

Holme Valley Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 20 AUGUST 2007 -

Those present :

Chairman : Cllr T Bellamy

Councillors : Cllr L Bailey, Cllr M Bower, Cllr Mrs R Bratt, Cllr J G Cropper, Cllr T W Dixon, Cllr R P Dixon, Cllr Mrs D Hall, Cllr R Oldfield, Cllr Mrs J M Osborn, Cllr A R Otterburn, Cllr Mrs J Roberts, Cllr P Robinson, Cllr P D Searby, Cllr Mrs B E Smith, Cllr M A Walker

Officers : Mrs MA Bewick, Mrs E Hirst

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillors Christofi, Dearnley, Greenwood, Kaye, K. Smith and B.A. Smith.

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman took the Chair for the meeting.

Mr. Neil Holt, West Yorkshire PTE, Mr. M. Davies and Mr. A. Hawksworth, First Bus, were in attendance to answer Members' questions. Mr. A. Scholey of First Bus had sent his apologies for not being able to attend.

07 28 Admission of the Public

It was agreed that no items required to be taken in private session.

07 29 Holme Valley Bus Services

(1) Members had been circulated with details of proposals from First Bus for changes to services 310 - 316 operating in the Holme Valley. At the earlier informal consultation meeting to which all Councillors had been invited a number of concerns had been raised. Mr. Davies of First Bus briefly addressed the main points about which the company had been asked to respond.

Following concerns expressed about increased charges because of the need to change buses in order to reach areas currently served by one service, First Bus and Metro had been exploring the creation of a Holmfirth Area Day Ticket, priced £2.50 for an adult, which would allow unlimited travel during the day on all services from Honley Bridge throughout the Holme Valley, including services to Meltham.

Concern had been expressed about the withdrawal of services on Sheffield Road, Jackson Bridge to New Mill and the increase in journey time which would result from the new route to be followed. First Bus responded that amending an early morning service to run direct to New Mill would physically require one bus, and put the whole cost of that vehicle on to the one journey. It was felt that the route suggested and the increase to a half hourly service to Hepworth and Scholes offered a greater benefit to a majority of people.

At that meeting the Council had also been asked to express a view on another amendment to routes in that service 316 (Parkhead) could be diverted down Burnlee Road, rather than terminating at Parkhead, and provide an extra service to Holmbridge and Holme. A further option could be that service 312 could be extended to Parkhead, offering another service to that area.

Members raised the following concerns/issues:

- the increase in journey time for passengers using service 316 which would run via Kirkroyds and New Mill, rather than direct down Woodhead Road/Huddersfield Road to Honley
- the presumption was questioned that there was confusion about where to catch buses on the part of passengers
- concerns about the number of buses passing along Victoria Street, and accessing Holmfirth Bus Station, giving potential problems caused by parked cars, etc.
- increased journey times from Hepworth, and Jackson Bridge and the loss of services for residents in

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the Sheffield Road area.

First Bus representatives commented in response to the above points:

- the possibility of a second peak hour express service from Parkhead running along the main A6024 would be investigated
- further explanations were given about the reasons for the majority of services focussing on Holmfirth Bus Station
- the proposals before the Council did not result in any increase in the number of services which accessed Holmfirth Bus Station and traffic issues would be monitored
- surveys taken by First Bus had not indicated a significant passenger demand on Sheffield Road, and it was reiterated that a half hourly service would benefit a greater number of people than would be disadvantaged.

It was accepted by the First Bus representatives that it was inevitable that some people would be disadvantaged by these proposals, but the company had already taken on board concerns expressed by Metro in early consultations and would endeavour to take on board Councillors' concerns wherever possible. The representatives offered to come back to the Council once services had been running for some time, say six months, and review how these were operating. It was accepted by the representatives that they could not expect the Council to endorse the withdrawal of services to some residents, and would note their concerns. It was also pointed out by Mr. Holt that negotiations had been taking place to simplify the fare structures without increasing the fares, and that this had been agreed by First Bus.

After some further discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That the Council wished the following comments and concerns to be noted and would welcome a written response in reply:

- (1) The Council accepts the proposal to amend service 316, as currently shown on the map, to run instead down Burnlee Road to Woodhead Road and on to Holme, offering a half hourly service from Holme and Holmbridge.
- (2) The Council would, however, ask that service 316 be rerouted to revert to its current route down Greenfield Road to Holmfirth and into Huddersfield on the A6024, omitting any loop round Holmfirth Bus Station.
- (3) The Council would ask First Bus to re-examine services to Scholes and Hepworth as the proposals require the removal of bus services on Sheffield Road between Jackson Bridge and New Mill, and it is felt that this will disadvantage local residents in this area; the proposed journey times will also increase significantly.
- (4) The Council has concerns for the impact on traffic and bus journey times of the number of services which will have to pass down Victoria Street to stop at, and pass through, Holmfirth Bus Station.

First Bus also indicated that it would look at the possibility of an express service at peak times for the Parkhead route.

It was further resolved that First Bus and WYPTE be thanked for coming to the meeting and for consulting the Parish Council about these important proposals, many of which were acceptable.

(2) As a result of discussions at the consultation meeting, it had been suggested that it might be possible to include information about these proposed changes to the bus services in the Council's newsletter which was due to be published and distributed early in October. Some implications of including this information were laid out in a report from the Clerk, with the additional information obtained that day, that Royal Mail would not accept an increase in the weight on that which had been agreed in the contract. First Bus reiterated its offer to sponsor the cost of printing and distributing the newsletter.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the offer of First Bus to sponsor the full cost to the Council of printing and distributing the next edition of the newsletter be accepted, and First Bus thanked for this
- (2) That First Bus be offered a full A3 page to provide residents with this important information about services
- (3) That the Parish Council restricts its information to one A3 page in this edition.

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RESOLVED: That, under the Council's Publication Scheme, supporting papers for any item within the public session of the meeting be made available, if requested after approval of the minutes.

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Chairman