

## **STATEMENT FROM CLLR JESS DAVID – NO. 8 BUS**

I am here this evening in order to make the case for improving the Number 8 bus service which serves the Moorlands estate, running from Kingsway to Bath City Centre. The Number 8 is a vital route for many people, including those who for age or mobility reasons cannot walk to other routes.

In April 2023, the Sunday and Public Holiday service was removed following the West of England Combined Authority's decision not to award a contract for this service. Like other services, it has also been cut in frequency over recent years - from every 15 to every 45 minutes. The service level is now also impacted by intermittent cancellations.

Whilst I am really grateful that the Monday-Saturday service has remained, and is supported by the council, I would like to speak up for the many residents that have contacted me about the desperate need to improve the service.

People have consistently raised this issue with me at drop-in sessions and on the doorstep. I recently also asked for some wider feedback on local social media groups and received 40 responses over the next 24 hrs. Here are some quotes – on the two top issues raised:

Firstly, on the lack of a Sunday Service:

- A resident said: "It cuts us off from Bath for one day each week, especially in the case of those of us who can struggle to walk long distances, as well as making links to other transport. Even if it was only a few times a day, that would be better than nothing".
- Another noted: "a large swathe of the city is cut off from the centre that whole day."
- Another said it would be great "to re-instate the Sunday and Bank Holiday service so that we can have a social life."
- Another said "even an hourly service would be helpful. I know a lot of elderly residents who rely on the service for both Moorland Road shops and the city centre".

Secondly on the frequency of the No 8:

- A resident has written: "I suffer from chronic pain and have been waiting for the bus only for no bus to appear! This has happened more than a few times both town and home end. I then end up having to get an expensive taxi."
- Another resident: "I use the service regularly to get home from work. Recently it's been abysmal with busses not showing up or running late. After a 12-hour day it's a right pain. More regular service is needed to mitigate this problem".
- Another resident: "I must spend an extra hour in town each day in order to arrive and leave on time for a 9-5 job. (The previous) service every 30 minutes worked much more smoothly and reliably".
- Another resident: "I can't tell you how many times I've had to fork out for a taxi, because the 8 has turned up 10 minutes early or not shown up at all or been very late! I find it very unreliable".

Informed by this feedback, my ask is:

For the Cabinet to support restoring a more regular 30-minute Service and a Sunday Service to the Number 8 bus route.

Based on previous inquiries I understand the cost of the Sunday and Public Holiday service to be in the region of £45,000 a year.

Secondly, in preparing for the next year's budget please can you look at every source of funding including the Community Infrastructure Levy as a means to restore this vital route.

Links to feedback:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2224409079/permalink/10160063094209080/?mibextid=WC7FNe&rdid=AJu2BYv07gSAitEF>

<https://www.instagram.com/p/C7MpimgsXIT/?igsh=a2N2bDYyam02dWd3>