



Anthony Browne MP
Member of Parliament for South Cambridgeshire
House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA
Tel: 0207 219 8089

Dr Nik Johnson
Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
By email only to nik.johnson@cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk

29th September 2022

Dear Nik,

Withdrawal of Stagecoach bus routes in South Cambridgeshire

The Combined Authority is the Local Transport Authority for Cambridgeshire, with responsibility for the bus network. I am writing to ask you for further information following Stagecoach East's announcement that it will abandon 18 of its bus services across Cambridgeshire from the end of October.

I know you will share my deep concern about the very serious consequences of this decision. It is profoundly worrying for the residents who depend on these services to go about their daily lives.

Three of the routes to be axed are in my constituency; the V4 (St Ives-Boxworth), 18 (Longstowe-Cambridge) and 915 (Royston-Cambridge). Furthermore, the Citi 4 (Cambourne-Cambridge) will be re-routed, leaving the villages of Hardwick and Caldecote with no bus service at all. My own office is on the Citi 4 route, meaning my staff will no longer be able to get to work by public transport.

Whilst I agree with your public statements condemning Stagecoach East's actions and I welcome your announcement of an "urgent process" to address this crisis, residents want to know how and why this situation has come about, particularly at such short notice. Unfortunately, having not been contacted prior to the decision being taken to cut services, the first I knew of it was when the story broke in the local news last week.

I am therefore writing to ask you to provide a more comprehensive timeline of the Combined Authority's contact with Stagecoach on this issue. I would also like to understand the specific steps you are taking to reverse the decline in local bus services and secure the future of the network.

To this end, I would be grateful to receive your responses to the following urgent questions, so that I can update my constituents accordingly:

1. When was the Combined Authority first made aware that these bus services were at risk of withdrawal by Stagecoach East?

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2. At that time, did you or your officers contact any other local authorities regarding the possible withdrawal of these services?
3. When did you first meet with Stagecoach East to discuss the problems with these bus routes?
4. What potential solutions have been proposed by Stagecoach, other local authorities and/or the Combined Authority to mitigate against the impact of these cuts?
5. Why were local MPs not informed or consulted about the impending cuts to services?
6. Can you confirm whether the V4, 18 and 915 services will be funded by the Combined Authority and will continue to operate on current timetables until March 2023? If not, what service, if any, will be provided?
7. What steps are being taken to ensure that Hardwick and Caldecote continue to have a bus service after 30th October?
8. Is there any other source of funding within the Combined Authority's budget that could be diverted to support the services withdrawn Stagecoach in the longer term?
9. What steps have you or your officers taken to bring forward bus franchising since your election in May 2021?

The situation is clearly untenable and needs to be addressed by the Combined Authority as a matter of urgency. I remain, as ever, available to you and willing to help to find a solution. Please do let me know how I can help.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest possible convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Anthony Browne MP

Cc Tim Bellamy, Interim Head of Transport

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