

22 May 2013

Passenger Transport Unit
County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 8JN

Our ref: IW/PTB302

Dear Consultee

Proposed changes to the evening journeys on service X3 (Salisbury – Ringwood – Bournemouth)

The Council is currently reviewing the provision of evening journeys on the X3 bus service, which runs between Salisbury, Downton, Fordingbridge, Ringwood and Bournemouth. I am therefore writing to ask for your views on the proposed changes.

Most journeys on the X3 bus service are operated by the Wilts & Dorset bus company as a commercial venture, without any involvement from the Councils through whose areas it passes. However, whilst the daytime buses on service X3 are well used and do not need any subsidy from the local councils, the evening journeys (except on Fridays and Saturdays) are less well used and do require council funding to keep them going. Due to the pressures on public spending, some of the other councils along the route have already withdrawn their funding for these evening journeys, and so the cost to Wiltshire Council of keeping them running is very high in relation to the number of Wiltshire residents who use them.

The Council is therefore reluctantly proposing to withdraw its funding for these evening journeys after the end of the summer timetable in mid-September. This means that on Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, there would be no buses operating on the X3 service after approximately 8pm and the last journeys would be as follows:

Last buses on service X3 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays:

- 1740 from Salisbury to Downton, Fordingbridge, Ringwood and Bournemouth
- 1810, 1840 and 1940 from Salisbury to Downton, Fordingbridge, and Ringwood only
- 1805 from Bournemouth to Ringwood, Fordingbridge, Downton and Salisbury
- 1835 and 1905 from Bournemouth to Ringwood only

Continued overleaf ...

Last buses on service X3 on Sundays and Public Holidays

- 1640 from Salisbury to Downton, Fordingbridge, Ringwood and Bournemouth
- 1740, 1840 and 1940 from Salisbury to Downton, Fordingbridge, and Ringwood only
- 1805 from Bournemouth to Ringwood, Fordingbridge, Downton and Salisbury

No change is proposed to the Friday and Saturday evening services, which the bus company have said they will continue to run as at present without council funding.

Your views are sought on these proposals and in particular your answers to the following two questions;

1. **Are you aware of any significant hardship** that would be caused if these proposals were implemented? If so, please could you let us know what specific journeys could no longer be made and, if possible, give an indication of how many people you think would be affected.
2. If you think the proposals will adversely affect people living in your area, **do you have any suggestions for other ways in which their needs could be met at an affordable cost?** (perhaps for example by using community or voluntary transport to provide transport at times when the bus service is not running)

The consultation will close on **1 July 2013**. Responses can be sent by post to the Passenger Transport Unit, Wiltshire Council, County Hall, Trowbridge BA14 8JN (attention of Ian White); or by email to buses@wiltshire.gov.uk.

This consultation letter has been sent to town and parish councils and their transport representatives; councillors and Area Boards; user and community groups and transport operators, including community transport. Questionnaires will also be made available on the bus so that users are able to comment on the proposals. Copies of the user questionnaire will also be available shortly on the council's website, or can be requested from the address above.

Yours sincerely



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