

Severn Loop
Local Joint Committee
12 July 2010

Coton Hill Community Bus

Background

- Previously served by Arriva Service 6
- Service ceased in September 2009 due to difficulties operating the route caused by parked vehicles and traffic congestion
- Subsidy paid by Shropshire Council reinvested in alternative services
- Crossing on Coton Hill completed April 2010 permitting safe pedestrian access to bus stops on Coton Hill. This bus stop is served by the 501 service on an hourly basis from 27 July
- Furthest distance from the Coton estate to the bus stop is 500 metres

Shropshire Council temporary arrangement

- A community bus service operating on a 20 minute timetable serving the estate and Shrewsbury town centre as a temporary measure, until the crossing on Coton Hill has been completed.

Severn Loop LJC decision 10 May 2010

- That £10,000 be approved to operate the community bus for Coton Hill for a further six months, and that the application would be considered further once the results of the tender negotiations were known.

Tender & prices

- Only one tender has been received (from Shropshire Council) at a cost of £160 per day
- Income from fares is approximately £36 per day
- Subsidy required ($£160 - £36$) = £124 per day
- Revenue subsidy is not sustainable for the LJC

Other options

Purchase of community vehicle to be operated and run by residents

- No evidence of sufficient community interest
- Capital cost £20,000-40,000 depending on vehicle.
- Operational costs and implications

Vehicle travelling a longer route, giving an opportunity for more passengers

- No evidence of sufficient interest from representatives of other areas of the LJC
- If a commercially viable route was available market likely to exploit it now.

Use of Community Transport Scheme

- Shrewsbury Dial a Ride available
- Scheme membership could be met in part by LJC
- Dial a Ride subsidised by Shropshire Council
- Fares 'expensive' but concessions can be used.

Conclusions

- LJC funding will finish 10 November 2010
- 56 days notice required to end the service
- Income does not meet cost and therefore a subsidy is required for to continue the service
- No subsidy currently available from Shropshire Council
- LJC cannot continue with the revenue subsidy
- Residents community bus scheme does not appear viable
- Shrewsbury Dial a Ride currently available
- No other providers offering the service

Recommendations

- The Severn Loop LJC recognises and thanks the local residents for their hard work and enthusiasm in endeavouring to establish a commercially viable community transport scheme for Coton Hill. However, in light of the need for ongoing subsidy for such a scheme determines not to give any further funding to this initiative and encourage residents to make use of the Shrewsbury Dial a Ride service.