

For immediate release

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Threats to Linkbus services cause concerns that Nottingham communities will be left stranded

Nottingham bus company CT4N fears that elderly, vulnerable and mobility-impaired people will be hit hard following proposals by Nottingham City Council to axe a number of Linkbus services in the city. The latest services to be threatened follow close after other cuts to the Linkbus network over the last two years. CT4N has expressed concerns that these latest proposals are yet a further erosion to the Linkbus network, and will leave many residents without a bus service.

Nottingham City Council has announced its intention to withdraw the following services:

- L1 – City, Wilford, Silverdale
- L9 – City, Mapperley, Sherwood, Arnold, Bestwood Park
- L10 – City, Wollaton, Bramcote, Beeston
- L11 – Bulwell, Beechdale, Beeston
- L12 – City Hospital, QMC, University of Nottingham

Managing Director Ian Combellack said: “Whilst I understand that wholesale reductions in funds from central Government means cuts across all areas, and that the City Council has to make difficult decisions, I am concerned regarding the timing of these cuts, bearing in mind that we are currently in the middle of the Coronavirus pandemic.”

“The Council believes the commercial network and remaining Linkbus services offer viable coverage for communities across Nottingham and that this reduction to the services will save the council money. We don’t feel that this is the case. If anything, it is likely to result in an increase in the Council’s concessionary payments, as passengers will have to find alternative services. This could in theory double the cost of concessions payments in some situations as some passengers that are required to interchange will now have to make 4 journeys as opposed to 2 journeys – and the Council will have to pick up the bill.”

With the current Coronavirus pandemic and the reduction in the number of passengers travelling, many service users are unaware of the proposed changes. CT4N chair Andrew Grieve said: “the passengers that are still using the services are complaining that they are not even aware of the proposed changes to the network. We understand that the email consultation of passengers disseminated

on the council's website and via a press release has been the only form of interface with the community. This does not seem adequate to us."

"If these changes are approved then this will have a negative impact, not least on the more vulnerable members of the community – elderly and disabled residents. These reductions will also aggravate loneliness and isolation, which all public transport services seek to minimise."

CT4N feels that a number of alternative approaches should be considered, and that there are potentially ways of reducing the council's expenditure without such a damaging action as the loss of five bus services. "We have requested that Nottingham City Council engages with us over these proposals in the hope that we can find a more acceptable solution," said Ian.