

Date: 09 August 2022



Doug Claringbold  
Managing Director  
First Bus, West of England

North Somerset Council  
Town Hall  
Weston-super-Mare  
BS23 1UJ

**Sent via email**

ciaran.cronnelly@n-somerset.gov.uk

Dear Doug,

**Communities will suffer if bus routes are cut**

First Bus's plans to withdraw the X5, X2 and 126 will be devastating for communities throughout North Somerset who will be left **stranded with no access to public transport**. Both the X5 and 126 are vital routes that run through the ward I represent and it's deeply concerning to hear that from October these routes will be withdrawn. The consequence of First Bus's decision will leave residents in Locking Castle and Weston Village with no public transport, which is unacceptable.

Many residents rely on these routes to get to work, school, college or medical appointments and if these are withdrawn it could cause job losses, cost families more to get children to school/college or mean people can't access their GP. Residents are being hit by the cost of living and now to hear the news that their only bus routes are being withdrawn is a kick in the teeth.

I cannot emphasise enough the importance of these routes to communities around North Somerset.

I understand these are challenging times for bus companies with the Government's grant ending soon and difficulties recruiting drivers. However, bus patronage is improving, albeit slowly, and withdrawing these services at this time is premature. Alongside this there has been no engagement from First Bus with communities who'll be affected by these change and had there been we could have worked collaboratively to try and find solutions.

This news has sent panic through communities and First Bus needs to act urgently. I'm ready and willing to work with First Bus to find solutions and I'd urge you to:

- **Reconsider the plans to withdraw the X5, 126 and X2** and publicly commit to continuing these services for the foreseeable future
- **Engage with residents via a public forum** to find solutions together. If you give me the date and time you or your colleagues are available for a public forum I'll do the rest and source the venues etc

I look forward to your response.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ciaran".

Cllr. Ciaran Cronnelly  
North Somerset Councillor for Winterstoke Ward