

## **Agenda Item 13a)**

### **Meeting with Vectare to review the '833' service Provision for Cropwell**

Old School Cropwell Bishop, 2.30pm on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019

#### **Items discussed**

##### **1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**

Vectare representatives, Peter Nathanail, Commercial and Operations Director and Kyle Giblett, Operations and Service Delivery Manager, met Alan Wilson, Colin Bryan and John Greenwood of Cropwell Bishop PC and David Lawton representing Cropwell Butler PC. Apologies from Clerk, Janice Towndrow who was on leave.

##### **2. Background to the 833 service**

Following the withdrawal of Yourbus from operating the 822 service in May 2019, CT4N stepped in to run a commercial service from Cropwell to town (33) and Vectare made a successful bid for the 833 service as specified by the County (Chris Ward) to run a two way loop from Bingham to Cropwell's and the Vale villages.

##### **3. Current patronage. (Use to Bingham, Cropwell Surgery?)**

Passenger numbers are growing and are now in the order of 2000 journeys per month. (mainly Aslockton/Whatton/Orston to Bingham and the Cropwell's and Langar to Bingham). Use to the Cropwell Surgery is limited but receptionist staff did report on some patients wanting appointments to suit the bus times. All agreed it is a desirable social service even if usage is low.

##### **4. Links between the 33 (CT4N) and 833 (Vectare operated)**

Again very few passengers taking advantage of the connection although through fares are available. Langar /Barnstone people with bus passes tended to stay on the 833 to Bingham and catch the Mainline for a faster journey to town

##### **5. Issues associated with current 833 service**

An email received 4th October from resident Phil Taylor highlighted one or two operational problems due to vehicle breakdowns. Vectare apologised for these situations but explained that the 3 vehicles in their available fleet all had a bad run of mechanical problems. They were replaced with minibuses. It was appreciated that Vectare do everything possible to cover for mishaps, delays and breakdowns. They have a standing arrangement with DJM taxis on call out if needs be. It was agreed that more needs to be done to advertise this back up service with Vectare telephone contact numbers (0115 777 3187) at each bus stop. Vectare have someone available to answer a call during working hours (0600 -2200) and will

advise on the situation to make sure the journey is completed. The Parish Councillors noted that passengers will very much appreciate this assurance.

The passing of the two 833 buses on the bends at Cropwell Butler is awkward but drivers now have an understanding of the schedules and serious conflicts are less. One suggestion was to adjust the schedule slightly by calling in at Upper Saxondale to further reduce the chance of meeting on the bends.

The meeting felt that routing the 833 via Hoe View Road would not be particularly beneficial to the majority of passengers from Cropwell. The 33 already serves Hoe view.

The possibility of routing some services between Cropwell and Langar via Colston Bassett was discussed but did not seem to be straightforward. A subsidised taxi might be a better solution for the 400 or so residents of Colston Bassett?

Vectare suggested the regular use of modern 16 seat minibuses with automatic doors and wheelchair access (rear door). The PC representatives were quite happy with the use of the minibuses which would offer a more efficient operation for Vectare – final decisions would rest with the County. Back up additional or larger vehicles would be available for key journeys (such as morning Aslockton to Bingham on market day)

#### 6. Fares charged and Subsidy available to support the route

The return fare Cropwell to Bingham (£4.40) seems a little expensive compared with the 852 return fare to Radcliffe (£2.60) but it is in line with Mainline fares (£7.20 Bingham – Nottingham return). For information, John Greenwood had listed the available travel options, journey times and fares from Cropwell to town (attached)

All agreed that through ticketing between all bus companies was highly desirable and the County should be developing such a scheme. (i.e. extension of the Robin Hood type scheme?)

Revenue from the 833 service was reported to be in the order of £5-600 per month. This was passed to the County in accordance with the Contract arrangements. Vectare agreed that future renegotiation of the Contract could include an incentive to attract passengers with Vectare keeping the revenue.

#### 7. Ideas to make the service more attractive

The basic day time service as it stands suits most Cropwell residents

Possible call in at Upper Saxondale for certain services? (If the County choose to withdraw the 852 service). The Bingham – Cropwell Butler link could perhaps travel via A52 and Upper Saxondale to help with the uphill journey?

#### 8. Possible other services by Vectare (Evening services?)

If CT4N are not able to make the 33 service more attractive by reducing the journey time to Nottingham, John Greenwood saw an opportunity for Vectare to run an hourly fast minibuss service to Nottingham (833X) on a commercial basis (see attached). This could be linked directly with the 833 with the same vehicles running on from Cropwell. Vectare thought it might be viable if it could attract 7 or 8 passengers per journey.

The desirability of an evening service was discussed but recognising that the County would not at this stage subsidise it. The Parish Council had sponsored such a service in the past but it had not been sustainable. Vectare suggested a possible trial of a limited evening service with minibuses at say 9.50 and 10.50pm from town to Hollygate Estate and the Cropwell's on a Friday and Saturday evening.

#### 9. Real time Information boards along the route.

The only information boards are at Nottingham Road, Bingham which give the Scheduled time (not the real time of arrival). Vectare have a system which locates their own buses but is not compatible with the County real time system. It was accepted that real time info was not realistic because of the number of stops involved. It was agreed that a note at bus stops to advise passengers to call Vectare (0115 777 3187) in the event of a 'no show' was the best solution

#### 10. Any other items for discussion

All items had been covered under previous headings.

#### 11. Future meetings

Vectare will be reviewing the Contract with Chris Ward at the County on November 18<sup>th</sup> and found the comments and views expressed today to be most helpful.

Vectare are happy to meet the Parish Councils again as required.

#### CONCLUSION

The 833 service has got off to a good start and the Parish Council Representatives were most grateful to Vectare (Peter Nathanail and Kyle Giblett) for attending and discussing the various issues and ideas to help sustain the reliable service into the future.