

**Presentation: WESTlink**

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**A copy of the presentation is awaited.**

- DRT is not a fixed route or timetabled bus service. It's also not door to door but a link to other bus stops and trains.
- The operating area is divided into North and South Zones with Keynsham between the two as a Town Zone.
- The project will run for 2 years with an option to continue for a further 2 years if successful.
- It uses an app-based system, similar to Uber. However, if you are not comfortable using an app, it will be possible to make bookings via a website and/or a call centre which will have a local number. You can set up an account and pay via this or pay in cash on the bus.
- The service is available to children, you can take dogs on it and all drivers undergo the same checks as those for fixed route bus services. The buses are also wheelchair accessible.
- It is possible to demand a DRT bus within an hour and if the bus does not deliver your journey within an hour, the operator will receive a fine. You can also book 24 hours in advance and book the return journey at the same time if you know when you want to travel. Otherwise, you can be flexible and book the return journey later.
- There will be 30 vehicles – 14 in the north zone and 16 in the south zone. The system uses algorithms to ensure vehicle movements are as efficient as possible. The bus depots are situated in Nailsea, Keynsham, Bristol and South Gloucestershire.
- The service will start on 3 April and the call centre will be operational from 20 March.
- The cost of the journeys will be the same as other bus services and concessionary bus passes will be accepted. There will also be through ticketing available in future to ensure an integrated system.

- It will be possible to download the app or set up accounts soon after 20 March. You can also use the call centre as the system is designed to be fully accessible. You will have a choice of where you want to be picked up – points of interest have been plotted (eg churches, community centres etc) as well as regular bus stops. You can also add extra passengers or arrange for them to be collected at another point on the route.
- As an example, if you needed to catch an 8.14am train from Keynsham railway station, the app will show you where the bus is on screen and, if you use the call centre, they will call you back in time for you to leave your house and be at the pick up point. You can also ask to be collected from a ‘virtual bus stop’/point of interest.

### **Questions following the presentation:**

**Q1: Shoscombe has a weekly bus service which takes people shopping and to the bank in Midsomer Norton. It will finish at the end of the month. Will the DRT take them on to Tesco, or drop them in Midsomer Norton to get another bus there?**

A1: It will give you options. The system is unable to compete against fixed route services but if the minibus will get you to your destination more quickly, it will do.

**Q2: If you have mobility issues, will it pick you up from your door if you mention this when booking?**

A2: Yes. However, it’s not a taxi service so we cannot offer this to everyone otherwise the service will not be achievable.

**Q3: What is the maximum distance from someone’s home to a stop?**

A3: 400m – as per the highway, not as the crow flies.

**Q4: We have one bus stop in our small village. Could we specify another stopping point?**

A4: Yes – this is a trial. If there are other places, do let us know.

**Q5: Will we get a map that shows us where the currently mapped stops are?**

A5: Yes – we can get this to you.

**Q6: Are the stops in existence plotted? We have a bus stop that has lost its ‘flag’ so buses fail to stop at it currently. We will also need more than one stop in our village as it is more than 400m to the existing stop for many.**

A6: Yes – we have asked the Local Authorities to tell us where the existing stops are.

**Q7: Our regular bus will be stopping on 3 April – can I use the DRT to get to Bath or Bristol?**

A7: It is likely to take you to the nearest main line bus stop or to the railway station. The DRT does not go into Bath or Bristol.

**Q8: Does this mean there would be no direct route to the RUH? From Keynsham, it would mean two bus journeys to get there which is not helpful if you are not well.**

A8: No – there would be no direct service to the RUH.

**Q9: I currently drop my son at the nearest bus stop but he can't get on the regular service as it is full of school children. If the DRT also drops passengers at mainline stops, this will add to the pressure.**

A9: The frequency of the X39 service will increase from 3 April with an extra bus per hour.

**Q10: I note that Keynsham is in purple on the map of the zones, between the blue and green zones. What does this mean in terms of fares?**

A10: Keynsham is a straddle/Town Zone but really in the green zone. This means, in theory, you could go to the airport from Keynsham for £2 but it may suggest you use a different service.

**Q11: Could I get from Keynsham to the Chew Valley?**

A11: Yes

**Q12: Can I just check that the DRT could pick up in more than one place – our village is very spread out.**

A12: Yes.

**Q13: It's just three weeks until this goes live. Is there a Communications Plan? Our parishioners are only interested in what transport is available to them – is there anything we can hand out? Are there plans for Parish Councils to receive the Communications Plan? Unfortunately, the bad news about cut services is out so we need the information on the alternative offer to ensure DRT is successful**

A13: This should be available next week. It has been delayed but we are working with B&NES on it.

**Q14: Will the Communications Plan include a map?**

A14: Yes – there are also maps on the app and on the website. It's not live yet but will be soon.

**Q15: Many existing bus stops have shelters and real time information. Will information about WESTlink be placed in bus shelters? This would be a helpful way of providing information.**

A15: Yes – we have got printed information and if a service is being cut, this will include details of the replacement offer.

**Q17: I know that you said information is changing rapidly but would it possible to have a copy of the presentation?**

A17: Yes – we will send this to Alison Wells to share.

**Q18: The current bus routes are gritted but the DRT will be going on smaller roads. Are there any plans to grit more roads?**

A18: The operators are required to use snow/winter tyres. Mandy Bishop confirmed that there would be no change to the existing, gritted routes in the district.