



Department
for Transport

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Dear Philip & Rebecca

Thank you for your letter of 6 May 2018, enclosing correspondence from the APPG for Rural Services about the consultation on the use of section 19 and 22 permits.

I would like to express my thanks to the Group and its Chairs for calling the meeting about the consultation on how EU Regulation 1071/2009 aligns with section 19 and section 22 permits under the Transport Act 1985.

As I stated during the meeting, the Department strongly believes that community transport operators provide vital services that both encourage growth and reduce isolation by linking people and communities to existing transport networks, jobs, education, shops and services. Many community transport operators are, in effect, also providers of social care services, especially to people who are elderly, isolated and disabled, and they are generally motivated by compassion and philanthropy, not profit.

The consultation closed on 4 May and concerns from local authorities and community transport operators have been heard loud and clear. Over 500 consultation responses have been received and over 550 community transport operators, local authorities and passengers attended the consultation events across Great Britain. The work of analysing the responses received, to form a view about the scope of exemptions to the Regulation in question, is now under way.

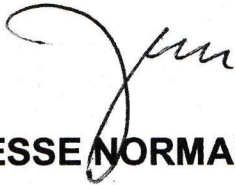
The Department will consider the views of any of the organisations who represent the views of the community transport operators and has received a consultation response from Mobility Matters.

While the Department explores these changes, it would, in general, be premature for any local authority to end or withhold community transport contracts.

The Department will issue a summary response to the consultation before summer recess. This will present our emerging findings, and it will set out what local authorities and community transport operators can expect to happen in the coming months.

As was made clear in testimony to the House of Commons Transport Committee, the Government has a broad and inclusive view of these issues, subject always to legal advice. It shares the Committee's wish to maintain the provision of high quality and safe community transport provision for vulnerable passengers.

As ever,



JESSE NORMAN