

BSWB 23 - Evidence from: Louise Burgel

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd, yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith | Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee

Bil Gwasanaethau Bysiau (Cymru) | Bus Services (Wales) Bill

1. What are your views on the general principles of the Bill, and is there a need for legislation to deliver the stated policy intention?

Yes, there is a need for legislation to deliver the policy as the local buses, (in my local area of Tenby) are woefully inadequate, unreliable, expensive and have no connectivity to other transport links.

2. What are your views on the Bill's provisions (set out according to Parts below), in particular are they workable and will they deliver the stated policy intention?

▪ Part 1 - Key concepts and general objectives (sections 1 to 4)

The Bill's key concepts and general objectives are workable and will deliver the policy intention IF they are created by people who actually use public transport, (especially in rural areas) and buses only run every hour, (trains every 2 hours) so that smooth connections can be ensured and contingency plans put in place should there be delays caused by roadworks, accidents, bike races, Xmas events scheduled on designated bus routes etc. At present a lot of the bus users in my local area who used the buses to commute to work have given up (due to First Bus timetable changes) and bought a car as the bus services are not fit for purpose. The timetables do not coincide with regular work start and finish times, (9-5) so people arrive late and have to make up hours as a result.

3. What are your views on the Bill's provisions (set out according to Parts below), in particular are they workable and will they deliver the stated policy intention?

- **Part 2 - Functions of the Welsh Ministers relating to local bus services (sections 5 to 20)**

Again, I believe that the Bill's provisions are workable and can deliver the stated policy intention if it is created by people who use public transport and actually try out every route and connection not just once but over a period of time with different people to make sure that everything runs smoothly and consistently. There is no point creating public transport system which only works on paper, devised by people who drive and never use public transportation on a regular basis.

4. What are your views on the Bill's provisions (set out according to Parts below), in particular are they workable and will they deliver the stated policy intention?

- **Part 3 - Restriction on providing local bus services (sections 21 to 24)**

I think that this provision is workable and will provide the policy intention as long as the bus companies who are given contracts by the local authorities are chose not by price ie: the cheapest but the company with an excellent track record for providing a reliable service and customer service. The company which provides the service between Tenby and Haverfordwest which I use, First Bus, have been absolutely appalling, buses don't turn up, or sail past people waiting at bus stops, buses are cancelled with no notice or information and some drivers who are rude and even abusive to passengers.

5. What are your views on the Bill's provisions (set out according to Parts below), in particular are they workable and will they deliver the stated policy intention?

- **Part 4 - Information and data (sections 25 to 31)**

Yes, I believe that these provisions are workable and absolutely imperative going forward to ensure that lessons are learnt and where services/ drivers fall short in

the service delivery are held accountable and the findings be part of the public record.

6. What are your views on the Bill's provisions (set out according to Parts below), in particular are they workable and will they deliver the stated policy intention?

- **Part 5 – Local authority powers and duties (sections 32 to 34)**

I believe that these provisions are workable and will help to deliver the stated policy intention.

7. What are your views on the Bill's provisions (set out according to Parts below), in particular are they workable and will they deliver the stated policy intention?

- **Part 6 – Miscellaneous and general (sections 35 to 44)**

I believe that these provisions are workable and will help to provide the stated policy intention.

8. What are the potential barriers to the implementation of the Bill's provisions and how does the Bill take account of them?

I repeat what I have previously said that the barriers to the implementation of the Bus Bill's provisions will be if the people creating the new public transport system do not and have not used public transportation. In order to make a system with 'joined up' connectivity between bus services, trains, ferries etc. The timetables need to be tried out physically over a period of time (maybe get commuting members of the public to try out the new timetables and connections, perhaps for free, to be able to report back as to what works and what doesn't so that glitches can be sorted out before the services are implemented. There is no point, taking the word of the Bus companies who are vying for the contracts, it is the needs of the travelling customers which must be taken into consideration. I don't know if this Bill does take the needs of the customers as the highest priority in the proposals but if we want to get cars off the road and people using public transportation, it must be fit for purpose and a much more preferable option

which will only happen if the system is affordable, reliable with seamless connections between all the public transport networks across Wales.

9. How appropriate are the powers in the Bill for Welsh Ministers to make subordinate legislation (as set out in Chapter 5 of Part 1 of the Explanatory Memorandum)

The powers in the Bill are totally appropriate for Welsh Ministers to make subordinate legislation in order to make the Bill work.

10. Are any unintended consequences likely to arise from the Bill?

Perhaps to highlight how the members of the public who use public transport have been seriously let down over a number of years by cuts, impractical timetable changes and the increasing unreliability of local bus services, rising costs and a cavalier attitude towards the customers.

11. What are your views on the Welsh Government's assessment of the financial implications of the Bill as set out in Part 2 of the Explanatory Memorandum?

I think the assessment is fair regarding the financial implications of the Bill.

12. Are there any other issues that you would like to raise about the Bill and the accompanying Explanatory Memorandum or any related matters?

I just want to reiterate that any improvements to the bus services, especially in rural areas must be physically tried out by people who regularly use public transport, before implementation, as I believe that a lot of the problems with the connectivity and suitability of services have been created on paper by people who have never and will never use public transport to get to and from work.
