

**Welland Valley Bus Service Meeting
Wilbarston 21 June 2018**

Those Present:

Nick Richards	Wilbarston PC
Georgina Royle	Wilbarston PC
David Grayson	Cottingham PC
Owen Davison	Cottingham PC
Sarah Brant	Middleton PC
John Underwood	East Carlton PC
Nick Janzen	East Carlton PC
Bernard Rengger	Sutton Bassett PM
John Hindle	Gretton PC
Trevor Burbidge	Rockingham PM
Ian Norman	Rockingham PM
Brent Woodford	Ashley PC
Cllr David Howes	Welland Ward, Kettering Borough Council
James Loader	Northants Highways Bus and Rail Team

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Purpose of meeting - there had been developments since the previous meeting and the intention this evening was to review those and consider possible options that might arise from them in order to be able to respond quickly and conclude arrangements for the bus service.

Updates since previous meeting-

Corby BC at their meeting on 28 June are to consider a proposal that £30,000 be made available to support rural bus services. At the moment it is not known how this figure has been arrived at or what the political response will be.

Following discussions around information from the last meeting a formal request for £3000 has been put to Kettering BC and is being circulated amongst cabinet members. Some form of response should be forthcoming shortly.

The short term bus service between Gretton/Rockingham/Corby will not proceed.

Information from Highways-

We are not going to conclude arrangements by 2 July but James confirmed that the plan will be carried forward subject to three weeks' notice of commencement when details are in place.

There may be some flexibility over the timetable of payments to the operator provided

that sufficient is available up front to allow for a period of nil usage.

This proposal is actually for two contracts, opening up the possibility of two funding partners rather than one. This could be extremely useful if Corby/Kettering provide funds without wishing to take the lead and each require them to be made available to a parish in their borough. It would also reduce the risk for any parish taking on the role of funding partner.

Funding Partners-

NCC will agree and manager contracts with the bus service provider but will sign service agreements with funding partners, who will then become responsible for collecting and providing the agreed payments. This will also include liability for any balance payment if usage does not match up to forecasts during the contract. Discussion took place around this but it was felt that, particularly if there were two contracts, the figures would not be great and with the backing of all parishes confirmed at the outset the risks could be managed. Parishes to consider whether they would be prepared to take on this role if necessary. Wilbarston would be a clear candidate within Kettering, subject to parish council approval.

James Loader will provide a specimen of the Service Level Agreement.

Way Forward-

It was agreed that Nick Richards(Wilbarston), Sarah Brant (Middleton), David Grayson (Cottingham) and Bernard Rengger (Sutton Bassett) would form a small group to take forward any detailed matters once responses are received from Corby BC and Kettering BC, reporting or referring back to others as necessary. The likely options are:

Corby/Kettering provide full funding, in which case only details of implementation will need to be settled.

Corby/Kettering provide partial funding. Some parishes have already agreed contributions in certain circumstances if necessary. This exercise will need to be concluded based on whatever the shortfall is and then details of implementation will be settled.

Corby/Kettering provide no funding. It is the clear wish of the group that even in this case we must try to do something with whatever funds we do have or believe could be raised. This may require flexibility in the implementation of the service and imagination in the source of funding. This option would probably require a further full meeting, but only after the 'four' had looked at information and possibilities, we would want it to be a meeting to finalize something, not to start a fresh process.

NR
22 June 2018