

Monday 6th October 2008

Notes from a Meeting at Stagecoach Cambridge, Re No.15 Bus Service

Present:

Stagecoach Cambridge: Mr A Campbell, Managing Director
Mr P Norwell, Commercial Manager
Swavesey Parish Council: Mr M Johnston, Chairman
Mrs L Miller, Clerk
Cambs County Council: Mr P Nelson, Education Transport

Swavesey Parish Council raised the following concerns and complaints received from local residents about the new No.15 bus service:

- The 07:40 from Swavesey to Cambridge and onto Hills Rd and Long Rd Sixth Forms does not get students to the Colleges before 9am.
- Majority of students now catch the 07:11, which means they have to change to a Citi 7 service in Cambridge in order to get to Long Rd by 9am.
- The 08:05 Citi 7, a single-decker bus, is often full and some students cannot get on the bus.
- The next Citi bus is a Citi 1, which does not go to Long Rd, so students end up walking from Addenbrookes – usually making them late for first lesson again.
- The journey time for the 7:11 and 7:40 is approximately two hours door-to-door for Long Rd students and almost the same time for Hills Rd students.
- The return journey time is often one and half hours long, giving an extremely long and unreasonable travel time.
- Other residents travelling to work in and around Cambridge have also complained about the long journey time.
- Parents were complaining that having spent out on a bus pass for the students, the scheduled 'college' bus was not used due to it not arriving at the colleges in time and if students were missing the Citi connection, they were walking through Cambridge to Hills Rd College.
- Some parents were now driving their children to college in the morning instead.

The Parish Council asked if the 07:11 bus could be made a through bus to the Sixth Forms, so that students did not have to change buses in Cambridge, either in addition to or in place of the through bus at 07:40.

The Parish Council also asked if a review of the Citi 7 service (08:05) could be made at the time when students are changing buses from the 07:11 (08:04 in Drummer St). If this bus was a double-decker then it could take all of the students, which the single-decker often cannot.

The Parish Council suggested that the No.15 route was too long, covering too many villages and should it be split? Other different routes for specific buses to the Sixth Form colleges in the morning were also discussed.

Stagecoach's responses to the issues raised were:

- One of the major factors in revising and reversing the No.15 route was due to concerns over the condition of the Earith-Willingham road, another being Stagecoach's purchase of Cavalier and the subsequent amalgamation of the services.
- The 07:11 bus from Swavesey could not be changed to a through bus on to the Sixth Forms. This bus was required to turnaround in Drummer St for a return journey and to re-schedule and re-route other buses to accommodate such a change would not be possible.

- The 07:40 is being held up and not reaching the colleges on time, due to the amount of roadworks it is having to travel through: Longstanton Guided Busway, Longstanton Bypass, Hills Rd bridge and from 6th October Swavesey Guided Busway junction. Once the Guided busway roadworks have been completed by the end of this year Stagecoach believes the 07:40 will run to schedule and reach Long Rd College by 9am.
- A separate or second bus for the college route in the morning is not viable or possible.
- Stagecoach agreed to review the Citi 7 service, for the 08:05 from Emmanuel St. It may be possible to put a double-decker onto that particular time to ensure all students can get onto the bus.

It was stated that the timing of the change of bus route, coinciding with the amount of roadworks for the guided busway was not ideal but Stagecoach's decision to stop using the Earith-Willingham road was a major factor in revising the No15 route.

Stagecoach will monitor the arrival times of the buses at Long Road over the next few days and weeks and will review the Citi 7 bus at 08:05 out of Emmanuel St.

8th October 2008 - Update to the above notes from Stagecoach

Having viewed the situation on Tuesday morning there is a 15A bus that has now been instructed to stop in Emmanuel Street to check if any students who came into Cambridge on the 7.11 from Swavesey wish to travel straight to Long Road.