

William Wragg MP  
13 Stockport Road  
Marple  
Stockport  
SK6 6BD

Our ref: 0220-040K4H-02829

4 March 2020

Dear Mr Wragg

**RE: Bus Service 375**

Thank you for contacting Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) regarding bus service 375.

As you will be aware, the bus network across Greater Manchester is run predominantly on a commercial basis by privately owned bus operators who are free to determine their own routes. Commercial operators generally provide services in areas where they consider there are sufficient passenger numbers to enable the service to be financially sustainable.

In addition to this, TfGM provides financial support on routes that we feel are socially necessary but where commercial bus operators do not consider it to be profitable. However, our ability to maximise accessibility has been impacted by a severely reduced budget for supported services in recent years.

Service 375 is commercially operated by Stagecoach between Stockport and Marple and TfGM supports the extension of the route from Marple to Mellor. The current contract for the supported element of this service ends in April 2020 and TfGM has undertaken two tendering exercises to seek to secure an operator for the continued provision of the supported section of route.

The bids received from operators would unfortunately have made the service unsustainable due to the low numbers of passengers using it. Due to this, TfGM is proposing to introduce a new Local Link service in the affected area to ensure that access to the wider public transport network is maintained.

I do appreciate that this change may be an inconvenience to some passengers, however, it is vital that TfGM continues to strike the right balance between maintaining transport links and ensuring services are sustainable and ultimately cost effective.

However, TfGM has also been made aware of a decision by Stagecoach to withdraw the commercial element of service 375 between Stockport and Marple. This part of the route has several unique sections where no alternative options are available, and TfGM is therefore reviewing the feasibility of supporting a replacement service. In turn, TfGM will use the opportunity to look again at the extension between Marple and Mellor. As I am sure you can appreciate, any recommendation will be based upon affordability, and will have to progress through the appropriate governance procedure prior to a decision being made.

Thank you for contacting me regarding this matter and I trust that the above information proves useful. If there is anything further I can help you with then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



**Alison Chew**

Interim Head of Bus Services