

ITEM 14

Time commenced - 6.00 pm

Time finished - 6.45 pm

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION 22 DECEMBER 2008

Present: Councillor Graves (in the Chair)
Councillor Webb

In attendance Councillors Care and Williamson

01/08 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Hird

02/08 Late items introduced by the Chair

There were no late items

03/08 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of Interest.

04/08 Consideration of a Petition Requesting a Bus Service from Alvaston to Derby City Hospital

The Sub-Commission considered a petition requesting a bus service to Derby City General Hospital from Alvaston and Allenton along the ring road calling at the Cavendish area on route to the hospital. Councillor Williamson presented the petition on behalf of the lead petitioner. The petition contained 332 signatures. Councillor Williamson advised the Sub-Commission that this service would benefit many people including patients, visitors, staff and people wanting to visit the low cost supermarket opposite the hospital.

Peter Price, Head of Transportation, presented a report to the Commission which detailed the current travel situation and the issues related to providing a direct bus link. He appreciated the desire to introduce a direct link but explained that bus services were largely provided by private bus operators on a commercial basis. He explained that the Council had the ability to seek tenders for contracted bus services, but said that both of the main operators in Derby had said that they do not believe such a direct link would ever be commercially viable, meaning that an ongoing and significant level of subsidy would be required from the Council. He also explained that there were already good links to the hospital via the city centre, although he accepted that this required a change of bus, which is currently inconvenient due to the poor interchange caused by the temporary bus station. However, he confirmed that the operators have agreed to introduce a joint ticket which would enable customers who did use two bus services to save money on their bus fares.

Peter Price went on to explain that the Authority already provided subsidy on routes it felt were important such as Darley Abbey, Mackworth and the Wyvern and could look

at whether it could provide additional revenue support such as through the Government's Kickstart programme. He confirmed this would be reviewed once the guidance on Kickstart bids has been published by the Government.

Councillor Care added that the Council needed to discuss with the hospital its travel plan and how it could be made more effective to promote the existing bus links and to help those who struggle to access the hospital.

The Sub-Commission raised concern that the Health Trust was not doing all it should be doing with regards to its travel plan and that routes such as this should be considered as part of their travel planning.

The Sub Commission noted that this petition had been submitted by residents living in some of the more deprived areas of the city who have modest levels of income and on whom the cost of transport has a bigger impact.

The Commission was also informed that a Section 106 Agreement had been entered into with the Trust which covered transport and the hospital was delivering the requirements of this through its travel plan. The Trust also gave refunds on transport costs to patients on certain types of benefits.

Resolved to make the following recommendations to the Scrutiny Management Commission:

- 1. To note that the Sub-Commission felt that this was a valid petition with valid concerns.**
- 2. To request that the Council investigate the viability of a direct bus route with involvement from Derby Hospitals Foundation Trust and the bus operators, and including a bid through the government's Kickstart programme if appropriate.**
- 3. To request that the Council contact Derby Hospitals Foundation Trust and encourage them to deliver more through their travel plan.**
- 4. To request that the Council sends a copy of the petition to Derby Hospitals Foundation Trust asking them to investigate ways to implement a service in conjunction with its travel plan and to look at ways of possibly combining a service with other social transport services such as Dial a Ride and other existing bus services, and if this was successful to extend the initiative City wide.**

Minutes End