

Get Swindon Moving Community Group Minutes

Date: 12th September 2024

Venue: Civic Offices

Attended:

SBC- Rachel Oliver (RO), Bryony Chetwode (BC)

User groups-

Learning Disability Partnership- Lily O'Brien (LO)

TravelWatch SouthWest CIC- Graham Ellis (GE)

Retired Rail Engineer- Ray Thomas (RT)

Apologies: Rebecca Sturgeon (**Wichelstowe**)

Date: 17th September 2024

Venue: Online

Attended:

SBC- Rachel Oliver (RO)

User groups-

Swindon Seniors Forum (Youth Empowerment)- Tony Martin (TM)

Learning Disability Partnership- Lily O'Brien (LO)

Wroughton- Cllr Graham Overbury (GO), Cllr Nathanael Hooper (NH), Emma Freemantle

Blunsdon (Retired Transport Planner)- Andy Saunders (AS)

Urban Mobility & Public Transport Academic Research- Dr Anna Plyushteva (AP)

Swindon Climate Action Network / Swindon Friends of the Earth- Julian Jones (JJ)

Live Well Team – Migrant Health- Zoe Norton (ZN)

West Berkshire (Swindon visitor)- Kate Green

Agenda:

- Welcome
- Recent relevant updates
- Introduction to any new members
- Draft Bus Passenger Charter
- Youth Empowerment
- 2024 Transport Conversation Survey
- Feedback form
- Next steps

1. Welcome

2. Introductions to new members

- 2.1. RO commented that it's great to see so many new members joining us this month. Everyone introduced themselves and who they are representing in the community.



2.2. GE created the online railway user forum: Great Western Coffee Shop, which has been running for 17 years. If you are interested in getting involved or reading through the forum, you can visit it [here](#). RO also added link to Public Transport in the Community site.

3. Relevant updates

3.1. LO reported that 2 new lifts are due to be installed at Western-Super-Mare rail station.

3.2. Bus Boarding Events – next events planned are a second Learning Disability group, and one at the GWH orthopaedic unit. SBC are awaiting response from bus operators with available dates. AP added that this would be a good idea for the SEND children and their families that she works with. **RO asked for details to be sent to arrange event.** NH suggested getting in touch with SEND schools too. All agreed that events would be welcomed at schools in general. **RO sent email to chase operators and discuss other events on 18/09/24.**

3.3. There was a good discussion around the Fleming Way works at the in-person meeting.

3.3.1. BC spoke around why this project went ahead; plans had to be different from bus station to secure funding and money could only be spent on specific project.

3.3.2. However, poor communication ahead of launch of layout and facilities etc. RT raised confusion in press releases about ‘hubs’. We need to know plan of area, toilet/facilities info, final bus stop layout, bus shelter design. **SBC to make contact to form working group.**

3.4. On a similar note, BC reported that there are plans to change the communal space outside Swindon rail station, which will need to be integrated with Fleming Way and display useful information on screens. Willingness for Get Swindon Moving to be engaged early on.

3.5. LO raised a bus that serves social club has recently changed for the journey that is used by attendees and they are getting stuck where it now ends in Penhill. Nothing communicated to them and poor driver attitude. **LO sending details to RO to be raised with operators.**

3.5.1. This led to idea of forming a working group to map key club/group sites for LDP that operators can check ahead of making changes. **RO to book separate meeting with Lily.**

3.6. RT raised that there are traffic signal issues on road from mechanics institute to rail station. **BC to raise with relevant officer in SBC.**

3.7. There was a discussion in both sessions around RTPI (Real Time Passenger Information) in the Borough. Contract awarded for Fleming Way, but solution needed for every bus stop in Borough. In meantime, BC recommends bustimes.org as useful site and JJ suggested Google Maps.

- 3.8. There was a good discussion in the online session about bus franchising. JJ asked about possibility of Swindon joining Wiltshire for a combined authority franchised network. AA added that franchising could be an interesting opportunity and focuses more on the passenger.
 - 3.9. KG raised concerns over the withdrawal of concessionary travel scheme in Autumn Budget. TM added that timings of the bus pass should be reviewed. As discussed previously, the 9:30am-11pm on weekdays is the England-wide minimum agreement and SBC is planning to undertake work on what financial impacts are of extending this.
 - 3.10. TM raised that drivers can be inconsistent, with some taking care on uneven roads and use local knowledge, whereas others can be too fast. Some drivers will also move off before elderly have sat down. TM asked whether main operator drivers undertake MiDAS training. **SBC to find out what training drivers take.**
 - 3.11. KG raised that Disabled Persons railcard has changed from 34% to 33.9% off peak and so prices increased. Small amount but hasn't been communicated anywhere, concerns for those with learning disabilities and autism as could be a sudden change to routine.
4. Draft Bus Passenger Charter
- 4.1. SBC sent initial draft to Group for feedback before finalising the draft to share with EP.
 - 4.2. AP asked for some background around the Charter and what power it will have. RO provided background on National Bus Strategy and how the Bus Passenger Charters set out the commitment made between local authorities/bus operators and the passengers they serve to ensure certain standards are met for each journey. Charters signpost passengers' routes for recourse and hold authorities/operators to account.
 - 4.3. AS commented that bus priority should be considered, reported that areas of north Swindon with on-street parking in residential areas cause issues for buses. LO agreed that traffic is impacting buses in Swindon, particularly 7, 11, 55 and 53, but understands suggestions from user group e.g. increased PVR (Peak Vehicle Requirement) has resource demands.
 - 4.4. JJ raised suggestions to include in charter: to make clear what you are paying for touch on/off, standard for ventilation especially in winter to reduce spread of respiratory illnesses, plan to reduce carbon emissions, where to find bus routes (e.g. Google Maps one of the best) and high level of customer service for drivers.
 - 4.5. ZN asked where Charter will be published and will it be available in other languages. RO said the Charter will be published on the SBC website, operator websites, ideally at bus stops and on buses, Swindon Hub and invited suggestions. TM added libraries and community centres. ZN confirmed SBC have an AI translator tool for documents, RO will look into obtaining this for Charter.
 - 4.6. LO and KG agreed to assist SBC in making the Easy Read version.

5. Youth Empowerment

- 5.1. RO, BC and TM met on 9th September. TM has plans for a flag football team in Swindon, for children aged up to 13 years. TM has experience in this and has asked for help securing training ground from SBC and suggestions for bus operators to provide some type of contribution, either travel or sponsor. Great discussion on other possible opportunities that could come from this. **RO discussed with relevant team in SBC to contact TM regarding training ground.**

6. 2024 Transport Conversation Survey

- 6.1. We didn't have a chance to raise this in the sessions, but we are currently drafting the 2024 Transport Survey. This follows up on the 2023 Transport Conversation survey where SBC received some useful information on travel behaviour. We will send the draft to GSM for feedback and ask the Group to share this with their user groups and communities.

7. Feedback form

- 7.1. RO to resend with minutes for new members.**

8. Next Steps

- 8.1. KG has written a rap for Get Swindon Moving and will send an audio file to RO to add to the website.

Next meeting will be booked for W/C 21st October.

Ongoing actions

Item	Action	Update
Relevant updates	Bus Boarding Events. 2 more events (another with LDP and one at GWH).	Arranging dates with bus operators.
	Fleming Way Working Group. SBC to make contact to set this up.	
Youth Empowerment.	Book meeting with SBC and TM to discuss opportunities.	Initial meeting held on 9 th September.
Next Steps	18 month schedule of meetings.	Still to be completed by SBC.
Bus Passenger Charter	SBC to review and update Charter following comments from the Group.	RO will send this before Fri 27 th Sep.

Completed actions

Item	Action	Update
Discussion around accessibility at rail stations.	RO to add rail operators to the Feedback Form and circulate.	Completed