
Decision Session - Executive Member for City Strategy

2nd June 2009

Report of the Director of City Strategy

Petition to First York bus company concerning changes made to the Nos 13 Service from Heworth to Monks Cross and York College

Summary

1. The report considers a petition presented to Council earlier this year seeking retention of the route 13 bus service linking Heworth to Monks Cross and York College.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member for City Strategy is recommended to:
 - i) Note the content of the petition and inform the lead petitioner of the outcome of the report.
 - ii) Allow the route and service changes of Autumn 2008 and Spring 2009 to become established and revisit the issue if the services do not adequately connect Heworth to Monks Cross or York College.

Reason: Council officers are working to further promote, sustain and develop the local bus network in Heworth and continue to monitor the development of 'Yorcard' in the interests of introducing a cross-operator ticket at the earliest opportunity.

York benefits from the competition that having several bus operators brings; encouraging them to improve their quality and retain lower fares.

Background

3. Route 13 has operated on a commercial basis (without Council subsidy) on week days (daytime and evening) for a number of years. The hourly Sunday service has been operated with financial support from the Council.
4. In Autumn 2008, First York approached Council officers to express concerns regarding the ongoing commercial viability of route 13 in its present form:

Copmanthorpe – York College – Tadcaster Rd – Station – Stonebow – East Parade – Hempland Lane – Woodlands Grove – Malton Road – Monks Cross.

5. The management of First York also expressed concerns regarding the ongoing commercial viability of route 16 (which operated between York and Monks Cross but via Dodsworth Avenue, Byland Avenue and New Lane). Council officers worked with the management of First York to ensure service changes which would be both commercially viable but which would also provide the greatest accessibility to existing destinations.
6. The service changes resulted in the old service 16 renumbered the 13 and 13A (to accommodate Woodlands and Westlands Grove) to Monks Cross and the 5 to Acomb. The old service 13 north east of the city centre ceased to exist. The bus network in Heworth prior to these changes is displayed in annex A. The revised network of bus services from May 2009 is displayed in annex B.
7. A petition containing 246 signatures (and attached as annex C) arrived at the Council at much the same time as officers were working with both First and other bus operators to improve bus accessibility from Heworth to major attractors.

Consultation

8. Officers consulted with Ward Councillors (both for Heworth and Heworth Without) throughout the course of the changes and have subsequently attended a Ward meeting on 21 April with a representative from First York and West Yorkshire to take on board the concerns of residents and explain the changes.
9. Ward Councillor comments will be provided at the meeting.

Options

10. The following options are presented for the Executive Member's consideration:
 - a. Allow the route and service changes of Autumn 2008 and Spring 09 to become established and revisit the issue if the services do not adequately connect Heworth to Monks Cross or York College.
 - b.

Analysis

11. Since the petition was submitted there have been several changes to the bus network in the Heworth area.
12. On 27th April, a number of Council tendered services changed operator and in some cases both route and service number at the same time. One such service was the former 27/28 (operated under contract by Transdev York) which is now operated by York Pullman as service 55. This hourly service connects Heworth with the University and Fulford in one direction and Monks Cross, Huntington and the city centre in the other.

13. In response to the concerns of residents, service 55 was re-routed to operate Melrosegate - Heworth Village - Hemplands Lane – Woodlands Grove - Monks Cross (the service previously operated via Heworth Road).
14. On 10th May, Yorkshire Coastliner (operated by Transdev) introduced a new commercial service 844 to complement the half hourly 843 and provide the residents of Heworth with service connecting Heworth to York College every fifteen minutes.
15. One of the concerns raised in the petition was that the Coastliner buses have, in the past, been full when reaching Heworth (having travelled from Scarborough). The new 844 commences its journey to Leeds from Ashley Park Road in Heworth so this problem will be eliminated.
16. Whilst tickets for both Coastliner and York Pullman are only accepted on their own buses (as is the case with First), the fares are competitive when compared to those on other local bus services and are outlined in table 1 below.

Table 1

	Adult single	Adult return
Pullman Service 55	£1.60 (Heworth Church – Monks Cross)	£3.00 (Heworth Church – Monks Cross)
Coastliner	£1.60 (Heworth – Town) (Under 18s travel for half fare with either a YOzone pass or Transdev Young Person Supersaver)	£2.50 (Heworth – Town) (Under 18s travel for half fare with either a YOzone pass or Transdev Young Person Supersaver)

17. There have been a considerable number of bus route changes in the past six months, many of which have directly affected the residents of Heworth. Services require marketing and 'bedding in' if they are to prove successful. A further recasting of the network at this stage is unlikely to benefit the mid to long term security of either the routes or the commercial operators providing the services.
18. Following the lengthy debates that have taken place over the last year on the subject, it is likely that the only circumstance under which First West Yorkshire and York would be prepared to re-introduce the old route 13 would be upon receipt of Council subsidy. As this would require an open tendering process to be conducted, there would be no guarantee that First would be awarded the contract to operate the route.

Corporate Priorities

19. Support for the bus services in this area would contribute to the following Corporate priorities:

- **Sustainable City** - There is considerable scope for reducing vehicle congestion delay on the overall network through greater bus use, thereby reducing the associated adverse affects, such as air pollution.
 - **Inclusive City** – The introduction of a range of sustainable bus routes across Heworth increases access to opportunities and facilities by a wider (and potentially cheaper) range of travel choices.
20. Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (LTP2): Support for the services outlined above would contribute to several of the aims of the second Local Transport Plan, namely:
- To tackle congestion
 - To improve economic performance in a sustainable manner;
 - To enhance opportunities for all community members, including disadvantaged groups, to play an active part in society;
 - To reduce the impact of traffic and travel on the environment, including air quality, noise and the use of non-renewable resources.

Implications

- **Financial**

There are no financial implications

- **Human Resources (HR)**

There are no HR implications

- **Equalities**

There are no equalities issues except to note that the Council cannot force a bus operator (whether First or any other) to introduce bus services.

- **Legal**

There are no Legal implications

- **Crime and Disorder**

There are no Crime and Disorder implications

- **Information Technology (IT)** (*Contact – Head of IT*)

There are no IT implications

- **Property** (*Contact – Property*)

There are no Property implications

- **Other**

There are no other implications

Risk Management

21. There are no known risks in the recommendations contained in this report.

Contact Details

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Report Approved



Date 19.05.09

Wards Affected: Heworth & Heworth Without

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes

Annex A: Map showing Heworth bus services prior to Winter/Spring 08/9 changes

Annex B: Map showing Heworth bus services post Winter/Spring 08/9 changes

Annex C: A copy of the front page of the petition