



## **RESPONSE TO PETITION**

### **SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S LOCAL COMMITTEE (MOLE VALLEY)**

**22<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER 2006**

#### **KEY ISSUE**

To consider a response to the Box Hill to Tadworth / Banstead / Sutton Bus service petition presented to the Committee at its meeting held on 25 September 2006.

#### **SUMMARY**

In response to the petition by Mrs Brayer for a new bus service from Box Hill to Tadworth/Banstead, to assist with travel to Sutton and also increase the accessibility to Box Hill.

It is generally accepted that travel choices will always be more limited in villages such as Box Hill, but the County Council does provide a means to deal with travel arrangements to appropriate towns for work, school and shopping, within the budget made available.

Local bus service 516 operates Monday to Saturday between Dorking, Box Hill, Leatherhead, Ashted and Epsom. The first bus from Box Hill to Leatherhead departs from Box Hill at 0715 Monday - Friday and 0750 on Saturdays, the last bus departs from Leatherhead Station at 1705 Monday to Saturday.

Travel to Sutton is possible from Box Hill with a change to either Rail in Leatherhead or changing buses in Epsom.

Unfortunately, there is no additional funding available to consider the possibility of a new local bus service operating from Box Hill to Tadworth, Banstead and Sutton. The petitioner's request is noted and will be given further consideration at such time when provision is being reviewed in the area concerned.

#### **OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Local Committee is asked to note the report**

## **1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Mrs Brayer of Box Hill Road presented a petition to the Local Committee at its meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2006. Mrs Bayer addressed the committee to request that a bus service be established between Box Hill and Tadworth/Banstead. Mrs Brayer informed members that a previous weekly service, now discontinued, was underused due to a very inappropriate timetable. Mrs Brayer stated that many residents in the Box Hill area have family in Sutton, and without a bus service to Tadworth / Banstead, it is very difficult for them to visit. Residents also felt that Box Hill would benefit from the service as more people would be able to visit the area, which has some excellent beauty spots.
- 1.2 Helyn Clack informed the Local Committee that she had been in contact with local representatives regarding this issue. The Committee agreed that discussions continue, with a view to finding a solution, and a report be brought to the next committee meeting.

## **2 ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY**

- 2.1 A visit to Sutton is made possible by using service 516 to Leatherhead and changing to rail. The earliest arrival in Sutton using bus and rail is 0805. The latest departure from Sutton using rail to Leatherhead and bus service 516 to Box Hill is 1629, with arrival at Box Hill 1742. As an alternative on Monday to Friday, Buses4U could be booked in advance to connect with the train at Leatherhead and this would allow for a departure from Sutton an hour later.
- 2.2 Alternatively, if bus travel is the preferred option, service 516 can be used for travel to Epsom and then change to bus service 470, which operates direct to Sutton. This will allow for a visit of up to 4 hours 30 minutes. Surrey senior citizens free bus passes are valid on both services 516 and 470.
- 2.3 Sunray Travel, the new operator of service 516 operating between Chart Downs, Dorking, Box Hill, Leatherhead and Epsom have recently invested £180,000 in buying new low floor environmentally friendly buses to operate on this route. Surrey County Council is working with the operator to promote service 516 to Box Hill. A press release is being prepared to send to the local papers to highlight the service, raise public awareness and encourage new users of this local service that provides a lifeline for the rural communities it serves.
- 2.4 The County Council is looking at alternative ways to serve communities in rural areas such as Box Hill. The demand responsive services, known as Buses4U, now operating in the County are being introduced to areas to supplement the conventional bus services and these are seen as being of benefit to the whole community.

- 2.5 Buses4U in Mole Valley also incorporates Box Hill in the area it serves. Journeys can be booked between 0900 and 1500 and again from 1600 until 1745. During school holidays the service can be booked between 0800 and 1745. The area covered by Buses4U in Mole Valley is from the M25 in the north, down to the West Sussex/Surrey boarder in the South and from the A24 in the West across to the A23 in the East. Buses4U complements the existing service 516 and can be used to cater for journeys within the area covered that are required at times when the conventional bus service is unavailable. Surrey senior citizens free bus passes are valid on both service 516 and Buses4U.
- 2.6 During the last 6 months (April – September 2006) 34 return trips were made using Buses 4U from Box Hill.
- 2.7 For further information about Buses4U please contact Mr Marcus Dode, The East Surrey Rural Transport Partnership, Tandridge District Council Offices, Station Road East, Oxted, RH8 0BT, tel: 01883 732877, or to make a booking please call 01730 815518 or visit the website at [www.buses4u.org.uk](http://www.buses4u.org.uk).

### **3 CONSULTATIONS**

- 3.1 Local Surrey County County Members, Mole Valley District Council (to forward information to Ward Members), the Chairman of the Local Committee, Surrey County Council's Local Partnerships Team and Area Transportation Director were consulted on the changes proposed to service 516 in July 2006.

Service 516 Dorking – Box Hill – Headley – Leatherhead – Epsom

- 3.2 With effect from 4<sup>th</sup> September 2006 service 516 will be operated by Sunray Travel to a revised timetable on Monday to Saturday. The level of service will be similar to the current timetable and brand new low floor vehicles will be operated. When devising the timetable the County Council were looking at ways to minimise additional expenditure, while also offering the current level of service, ensuring peak journeys were catered for. As a result of this the Saturday journeys operating to Sutton will not form part of the new timetable. These journeys were previously used by 2 – 3 passengers but they do not offer the County Council good value for money. Journeys into Sutton can still be made by service 516 into Epsom and change to service 470 to Sutton. The last journey from Dorking to Box Hill and Leatherhead will depart at 1727.

### **4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Whilst the County Council endeavours to provide a wide range of supported bus services to cater for as many travel requirements as possible, it can only do so within budgetary levels, resulting in services which are affordable and offering value for money within criteria agreed by the County Council's Executive.

## **5 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no specific sustainable development implications.

## **6 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no specific crime and disorder implications.

## **7 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no specific equalities implications.

## **8 CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 Prior to September 2006, one return journey to Sutton was operated by service 516 on Saturdays. This allowed for two hours in Sutton but was not well used with between 2 - 3 passengers using the service. When service 516 was retendered the decision to withdraw this one journey on Saturday from Sutton was made due to poor usage.

The County Council does work closely with local bus operators to achieve the best available services at a cost that is sustainable to the County Council. Unfortunately, at this time there is no additional funding available to consider the possibility of introducing new services such as that proposed to Tadworth, Banstead and Sutton, nor to enlarge the existing Buses4U service. However, the Petitioner's request is noted and will be given further consideration at such future time as bus service provision is being reviewed in the area concerned.

**Report by: Geoff Wallace, Local Transportation Manager for Mole Valley**

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<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS:</b>	<b>Petition presented to the Local Committee (Mole Valley) on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2006</b>

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