



LOCAL COMMITTEE (WAVERLEY)

PETITION: PROPOSED RESPONSE

DATE: 16th September, 2016

A petition with 392 signatures has been received from Ms Ann Hare requesting the re-routing of bus services 4 & 5 to travel via Drovers Way/Trinity Hill in Farnham:

This petition has been forwarded to Waverley Local Committee to ask for its consideration in taking action on behalf of residents within the Folly Hill area

As a result of our bus service being severely cut in April 2016, we are petitioning to have our buses rerouted via Drovers Way/Trinity Hill as it would provide us with a far more frequent service. This route, classified as a spine road, would be a reinstatement of the Stagecoach route which was stopped due to complaints made by some of the residents within the area. At that time we had four buses an hour, the numbers 4 and 5. This was dropped down to two buses an hour, when the buses started using the current route down Castle Hill.

Following the cutbacks which had to be made by Stagecoach earlier this year, the service was then further cut back in April 2016 to one bus per hour, with an afternoon gap of two hours. This is a reduction of over 75% on the service we were receiving when the buses followed the Drovers Way/Trinity Hill route. We believe that the decision made to stop the buses using the Drovers Way/Trinity Hill route now needs to be reconsidered.

We therefore ask that sympathetic consideration and support be given to our petition

Correspondence from the bus company along with details of the timetable and route were also submitted with this petition

Proposed response

Except for during the evening and all day on Sundays, Stagecoach bus services 4 and 5 (Farnham-Sandy Hill-Aldershot) are run on a commercial basis by Stagecoach, with no contractual control from Surrey County Council. As such, the level of service provided, the route followed and any thought of making changes, are Stagecoach's prerogative, based on their own commercial wishes.

Last winter, Stagecoach announced that it was considering sending all their buses on this route via Hale, rather than Castle Hill and Folly Hill. However, they decided to keep certain journeys running via Folly Hill following concerns expressed during the Local Transport Review public consultation and discussions with the County Council. They retained an hourly service at the times of the day when the large majority of trips were being made to/from the Folly Hill area.

Any thought regarding making some of their journeys via Hale also to serve Folly Hill by using Drovers Way, would be a decision for Stagecoach to consider. Some time ago, buses did use Drovers Way but there was significant objection from local residents, who considered the use of the road by buses was "unsafe". Surrey Police were unable to recommend any safe sites for bus stops in Drovers Way, making the use of the road by buses just a means of getting to/from Folly Hill with its limited potential to provide patronage. Stagecoach took the view that they were unable to continue imposing their presence on an unwilling community which was unable to benefit from being able to board or alight at properly marked bus stops.