

**Communicating changes to bus services – paper to Overview & Scrutiny arising from meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2009.**

Communicating forthcoming changes to bus services has always been challenging. We have no database of bus passengers and even were this available volume and cost would prohibit individual direct contact being made for each service change. Passengers who make regular, often daily, journeys are our key users and these, once they have established a travel pattern, do not check timetables regularly as they feel they know when their bus arrives.

Currently either we provide, or request bus operators to provide, information posters on buses around two weeks in advance of changes but ensuring users actually take note of these is difficult. Revised timetables are supplied; bus stop information and Council and Traveline websites are also updated. We will look to make this information available further in advance.

The resources used to update bus stop information at the 2000 stops and shelters across Buckinghamshire are limited and would not extend to providing comprehensive advance notice at stops as well. This would require stops to be visited twice for each service change, once in advance to flag up a forthcoming review and again to provide new timetables for the change itself. It should be possible at certain key points such as bus stations and interchanges and we will look at this.

As suggested by the Committee, in future where changes are planned by county on supported services we will provide information of proposed reviews on buses and on our website as far in advance as can be arranged, working to the 6 weeks proposed. We will also meet with bus operators and request that they do the same for routes operated on a commercial basis.

We will look at how we can make best use of parish magazines giving consideration to print and distribution deadlines and how these will fit with dates for changes to bus services and will discuss this with Jackie Louch (BALC contact). We already include client transport services and District officers in current communications regarding changes to bus services but in future will widen this to include other service providers within the council, such as Adult Social Care and Children's Services.

Following difficulties experienced by a small number of parishes with receiving written communication earlier this year, officers now send information regarding bus service reviews both by post and email.