

PRESS RELEASE

York Bus Forum calls on Councils tendering Bus Services to Strengthen their Financial checks on Bidders.



The sudden closure of Stephenson's of Easingwold raises issues about the extent of financial checks on bus operators.

YBF Chair Graham Collett said "The sudden end of Stephenson's is the second collapse in recent months of a major local supplier of rural bus services. We need much stronger checks on the financial viability of bidders before contracts are awarded."

"We congratulate North Yorkshire County Council for finding operators so quickly to run the school contracts and most of the key links to York, but some regular bus passengers have been left stranded without notice."

"This issue demonstrates the fragility of our rural bus services, which provide an essential service, but are increasingly being run by smaller operators on low margins. Greater support is needed to ensure these services have a secure future."

The Forum meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, except August, at West Offices, York. It has a number of local parish and town councils affiliated and would welcome more. Details at: www.yorkbusforum.org or contact John Bibby on 01904-330334 Graham Collett on 07581-131141 or Email Chair@yorkbusforum.org

Note to Editors

York Bus Forum is a voluntary group set up initially to lobby against cuts in evening and Sunday services. It was successful (with others) in retaining most evening services and now works with community transport groups, local bus operators and councils to maintain and improve bus services in and around York.

The Forum established an Access Working Group, which is looking at current provision for people with disabilities on buses and whether and how their needs could be better met. The Group has worked closely with the MS Society and the York Blind & Partially Sighted Society to understand their members' transport needs.