

Motion on Notice - Councillor Thorpe

Localism Bus Services Bill

This council notes:

1. That the Bus Services Bill currently passing through Parliament includes Clause 21 that will effectively “prohibit a local authority from forming a company for the purposes of providing a local bus service”.
2. That the Localism Act (2011) provides general powers of competence to local authorities.
3. That municipal bus companies like Reading and Nottingham provide some of the best bus services in the country and have a successful track record of increasing bus passenger numbers and providing high quality bus services.
4. That polling by We Own It found that a majority of the public (57%) oppose clause 21, whilst just 22% support it. The opposition to Clause 21 is consistent across voters from all political parties.

This council believes:

Clause 21 contradicts the general powers of competence and the spirit of the Localism Act 2011.

If there is a need and a demand from their public, then Councils should be able to provide their own bus services

Should they wish, Councils should be legally able to follow the model developed by Reading and Nottingham.

Consequently Clause 21 should be omitted from the Bus Services Bill.

This council resolves:

1. To write to Lord Ahmad and to call on the Department for Transport to omit Clause 21 from the final legislation
2. To write to our local MPs Sir Peter Bottomley and Tim Loughton to ask them to oppose clause 21 when the Bus Services Bill reaches the House of Commons and ask them to write to Lord Ahmad and the Department of Transport to raise concerns about Clause 21.
3. To work with any partners and organisations such as “We Own It” to publicise our support for local bus services meeting the needs of local people in the media to enable true localism in Worthing.

Proposed by Councillor Hazel Thorpe

Seconded by Councillor Robert Smytherman

Relevant Council Policies:

Local Government Act 1972

Background papers:

Emails Councillor Thorpe, Director for Communities December 2017