

## Statement from David Redgewell for Cabinet meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Councillors,

We (South West Transport Network and Railfuture Severnside) are concerned about social distancing regulations within Bath and North East Somerset on the public transport network; with government guidance to local authorities to transport operators and passengers' groups. We are concerned about the lack of social distancing notices on Bus shelters and stops. There are no clear social distancing markings on pavements at key locations for Bath city centre, Dorchester street, Keynsham Town centre, Midsomer Norton Town centre, Radstock Town centre, at Whitchurch, Pensford, Farrington Gurney, Salford, Paulton, and Peasedown St John.

Realtime information displays need to explain timetables and social distancing guidance, the importance of wearing face masks and CONTACTLESS payments on buses.

Buses are only allowed to carry 10 people on a single decker and 20 people on a double decker bus, which is 10% of existing capacity.

Clear destination displays must provide information on the front when the bus is full, for passengers' information. DISABLED ACCESS must be protected.

We also need to make sure there is a provision made for extra buses to layover in Bath City centre, Keynsham and Midsomer Norton.

Extra pavements' widening needs to be provided in Keynsham, Peasedown St John, Radstock and Midsomer Norton with adequate provision for cycle lanes.

Some bus stops and shelters may need to be relocated for social distancing. Extra bus stop cleaning is required. Hand gels are required at key interchanges; and public toilets need to be reopened in the district and at the block at Avon street coach station.

WECA Mayoral Transport Authority and Bristol City Council are looking at social distancing measures on Bus infrastructures in Bristol city centre and across the city.

Similar plans are required in south Gloucestershire and across Weston Super Mare and North Somerset.

At present all bus services are funded by the department for transport Covid-19 bus operators grant at £400 million, which is £17 million per week in England. This grant is funded by WECA Mayoral Transport authority and North Somerset Councils. Wiltshire and Somerset County councils are also funding DfT services.

Bus service provision: there is a need for improve the following bus services:

- Evening and Sunday services.
- Bus route 19 (Bath to Cribbs Causeway)
- 179 (Bath to Midsomer Norton via Timsbury and Marksbury).
- Access to south Bristol hospital at Hengrove by providing connections at Brislington and Knowle to route 96 (with weekend and evening service).

Social distancing is required by railway services on trains with just 45 passengers on a 3-car train and 60 on intercity train. Notices and signs need to be in place at Keynsham Oldfield Park, Bath Spa and Freshford. Enforcement on social distancing is required by transport staff including marshalling at key interchanges, with support from the British Transport Police and the Avon and Somerset Police.

We must also note the deaths of 61 public transport network staff who have died on the frontline including 2 local bus drivers. Key public transport workers are members of RMT and Unite union.

Kind regards David Redgewell South West Transport Network and Railfuture Severnside.