

REPORT TO:	OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM:
DATE OF MEETING:	1 AUGUST 2007	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE	OPEN:
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	John Porter (01283) 595780	DOC:
SUBJECT:	Briefing note –Public transport matters	REF:
WARD (S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE:

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is provide Members with some background information regarding public transport in South Derbyshire
- 1.2 To seek Members views on whether this Committee would like to contribute to Derbyshire County Council's Overview & Scrutiny Review on public transport

2.0 Detail

- 2.1 At the last meeting of this Committee on the 27th June 2007 (Minute ref: OYS/4 and OYS/5) it was agreed that to invite an Officer from Derbyshire County council's Public Transportation Unit to attend to brief Members on public transportation issues, generally. However, this has not been possible because the County Council are very busy in trying to focus on their own review, which will be undertaken later this year.
- 2.2 Therefore, this report seeks to provide Members with some background information, in order to consider the best way to proceed. An overview of public transport issues in South Derbyshire is provided at Annexe A; and a scoping report produced by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council , which may be of assistance for Members in scoping this review, can be found at Annexe B.
- 2.4 If Members wish to contribute to Derbyshire County Council's review, in terms of issues and scope, it would be good practice, to consult with the Council's Environment & Development Services Committee on any issues, which they may wish to raise.

3.0 Financial Implications

- 3.1 None from this report

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with some background information regarding public transport issues in South Derbyshire
- 1.2 The report is divided into a number of sections, which cover the following.
 - The Area
 - Policy Context
 - Consultation with local residents
 - Public transport services

2.0 The Area

- 2.1 South Derbyshire is a largely rural district, with two main settlements and a host of villages and hamlets surrounded by countryside. It covers an area of approximately 34,000 hectares (340 sq km) and has a population of 87,700 (ONS Mid 2005 Estimate).
- 2.2 South Derbyshire has been the fastest growing district in the County for almost two decades and has one of the fastest growing populations nationally. In recent years significant new development has taken place in both Swadlincote and Hilton.
- 2.3 The area has *'good access to regional road links with the A50 and A38 running through the district. Public transport links to rural areas, however are limited. Many residents rely on cars for getting around and many of them travelling out of the district to work this creates issues connected with transport and its effects on the environment.'*¹

3.0 Policy Context

SDDC Community Strategy 2005 –2010

- 3.1 Priorities relating to public transport issues have been identified within a number of themes. The main themes, which cover public transport issues are the 'sustainable environment' and 'creating opportunities for all'
- 3.2 This is illustrated in Table 1 below:

¹ Community Strategy 2005 –2010

Table 1: Extract from Community Strategy 2005-10 - transport issues

Theme	Challenges	Priorities	What will change by 2010
Creating Opportunities for All	<i>'... the continual decline of essential services such as Post Offices and rural shops is creating access problems.'</i>	<i>Improving social inclusion by providing fair and equal access to all services for everybody</i>	<i>More help with public transport</i>
Sustainable Environment	<i>'Pursuing greater range of transport options. . .' Recognising the importance of the environment to economic and social well-being – in a recent survey . . . residents put road and pavement repairs, clean streets, low levels of traffic congestion [and] public transport. . . in their list of the top ten things needed improving.'</i>	<i>'improving our environment by working together.'</i>	<i>'improvements to cycle and walking routes . . .'</i>

SDDC Corporate Plan 2007/ 10

- 3.3 One of the challenges identified under the 'Rural South Derbyshire,' theme is making sure that the policies and infrastructure that support a rural way of life an identification that despite the impression of an idyllic lifestyle; people living in rural are in place – homes, local facilities, schools, jobs, transport, meeting places etc.. The Corporate Plan includes a specific action for public transport.
- 3.4 Table 2 below is an extract from the Action Plan, where the following actions/ targets and outcomes have been agreed.

Table 2: Extract from the Corporate Plan 2007-10 - Action Plan – Improving public transport

Action:	Target for 2007/08:	Outcome by 2010:
Work with partners to ensure rural areas have good quality, affordable public transport	Partnership arrangements established	Improved access to public transport in rural areas

SDDC - Economic Development Strategy 2007-2012

- 3.5 The Economic Development Strategy identifies a number of transport issues. These have been summarised within Table 3, and considered in terms of strengths and weaknesses

Table 3: Extract from the Council's Economic Development Strategy- Key economic development themes, relating to transport issues

Strengths	Weaknesses
Theme: Ensuring sustainability	
<p>District has outstanding communication links and accessibility to the national road network (A38, A42, A50, M1, M6 and M42); and rail network (NE/SW main line)</p> <p>Proximity to Birmingham International Airport and East Midlands Airport (a key European express freight hub)</p> <p>Disused or freight rail lines with the potential to be upgraded for freight or passenger use, such as The National Forest line.</p>	<p>Poor road links to and within Swadlincote itself; Congestion hotspots and parking issues in both urban and rural areas</p> <p>Constraints on business operation imposed by weight restrictions on HGVs in the District and neighbouring areas; Limited river crossings; Lack of secure HGV parking; Loading/delivery problems caused by poor parking</p> <p>No rail links between Swadlincote and other centres, including East Midlands Airport</p> <p>Poor bus and rail links to employment sites, especially north-south links Limited public transport services vital to access services and opportunities, especially in rural areas and to employment growth centres; Residents of Swadlincote have not greatly benefited from employment developments along the A50</p> <p>Limited usage of non-road based forms of freight movement, including both rail and waterway</p>
Theme: Achieving equality	
<p>High levels of population growth</p> <p>Low levels of deprivation: South Derbyshire is ranked 142 out of 354 local authority districts – better than most neighbouring districts; 32 of the District's 54 Super Output Areas (SOAs) are in the 50% least deprived; However, 8 are in the third most deprived.</p>	<p>High levels of commuting, revealing a dependence on employment in neighbouring areas (Census, 2001)</p> <p>Dependence on the private car due to limitations in public transport services; Barriers to non-car owners</p>

Derbyshire County Council - Transport Policy

- 3.6 Transport Policy in South Derbyshire is lead by Derbyshire County Council the Highway Authority for the area.
- 3.7 South Derbyshire falls within the areas of two Local Transport Plans (LTPs), the Derbyshire Local Transport Plan, and the Derby Joint Local Transport Plan.
- 3.8 The LTPs set out the broad strategy for the maintenance and improvement of transport in their respective areas over the period from 2006 to 2011. They were made available in draft form for consultation prior to adoption and were the subject of a report to the Council's Finance and Management Committee on 13 October 2005 (Minute FM/54 refers).
- 3.9 The Burton and Swadlincote Joint Transport Strategy is contained within the Derbyshire LTP. The aim of the Strategy is to identify the local transport issues that are of common concern to the neighbouring local authorities and agencies. It presents a vision for the future sustainable enhancement of the local transport network and corresponding scheme proposals. Among these is the enhancement of bus services in the Strategy area, which is being pursued under the auspices of the Burton and Swadlincote Bus Quality Partnership.
- 3.10 The LTPs also incorporate Accessibility Strategies, which address access to healthcare, employment opportunities, education, healthy food shopping and leisure/culture facilities by means other than a private car.
- 3.11 The County Council is considering the establishment of Local Accessibility Partnerships (LAPs) which would be responsible for preparing and implementing Local Accessibility Strategies. The LAPs may comprise representatives of local authorities, other public service providers, Local Strategic Partnerships, transport operators, the voluntary sector and businesses. It is anticipated that South Derbyshire may fall within the area of an LAP covering the South East of the County and also comprising the areas covered by Amber Valley, Erewash and that section of the Derby–Matlock railway falling within Derbyshire Dales.
- 3.12 A report on LAPs will be considered by the Economic & Development Committee in the near future.
- 3.13 The Partnerships may also carry forward work previously undertaken by the Rural Transport Partnerships (RTPs) who assessed rural transport need and provided locally tailored solutions. In March 2006, Funding for the Southern Derbyshire RTP, covering South Derbyshire and Erewash, ceased in March 2006.

4.0 Consultation with local residents

- 4.1 Several surveys highlight the views of residents on transportation issues.

Best Value User Satisfaction (General) Survey 2006

- 4.2 In September 2006, as part of the Best Value User Satisfaction Survey, residents were also asked for their views on a number of 'quality of life' indicators. For

instance, “things” that are important in making somewhere a ‘good’ place to live, and what “things” needed ‘improving in their local area.

4.3 From a list of 20 “things” residents were asked to identify their top 5 within each category. ‘Public transport’ appeared in the top 10 of both categories live.

4.4 Headline details for the district can be found in Table 4 below.

Table 4: The top 10 “things” that are most important in making somewhere a ‘good’ place to live, and ‘need improving’ in the local area.

Rank	‘Things’ that are <i>important</i> in making somewhere a ‘good’ place to live	Rank	‘Things’ that <i>need improving</i> in the local area
1	Level of crime	1	Activities for teenagers
2	Health provision	2	Level of crime
3	Clean streets	3	Road and pavement repairs
4	Affordable ‘decent’ housing	4	Level of traffic congestion
5	Education provision	5	Clean streets
6	Parks & Open spaces	6	Public transport
7	Public transport	7	Health services
8	Shopping facilities	8	Affordable ‘decent’ housing
9	Level of traffic congestion	9	Shopping facilities
10	Activities for teenagers	10	Facilities for young children

Citizens Panel

4.5 In September, each year, the County Council asks questions on highways and transportation issues via the Citizens Panel, in order to inform the Local Transport Plan.

4.6 An extract of headline data collected from the latest survey undertaken in September 2005 is provided in Tables 5 –9 below.

Table 5: Number of cars /vans owned by household

Number of cars /vans owned by household				
0	1	2	3	4+
4.2%	34.1%	45.4%	10.6%	5.7%

Table 6: Frequency of respondents using the bus service

Frequency of using bus service							
Daily	Between 2 and 6 times per week	Weekly	Monthly	Between 2 and 10 times per year	Annually	Less than yearly	Never
1.0%	6.3%	4.9%	7.9%	16.2%	14.8%	8%	41%

Table 7: Distance from the nearest bus stop

Distance from nearest bus stop				
Less than 1/2 mile	1/2 to 1 mile	1 - 2 miles	2 - 5 miles	more than 5 miles
80.4%	13.9%	3.2%	2.3%	0.3%

Table 8: Frequency of respondents using rail services

Frequency of using rail services						
Between 2 and 6 times per week	Weekly	Monthly	Between 2 and 10 times per year	Annually	Less than yearly	Never
60.0%	1.1%	4.2%	29.5%	24.8%	11.2%	29%

- 4.5 This headline data for the district can also be provided at a local/ Ward level, if this is of interest to Members

5.0 Public Transport Services

Derbyshire County Council

- 5.1 Derbyshire County Council is committed to supporting public transport. It promotes the use of buses and trains in a variety of ways

- Providing socially-necessary local bus services
- Providing home to school transport
- Part-funding the "Traveline" telephone enquiry service
- Publishing comprehensive timetable books and route maps
- Maintaining the online Journey Planner and Timetable Finder database
- Funding and administering concessionary fares for disabled and elderly people, children and students
- Supporting community transport
- Supporting the development of train services
- Promoting the "Derbyshire Wayfarer" day rover ticket
- Developing Local Transport Plans and policies

Bus Services

- 5.2 An overview of the local bus services operating in the district are summarised at Annexe 1
- 5.3 More detailed information can be obtained from Derbyshire County Council's *South Derbyshire Area Travel Guide*, which will be circulated at the meeting

Community Transport

- 5.3 Community Transport is a registered charity and managed by a voluntary management committee. It operates in many parts of the district to provide transport for people who are unable to use ordinary public transport and for voluntary organisations.
- 5.4 The services provided include:
- **Dial-a-Bus-** A 'door to town' transport service, for individuals who experience difficulties with conventional public transport. Operates in the Aston, Weston, Overseal, Coton areas.
 - **Dial-a-Ride** -A flexible door-to-door service catering for individual needs, such as transport to hospitals. This service is available for people with mobility problems or when there is no other transport available.
 - **Group Travel** - Available for Community Groups of all ages and abilities throughout South Derbyshire on a regular or occasional basis.

Community Car Schemes

- 5.5 This service is provided by the South Derbyshire Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) Volunteers use their own vehicles to provide one-off essential journeys and are paid a mileage allowance. This service is only available to people who are unable to use public transport or who do not have access to a service. South Derbyshire CVS state that the scheme mainly operates within the urban core. The cost of the scheme prohibits rural take-up, and in most cases it is cheaper to use a taxi.

Rail Services

- 5.5 A map showing the rail routes serving Derbyshire can be found at Annexe 2

Local bus services in the South Derbyshire area

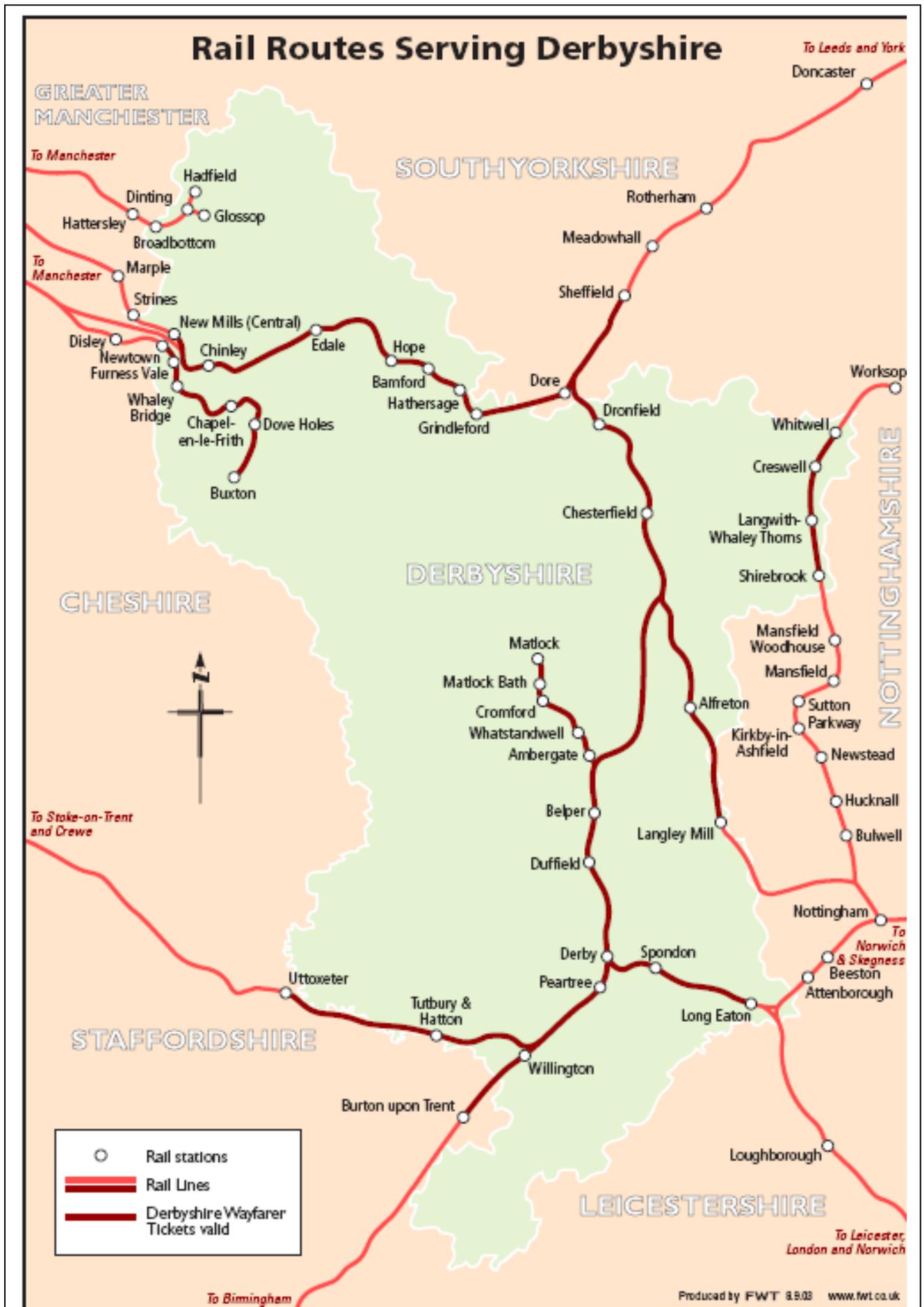
<i>Operator</i>	<i>Service</i>	<i>Route</i>	<i>Note (see below)</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Arriva Midlands	1	Uttoxeter- Foston (Dove Valley Park) Hatton Tutbury Burton (Rail)	1	Bus route hourly or better
	3/3A	Swadlincote –Newhall – Burton (Rail)– Beam Hill (Stretton)	2	Bus route hourly or better
	4	Church Gresley- Swadlincote –Church Gresley - Linton - Burton		Infrequent service
	8	Burton – Swadlincote- Overseal- Measham - Ashby		Bus route hourly or better
	9	Swadlincote- Goseley- Midway- Brizlincote- Burton		Bus route hourly or better
	20	Swadlincote-Morrisons Midway - Burton	3	Bus routes 4- 5 journeys or better
	22	Swadlincote – Coton Park- Coton in the Elms- Rosliston -Forestry Centre- Walton on Trent - Burton	3	Bus routes 4- 5 journeys or better
	68	Derby – Chellaston – Stanton by Bridge – Kings Newton - Melbourne		Bus route hourly or better
	69	(Linton) Castle Gresley Church Gresley– Swadlincote Woodville- Goseley Estate – Hartshorne -Ticknall – Melbourne- East Midlands Airport	3	Infrequent service
	218	Swadlincote- Ashby – Coalville - Leicester		Infrequent service
X2	Burton – Swadlincote- Woodville – Ashby - Leicester	4		
X38	Burton – Derby (Direct)		Bus route hourly or better	
Cresswells Coaches	154	Castle Donington – Melbourne – Ashby	5	Infrequent service
	156	Castle Donington – Melbourne – Coalville	5	Infrequent service
Glovers Coaches	423	Roston – Church Broughton -Derby	3	Infrequent service
	424	Clifton – Yeaveley- Church Broughton – Roston – Uttoxeter -	3	Infrequent service
	427	Foston – Church Broughton – Hollington - Ashbourne		Infrequent service

Kinchbus	AL	'Airline' Derby – Shardlow - EMA- - Loughborough		Bus route hourly or better
Macpherson Coaches	23	Swadlincote - Moira- Ashby	5	Bus route hourly or better
Midland Classic	21	Swadlincote – Church Gresley –Castle Gresley- Linton- Castle Gresley – Burton		Bus route hourly or better
Notts & Derby	70	Derby – Chellaston – Barrow on Trent	3	Infrequent service
	73	Derby – Aston on Trent - Weston on Trent	6	Bus route hourly or better
Trent Barton	V1	'Villager' Derby – Etwall- Hilton –Eggington- Hatton - Tutbury - Burton	7	Bus route hourly or better
	V2	Villager' Derby – Etwall- Hilton –Eggington- Hatton - Burton	7	Bus route hourly or better
	V3	Villager' Derby – Findern - Willington –Repton –Newton Solney - Burton	7	Bus route hourly or better
	VN	Villager Nightflyer' Derby – Findern - Etwall- Hilton – Tutbury - Burton	7	Infrequent service
	X38	Burton – Derby (direct)		Bus route hourly or better

1 Notes -

- 1 The Sunday service and some journeys are operated under contract to Staffordshire and Derbyshire County Councils
- 2 Some journeys are operated under contract to Staffordshire and Derbyshire County Councils
- 3 Service is operated under contract to Derbyshire County Council
- 4 Some journeys operated under contract to Derbyshire County Council
- 5 Service is operated under contract to Leicestershire County Council
- 6 Some journeys and Saturday service are operated under contract to Derbyshire County Councils
- 7 Sunday service are operated under contract to Derbyshire County Council

Source: Derbyshire County Council: *Bus Times; South Derbyshire Area Travel Guide 4th Edition* (April 2007)



STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS - BUS SERVICES REVIEW

The Terms of Reference

To examine, investigate and bring forward recommendations on how the bus services in Staffordshire Moorlands could be improved, and in this regard:-

- a. to bring forward proposals to encourage more bus use
- b. to work constructively with service providers to find ways of enhancing their services
- c. to investigate the concerns of existing and potential bus users and
- d. to investigate the role which community transport can play in providing the services

Improving Bus Services in the Staffordshire Moorlands

Buses play a major role in the public transport network but it is essential that the bus services are integrated with other transport modes such as trains, coaches, taxis, community transport, cycling, cars, walking, and that interchanges at train stations, coach and bus stations, and the town centres have good passenger facilities that enable seamless transfers.

Buses provide essential transport services for thousands of passengers everyday, to enable them to access work, education, shops, leisure, friends and family.

Buses are essential for households without access to a car and can also offer an alternative to many car journeys, thereby helping to reduce traffic congestion and pollution.

A good bus service in the Staffordshire Moorlands is dependent on having the right network of bus service, bus operators willing to provide those identified services, a reliable timetable, clean accessible buses, fair fares, customer focused supportive bus staff and well equipped accessible bus shelters with comprehensive accessible real time passenger information.

In Staffordshire Moorlands, the bus operators include

Whilst bus operators do face competition from other modes of transport, for thousands of the Staffordshire Moorlands bus passengers, there is no alternative but to use an inadequate bus service.

Passenger confidence in bus services has been damaged by passengers' experiences of unreliable bus services. The public image of bus services currently acts as a major barrier to getting new people out of their cars and on to buses.

Reliability was identified as the key issue to be addressed if bus services are to be improved ensuring that there are not bus driver shortages, that the bus fleet is kept on the road and that float buses are available to cover unanticipated delays, which should now be reported through modern communication systems.

Bus services need to be quicker, more reliable and better value for money than using a car, if they are to attract car drivers and help reduce traffic congestion and pollution.

Community transport, dial a ride, and supported bus services play a crucial role in reducing social exclusion and providing access to travel where gaps are left by commercial operators. However, the current funding still leaves gaps in provision, especially at night, denying many people access to work, leisure, cultural, retail and educational facilities as well as to public services. This gap can only be closed if the Government provides more funding to support these services and the goodwill of volunteers is retained. Without this support, more local communities will be left with inadequate bus services as the withdrawal of commercial services are currently rising.

Passengers require good value for money and reliable bus services, especially if car drivers are to be attracted to using buses, but currently passengers have little influence over the network, timetables, bus stop, waiting facilities or fares.

There is need for Councils and bus operators to consult locally and publish a network of clearly identified name/numbered bus stops, the current information and shelter provision at each bus stop.

Recommendation

The Council needs to continue to bring together disability groups, bus operators, transport planners and community transport groups on a regular basis to discuss access issues and problems, find solutions and monitor progress.

Staffordshire County Council is currently working with the bus operators to improve bus timetable information at bus stops and, more significantly for Leek, they are undertaking, in partnership with Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, a significant refurbishment of Leek Bus Station. As well as providing a more suitable environment for bus passengers, the work will include better quality information displays, showing passengers which services they can use and the departure stand. These will be indicated by eight new high contrast stand numbers attached to the bus station canopy. Staffordshire Moorlands District Council is providing the new information display cabinet on the bus station and new 'Bus Station' signage around the town.

Reliability

The greatest concern for bus passengers is reliability. Whilst congestion can and does affect reliability, passengers continue to experience reliability problems outside of congested periods. This can be due to driver shortages or bus shortages. It is imperative that the bus operators recruit and retain drivers and have a sufficient fleet of buses to maintain the scheduled services. There is a need for operators to have reserve buses to cope with unanticipated problems and passengers need to be kept informed of difficulties.

Passengers expect better communication, now that drivers can report problems via mobile phones and operators have transponder tracking facilities

Ticketing and Fares

On board ticket purchasing arrangements have a major impact on journey times. Dwell times at bus stops can be reduced if more passengers bought multi-journey tickets in advance. Those passengers who purchase multi-journey tickets in advance receive discounts making their travel much cheaper per journey than those purchasing tickets on the day. There needs to be more publicity of where the tickets can be purchased and the Council and other employers could promote ticket information using pay slips, Staffordshire Moorlands News' and employee newsletters.

Fares need to be given more publicity and provision of clearly visible tariff boards would assist passengers.

Routes

They include major sites such as railway stations, hospitals and major entertainment centres. Major route reviews should be fully consulted upon with the local Council and the public.

The ideal bus

The ideal bus would be modern clean with improved boarding and departure layout, accessible for wheelchair users, have space for luggage, buggies, clear windows at face level, air conditioning, large numbers on the front side and back, would be well maintained, have modern communications and would provide up to date passenger information including next stop information.

Customer Charter

Bus operators need to introduce 'Customer Charters' to include standards of service, accessible information policy, including pictorial illustrations and multi-

lingual information, commitment to dealing with complaints, a clear complaints procedure, regulated commitment to passengers, plan of proposed improvements, a help-line during service hours, standards for passenger behaviour, compensation policy and service commitments for people with access requirements.

Passenger behaviour standards need to be set and operators need to seek the removal of passengers who are a threat. The Police and bus operators need to give their full support to drivers who currently face unacceptable physical and verbal abuse from some passengers.

Accessibility

Buses need to be easily accessible for all passengers. Raised pavements and buses that can lower their floors enable wheelchair access but ramps, clamps and harnesses are required on buses, where these facilities are unavailable. The scheduling of low floor buses on routes with raised pavements needs to be consistent.

In line with health and safety requirements drivers need to give adequate consideration to less mobile passengers to ensure that they can board, be seated and depart safely whilst the bus is stationary. Young people need to be encouraged to give up seats designated for the elderly. Drivers need passenger information, customer care, equalities training and regular refresher driving training.

In line with health and safety requirements, there is a need for buses to avoid, whenever possible, waiting in the middle of the road.

Bus and travel information needs to be easily accessible to all groups including visible tariff boards on buses, providing ticket fares information and driver identification details.

Supported Services and Community Transport

The Council should continue to ensure there is an effective forum for disability groups, bus operators, transport planners, and community transport groups to discuss access issues and problems on a regular basis, find solutions and monitor progress.

