

## RELBUS – MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN TOWN HOUSE, HADDINGTON on 15<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2017

Present: Harry Barker (Chairman); Jacqui Bell ; Jenny Cormack ; Derek Gilmour (Perrymans); Shena Jamieson ; Sharon Morrison (Perrymans) ; Barry Turner.

Apologies: George Rapson ; Elisabeth Wilson

**CMA approval of East Coast Buses' acquisition of First Group's East Lothian operations:** It was noted the acquisition had been approved by the Competition and Markets Authority which hopefully will give some stability to East Lothian's bus network for some time to come. ECB have ordered 15 new single deck buses for their East Lothian commitments and these are in build now. It was noted that there had been no serious complaints about the revised services.

**Haddington – Humbie service 109** A new vehicle, disability compliant, is now working the service. The initial publicity issues appear to have largely been overcome, but the service is not being well used. ELC Andrew McLelland are anxious that use of the vehicle for community activities on Tuesdays and Thursdays is increased, and also seeks views from interested parties on how the service can be better used. It is understood this may be raised at the forthcoming Bus Forum. (5<sup>th</sup> April, 1000hrs in Council Chambers, Town House, Haddington.)

**Provision of services at East Saltoun towards Tranent and Edinburgh including re-cast of 123 Gifford Circle.** The potential extension of Lothian Country Buses (LCB) 113 from Edinburgh to Pencaitland to East Saltoun – about 5 minutes running time – has not been welcomed by LCB who advise it would interfere with drivers' breaks at Pencaitland and there is nowhere to run at East Saltoun. The latter is easily overcome by doing a loop via West Saltoun to pick up at the Pencaitland terminus or continuing directly into the heart of Pencaitland Lempockwells Road. The drivers' break situation would be less crucial at the beginning of the day or in the evening peak, and it is considered that a handful of morning and evening peak journeys could be considered for extension to East Saltoun – presumably subsidised.

For off peak services towards Tranent and Edinburgh, Harry Barker suggested that the 123 Gifford Circle be run as one through service Gifford – (Bolton) – Haddington – Pencaitland – (Glenkinchie) – West Saltoun – East Saltoun and possibly onto Humbie occasionally to replace the 109 if that is considered an unsuccessful venture. The journey time from Gifford – East Saltoun would be less than 45 minutes and an even interval 2 hourly service could be introduced which would be more easily understood than the present complicated timetable. If implemented buses to/from East Saltoun could be timed to connect at Pencaitland thereby providing a public transport link to both Tranent and Edinburgh. Such a service would mean that the direct link from East Saltoun to Gifford would be broken during the off peak, but passenger usage between these two points is very likely to be minimal and a service via Haddington would still be provided.

It was suggested that public consultation with East Saltoun residents was desirable, and Harry Barker has offered to attend a meeting (to be confirmed) at East Saltoun village hall in the future on behalf of RELBUS to gauge reaction and report back.

**Lack of information at Belhaven and West Barns bus stops** This situation has been raised for a number of years without any meaningful improvement being put in place. Jacqui Bell raised various specific points with the Perrymans representatives who indicated they would visit the stops concerned. Harry Barker advised that the top line problem was really that of ELC who were responsible for bus stops. In addition, because the bus stop panels were relatively small in some

cases, the large timetable produced by Eve took up most of the available space even though many of their services were not relevant to a number of stops, thereby preventing operators who did use the stop from putting up their timetable relevant information.

**Bus – rail connectivity** Harry Barker advised that the apparent discrepancy between notice that requires to be given to the Traffic Commissioner to alter bus times to match changing train times has been resolved in that the Traffic Commissioner has agreed to look favourably at situations where insufficient time is available to allow bus times to change in a shorter period if required. This means that the rail industry is now the focus of attention to achieve bus-rail connectivity by providing clock face timetables to match current clock face bus timetables. East Lothian Community Rail Partnership hope to introduce connectivity at North Berwick, Longniddry and Dunbar.

**Innerwick** The issues regarding Perrymans 253 serving Innerwick have now been resolved. The general opinion is that Innerwick has an excellent bus service.

**Provision of real time information** The fact that, in Edinburgh, the 107 and 124 services only have scheduled time rather than real time information stops was mentioned as being misleading. Harry Barker also mentioned that he was aware that some 'real time' bus information was in course of being installed at some stations but was unaware whether these would be real or scheduled timings.

**Musselburgh** Barry Turner raised the issue of relocation of bus stops in Musselburgh centre, to alleviate standing buses producing pollutants, and also the position of the introduction of the proposed electric buses by Lothian. Harry Barker questioned if the latter were still planned to go ahead. This matter is to be raised by RELBUS at the Bus Forum along with other relevant items.

**Local elections** Barry Turner suggested that RELBUS write to selected local election candidates raising our profile with them as to current bus issues and making sure they knew what RELBUS stood for and was trying to do.

HB 16/3/17