

COPYTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING - TUESDAY 14th JANUARY 2020

ITEM NO: 9 –

Initial report on the Feasibility of providing a Community Transport Link in Copythorne Parish

Last year saw the local T3 and T4 Blue bus scheduled service cut from 3 days to 2 days per week (it now only runs on Tuesdays and Thursdays) - as well as a reduction in the number of scheduled buses per day to just two in the mornings and two in the afternoons. There are of course still scheduled buses running Monday to Friday to and from Totton and Brockenhurst colleges (but only early morning and late afternoon). Otherwise the nearest scheduled bus service is the No.11 Blue bus which stops opposite Goodies Fish Bar on the A336 (Ringwood Road).

This is a serious loss of amenity and for those without their own (or access to alternative) transport has effectively meant that they can only travel to Totton and beyond by bus twice a week.

I believe that the first thing to do is to establish the need for community transport in the Parish, by engaging with the community and undertaking a detailed local survey. Just to test the water so to speak I wrote to the HCC Passenger Transport Department and was surprised to be told that over 870 people had boarded the T3 and T4 buses in October and November 2019! Obviously having once established, what I believe is the need, we will have to undertake a complete review (audit) of what's available locally, before deciding on our preferred course of action.

I have also had a quick look at some of the Community options being offered and available elsewhere in the New Forest. Namely: a) a scheduled daily service, b) pre-booking, c) "call and Go", d) group minibus hire. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list, merely a few examples of what's out there.

As the recently appointed Transport Representative on the Council, I should like propose that we look at the feasibility of providing Community Transport in the Parish. The idea being, to then present the findings of the study at the forthcoming Annual Parish Meeting in March; with a view of asking them what they would like us to do.

Cllr. Graham Chillcott 5th January 2020