

North Somerset Council

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE ORGANISATION POLICY AND SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE OF MEETING: 5TH NOVEMBER 2019

SUBJECT OF REPORT: MAVISBUS

TOWN OR PARISH: N/A

OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING: HOWARD POTHECARY (COMMUNITY SAFETY MANAGER) & HARRY MILLS (COMMUNITY SAFETY OFFICER)

KEY DECISION: NO

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the panel notes:

The success of the Council's Street Safe bus 'MAVIS' and provides feedback on our plans for its future development in Weston's Evening & Night Time Economy.

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides an opportunity for the Panel to review the work led by North Somerset Council's Safer and Stronger Communities Team in partnership with other agencies to provide a safe space in Weston's Evening & Night Time Economy and the impact of this work to date.
- 1.2 The report provides an opportunity for the Panel to feed into the future priorities and planned actions for the development and future funding of the council's Street Safe bus MAVIS.

2. POLICY

- 2.1 The North Somerset People and Communities Strategy 2017-2020 under the Priority Theme 4 – *Enabling communities to thrive includes the priorities:*
 - building strong resilient communities
 - tackling crime types and locations where there are particular concerns (and opportunities)
 - supporting vulnerable victims

2.2 The North Somerset Council Corporate Plan 2015-2019 identifies the following three Priorities which include actions to improve the ENTE in Weston-super-Mare and to reduce the harm of alcohol misuse:

- Prosperity and opportunity
- Health and wellbeing
- Quality places

2.3 The Joint Police and Crime Plan between Avon & Somerset's Police and Crime Commissioner and North Somerset's Community Safety Partnership identifies the following four objectives which the MAVISbus feeds into:

- Building strong resilient communities
- Tackling crime and improving outcomes in priority neighbourhoods
- Supporting vulnerable victims
- Working together effectively

3. DETAILS

3.1 MAVIS (Multi-Agency Vehicle in Service) is a community safety bus that is operated by North Somerset Council's Community Safety Team and is a partnership scheme setup to make Weston's Evening & Night-Time Economy (ENTE) safer and reduce demand on medical and enforcement agencies.

3.2 The MAVISbus has been in operation since 2015, providing a Safe Space and Multi-Agency Help Point in Weston's ENTE by offering a highly visible, safe, warm and non-judgmental place for anyone to get care and advice and to prevent more serious incidents happening in Weston's ENTE. The four key objectives of the MAVISbus are:

- To create a safe space in the ENTE for those that find themselves vulnerable on a night out
- To act as a collaborative multi-Agency hub (for police, ambulance, street wardens, street pastors, licensing and other local agencies) in the ENTE
- To provide triage and recovery by having on-board private medical area for minor first aid reducing demand on the accident and emergency department at Weston's General Hospital.
- To offer general help and assistance to visitors to the town after dark

3.3 The beneficiaries of Safe Spaces (other than the clients themselves) are wide ranging. Safe spaces help ambulances reduce call outs, speed up handovers, reduce response times and address aggression towards staff. Hospitals benefit from fewer admissions, helping meet A&E wait time targets and a less chaotic emergency room environment. Anecdotally, non-night-time economy patients may receive better care due to an improved emergency department setting. Police benefit because they do not have to wait with intoxicated or injured socialisers until an ambulance arrives (or escort them to hospital). This wait can remove officers for up to two hours from the streets. This reduces pressure on officer numbers and allows them to focus on core policing responsibilities. These agencies are thus able to

better prioritise their increasingly limited resources on 'serious' hospital admissions (in the case of the NHS) or in preventing crime and responding to incidents across the whole community (in the case of the police). Night-time economy businesses also benefit through a better visitor environment for customers and enhancing their duty of care for socialisers who may find themselves lost or vulnerable.

- 3.4 National research commissioned by the Portman Group and Home Office identified that Safe spaces such as Weston's MAVISbus provided a return of up to £9.31 to the public purse for each £1 invested. This only includes reduced Ambulance Call Outs and A&E admissions not reduced A&E admissions or reduced demand on policing.

Where We Are Today

- 3.5 Over the past year we have worked hard with our partners to fully develop the MAVISbus as a safe space in Weston's ENTE. Thanks to our partnership with Avon & Somerset Constabulary, MAVISbus is now crewed by two Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) every Saturday night alongside two first aiders - which has been a huge success.
- 3.6 A quote from North Somerset's Neighbourhood Police Inspector Jess Aston said: *"North Somerset PCSO's are out and about on Saturday evenings to identify anyone who might benefit from some friendly advice, a cup of coffee or basic first aid – whatever they need to keep them safe. The PCSOs have received a very warm welcome from the public and licensees and they are really enjoying themselves"*.
- 3.7 Since April 2019, the MAVISbus has helped over 170 people ranging from directions to the local taxi rank to life saving medical care.
- 3.8 We have also strengthened our partnership with the Street Pastors who are incredibly popular amongst Weston's ENTE visitors and venues. The Street Pastors can use the MAVISbus as a base to serve hot drinks and biscuits to those who live or sleep on the streets and offer care, support and advice to anyone who needs it when required. Street Pastors are also able to bring anyone who is unwell, seriously drunk, or have lost their phones, handbags, friends etc to the MAVISbus for treatment by the medics or PCSO's.
- 3.9 We have also been successful with two bids in 2019 for financial support from the Avon & Somerset Police & Crime Commissioner's Community Action Fund grant and Weston's Business Improvement District (BID). These bids ensure sustainability of MAVISbus and several desired improvements.

Challenges

Funding

- 3.10 One of the biggest challenges we face is sustainability of MAVISbus on a limited budget. Currently financial backing for MAVISbus is provided by the North Somerset Council Community Safety Team and their limited Police Crime Commissioner Community Safety budget and successful bids for ad hoc grant funding.
- 3.11 MAVISbus costs approximately £500 per shift which includes medics, Police Community Support Officers, driver and cleaning.

- 3.12 In comparison, the average Safe Space budget for similar schemes nationwide is approximately £1,000 - £1,500 per shift e.g. Norwich £1,106 per shift; Swansea £1,345; Hereford £1,186 per shift.

Our vision going forward

Funding

- 3.13 One of our key priorities for MAVISbus going forward is to make the bus as cost neutral as possible to ensure its sustainability through long-term financial support from key stakeholders.
- 3.14 We have met with the local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to discuss our MAVISbus in Weston's ENTE and the future sustainability of the scheme where it was agreed that this was something the partnership wanted to support. We are now currently waiting to hear back from the CCG to find out what they can contribute towards the MAVISbus, particularly in light of the recent overnight closure of Weston's A&E.
- 3.15 There is also a desire to look at potential financial income from other beneficiaries such as health, ambulance, hospital, police services and local businesses operating in Weston's ENTE.
- 3.16 We have also been working to set-up a sponsorship scheme for the MAVISbus which will allow local businesses the opportunity to provide financial (or other) support to MAVISbus.
- 3.17 When not in use for the ENTE or another Community Safety activity, the MAVISbus can be hired for community events across North Somerset, helping to bring in a much-needed income.

Staffing

- 3.18 Due to the success of the Police Community Support Officers, we intend to continue our partnership with Avon & Somerset Constabulary to provide PCSO cover on the MAVISbus every Saturday night.
- 3.19 We are also hoping to launch a new 'MAVISbus Crew' volunteering scheme in the next few months which will allow members of the public to volunteer on the bus. The volunteers will work alongside and support our partner agencies on the MAVISbus such as the police and medics.

Improving the awareness of the MAVISbus

- 3.20 We have identified that there is a need to improve the awareness of the MAVISbus and the services it provides amongst Weston ENTE's visitors and venues. To address this, we plan to launch an awareness raising campaign to improve awareness of the MAVISbus.

- 3.21 We are also looking at making the bus more approachable for service users during in Weston's ENTE.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Consultation has taken place with key stakeholders through Weston's ENTE Steering Group
- 4.2 Members have been consulted through the Community Safety Working Group.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. The activities referred to within the report are accommodated within existing approved budgets and resources.

6. LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

7. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The MAVISbus provides a mobile base for health and ambulance services and allow them to treat people from the bus, reducing the number of hospital admissions from the ENTE, therefore reducing the number of ambulance trips.
- 7.2 The MAVISbus also uses an on-board battery to power all electrics on the bus while stationary, removing the need for keeping the engine running or use of a petrol generator.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 There is a risk that MAVISbus cannot be sustained going. This risk is being mitigated by the Community Safety Team through identifying short-term and long-term funding to ensure the sustainability of the MAVISbus.

9. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Being safe and feeling safe affect some communities disproportionately (including those with protected characteristics). For example, some members of the community are more at risk of being the victim of crime – particularly some types of crime

10. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 This report sets out work being done to sustain and develop the MAVISbus, which contributes to corporate priorities.

11. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 11.1 A range of options have been considered in terms of the most effective initiatives and funding sources to sustain and develop the MAVISbus as a Safe Space in Weston's ENTE. This includes through engagement with partners and stakeholders. Ensuring that Weston's ENTE has a Safe Space is a critical element of achieving the overall objectives for providing a safe and diverse ENTE in Weston.

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APPENDICES

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

A Study of 'Safe Spaces' in the UK Night-time Economy

<http://www.portmangroup.co.uk/docs/default-source/alcohol-and-local-areas/safe-spaces-summary-report.pdf?sfvrsn=2>

Evening & Night Time Economy Community Safety Report to CCO – 19th June 2018

<http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/docs/doc28877.pdf>

Local Joint Crime Plan for North Somerset

<https://www.avonandsomersetplan.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/avon-and-somerset-police-local-crime-plan-north-somerset.pdf>

MAVISbus Website

www.saferstrongerns.co.uk/mavisbus