

Dear Councillor

Shropshire-wide Bus Upgrade Project

I think you will already be aware of the Shropshire-wide Bus Upgrade project which was launched at an event at Theatre Severn on 29th June this year.

The aims and objectives of the project are to identify ways in which services can be improved and ways in which improved services can be funded and delivered.

Buses are very important to local communities and the local economy and have a vital role to play in delivering Shropshire Council's high level strategic objectives. Improved bus services and a shift away from car use to sustainable transport choices (buses, walking and cycling) are essential to the urgent need to reduce congestion and deliver new policies and measures that are needed to convert the Council's recently declared "climate emergency" into actual reductions in CO2 emissions.

A shift from car to bus will reduce CO2, reduce pollution and recognise the needs of all those in society that may not have access to a car or be able to drive.

The project is funded by the national organisation, the Foundation for Integrated Transport. The Foundation is a registered charity and it is a condition of the project funding that we are very strictly non-political.

We are now constructing a web site and we want to include on this web site a statement from the political parties represented on Shropshire Council and from independent councillors about their ambitions for bus services in Shropshire. **We are asking that you set out your policy ambitions for buses serving rural communities in Shropshire.** We are not asking that you make funding commitments or budget decisions but we are asking whether or not you support much-improved bus service provision in future years.

I am aware that you are very busy and have many pressures on your time so if it is helpful please address 3 questions:

What single practical measure you would like to see in the short term to improve our bus services?

What practical measures should be a medium term priority?

How you would like to see Shropshire take advantage of the new powers for local authorities set out in the Bus Services Act 2017?

Thank you for your help

Best wishes

John Whitelegg