

By email to: mary.boyle@dublincity.ie

Dún Scéine, Lána Fhearchair
Baile Átha Cliath 2, D02 WT20

Dún Scéine, Harcourt Lane
Dublin 2, D02 WT20

t 01 879 8300

info@nationaltransport.ie
www.nationaltransport.ie

Councillor Noeleen Reilly
Dublin City Council Head Office
Civic Offices
Wood Quay
Dublin 8

24th January 2023

Dear Councillor

I refer to your letter dated 6 January 2023 last forwarding a motion from Dublin City Council's Traffic and Transport SPC in relation services provided by Dublin Bus and Go Ahead Ireland.

The National Transport Authority is very aware of the service issues being experienced by customers on Dublin Bus and Go Ahead Ireland services over the last number of months of 2022. The Authority has been working closely with the operators to address such issues. There are a number of factors that have combined to cause such service issues;

- Driver shortages following COVID re-openings have been experienced by public transport operators worldwide, and in Ireland, Dublin has been particularly affected. The driver shortages have had an adverse impact on both Go-Ahead Ireland and Dublin Bus service reliability as a larger proportion of services were not operated;
- In addition to driver shortages, traffic congestion in the latter part of 2022 has affected bus services to a greater extent than anticipated and this led to service cancellations. This affected many routes including the newly launched Spine G and Route 60 services which were particularly affected from October onwards.

In order to address the service issues being experienced and to help mitigate its impact, the NTA and our contracted operators have undertaken the following;

- Extensive recruitment campaigns advertising the availability of driver opportunities across the TFI bus network;
- Recruitment of significant numbers of new drivers by operators in recent months but this has been offset to some extent by bus drivers who are continuing to leave the industry;
- Liaison with the Road Safety Authority seeking to expedite bus driver tests and CPC card issue to enable new drivers who have passed their test to operate buses;
- Revision of timetables ensuring that the operation of lower frequency services and first and last services of the day are prioritized;

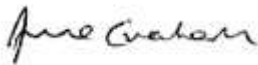
- Changes to schedules are planned by operators from January 2023 onwards to reflect changes in bus journey times.

At present, Go-Ahead Ireland is nearing the number of in-service drivers required to operate bus services to its full timetable, and less than 2% of services are not being operated for reasons that are within the operator's control (such as driver availability). GAI intend to return to provision of a full timetable from mid-February.

Dublin Bus continues to have a shortage of in-service drivers. Notwithstanding this shortage, and due in part to driver overtime, there has been a significant improvement in the percentage of scheduled services operated by Dublin Bus in recent weeks.

The NTA has postponed the implementation of planned bus network expansions planned as part of the Bus Connects Network Redesign programme, until driver availability is at a level that services can be reliably operated.

Yours sincerely,



Anne Graham
Chief Executive