

Agenda Item No. 4(b)

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**CABINET MEMBER MEETING – HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE**

1 March 2016

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**PETITION - REQUEST TO REINSTATE A LOCAL BUS SERVICE TO
INCLUDE BROOKFIELD PARK AND ADJACENT PARK HOME SITES ON
MILL LANE, OLD TUPTON**

(1) **Purpose of Report** To consider the County Council's response to a petition received requesting the reinstatement of a local bus service to include Brookfield Park and adjacent Park Homes sites on Mill Lane, Old Tupton.

(2) **Information and Analysis**

Background

A petition was received by the Cabinet Member on 10 November 2015, for Derbyshire County Council to reinstate a local bus service to include Brookfield Park and adjacent Park Home sites on Mill Lane, Old Tupton (Minute No. 146/15 refers). It was resolved that the Cabinet Member should be asked to investigate the matters raised in the petition.

Until 27 May 2012, Mill Lane and Ashover Road, Old Tupton were served by local bus Service 52 that served Clay Cross, Britton Wood and Old Tupton. This Service consisted of five journeys to and from Clay Cross, and was withdrawn when changes to nearby commercial bus services necessitated revision to County Council funded bus services.

Under the terms of the 1985 Transport Act, the County Council has to identify socially necessary bus services which are not provided by the commercial bus operators. The Act does not set out the level of support required for bus services that are deemed socially necessary. In Derbyshire, 85% of the local bus network is operated commercially, that is to say, funded without subsidy from the local authority.

Current Situation

Brookfield Park and the two adjacent Park Homes comprise approximately 120 homes located on Mill Lane, an unclassified road to the west of Clay

Cross. Of the three parks, Brookfield Park is the furthest away from Clay Cross and is approximately 1.2 miles from the A61 and main shopping area of Clay Cross.

The two nearest local bus services are the commercial Service 51 operated by Stagecoach Chesterfield, and Service 63/63A, which is funded by the Council and operated by Hulleys of Baslow.

Service 51 – This is the nearest local bus service to Brookfield Park and operates every 15 minutes between Clay Cross and Chesterfield. The nearest bus stop is at Rock Crescent, off Valley Road, and is 0.6 mile from the main entrance to Brookfield Park. The route to the bus stop has a footway along its entirety. As a commercial service, the Council has no influence over the route or timetable the service operates to.

In order to ascertain whether it would be possible and what would be required to divert Service 51 as requested, Stagecoach Chesterfield were asked to comment and estimate the costs involved. The response from John Young, Commercial Director is as follows:

“Whilst we sympathise with the situation described, we do not consider that the rerouting of service 51 would be commercially viable or in the interests of the majority of its existing users.

I suspect that likely demand will be low and as such it may be more appropriate for your tendered service 63 and/or 63a to be considered for any rerouting.”

Service 63/63A – The route and timetable of this service have changed since Brookfield Residents Association's request. Whilst the service still serves Clay Cross, it no longer starts or terminates there and has no standing time that could be utilised to accommodate the requested route diversion.

To divert the current 63A bus route from Littlemoor along Mill Lane would involve changing the route and/or timings elsewhere in the timetable in order to accommodate the additional running time needed. Unfortunately, there is no room in the timetable to enable this.

Other Services – Other supported services in the area are 48, 49 and 150. The timetables of the supported services have been looked at and, as with Service 63/63A, there is no room in their timetables to absorb a route extension.

Community Transport is available, provided by CT4TC which operates shopping journeys to Chesterfield and Morrisons on Fridays.

Conclusions

Stagecoach Chesterfield is unable to fulfil Brookfield Park Residents Association's request to alter its commercial Service 51. The alternative option to re-route service 63A would not be possible without a negative impact on the current service. It has recently undergone route and timetable changes, and there is no room in the timetable to accommodate a route diversion or extension. The operator of the route, who also operated the former Service 52 to Brookfield Park, says that passenger numbers were low and that to re-route Service 63A to serve Brookfield Park would leave another area with good passenger numbers, unserved. An additional service along Mill Lane could have a detrimental effect on the viability of commercial Service 51 by competing for passengers along common sections of route.

No other local bus services provided by the Council that serve Clay Cross have spare time in their timetables that could accommodate a diversion along Mill Lane. Any solution would therefore need to be provided by the Council, either by providing an additional service or putting more resource into an existing service. Both of these would require additional subsidy from the Council and there is no funding available for this.

Local Member Comments

Councillor Brian Wright has been consulted.

(3) **Financial Considerations** The Council must ensure the finite funds are best targeted to provide service provision while being mindful of best value. Any additional provision is likely to be similar to the previous Service 52 which proved to be unviable. It may also be of limited benefit, given the close proximity of existing services. Any additional provision could also adversely affect existing services.

(4) **Environmental and Health Considerations** Whilst a direct bus service from Brookfield Park to Clay Cross and/or Chesterfield would give residents greater convenience, for those unable to access the existing Service 51, which is 0.6 mile from Brookfield Park, Community Transport is available.

(5) **Transport Considerations** As set out in the report. It is considered that the actions outlined above should not have any detrimental impact on equalities, race discrimination and crime and disorder.

Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources and property considerations.

(6) **Key Decision** No.

- (7) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.
- (8) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Environment. Officer contact details – Janet Pickersgill, extension 36734.
- (9) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That:
- 9.1 The request for the reinstatement of a local bus service to include Brookfield Park and adjacent Park Home sites on Mill Lane, Old Tupton should not be pursued.
- 9.2 The local Member and lead petitioner be advised accordingly.

Mike Ashworth
Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment