****

**Cllr. A.R. Wilson - Chairman**

**The Old School , Fern Road, Cropwell Bishop**

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Mr Mark Hudson

Group Manager, Transport and Travel Services

Nottinghamshire County Council

Trent Bridge House

West Bridgford

Nottingham NG2 6BJ

23rd July 2014

Dear Sir

**Inadequate supported bus services for Cropwell Bishop**

The proposed revisions to the County supported bus services were published on the NCC web site (Friday 27th June 2014) and circulated to County Councillors. These proposals are not acceptable for Cropwell Bishop.

After 2 years of ‘Titan’ consultation and discussion based on network plans showing daytime bus links from Cropwell Bishop to Cotgrave and Bingham, the County are taking forward a very different scheme (without these links) which they have agreed with Trent Barton without any reference to Cropwell Bishop Parish Council.

Last year, the County withdrew the 53 service which linked Cropwell to Cotgrave and Bingham. They now intend to withdraw the daytime 22 service which links Cropwell to Cotgrave and Morrisons as well as providing a bus to Nottingham.

Our one remaining service, the Rushcliffe Greens (previously known as Radcliffe Line), is to be extended into the Vale to serve the Vale villages. Whilst it will provide a link to Bingham, the journey time from Cropwell Bishop to Bingham, touring around the Vale villages, is likely to be a tedious 35 minutes.

The extended Rushcliffe ‘Greens’ proposals are good for the smaller villages such as Granby, Sutton, Orston and Aslockton as it seems they will have 2 buses per hour to and from Nottingham whereas our larger community of Cropwell Bishop will only have one. This single daytime ‘Greens’ service is not adequate for our Cropwell community.

We understand that a generous subsidy of £524 per day (£159,820 per year) is to be paid to Trent Barton to run the extra bus on the extended daytime Greens service, and provide a couple of commuter buses and school services. This expenditure benefits mainly the smaller Vale villages.

As pointed out by Cllr Greenwood, this money could be used more efficiently and provide the right service for Cropwell if the Greens service to Cropwell was combined with the 22 (saving one bus) and a linking service provided (Sutton, Granby, Barnstone, Langar, Cropwell Bishop, Cropwell Butler, Upper Saxondale, Bingham, Whatton, Alslockton, Orston and return) either hourly or every 2 hrs to further reduce expenditure. Communities such as Aslockton do have the benefit of rail services and some Bingham/Grantham/Bottesford bus services.

If the proposed extension of the Greens into the Vale goes ahead, another solution would be to continue to run the 22 service from Cotgrave to Cropwell Bishop and then on to Bingham (it could serve Upper Saxondale or a Bingham estate en route). Whilst the route would not be totally viable commercially it should be possible for the County to negotiate a partial subsidy within the agreement with Trent Barton.

We request an urgent review and reconsideration of how the available funds can be better spent to provide the appropriate supported daytime bus services for Cropwell (2 buses to and from Nottingham each hour and convenient links to Bingham, Cotgrave and Morrisons) as well as the Vale Villages.

We look forward to seeing your revised proposals.

Yours faithfully

Alan Wilson

Chairman, Cropwell Bishop Parish Council

Cc Cllr Kevin Greaves, Chairman of the Transport and Highways committee.

Cllr Richard Butler

Cllr Gordon Moore

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Mr Alan Wilson

Chairman, Cropwell Bishop Parish Council

C/o Mrs J Towndrow

The Old School

Fern Road

Cropwell Bishop

Nottingham

NG12 3BU

23 July 2014

Dear Mr Wilson

Re: Cropwell Bishop Supported Local Bus Services

Thank you for your letter dated 8 July registering your concerns regarding the new bus services which will operate from the beginning of August. I am sorry to hear that you find the outcome unacceptable as there have been substantial discussions between the Parish Council and NCC officers on developing the new network of services for the Vale of Belvoir.

The County Council is in a very difficult financial position and the 2013 budget review identified that further efficiency savings, over and above those planned as part of the TITAN project, were necessary in respect of Supported Local Bus Services. These savings have been achieved through revising the bus services, reducing frequencies and introducing more connecting bus services. The views of the Parish Council were fully considered during the planning stage, along with the views and needs of other Parishes within the area and the amount of funding available.

The Service 53 was withdrawn in 2013 as there were insufficient passengers to sustain the service. The new commercial Rushcliffe Green service now incorporates much of the old Service 22 and operates on a clockwise and anti-clockwise system which provides a 30 minute frequency from all destinations throughout the day. I accept that the travel time for the anti-clockwise service is significantly longer but this does provide a link to Bingham. Also, Service 22 provides additional services at peak morning and afternoon times. The new service therefore retains a significant level of provision to all the villages at a time of severe financial constraints.

The Trent Barton arrangement was an alternative proposal submitted by them as part of the competitive tendering process. The proposal combined elements of previous Services 22, 55, school bus service and the extension of the Rushcliffe Green service. The new network has achieved savings of approximately £300k per year.

In addition, off-peak Shopper Service 853 (timetable enclosed) provides journeys between Cropwell Bishop and Cotgrave. Discussions are being held with the operator to determine whether this service can be extended to and from GamstonMorrisons.

I have considered your request for a review of the new services but I am unable to accede to this as the Council has made the final decision on the budget review and no further funding is available. Monitoring will take place over the coming months to inform how new services are performing and a review report will be taken to the relevant service Committee.

Yours sincerely

Group Manager

Transport & Travel Services



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Mr Mark Hudson

Group Manager, Transport and Travel Services

Nottinghamshire County Council

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Nottingham NG2 6BJ

25th July 2014

Your Ref MH/DH/032

Dear Mr Hudson

**Cropwell Bishop Supported Local Bus Services**

Your letter of 23rd July does not address our concerns.

Your financial restraints are well appreciated but that does not excuse the County’s irresponsible decision to accept a different proposal from Trent Barton, and agree to pay them a subsidy of £524 per day, without any consultation with the communities involved.

The inappropriate Trent Barton scheme is in fact contrary to your stated principle of subsidising connecting services linking to the core commercial services. Cropwell and the Vale villages would be better served, as suggested by Cllr Greenwood during the Titan Consultation, if Trent Barton ran a commercial service, combining the Green service to Cropwell Bishop (travelling via Cropwell Road to and from Radcliffe) with the 22 service (Cropwell to and from Cotgrave and Nottingham).

The available subsidies can then be used to support the connecting link services which could be an hourly circuit in each direction to serve the Vale villages (Bingham –Upper Saxondale – Radcliffe – Cropwell Butler –Cropwell Bishop – Langar – Barnstone – Granby – Sutton – Elton – Orston – Aslockton–Whatton– Bingham). This would restore an appropriate service for Cropwell Bishop and Cropwell Butler.

Whilst the smaller villages would not have a through service (except at peak times), they would have convenient links from Cropwell to Cotgrave, Morrisons and town on the 22 and links to the Greens services at Radcliffe and Bingham.

Please arrange urgent discussions with Trent Barton and ourselves to agree the necessary revisions (within the existing budget) to provide the appropriate services for Cropwell and the Vale villages.

Yours sincerely

Alan Wilson

Alan Wilson

Chair, Cropwell Bishop Parish Council

CC Cllr Kevin Greaves

 Cllr Richard Butler

 Cllr Gordon Moore