

Holme Valley Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 22 OCTOBER 2007 -

Those present :

Chairman : Cllr T Bellamy

Councillors : Cllr M Bower, Cllr J G Cropper, Cllr T Dearnley, Cllr T W Dixon, Cllr R P Dixon, Cllr D M Firth, Cllr J M Greenwood, Cllr Mrs J M Osborn, Cllr Mrs J Roberts, Cllr P Robinson, Cllr P D Searby, Cllr Mrs B E Smith, Cllr B A Smith, Cllr M A Walker

Officers : Mrs MA Bewick, Mrs E Hirst

Four Members of the public were present.

Mr. Neil Holt, of West Yorkshire PTE in attendance

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillors Bailey, Mrs. Bratt, Christofi, Mrs. Hall, Kaye, Oldfield, Otterburn and K. Smith.

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

07 59 Disclosure of Interests

None were given.

07 60 Admission of the Public

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

07 61 Holme Valley Bus Services

The Chairman welcomed to Mr. Holt to this Special meeting of the Council called to consider further information in relation to proposals for changes to bus routes in Holme Valley. Mr. Holt outlined the past discussions between the Council, Metro and FirstBus and the current position, in that he was not here to re-open consultations. It was very clear that FirstBus was not willing to abandon its plans, although it had agreed to defer introduction of those plans until 9 December 2007 to see if any alternative solutions could be identified to address the outstanding issues.

He understood that FirstBus was looking to adapt the proposed timetable to provide an early morning service starting in New Mill to cater for students travelling from the area to Huddersfield for college, and that it was aware of a similar problem with the service for Uppertong residents, and would also look at this.

He then outlined his initial ideas for tackling, in particular, the withdrawal of a bus service from Jackson Bridge down to New Mill, which would entail alteration of Minibus Service H4. Given that this route was well supported in its current format, he would not propose a complete rerouting. Surveys had shown that the majority of users of this service travelled in the mornings, and he, therefore, asked the Council to consider maintaining the H4 on its current route in the mornings, up until 1pm, but to provide four trips in the afternoon, linking Hepworth, Jackson Bridge and Sheffield Road to New Mill. It was hoped that the Parish Council would co-operate in taking this idea further.

Members reiterated their concerns about issues identified at previous meetings:
the lack of proper public consultation, and the lack of attention to the public's views
the withdrawal of bus services in the Hade Edge, Jackson Bridge, Sheffield Road, New Mill area
the extended journey times for travellers from Hepworth and from Parkhead
the unsuitability, for such traffic, of some of the highways on which FirstBus proposed to operate
the potential loss of income for the Minibus routes.

There was also concern that FirstBus could not be instructed to continue to provide services as at

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present. It was explained that FirstBus was a private company trading in a private market place, and that, therefore, it could operate such services as it wished, and where it wished. Metro could only seek to influence such decisions, not dictate them.

The Chairman reminded Members that Metro wished views from the Parish Council on the proposal to divert afternoon services from H4's current route, to provide some service to the Jackson Bridge/New Mill area. Members commented that this was very much a second best option, and could affect the current Minibus services. It was felt that services should be left as present.

RESOLVED: That it is the Council's wish that, as from the date of the proposed changes by FirstBus, there should be no changes at all to any bus services (including the Holme Valley Minibus Services) in the Holme Valley from Honley Bridge upwards, and that this wish be communicated to Metro and FirstBus.

07 62 Freedom of Information Act 2000

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 by the full Council.

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Chairman