

Community Transport Working Group

Minutes of the Meeting dated 11th June 2024 7pm (Teams Meeting)

Cllr C Martin (Chair)	Present		KCC Cllr Hook	Present
Cllr BJ Martin	Apology		KCC Cllr Lehmann	Present
Cllr Saunders	Present			

Present:

Rob Gibbs (Community Transport and Project Officer)

1. Apologies

An apology was received from Cllr BJ Martin.

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Minutes

It was proposed by Cllr Hook, seconded by Cllr Lehmann, and on being put to the meeting, the minutes of the CT Working Group held on 2nd May 2024, were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

RG advised he would be looking at the costs to create a diecast model of the bus although this had not been carried out at the present time in an effort to contain costs.

The letter to Housing Associations with timetable information has been sent. RG would follow this by contacting local care homes and schools. It was noted that Canterbury House Care Home was already making good use of the service.

RG reported he has arranged a visit to Wealden Wheels on 5th July to meet their General Manager and he will be carrying out further research into the costs and rates for private hire work. At the present time he did not feel there were enough volunteers to take on private hire in addition to maintaining the bus service.

4. Volunteer Drivers

Two volunteers had stepped back from regular driving, but following intensive promotion during the Transport Weekend, one person had sent in a volunteer form. He was employed full-time so would only be available on an ad-hoc basis.

The service was being maintained although it would be desirable to have more cover, particularly during holiday times.

5. **Passenger Figures**

RG provided a summary of the latest passenger figures. The average number of passengers was 12.1 between 24 April and 7 June, an increase on the previous period's figure of 10.25.

The service was now picking up passengers in Lynsted and it was noted the service was being well used in Oare and Newnham.

RG reported he had received a request from Judds Folly Hotel and a member of the public to stop at Judds Folly. It was agreed this could be included on the route before it carried on to Newnham, although it was felt it was a higher risk to try and turn right out of the hotel entrance towards Faversham. Further feedback included a request for a later direct journey back to Newnham.

Following a discussion about concessionary bus passes, RG agreed to check that the service was able to accept KCC Child passes.

It was noted that afternoons tended to be relatively quiet compared to the mornings. An update on the Hopper would be featured in the Summer newsletter, including a timetable.

RG reported an incident on 28th May, when the lift broke down on the bus, this resulted in the service being down for four hours whilst an Engineer, from London Hire, fixed the fault.

6. **Parish Council Liaison & Community Engagement**

a) **Village Events**

RG reported he had arranged for a bannerstand and timetables to be displayed at the Newnham Family Fun Day on 15th June. The Doddington and Lynsted annual fetes were on the August bank holiday. Although he could not find any information on similar events in Oare, RG stated he would make contact with the two pubs and The Café by the Creek again.

b) **Sponsorship Proposal from Lotty's Flowers**

The paper detailing a sponsorship proposal from Lotty's Flowers was noted. This had already been agreed at the Active Travel Committee on 6th June 2024. The possibility of selling advertising space within the bus was discussed.

7. **Matters for Report** **Business Plan/Grants**

RG advised he would be drafting a business plan and looking at alternative sources of grant funding for the service. This would include possible private hire work, in which case possible implications on the bus lease and insurance would need to be considered. It was hoped this would be in a draft form by September.

It was agreed that RG would seek clarification on the amount of reimbursement from KCC concessionary passes.

It was agreed to hold the next meeting in late July. RG to circulate possible dates.

