

# Transport and Environment Committee

10:00am, Tuesday, 27 August 2013

## Dumbiedykes Public Transport Access: Update

|               |                          |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| Item number   | 7.8                      |
| Report number |                          |
| Wards         | 15 - Southside/Newington |

### Links

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|                          |                                                                                         |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Coalition pledges        | <a href="#">P33</a>                                                                     |
| Council outcomes         | <a href="#">CO8</a> , <a href="#">CO9</a> , <a href="#">CO10</a> , <a href="#">CO22</a> |
| Single Outcome Agreement | <a href="#">SO1</a> , <a href="#">SO2</a>                                               |

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## Dumbiedykes Public Transport Access: Update

### Summary

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The report:

- discusses the results of a demographic study of the Dumbiedykes along with the views of the community of potential solutions;
- concludes that the provision of a stand-alone bus service is the preferred solution, however currently there is no funding to provide this;
- notes that options for this provision will be explored through the Council's Framework Agreement for the Provision of Local Bus Services; and
- notes the intention to explore the costs of providing a service through the Framework Agreement, and report to the Committee on the matter in due course.

### Recommendations

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It is recommended that the Committee:

- 1 notes the results of the demographic study of Dumbiedykes;
- 2 notes the intention to obtain costs for the provision of a stand-alone bus service under the Council's forthcoming Framework Agreement for the provision of Local Bus services;
- 3 notes that the results of the exercise will be reported to the Transport and Environment Committee later in 2013; and
- 4 advises the Petitions Committee of the decision of the Transport and Environment Committee and to note that an update will be provided in the Petitions Committee Business Bulletin.

## Measures of success

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Completion of the tendering exercise for a new subsidised bus service and preparation of a report on the issue to be considered by the Committee in October 2013.

## Financial impact

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No financial impact as a result of this report. It should be noted that the recommendations include the exploration of costs for the provision of a new subsidised bus service, which cannot be met from current budgets.

## Equalities impact

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There are no equalities impacts as a result of this report.

## Sustainability impact

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There are no sustainability impacts as a result of this report.

## Consultation and engagement

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A report on the new Framework Agreement for Supported Bus Services in Edinburgh, East Lothian and Midlothian will be considered by the Finance and Budget Committee on 29 August 2013.

Following approval of the Framework Agreement, a mini-competition will be run between the participating bus operators for various service options for a Dumbiedykes bus service. The results of the mini-competition will be reported to the Transport and Environment Committee in October 2013.

The Braidwood Centre in Dumbiedykes has carried out a survey of resident's transport needs, which yielded comprehensive and detailed information, broken down by age group, on the reasons for and frequency of travel for residents from Dumbiedykes to the Southside. The survey results, which appear as Appendix 1 to this report, have been made available to the Council, and the information gained will be taken into account fully in developing service options.

Consultation with representatives of the Dumbiedykes community will continue as part of the preparation for the report to this Committee on the results of the mini-competition in October 2013.

## **Background reading/external references**

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Report: Subsidised Local Bus Services: Transport Infrastructure and Environment Committee, 26 May 2009

## Dumbiedykes Public Transport Access: Update

### 1. Background

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- 1.1 At its meeting on 19 March 2013, the Committee considered a report in response to a public petition from residents of Dumbiedykes.
- 1.2 The petition called for the re-routing of Lothian Buses service 36 to link the community to the Southside, the traditional focus for shopping and other services.
- 1.3 Recommendations 1-4 of the report were as follows:
  - *that a demographic study of the Dumbiedykes is planned to establish the transport needs of residents;*
  - *that community representatives will be included in this process;*
  - *that a comprehensive report detailing the results of the demographic study and proposals for addressing the issues raised in the Petition will be brought to the Committee in due course; and*
  - *notes that further discussion will take place with bus operators with a view to bringing forward improvements to public transport access for Dumbiedykes.*
- 1.4 This report addresses these issues.

### 2. Main report

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- 2.1 The Dumbiedykes area is a largely discrete residential area comprising the following streets: Dumbiedykes Road, Viewcraig Street and Viewcraig Gardens.
- 2.2 The development consists of blocks of flats erected in the 1960s to house residents moving from other areas nearby.
- 2.3 The following information was obtained from Scottish Government data available on the Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics (<http://www.sns.gov.uk/>).

- 2.4 In 2011, the population of the area was 3,791. Of these some 89% were in receipt of benefits or pension credits, indicating a high proportion of low-income households. 9.4% of the population is of pensionable age.
- 2.5 Of those claiming key benefits, 7.56% are aged 16-24, 21.93% are aged 25-29 and 44.47% are aged from 50 to pensionable age. Of those aged over 60, 37.03% are claiming Guaranteed Pension Credits (*Source: Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics (<http://www.sns.gov.uk>)*).
- 2.6 Health statistics for the area show relatively high levels of emergency hospital admissions in the over-65 age range, together with significant admissions for drug misuse (*Source: Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics (<http://www.sns.gov.uk>)*).
- 2.7 The picture that these figures paints is one of low-income households where a higher than average proportion of residents have significant health problems of one sort or another.
- 2.8 For these people the relative difficulty of reaching the services they need in the Southside is exacerbated by mobility difficulties. For those not entitled to free travel through the Scotland-wide Free Bus Travel Scheme, it is necessary to pay two public transport fares each way for the trips they need to make.
- 2.9 Added to this is the time penalty involved in changing buses to reach the desired destination, exacerbated again for those with mobility difficulties, whether these are physical or for parents with prams or buggies.
- 2.10 The conventional public transport options currently available to Dumbiedykes were discussed in the previous report on this issue and, while they do exist, are at best inconvenient, time-consuming and relatively expensive for some residents. Some residents with mobility difficulties may struggle to access these bus services.
- 2.11 Equally, however, past experience has shown that the provision of a conventional bus service for Dumbiedykes is uneconomic from the commercial viewpoint of local bus operators and does not represent good value from the perspective of Council-subsidised bus services.
- 2.12 This latter aspect was discussed in some detail in the report to the Council's Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee (*Subsidised Local Bus Services*, 26 May 2009). In the intervening period, little has changed to alter that conclusion.
- 2.13 At that time the lowest tender for service 60 was £49,400 *per annum*, equating to £12.50 per person uniquely served in the area.

- 2.14 There is no doubt that the community wants access to a conventional bus service, open to all, capable of linking it to the services and opportunities in the Southside.
- 2.15 The Community Transport options currently available to local residents are not acceptable to them because they are restrictive and would, in their view, further damage the image of Dumbiedykes where it would be seen as a community with special needs, rather than one which has the same level of access to public transport enjoyed by most other areas in the city. Community Transport solutions have the added disadvantage that they are not included in the Scotland-Wide Free Bus Travel Scheme and their use would be a further drain for those on low incomes.
- 2.16 From consultation with representatives of the community, it is clear that the only option acceptable to them is the introduction of a new subsidised bus service.
- 2.17 In its petition the community asked specifically for Lothian Buses service 36 to be diverted to create the link to the Southside. This option is not acceptable to Lothian Buses; as such a diversion could have a seriously detrimental effect on the commercial viability of that service.
- 2.18 Similarly, Edinburgh Coach Lines has no interest in reinstating the former service 60 operated commercially by the company until 2008.
- 2.19 The community recognises that a bus service penetrating the estate itself is not practical, however, a stand-alone service could use Viewcraig Gardens as a terminus, as the former service 60 did in its final configuration, terminating near Potterrow at its western end.
- 2.20 The Council intends to introduce a Framework Agreement for the provision of local bus services. The procurement process for this was recently completed, and the results will be reported to the Finance and Budget Committee on 29 August 2013. The Framework Agreement will come into effect shortly thereafter.
- 2.21 Once in place, the Framework Agreement will allow the exploration of options for the provision of a bus service to link Dumbiedykes with the Southside. Various timetable options will be offered to the market, and it will be open to tenderers to offer alternative options that may be more cost-effective for the Council.
- 2.22 This process will establish the costs of these proposals, and allow the Council to decide whether funding should be made available to provide the public transport link that the Dumbiedykes community has requested.
- 2.23 A further report outlining the options and costs of a public transport solution for Dumbiedykes will be presented to the Committee in October 2013.

### 3. Recommendations

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3.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

3.1.1 notes the results of the demographic study of Dumbiedykes;

3.1.2 notes the intention to obtain costs for the provision of a stand-alone bus service under the Council's forthcoming Framework Agreement for the provision of Local Bus services;

3.1.3 notes that the results of the exercise will be reported to the Transport and Environment Committee later in 2013; and

3.1.4 advises the Petitions Committee of the decision of the Transport and Environment Committee and to note that an update will be provided in the Petitions Committee Business Bulletin.

**Mark Turley**

Director of Services for Communities

## Links

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|                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Coalition pledges</b>        | P33 – Strengthen Neighbourhood Partnerships and further involve people in decisions on how Council Resources are used.                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Council outcomes</b>         | CO8 – Edinburgh’s economy creates and sustains job opportunities.<br>CO9 – Edinburgh residents are able to access job opportunities.<br>CO10 – Moving efficiently – Edinburgh has a transport system that improves connectivity and is green, healthy and accessible. |
| <b>Single Outcome Agreement</b> | SO1 – Edinburgh’s economy delivers increased investment, jobs and opportunities<br>SO2 – Edinburgh’s citizens experience improved health and wellbeing, with reduced inequalities in health.                                                                          |
| <b>Appendices</b>               | Appendix 1: Braidwood Centre Transport Survey, July 2013.                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

## DUMBIEDYKES TRANSPORT SURVEY

JULY 2013

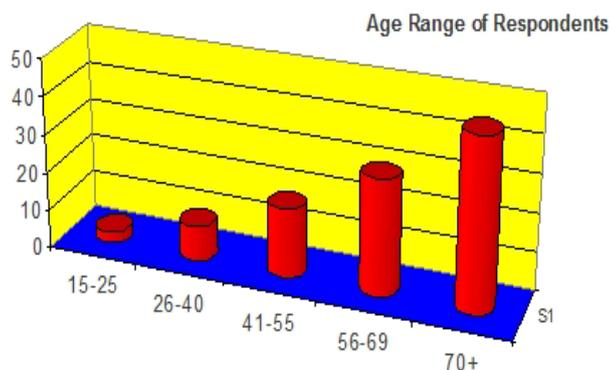
During 13 weeks period between April and July this year, local campaigners undertook a survey of local residents in order to establish how often and why they visit the Southside, and, in particular the necessity to travel up the Pleasance in order to access everyday facilities.

106 people were asked for their views. A number of questions were asked the results of which are noted herein together with many additional comments which explain the difficulties experienced by many residents, particularly the elderly, in accessing facilities which are taken for granted by the bulk of the population of the city.

In addition, respondents were asked to include any comments they would wish to make. These are included and help to emphasise the strength of feeling around the issue of the lack of a proper bus service and the resultant impact on people, above all over the winter months.

### Q1 – *What age are you?*

43% of those questioned were aged 70+ ; 29% aged 56-69 years old; 17% aged 41-55 and the remaining 12% being aged 40 or under.



## Comments

### Age

- I am not happy with bus service. Whenever or wherever I need to go I have to use two buses every time.

### 70+

- Had to stay in the house most of the winter – it was terrible.
- The service is missed very much.
- The bus also helped people to keep in touch with people in the scheme. If a regular wasn't seen for a while you asked after them. Also the bus is missed for getting back from the shops. More so in the winter months. Between the ice and snow it is very difficult to walk down the hill and steps with shopping, more so the elderly

### Age 56-69

- It's an utter disgrace that no one can get from the Dumbiedykes up cardiac hill to the doctors or chemist but there is a bus for the tourists to get to-and-from the parliament and the palace.
- I find it very tiring getting two buses, especially to the doctors.
- Very time consuming to get to Southside as you have to take 2 buses, 45 min each way when it is 5 min up the road if we had a bus.
- Please – we need bus service. Isolation in this community is very poor. Lack of bus service is depressing people
- Any snow or icy weather makes it almost impossible to negotiate the steep hills to reach Southside shops or doctors. The bus is a necessity and should be introduced to the scheme.

### Age 41-55

- I am disgusted that after a petition and talks with MSPs that this matter is still not fixed. It saddens me to see the elderly neighbours stuck in the house.
- The bus should never stopped in the first place.
- How will we be informed of the progress and is there a committee or action group that we can join and who is speaking up for us?
- I would like to comment on ho the small bus up Southside is missed by me and other residents and is very inconvenient to all on the estate.

- Age**
- I think its shocking no bus service. The elderly are particularly affected.
- 26-40**
- The hill to get up to the Southside is too steep for most people to get up easily. A bus service would be really beneficial to many people.
  - It would be so good if there was a bus for the elderly that would make use of it instead of being cooped up in their home.

**Q2 Why do you go to the Southside?**



Out of the 106 people questioned over 92% visited the Southside to access their doctor, chemist and/or go shopping. The 27% "Other" included trips to the Hairdresser, dentist and/or visiting family etc

**Comments**

- Age**
- I want a bus to go and meet up with family and friends, socialise more – I miss my bingo.
- 70+**
- I would like to go to my doctors and keep contact with family. My local amenities are all based in Southside. Re-direction will provide me access to all my amenities.
  - Not able to walk much now and really miss our community bus. It was a life saver in more ways than one.

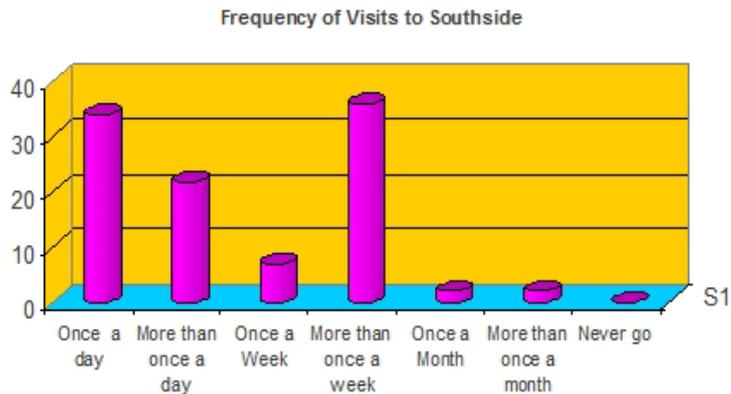
**Age**  
**26-40**

- Visiting relatives is needed as they need more assistance as have no real access to main shopping with getting more than one bus.

**Age**  
**15-25**

- I would like the bus to go to Southside to meet my pals. I do not like to walk through scheme.

**Q3 On average how often do you need to go to the Southside?**



33% of respondents indicated that they needed to visit the Southside “once a day”; with a further 21% and 35% visiting “more than once a day” and “more than once a week” respectively.

**Comments**

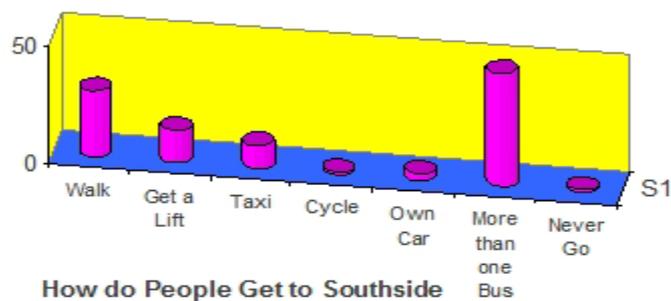
Age 70+ Need to go to the doctor once a month to get my blood check as I am on warfarin - can't walk up hill as I am short of breath.

I find it difficult to walk up the hill to shops, due to bad knees.

Age 56-69 Bring back a bus going to the Southside. It would make life a wee bit easier for everyone in Dumbiedykes. We also still need a bus that will take us into town.

More than once a day if I need medication.

**Q4 How do you generally get to the Southside?**



27% of respondents will walk to the Southside. Alternatively 46% need to take two busses with a further 13% and 10% requiring a lift or taking a taxi.

**Comments**

- Age 70+ Can't Walk up the Hill – It costs me money for a taxi and I am an OAP
- Can't get out without assistance. Can't climb hills. Need two buses to get to all of the services.
- Can't walk too far as I am short of breath and get breathless as I on wafarin for life and can't walk up hills.
- Age 56-69 The 36 Bus would be beneficial to myself and give me more independence and not rely on others and family members to make time just for me.
- I find it difficult getting on and off 2 buses; one bus would be easier.
- I walk to Southside as two buses takes far too long. I am asthmatic but have regular rests when I walk.
- Age 41-55 I find it extremely difficult to get to Southside as I have mobility problems. I should attend my doctors more frequently but cannot do this as the travelling on two buses and walking prevents me from doing so.
- The hills are too steep and most times I need to ask my neighbour to use his landline to phone a taxi to get to main street to get to the doctors, chemist and shops and I always need to get a tax back because of my bad legs.
- Age 26-40 I rely on family and friends for lifts to local amenities as I have arthritis and need transport to get around.