

WEST DORSET WESTERN AREA TRANSPORT ACTION GROUP (WATAG)

Minutes of general meeting No. 73 held in the W.I. Hall, Bridport, on Thursday July 25th 2013 at 6.30pm

Present: Monica Burt (BAFT); Ron Coatsworth (Bradpole); Bob Driscoll (Bridport); Richard Edwards; David Ellery (Bradpole); Alan Glenn (Askerswell); John G. Green (CPRE); F. Hennessy (Corscombe parish council); Sue Herman (POPP/secretary); Dominic Knorpel (POPP); Anna Lovell; Mike Nicks (West Bay); Geoff Parr (West Bexington); J. Proctor (Burton Bradstock); Peter Ridler (Dottery); Sally Samuel (Beaminster Town Council); Beryl Stork (Bradpole); Philip Sankey (Lyme Forward); Peter Smith (chair); Daryl Turner (DCC); R. Webster (Bridport); Alan Williams (Watag); Mark Williams (First)

Apologies: Darren Batten; Tessa Greenway; Neil Hurlock; Ros Keyes; Erica Pretty; Jane Richardson; David Smith;

1. The Minutes of the previous meeting held on May 24th 2013 were accepted and signed.

2. Matters Arising: there were no matters arising which were not on the agenda.

3. Bus X53 and prospect of winter Sunday service: Mark said that as it stands the Sunday service would stop at the end of September. Debbie Fiddik's report – item 6 – contains more on this.

4. Bus 31 timetables and loading: Mark explained the problems with timetabling a bus which needs to connect with 2 stations and school movements for Dorchester, Bridport and Lyme Regis; it doesn't add up. He said that it was probably better to stick with old timetable – and its problems than trying to change hurriedly.

5. Revision of route 40 for Court Orchard Residents: this route has been re-registered. See item 6.

6. Report from Dorset Passenger Transport for WATAG meeting 25th July 2013

a) Consultation and service review:

Options for a revised, subsidised network were presented to Cabinet on 26th June. Cabinet Members deferred a decision until the October Cabinet Meeting while they invite comments from Parish, Town, Borough and District Councils. **ANYBODY WANTING TO MAKE COMMENTS SHOULD CHANNEL THEM THROUGH THESE BODIES WHO HAVE MORE DETAILED INFORMATION . THE INTENTION IS TO INTRODUCE A REVISED NETWORK IN EARLY 2014.**

b) Bus services:

Service 40 has been re-registered and the route change will begin on 9th September (subject to approval by the Traffic Commissioner). To recap – the service will run to the hospital via Court Orchard and return directly to Bridport via the B3162.

The winter Sunday service X53 was put out to tender and prices were received. However, due to the ongoing pressures on the public transport budget we have been unable to award it. Unless an alternative source of funding can be found, or the service is registered commercially, regrettably, Sunday services will end after the 28th September.

c) Roadworks:

The closure of the Coast Road is likely to be in November for Burton Bradstock and after Christmas for Abbotsbury. The bus companies are aware and DCC will be working with them to try to minimise problems. However, it is inevitable that there will be some disruption to services along the route.

d) Publicity/Timetables:

The new set of timetable books will be produced to coincide with the introduction of the new network in January. In some cases where there are major changes to services, we will aim to produce a limited run of individual timetables. Until printed material is available, can I draw your attention to the next paragraph. This

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facility or Traveline will supply the most up to date information. We will be discussing options for the operators to provide printed material and roadside information.

A new bus journey search facility has been launched by Dorset County Council's Travel Dorset team. This has replaced the County Council's existing web-based timetable information. It can be accessed on the front page of www.dorsetforyou.com and offers bespoke journey information and timetables. However where services are split between operators – such as the 47 Bridport - Yeovil (First and Damory), two separate timetables need to be read as no composite is currently available. There is an option in the corner of the screen to give feedback on the new system and I would encourage you all to either do that or feedback your responses through the TAG meeting. Any comments received will be forwarded to the Highways team running this project.

Report prepared by Debbie Fiddik, Dorset Passenger Transport
25th July 2013

After this report was read by Peter it was asked, referring to item b) about the X53 whether it was known by how much the County Council lacked funds to accept a tender.

It was also pointed out that, at the weekends there are buses which just sit in the bus station and also social service buses which are unused.

The problems of bus-stops with no timetables or defaced ones was also raised and it was asked whether or not we could have an Adopt-a-bus stop scheme.

7. Bus and Rail matters: There were no representatives from the rail companies or from Damory and it was noted that no-one from Damory had been present recently. Sue was asked to make sure they were contacted as there were many questions which delegates wanted answers to.

Mark, from First, said that the timetable changes were now done and dusted. The X53 tenders had been submitted in June, to start in September, This had now been deferred for consultation with county and parishes for the meeting on 2nd October.

New X53 livery had just started and these buses had new leather seats which were easier to clean There will be 5 buses. There was also a summer promotion for families with a £10 fare across Dorset instead of £17.

Mark showed the meeting the new "Safe Journey" cards. These are small, private cards which can be shown to the driver eg: "please be patient I have difficulty speaking". These can be downloaded or Mark will send copies.

Mark had attended a "blind" day in Weymouth to get across to drivers what it is like to be blind and also for travellers to understand how difficult it can be for drivers, behind their safety screens, to hear requests.

In response to a question he said that there had been no comments from drivers about the West Bay pinch point.

It was asked why there had been fewer 31 double deckers recently and Mark said they had suffered gear-box problems in the heat, hence the number of single deckers which had been running.

It was brought up that in the villages which the 31 goes through on the way to Dorchester it was now an uncomfortable ride because of the potholes and Mark was asked what could be done. It was suggested that his drivers complain repeatedly on the Dorset View website.

There are problems on a Saturday with the 253 as Damory doesn't run a Saturday service and there is a 4 hour wait for people trying to get from Beaminster to Burton.

It was again noted that there was no representatives from Damory or South West coaches to answer questions.

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8. Realtime Information: Alan said there are still problems as it is not “realtime” and he has talked /is talking to County hall but progress is slow.

The 753 has been updated – the wrong way round and things do not seem to be improving.
There is now audio on 73 but it is still inaccurate.

9. Axe Valley Ring and Ride: Philip has the statistics for individual parishes financial support for the service and the number of people from each parish who use it. This information is attached to these minutes.

10. Democratic Moment: a) The suggestion that concessionary pass-holders could pay towards there fare to keep buses running was again raised and Alan said he was meeting Oliver Letwin to discuss this.

b) the timetables are still unclear and some people think there is no Sunday service between Bridport and Yeovil.

c) It was noted that the park and ride bus from West bay was often half empty and it was asked whether it could stop and pick people up along West Bay Road and perhaps go on to Burton Ice and hour. It was also suggested that it could go up to The George in West Bay to pick up elderly passengers.

There being no AOB the meeting closed. The next meeting is in September 26th.

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