

Brixham Town Council

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Title:	Community Transport Update		
To:	Full Council	Date:	17.12.20
Contact Officer:	Receptionist/Information Assistant	Liz McCusker	
Contact Details:	info@brixhamtowncouncil.gov.uk	01803 859678	

Purpose of Report

To update Councillors on community transport progress. Members were last updated during the Full Council meeting held on the 19th November 2020, this was a verbal update.

Background and overview

Brixham Town Council were notified on 15th June 2020 by the then BTC Councillor Mike Morey that it had come to his attention that the Country Bus company were planning to scrap the number 15 and 16 routes in the town on 31st July.

This gave the Council little time to react other than to voice objections on the basis of the anticipated impact on residents who would find themselves entirely cut off from their own Town Centre as a result of the earlier loss of other routes in the town that were formerly run by Stagecoach and Local Bus, coupled with the Country Bus announcement.

Subsequently Torbay Council gained some extra funding so they could continue to support the threatened services until 31st March 2021.

Since that time, working with partners, staff and Councillors we have been investigating what BTC can do to provide or support some kind of alternative service in the event of the 15+16 routes being cancelled, having gained a little time as a result of the extra funding being obtained by Torbay Council.

The partnership has at various times in the past 6 months included contributions from Torbay Council officers, Anthony Mangnall MP and Sustainable Frome, with regular input from Torbay Community Development Trust and The Edge.

Update from 19th November 2020

Councillor Massey has joined the community transport group and attended the last meeting on 1st December 2020. In attendance from Brixham Town Council (BTC) was Liz McCusker, Cllrs Massey, Hoggart and Giles, from Torbay Council (TC) Lesley Dranfield, John Clewer, from Torbay Community Development Trust (TCDT) Tracey Cabache, Kelly Bedoyan.

At the meeting Cllr Giles asked if the number 18 bus service could extend to take in the Summercourt area that will have no service if the 15/16 are lost. Mr Clewer said it was important to them to know how many use the bus to go to Kingswear. The report from the questionnaire that BTC carried out was sent to Torbay Council, who have passed this to WSP consultants. A discussion took place about the Fare Car Scheme which is run by Independent Cars Ltd in partnership with Torbay Council who provide funding to top up the fare charged to users, you need to register to join. Fare Car Torbay provides a vital link for Torbay residents who have difficulty using conventional transport due to disability, age or mobility restrictions.

It is a Private Hire car which runs a bit like a bus service. Like a bus it runs to a fixed schedule with set arrival and departure times at designated locations. Unlike a bus it can pick you up from your home, and you have to book a journey in advance. If only one person books a journey to a set destination then Fare Car will not run.

It was suggested that a joint letter to Stagecoach is sent from both BTC and TC. An article and questionnaire will be going out in the January Signal regarding community transport.

A meeting was held with Martin Gallagher from WSP who have been commissioned by Torbay Council to do a study to investigate the feasibility and suitability of DRT (Demand Responsive Transport). WSP will develop a framework for Torbay Council to use when considering further public transport service procurement. WSP will not be shortlisting specific routes or discussing how these would be commissioned, funded etc. They will report to Torbay Council before Christmas.

Contact was also made with the Community Transport Advisor at Devon County Council, to explore the support they could provide. They have forums that we could join if we decide to take on a community car scheme, they have also supplied this link:-

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/transportoperators/community-transport-kit/setting-up/voluntary-car-scheme#:~:text=How%20to%20set%20up%20a%20voluntary%20car%20scheme,insurance.%20...%208%20Contact.%20...%209%20Further%20reading> from Hampshire County Council that gives information for setting up a community car scheme.

Devon County Council also linked us up to Karing in Paignton who are currently running a scheme, originally in Paignton and is now covering a wider area including some work in Brixham and is keen to be involved, they are coming to our next meeting, 22nd December, to share information about what they do and how it operates, this might be an option if we lose the bus services in April. Most of the community car schemes would be classed as DRT options.

Under review

The following actions and possibilities are under review:-

- An updated community consultation has been included in the January 2021 edition of the Brixham Signal (some 330 plus took part in an earlier one). The consultation has two core objectives among its questions, which are whether the public will support and possibly pay towards an alternative scheme and the commencement of a search for volunteers should BTC to implement a community scheme where this would be required.
- A community bus scheme is being investigated, including all anticipated costs, and members of the group will be asking the F&GP Committee to allow for such a scheme in the forthcoming 2021/22 budget.
- A community car scheme is being investigated and the group anticipate receiving a member of the Paignton based organisation, Karing, at their next meeting towards the end of the month as they already organise a successful scheme in their area and may be interested in extending it into Brixham. Again members will be asking the F&GP Committee to consider this when developing the 2021/22 budget.
- A joint letter to Stagecoach is being sent by BTC and Torbay Council calling for them to extend the route of the 18 service to Kingswear around that part of the journey that previously covered the Summercombe Way, Chestnut Avenue and

Summer Lane areas as such a move would immediately solve the problem in that part of the town if the 15 and 16 services are withdrawn.

This remains an ongoing process and any financial elements will be discussed with the F&GP Committee as laid out in the bullet points above.