



Accessible Transport Report

Date: 4th September 2017

Report Title: Accessible Transport Report

Accountable Director: Steve McAleavy

Accountable employee(s): Richard Mayes

Report Considered by: Cllr Kath Hartley,
Lead Member – Putting Passengers First

Cllr Diana Holl-Allen,
Lead Member – Safe and Sustainable Travel

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

- To note the report regarding Accessible Transport

Purpose of Report

1. To report matters relating to Accessible Transport in the West Midlands, the performance of the Ring & Ride service, and progress with regard to the Service 89. This report includes:

Section A **Ring & Ride Update**

- Patronage May 2017 – June 2017

Section B **Service 89**

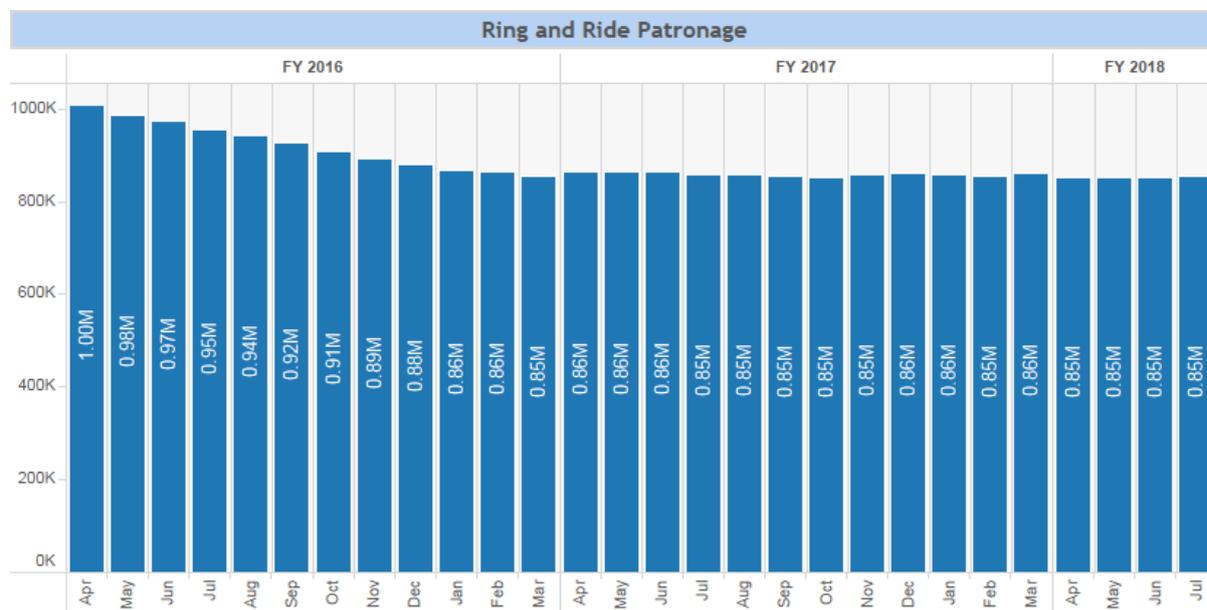
- Progress Update

Section A – Ring and Ride Update

2.1.1 Patronage for Ring and Ride from May 2017 to July 2017 has continued to be steady overall, although with a very slight rise of 0.82% compared to the period May 2016 to July 2016. This equates to approximately 1750 more passenger journeys in the 3 month period and averages to approximately 580 additional passengers per month.

2.1.2 Patronage each month has fluctuated, with May 2017 seeing a rise of 1.82% over May 2016, June 2017 seeing a slight decrease of 0.19% over June 2016, and July 2017 seeing an increase of 0.87% over July 2016

2.1.3 A graph, detailing patronage up to and including July 2017 is included below and shows that annualised numbers remain stabilised at between 0.85 million and 0.86 million passengers.



2.1.4 From 1st May 2017, as recorded previously, Ring and Ride increased some of its fares (generally by 20p for an adult fare)

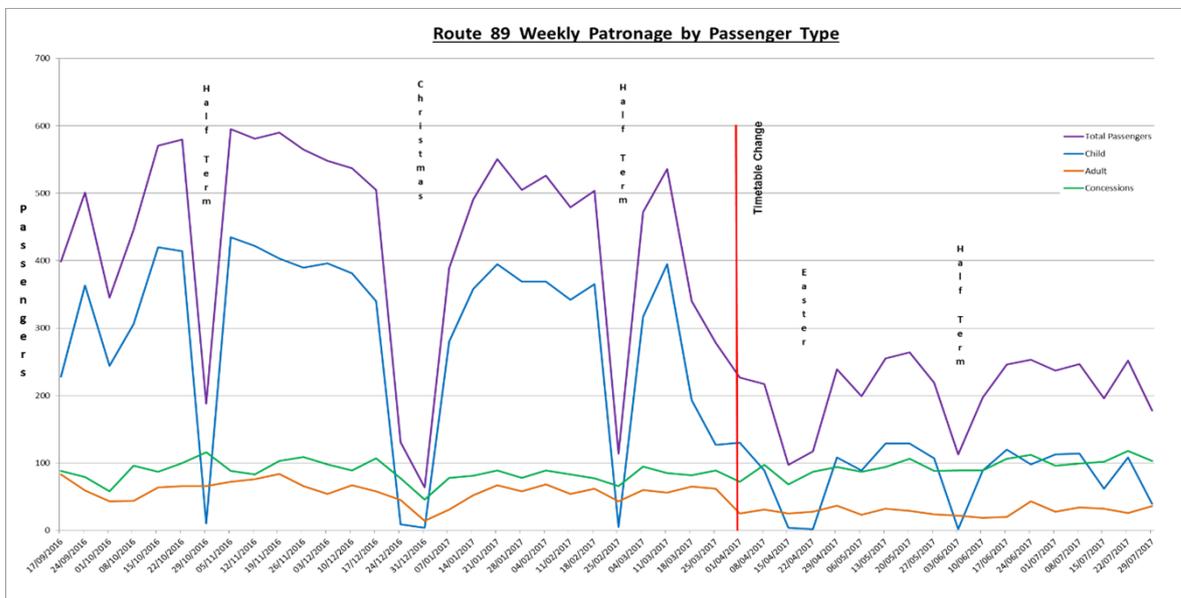
2.1.5 The impact of the increase in fares, whilst not apparent during May or June, may have a longer term impact on patronage. Any effect should be apparent in the coming months, and appropriate updates will be provided on this.

2.1.6 ATG reports that they are undertaking a number of initiatives at present. This includes integrating the Ring and Ride service with Igo bus routes and a trial is underway where passengers in Sandwell are able to connect directly with the 10H service in Quinton, to link with Birmingham City Centre. They are looking to link into services that would assist Ring and Ride service users in reaching hospitals and appointments. ATG is also looking at attracting new customers to the Ring and Ride service through social media, and have been highlighting the service to schools where pupils have Special Educational Needs.

2.1.7 A mid-term review is being undertaken shortly by consultants SYSTRA, on behalf of Transport for West Midlands. This review will provide an independent and impartial examination of the Ring and Ride service, to help ensure that the service is meeting the need, and provides value for money. Further updates will be provided regarding this review as information becomes available.

Section B – Service 89

- 3.1.1 The Service 89 replaced the Taxibus in the Heart of England from 5th September 2016, and a revised timetable was introduced from 27th March 2017. The annual cost of the 3 year contract in place is £70,000 a year up to 1 September 2018 and then £59,500 for the final year covering 2 September 2018 up to 1 September 2019
- 3.1.2 In addition, a feeder mini-bus is provided three days a week to help ensure that those who cannot reach the Service 89 directly, still have access to public transport. This provides a service between 09:45 to 14:00 on Tuesday and Friday, and 09:00 to 16:00 on Wednesday. It links into the Service 89, other public transport services, and provides local journeys for those who cannot access the Service 89. The funding for the feeder mini-bus is currently in place until 30th March 2019 at a cost of £11,359 a year.
- 3.1.3 The service 89 bus is continuing to operate into two key ‘roaming zones’ in Meriden and Balsall Common, allowing better coverage of these areas and for residents to be collected from or returned to their front door, or closer to their homes, but also now roams to Peel Close, Hampton-in-Arden, following feedback.
- 3.1.4 Since 27th March 2017, the bus has operated from Balsall Common, through Berkswell, Meriden, Hampton-in-Arden and Catherine-de-Barnes to Solihull on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and from Meriden through Berkswell and Balsall Common to the Cannon Park shopping centre and Coventry on Tuesday and Thursday.
- 3.1.5 Following the recent service change there has been a sustained drop in patronage. The adult figures are below those observed before the change, and this is believed to be as a result of the bus operating a different service on different days of the week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday to Solihull, Tuesday and Thursday to Coventry). This revised operation was designed to better meet the users in the area for whom the service was designed, however the expected uptake in concessionary pass uagage has not been seen. The child figures have reduced significantly, partly through bus operators working with schools to manage school loads across different services, but also due to the change of timetable as some conections are no longer able to be made.



- 3.1.6 Options are currently being considered regarding the timetable, and Transport for West Midlands will be approaching key parish groups in the next few weeks to discuss a proposed return to the original timetable, albeit with potential improvements to maintain certain links, such as that with Cannon Park shops. A further update will be presented when available.

Financial Implications

5. The budgeted Ring and Ride service grant for 2017-18 is £7.3m which based on latest rolling year patronage numbers equates to £8.59 per passenger trip. Funding for the Service 89, and the feeder bus are accommodated for within the agreed 2017-18 budgets for Subsidised Bus and Community Transport provision.

Legal Implications

6. There are no legal implication directly arising from the contents of this report.

Equality Implications

7. No specific equality comments as this report is for information.

Media Implications

8. No implications are expected to arise as a result of this report.