



Friends of Moorsbus,
4 Foundry Cottages, Wrelton, Pickering YO18 8PF

Dear Clerk,

29th December 2015,

We would be grateful if you would include this letter requesting support on your Agenda in January if possible.

We are now planning the 3rd year of the “new” Moorsbus, and working to expand the length of season and the number of bus services. Our routes already serve quite a number of Parishes. We know that Town and Parish Councils are under increasing budget pressure, but if each Parish including yours would support us in a small way, then the businesses, residents, visitors and environment of the whole region will benefit. Can you help?

We ran two Sunday bus services in July/Aug/Sept 2015, with a total of 2973 recorded passenger journeys. Thanks to donations from passengers, from Parish Councils, from the North Yorkshire Moors Association, and with funds carried forward from 2014, we covered the final cost of £5958.63 for July/Aug/Sept 2015 Sundays and the August Bank Holiday Monday. This was the bill from Arriva after they had deducted their income from fares (£1177.8) and concessionary pass rebate (£3279.57). This might seem like a lot of money to spend, but it works out as an investment of about £2 per passenger journey, and many passengers spend at least £10 that supports the local economy when they are out for the day.

We would like to do better by attracting more passengers on some sections of the routes; other sections already have full buses and need some changes such as more frequent “shuttles” or a bigger bus to maintain passenger comfort and confidence. We would welcome any comments and suggestions about adjustments to the 2015 services which were:-

“Rambler”:- Darlington (08.10am)-Stockton-Middlesborough-Ormesby-Guisborough-Danby-Castleton-HuttonLeHole-Kirkbymoorside-Pickering....lunchtime return on this route to Guisborough and Great Ayton and back to Pickering.....then the whole route from Pickering back to Darlington, (arriving back at 19.41)

“Endeavour”:- Saltburn (08.50am) -Marske-Redcar-Dunsdale-Guisborough-Great Ayton-Stokesley-Swainby-Osmotherley-Northallerton-Thirsk ...meeting trains at Northallerton and Thirsk Stations...Sutton Bank-Helmsley....then a return trip to Great Ayton but via Rievaulx, Chop Gate and Stokesley..then a return trip to Thirsk railway station via Sutton Bank...then the whole route from Helmsley, back to Redcar at 18.59. This service met the Rambler twice daily at Guisborough, once daily at Great Ayton, giving passengers more journey options.

Moorsbus CIC (Community Interest Company) and Friends of Moorsbus are all volunteers, working from our own homes. There are only a few of us, and we all have other lives to lead. But with a bit of help from every community, we can make a big difference. There will be benefits to every community along the way from improved public transport, including health and happiness of residents and visitors, reduced car parking problems, reduced congestion and reduced pollution/carbon footprint.

As well as raising funds to re-start missing routes, we work with commercial and community bus services in and around the North York Moors area. We try to integrate our buses with existing bus routes, and trains, with timings and ticket offers that will enable more people to use the buses or trains, and so spread the benefit of a public transport network. If we can increase passenger numbers so that fare and pass income goes up for all operators, then the funds and fare income we raise can be invested in more services. The commercial and community operators will be encouraged to increase their services if they can see a growing demand.

Helmsley Town Council have promised to make a contribution of £100 from their 2016/17 budget to start the wheels rolling. The summer may seem a long way off, but we need promises at this early stage so that we can sign the service contracts. Contracts are signed 8 weeks before the service starts because of Traffic Commissioner regulations. This means knowing we have the funds in February for a bus service starting at Easter. We make payments after the end of each service month.

Thanks to donations made during the summer and more recently, we are carrying forward £6630 for 2016, enough for the likely final cost of two buses for all the Sundays in July, August and September, based on 2015 prices and fare income, IF the weather is good. However we can't risk "going into the red", so we need to raise a further £4000 "poor weather contingency" for 2016. All funds promised beyond this target before mid-March (when Whit services are registered) will enable a longer season. Funds we find before May could be used for more July/Aug/Sept services. We hope for good weather so that our 2016 poor weather contingency fund can be carried forward for 2017 services..

Arriva have sent us the total passenger figures for each route, and the cash fare figures for each town or village, so we know that passengers were getting on at every town or village that the routes are registered for. But because more than half the passengers for each route were concessionary pass holders, which you can see from the income figures above, we can't work out the total passenger numbers for each town or village.

Please let us know whether your Council will consider supporting us financially, and whether Councillors require further information in order to decide this. We can send a representative to your meeting if this would be helpful; please let us know the time, date and venue.

Our Bank Account is with Unity Bank, 60 83 01 20339939. We can also accept cheques, made out to Friends of Moorsbus.

It would also be really useful if you or Councillors could tell us about any other local sources of funds that we could try applying to.

It would also be tremendously helpful if Clerk and Councillors would help us to promote the services where you live. We can send you posters and timetable leaflets shortly before the services start. We can work with you on Radio interviews or pieces for local newsletters. We have a website www.moorsbus.org, we use Twitter @Moorsbus, and friendsofmoorsbus are on Facebook too. Links to us on your local websites are also a great way to spread the word about Moorsbus. By phone we can be contacted on 01751 477216.

Best wishes and happy travelling for 2016!

Helen Gundry, Eden Blyth, Bill Breakell

for Moorsbus Community Interest Company & Friends of Moorsbus