group’s published action plan be visibly forced into convergence with the emerging WECA JLTP4</p>	
<p>ACTION 1. Confirm the status of the published Chew Valley and Somer Valley Transport Strategies</p>	<p>LEAD Programme Mgr</p> <p>TARGET DATE To be agreed with B&NES before the next MC meeting</p>
<p>PROGRESS REPORT</p> <p>David Orme took an action to contact B&NES to determine how the status of extant B&NES Somer Valley and Chew Valley transport strategies might best be confirmed.</p> <p>https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/parking-and-travel/transport-plans-and-policies</p> <p>Update: meeting arranged with Cllr Butters 29 July to explore the way forward</p>	<p>DATE</p> <p>Action opened: 18 Jun 19</p> <p>18 Jul 19</p>

<p>ACTION 2. Initiate an update accordingly, ensuring that any update clearly connects to the emerging WECA JLTP4</p>	<p>LEAD To be confirmed by the Action above</p> <p>TARGET DATE To be agreed with B&NES before the next MC meeting</p>
<p>PROGRESS REPORT</p> <p>This action is wholly dependent on the outcome of the action above. We await B&NES advice and direction accordingly. Going</p>	<p>DATE</p> <p>Action opened: 18 Jun 19</p>

forward there must be a hard, overt and clear linkage between the B&NES and WECA strategies relating to rural transport services.	
Update: as per action above, awaiting the outcome of the meeting with Cllr Butters 29 July.	18 Jul 19

ACTION 3. Consider the need for a new, separate, Cam Valley Transport Strategy	LEAD Programme Mgr – going to the Cam Valley Forum
	TARGET DATE At next meeting of the Cam Valley Forum unless overtaken by B&NES direction following the action above
PROGRESS REPORT	DATE
This is related to the action above. Is there a need for a new, separate, transport strategy for the Cam Valley? Comment to be sought from the Cam Valley Forum.	Action opened: 18 Jun 19
Update: Next Cam Valley Forum meeting scheduled for 18 Sep 19.	18 Jul 19

ACTION 4. Co-ordinate BANES' input on all rural transport issues to the development of the WECA JLTP4	LEAD To be confirmed with B&NES
	TARGET DATE By the next RTG MC Meeting
PROGRESS REPORT	DATE
This is dependent on the outcome of the related actions above. We await B&NES clarification and direction as to the way forward. No-one seems very sure or clear about how the WECA bus strategy is being developed – particularly as it does, or does not, outline the way future rural transport services across B&NES will be created and funded to satisfy the demand for them.	Action opened: 18 Jun 19
Update: As above, awaiting the outcome of the meeting with Cllr Butters 29 Jul.	18 Jul 19

OBJECTIVE 3	
The Group is to work with the Parishes to determine the demand for rural transport services	
OUTCOME	
There will be a better collective understanding of the demand for rural transport services – thereby a better understanding of how “Value for Money” might best be determined	
ACTION	LEAD

1. Customer Demand Survey	Rosemary Naish TARGET DATE Second Week in July
PROGRESS REPORT	DATE
<p>A draft customer survey had been tabled and was discussed. Rosemary Naish would update the draft accordingly and keep the Management Committee informed.</p> <p>To maintain progress, Rosemary offered to fund the printing of a hard copy of the survey for distribution on the condition she could reclaim costs from the RTG bank account when it had been set up and funds were available. The survey would also be made available on SurveyMonkey.</p> <p>Update: Survey is available for completion online, was printed by 7 July and is now being distributed in hard copy. Returns requested by 31 July.</p> <p>Note: Andy Strong has reported frustration and inconvenience that has been caused by the covering text to the survey which states that the 179 service will be replaced from November this year by “some sort of minibus.” Apologies for any confusion caused by this: I had the opportunity to discuss with Rosemary omitting this text out but I missed it. To clarify: the best advice about the developments in the planning for the 179 is as provided by Andy dated 27 June and reported below under Objective 4 Action 1 below.</p>	<p>Action opened: 18 Jun 19</p> <p>18 Jul 19</p>

<p>ACTION</p> <p>2. Formalise B&NES recent assurance that in decisions about levels of bus subsidies the impact on communities will in future be taken into account: how will VFM be defined?</p>	<p>LEAD</p> <p>Programme Mgr to engage with B&NES</p> <p>TARGET DATE</p> <p>By next MC Meeting</p>
PROGRESS REPORT	DATE
<p>There needs to be a better, collective understanding about the criteria used to determine the level of subsidy allocated by B&NES to keep some bus services (such as the 179) going.</p> <p>There needs to be a better and collective understanding about the perceived “Value for Money” associated with these decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The commercial value - as seen by bus operators b. The strategic value – as seen by B&NES; how far the allocation of subsidies enables achievement of the authority’s strategic objectives (for example how far support to a rural bus service is a means to deliver effective 	<p>Action opened: 18 Jun 19</p>

<p>B&NES action in response to its declaration of a Climate Emergency. Also this must refer to the emerging WECA bus strategy)</p> <p>c. Customer Value - as seen by the customer. Whether the provision of bus services meets the identified demand.</p> <p>The current measure of cost per passenger per service doesn't seem to measure any of these ideas of "Value". It just measures some metric related purely to cost. Specifically, we need to understand how this discussion with B&NES will be managed in time to inform key decisions about the 179.</p> <p>Update: refer to Andy's latest info at Objective 4 below on the planning for the future of the 179, in which he confirms "the award of a new contract will be considered during July. The assessment will not be focussed purely on financial considerations."</p>	<p>18 Jul 19</p>
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<p>OBJECTIVE 4 The Group is to consider and test the effectiveness and affordability of a mix of rural transport solutions</p>	
<p>OUTCOME There will be an understanding and informed commitment to the future delivery of an effective mix of rural transport solutions as discussed at the April 18 Timsbury Workshop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial Bus Services - Community Transport Solutions - Car Sharing 	
<p>ACTION 1. Continue existing discussions about 179/172 services</p>	<p>LEAD Clive Turner & Damien Valentine</p> <p>TARGET DATE To be confirmed – see below</p>
<p>PROGRESS REPORT</p>	<p>DATE</p>
<p>It was agreed that Clive Turner and Damien Valentine should lead on this action for the RTG. It was hoped and intended that the discussions would be informed by the results of the survey as they came available.</p> <p><u>179 Bus Service. Update No. 2 from Clive Turner</u></p> <p>Whilst many of you have probably been wondering what's happening to the 179 service, since our last update in April, there has been much going on behind the scenes; let me update you.</p> <p>Damien Valentine and I got the discussions with First Bus and BANES to a point in mid-May where all key players were prepared to sit around a table and seek the best solution for all concerned.</p>	<p>Action opened: 18 Jun 19</p> <p>20 Jun 19 (and posted on social media)</p>

Having got things that far and because time was of the essence due to regulatory requirements, rather than replicate possible actions being taken by other groups, Damien and I decided to pass the baton to the relevant forum (Cam Valley Transport Solutions Group CVTSG) to make that meeting happen. Unfortunately, due to other background developments, it seemed to have slipped through the cracks and was not actioned.

Since then the CVTSG has been absorbed into the newly formed BANES Rural Transport Group (BRTG) which will be looking at the wider picture of all types of public transport options for the BANES Rural Communities not just the 179 service. You will be hearing more from them in the very near future.

However, In order to maintain the momentum which has been built up for the 179 service over the last 7 months, Damien and I have been invited by the BRTG to again pick up the 179 baton to ensure that no stone is left unturned in order to get the best possible service we can for those served along the 179 route; we have accepted.

The situation now is that BANES have issued and received tenders for the current 179 service plus a couple of slight variants.

First Bus have agreed to keep the current 179 service running **but only until early November 2019**. This at least gives us a breathing space to get the best deal within the regulatory timelines (remind you of anything?)

SO WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

Our next steps are as follows:

1. Establish exactly what BANES is planning regarding the tenders already issued and bids received.
2. First Bus are still interested in the Bath - Wells Express idea (which could possibly run 7 days a week with evening provision as well) so in keeping with regulatory practices we need to persuade BANES to issue a Bath - Wells Express tender inviting First and any other providers to respond.
3. All tender responses can then be considered in the round. This will obviously dictate our next course of action.
4. The outcomes of any resulting meetings with BANES, providers and us will influence the complementary public transport provisions now being explored by the BRTG.
5. Whilst all this is going on, Damien and I will be making sure that everyone who needs to be made aware of what we are trying to achieve is kept involved / informed.
6. We will also be gathering lots of key 179 service information; that's where you can help, but I'll let Damien deal with that separately.

Update to Ward Cllrs and PCs (direct) from Andy Strong

27 Jun 19

You may be aware that the arrangements we set up to rescue bus service 179 at short notice last autumn – when First Bus notified us they would no longer run it on a commercial basis – are due to end on 31 August 2019. Bus 179 runs from Midsomer Norton (Tesco) to Bath via Paulton, High Littleton, Farmborough, Timsbury and Tunley.

We've produced the Enclosed update to explain where we are and what we're doing to try and secure the service into the future. In the short term, we have negotiated an extension to the current contract with First Bus until 9 November 2019, so the current timetable will run until then. Our Cabinet Member for Transport hopes to be able to award a new contract to follow on from that date but we need to carry out another quick procurement exercise before a decision can be considered.

Tender prices for bus service contracts have gone up substantially this year – for a variety of reasons we've been told – and this has increased the pressure on our budget.

Despite that, we recognise the social value of this service to the communities along the route and the role it can play in helping to meet the challenges we are facing. Please be reassured that we are trying to find a sustainable and affordable solution. I am optimistic that we will be able to retain a basic level of service on the 179.

UPDATE No 3 from Clive Turner

11 Jul 19 (and posted on social media)

On behalf of the recently formed BANES Rural Transport Group (BRTG) Damien Valentine and I recently met with Andy Strong to discuss all matters relating to the 179 Bus. You may have seen a statement recently issued by Andy Strong providing some details. Below are the key issues with some additional information.

Subject to all the various necessary council approvals, (expected by mid-August latest) we should have a 179 bus service at least until the end of August 2020.

That service, combined with rescheduled 768 service should provide an improved weekday service, for most people.

It will also enable 179 users to go to Midsomer Norton

There will be interchangeability of provider ticketing

Development of interest in the 179 Bath to Wells Express (in its various options) continues. More of that in the next update.

	Meeting
PROGRESS REPORT	DATE
<p>At the April 18 meeting, it was agreed that car sharing schemes could be exploited to provide a part solution to the need for rural transport services.</p> <p>There was a need to find out whether any such scheme was in use in rural B&NES and, if so, for the RTG to consider how best to evaluate their/its success and portability to other rural areas across B&NES.</p> <p>Update: no significant progress – before the parishes liaison meeting on 24 July I will ask the parishes to flag up any known schemes</p>	<p>Action opened: 18 Jun 19</p> <p>18 Jul 19</p>

OBJECTIVE 5	
The Group is to ensure the Parishes and their residents are aware of all providers of Community Transport solutions and what they offer	
OUTCOME	
There will be a new communications plan owned and driven by the parishes to educate, inform and update residents across BANES rural areas about the availability of community transport services	
ACTION	LEAD
1. Clarify who is providing what, when, to whom and why	Management Committee
	TARGET DATE
	Review at next MC Meeting
PROGRESS REPORT	DATE
<p>Communications were to be established:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. An RTG Website – Damien Valentine kindly offered to help create one b. Social Media (Facebook) page(s) – Rosemary Naish is creating one c. Minutes of RTG Meetings – as per this report, to RTG Members for onward transmission/briefing/display as appropriate. An RTG mailing list needs to be finalised and maintained. d. Communications to the Parishes and Stakeholders – as required to deal with specific issues or questions e. Some involvement (TBC) of the B&NES Forums – as yet unknown f. All related B&NES and WECA websites <p>As the RTG stood up, these communications needs would be captured and published in a communications plan. Draft to be produced by David Orme and considered by the Management Committee at the next meeting.</p>	Action opened: 18 Jun 19

Update: Wordpress website and a Facebook page have been created. The content of, access to and update of these communications media to be reviewed at the next MC meeting.	18 Jul 19
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ACTION 2. Ensure rural residents know	LEAD Management Committee
	TARGET DATE Review at the next MC meeting
PROGRESS REPORT	DATE
The Management Committee needs to be sure that not only does a communications plan exist, but there is an effective solution in practice to deliver against it – ie that residents are getting good and timely information about the plans for the delivery of rural transport services across B&NES. Update: dependent on action above. Pending next MC meeting	Action opened: 18 Jun 19 18 Jul 19

OBJECTIVE 6 The Group is to develop a capability to manage the impact of planned, or anticipated, community action or campaigning	
OUTCOME There will be a proactive engagement with the Forums and the Parishes to identify issues likely to lead to community action or campaigning of any sort, and a collective response will be agreed to maximise the beneficial effects of such action whilst minimising any adverse effects	
ACTION RTG to develop appropriate communications and links to Parish Councils via Forums to create an awareness of current, anticipated and potential rural transport issues that might result in campaigning	LEAD Management Committee
	TARGET DATE To be determined as required on a case by case basis
PROGRESS REPORT	DATE
This is integral to the communications action above but specifically mentioned to ensure that the RTG is aware of the need to get ahead of any proposed or anticipated campaigning. The RTG must avoid looking like it is unaware of, merely reacting to, or is blindsided by, such actions. There are none known or anticipated at the moment. Update: no change	Action opened: 18 Jun 19 18 Jul 19

OBJECTIVE 7 The Group will seek out lessons to be learned from successful integration of rural transport
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services elsewhere	
OUTCOME Time, money and effort will be saved in the adoption of best practice across BANES	
ACTION Ask key stakeholders if they know of successful schemes elsewhere, and determine the best way to understand the factors behind any perceived success.	LEAD Management Committee
	TARGET DATE Review at next MC Meeting
PROGRESS REPORT	DATE
<p>There was discussion about perceived successes in the provision of rural transport services in Lincoln and Oxford. Apparently, Lincolnshire County Council saved £1M on their bus subsidies while increasing coverage of routes to 97% of the rural area.</p> <p>There was also some discussion about developments at Yatton.</p> <p>The Management Committee needs to consider how lessons learned and best practice should be considered and adopted across B&NES as may be appropriate.</p> <p>See these links:</p> <p>Bus information for Lincolnshire - Home of CallConnect - Lincolnshire Bus : Lincolnshire Bus</p> <p>Lessons for rural transport provision - Rural Services Network</p> <p>Update: for review at the next MC meeting. May be discussed briefly (TBC - time permitting) at meeting with Cllr Butters 29 July.</p>	<p>Action opened: 18 Jun 19</p> <p>18 Jul 19</p>