

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**HIGHWAYS AND PLANNING
CABINET MEMBER**

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT:
STAGECOACH SERVICES 37 AND 38: SECTION 106 GRANT**

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To approve the award of a grant to cover the cost of providing a low-floor bus on services 37 and 38 in Scunthorpe.
- 1.2 Stagecoach run these services commercially using an older, less accessible vehicle. Two thirds of users are over 60 or people with disabilities who would benefit from a low floor bus.
- 1.3 The cost in 2009/10 will be £5,000. This is available from the PublicTransport budget. The cost in 20010/11 will be £2,500.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Services 37 and 38 run between Scunthorpe Bus Station, the Hospital and Berkeley Estate and Foxhills. (These are the yellow and green routes shown in Appendix 1). Though Stagecoach provides them without subsidy, they are not highly profitable. The services are restricted to off-peak periods, Monday to Saturday. One bus serves both routes.
- 2.2 Two thirds of service 37 and 38 users are passholders who are over 60 or disabled.
- 2.3 At the moment, these services are linked operationally and financially with school and college buses. Because of student numbers, the bus must be a double decker. Stagecoach does not have any low-floor double deck vehicles in their Scunthorpe fleet so users of 37 and 38 are faced with a bus which is less accessible than most buses on town services.
- 2.4 This is a regular cause of complaint from people on the area.
- 2.5 Following discussions, the Company has arranged for a low floor bus to run on services 37 and 38 when one is available. This is welcome but will not provide a better bus on a consistent basis. Some users need to be confident that a low-floor and wheelchair accessible bus will run when they need it.

3. OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

- 3.1 Government regulations require that all buses on local services must eventually be of low floor design and include space for a wheelchair user. The cut-off dates for non-compliant vehicles range between 1 January 2015 (smaller single deck buses) and 1 January 2017 (double deckers).
- 3.2 If the council took no action, low floor buses would take over services 37 and 38 some time in the next six years but Stagecoach cannot say when. A “wait and see” policy does not help people travelling now.
- 3.3 Stagecoach’s Scunthorpe fleet includes two spare buses used to cover maintenance work. Both spares are currently older double deckers. They are willing to swop one of these for a low floor bus from elsewhere in the fleet and use it on services 37 and 38. However, a newer bus brings with it higher costs so they cannot justify doing this commercially in the next two or three years.
- 3.4 Section 106 of the Transport Act 1985 allows councils to make grants towards the cost of buses or other facilities. We can use Section 106 to provide a modest grant to Stagecoach which will ensure that a low-floor vehicle is used on most journeys on services 37 and 38. The agreement excludes two specific journeys which are directly linked with school buses.
- 3.5 Appendix 2 shows the terms of the proposed Section 106 grant negotiated with Stagecoach. The grant will not change the timetable on either service.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

- 4.1 Finance:
 - 4.1.1 The proposed Section 106 grant is £5,000 payable in 2009/10 and £2,500 payable in 2010/11.
 - 4.1.2 If Stagecoach fail to provide a low-floor bus on specified journeys over this period, the agreement allows the council to claw money back.
 - 4.1.3 £5,000 can be found from the Public Transport revenue budget in 2009/10. £2,500 is available from the provisional budget for 2010/11.
- 4.2 There are no staffing or property implications.

5. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)**

5.1 Diversity

5.1.1 Providing a bus with a low entry step and flat floor immediately will help many users of service 37 and 38. The design particularly benefits people with impaired mobility but also assists those with push chairs or heavy shopping. The bus will be able to carry one wheelchair user sitting in their wheelchair.

5.2 Risk

5.2.1 The proposed agreement between Stagecoach and the council covers three years from October 2009. However, neither of us can foresee every eventuality. There is a small risk that circumstances may mean that services 37 and 38 revert to a less accessible bus between the end of the agreement and the cut-off dates given in paragraph 3.1. We do not think that this risk should prevent the council making a grant which will bring an immediate improvement for passengers using 37 and 38.

6. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION**

6.1 We have consulted local members on the proposal.

6.2 The council and Stagecoach continue to receive complaints about the adequacy of services 37 and 38, the routes and the buses used. A better bus will go some way to resolving these.

7. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 That a "Section 106" grant be made to Stagecoach East Midlands to provide a low-floor bus for specified journeys on Scunthorpe Town services 37 and 38 and

7.2 That the Service Director, Highways and Planning be authorised to sign an appropriate agreement.

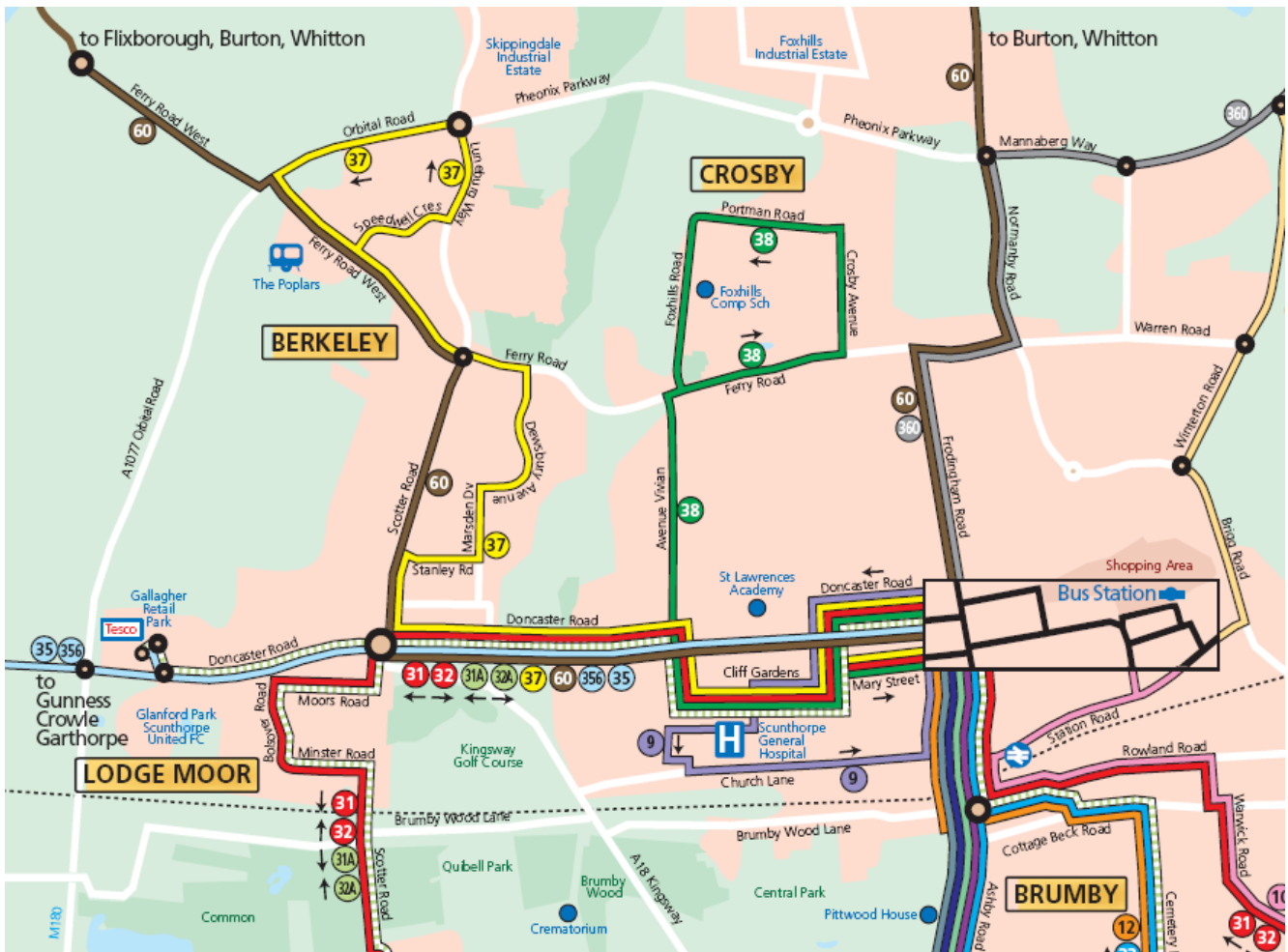
SERVICE DIRECTOR HIGHWAYS AND PLANNING

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

On file 09/1359 held by the Public transport Team

Local Bus Services in Scunthorpe



Service 37: Yellow

Service 38: Green

Source: Stagecoach in Lincolnshire

Draft Agreement Between North Lincolnshire Council and Stagecoach East Midlands

Transport Act 1985 Section 106: Grant to Provide a Low Floor Bus on Scunthorpe Town Services 37 & 38

1. The period of this agreement will be for three years between *28 September 2009 to 27 September 2012. Dates subject to confirmation.*
2. **North Lincolnshire Council agrees that:**
3. The Council will make a grant to Stagecoach East Midlands under the provisions of Section 106 of the Transport Act 1985 to cover the extra cost of using a low-floor bus on specified journeys on Scunthorpe Town services 37 and 38.
4. The Council will pay £5,000 at the start of this agreement to cover the Company's additional costs in the following 12 month period.
5. The Council will pay £2,500 in 2010 to cover the Company's additional costs in the second year on the anniversary date of the start of the agreement.
6. **Stagecoach East Midlands agrees that:**
7. The Company will provide a low floor bus which complies with the Public Service Vehicle (Accessibility Regulations) 2000 from the start date of the agreement for three years.
8. The bus will be used to provide the following specified journeys:

Service 37: Departures from Scunthorpe Bus Station at 08:55, 09:55, 10:55, 11:55, 12:55, 13:55 and 17:05, Monday to Saturday.

Service 38: Departures from Scunthorpe Bus Station at 07:20, 09:30, 10:30, 11:30, 12:30, 13:30, 14:30, 15:30, 17:15 and 18:00, Monday to Saturday.
9. Journeys at 08:30 (Service 38) and 14:55 (Service 37) are not covered by this agreement and may be operated by a bus which is not of low floor design.
10. The Company will give priority to the provision of a low floor bus on the specified journeys and substitute another vehicle type only in unforeseen circumstances.
11. **Termination of the Agreement**
12. Council may terminate the agreement if the Company fails to provide a low-floor bus on the specified journeys.
13. If the termination occurs in years 1 or 2, the Council will be entitled to recover the unexpired proportion of grant paid for that year.
14. The Company may terminate the agreement and substitute a bus of another type if the Council fails to make the grant payments specified in paragraphs 4 and 5.
15. A substantial reduction of services 37 and 38 by the Company will be regarded as termination of this agreement.