



MAYOR OF FAVERSHAM – CLLR TREVOR MARTIN
Town Hall, 12 Market Place, Faversham, Kent, ME13 7AE
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26th May 2022

Mr R Gough
Leader
Kent County Council
c/o Leaders Office
Sessions House
County Hall
Maidstone
ME14 1XQ

Dear Mr Gough

Faversham Town Council objects strongly to the withdrawal of bus services in our area. We fail to see how the withdrawal of services marries with the government's "Bus Back Better" strategy. We understand that with high inflation, and high fuel costs, the cost of running transport services are increasing. However, the recent decision by Stagecoach to withdraw services along Lower Road in Faversham and the relatively new X4 service between Canterbury & Maidstone, which serves Faversham and Ospringe, is one that we fail to understand.

The X4 service was instigated less than a year ago. Popularity of the service was still building, however, short notice cancellations over the last few months were having an impact.

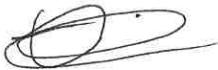
The loss of the X4, along with services along Lower Road means residents in the south west of Faversham and in Ospringe will have no accesses to bus services within a mile of their homes. It also means that bus stops we have recently provided benches for will be served by just 3 buses per day in the AM peak, provided by another company. It also means that there will be no direct service between Sittingbourne and The Abbey School, We know with the increased development in South Sittingbourne, and between Sittingbourne and Faversham and a lack of secondary school places in Swale, that a number of students now travel to the Abbey School utilising this service.

Residents in the North of the town have already had to cope with the loss of services, as no buses have served Davington and North Preston since the start of the pandemic.

We understand that these are commercial routes, however, at a time when Kent County Council, Swale Borough Council and Faversham Town Council are encouraging Active Travel and the use of Public Transport to help tackle the climate and biodiversity emergency and working towards a modal shift in order to reduce congestion and air pollution issues, the decision to cut services appears short-sighted at best.

Faversham Town Council requests that Stagecoach reconsider their decision to withdraw these vital services, and that an urgent review of routes within and around the town is undertaken, to ensure that residents across our area, and in the surrounding villages are able to access the town and it's services by public transport. We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely



Cllr T Martin
Mayor of Faversham