



DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

PETITION - LOCAL BUS PROVISION LADYWELL WEST

REPORT BY HEAD OF OPERATIONAL SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to consider a petition submitted by residents of Ladywell regarding Public Transport within the Ladywell West area and to provide a recommendation to Council Executive.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Scrutiny Panel;

1. Note the submission of the petition;
2. Note that the public transport budget is fully committed within the current financial year;
3. Note that the existing local bus provision available to the Ladywell west area is in line with current council strategy and performance indicators;
4. Note and consider the following recommendation which is intended to be submitted to the Council Executive for approval:

It is recommended that the Council Executive instruct officers to respond to the petition stating that the request of the petition cannot be met.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; developing employees; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	<p>The council has a policy of supporting public transport services where resources permit. The Transport (Scotland) Act 1985 states that it is the duty of the council, in exercising their power, to conduct themselves as not to inhibit competition in the commercial market.</p> <p>The council's procedures on dealing with petitions require that petitions are considered by Council Executive.</p>
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None

IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	The council has a target PI for Public Transport of having 90% of residents with access to an hourly or better daytime service Monday to Saturday. It is possible that changes in the commercial and subsidised network could impact this PI.
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	The local bus network contributes to a number of outcomes by connecting communities with services and employment.
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	The Public Transport budget approved by Council Executive in February 2019 was £9.985 million. Council Executive agreed on 25 June that an additional one-off resource of £473,000 would be allocated to assist with the mitigation of the pressures within mainstream school transport and local bus services time-limited funding.
VII	Consideration at PDSP	
VIII	Other consultations	Financial Management Unit

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

A petition signed by 330 residents of Ladywell has been received by the Council. The petition is requesting the reinstatement of the 31 local bus service within the area of Ladywell West to provide “an essential link for Ladywell West residents to our local pharmacy, shops and medical services”.

West Lothian Council's Public Transport Strategy was approved by Council Executive in June 2015 and outlines the council's commitment to maintaining a public transport network to meet the majority of transport needs for local people, while creating the savings which are necessary to ensure that the service is sustainable and affordable for the future. A key feature of the Public Transport Strategy is to remove duplication of bus services and make best use of resources. The council does not necessarily seek to use its financial support to provide service users with a choice of travel destinations or service type; preferring instead to seek to provide accessibility for as many people as possible to locations at which social needs can reasonably be met.

The council also has a performance indicator aiming for at least 90% of residents to have access to an hourly or better bus service within 800 meters of their home address. The council is current exceeding this target at 91.6%.

D.2 Local Bus Service (LBS) 31

In April 2016, the council redesigned and retendered subsidised local bus contracts based on the outcomes of the public transport strategy. In September 2016, the council identified one off time limited funding to extend the newly designed 31 service to include stops in Ladywell West and Dechmont. At its meeting of 25 June 2019, Council Executive extended the funding to 28 September 2019 and agreed that after this date the timetable would revert back to the originally contracted specification and Ladywell West and Dechmont would subsequently be removed.

D.3 Local Bus Provision Ladywell West

As the 31 bus service was the single service serving Ladywell West, the removal of the service from the area has resulted in the 4 stops along Ladywell West Road no longer being served by a local bus service. However, in line with the council's performance indicator all residents within Ladywell West have access to alternative services within 800 meters of their home address. Appendix 1 provides a map of Ladywell West Road and the alternative bus stops available on both Ladywell East Road and Alderstone Road. The following local bus services can be accessed by utilising these stops:

Stop	Services Available
Ladywell East Road	25,27,280 and X23
Alderstone Road	26, 27, 275, 281, X27 and X28

These services provide a direct link to the majority of areas available on the previous 31 service including St John's Hospital and Livingston Centre. Passengers wishing to travel to Linlithgow can board the 31 at Livingston Centre for onward travel.

Officers within Public Transport have liaised with commercial operators to ascertain if a commercial service could be amended to serve Ladywell West Road however operators confirmed that there is no scope at this time within the current commercial network to make a change of this nature. The local bus provision available to residents of Ladywell West is in line with the Public Transport Strategy and performance indicators

D.4 Additional West Lothian Transport Schemes

Residents that feel they are unable to walk or use the travel options available may be entitled to use alternative concessionary travel schemes provided by West Lothian Council. The Dial-a-Ride and Dial-a-Bus services provide a door through door service for customers unable to use ordinary bus services and/or feel they suffer from a degree of social exclusion due to geographical remoteness. Applications for this service are made directly to HcL Transport with further information detailed on the HCL website (www.hcltransport.org.uk).

D.5 Public Transport Financial Pressures

The Public Transport budget approved by Council Executive in February 2019 was £9.985 million. The revenue outturn report was considered by Council Executive on 25 June and it was agreed that an additional one-off resource of £473,000 would be allocated to assist with the mitigation of the pressures within mainstream school transport and local bus services time-limited funding.

It was previously reported that, based on the 2018/19 outturn, Public Transport had budget pressures of £1.443 million. Officers have undertaken work to reduce the recurring overspend however underlying pressures still remain across public transport as a whole.

E. CONCLUSION

A petition has been received from Ladywell West residents requesting the reinstatement of the 31 service within Ladywell West Road. The local bus provision available to residents of Ladywell West is in line with the Public Transport Strategy and performance indicators. Furthermore, there is no available financial resource within the public transport budget to provide additional services over and above those already in place.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Appendices/Attachments:

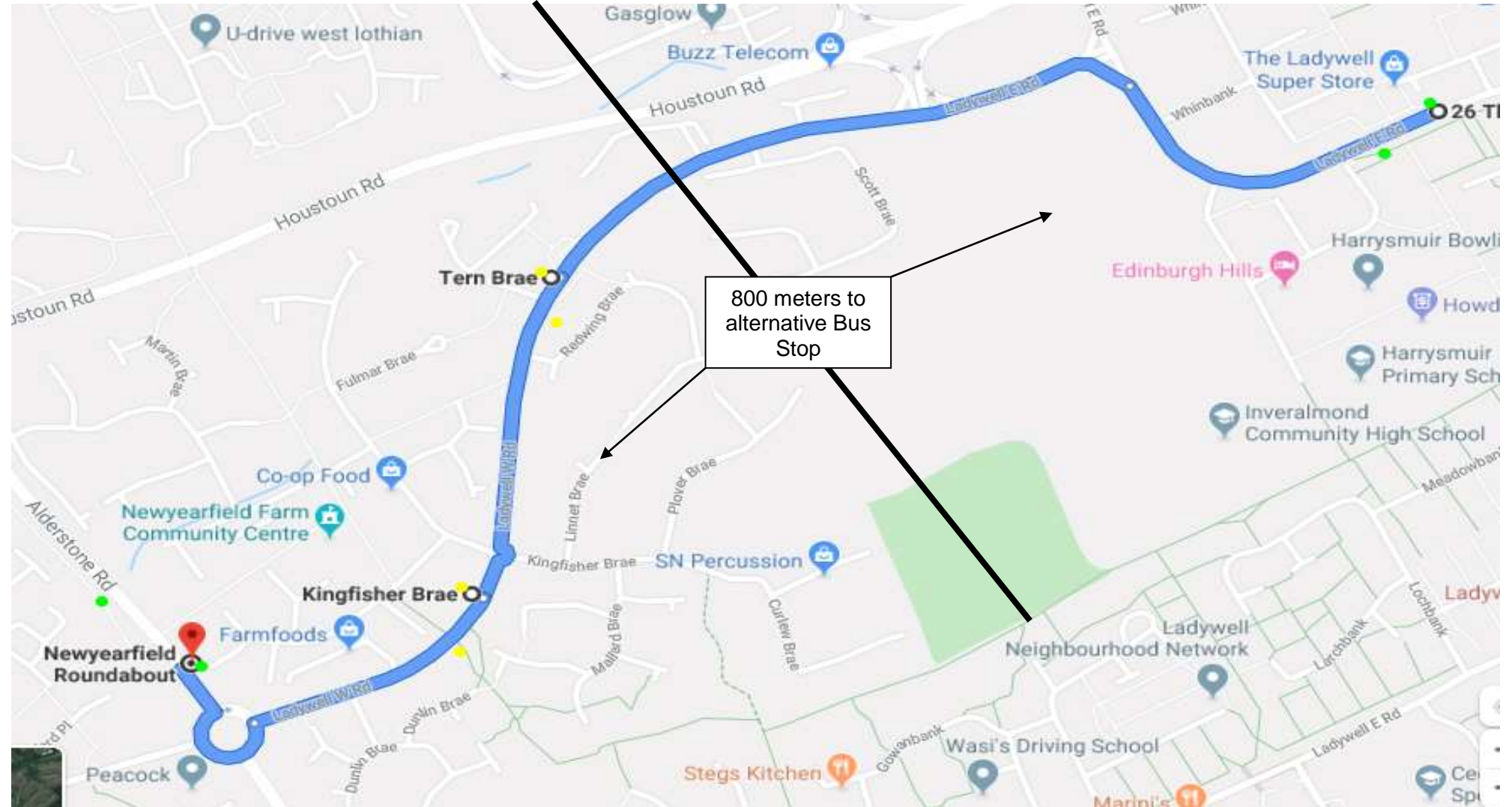
Appendix 1 – Ladywell West Road Alternative Bus Stops

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Date of meeting: 5 November 2019

Appendix 1 – Ladywell West Road Alternative Bus Stops



Key

- Current Bus Stops on Ladywell West Road
- Alternative Bus Stops within 800 meters
- Cut off for direction of alternative bus stop