

Agenda item 5

For decision – Village Bus Support

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Summary

Over the past two years Frome Town Council has been part of a consortium with local villages to underwrite a weekly bus connecting villages to Frome. Usage has now reduced and one village has withdrawn support which means costs per passenger journey have increased significantly. It is recommended that FTC no longer helps to underwrite this service and focuses on other ways to enable villagers to travel sustainably to Frome.

Village Bus

Frome Town Council has been working with other local villages to support a weekly community bus service through Wanstrow, Trudoxhill and Witham Friary to Frome on Wednesdays over the last 23 months. The service has cost FTC £550 a year and has enabled 1100 passenger journeys. Feedback has been positive, however, recently overall numbers have declined (due to illness and people moving away) and predicted numbers are as low as 2 or 3 passengers a week. Trudoxhill Parish Council has also decided to stop supporting the service from July. This means that the amount each village needs to contribute has increased.

Given the low numbers and consequent high per passenger cost it is proposed that Frome Town Council stops underwriting the service. FTC will work proactively with users and other councils to enable lift share and volunteer drivers to ensure these people don't get cut off.

Recommendations

1. That FTC no longer underwrites the weekly community bus service linking Wanstrow, Trudoxhill, Witham Friary with Frome
2. That FTC works proactively with users and other parish councils to enable residents to use lift share and volunteer drivers