

ELLESMERE PORT AREA PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Report From: Steve Williams, Senior Manager, Integrated Transport Service

Report To: Ellesmere Port Area Partnership Board

Date: 23rd July 2010

Subject: Route & Branch Review Of Local Bus Services.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 A "Route & Branch" (R&B) review of the bus service network in Ellesmere Port (EP) has been undertaken by the Integrated Transport Service (ITS) of Cheshire West and Chester Council, (CWAC) and is one of a number of similar reviews previously carried out in other areas. R&B seeks to help provide a basis for a stable network of services provided with financial support from CWAC in addition to those operated on a commercial basis. (i.e. without direct financial support from CWAC)
- 1.2 By undertaking an over arching yet detailed assessment of the network, the outcome of improving the quality and overall attractiveness of these services can be achieved by ensuring that these are closely planned to meet current realistic usage patterns and demand, leading to growth in the number of passengers travelling.

2.0 FINDINGS AND PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The bus services linking EP with the nearby areas of Liverpool, Birkenhead, Arrowe Park Hospital, Neston, Runcorn, Chester and Mold will remain unchanged.
- 2.2 The local bus services operating within Ellesmere Port will continue to operate from early morning until early evening, (Monday to Saturday) at regular times each hour (Making the times easier to remember) providing a half hourly frequency. The timetables for the new services ensures these cross town routes meet at the bus station, enabling passengers to easily make changes between these services.
- 2.3 The new network will be introduced on 25th October 2010 and will replace the following existing route numbers; 4/4X, 7, 101, 141, 159, and 404.
- 2.4 It has been possible to include Naylor Court off Rivacre Road within the new network, whilst also increasing service frequency from hourly in areas such as Rossmore Road East, Wolverham Road, Seacombe Drive, Ascot Drive, Kendal Drive and Summertrees Road. However,

the frequency of three buses per hour serving Wetherby Way, Glenwood Road, Parklands, and Stanney Grange will reduce to two buses per hour, reflecting demand, and being comparable with other areas of the town. (However, some additional services will operate after 9.30 am and at lunch time, recognizing the increased number of passengers travelling at those times)

- 2.5 Adopting a successful approach used in other R&B reviews, these services will be operated by new wheel chair accessible vehicles with a colourful high profile livery and branding, raising the profile of these services for the community. Accompanying this, will be attractive publicity material, sharing the livery and identity of the buses.
- 2.6 Minor amendments will be made from current routes, taking account of sections with little or no use, or availability of alternative services, which helps reduce the journey time to / from town.
- 2.7 For information, research of usage of the journeys serving Stoak and Wervin found few or no passengers from those communities travelling. Unfortunately, it is necessary to reduce the current hourly frequency of these to four return journeys per day linking these areas with Ellesmere Port and Upton where onward connections to Chester can be made.

3.0 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The new network of bus services for Ellesmere Port seeks to significantly improve the local awareness and attraction of using public transport within Ellesmere Port. The new services will provide important service improvements in response to requests specifically from certain areas of the town, and careful route planning will improve reliability of these services.