

Minutes of first meeting on 14 July
2022 at the White House.

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE BUS USERS GROUP
SPONSORED BY LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL
THE WHITE HOUSE
LEIGHTON BUZZARD LU7 1HD

Present:

Cllr Victoria Harvey (“VH”), Leighton-Linslade Town Council and Central Beds Council

Cllr Steve Owen (“SO”), Leighton-Linslade Town Council

Mr J Sharp (“JS”), Leighton Buzzard Society

+ 6 bus users (names redacted for publication)

1. Organisation:

It was agreed that

Cllr Harvey Chair the meeting

Mr Sharp act as co-ordination and representative to the Central Bedfordshire & pan-Bedfordshire Bus Users Group Forums.

Cllr Owen would take notes of the meeting and circulate them.

2. Purpose of the Group:

It was agreed that the Group’s purposes would be to hold regular meetings to

Receive and discuss residents’ issues with Leighton-Linslade bus services

Communicate with CBC and bus operators to secure improvements

Take part in the Central Bedfordshire & pan-Bedfordshire Bus Users Group Forums

Identify and press for funding to improve local bus services

3. Introductions

VH and JS gave the group information on what was happening with bus services at CBC. Mr Sharp explained that CBC had been awarded £3m Government funding for bus improvements: a condition was that the bus operators were required to act with greater “transparency”, i.e. better local consultation. There would be a Bus Users Forum for the whole of Bedfordshire in October which our representative would attend. VH also spoke of plans to review all the network in light of bus service provision for the new Eastern Leighton Buzzard developments.

Mr A Hardy, CBC Public Transport Manager, had given a presentation to the Town Council’s Planning & Transport Committee about these changes. He also mentioned that the only CBC-subsidised services in Leighton-Linslade were the 36A and 36C and so they had no influence over Arriva services.

4. Issues raised by Group members:

General

- a) Some unreliability issues, i.e. bus services not appearing or not on time.
- b) Exclusion of buses eg 36C from the High Street on market days.
- c) Bus stop information boards sometimes out of date, absent or difficult to read
- d) Buses to Luton stopping further away from the L&D Hospital than before causing problems for those with mobility issues
- e) Lack of printed timetables (apparently discontinued by CBC) – VH asked how people got information about bus services. People generally unaware of a phone callpoint.
- f) Route changes are not publicised.

Specific Services

- g) 150 Arriva bus service (Milton Keynes – L-L – Aylesbury)
 - unreliable and too infrequent – it used to be half-hourly and is now hourly, with two hour gaps on Monday to Friday
 - no service on Sundays (a popular service in the past).
 - recent changes possibly influenced by MK Council have made access to MK hospital more difficult for L-L/H&R users of this service.
 - CBC used to subsidise some journeys on this route but not now.
- h) 36C Grant Palmer Linslade loop service: still not using the High Street stops on non-market days, making it difficult for those with mobility issues, and the service lacked the convenience of having both clockwise and anticlockwise services. There was now also a two hour midday break in service.
- i) S70 service (to Milton Keynes) used to go along Stoke Road – now goes up Soulbury Road
- j) 150 service to Luton & Dunstable Hospital has no room for buggies
- k) 34/35 service to Meadway and Churchill Road – bus is too small and so difficult to access for disabled people and those with shopping trolleys.

[Note: at the September meeting we will need to discuss the above issues in greater detail and what action we should take.]

5. Next Steps –

It was agreed to

- Hold the next meeting in week commencing 19 September at 11 am, **SO to** check availability of meeting room at the White House and notify members **[Meeting fixed for Tuesday 13 September, 10 am, White House]**
- **SO to** circulate draft minutes **(herewith)**
- **VH to** advertise the group's existence at the library with a view to encouraging other bus users to join
- **SO and VH to** agree a Press Release.

Steve Owen