

Appendix D - Bus Consultation 2015

Summary of Stakeholder Responses

135 responses were received from the following external stakeholders. This included more than one response from some stakeholders.

Borough & District Councils (7)

Broxbourne Borough Council
East Herts District Council
Hertsmere Borough Council
Stevenage Borough Council
Three Rivers District Council
Watford Borough Council
Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

Bus Operators and User Groups (3)

Bus User Group Stevenage
Potters Bar and St Albans Transport User Group
Sullivan Buses

CCG, NHS Trusts and Hospitals (3)

East and North Hertfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust
Rivers Hospital

Letters/emails from Members of the Public (83)

Members of Parliament (4) *letters from bus user groups and member of the public*

John Bercow MP
Sir Oliver Heald MP
Peter Lilley MP
Richard Harrington *Parliamentary Candidate*

Organisations (6)

Berkhamsted Citizens Association
Campaign for Better Transport
Dacorum Environmental Forum
Hertfordshire Rural Issues Group
South Hertfordshire Branch of CAMRA
Three Rivers District Council Labour Group

Parish & Town Councils (22)

Abbots Langley Parish Council
Aldbury Parish Council
Berkhamsted Parish Council
Bramfield Parish Council
Buntingford Town Council
Chrishall Parish Council, Essex
Croxley Green Parish Council
Elstree & Borehamwood Town Council
Great Gaddesden Parish Council
Hertingfordbury Parish Council
Little Gaddesden Parish Council
Offley Parish Council
Manuden Parish Council, Essex
Rushden and Wallington Parish Council
Shenley Parish Council
Tewin Parish Council
Ware Town Council
Watford Rural Parish Council
Watton at Stone Parish Council

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Welwyn Parish Council
Weston Parish Council
Wigginton Parish Council

Schools (4)

Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School
Mary's Church of England High School, Cheshunt
Presdales School, Ware
The Harefield Academy, Uxbridge

Borough & District Councils

Broxbourne Borough Council

- Impact on attendance at evening classes run by Hertfordshire Regional College. Upskilling of local population is fundamental to economic development strategy.
- Impact on commuters from new housing developments.
- Request for bus timetables to be aligned with train times.

East Herts District Council (council meeting)

- 7:30 pm cut-off time and Sunday services serving hospitals likely to have greater impact on services within East Herts than previous proposals
- Impact on students and staff travelling to University of Hertfordshire
- Reduces options for travel for shift workers
- Reduces opportunity to visit towns and villages in the evening and at weekends
- Potential negative impact on retail trade and development of Sunday trading
- Additional impact of Value for Money criteria on services
- Centrebus element of 395 service is result of East Herts funding withdrawal
- Impact on most vulnerable residents with no access to alternative means of transport
- Service cuts would result in additional private vehicular movement leading to increased congestion, consequential rise in emissions to the detriment of the County's air quality and health of residents
- Proposals run counter to the sustainability policies and strategies of the county council
- Impact on existing Local Plan and draft District Plan and work underway to identify mitigating measures to enable movement of the existing and future population.
- Recognises proposals driven by need to reduce funding gap and that unlikely current levels of service will be maintained but objects to proposals which will result in complete cessation of any service
- Suggests shortfall in funding gap should be identified from other service areas

Hertsmere Borough Council

- Recognises HCC needs to identify savings and welcomes change in approach following previous consultation, specifically consideration of cost per passenger journey.
- Concerned about proposed cuts to services throughout borough.
- Services are well used by travelling public (provided statistics on annual passenger numbers)
- Information on cost per passenger journey should be used when considering services to cut.
- Not clear whether proposed reductions have considered possible impact on groups with protected characteristics.
- Supports introduction of a modified value for money criteria to help determine which services receive funding.
- Suggests an additional criteria of "bus services serving areas which have been identified as suffering from congestion".
- Environmental impact of proposed cuts to services.
- Highlighted areas where there is no alternative service or route.
- Highlighted impact on rural communities.
- Concerned that the financial impact of alternative modes of transport may indirectly result in social exclusion.

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Stevenage Borough Council

- Views unchanged.
- Opposes proposals to reduce subsidies on routes serving Stevenage.
- Will have a detrimental impact on local economy.
- Commuters will be forced to use taxis which will impact on them financially and impact on the environment.

Three Rivers District Council

- Concerns for the residents of Chorleywood, Gade Valley Ward, Maple Cross and South Oxhey.
- Would directly impact upon the lives of many vulnerable residents, including disabled people, who are reliant on accessible bus services because they have no access to a car
- Would have negative effects on the wider economy of the Three Rivers District by reducing the capability for local people to travel for economic purposes
- Would severely reduce the availability and effectiveness of the public transport network, forcing an increase in private car journeys, in opposition to many of the policy objectives of national government as well as both the District Council and the County Council.
- Concern for
 - Older people
 - Young people
 - Evening and late night commuters
 - Employees who work daytime and cannot afford to work later than the latest bus will be unable to sustain their employment
 - Low wage shift workers who do not have access to a car but who are required to work in the evening.

Watford Borough Council

- Current proposals are a slight improvement on previous ones, but still represent a potentially disturbing outcome for the town's passenger transport system.
- Watford is a congested town and a key aim of planning and other strategies is to promote sustainable travel and encourage modal shift. HCC should be working to enhance travel choices, to create and retain a resilient and reliable sustainable transport network across the town (and County) so promote modal shift away from private car use can be promoted and thereby combat congestion.
- Accept evening bus services make only a small contribution to the local transport facility, but this contribution is valuable to those who wish, or need to travel in the evenings without the benefit of a car. Applies particularly to workers on low incomes and potentially vulnerable groups such as those not old enough to drive and the elderly.
- A reduction of evening services could also have a detrimental effect on Watford's evening economy. In addition, Sunday services play a small but important part in the social and economic wellbeing of the town. Cuts are also likely to disproportionately affect those on low incomes.
- HCC should maintain its focus on improving and promoting public transport facilities and their ease of use.
- Understand HCC is facing substantial budget cuts as well as various pressures on funding. However, reducing bus services is an unacceptable option, having the effect not only of reducing specific services, but also reducing the extent to which people feel they can rely on bus services as a viable transport choice.
- Commented on cuts to specific services.

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

- General opposition to the proposals as they do not address fundamental concerns raised in response to the previous consultation.
- The 7.30pm cut off for services is not the best basis for changes as some evening services will be of more social and economic importance than some earlier services. People without access to transport are put under an evening curfew, relate to more than 1 in 5 households in this borough.
- The cuts are considered contrary to public health and wellbeing agenda. They impact the less well off, elderly, disabled and young.
- Account needs to be taken that if services are stopped at 7.30 there is a chance that passengers may not use the earlier services as they will not be able to make the return journey thereby impacting on services which are currently viable.

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- Limited evening services would be better than a total withdrawal particularly for villages where choice of other modes is much less. Large parts of the county are rural and need a decent public transport system.
- The NHS is 24/7 and ideally bus services should reflect that. Consideration should be made for visiting hours some finishing 8pm if not later. Would also enable night staff to use public transport to get to work.
- Concern in particular for the 300/301 service as it is a key route in the borough.
- The loss of the 388 would mean there would be no transport from Burnham Green to the station.
- The 737 service would miss out Welwyn Village.

Bus User Groups

Bus User Group Stevenage

- Disappointed there is scant evidence findings of previous year's consultation have been useful in framing proposals for revised consultation.
- Point made in the NHS responses about changing patterns of primary care seem to be ignored.
- Evenings and weekends are increasingly times when people travel to work, use leisure and entertainment facilities and visit family and friends.
- More people will use their cars, adding to congestion on the roads where the county council already struggles to maintain an acceptable level of repairs.
- The town has a high number of people on low incomes and a high proportion of households without cars; this will bring social isolation and loss of access to the labour market. Concerns of local leisure providers about the difficulties which would be faced by both users and employees in what is not generally high paid work.
- Proposals fly in the face of the county council's proclaimed policies of environmental sustainability, social cohesion and reduction of social and economic disadvantage.
- An opportunity has been lost to look more creatively at the future of bus services provided in a more flexible, cost effective and co-ordinated manner. Examples may be found in several European countries, notably Germany and Austria.
- Time has come to revive and rethink Herts Integrated Transport Plan by including public transport in its remit and using need for economy as a stimulus for better, more sustainable planning.

Potters Bar and St Albans Transport User Group

- Put forward suggestions on changes to specific routes.
- Would like all contract services to accept M ticketing this year to encourage the younger generation to use buses.
- Suggested the county should have a contingency fund to cover withdrawal of services by 2017 in certain areas, when s106 funding ends.
- Proposed a 242 timetable for discussion.
- Queenswood (private) school has a red travel plan (cars and taxis) rather than green as all schools should have.
- Contracts are 'socially necessary' safety net services.
- 8,000 new homes planned for east of St Albans and Harpenden will need new or amended services.
- Large scale Hatfield campus s106 funding going in 2017 which could affect UNO and Hatfield. Severe congestion in St Albans during market days and with school buses all using St. Peters Street.
- Asked if there is going to be a county map of 'socially necessary' services in the amended bus strategy; including future airport and cross county and Hertsmere links, and proposed housing east of St Albans and Harpenden.
- Asked for a downloadable booklet of Sunday/ hospital services.
- Suggested redirecting subsidy to TfL to fund new county services such as to airports and cross county links.

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Sullivan Buses

- Pleased a Value for Money Criteria is included in revised proposals.
- Disappointed these are additional to proposals to remove funding from evening and Sunday services.
- Very disappointed proposed savings are now double that of the previous consultation despite the opposing responses.
- Publication of consultation has been considerably less and extent of cuts not made clear.
- Members of the public are unaware of extent of cuts.
- Members of the public believe their response to the first consultation stands. This has not been made clear by the county council.
- Disputes that proposals will impact on fewer number of passengers.
- New proposals impact on more people who use the bus to access employment.
- Blanket cuts to evening and Sunday services do not provide best value for money. Proposal to maintain funding routes serving hospitals is exacerbating the poor value for money position of revised proposals.
- Pointed out some local hospitals now offer few services and have few inpatients. Larger hospitals are serving larger areas.
- If the revised bus strategy is adopted it would not be justifiable for the county council to continue to fund TfL services or any element of free travel for children on these services.
- Consider the cost per passenger should be the first and main criteria.
- Asked that before funding is withdrawn for any service, up-to-date passenger numbers are obtained.
- Pointed out road traffic in the county is a major issue for the environment, businesses and citizens. Proposals will make bus services much less attractive to users.
- Will lead to more pressure to build and maintain roads, and demands for town centre parking. No financial assessment has been made to this cost in comparison to funding bus services.
- Provided information on their passenger numbers and case study of route 306
- Appreciates the need to identify savings but current proposals have more implications than stated in consultation document especially for vulnerable citizens and young people.
- Revised proposal falls short of providing best value for money and risks starting downward spiral for bus services in the county.
- Cuts impact on people going to and from work; many are on low pay and/or young.
- Risk of shop workers giving up their jobs or stop using the bus which will undermine profitability of commercial services. Knock on effect could be operators handing back services for the council to fund defeating the object of making savings.
- Negative impact on children and young adults participating in sporting activities; Sunday shoppers; concessionary pass holders enjoying a range of social activities; and hospital staff, patients and their visitors/carers.
- Suggests adopting a value for money assessment on services after 7:30 pm and on Sundays rather than stopping funding.
- Removing evening services will impact on commercial daytime services.
- Made suggestions for on better value for money within area they serve.

CCG, NHS Trusts and Hospitals

East and North Hertfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group

- Recognises considerable challenges faced by county council in delivering savings required in years ahead.
- Appreciate important revisions made to the original proposals.
- In interest of NHS staff; patients and their families and carers asks the county council to consider further protection of routes serving hospitals within the county and in neighbouring counties until regular visiting times have finished.
- Visits from family and friends are important for wellbeing of longer term patients.
- Highlighted needs of carers and those with long term health conditions; groups who are vulnerable and who the CCG is committed to supporting.
- Aware Trust colleagues are concerned of impact on staff working shifts in hospitals operating 24 hours a day.
- Significant percentage of population who live in east and north Hertfordshire district council areas have no private transport.

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- As partners on the Health and Wellbeing Board understands financial pressures faced by HCC and difficult decisions that need to be made.
- Reminded of the work with the county council and voluntary organisation to provide transport solutions and look forward to continuing to work productively together to ensure staff, patients and carers are not disadvantaged by proposed subsidy changes.

East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust

- Understands operational and financial challenges faced by the county council to deliver cost improvement programmes in years ahead.
- Recognises significant changes have been made to the original proposals. Welcomes later cut-off point and routes serving hospitals protected on a Sunday up to 7:30pm.
- In interest of NHS staff; patients and families/carers asks the county council to consider further protection of routes serving hospitals within the county and in neighbouring counties to allow travel home by bus following visits to loved ones in the evening.
- Visits from family and friends are important for wellbeing of longer term patients many of whom are elderly with complex health and care needs.
- Understands challenges facing county council
- Highlighted needs of carers and those with long term health conditions; groups who are vulnerable and whom both the NHS and county council are committed to supporting.
- Concerned with impact on staff who rely on local bus services, many of whom are lower paid.
- Colleagues in East and North Hertfordshire CCG told the Trust a significant percentage of population who live in east and north Hertfordshire district council areas have no private transport.
- Understand the financial pressures faced by the county council and difficult decisions to be made.
- Reminded of long-standing record of working with the county council and voluntary organisation to provide transport solutions.
- Look forward to continuing to work productively together to ensure staff, patients and carers are not disadvantaged by proposed subsidy changes.

Rivers Hospital

- Hospital and healthcare campus not well served by bus services currently
- Further reduction would adversely impact on patients and residents, and on their visitors, family and friends
- Had looked to encourage alternative methods of travel to the hospital to ease car parking pressures
- A reduction in public transport options would adversely impact the already limited options for those who come to the hospital

Letters/emails from Members of the Public

- Expressed dissatisfaction with particular bus routes or current services
- Concern for the elderly, vulnerable, school children, commuters, and shift workers. Groups of people most reliant on bus services or who would feel the most impact on the proposed cuts to bus services
- Concern for buses which serve Saffron Walden in Essex
- Concerned cuts will have a negative impact on the ability to carry out everyday tasks such as shopping, going to the bank, to the doctors, to the dentists, the hairdressers and visiting friends
- Proposed cuts would curtail social life in the evenings
- Being able to travel independently is an essential part of the infrastructure of any community seeking to promote health and wellbeing; provide access to education and job opportunities
- Queried fairness of proposed bus cuts across the county. Less cuts proposed in East Hertfordshire
- Suggestions made for other ways to fund bus services such as increasing council tax and/or bus fares
- Understand savings have to be made but a reduction in services not offset against a reduction in council tax
- Questioned the way bus services were privatised and the allocation of public money
- Suggested proposed changes did not take in to consideration hospital visits to patients
- Pointed out consequences on the health and wellbeing of elderly/vulnerable patients

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- Importance of public transport to access other towns; for commuting; and day to day activities
- Emphasis on the bus being a 'service'
- Requests for further information on timetables
- Comment that without full information could not respond to consultation
- Pointed out lack of alternative public transport
- Alternative is to use trains but safety issue getting home from train station
- Some areas have good train services but not all journeys can be made by train
- Dial-a-Ride is not a viable alternative and taxis are too expensive
- Concerned (certain) poor bus services will distort information on passenger numbers
- Concerned for rural areas
- Pointed out potential negative impact on planning applications and new housing developments in rural communities
- Raised safety issues of getting home at night
- Concerned for shift works and night workers: workers who rely on evening and Sunday services
- Highlighted limitations of employment options if buses are cut
- Raised the point the amount of people in their cars should be trying to get reduced and making sure kids can get to college
- Concern especially for people with mental health problems and other health and social care needs
- Public transport network is the mark of a civilised, socially equitable and sustainable society
- The approach to withdraw all evening and Sunday daytime services is flawed legally. The transport Act 1985 refers to all needs not just ones HCC are prepared to consider
- Raised the point that the operation of any value for money system can only be as good as the data used so data not being recorded or being recorded incorrectly leads to misinformation
- School journey from Bishops Stortford would not be adequate if the 386 and 700 are merged instead of two separate buses
- There is a bus that has increased in size since new ownership and its size means it cannot follow the approved route and misses the centre village stop, upset a number of regular travellers and may account for a drop in use
- I am not sure spending money on digital bus timetables is an effective use of funds unless they can give live info/ cancellations/ delays in due course
- Concerns expressed over the need for a second consultation and the process for carrying out an exercise (costs and officer time)
- Suggestion that older people pay a nominal fee towards their bus pass as opposed to free travel in order to save some routes
- The town centres are currently in difficulties and measures that make it more difficult for shoppers (on a Sunday in particular) and employees to get to the town centre will only add to the difficulties
- Account needs to be taken that if services are stopped at 7.30 there is a chance that passengers may not use the earlier services as they will not be able to make the return journey.
- New homes planned for east of SA and Harpenden will need new or amended services.
- It was raised that many evening and Sunday bus contracts share costs with other commercial or contract operations therefore removing one section would have a negative impact on the other journey potentially making it no longer sustainable
- Taking away the return journey means people are less likely to make the outward journey by bus
- Research suggests more jobs would be created if bus times were shorter and many young unemployed people have missed out on job as there are no buses to take them. Bus is the most popular form of transport for reaching city centres and crucial to their prosperity.

Members of Parliament

John Bercow MP

- Constituents are concerned about proposed cuts to village.
- Local bus connects village to towns, allowing people to go to their doctor, dentist, hospital, go shopping and socialising.
- Village has an ageing population who have greater need for a bus service.
- Already have a problem with the elderly being isolated. Lack of public transport only adds to this and in the end creates greater problems.

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Sir Oliver Heald MP

- Difficult decisions must be made in challenging economic times.
- Pleased HCC have listened to local people directly affected with this 2nd bus consultation
- Objections to new proposals:
 - Proposed termination of 334 and 700
 - reduction in frequency of service makes travel more difficult
 - complete termination of service has serious effect
- Bus service 334 on a Friday is described as essential mainly used by elderly and disabled
- Used to go to Addenbrookes Hospital, shopping and to the bank in Cambridge
- Urges HCC to keep service
- Bus service 700 proposed for termination - part replacement with 386 is not sufficient compensation
- Revised route will no longer serve Royston affecting 16,000 residents
- Will no longer provide a service to Stansted Airport
- Will reduce economic competitiveness of area
- Bus service 700 currently operates on Sunday, 386 does not
- Objection to value for money criteria changes:
 - Cost per passenger ranks higher than elderly and disabled passengers; young people
 - Takes issue with possibility duties HCC legally obliged to perform and services that most affect elderly, disabled and young may be pushed to bottom in favour of other value for money considerations
- Understands need for savings but some cuts seem to affect children, elderly and disabled disproportionately
- Contacted by elderly constituents, bus users of Standon service, particularly bus services 23 and 25
 - Concerned will not get to doctor or to meet with friends
 - Could leave them isolated
 - If elderly do not wish to use Dial A Ride bus passes will not be of use if services are terminated
 - Concerned replacement services will not adequately fill in gaps created by changes to 23 and 25
- Tewin Parish Council and one of its elderly residents feel strongly bus service 388 is an important, well used service and that the 724 is not an alternative. Requested submission by the parish council be fully taken in to account.

Peter Lilley MP – (on behalf of) North Hertfordshire Bus Users

- Would like to ensure the concessionary travel card is not withdrawn and current conditions of use are not altered
- Do not want bus operators to cut any of the current bus routes
- Local people need these services, especially those who live in the rural communities
- Makes no sense to stop any of the currently scheduled evening or Sunday bus services
- Would like Arriva to re-think decision to withdraw the 797 Stevenage to London
- Asked if instead of cutting local bus services between cities and towns in North Hertfordshire, they add some 'conveniently scheduled' night time buses

Richard Harrington *Parliamentary Candidate for Watford*

- Changes made by since the first consultation improved the situation for buses in his constituency.
- Wished to re-affirm position that subsidised services in and around Watford are incredibly important.
- Pleased the county council is considering a cap on highly subsidised services as opposed to blanket change which was previously proposed.
- Keen to see individual bus routes in Watford which are not heavily subsidized considered on their individual merit as opposed to just as part of the wider contract which may require a heavier subsidy.

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Organisations

Berkhamsted Citizens Association

- Public transport network is the mark of a civilised, socially equitable and sustainable society.
- The maintenance of such a network is of interest to everyone, now and for future generations.
- Withdrawal of the evening service on route 501 would limit mobility of young people, those who do not or can not afford to drive, as well as those who need to travel for work.
- Not everyone works 9 - 5 Monday to Friday. It limits travel options. Increased travel congestion.
- Would urge HCC to find other ways of making savings and to encourage bus operators to consider operating services commercially - especially on Sundays and to improve connectivity at hub points.
- HCC has an admirable record in improving public transport through the Intalink scheme. Sincerely hope HCC will step back from its proposals to withdraw financial support for evening and Sunday bus services.

Campaign for Better Transport

- Published a report in January 2015 called Buses in Crisis 2010-2015. Research showed that Hertfordshire County Council has cut 39% of its bus funding since 2010.
- This is a very worrying trend.
- Local transport authorities must secure the provision of appropriate services to meet public transport requirements.
- Local authorities must undertake Equality Impact Assessments at a stage when the policy is still being considered.
- The first consultation received 4548 responses and only 30 of them were in any way supportive of the council's plans to cut bus services.
- Due to the severity of the decision to cut significant funding for supported bus services in Cambridgeshire, local resident with support from Campaign for Better Transport launched a legal challenge against the council's decision.
- We are not saying HCC have acted the same way as CCC but the sheer extent of the proposed cuts lead us to revisit what we learned from this case.
- Evening services are more important than daytime services for many.
- Evening services transport shift and service sector employees allowing night time economies to flourish and prosper.
- We believe the cost per passenger is counter balanced with revenue per passenger.
- Economic importance of the bus.
- Social importance of the bus.
- Environmental importance of the bus.
- The need for transport in rural areas more so than urban areas.
- Buses are the backbone of public transport in regional cities.
- Vulnerable bus users such as older people, young people and those in part or full time education, people on low incomes and job seekers and people with disabilities would be disproportionately affected.
- More innovative approaches to delivering supported services should be considered.
- Developing and coordinating bus networks would be a way.

Dacorum Environmental Forum

- Opposed to proposed cuts to subsidies on routes after 7:30pm and on Sundays.
- Cuts will lead to a loss of some services altogether and of many evening buses.
- Concerned about the impact on the large group of people without cars which includes low income families; older people, people with health issues and young people.
- Many of these people will be deprived of access to rural areas and town centres at certain times.
- Also an issue of late evening and shift workers.
- The cost of taxis is not an economically viable option for many low paid people.
- Evening businesses including restaurants and pubs may suffer.
- Cutting evening services sends out wrong message when people are being asked not to drink and drive.
- Buses represent an excellent opportunity to reduce the number of vehicles on the road and reduce carbon emissions.

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- Reducing the service will cause a downward spiral in use and a further decline in revenue.
- HCC should be looking to expand its support and encourage more people to use the system.
- People want reliability from a service.
- Real time running information across the bus network would increase the number of customers, increase their confidence in the service and perhaps decrease the need to subsidise routes in the longer term.
- Cutting support to the bus service will be a false economy and a disservice to many people in the county.
- Those on higher incomes will find alternatives but many others will not and for some people reducing the service may impact on their lives and livelihoods.
- What is required is a concerted effort to promote the bus system through better advertising, travel deals, improved reliability and better connectivity.
- At the very least a late bus should be available on all routes to allow people to get home.
- The council needs to be more forward thinking and innovative in improving not decreasing the bus service.

Hertfordshire Rural Issues Group

- Welcomes that only 2% of bus passenger journeys to be affected by proposals.
- Concerned with any action subsequent to consultation that adversely affects bus services in rural areas.
- Many villages/hamlets have a skeleton service used by the most vulnerable and at risk of isolation and disadvantage - the elderly; young people and children; people with mental health problems and other health and social care needs.
- Urge action not to be taken that will detrimentally affect the lives of those in rural areas who are most at need of support and publicly funded services.

South Hertfordshire Branch of CAMRA

- Understand the financial context under which the proposals have been gathered but feel that, in this case, the need for the services outweighs the saving that might be annually achieved.
- Proposed cuts to services will cause hardship to commuters, evening workers, people visiting friends, students, people attending evening classes, tourists – to name a few – and have a dramatic effect on people visiting town centres to enjoy theatres, restaurants and pubs.
- The pub remains a popular destination for people looking for evening and weekend companionship and entertainment.
- 30 pubs are closing per week and many landlords are barely earning the national minimum wage. Nevertheless a visit to the pub remains one of Britain's favourite pastimes. Withdrawal of bus services will have the effect of reducing custom still further
- Not everyone can jump on a bike or find the cost for a taxi on a regular basis - particularly the old, the disadvantaged and people with disabilities. Many older people rely on the bus services to get to the pub to meet and socialise with friends. If they are withdrawn we will be robbing this group of a freedom and independence.
- There are also many people who are using the services and putting money into the local economy, not just pubs.
- Bus services connect communities
- The threat to bus services appears to fly in the face of previous Government and County policies which aim to encourage the use of public transport and to link and integrate all communities, not to isolate them.
- Institute for Transport Studies reports have highlighted the importance of bus transport. Government ministers have spoken strongly of its need.
- Suggested environmental reasons for using buses should be part of a strategy on carbon reduction.
- As in the first consultation could not see any form of data collection, in-depth study or impact assessment that has been made ahead of the proposals being aired and strongly suggest that these are carried out or provided before any decisions are taken to implement the cuts.
- There is no evidence that bus companies have been approached to see to what extent they are able to pick up any slack if funding is withdrawn and as to whether some of the threatened services might therefore still be operated. We would encourage such engagements
- Would like to register that we are against any significant cuts to evening and Sunday services. This would be a detrimental step.

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- Would prefer to see the Council supporting the future of Hertfordshire's pubs, and maintaining bus services, not just for pub goers, but for all the other people who genuinely need them.

Three Rivers District Council Labour Group

- Strongly objects to proposals to withdraw funding from services which run after 7:30 pm and from Sunday services except those serving hospitals until 7:30 pm.
- Believe additional hour in the evening presents little improvement to residents reliant on bus services.
- Hospital visits to see patients and/or receive treatment do not finish at 7:30 pm. Hospital users and staff would be adversely affected.
- Withdrawal of services at 7:30pm would impact on commuters; shift workers; including those working in public services; retail trade and night workers; students taking part in extra-curricular activities and social events
- The proposals would particularly affect; young people; low income earners; the elderly; disabled; and other vulnerable groups, forcing them to remain at home and become increasingly isolated. Detrimental to health and well-being
- The proposals would have an environmental impact with increased car usage in evenings and at weekends.
- Commuters unable to return home in the evening by bus would travel to work by car in the mornings.
- Proposals contradict HCC's TravelWise Plan aimed at creating sustainable transport and changing travel behaviours.
- Current proposals would adversely impact on local economic and business initiatives aimed at encouraging growth, increasing prosperity and employment opportunities in Hertfordshire.
- TRDC Labour Group represent South Oxhey ward which has lowest number of car owners in the county. Many residents dependent on availability of public transport. Proposed cuts would leave South Oxhey with no evening bus service including a service to access the nearest train station.
- Challenge for local government to provide quality services despite cuts in funding.
- Flaws in consultation same as in previous consultation.
- Urge needs of local communities and analysis of demographics be taken into consideration before any decision is made.

Parish & Town Councils

Abbots Langley Parish Council

- Extremely concerned about the impact the proposed changes would have on the most vulnerable members of the community.
- Noted the revised consultation on the reduction in bus subsidies.
- Still significant concern of the effect a reduction in services after 7:30 pm and on Sundays would have on the most vulnerable in the community and those that had employment outside of "9 to 5 Monday to Friday".
- Particularly concerned about bus service 322. If discontinued there would be a significant number of residential and business premises left without any bus service.
- Asked that their comments are taken in to consideration when final proposals considered.

Aldbury Parish Council

- Proposals to routes affecting the parish, although unwelcome and opposed, do at least maintain a minimal link to Hemel Hempstead
- Realise the county council may well enforce proposed reductions on cost grounds despite opposition.
- Totally opposed to the complete removal of Aldbury from services if that is the consequence of running services to/from Berkhamsted.

Berkhamsted Parish Council

- Proposed changes were welcomed
- Town council supported the proposed changes

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Bramfield Parish Council

- Sought clarification on proposed changes which would impact village
- Pointed out limited bus service would not enable Clerk to Parish Council to attend Town & Parish Council meeting
- Formal objection to the proposed change/reduction in the 379 service as it impacts on Bramfield

Buntingford Town Council

- Concerned to note that revised changes do little to allay previous concerns
- Pleased to note services will continue to 7:30 pm
- Concerned at demise of 700 service
- Note it is intended to extend current 386 service, will still be no Sunday service and only 4 return journeys a day to Stevenage
- Stevenage is main access to rail services
- There will be no means of meeting hospital appointments on a Sunday and no possible way of reaching Stansted Airport
- No railway station only public transport available is by bus
- Two main services 331 travels north to south and 700 east to west
- Town target for property developers
- Not green belt and not protected by District plan
- Planning permission granted for in excess of 1000 new dwellings with the possibility of a further 580. 40% is affordable housing
- Will change needs of town particularly need for more frequent bus services
- Planning permission granted on assumption of evening and Sunday bus services
- Town already struggles with lack of public
- HCC will be preventing residents travelling anywhere on a Sunday or returning after 7:30 pm by public transport
- Not a sustainable measure
- Outside Government proposals contained in National Planning Policy Framework
- Lack of employment opportunities in area means incomers are likely to commute to nearby towns or Stevenage rail station
- Newcomers decision will be based on availability of buses
- To change bus services at crucial time for town is irresponsible and unfair
- Withdrawal of services should be considered on a case by case basis

Chrishall Parish Council, Essex

- Highlighted route of bus service no 43 serves villages in Hertfordshire and Essex.
- Important for those who cannot drive or are unable to drive as gives access to two main market towns.
- Use by many mature residents.
- Asked if Essex County Council had been approached to contribute towards the cost of provision of service to Bishops Stortford.
- Parish has lost a number of bus services over the years.
- Villagers may not have a huge impact on the economy of either Royston or Bishops Stortford but important to enable residents to have access on traditional market days.
- Concerned for impact on health of elderly if denied public transport leading to costs associated with other services such as social services.
- Long term outcome is reliance on social services or moving away.
- Requested proposal to withdraw bus service is reconsidered.

Croxley Green Parish Council

- Not in favour of any proposed cuts.
- Particularly concerned for those dependent on services such as the elderly; those on low income and youngsters.
- Concerned about the extend and methodology of the consultation, not reaching bus users therefore having a negative impact on the validity of the results.
- Concerned HCC has already pre-determined the outcome.
- Noted changes and documents have been 'watered down'.

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- Concerned proposed changes will affect the vulnerable; shift workers; elderly; low income and youngsters - all those who rely on services and have no other means of transport.
- HCC should be taking a more in-depth strategic approach - look at each area, specific services and evaluate each route.
- Suggests 'London system' of service provider tendering - operators take less economic routes as well as profitable to meet diverse needs of community.
- Significant more thought should have been given to this extremely important matter for the community.
- Should not be driven by pre-determined budget requirements.

Elstree & Borehamwood Town Council

- Concerns expressed over the need for a second consultation and the process for carrying out an exercise. Costs and officer time.
- The possibility was suggested that direct bus routes to hospitals might not be the only criterion to judge a route's essential value (as some non-hospital services were better used, while routes required by patients and staff to access hospitals were not limited to those which serve them directly, route 306 from Borehamwood to Watford being a case in point).
- There was also a perceived need to consider non NHS hospitals or places of healthcare where NHS services may be delivered.
- It was noted that the withdrawal of service after 7.30pm would be marginally less damaging than a withdrawal after 6.30pm but this remained an unpopular proposal and the adverse consequences this would have for employees working unsocial hours and access to evening leisure and recreational facilities.
- The withdrawal of funding to services as it is suggested will have negative effect on residents of Elstree and Borehamwood many who rely on an affordable bus service to travel to/ from work and to visit friends and family members.
- The changes would have wider negative impacts on public transport within the County and would limit access to other towns/ areas. Large areas of the town would be inaccessible. Concern about the blanket nature of the proposals that don't take into account usage. Sundays now second busiest shopping day of the week and many people work unsocial hours and young people use evening/ Sunday services for leisure trips.
- Any reduction in the passenger transport budget would be detrimental.

Great Gaddesden Parish Council

- Would like to register objections to the proposed cuts to bus service 30/31.
- At present no Sunday service, to eliminate Saturday service would prevent villagers travelling over the whole weekend to nearest towns and to visit family and friend.
- Cutting the service could have a dire effect on shift workers and parents collecting children from school.
- Elderly and young families, those without their own transport will be forced to move or restricted to the village.
- No shops in the village so travel is a necessity.
- Cuts could lead to more pollution and traffic chaos.
- Request proposed cuts are reconsidered.

Hertingfordbury Parish Council

- Residents are trying to understand the reasoning behind the proposal to decimate the 388 bus service.
- Requested information on how the price per passenger journey is calculated.

Little Gaddesden Parish Council

- Concern that this "lifeline of transport" to doctor's surgeries, dentist, pharmacies and markets will be removed.
- Concerned for the elderly residents who can no longer drive.
- Taxis are expensive.
- Neighbours and friends are good but most people wish to remain independent and take advantage of a reliable bus service.
- Would like to offer direct help in discussing the proposals further.

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- Aim would be to achieve savings but minimise the impact on passengers and provide maximum time allowance in Berkhamsted.

Offley Parish Council (Bus service 88)

- Writing on behalf of Cockernhoe, Mangrove Green and Tea Green
- Service is vital to elderly residents
- No alternative transport
- No shops in villages, need transport to towns, supermarkets, clinics, opticians, hospital
- Service used by young families and school children - no alternative available
- Would also affect residents of Beachwood Green, Kings Walden, Ley Green, Preston, Gosmore
- Publicity has not reach residents of these hamlets
- Many people affected cannot access the internet
- Nearest library is Hitchin
- Do not receive local newspapers
- Nearest clinic is in Luton
- Buses have not carried publicity material - bus drivers not aware

Manuden Parish Council, Essex (on the Hertfordshire/Essex border)

- Opposed to the removal of bus service 10
- Highlighted the importance of bus services on non-drivers and the limitations of the current service
- Understood budgetary pressures but pointed out responsibility of local government to provide basic services to residents
- Concerned for the elderly, disabled, those on lower incomes and those without access to a car
- Highlighted potential detrimental impact on rural life
- Suggested asking for subsidy from Essex County Council or altering rather than cancelling routes
- Criticised questionnaire and advertising of consultation
- Wanted to formally complain about consultation and perceived lack of communication

Rushden and Wallington Parish Council

- Carried out own survey because many elderly residents, who are most likely to be affected by the changes, do not have internet access to complete the online survey.
- Other residents complained survey was too long and complicated.
- Survey responses: Do you think that it is important to keep a bus service for Wallington?

Total households responded	37
Households in Wallington	43
% of households responded	86%

Total responses	47
Responses from non-residents	1
% of responses from residents	98%

Online Responses	13
Paper Responses	35

Yes	No	Not Sure
39	8	1
81%	17%	2%

- Comments
 - Reliance of elderly/retired on bus services.
 - Not everyone drives or has a car.
 - Buses are comparatively inexpensive form of public transport.
 - Comments about current service route and timetable.
 - Public transport should remain a public service.

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- Provides independence for elderly.
- Proposed cuts comes on back of library withdrawal and exclusion from superfast broadband.
- Rural transport is a vital link which should not be broken.
- Service should be improved rather than stopped
- Suggested a simpler, smaller and potentially cheaper alternative to a big bus is used.
- Unless people actually rely on this service as only means of transport and cannot afford to use taxis, do not think it is a good use of the council's budget.
- Never seen it, won't miss it
- A public bus at different times or 'car pool' system would be more useful.

Shenley Parish Council

- Opposed to reducing funding
- Shenley relies heavily on bus services as there is no local train station
- Cuts would greatly impact on residents of Shenley

Tewin Parish Council

- Background to bus services, bus service 388 and users in Tewin Parish
- Bus service 388 is a critically essential service for rural populations.
- Objections are:
 - the severe reductions to the current service and limitations of the proposed new service
 - the impaired access to essential services: doctors surgeries, hospitals, dentist, opticians, supermarkets and other shops and local rail connections in Hertford, Welwyn North and Welwyn Garden City
 - if implemented, the service could no longer be used by students going to college, or school out of normal hours, or people going to & from work
 - the resulting impact on those who have no other form of transport
 - the consequent loss of sustainable transport in this area and further reliance on the car
 - the use of inaccurate figures, and assumptions, for passenger numbers, which invalidates the calculation of cost per passenger journey, which in turn invalidates the 'value for money test' as the basis for these cuts
 - the short-sighted assumption that the subsidised bus services are an easy target and can be cut 'to save money'.
- Implications are:
 - The severe and disproportionate reduction to the service
 - Impaired access to essential services
 - Equalities impact – no attempt has been made so far to assess the impact on individual villages and communities
 - Impact on rural and sustainable transport – even greater dependence on the car
 - Passenger numbers – disagree with HCC estimate. If passenger numbers cannot be determined with any certainty this has a significant impact on the cost per passenger journey and the validity of the value for money test is then in question
- Parish Council opposes the changes.
- Views of the parishioners:
 - People of Tewin and other parishes along the route of the 388 object strongly to the proposals in the current consultation document.
 - Loss of independence and potential isolation for those who are not able to drive, in particular the old, the young and those with disabilities/mobility problems.
 - Those with bus passes will be especially disadvantaged if they cannot access bus services and cannot afford to pay for taxis.
- Consultation exercise:
 - Lack of notice (possibly due to error in email address)
 - Notice only on Saturday bus services
 - No notice at bus stops or stand at WGC bus station
 - Suggested survey fatigue
 - Suggested people not aware of second consultation.
 - Consultation document to long and complex
- The consultation proposals appear to be contrary to the main objectives of the prevailing policies of HCC and to the assumptions made by District Councils in their planning documents.
- Issues with costs and funding figures given
- Highlighted negative impact on concessionary pass holders

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- Tewin residents and other users of the 388 bus service rely on the bus for their everyday needs
- Strong feeling that Tewin has been affected disproportionately in new consultation proposals
- Hope HCC will talk to other interested parties, seriously reconsider proposal and maintain existing service.

Ware Town Council

- Concerned for access to hospital, the elderly and disadvantaged residents
- Stopping evening bus services would prevent residents taking part in voluntary activities or adding to the economy
- Stopping evening services would be detrimental to the objectives of reducing drink/driving and of car usage

Watford Rural Parish Council

- South Oxhey is well known for being a deprived area, having a high population of elderly residents and single parents.
- Many residents are unable to afford a vehicle and the associated running costs; therefore they rely heavily on the buses to take them to the town centre and surrounding areas. For many this is their only means of transport.
- If services were cut would have a serious impact on the elderly being independent.
- The elderly can not afford to get taxis and feel more secure on buses than on the trains.
- For single parents who are on low income, again this is their only means of transport.
- Route 8 is a lifeline for this parish enabling people to get to work and to shop.
- Negative effect on Sunday workers and evening workers; shoppers; hospital visits; businesses; theatres and restaurants.
- Train is too expensive.
- Cutting back on bus services will have a detrimental effect on communities.

Watton at Stone Parish Council

- Agree that bus services need to be rationalised and fit for purpose, strongly believe that the reduction of any services which results in more individual car journeys should not be contemplated because of
 - • Increased environment harm
 - • Greater congestion
 - • Disadvantages sections of the community
 - • A good service encourages more people to use buses on a regular basis
 - • Should be promoted as the "travel option of choice"
 - • Must be part of sustainable living
 - • Should be funded by car parking fees from town and district councils
- Are particularly concerned in Watton that the cessation of the 390 service on Saturday morning will make life particularly less rewarding if not impossible, for the working population who traditionally shop at the weekend and for younger members of the community who are in part time employment for which there is little opportunity in the village.
- Are trying to make the 'Bus Experience' better by installing bus shelters and to suggest that services be reduced makes their efforts somewhat pointless.

Welwyn Parish Council

- Asked whether any of the remaining commercial 388 route school journeys would serve anywhere west of Tewin
- Asked whether the 203 would continue to serve Burnham Green and Digswell
- Asked whether the new 202 Tewin/WGC would serve Burnham Green and Digswell
- Asked for clarification what the route of the proposed 202 would be and how long bus users would have to shop in Panshanger Morrisons and central Welwyn Garden City

Weston Parish Council

- Ask that the decision to withdraw the route 23 to Hitchin on a Tuesday is reconsidered. It the only bus during the week to the most popular market town. Although not heavily used it is valued by a number of elderly residents who have no access to private transport and certainly cannot afford a taxi.

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- The proposal to reduce the days of operation of the route 391 is also objected to by the Parish Council. The value of this service is that it is daily and to reduce to 3 days a week makes it of little value.
- The Lister hospital is to the local hospital for Weston and appointments cannot be made on just 3 days per week to suit the local bus service.
- If the proposal to withdraw the mobile library is done then a bus is even more important for people to get to a local library.
- Weston Parish Council realises that the services are under used but would appreciate the actual usage numbers for the last few months. The bus has increased in size since the new operator took over, regularly damages the verges in the village, is so large that it cannot follow the approved route and misses the centre village bus stop.

Wigginton Parish Council

- Current service essential link between villages and rail station
- Adverse effect of cuts on commuters, elderly and those without cars

Schools

Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School

- Advised of problems with current service
- Suggested there would be increased usage if journey times were more conducive to school hours

Mary's Church of England High School, Cheshunt

- Requested information on student journeys to enable to assess impact on student community

Presdales School, Ware

- Proposals impact on school travel planning
- Withdrawal of service with no alternative would exacerbate dangers of walking
- Service should be enhanced not withdrawn
- Urge members to consider carefully implications to students

The Harefield Academy, Uxbridge

- Provided information on the type of school; student catchment; student life and current travel arrangements
- Highlighted importance of current bus services
- Subsequently met with the county council