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Mr Mike Cooper, CEO,
Arriva
By Email

12 February 2024

Re: Penrhynside

Dear Mr Cooper,

I am writing with regards to Arriva's decision to deprive Penrhynside of all bus services by changing the route of the 14 and 15.

In the first instance, I would like to express how very dissatisfied local residents and I are that nobody from Arriva attended the public meeting at Penrhynside Village Hall on Friday evening. The venue was packed, and all in attendance unanimous that the services should be reinstated.

Mr Adam Marshall, Area Head of Commercial, Arriva Buses Wales, wrote to me ahead of the meeting stating: "As an operator we understand the number of people who will be impacted by this change as we have electronic ticket machine data which shows in detail where and when people board our services". Whilst I acknowledge that you have data for the number of passengers boarding services, you do not have data for the number alighting in Penrhynside. This is a major oversight by your bus company because there would naturally be a greater number using buses to reach the village than leave it. Indeed, the community is atop a steep hill, which is hard to walk to from any direction. In fact, at the public meeting many made clear that they used your buses to reach the village, and no longer go to the community because the walk up steep and unlight routes is too difficult.

Another reason Mr Marshall gave for axing the services was "The 20mph has impacted bus services by increasing the time it takes the bus to operate its cycle. The volume of mileage that buses operate has had a significant cumulative impact." 20mph is not a justifiable reason for cutting off the community, especially when bearing in mind that should the 14 and 15 buses return to Bryn-y-Bia Road, their route would be around 15 meters shorter!

Regular bus users made clear at the meeting that they feel vulnerable when attempting the difficult walk from the bus stop in Penrhyn Bay. That entails walking up a muddy, steep path, with several steps, in the dark. It is completely unreasonable to expect parents with prams, wheelchair users, the elderly, and individuals on their own to take such an unsuitable route. With 34% of residents over 65 in Penrhyn Ward, it is apparent that the lack of services is hitting the oldest in our community hard, to the point where some now feel completely isolated, and are having to use costly taxis to get to and from Llandudno. [Cont...]



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It was highlighted that drivers of the 14 and 15 are often seen outside the Toll Bar bus stop, passing time. Questions were therefore raised as to whether Arriva does have a punctuality problem, and if the breaks could instead be taken by the now unused bus stops on Bryn-y-Bia Road.

Finally, it is important to highlight that Arriva's cut is already harming the economy of the community. A pub landlord attended the meeting and advised that the loss of buses has harmed trade, and that consideration is now having to be given to closing three nights a week, or completely.

I do not believe that Arriva understand the true impact of the devastating decision to cut off the community.

I would be grateful if you could arrange for bus services in Penrhynside to be reinstated.
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janet".

Janet Finch-Saunders MS/AS