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30<sup>th</sup> May 2014

David W. Brown

Public Transport Project Officer

Public Transport Unit, Bus Station, Goosecroft Road, Stirling, FK8 1PF

Fintry Community Council Consultation

Fintry Demand Responsive Transport Service (DRT)

Dear Mr Brown

Please find below FCC's response to the suggested options for possible changes to DRT services:

FCC have held open meetings, taken correspondence and run online polls with the aim of taking the views of as many public transport users as possible.

The overriding response has been that the DRT service has been a very well received transport system, well suited to our rural area and road system, it is flexible and able to cover the entire community, many elderly people have been encouraged to give up their own vehicles thus reducing emissions and road usage, the service provides safe transport for children and elderly, with the important side effect that it provides a social support system to the community – this factor should not be underestimated.

FCC, accepting that Stirling Council plan to make savings have addressed the proposals, but would ask that no actual changes are made to this essential service without further consultation:

*a. Reducing short notice bookings – unless incorporated into an existing pre booked journey:*

FCC believe that this may be the most workable solution, as it will still be possible for everyone to access the DRT service (with a little planning), and there will be savings for Stirling Council by reducing the number of journeys. The only exception to this could be in cases when someone needs transport urgently for healthcare purposes. There would also be an environmental benefit of reducing journeys which has the backing of our carbon saving trust – FDT. An additional saving may be possible, if a sufficient number of passengers have arranged a journey – it may be cheaper for them to pay for a conventional taxi fare rather than a DRT fare – thus saving Stirling

Council the entire journey. FCC would be prepared to work with Stirling Council in an effort to reduce journeys.

***b. No longer allow journeys under 2 miles:***

FCC believes that this will not present any significant problems for DRT users.

***c. Reduce times which DRT is available:***

This option would seriously disadvantage the few residents who depend on DRT to access public transport for work purposes and children for after school activities. FCC would not support this option.

***d. Withdraw services on Saturday:***

This option would disadvantage mainly the younger residents who use DRT to access neighbouring villages for social contact, the consequence of removing the service would simply result in more vehicles on the road running back and forward. FCC would not support this option. As previously raised, an additional saving may be possible, if a sufficient number of passengers have arranged a journey – it may be cheaper to them to pay for a conventional taxi fare rather than a DRT fare – thus saving Stirling Council the entire journey. FCC would be prepared to work with Stirling Council in an effort to reduce journeys.

***e. Replace DRT with bus service:***

FCC do not believe this is a viable suggestion, there appears to only be a couple of residents in favour of this. FCC do not see any evidence to suggest that a scheduled bus service would be used by a significant number of users to justify losing the existing DRT service (FCC understand that under current rules DRT cannot be provided where a scheduled bus service operates). FCC do not support the replacement of DRT by a bus service.

***f. Replace DRT with community transport/car sharing:***

FCC do not believe this is a viable suggestion, informal community transport does exist within Fintry in addition to DRT for church on Sundays etc. FDT also operate a car club which fills the gap of DRT/car ownership – however these arrangements cannot replace the type of transport provision that DRT offers.

***Suggestions for additional savings by FCC:***

As highlighted in previous answers, FCC believe there could be an opportunity to work together to co-ordinate journeys using a combination of DRT supported services and conventional paid for transport, thus retaining the DRT service, but also reducing journeys and saving Stirling Council money.

