



NOTICE OF MEETING

Bracknell Forest Access Group

Tuesday 14 October 2014, 7.30 pm

Meeting Rooms 1&2, Easthampstead Baptist Church, South Hill Road, Bracknell, RG12 7NS

To: Bracknell Forest Access Group

Councillor Thompson (Chairman), Councillor Finnie (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Harrison and Ms Wilson

David Ariss

Tom Conlin, The Berkshire County Blind Society

Alan Dale, Be Heard in Bracknell

Geraldine Edmond

Ray Edwards MBE, Limbcare

Jane Figg, Macular Support Group

Sarah Gaitely, Konnections

Fiona Goodhand, Older People and Long Term Conditions

Geoff Hallett, BADHOGS

Mira Haynes, Bracknell Forest Council

Dorothy Lim, Bracknell Forest Homes Tenants and Leaseholders Panel

Andrea McCombie-Parker, The Ark

Mrs Isabel Mattick, Triple A

Barry Perrin, Limbcare

Muriel Rawsthorne, Bracknell Forest Homes Tenants and Leaseholders Panel

Fred Rule, Keep Mobile Accessible Transport

Jacqui Ryder, Bracknell Shopmobility

Mark Sanders, Healthwatch

Mary Waight, Community Learning Disability Services, BFC

cc: Substitute Members of the Committee

Councillors Dr Barnard, Birch, Brossard, Turrell and Virgo

ALISON SANDERS

Director of Corporate Services

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Tuesday 14 October 2014, 7.30 pm
Meeting Rooms 1&2, Easthampstead Baptist Church, South Hill
Road, Bracknell, RG12 7NS**

AGENDA

Page No

1. **Apologies for Absence**

To note apologies for absence and the attendance of any substitute members.

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

To receive and note the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 2 July 2014.

1 - 4

3. **Supported Bus Service Contracts and Community Transport**

To receive an update on planned changes to the supported local bus network and the forthcoming procurement of the revised bus contracts

5 - 10

4. **Any Other Business**

5. **Items for Future Meetings**

To consider any additional items for discussion at future meetings.

The next meeting of the Bracknell Forest Access Group will be held on 4 February 2015 at 7.30pm in Esathampstead Baptist Church

Unrestricted

**BRACKNELL FOREST ACCESS GROUP
2 JULY 2014
7.30 - 8.40 PM**



Present:

Councillors Thompson (Chairman), Harrison and Ms Wilson
Alan Dale, Be Heard in Bracknell
Geraldine Edmond
Jane Figg, Macular Support Group
Sarah Gaitely, Konnections
Mira Haynes, Bracknell Forest Council
Muriel Rawsthorne, Bracknell Forest Homes Tenants and Leasholders Panel
Mary Waight, Community Learning Disability Services, BFC

In Attendance:

Abby Thomas, Head of Community Engagement & Equalities
Darren Burgess, Bracknell Forest Council
Dean Eales, DisabledGo

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor Jim Finnie
Ray Edwards MBE, Limbicare
Andrea McCombie-Parker, The Ark
Jacqui Ryder, Bracknell Shopmobility
Mark Sanders, Healthwatch
Helen Barnett, Bracknell Regeneration Partnership
Alison Sanders, Director of Corporate Services

25. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Bracknell Forest Access Group held on 7 May 2014 were agreed as a correct record.

Arising on the minutes, the Group was advised that it was anticipated that the Bracknell Forest Retailers Guide would be published by the end of August; comments on the draft had been incorporated. All members of the group would receive a copy of the Guide and it would be made available on request. The Guide would be officially launched in September/October 2014 in partnership with the Bracknell Forest Regeneration Partnership

26. Access Improvement Plan Progress Report

Darren Burgess, Principal Building Surveyor presented the Access Improvement Programme Report to the Panel. A number of improvement works had been recently completed, these included The Youth Offending Service at Binfield Road, the children's respite centre at Larchwood and Bracknell Family Centre at Wick Hill Cottage. The works included improvements to access ramps and steps and improvement to bathroom facilities at Larchwood.

Improvement works had started at Bracknell Forest Leisure Centre, this included widening of doors in the buildings, installation of hand rails, updating accessible toilets (both male and female individual toilets) and changing facilities and improved signage and notices within the centre. The Panel noted that these works were worked around the use of the centre to permit the centre to remain open during the works with minimum disturbance to the users of the centre.

Other works that had not been part of the Access Improvement Plan had been included where there were accessibility issues that had been identified, including where other work had been carried out on council buildings. These included improving access issues at Great Hollands Community Centre and Library, whilst the centre was being redeveloped. The work would be completed by the end of July. At North Ascot Library the issue around the accessibility inside the building was being addressed, in consultation with the library service.

The list of Publically Accessible Buildings had been circulated. The Council now includes on this list the two Bracknell town centre car parks at Charles Square and High Street. Studies had been commissioned to assess what work is required to bring them to the agreed accessibility standard.

Arising from the questions and comments from the Group, the following points were noted:

- The bathroom facilities at Larchwood had been updated, SG reported that there appeared to be a problem with restrictive space for assisting a quadriplegic young person. The family had been advised that the centre could not accommodate this family. This matter would be addressed with the Manager at the centre and with the children's social care section at the Council.

Action: *Darren Burgess to contact the manager of Larchwood.*

- Adult Social Care buildings that would form the 2014/15 improvement works would include Heathlands and Ladybank. Work had previously been completed at Waymead.
- There was no plan to re-audit the premises on this list, issues were addressed if and when they arose.
- Bracknell Bus Station was not within the remit of the Council. It would be part of the regeneration of the town centre and would form part of the Bracknell Regeneration Partnerships programme for the redevelopment, accessibility would be part of that programme.

27. **Disabled Go Annual Report**

Dean Eales, Account Manager at Disabled Go, presented the annual review of Disabled Go in Bracknell Forest. He gave an overview of Disabled Go's operations; they assessed premises and business for accessibility from a pan disability perspective. They had 130,000 venues registered in the UK, Ireland, Guernsey and Isle of Man. All venues were assessed using the same template, which had been devised in consultation with disability groups and individuals with a disability. Each individual venue was contacted and revisited annually to ensure the information held by Disabled Go was up to date. The information provided also assisted families with

pushchairs and other older people who may not be classified as disabled, but benefit from the information that Disabled Go collated.

In Bracknell Forest five venues had been removed from the list, some because they had closed. Bracknell Shopmobility had relocated within the town centre and would be visited shortly to be assessed and would be re added to the list of venues on Disabled Go.

The Disabled Go website gave full details of the venues registered with them. It showed a photograph of the venue, and had 20 symbols that could be used to identify what was and wasn't available, such as designated seating areas, accessible car park, opening times, inside access and so on. New additions included a google map link, and the ability to leave a comment or review from the visitor about the venue. Disabled Go was also looking at ways to raise awareness and investigating promotional livery on their vehicles and window stickers showing membership of Disabled Go at venues. Both these initiatives would have QR codes that could be scanned with smart phones and information download to the smart phone on the move.

The Disabled Go website had been redesigned with additional functionality introduced and ReciteMe had been included which spoke aloud sections of the website when the computer mouse hovered over an area. The website was able to be translated into 55 different languages; text could be changed to different fonts as well as dyslexia friendly fonts. The new website should be launched in mid July; Dean Eales welcomed any comments on the website before it was launched.

Arising from the questions and comments from the Group, the following points were noted:

- Disabled Go Bracknell Forest was funded from Bracknell Forest Council, Thames Valley Police, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Bracknell Forest Homes and others.
- 600 venues were listed under Bracknell Forest, with 150 or so of those being public venues.
- Following the introduction of the Care Bill other indicators could be introduced such as Autism Friendly, Dementia Friendly, Safe Places in conjunction with existing Council initiatives.
- Local logos could also be incorporated into the guide.

The Panel thanked Dean Eales for the full review of Disabled Go in Bracknell Forest.

28. **Items for Future Meetings**

It was agreed that the following items would be discussed at future meetings of the Group:

- Master Plan for Accessibility.
- Access for trains and access at stations.
- Bracknell Town Centre Regeneration.

29. **Any Other Business**

There were no additional items of business.

30. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Bracknell Forest Access Group will be held on Wednesday 1 October 2014 at Easthampstead Baptist Church.

**TO: BRACKNELL FOREST ACCESS GROUP
14 OCTOBER 2014**

SUPPORTED BUS SERVICE CONTRACTS (2015) AND COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Director of Environment, Culture and Communities

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Bracknell Forest Access Group of the planned changes to the supported local bus network and the forthcoming procurement of the revised bus contracts.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Bracknell Forest Access Group notes the report.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP3) sets out the Council's role regarding bus service transport in the Borough. This includes 'procuring socially necessary services that are not provided by the free market, subject to external funding'. These services are delivered under the 1985 Transport Act, which allows the Council to 'secure the provision of such public passenger transport services as the council consider it appropriate to secure to meet any public transport requirements... which, would not in their view, be met apart from any action taken.'
- 3.2 Bus services funded by the Council are termed 'supported services' and are provided through contracts' with bus operators and provide communities with access to their daily needs.
- 3.3 In 2013 the Overview and Scrutiny Panel appointed a Bus Strategy Working Group to review and develop the emerging Bus Strategy to provide more detail on the practical implementation of bus passenger transport across the Borough. Following a consultation exercise with the general public, bus users, bus operators, representatives from stakeholder groups and neighbouring local authorities, a Bus Strategy was developed and formally adopted by the Executive in January 2014.
- 3.4 This Bus Strategy reflects the Council's aims and principles and ensures that future bus passenger transport is delivered effectively across the Borough. The associated Action Plan sets out the headline tasks required to implement the strategy; an important element being to introduce new supported bus services, whilst working in partnership with commercial service operators to improve current services, extend commercial operations, and potentially facilitate changes to services in order to better serve local amenities.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The Bus Strategy Working Group (BSWG) was of the view that the Council should continue to support bus provision where most needed; however, it felt that the Bus Strategy should seek to support services evolving to become commercial services over time, to reduce reliance on Council funding. The option to reduce bus subsidy was not supported at that time, but instead a view put forward that services should be provided where needed, subject to value for money considerations.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The future bus network in the Borough will be shaped by the key objectives in the Bus Strategy:
- i. Response to commercial bus service changes, where current commercial operations are limited and supported services are therefore required;
 - ii. A quality network that focuses the Council's supported routes to/from Bracknell town centre, improving connections between local bus services and maintaining access to important services such as employment, education and health, thereby supporting both the young and older populations;
 - iii. Steps to ensure that new developments are served, including the regeneration of Bracknell town centre and new residential developments, such as Warfield;
 - iv. Promotion of partnership working with neighbouring local authorities and local bus operators;
 - v. Monitoring of performance/quality enabling the Council to better plan for future service changes.
- 5.2 As part of the current procurement exercise a Bus Network Review was undertaken to consider the priorities of the Bus Strategy, including current patterns of use; reasonable levels of service for most areas; consistency and equity, greater clarity of service and simpler routing patterns; establishing Bracknell town centre as both a destination and a transport hub; and providing the best opportunity for more commercial services across the Borough.
- 5.3 There were no obvious gaps in the commercial services that needed to be plugged by the revised supported network. Accessibility checks showed that the proximity of residential areas to a bus service gave good coverage. There were few adverse comments received regarding the routing and timetabling of existing services. Therefore there was no need for wholesale change but instead a review was undertaken to see how the network could be enhanced and provided more efficiently.
- 5.4 As a result, the key features of the Revised Bus Network are set out below:
- i. Accessibility maintained to/from Bracknell town centre and other key destinations, such as Wexham Park Hospital and the supermarkets, in particular Warfield Tesco and the surrounding local amenities;
 - ii. A consistent level of service with regularised half-hourly frequency of service achieved across the Borough where possible;
 - iii. Combined existing routes where appropriate, to improve reliability and reduce the overall number of buses required;
 - iv. Updated timetables and increased opportunities for connections between local bus services;
 - v. Access maintained to almost every bus stop on the existing network;
 - vi. Existing connections retained with rail services and improvements to these where possible;
 - vii. Improved access to health facilities, such as Brant's Bridge 'HealthSpace';
 - viii. Provision of services for new housing developments, such as Warfield;
- 5.5 Suppliers on the Framework Agreement have been given the opportunity to submit quotations against the proposed supported bus network, together with additional options for better quality

buses, Sunday services, evening services and vehicles compatible with the Council's Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) system.

- 5.6 Bracknell Forest Council also currently has an Agreement with Keep Mobile on a not-for-profit basis. Services for Bracknell Borough residents who are unable to access conventional public transport services owing to their age, physical disability, sensory impairments, learning difficulties or mental health difficulties are subsidised by the Council under this Agreement. Those wishing to use the service become members of the Council's community transport scheme and are then able to call Keep Mobile to book journeys. The current funding under the Agreement enables Keep Mobile to offer group travel opportunities, together with dial-a-ride services for individuals to make door-to-door journeys. Currently, there are over 600 Borough residents registered with Keep Mobile and approximately 230 single passenger journeys are made each month. Users are charged a fare based on distance.

6 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 The Bus Strategy was subject to a 12 week consultation (July and October 2013). Conclusions supported the proposed objectives/principles set out in the Bus Strategy by highlighting the importance of local bus services to the older population and people with health problems.

An initial Equalities Screening Form was produced specifically for the procurement of the new supported bus services, which concluded that a full Equalities Impact Assessment was not required given that a withdrawal of bus services and no material change in service format was proposed.

Background Papers

Table 1 summarises the proposed changes to the supported bus network.

Contact for further information

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TABLE 1**SUPPORTED BUS SERVICE CONTRACTS 2015****PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE BUS NETWORK**

ROUTE NO:	BRIEF ROUTE OUTLINE:	COMMENTS:
A (Subject to re-numbering)	Bracknell – Winkfield /Ascot	Combines the 152, 153 and 162 services. The new service links Bracknell- Tesco-High Pines-Winkfield/Ascot. Frequency every 60 minutes peak and 90 minutes off peak. Simplified single service with greater consistency of frequency.
B (Subject to re-numbering)	Bracknell – Warfield Park	Replaces service 199, serving Warfield Tesco instead of Birch Hill Sainsbury's and includes town centre service. Infrequency of service unchanged.
C (Subject to re-numbering)	Bracknell - The Parks – Brants Bridge - Bracknell	Replaces the Parks 156 service and takes in Brants Bridge Health Centre. Reduction of frequency to 60 minutes.
D (Subject to re-numbering)	Bracknell – Bullbrook – Tesco – Quelm Park – Bracknell	Replaces the 154 Bullbrook and the 152 to Bracknell-Quelm Park-Tesco-Winkfield. The new service links Bracknell-Bullbrook-Tesco-Quelm Park and Harvest Ride (future Warfield development) – Bracknell. 30 minute frequency in both directions.
E (Subject to re-numbering)	Bracknell – Binfield – Bracknell	Replaces the Binfield to Bracknell 153 service and will follow the existing route with an unchanged 30 minute frequency. Re-numbered for clarity.
53	Bracknell – Tesco – Wexham Park Hospital	Route of the Bracknell-Tesco-Wexham Park Hospital service is unchanged; the frequency remains at 60 minutes.
108	Bracknell - Jennett's Park – Bracknell	Route of the Jennett's Park service is unchanged; the frequency is reduced to 30 minutes.
151	Bracknell – Binfield – Wokingham	Route of the Bracknell-Binfield-Wokingham service is unchanged; frequency remains at 120 minutes during peak periods.
598	Sandhurst Shopper Service	Route and frequency of the Sandhurst Shopper Service are unchanged; the service is infrequent.

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