

ENVIRONMENT CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 10(i)

Brighton & Hove City Council

Mr Alan McCarthy
Chief Executive
Brighton & Hove City Council

24 April 2008

Dear Alan,

Withdrawal of Metrobus Sunday bus services 87 and 82.

I would like this letter to be placed on the agenda of the Environment Cabinet Member's Meeting of 5th June and I will be attending to speak to it.

All City Councillors have been informed by the council's Public Transport Manager that Metrobus Ltd have taken the decision to withdraw their Sunday service that links Brighton & Hove with key areas of Sussex, including the Princess Royal Hospital, Haywards Heath. We were informed that the service would end on the 18th May.

The decision to withdraw these services is very regrettable in terms of bringing Sunday visitors into the City on public transport, enabling Brighton and Hove residents to visit patients at the Princess Royal Hospital and severing a transport link to the city from several outlying areas that are distant from rail stations.

We were informed that up until last year West Sussex County Council subsidised these services and after that funding ceased these services are, apparently, not commercially viable.

I am writing to request that the Cabinet Member for Environment, Cllr Geoffrey Theobald, and the Assistant Director for Sustainable Transport meet with Metrobus and West Sussex County Council to explore whether a joint council subsidy could mean that these services might be reinstated. Failing that, I would request that consideration is given to Brighton & Hove City Council providing the subsidy from DPE income.

It is vital that these services are maintained both in terms of the city's visitor economy and for people to be able to visit friends and relatives in hospital. I hope that since councillors were first informed of the ending of these services on 24 April, that measures will have been taken to save them. If not, then I would request that the requests that I have made are considered as a matter of urgency.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Gill Mitchell