

EXECUTIVE MEMBER RESPONSE

NAME OF TOPIC GROUP: Disability Support for Bus Users

CHAIRMAN: Anne Joynes

SCRUTINY OFFICER: Natalie Rotherham

DATE OF SCRUTINY: 17 March 2017

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Derrick Ashley

DATE REPORT PUBLISHED: 28 March 2017

DATE RESPONSE DUE: 29 May 2017

DATE RESPONSE RETURNED: 1 June 2017

Recommendations

Executive Response

2.1 That officers explore opportunities to engage with people with disabilities to inform their work with Intalink and ongoing service development. (3.4, 3.7, 3.8, 3.10, 4.5)

The Intalink co-ordinator will be attending the Learning Disability Partnership Board – Transport Working Group where she will update the group on what issues were discussed at the Intalink Steering Group. Going forward there will be a regular agenda item in supporting disabled people on buses and the Transport Working Group will be able to input into that via the Intalink co-ordinator.

Officers are exploring ways of engaging with Watford Disability group and other groups that come forward. Any concerns that arise will be taken to the Intalink partnership and discussed with operators.

2.2 That officers ensure that the needs and concerns of disabled bus users are known and regularly discussed at Intalink. (3.11, 3.12, 3.14, 3.16, 4.6)

The Intalink partnership meets quarterly: the next one is in July and the agenda will discuss the outcomes from the scrutiny on disabled bus users experiences and what can be done to support them.

The Disability Support for Bus Users report has been circulated to all bus operators for their information and awareness in advance

	<p>of discussion at the forthcoming Intalink Steering Group meeting.</p> <p>Training material for the Orange Wallet scheme has been sent to bus operators via Intalink. When shared with bus drivers this information will raise awareness of needs of disabled passengers amongst bus drivers.</p> <p>The Intalink Partnership has invested in updated flyers about the Orange Wallet scheme that are sent to every passenger with newly issued or reissued concessionary bus passes for passengers with disabilities.</p>
<p>2.3 That officers respond positively to the Bus Services Bill consultation to reflect the opportunities within in it to deliver benefits and improvements for all bus passengers in Hertfordshire including disabled passengers. (3.17, 3.20, 3.21, 3.24, 4.7)</p>	<p>The Bus Service Act 2017 was given royal assent at the end of April. Officers will be reviewing what opportunities the Bus Service Act can offer Hertfordshire along with details contained in the secondary guidance which is still to be published over the coming months and post the general election. Discussions on the implications of the Act will commence with operators at the Intalink AGM in July and will carry on throughout the year.</p> <p>Officers will be reviewing all elements of the Act and will be asking members via the Environment, Planning and Transport Panel to recommend to Cabinet options to be taken forward in the best interests of all bus users in Hertfordshire. Disability groups will be part of those discussions in developing options including discussions at the Co-Production Board before being put to Panel</p>
<p>2.4 That officers through the stewardship of the Intalink Partnership raise awareness among disabled residents of the range of products available to them and how to access. (3.23, 4.8)</p>	<p>As stated in 2.2 above officers are committed to raising issues and concerns with operators directly and collectively in the Intalink Quality Partnership. Officers will work with bus operators to simplify the range of products and improve the marketing and information for disabled people.</p> <p>The Deputy Head of Service (Community Wellbeing Team) Health & Community Services will be attending the next Intalink Steering Group to raise awareness of the Orange Wallet to</p>

	<p>operators, to seek their support for training drivers to recognise and improve the on-board experiences of disabled customers.</p> <p>Orange Wallet leaflets have been redesigned and are now being distributed as and when someone with a disability applies and is accepted for a disabled bus pass. We are currently in the process of renewing disabled passes so this scrutiny has come at an ideal time to revamp the Orange Wallet scheme.</p> <p>The Intalink website has also been updated and now allows users to click on a link to the Orange Wallet pages and apply for a wallet.</p>
<p>Any other comments on the report or this scrutiny?</p> <p>This has been a timely opportunity to review our relations with disabled users and how we can most effectively represent their views and needs in discussions with operators. <i>Derrick Ashley, Cabinet Member Environment, Planning & Transport</i></p>	