

1. **The 423/424 Mow Cop Service to Leek is vital for elderly people living in quite an isolated area. Residents need this route to obtain basic supplies and food. Will Cllr Winnington keep in mind that this bus route was never set up for profit making purposes and the service was put in place because parts of Mow Cop are very rural?**

The 423/424 service which operated prior September this year was evaluated as part of an area review covering the Kidsgrove and Biddulph areas. Due to sustained low demand and revenue forecasts, it was not possible to continue to provide the direct Biddulph–Mow Cop service. Connectivity between Mow Cop and Kidsgrove (the closest shopping destination) is currently provided by bus service 77 and larger shopping destination of Stoke on Trent is served by service 27. Connections to and from Biddulph from Mow Cop are maintained by interchanging at Newchapel.

2. **Would Cllr Winnington agree that working people and the local economy will suffer as a result of cutbacks to the bus service subsidies?**

Some 90% of bus services in Staffordshire are provided commercially and we have been working closely with operators to ensure that where possible commercial viability is maintained and enhanced. This has included switching a significant number of pupils on to the public bus network and continuing to provide subsidized transport for young people via the Your Staffordshire Card and providing an enhanced concessionary fare scheme for the elderly and disabled community. Although it is recognised that any change to the supported bus network must have some impact on existing service users, any financial support to operate bus services in Staffordshire needs to be considered alongside other authority commitments.

3. **How much has been done to consult Staffordshire residents and users of the bus service regarding the County Council's cuts to transport subsidies?**

All supported bus services are kept under constant review and adjustment made to ensure value for money for the Staffordshire tax payer. In relation to changes that took place countywide in September this year, engagement took place in March and April 2015 with all district / borough councils in Staffordshire to gain their thoughts on draft service change proposals. Unfortunately an offer of detailed officer engagement was not taken up by Newcastle Borough Council. The proposed changes to the Staffordshire supported bus network were then informed to all local members and openly shown via the normal democratic process and the call in process was not invoked.