
Decision Session
– Executive Member for City Strategy

1st March 2011

Report of the Director of City Strategy

Sunday Bus Services to Fulford and Naburn

Summary

1. This urgent report is written in response to information recently received from Arriva Buses Ltd regarding changes to bus routes 415 (Selby – York via Escrick) which is a commercial operation, and route 42 (Selby – York via Stillingfleet), which is currently wholly subsidised by North Yorkshire County Council, with a contribution from City of York Council.
2. On Sundays, and at times during the early morning and evenings on weekdays, route 415 operates via Heslington Lane and Fulford Broadway. Arriva have now indicated that they intend to amend the route with effect from April 18th 2011 so that all journeys will operate direct along Fulford Road. This will then leave the Fulford Broadway area devoid of buses at these times.
3. We are further advised that funding for evening and Sunday journeys on route 42 will be withdrawn with effect from April 18th 2011, leaving Naburn without any public transport provision at these times.
4. This report offers options for consideration by the Executive Member as to how the areas affected by these changes may be provided with some continued level of public transport provision despite the budgetary pressures faced by the Council.

Recommendations

5. The Executive Member is asked to note the contents of this report and to:
 - 1) Agree for Officers to seek an emergency short-term tender to provide a replacement bus service to Fulford Broadway and Naburn.
 - 2) Agree to a new, Sundays only, bus route linking Naburn Village with York City Centre via Fulford Broadway being incorporated in the package of routes about to be offered for tender, for inception from August 28th 2011.
 - 3) Agree to the withdrawal of funding to support the Sunday evening service on route 10 to offset the additional costs to the Council in obtaining a replacement for routes 42 and 415.
 - 4) Agree that while the loss of the early morning and evening weekday journeys to Fulford Broadway and Naburn are regrettable, the low level of usage

demonstrated makes it uneconomic for the Council to seek replacement facilities.

6. Reason: The Council has obtained from Arriva detailed loadings and revenue figures in respect of the affected journeys and undertaken its own surveys since being informed of the changes. The data suggests that whilst the usage does not justify the provision of individual bus services to each area, a single route serving both would meet the Council's criteria for revenue support.

Background

7. The 1985 Transport Act provides for bus companies to register, amend or withdraw commercially operated bus services at will, provided they give fifty-six days notice to the Traffic Commissioner.
8. Arriva have registered an amendment to route 415 re-routeing those journeys that currently serve Heslington Lane and Fulford Broadway to operate direct via Fulford Road, also with effect from April 18th 2011. This will then leave the Fulford Broadway area devoid of buses at these times.
9. As route 415 is a commercial operation, the Council have no legal powers to request Arriva to reconsider their decision to withdraw the route from Heslington Lane and Fulford Broadway.
10. On Mondays to Saturdays, the Council procure a regular bus service to Fulford Broadway. However, the Council have not needed to procure a Sunday service due to the facility offered by route 415.
11. The Council has obtained from Arriva detailed loadings and revenue figures in respect of the affected journeys and has undertaken its own surveys since being informed of the changes. The data obtained shows that there is significant demand for a continued service to Fulford Broadway.
12. North Yorkshire County Council have recently announced a total withdrawal of revenue support for non-commercial bus services that operate in the evenings and on Sundays.
13. Arriva have decided that it is not possible for them to continue operating route 42 at these times without any financial support and thus cancelled the registration with effect from April 18th 2011.
14. In the absence of any commercial registration being lodged by another operator for a replacement service, residents of Naburn Village will be denied access to public transport at these times.
15. Whilst the Council would not seek to replace withdrawn facilities outside of the borough boundary, the result of the decisions by both Arriva and North Yorkshire County Council will leave the Fulford Broadway and Naburn areas with poorer public transport provision than other areas of York.

16. Loadings figures obtained by the Council show that there is enough demand to support a continued Sunday service to Naburn. The data obtained is appended to this report in Annexe A.
17. All local authorities throughout England have had to review the level of service they can affordably fund following the comprehensive spending review. The current financial pressures faced by the Council and the change of circumstances with reference to routes 42 and 415 is believed to warrant a reconsideration of local bus expenditure priorities.
18. It is both practical and cost effective to satisfy the demand from both areas by providing a single service to both areas.
19. The estimated cost of procuring a Sunday daytime service to Fulford Broadway and Naburn Village is between £8000 and £10000 per annum.
20. The Council wishes to ensure all areas of the city are provided with an equal level of public transport but can only do so within the budgetary limitations set.
21. The Council currently provides support for operation of three round trips on route 10 during the late evening on Sundays. At all other times route 10 is operated commercially, with two operators providing competing services during the week.
22. Whilst the usage of these evening journeys meets the minimum criteria required for the Council to provide financial support, the numbers are lower than those shown to be using the existing services to Fulford Broadway and Naburn.
23. Under the Council's proposals for revisions to the supported bus network agreed by the Executive Member in December 2010, all areas currently served on Sundays would retain a bus service during the day on Sundays but route 10 alone would continue to receive support for late evening journeys on this day.
24. This would appear to unreasonably favour those areas served by route 10 and the Council feels it cannot justify continuing this support to the total exclusion of two other areas of the City.
25. The cost of providing the late evening service on route 10 is currently £6075.50 per annum, a figure expected to increase under re-tender.
26. The Council believes it is justified in transferring support from route 10 on Sunday evenings to a replacement facility to serve those areas that would otherwise be left without any such provision at any time on Sundays.
27. If this were accepted, it is estimated that the cost of obtaining replacement facilities to Fulford Broadway and Naburn on Sundays would require only a small increase in the Council's expenditure on procurement of non-commercial bus services, equivalent to approximately 0.3% of the total.
28. Within this, a limited daytime Sunday service can also be provided via weekday route 24 to Westfield, thus meeting the Council's aim of providing a similar level of Sunday bus provision to all areas.

29. Following a successful trial of providing a bank holiday service on routes 24/26, the Council proposes to offer a longer route through the full procurement process, (as outlined in the proposed timetables at paragraph 29), extending the service to Acomb and Westfield.
30. This extended service can be provided at little additional cost as the Council proposes only to replace routes 415 and 42 at a two-hourly frequency. A round trip from York to Naburn and back takes just under an hour, so it is proposed to use the time available between these journeys to provide the service to Westfield.
31. As this does not require any increase in resource, the only additional cost to the council over and above that quoted in paragraph 15 will be for the additional mileage operated.
32. Proposed time tables for
 - a) a short-term replacement service between York and Naburn to operate from April 18th until August 21st 2011 and
 - b) the service between Naburn and Westfield proposed to be incorporated in the tender process for operation from August 28th 2011

are attached to this report as Annexe B.

Consultation

33. The outcome of the Councils' review of the procured local bus network was presented to the Executive Member in December 2010.
34. At this decision session, the Executive Member indicated his support for the Council's proposed alterations to services to cater for the reduction in available funding.
35. Details of these proposals have been available for public consultation since December 2010. As yet no adverse comment has been received.

Options

36. The following options are presented for the Executive Member's consideration:
 - a. Agree to the Council seeking an emergency tender for a short-term replacement service between York and Naburn whilst adding the proposed Westfield – Naburn route to the upcoming procurement process and withdrawing funding for the Sunday evening operation on route 10.
 - b. Take no further action beyond the approval given in December 2010, accepting the withdrawal of evening and Sunday bus services to Fulford Broadway and Naburn.

Corporate Objectives

37. The recommendation meets the Council's objectives of providing an equitable level of public transport provision to all areas of the city not served by commercial bus services in the most cost effective manner.

Implications

- **Financial** – The proposal would require a small increase in the Council's expenditure on procurement of non-commercial bus services, equivalent to approximately 0.3% of the total.
- **Human Resources (HR)** - none
- **Equalities** – Total withdrawal of evening and Sunday service to the Fulford Broadway and Naburn areas would cause hardship to those unable to access other means of transport and could be seen as treating residents of the areas, particularly the young and disabled, unequally compared to others.
- **Legal** - none
- **Crime and Disorder** - none
- **Information Technology (IT)** - none
- **Property** - none

Risk Management

38. There is a risk that leaving the areas of Fulford and Naburn devoid of public transport on Sundays could impact unfairly on residents who have need to access facilities in York.

Contact Details

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Report Approved



Date

25 February 2011

Specialist Implications Officer(s) *List information for all*

Implication: Financial
Name: Patrick Looker
Title: Finance Manager
Tel No: 1633

Wards Affected: *Fishergate, Fulford, Guildhall, Wheldrake*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers

None

Annexes

Annex A – Loadings and revenue figures for routes 10, 42 and 415

Annex B – Proposed timetables for replacement Sunday bus service to Fulford Broadway and Naburn.