

Steering Group meeting notes

28.09.22

Guildhall, 18:30 – 20:00

Present:

John Scanlan (Chair)

Joy Gleeson – Bourton Residents Association (until ~19:00)

Graham Bennett - Ramblers

Maggie Cornhill – Chamber of Commerce

Steve Grove – Bob the Bus

Sarah Collinson – Inclusive Totnes

Cllr Bennett

Cllr Hodgson (until ~19:00)

Maiken Hutchings – TTC Sustainability Officer (notes)

Recommendations:

- The Steering Group recommend to Planning that TTC should send a letter of concern to relevant stakeholders (including relevant DCC officers) regarding the issues around recently amended and reduced bus services in and around Totnes.
- It was agreed to recommend to Planning that TTC should consider the issue of pedestrian safety around the Lamb and Heaths Nursery car park, specifically how it might be able to financially support the implementation of pedestrian safety measures, such as a zebra crossing

Actions:

- Cllr Hodgson to await email from Joy Gleeson before taking bus stop issue further
- Sustainability Officer to find contact details for relevant officers at DCC to pass on to Cllr Collinson/Cllr Bennett
- Sustainability Officer to chase outcomes/report from signage workaround
- Sustainability Officer to pass on feedback on wayfinding to TTC Marketing Manager
- Sustainability Officer to find out about current status of getting Totnes map removed and replaced
- Steering Group members to email feedback on new wayfinding signs to Lucy at TTC
- Sustainability Officer to pass on Wales & West contact email to CoC, Bob the Bus and Inclusive Totnes

1. Bus issues

1.1 Bourton bus stop issue

Joy Gleeson, representing the Bourton Residents Association, explained the difficulties experienced by residents with regards to buses suddenly not stopping at the bus stop by Newton Road. This has caused significant distress as people are not able to get to where

they need to go. Some bus drivers have said that there have been a number of new drivers employed who are not aware that it is a formal stop. There is currently not a bus stop sign at that location. This was felt to be a key solution to the problem. The bus company had been contacted but no response had been received.

The group discussed the issue, and it was agreed that Joy should write to Cllr Hodgson as DCC Councillor so that she could take this forward. It was also suggested that she write again to the bus company in another effort to receive a response.

ACTION: Cllr Hodgson to take this forward with DCC/bus company once email from Joy received

1.2 General bus issues

Sarah Collinson explained that she had received an email from Chris Watson regarding the mounting mobility problems faced by Bridgetown residents who rely on buses, particularly evenings, weekends and for anyone needing to get to Torbay Hospital. Appendix A outlines some of the changes coming into effect 2nd October 2022.

Particularly safety issues related to the new Gold bus route were highlighted, such as lack of safe crossing points on the busy main road and lack of bus shelters.

This was discussed. The conversation turned to bus issues in general, the serious issues with Stagecoach, and how the Town Council might be able to take these issues forward.

It was suggested that TTC should send a letter of concern to the relevant stakeholders, including officers at DCC and the transport commissioner (?).

RECOMMENDATION: It was agreed to recommend to the Planning Committee that TTC should send a letter of concern to relevant stakeholders (including relevant DCC officers) regarding the issues around recently amended and reduced bus services in and around Totnes

ACTION: Sustainability Officer to find contact details for relevant officers at DCC to pass on to Cllr Collinson/Cllr Bennett

2. Initial traffic meeting feedback

The group discussed the traffic meeting that was held on 13th September 2022. Four Steering Group members were present as participants (Jo Sweett, Maggie Cornhill, Graham Bennett, Sarah Collinson).

They felt that the meeting spent too long going over things that have been discussed previously (which we know won't work) rather than focusing on new solutions. It was felt that a lot of legwork had gone into the meeting for little outcome. The group also expressed frustration at the fact that DCC had us do this meeting rather than engage with us directly. It was felt that it was a way to kick the issue further into the grass.

Graham said he felt that the meeting was a positive one, but that he thought the real issue related to the next steps process and the worry that it would lead to another stalemate.

- Graham stated that what we really want and need is to sit around a table with DCC officers to explain why Totnes is a peculiar place, why it matters, and try to find solutions that work for everyone.
- He also made the point that if we can find a solution that works for Totnes, then this may be replicable in other places

The group agreed that an open approach should be taken and that the whole of objective of the final report to DCC should be to get a proper sit-down meeting with DCC. This will be discussed further at the November Steering Group meeting.

Other issues

The group then discussed other issues that came up at the meeting, such as signage. It was requested that the Sustainability Officer chase Highways / TTC internally for a report back on the signage walkaround in mid-July, especially with regards to the Fore St entrance sign.

ACTION: Sustainability Officer to chase outcomes/report from signage walkaround

Some of the Group also provided feedback on the new wayfinding signs in town.

- Generally agreed that writing too small
- Fingerposts too high and sometimes not visible
- Lack of signage from car parks into town (many had seen tourists wandering around lost)

The Totnes map by the bus stop at Seven Stars was also highlighted as being a real eye sore. Maggie said that someone local had offered to create a new one for £150.

ACTION: Sustainability Officer to pass on feedback on wayfinding to TTC Marketing Manager

ACTION: Sustainability Officer to find out about current status of getting Totnes map removed

Cllr Sweett highlighted to the Group that DCC will be introducing new parking charges on Fore St / High St parking. Prices are going up quite significantly.

3. Update on zebra crossing at the Lamb

Sarah updated the Group on the current situation with the proposed zebra crossing. Inclusive Totnes was approached by local residents regarding the situation for pedestrians around the Lamb. A zebra crossing had originally been rejected by HATOC but Sarah explained that they hadn't taken everything into consideration that they should have done. Inclusive Totnes had pointed out several oversights. HATOC were told to repeat their

surveys. The result is that HATOC in principle support the introduction of a zebra crossing (no formal vote taken) but that they do not have any funds to provide.

The Group discussed this further.

- Cllr Sweett pointed out that there is another problem area between Heaths Nursery and the Nursery car parks. Many people cross here and it is also on a corner.
- Cllr Bennett suggested that DCC could put in stop signs at each junction to prevent drivers speeding around the corners.
- Sarah suggested that it might be worth TTC looking into whether they could fund it through a multi-pronged approach (TTC funding, sponsorship, etc).

RECOMMENDATION: It was agreed to recommend to Planning Committee that TTC should consider this issue further, specifically how it might be able to financially support the implementation of pedestrian safety measures, such as a zebra crossing

4. AOB

Gas works on Fore / High St

TTC have recently been informed by Wales & West Utilities about future gas works on Fore St / High St. TTC have very little information other than the fact that gas pipes need replacing for safety issues and the works are expected to take potentially several months. Wildanet are also due to install fibre up the High St which will also require road closures.

A council officer told Wales & West to contact the Chamber of Commerce, Bob the Bus, Inclusive Totnes, funeral care providers, and others as soon as possible to consult with them directly. Wales & West were informed that Easter is a key time for traders in town.

ACTION: Sustainability Officer to pass on Wales & West contact email to CoC, Bob the Bus and Inclusive Totnes

End of meeting 20:00

Appendix A

Bus changes

Some more changes that will affect Bus services in the area beyond the Gold, such as on to the hospital and the number of connections from Paignton to Torquay. These will come into play on the 2nd of October.

Service 13/13C/13D (Kingsteignton – Brixham)

This Service will no longer provide a connection to Torbay hospital for those coming into Paignton Bus Station from Totnes (Gold) service as it will no longer connect at Paignton Bus station. Due to low customer demand, the Service 13 route and timetable are being redesigned to provide a simpler, sustainable service for the future with more unique areas served.

The route will be amended to operate between Brixham and Torbay Hospital only, with the section of route between Torbay Hospital and Kingsteignton withdrawn. To simplify the route Paignton Bus Station will no longer be served, however, Service 12 will provide an alternative in many cases.

- The 12 will pass close to the Hospital but at the bottom of the hill by the stop at Lowes Bridge which will be inconvenient for those who are mobility challenged.
- Service 13 will operate every 60 minutes Monday to Friday daytime, with no service at the weekend.

To accommodate staff working at Torbay Hospital, the timetable has been designed to accommodate a pre-0800 arrival and an additional evening return journey at 2015 will be introduced.

A replacement new Service 53, operated under contract to Devon County Council will operate between Kingsteignton and Torbay Hospital. School and college journeys will operate as Services 13C, 13D or 53.

Reduced Frequency - Service 12 (Newton Abbot – Brixham via Torquay and Paignton)

The Saturday daytime frequency will be reduced from 10 to 12 minutes. On Sundays and Public Holidays, the daytime frequency will be reduced from 15 minutes to 20 minutes. In addition, there are also some minor changes to journeys at the start and end of the day.

Service 35A/35C (Torquay – The Willows via Torbay Hospital)

Sunday and Public Holiday daytime frequency will be reduced from every 30 minutes to every 60 minutes.

Stopped service until next year

Service 122 (Babbacombe – Devon Bay via Torquay and Paignton)

Service 122 will pause operation until 2023. While there will be no direct service to Devon Bay, Services 12 and 120 continue to stop nearby on Dartmouth Road (Waterside Shops), with all other sections of the route served by other frequent services.