

LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
HIGHWAYS FORUM FOR HARBOROUGH

28TH FEBRUARY 2017

RESPONSE TO PETITION: REQUEST TO REINSTATE THE KNOLL STREET/GARDINER STREET/HIGHCROSS STREET, MARKET HARBOROUGH ROUTEING OF THE CENTREBUS SERVICE 33

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT

Purpose of Report

1. To report on the outcome of investigations following the receipt of a petition requesting the reinstatement of the Knoll Street/Gardiner Street/Highcross Street, Market Harborough routeing of the Centrebus service 33.

Background

2. Lead petitioner Mrs Pauline Passingham presented a petition containing 58 signatures at the last meeting of the Harborough Highways Forum on 25th October 2016. The petition read as follows:

'We the undersigned, respectfully request the restoration of the #33 town service bus to the Knoll Street, Gardiner Street and Highcross Street routes'.
3. The Centrebus 33 service is an hourly Market Harborough Town service, which operates on a cloverleaf arrangement through residential estates around the town including the Highcross Street area. An area guide showing the route is attached as **Appendix A**.
4. The service is subsidised by the County Council and was registered with the Traffic Commissioner in 2013. The registered route follows Logan Street, Highcross Street and Wartnaby Street (see **Appendix B**).
5. The service operates on a Hail and Ride basis along Logan Street and Highcross Street and then serves a fixed bus stop on Wartnaby Street.
6. Drivers of the service had been incorrectly routeing via Knoll Street and Gardiner Street until they were reminded of the registered route by the operator following receipt of a recent registration of timetable changes. Drivers should now be following the registered route.
7. Petitioners are requesting that the service routes via Knoll Street and Gardiner Street as opposed to the current registered route (see **Appendix B**).

Outcome of Investigations

8. Officers have discussed the service with the operator, Centrebus to establish why their drivers have been routing via Knoll Street and Gardiner Street instead of along the registered route.
9. Centrebus have advised that their drivers route along Knoll Street when experiencing difficulties passing inappropriately parked vehicles around the Logan Street junction with Knoll Street. However, they also advised that they experience difficulties on Knoll Street when negotiating parked vehicles close to the 90 degree bend onto Gardiner Street. Either route has therefore presented its problems and difficulties for the operator.
10. The operator has confirmed that the service operates on a Hail and Ride basis when it gets to the Knoll Street/Logan Street junction and that drivers will stop on Logan Street to pick up/alight passengers. Residents living on Knoll Street will therefore have as little as 10 and no more than 240 metres walking distance to the nearest Hail and Ride pick up point.
11. Officers have undertaken on site observations of the bus routing through the estate on a number of occasions and at varying times. Lots of on street parking was observed along all of the roads on the estate, however, on all but one occasion the bus followed the registered route without any problems or obstruction. On the occasion that the bus routed along Knoll Street, it was not clear why as the registered route was not obstructed in any way. So, on the whole buses were observed negotiating the registered route without any difficulty.
12. Based on the discussions with Centrebus and observations made on site, it is the County Council's view that the Centrebus 33 continues to serve the estate as per the registered route. The registration is a legal document that should be adhered to and if residents park appropriately then buses and indeed emergency service vehicles (the buses are of a similar size to fire engines) should have no difficulty negotiating the registered route.

Conclusion

13. The registered route of the Centrebus 33 service is via Logan Street, Highcross Street and Wartnaby Street. However, up until a recent timetable registration for the service, drivers have incorrectly routed via Knoll Street and Gardiner Street.
14. Drivers use Knoll Street when they experience difficulties passing inappropriately parked vehicles on Logan Street. Whilst Knoll Street is the petitioners preferred route, drivers do have difficulties negotiating parked vehicles at the bend onto Gardiner Street when routing along Knoll Street.
15. On site observations have shown that buses are able to navigate the registered route without any problems.

16. The service operates on a Hail and Ride basis along the registered route and the maximum walking distance to the nearest pick up/drop off point will be as little as 10 and no more than 240 metres for those living on Knoll Street.
17. Based on the investigations carried out the registered route is considered appropriate.

Recommendation

18. That the Centrebus 33 service continues to route along its registered route via Logan Street, Highcross Street and Wartnaby Street.
19. That it continues to operate on a Hail and Ride basis along Logan Street and Highcross Street to ensure close access to the service for Knoll Street residents.
20. The County Council and Centrebus continue to monitor the situation and review again if persistent routeing problems occur.
21. Members are asked to note the content of this report.

Officer to Contact

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Background Papers

Petition containing 58 signatures is held on the Chief Executive's Department petition file.

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