

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

NORTHERN AREA LOCAL COMMITTEE - 6 MAY 2004

SERVICE 500: IRVINE VALLEY RING'N'RIDE

Report by Executive Director of Development and Property Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise East Ayrshire Council of the progress of the 500 service since its inception in March 2003.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Service 500 was introduced following a review of the Dial-a-Bus M104 Kilmarnock service, when it was noted that one bus primarily served the outlying rural areas providing links into Kilmarnock and the surrounding towns and villages. The service was modified and one bus converted to a Ring'n'Ride open to all passengers, including non-Dial-a-Bus passengers.
- 2.2 The 500 provides improved service links particularly between the rural communities. Weekend provision is now available to Waterside and Moscow and new and re-instated links were introduced between Fenwick-Stewarton, Moscow-Darvel and Crosshouse Hospital-Fenwick.

3. SERVICE PROFILE

- 3.1 Attachment A provides a map of the operating area. This was extended to include Lugton last year. The 500 operates seven days a week from 0900 until 1800 hours with one low-floor wheelchair accessible vehicle. Bookings are taken one day in advance of travel or on the day of travel provided 2 hours notice is given.
- 3.2 Travel patterns indicate the majority of users travel into Kilmarnock with the greatest demand from Darvel, Newmilns, Galston, Stewarton and Fenwick. However, regular users from Waterside, Moscow and other rural areas continue to use the service. As passengers become accustomed to the booking procedures and flexibility of the service, more journeys are being accommodated.

4. ENHANCEMENTS

- 4.1 Demand for the 500 service continues to increase. To improve the quality of service to users, SPT has introduced the option to book up to 24 single journeys a year in advance. This additional facility enables users to book

those important journeys up to two weeks in advance. This was introduced from 1 February 2004 for an experimental period of 12 months. SPT continue to look at means to improve service levels and transport links in the area. Semi-fixed timetable routes to meet more users' travel demands are currently being examined.

5. FUTURE

- 5.1** Due to the failure of the previous contractor, HAD Coaches Ltd, SPT has made temporary arrangements to maintain the service. In the longer term, from July 2005, it is SPT's intention to introduce an evening service subject to finance being available.

6 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1** It is recommended that the Committee notes the contents of the report.

James Lavery
Executive Director of Development and Property Services
23 April 2004

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Implementation Officer: Kerr Chalmers

