SOUTHEND DE-REG NEWS

January 1987

A review of deregulation events in the Southend, Rochford & Castle Point districts, from D-Day (October 26, 1986) to January 13, 1987, covering operators other than Eastern National & Southend Transport.

Commercial operations

The following commercial operations commenced on October 26 or 27, as appropriate. Those which are known to be a continuation of existing services or contracts are shown by a #:-

Castle Point Bus Co - (Linkfast Ltd trading as) - 4 routes on M-F peaks from Canvey Leigh Beck to Benfleet Station, numbered 1, 1A, 2, 2A. Operator leaflet shows 'with peak' timings only, but the routes operate in *both* directions in each peak. *Routes;*

1 Leigh Beck-Newlands-Somnes Ave-Station: 0659,0726 & 0851.
1A Leigh Beck-High St-Central Wall Rd-Somnes Ave-Stn: 0631 & 0813.
2 Leigh Beck-Eastern Esp-Long Rd-Canvey Rd-Stn: 0638, 0745 & 0833.
2A Leigh Beck-Eastern Esp-Long Rd-Link Rd-Stn: 0720 & 0806.
Return trips ex Station at:
1 - 1737, 1810 & 1911; 1A - 1707 & 1823; 2 - 1645, 1753 & 1856; 2A - 1724 & 1838.

Requires 3 buses, usually:
MDW 388,392G PDR1A/1, Alexander H43/31F ex Newport; red & cream, and
TOE438N VRTSL6LX, Metro Cammell H43/33F ex South Wales, orig WMPTE; red/white, although coaches have been noted as well.

TV Taxis (Messrs Neville & Fisk, Fleming Ave, Leigh) - three hail and ride routes each between Highlands (Thames Drive) and Southend, via:
(a) London Road, to terminate in London Road at Victoria Circus - TVT have their own bus stop outside the Co-Op Bank;
(b) London Road, Eastwood Rd, Blenhiem Chase, Prittlewell Chase, Victoria Ave; and
(c) Leigh Stn & Church, Chalkwell Stn, Westcliff Stn (ie, 24 route except via Woodfield Rd & Leigh Rd, not Grand Dr). (b) & (c) run to Central Bus Stn.
Initially each ran approx hourly, M-S; a spasmodic service runs on Sundays (but not on D-Day itself). Timings are vague - in response to the question 'What time do you go?', one reply was, 'when do you want to go? - give us a ring'! Their original service registration to the Traffic Commissioner states hours of operation to be 0700 to 0230, half hourly M-S and hourly Suns, but that timetable is just one aspect of their registration which they chose to ignore. They only had 3 vehicles initially, but more arrived in November, permitting an increased frequency.

Operated by 8 seat taxi plated VW's - white LT28 models VKW 32Y, VWG 611Y, A303 BET and A231 AAK, each with white roofboards reading 'TAXI BUS' and paper destination stickers in the windscreen. Silver grey 6 seat Caravelle B64 FKW operated as well in the first few weeks. Illegal carriage of 'standing' passengers has been seen.

R & R Bus Service (Mrs R D Raymond, Ness Rd, Shoebury) - 2 routes were registered; observations of actual operation would be appreciated;
(a) Shoebury Constable Way/Wakering Rd junc - Southend CBS via Wakering and Barling (4A route to Little Wakering, thence 4B), one jny Suns only, out at 1130, return 1630;
(b) Shoebury Constable Way/Wakering Rd - Shoebury ASDA via Wakering, one jny M/Th/F, out at 1130, return 1330. Uses red Morris Ital car (taxi) YPU406X.
Interestingly, a company, Southend Dial a Ride Services Ltd, was registered at Mrs Raymond's address last May.

Ltd'm after 25/1/87

National Express - 090#, now operates to Central Bus Station instead of Victoria B/S. Still 4 jnys daily, now operated by (in order of departures from Southend) (i) Crosville or Milton Keynes Citybus, (ii) Southdown, (iii) Midland Red South, (iv) Catteralls of Southam. Jnys ex Southend at 0850, 1150, 1450, 1750; ex London 0930, 1230, 1530, 1930. For full times see ECC Basildon area timetable.

Nelsons (Wickford)
01# Disco service Wickford Halls Cnr via Basildon, Billericay, Downham, Wickford (Broadway) and Rayleigh to Zero 6 and/or TOTS, W/Th/F/S;
Ex Wickford 1750 (W, to Zero 6), 2000 (Th/S, 2030 F, to TOTS via Zero 6),
Ex Wickford (Broadway) 2205 (W, to Zero 6), 0110 (shown as Th/F/S but presumably really F/S/Su, to TOTS); return trips 1915 (W, ex Zero 6), 2147 (F, TOTS), 2235 (W, ZERO 6), 0145 (Th/F/S but in reality F/S/Su ex TOTS).
05 TOTS Disco to Stanford Le Hope, 2117 ex Southend Th/S only; no return working.
(See Basildon book for full details of these services). Vehicles are presumably any buses/coaches from the NIBS fleet.

Channel Coachways (Southend Airport)
C1# - registered as Rochford Station to Southend Moat House Hotel (by Zero 6) running 'as required' daily. Thought to be the old defunct Rochford-Airport rail air service, replaced some time ago by C3. It is doubtful if this route has run.
C2# - Canewdon, Loftmans Cnr - Romford St Edwards Way via Rochford, Ashingdon, Hockley & Rayleigh; Weds only, shoppers service, out 0850, returns 1410.
C3# - Southend Airport - Southend Victoria Station (non-stop); daily, as required for rail/air passengers. Consists of the scheduled Maersk Air connections for their Billund service plus ad hoc trips. All use any coaches from their fleet.

Stephensons Coaches (Southend Airport)
X102# - Hullbridge, Pooles Lane - Rayleigh Sweyne School (as registered; in practice runs beyond Sweyne to R.C. school, Little Wheatleys); schooltimes only.
X103 - Hockley, Dome - Basildon, Trafford House via Rayleigh; shoppers service, Tues only, out 0905, return 1400 (see Basildon book for timings).
X104# - Basildon, Whitmore Way - Hockley, Eldon Way via Wickford, Rayleigh; M-F at 0710; no return working (again, details in Basildon area book).
X105# - Hockley, Dome - Romford St Edwards Way via Rayleigh; shoppers service, W. Operated by coaches from their fleet.
Also registered was X101#, Southend Airport - London, Bressingham Place, via Rochford, Hockley, Rayleigh, Wickford; M-F commuter service, out 0600, return 1730, but this was withdrawn in May 1986 although cancellation has never been published.

Fords (Althorne)
2# - Tillingham - Southend via Bradwell, Latchingdon, South Woodham; Thursdays *fortnightly*, out at 0915, return 1345.
5# - Burnham - Southend via Southminster, Althorne, South Woodham; also Thursdays *fortnightly* (alternate weeks for each route); out 0920, return 1415. Southend terminus is Seaway car park and operation is usually by a well laden *double decker*, normally ex Lothian Atlanteans or ex Grampian or ex Southend Fleetline.

Kirbys (Rayleigh)
(a) Rayleigh, Princes Rd (depot) - Romford Stadium via Eastwood, Southend, A13, Pitsea, Basildon; T/S only, out 1750, return 2230 (times in Basildon book).
(b)# Rayleigh, Downhall Rd/Hambro Hill via Station, Eastwood Rd, Kent Elms, Bell, Priory Park, Victoria Circus to Southend Stock Rd; an old contract operation, M-F, out 0720, return 1700 (M-F), 1200 F. Both use coaches from Kirbys fleet.

Venturer Travel (Messrs Spence & Watson, Rayleigh) - 'Leisure Lynx' sers.
19# - South Woodham, Asda - Rochford Town Centre or Southend Central Station via Rayleigh, Eastwood Road and Airport (Roller City); Tues only ex Rochford at 1745 and Southend at 2215; ex Woodham at 1846 (to Southend) and 2320 (to Rochford).
403# - Canvey Leigh Beck - Rochford North St via Benfleet Stn, Kents Hill Rd, Kenneth Rd, Rayleigh Weir, Eastwood Rd, Airport (Roller City); Weds only, ex Canvey 1905 & 0005, ex Rochford 1753 & 2253. For vehicle notes, see later.
Both routes introduced in w/c 20/10/86, to be withdrawn after w/c 19/1/87 but due to bad weather both last op - w/c 5/1/87.
ASDA free buses: starting on 21/10 were 5 routes to Asda, North Shoebury:
A - Rayleigh, London Rd via Rayleigh Stn, Eastwood Rd, Kent Elms, Blenhiem Chase, Fairfax Dr, Blue Boar, Sutton Rd, Southchurch Rd; T/Th, out 0945, ret. 1305.
B - Rayleigh, Rawreth Lane via Hullbridge, Coventry Cnr, Church Rd, Hockley Spa, Ashingdon Schools, Rochford, Cuckoo Corner, Eastern Ave, Bournemouth Park Rd, Central Ave, Hamstel Rd; T/W/Th/F, out 0915, ret. 1310.

C - Tarpots Corner, via Hadleigh Church, Hadleigh Rd, Leigh Church, Leigh Rd, London Rd, West Rd, Blue Boar, East St; W/F, out 0945, ret. 1305.
D - Shoebury, Ness Rd, via Church Rd, Maplin Way, Johnstone Rd, Thorpe Hall Ave, Thorpe Bay Stn, Delaware Rd; T/W/Th/F, out 1050, ret 1230.
E - North Shoebury Cnr, via Star Lane, Lt. Wakering Cnr, Wakering Church, Shoebury High St; T/W/Th/F, out 1035, ret. 1240.

Operation is by 2 vehicles - Harris Bus (Grays) DMS MLH318L (routes A, C, D) and Nelsons of Wickford (B, E) RTH550K, PSU3B/4R, Plaxton DP51F ex West Wales, both in white with signwriting for the services. Both operators are running duplicates as well. Nelson operation is with single decks due to the low bridges at Hockley on route B. The Harris operation was enlivened in the first week by (apparently) hitting a tree outside member Les Thorington's house! The tree was later removed.

ROCHFORD LEISURE BUS
Rochford District Council's free service which commenced in April 1983 continued after D-Day but ceased just prior to Christmas when the regular driver left. The service is to be operated by M&E Coaches of Southend under contract to the RDC from 13/1/87 (although in practice it did not start then due to the adverse weather). Details of the timetable are unclear at the time of writing.

BORDABUS service 9 ex Cheshunt to Southend on Thursdays apparently ceased in the week prior to deregulation but may recommence in April; shopping excursions did run to Southend on 30/10, 27/11 and 18/12.
LONDON COUNTRY N E 945 ex Harlow and 930 ex Hertford were seasonal operations only, last running in September or October respectively.

ECC tenders:

Except where noted below, details of these operations are in the County produced amendment leaflet for the old Southend area timetable, hence only brief details will be given here. Most routes are exact copies of pre deregulation services. Fares are generally the same as EN/STL but no returns are issued; Travelcards are not accepted nor are returns issued on commercial services (save a few exceptions). All services are required to use ticket machines - all minor operators are thought to use Setrights; EN use Weyfarer and STL Almex.

Castle Point Bus Co:
Service 5A, Benfleet Station to Canvey Eastern Esplanade, 3 jnys Sun mornings;
Service 404, Canvey Leigh Beck - Rochford Station, one return trip Weds & Suns.
Both use double deckers as listed under commercial network.

Venturer Travel:
Service 6, Kent Elms Cnr - Central Bus Station, 13 jnys Suns;
Service 21, Leigh Church - Southchurch White Horse, 7/8 jnys M-F.

Used initially white/blue WJG471J, AEC Reliance, Plaxton C53F (ex East Kent) pending completion of work on DVA355K, AEC Reliance/Plaxton B55F (ex Hutchison, Overtown). The latter entered service in all white on 16/11, but was itself replaced from 25/11 by ROK453M, Daimler CRG6, East Lancs H44/30F, ex West Midlands PTE, still in WM livery. In cases of vehicle non-availability hired Southend Transport vehicles have been used, including DMS's, various coaches and Cardiff Olympian 559; coaches from Stephensons and Kemps have also been noted. For the week of November 10 *only*, one mid-day journey on 21 was subcontracted to Southend Transport Ltd.

Service 21 was a three month contract and will cease on 23/1; EN will take over on a further 3 month contact from 26/1. The 6 is a six month contract.

Southend Radio Cars:
Service 10B, Rochford Station - Paglesham via Stambridge, 3 jnys M-F, 2 on Sats;
Service 12A, Rochford Station - Wallasea Island via *Golden Cross, Larks Hill* and Canewdon, 6 jnys M-S (note route - *not* via the old 12);

Service 65A, Rochford Station - South Fambridge, 2 jny T/F.
Mainly operated by an off white taxi plated 8 seat Toyota Hiace Dormobile C623HJN.

Upson (UMBH):
Service 10, Southend CBS - Paglesham, 3 jnys Suns;
Service 12, Southend CBS - Wallasea Island, 5 jnys Suns;
Service 24, Southend CBS - Thundersley Woodmans Arms, 3/4 jnys M-S evenings, 14/15 jnys Suns.
Using coaches, mainly NMJ 391P Bedford/Willowbrook, Bova YKY 777, OKY 88R AEC Reliance/Plaxton, DAF/Plaxton XPP422S and OMJ792M Ford R1114/Duple, in a white/red/blue livery.
Operation of the 24 was abysmal with many journeys missing, early running and coaches not following the correct route; as a result the contracts for 24 were revoked by the County on 5/1/87. STL took over 24 commercially on that day.

The 10/12 were subcontracted (apparently without the County's permission) to **Southend Radio Cars** with 8 seater C623HJN, on hire to UMBH, from November 23.

Clintona: (Brentwood)
Service 18, Southend CBS - Foulness, 2 jny M-Th, 4 jny F, 5 jny Sats, using mainly Bedford CF/Reeve Burgess DP17F HKN 333/6V (ex Maidstone B C) in blue/white.
Service 48, Southend CBS - Little Wakering: not in the ECC leaflet is this late award of a journey at 0840 on schooldays only, needed as ENOC retimed the old 0840 to 0910, leaving schoolchildren stranded.

Stephensons:
Services 26/26A, Highlands, Woodlands Park - Leigh Church, via Station (26) or Western Road (26A), 19 jnys M-S, using white liveried CCN 911D, PSU3/3R, Marshall B49F, ex Northern General. The Leopard was out of use in December and Venturer DVA355K was hired from the 8th to the 24th; coaches have also been noted.

Kirbys Coaches:
Service 69, Hockley Dome to Rochford East St via Plumberow Mount, Hockley Spa and Stroud Green; one jny Tuesdays. This contract commenced on May 6 last, part of the old 66 (EN run the Wakering end, still as 66).

ECC contracts run by the two major operators are;
Eastern National:
6 Southend - Kent Elms Cnr, 4/5 jnys M-S evenings; 25 Southend - Leigh Church, 6 jnys Su mornings; 61 Southend - Sutton Cemetery, 4 jnys M-F, 1 jny Su;
66 Wakering Church - Rochford, 1 jny T.
Southend Transport Ltd:
1 Rayleigh Stn - Thundersley 6th Form College, 1/3 jnys schooldays; 7C Ashingdon - Rochford, 4 jnys M-F am; 10A/10B Paglesham - Rochford, 3 jnys M-S + 1 schooldays; 25 Southend - Leigh Church, 6 M-S evenings; 26 Leigh Stn - Highlands, 3/4 jnys M-F evenings; 225 Brock Hill - Wickford Beauchamps, 2 jnys schooldays; 251 Wickford Stn - Rayleigh High St, 1 jny schooldays only to Rayleigh.

New Operators:

Issue 1463 of the Eastern Traffic Area *Notices & Proceedings* notes an application for a one vehicle PSV Operators Licence by '**Macstrax**' (S McGowan trading as) of Great Stambridge - another taxi operator with an interest in local services?

SIMIEN COACHES (Canvey Island) have registered a service to commence on 26/1: Benfleet Station - Canvey circular via Somnes Ave, Link Rd, Long Rd, Furtherwick Rd, High St, Leigh Beck, High St, Dovervelt Rd, Somnes Ave, to run M-F 1630 to 1830 only (4 trips); flat fare, no tickets to be issued. Operation by a Ford coach.

This report was produced as a free service for ENEG members by Richard Delahoy, 120 Yarnacott, Southend on Sea, SS3 8AW; phone 588590. Corrections or updates will be appreciated. Further editions will appear when there's something to report!