

Balsham Bus Campaign 2019/20/21

Debbie Paton – Parish Councillor

CaPCA:

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority. The Combined Authority is made up of eight founding members across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and is the body responsible for the transport infrastructure in Cambridgeshire.

<https://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/>

Bus Reform Task Force Group:

The project aims to look at ways in which bus services can provide a well-functioning and integrated transport network for the region, and is being led by Metro Mayor James Palmer, chair of the Bus Reform Task Force, with a team of officers from member councils which is headed by Bus Strategy Manager Oliver Howarth.

Rowland Potter, Head of Transport CaPCA

<p>Oliver Howarth Bus Strategy Manager Cambridgeshire Peterborough Combined Authority Debbie Paton</p>	<p>Friday 10th September 2021</p>	<p>Had a zoom call with Mr Howarth. Nothing new from the letter he sent to me, but it seems we have to come the end of the road for now. There are so many variables that are against such as launching this campaign during covid where ridership numbers are down, many elderly have free travel, converting car drivers to buses when told not to travel on public transport, and more importantly the costs of running a service with passenger numbers are low and lengths of journeys making operational costs high make them uneconomical to run.</p> <p>So yes, it all boils down to money.</p> <p>However, I asked what is going to happen in the future. Mr Howarth said they are looking at three options:</p> <p>Direct Response Transport How I understand this is that the user dictates the bus use, so like a taxi style service (not dial-a-ride). Buses will alter their routes based on the transport demand rather than using a fixed route or timetable.</p> <p>The user will call or use an app to request a pick up. This then tells them when the next bus will be available. This should allow users to request a bus in the most remote locations.</p>
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Oliver Howarth Bus Strategy Manager Cambridgeshire Peterborough Combined Authority	Friday 3 rd September 2021	<p>Mr Howarth officially wrote to Debbie. The letter was not positive. Mr Howarth contacted Stagecoach twice to see about rerouting a 13 service through Balsham. Stagecoach declined to divert their service. The CPCA have no powers over Stagecoach as they are a commercial company. Stagecoach informed Mr Howarth they have invested heavily in giving the route the highest frequency and fasted running times to generate more passengers which they would lose by diverting journeys. Also running more 16a services would be the most expensive bus service in the county.</p> <p>Our demographics do not help as in the 2011 census lists over 50% of the population of Balsham as professionals, company directors or senior managers, one that is not dependent on buses.</p> <p>Debbie has agreed to have a Teams meeting to think about what solutions might be possible, which groups of villages that will benefit and which will deliver to viable passenger numbers.</p>
Lucy Frazer MP	Friday 3 rd September 2021	<p>Lucy Frazer wrote to Debbie Paton. Mrs Frazer put forward our proposals and she did receive a response from Dr Johnson's Chief of Staff after the meeting which was not very promising. Mrs Frazer said she will continue to press him especially given Dr Johnson's pledges to improve bus services. Will keep Debbie updated.</p>
Lucy Frazer MP	Wednesday 25 th August 2021	<p>Debbie contacted Lucy Frazer on 25th August to see how her meeting with Dr Nik Johnson, the new Major of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.</p>
Lucy Frazer MP	Saturday 10 th July 2021	<p>Zoom meeting with Lucy to discuss the way forward with the bus situation. It was agreed I would write to the new mayor of the Combined Authority, Dr Nick Johnson and include</p>

Debbie Paton Lynn Camber		our proposal. Lucy Frazer has been trying to get a meeting with Dr Johnson to discuss our public transport poverty. Discussed compensation or refunds for students who didn't use their bus passes in 2020/21. Lucy Frazer will write to Stagecoach. Discussed cycle and foot path between Balsham and Linton. There has been Government £2b funding package for cycle/foot routes. We would need to get Linton on side to help move forward with this.
Cllr Geoff Harvey Cllr Anna Bradnam	Tuesday 3 rd November 2020	Cllr Bradham presented our proposal to the Bus Taskforce Reform Group. Feedback from the Chair saying was "we already know about this from Lucy Frazer".
Rachel Jeffery Senior Caseworker for Lucy Frazer	Tuesday 3 rd November 2020	Thanks so much for this, and your hard work at reworking it so quickly. We continue to be in discussion with the Combined Authority on this issue and will present this to them for their consideration.
Cllr Geoff Harvey Cllr Anna Bradnam	Monday 2 nd November 2020	Cllr Harvey sent our proposal to Cllr Bradnam.
Debbie Paton Parish Council	Thursday 29 th October 2020	Proposal sent to Lucy Frazer MP to feed into the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CaPCA) Bus Reform Task Force group.
Debbie Paton/Annie West Parish Council Cllr Geoff Harvey Lynn Seager Public	Monday 26 th October 2020	Met with Cllr Geoff Harvey to voice our concerns about the news of a demand-responsive transport scenario from the CaPCA. Following the meeting, Cllr Harvey spoke with Cllr Anna Bradnam, a member of the Bus Reform Task Force group. The next meeting is Tuesday 3 rd November. Cllr Bradnam asked Cllr Harvey to prepare a briefing in advance of the meeting describing all the difficulties.
Debbie Paton Parish Council Julie James Executive Assistant to the Principal and Associate Principal Hills Road Sixth Form College	Tuesday 13 th October 2020	Emailed Julie James from Hills Road to find out if any of their students have difficulty attending college, arriving in good time and if they are left stranded. Julie replied as they know of some cases from Balsham who have to catch the early bus and stay until their afternoon sessions start at 3.15pm. Those who start at 10am have to wait for the afternoon bus. Students have been given a place to study in their library outside of these times. They started college started later to avoid peak commuting time for students.
Debbie Paton Parish Council Stephen Dann, VP Long Road Sixth Form College	Wednesday 7 th October	Emailed Stephen Dann, to see if they had heard from students about the difficulty they faced getting into college. If they are left stranded as they have missed buses, or having to wait long periods of time for classes to being. Stephen Dann asked who deals with transport at the college and they both hadn't any specific concerns raised as far as they no. Its not to say that they haven't found it difficult to get to college. They had run a survey before the summer break with details of those who travel by bus. It appears only 7 students from Balsham use the bus, possibly due to Covid-19 and the lack of buses, students being driven into college.

<p>Lucy Frazer MP Debbie Paton Parish Council</p>	<p>Wednesday 30th September 2020</p>	<p>Letter from Lucy Frazer MP: “Further to my letter of 2 September 2020, I have now met with the Mayor to discuss his plans for bus services in the light of the significant changes that the Coronavirus pandemic has caused, as well as the situation in Balsham and wanted to update you, as promised. As I mentioned in my previous letter, the Bus Reform Taskgroup remains ongoing, however all the work done prior to March 2020 has had to be completely rethought following the new context in which we find ourselves. As I mentioned in my previous letter, the Combined Authority are currently having to use all their available funds to ensure that existing bus services continue running. We did discuss Balsham and the proposed new service, however the focus for rural areas moving forward is likely to be demand-responsive transport and there are trials of this due to take place in the county. Whilst I appreciate that this is not what you had originally planned for the village, it may be something that you want to consider and submitting a proposal to the Combined Authority. I am happy to assist with ensuring any such proposals is properly considered by the Combined Authority in due course. I am sorry that this is not the update that we were hoping for, but am happy to keep working with you and the Parish Council to take advantage of any opportunities which arise in the future to improve the bus services in Balsham”</p>
<p>Debbie Paton Parish Council Lucy Frazer MP</p>	<p>Wednesday 2nd September 2020</p>	<p>Letter from Lucy Frazer MP: Thank you for your patience whilst I sought an update on the work being carried out by the Combined Authority on improving local bus routes and your campaign in Balsham which I am supporting. The proposals put forward by the campaign have been fed into the work being carried out by the Bus Reform Taskgroup, however you will be aware that the Coronavirus pandemic has had a very significant impact upon bus travel, and therefore revenue, throughout Cambridgeshire. At the moment use of buses is 30% of what it was prior to the pandemic with no ‘rush hour’ peak as previously. The Combined Authority are, therefore, having to spend a significant amount of additional money each week in order to keep the current services operating. This has meant that previously planned reform is needing to be rethought. Within this new context, for any new bus service to be able to be considered it will need to demonstrate value for money and that people will use the service in the current climate. I am seeking a meeting with the Mayor to discuss the issue of buses across the constituency and will raise again the proposals for Balsham and ways forward at this difficult time. I hope, therefore, to be able to report to you further after that meeting. Thank you again for taking the time to contact me</p>
<p>Debbie Paton Parish Council Parish Council Lucy Frazer MP</p>	<p>Wednesday 19th August</p>	<p>Follow up email to Lucy Frazer MP requesting that a Stagecoach 13 service is rerouted from Horseheath to Balsham three times a day to allow students to get to their classes at the appropriate times (unable to wait on site). Shuttle bus number 19 doesn’t liaise with the 13 services, have to wait long periods of time between the services. Requested</p>

		timetables be reviewed for the 16 service and if no changes in site, a cycle path between Balsham and Linton.
Debbie Paton Parish Council Lucy Frazer MP Rachel Jeffery Senior Caseworker for Lucy Frazer	Thursday 13 th August 2020	Emailed Lucy Frazer MP and Rachel Jeffery for an update on the bus situation following our campaign. Requested an update with the Bus Reform Taskforce Group and how it is progressing moving forward after Covid-19 with Stagecoach where they will have to bid for routes (bid for a profitable route but have to take on a non-profitable one).
Rachel Jeffery Senior Caseworker for Lucy Frazer Debbie Paton Parish Councillor	17 th March 2020	Rachel Jeffery replied that the information we sent on the 6 th March will be fed into the Mayor's working. Meetings are in some flux so uncertain about future face to face meetings with Lucy and Mr Palmer, however, will make sure it's on his radar.
Annie West Parish Council Chair	13 th March 2020	Annie West wrote to Lucy Frazer MP confirming that the Parish Council and the village has the full support of this campaign reinforcing the fact we need better bus service. Also sent on our presentation and survey results.
Debbie Paton Parish Council Lynn Seager Public Lucy Frazer MP	6 th March 2020	Meet with Lucy Frazer MP to discuss the current situation and express our frustration. Passed on our presentation where informed us the Bus Taskforce Reform Group are looking into asking Stagecoach to bid for routes. They must also take on a non-profitable route as well as a profitable one. Asked if our Chair could forward on the data we have collated along with confirming the PC support to this campaign. Debbie Paton emailed Lucy Frazer MP following the meeting clarifying what we would like to see asking it to be filtered to the Mayor's office.
Debbie Paton Parish Councillor Lynn Seager Public	March 2020	Put together the survey results into a presentation to Lucy Frazer.
Tracy Coston Parish Council Clerk	22 nd February 2020	Tracy emailed Cllr Anna Bradnam confirming that it had been minuted at the Parish Council meeting on the 17 th February that Debbie would contact the Mayor's Bus Reform Task Force requesting a better bus service for Balsham.
Debbie Paton Parish Council	19 th February 2020	Cllr Anna Bradnam offered to put forward to our question to Stagecoach - and (in advance) to the Mayor's Bus Reform Task Force meeting on 31 March 2020: "What can be done or what can you do to help Balsham who is in desperate need for a regular, more reliable and direct bus service to help our aging population, students and workers who are keen to give up their cars in favour of a good service?"

Debbie Paton Parish Council	19 th February 2020	Debbie Paton telephoned Susannah McIntyre then following up with an email summarising the conversation reinforcing with the data. Asked if our collated data could be incorporated at the next Bus Reform Task Force. Later, she responded informing me this has been passed it onto the bus taskforce manager. They are meeting tomorrow so will discuss with him how it can be used and will report back.
Geoff Harvey District Councillor	18 th February 2020	Cllr Anna Bradnam informed Cllr Harvey, the next meeting of the Mayors Bus Reform Task Force is scheduled for 31 March 2020 This is a closed meeting for councillors only. Cllr Harvey then passed on to Susannah McIntyre's details where Debbie Paton sent through all of the information collated from the bus survey. susannah.mcintyre@cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk Susannah manages the CPCA Bus Reform Task Force Her phone number is 01353 667721
Cllr Geoff Harvey District Councillor	17 th February 2020	Cllr Harvey contacted Cllr Anna Bradnam informing her we had no response from Jackie Cockerill. Asked when the next Bus Taskforce forum meeting is.
Debbie Paton Parish Council	14 th February 2020	Contacted Cllr Geoff Harvey again cc'ing the response from Stagecoach. Stating never heard back from Jackie Cockerill and receiving lots of holding emails from Mr Palmer's PA.
Debbie Paton Parish Council	14 th February 2020	Reply from Steve Zanker, Business Development Manager for Stagecoach "It is always difficult to provide fully commercial services to smaller rural conurbations, however, I do understand why residents are keen to see improvements. I'm not sure if you are aware, but the Combined Authority (Peter Harvey) is, at present carrying out a county wide consultation regarding improving bus service, and I will pass on your request to the appropriate person. I note you have a meeting planned in early March with your MP, therefore it may be useful to meet with you after that meeting, and you also may have been contacted by Peter Hardy to discuss your situation" ** never heard back from Peter Harvey
Debbie Paton Parish Council	7 th February 2020	Holding response from Mr Palmer's PA - Jo Whatley jo.whatley@cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk

Debbie Paton Parish Council	31 st January 2020	Wrote to Mayor the CaCPA, James Palmer explaining our issue with transport poverty in Balsham and the problems students, workers and older adults getting to college, work, and appointments. I also copied the letter sent to Stagecoach.
Debbie Paton Parish Council	31 st January 2020	Briefly meet and spoke to James Palmer – Major of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Authority (CaPCA) following a A1307 meeting. Asked me to write to him explaining the situation.
Debbie Paton Parish Council	31 st January 2020	Cllr Anna Bradnam, Councillor passed on Jackie Cockerill’s contact details via Cllr Geoff Harvey: Received no response from Jackie Cockerill.
Debbie Paton Parish Council Geoff Harvey District Councillor	24 th January 2020	Cllr Harvey put me in contact with the CaCPA – Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority makes the decisions on how the bus transport network operates, so our data can be feed into the Bus Reform Task Force group – a group set up to look into ways to reform the bus network.
Debbie Paton Parish Council	23 rd January 2020	Wrote to Michelle Hargreaves of Stagecoach asking for a better bus service. Outlined the current service. 7.35am departure taking an hour to reach Drummer Street taking in Fulbourn, Teversham and Cherry Hinton. Explained village is expanding with 70 new homes, current service is inadequate. Informed of the petition undertaken in November where we received over 300 signatures for the petition with 270 responses to the survey carried over October and November 2019. Informed of the peak travel times including weekends. Emphasised that people would give up their cars, being more environmentally friendly. Requested a meeting. Informed we are meeting Lucy Frazer on the 16 th March to present results.
Debbie Paton Parish Council Lynn Seager Public	October/November2019	Bus campaign underway with survey’s out in the November Balsham Review and on-line survey set up. Also stood outside the Post Office and Old Butchers to capture petition signatures and survey responses