

From: Graeme Smith [mailto:graeme-w-smith@tails-prower-2040.net]
Sent: 12 February 2007 23:44
To: Anne Jolly
Subject: Comments - Joint Venture - Citylink / Megabus

Graeme Smith
Dundee
Scotland

Sir,

I write reference your enquiry of the Megabus.com/Scottish Citylink merger and your final report undertakings, as a passenger of these services since 2003 I feel that your actions jeopardize an affordable method of travel to people such as myself who have no transport or alternate service to their destination.

Over the years I have seen a vast improvement in the number of journeys made available and at times which allow for a day out that is also greatly appreciated by our senior citizens who can regularly be seen using these services.

Having read your report you appear to have taken only a very small number of the issues a coach operator faces in the day to day running of their business and find you repeat many points through the document which are unnecessary.

The most important point I must emphasise is the vast improvement in vehicles we have seen since the introduction of joint venture and the forthcoming new vehicles that the companies have promised to deliver for their Saltire routes which may be jeopardized by the commissions final findings, I should bring your attention that these vehicles have been ordered with special needs customers in mind and fitted with toilets and disabled access, you will find very few other operating companies able to afford such vehicles and Joint Venture should be praised for their decision to bring them into use to meet the needs of their passengers.

Secondly the prices you criticize are unjust as all businesses face expenditure increases, given the recent prices of diesel fuel and maintenance costs of their vehicles to ensure punctual reliability are an improvement over what was in place previously, it is my experience that passengers now have the reassurance to know their bus will appear even if it may be held up by unavoidable delays.

The passenger numbers have also increased considerably since the new website fares system was introduced and many have complemented the companies on the simplicity of their booking system and overall friendliness of the drivers and staff who provide the on site support, all of these issues will be affected by the decision and should be seriously considered, no other operating company would go to such lengths and as a regular passenger it is pleasing to see these professional staff when I make my journeys.

In conclusion I think you will find that no other operating group would be able to provide such a frequent network of bus journeys to the major towns and cities of Scotland, to use a phrase from the industry in which I work - if something works why change it and cause great inconvenience to the public who use it on a daily basis?

Yours faithfully

Graeme Smith