



DevonBus - Enhanced Partnership Board Meeting
Thursday 19th January at 11am – 1pm, County Hall, Exeter (or via Teams)

Board members present:

Damien Jones – DCC Deputy Director, Transport Operations, Environment & Waste
Councillor Andrea Davis – DCC Cabinet Member, Climate Change, Environment & Transport
Ian James (via Teams) – Traffic Management Group Manager
Don McIntosh – Managing Director, Tally Ho Coaches (Rep – small/medium operators)
Peter Knight – Managing Director, Stagecoach Southwest (Rep – large operators)

DCC Officers/others present:

Mike Tucker (DCC)
Rachel Phillips (DCC)

Apologies:

Jamie Hlland (DCC)

AGENDA & MEETING NOTES

1. Welcome – apologies were noted; Peter Knight was welcomed as a Board Member
2. Review of notes from last meeting
 - These were accepted as a true record of the meeting
3. DFT / Funding update
 - Monies for Y1 were finally received in December – we now have 3 months to deliver 6 month worth of projects
 - Review meeting with DFT Relationship Manager and first return due to the DFT at the end of January 2023
 - There will be some flexibility to move funding between years – however we will need to get DFT approval; it has been indicated that they will be less flexible if we want to move monies between schemes
4. Cabinet Member update
 - Hoping for a standstill budget for Public Transport next year – this will be propped up by Local Transport Fund (DFT funding) and on street parking – due to go to cabinet for final decision in February.
5. EP Scheme update
 - Capital Schemes:**
 - A brief update was provided on all capital schemes, many Y1 schemes are on target to be completed by March 2023, including significant investment in bus stop infrastructure, an audit of the Devon real time system (with scope to now upgrade), and an upgrade of street lighting at bus stops. Additionally all operators in the partnership should have ticket machines with QR code

capability by July 2023. Design work on capital schemes for Y2 delivery has also commenced.

- Stakeholder consultation process has been started with regards to larger capital schemes
- Concerns were shared about the feasibility of the proposed scheme at Crealy/Hillbarton Business Park, as design and delivery has come in way over initial budget, due to the necessary provision of street lighting following a safety audit. Board agreed that limited mitigation is better than no mitigation, and this should be looked in to further. Crealy and Hillbarton Business Park to be approached for a contribution.
- Devonwide pinchpoints schemes – we have a list but this needs refining and prioritising; project team working on this.

Revenue Schemes:

- Fare support proposals for Y1 were halted due to the introduction of the £2 Fare Cap – we are in discussions with the DFT with regards to carrying the Y1 monies into Y2.
- Bus Service Support – service enhancements; 3 enhanced services, made possibly due to BSIP funding, will start from 1st April
- Miles of Smiles promotional campaign – this is due to start in February and will have many strands – initially it will focus on promoting the £2 Fare Cap

6. Operator Update – Stagecoach and Medium/Small Operators

- DM reporting that the cost of living crisis, added to other factors such as the costs of replacing vehicles, driver shortages in rural areas where house prices have risen, and the rise in overheads are making many businesses unviable. Training new staff is also expensive - PK offered to provide training facilities at cost for drivers with other operators.
- PK provided an update of Stagecoach's current position - currently 21 vacancies in SW business, but there is enough slack in rosters to carry this and it should not reduce service provision. Turn over of staff is also reducing, with a healthy pipeline of new workers and returners. Lost mileage is now 0.3% and not related to the driver shortage. Grateful for the promotional campaign for £2 fare – there was even a positive piece in Devon Live about Stagecoach which makes a change. Cost pressures are still evident and predicted to rise even further.

7. BUS Forum

- The first meeting of the Forum is scheduled for 9th February. Terms of Reference for the forum were shared and agreed by the board.
- Andrea Davis will Chair the first meeting, following this there will be a selection process to appoint a Chair, approved by Andrea Davis and Damien Jones.

8. Making of the Customer Charter

- Review of draft charter – this was agreed by the board as an extended version to sit on the website, and fulfil the DFT requirements. However the board strongly felt that we needed to consolidate the Charter so that it is more concise, user friendly, and embodies what we are trying to achieve through DevonBus and the EP. Therefore we will also produce a shorter version a "Customer Promise".

9. AOB & next meeting date

- Tackling Loneliness Through Transport – DFT funded driver awareness training has been poorly supported by operators – we were asked to raise awareness through the board. Feedback was that it needs to be an accredited course, and due to time constraints it would be better if this was offered as an online course.
- Highways issues – several sets of roadworks in Exeter are causing major problems for operators at the moment. DCC appreciates the difficulties this has presented; temporary lights have been synched to improve traffic flow. The two pieces of works came through different pathways so couldn't be coordinated and permitted in a logical way.
- Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 25th April at 11am.