



The Argus

Date: 24 January 2012

Our Ref: BusCon

Dear Sir,

The eagle-eyed amongst your readers will have spotted deep within the council's draft budget papers reference to changes to bus services the council currently subsidises. Clearly set out are proposals for '*fewer supported bus routes*' and that '*unviable services with very poor patronage will be reduced or withdrawn*'.

Bus services are vital to many vulnerable groups within the city, older people being a prime example. Free bus travel allows older people to shop, socialise and access the services that keep them independent. This lets them to play and a full and active role in the life of our city and indeed reduces the cost of support to the council and society as a whole.

As subsidised bus services compete with other services for scarce council funding any campaign to save individual routes looks to be an uphill struggle. Bus users all over the city should be concerned whether their route will be one that faces the axe completely or suffer a reduced timetable.

As a city we enjoy a formidable bus service, indeed one of the most comprehensive in the country, as the list of awards on the Brighton & Hove Bus and Coach Company's website shows. Their website also states that the local market for bus travel has grown 5% each year since 1993. It should be possible for the council and a company that has been supported by the city for long to come together to ensure that any reduction in service is kept to a minimum and alternative ways of delivering the service are explored.

Yours faithfully,

Someone
Older People's Council

