



Supporting Information for Public Transport Item

Passenger Transport legal obligations

Concessionary Fares

Buckinghamshire County Council is required by the Concessionary Bus Travel Act (2007) to provide a free bus pass scheme.

The scheme must provide, free of charge, a bus pass that allows the holder free off-peak travel on local buses anywhere in England. Off-peak hours are 9.30am until 11pm during the week and all day at weekends & bank holidays.

Act also requires that bus operators are reimbursed for all travel made based on published guidance & the principle that they are “no better or no worse off as result of free scheme”.

Local Bus Services:

The Transport Act 1985 defined the County Council’s Duty for Public Transport as follows:

- To secure the provision of such public passenger services as the Council considers it appropriate to secure to meet any public transport requirements within the County, which would not in their view be met apart from any action taken by them for that purpose
- To formulate from time to time general policies as to the description of services they propose to secure.

The Act also required that the authority had regard for the transport needs coming from Education and Social Service function and co-ordinate where possible. This requirement has now been reinforced in the Transport Act 2000. In addition, the Act also gives the authority the power to promote the availability of public transport services.

Transport Authority is required to consider needs of elderly & disabled users when delivering bus services.

Council may not undermine commercial bus services in terms of routes or fares.

Sets out methods by which councils may subsidise services:

- Competitive tender for fully subsidised routes
- Direct negotiation with a commercial operator on partly subsidised routes (known as “de-minimus” payments.)

Various Education Acts set out requirements for Home to School transport.

Bus timetable Information:

Transport Authorities have a duty to provide regional bus passenger information and in the south east this is delivered jointly through the SEALTA consortium via the Traveline phone and web based information system. This includes managing service registration data for all timetable changes.

Authorities are required to provide up to date roadside timetable information.

Public Transport policy documents

Local Transport Plan 2 (2006-11) containing Bus Strategy:

Set out principles of the Core network. (Bus Strategy p13)

- Strategic interurban routes: daytime 30 minute frequencies
- Local interurban routes: hourly daytime frequencies.

Evening and Sunday services to be provided on a less frequent basis where there is demand and available funding.

Aim of the core network is to provide communities with a population of over 2000 with at least one core interurban service.

- Principle Urban routes: 10-15 minute frequencies during daytimes with evening / Sundays services every 30–60 minutes.
- Secondary urban routes: minimum half hourly during daytimes.

Set out those services providing lower frequencies to smaller settlements (Accessibility services) including trials of 2 demand responsive routes in the Bledlow and Hambledon areas. (Bus Strategy p26 onwards)

Following adoption of LTP2 a methodology for evaluating supported services was developed using policy objective and value for money criteria. (Attached)

Travel Bucks Strategy (2012):

This reinforced the principles of the Core & Accessibility networks and support for community transport schemes.

- Committed to partnership working with strategic partners and commercial bus operators (Policy 1- 4)
- Options for integration with Client Transport & NHS transport (policy 1)
- Reviewed how accessible transport options would be provided with reduced budgets. (Policy 5,6)
- Community Transport support including pump-priming fund (policy 7,8)
- Considered potential for Information Hubs (policy 9) and led to the development of the Community Transport Information Hub.

Objectives for supporting bus services

Financial support for bus services is used to deliver against one (or more) objectives:

- (a) Providing improved public transport to support economic growth.
- (b) Reduce car use at peak travel times, contributing to a reduction in traffic congestion.
- (c) Providing improved public transport travel choices to reduce car use and improve environmental and air quality standards.
- (d) Delivering a core network of hourly (or better) bus routes connecting the larger rural communities with one or more local or regional centres
- (e) Providing a basic level of service to smaller communities to ensure a reasonable level of accessibility to shopping and healthcare services
- (f) Providing access to employment opportunities from the larger rural communities and within the main towns.
- (g) Meeting specific transport needs for people who are elderly or disabled.

Some supported bus services have evolved through different circumstances, including:

- (h) A need to avert the loss of bus services that would otherwise have been withdrawn
- (i) A joint commitment with a neighbouring authority to provide or maintain a service
- (j) Evening and Sunday services that serve an identified demand (e.g. Sunday shopping)
- (k) Services established with grant funding from government through Rural Bus Grants
- (l) Services providing transport for non-entitled children travelling to and from school
- (m) Services established at the request of a local community or committee
- (n) Services secured on behalf of another authority (e.g. a district council).

Evaluating supported bus services

The evaluation matrix provides a weighted value measure for each supported bus service, allocating a positive score to those services which contribute to each of the following Local Transport Plan objectives, and a graduated score according to the scale of benefit (operational or financial) delivered by the service:

Objective	Measures	Scoring
<p>Does the service contribute to improving travel choices as a means of reducing car dependency and helping tackle congestion? (up to 27 points)</p>	<p>Does it meet an identified transport need?</p> <p>Does it provide a primary urban service?</p> <p>Does it provide a secondary urban service?</p> <p>Does it form part of the core inter-urban network?</p> <p>Does it provide a core Evening bus service?</p> <p>Does it provide a core Sunday bus service?</p> <p>Does the service operate at peak employment times?</p> <p>Does the service provide for entitled pupils or students to travel to & from school/college?</p>	<p>10 if yes</p> <p>5 if yes</p> <p>5 if yes</p> <p>5 if yes</p> <p>3 if yes</p> <p>3 if yes</p> <p>3 if yes</p> <p>3 if yes</p>
<p>Does the service contribute to improving accessibility to essential services? (up to 25 points)</p>	<p>Does it provide the principal core service to one or more large rural communities (2,000+ pop.)?</p> <p>Does the service provide fully accessible buses?</p> <p>What % of service users are elderly or disabled?</p> <p>How many people only have access to this service?</p> <p>Does the service meet NI175 criteria for a regular accessible service?</p>	<p>5 if yes</p> <p>5 if yes</p> <p>1 to 5</p> <p>1 to 5</p> <p>5 if yes</p>
<p>How much is the service used by the local community? (up to 23 points)</p>	<p>How many passengers use the service each year?</p> <p>Are there alternative services available in the area?</p> <p>How many times/days a week does the service run?</p>	<p>1 to 10</p> <p>1 to 5</p> <p>1 to 8</p>
<p>Does the service provide value for money? (up to 30 points)</p>	<p>Does each journey on the service carry at least 5 passengers in total?</p> <p>Does each journey carry at least 5 passengers who would not otherwise be able to make the journey by public transport?</p> <p>What is the average subsidy paid for each passenger journey?</p> <p>Does the cost of subsidising the service exceed £5 for each passenger who would not otherwise be able to make the journey by public transport?</p>	<p>10 if yes</p> <p>5 if yes</p> <p>-5 to +5</p> <p>10 if no</p>

Net spend on subsidised bus services:

Year:	Net Spend:	Inflation:	Real terms reduction:	MTP cut:
2009 10	£3,379,000			
2010 11	£3,196,000	2.40%	8.3%	
2011 12	£2,999,000	4.77%	11.7%	
2012 13	£2,893,000	4.82%	8.7%	
2013 14	£2,788,000	3.09%	6.5%	
2014 15	£2,676,000	2.67%	6.5%	
2015 16	£2,516,000	3.00%	8.7%	£248k
2016 17	£2,505,000	3.00%	3.3%	£102k

Net Spend 2014/15:

Accessibility routes (rural, low frequency):	£1,486,000
Core routes (urban or interurban):	£1,117,000
Dial-a-Rides	£73,000
Total	£2,676,000

Of which:

Sunday services (core):	£87,000
Evening services (core):	£423,000

Spend on Statutory Concessionary Fares Scheme:

Year:	Spend:	% increase:	trips made:	
2009 10	£3,260,653		3,381,663	District scheme
2010 11	£3,554,112	9.0%	3,523,258	District scheme
2011 12	£3,357,000	-5.4%	3,782,016	BCC scheme
2012 13	£3,692,700	10.0%	3,650,315	BCC scheme
2013 14	£3,969,652	7.5%	3,810,062	BCC scheme
2014 15	£4,346,769	9.5%		BCC scheme

Responsibility moved to Upper Tier Authorities from April 2011.