

---

# Passenger Transport Fares and Ticketing Best Practice Report

## November 2007

---



## Executive Summary



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Passenger Transport Fares and Ticketing Best Practice

This report was commissioned as part of the project to develop the Passenger Transport Fares and Ticketing Strategy for Worcestershire. It sets out best practice in terms of the uses of pricing and ticketing strategies to increase passenger transport demand and encourage modal switching from car, whilst taking account of the legal, financial and policy constraints imposed on local authorities and the commercial imperatives of passenger transport operators. This Best Practice Report will form a vital input to the definition of the Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy.

Fares and ticketing systems are vital to and a core component of, passenger transport planning within an Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy (IPTS). In terms of passenger transport, the availability, format and price of tickets are among the most important influences on the propensity of the travelling public to choose to use passenger transport as opposed to the car. In addition to travel time (which has a perceived cost), the total perceived cost of travel by passenger transport is strongly influenced by the “out-of-pocket” cost of a ticket together with its availability, ease of purchase and the extent of its validity across the passenger transport network. Where the total perceived cost of travel by passenger transport greatly exceeds those of competing transport modes (in particular the car), few people with a choice of modes will choose to use rail, bus and other passenger transport services.

The delivery of enhanced fares and ticketing systems are, therefore, a core element of the Worcestershire IPTS. Worcestershire County Council must work in partnership with passenger transport operators, regional and national government to shape and deliver a fares and ticketing system, which puts passengers first, whilst supporting the financial and economic imperative of delivering a commercially sustainable passenger transport network.

Increasing traffic volumes and its associated adverse impacts on congestion, air quality and carbon emissions is a key problem in Worcestershire and elsewhere in the UK. The situation is likely to continue to deteriorate, as long as the private car remains the dominant mode of travel choice, even for short journeys. In addition, the impact of the proposed growth in travel demand arising from the Regional Spatial Strategy puts further emphasis on the need to provide a sustainable and realistic alternative to the car for certain types of journeys.

Addressing the issue of travel demand solely through large-scale road construction is neither a viable nor a sustainable option as the impact on our local communities would be huge in terms of the environment, land take, property demolition and isolation. We must, therefore, find other solutions that can meet peoples’ desire to travel, by creating an attractive alternative that will encourage greater use of passenger transport, cycling and walking and reduce the reliance on the car.

There is clear evidence that fares and ticketing has a major role in supporting balanced and integrated transport strategies, which seek to improve the quality of passenger transport. This report focuses on the methods of delivering a fares and ticketing strategy which supports the provision of an integrated, sustainable and high quality passenger transport network for Worcestershire.

There are a number of legal, policies and financial constraints which make the delivery of truly integrated and multi-modal fares and ticketing difficult to achieve. These constraints include:

- The Competition Act 1998, which prevents “anti-competitive” agreements and concerted practices, and prohibits the abuse of a dominant position. The Department for Transport can and does scrutinise bus fares that appear to be ‘excessive’ under the auspices of this Act
- Transport Act 1985, which (amongst other things) prevents Local Authorities from introducing fares and ticketing schemes on their financially supported (tendered) services which undercut commercial fares and undermine competition
- Transport Act 2000, which although allowing for the provision of Quality Partnerships between local authorities and bus operators do not normally allow the local authority to set fares or service frequencies
- Railways Act 1993, which although retaining multi-operator ticketing across the rail network does not provide sufficient incentive to work with Local Authorities and bus operators to develop truly integrated multi-modal ticketing
- The significant set-up costs associated with implementing an integrated multi-modal ticketing system

Where these constraints have been overcome (usually due to exemption from some or all of the above Acts and with additional sources of funding), such as in London, integrated fares and ticketing systems have delivered major benefits in terms of encouraging greater use of all passenger transport modes (bus, rail, metro and light rail). Despite these constraints, there are, therefore, strong arguments for the delivery of an integrated fares and ticketing strategy for Worcestershire.

The Concessionary Bus Travel Act 2007 and the associated expansion of Concessionary Travel in England and the Local Transport Bill (if enacted), currently being consulted upon, may offer opportunities to National, Regional and Local Authorities in conjunction with passenger transport operators to deliver integrated fares and ticketing systems.

It is recommended that as part of the IPTS and within its legal, policy and financial constraints, Worcestershire County Council should work with the key partners to deliver an integrated fares and ticketing system for its residents and visitors. Worcestershire County Council cannot deliver this by itself.

The figure overleaf illustrates, in outline form, the suggested process by which a multi-modal, multi-operator and integrated fares and ticketing system may be delivered in Worcestershire. It forms a blueprint for a potentially lengthy process recognising constraints and opportunities.

**THE LOCAL TRANSPORT ACT**  
Prepare for the implementation of the Local Transport Act (Including the use of Statutory Quality Contracts, where required, in Worcestershire.)

**MULTIMODAL & MULTI-OPERATOR TICKETING DELIVERED NATIONALLY**

**CENTRAL REVENUE ALLOCATION SYSTEM**  
Enter into close partnership working with neighbouring transport authorities and operators to develop a Central Revenue Allocation System (or HOPS) for bus ticket sales in Worcestershire (The Rail Industry already has this function.)

**MERGING OF BUS AND RAIL PRICING SYSTEMS**  
Central Government (via the Department for Transport) facilitates the merging of national rail and bus pricing and ticketing systems.

**A CHANGE IN LEGISLATION TO DELIVER MULTIOPERATOR BUS FARES**  
In partnership with other Transport Authorities, Worcestershire County Council lobbies Central Government for the relaxation or amendment of relevant legislation (including the Competitions Act 1998) to permit multioperator ticketing agreements on local bus services.

**WORCESTERSHIRE BUS AND COMMUNITY TRANSPORT NETWORK TICKETING INTEGRATES WITH NATIONAL BUS NETWORK TICKETING**  
Worcestershire enters into negotiations with other local transport authorities and Central Government, to release Worcestershire products for sale nationally.

**BUS FARES & TICKETING STANDARDISATION**  
*ALL* bus and Community Transport operators and Worcestershire County Council commit to using a standardised range of ticket types and ticket stock.

**SMARTCARDS INTRODUCED FOR GENERAL USE ON BUS & COMMUNITY TRANSPORT NETWORKS**  
Standardised ticketing range applied to smartcard technology. Smartcards rolled out across Worcestershire, with pre-purchase facilities made available at all significant locations and on the Internet.

**PRICING THE NETWORK**  
Close partnership working between County Council, bus and Community Transport Operators and other local authorities to create a series of "through tickets" for all possible passenger "flows" in Worcestershire.

**MULTIOPERATOR TICKETING FOR BUSES**  
*ALL* bus and Community Transport Operators and Worcestershire County Council begin retailing paper-based bus/Community Transport Multi Operator tickets. Individual operators' tickets phased out over pre-agreed time period.



---

**Passenger Transport  
Marketing and Information  
Best Practice Report**  
November 2007

---



Executive Summary



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Passenger Transport Marketing & Information Best Practice

This report was commissioned as part of the project to develop the Passenger Transport Marketing and Information Strategy elements of the Worcestershire Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy. It sets out passenger transport marketing and information best practice and draws on examples from within the United Kingdom and abroad. The Best Practice Report will form a vital input to the definition of the Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy.

The marketing of the passenger transport network and the use of effective delivery methods for timetable and service information play an essential role in the public perception of the passenger transport network in Worcestershire. Where conducted effectively, marketing and information delivery generates the following key benefits:

- Development of a prestigious image of the passenger transport network
- Increasing public confidence in the passenger transport network
- Improved access to passenger transport information
- Increased reassurance to members of the public during (inevitable) periods of service disruption
- Increased patronage across passenger transport networks (increasing the sustainability of the network)
- Improved information dissemination to the public on passenger transport network developments and enhancements
- Promotion of multi-modal journey options and encouraging modal switching from car to passenger transport.

For the purpose of this report the research was condensed into four topic areas:

- Printed Information
- Electronic Information
- Face-to-Face Information
- Marketing

Each local authority has a statutory duty to provide bus service information (Transport Act 2000). However there is no statutory obligation to provide rail information or market the local passenger transport network.

All local authorities are measured on their service delivery through the Audit Commission. Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) and Comprehensive Performance Assessments (CPA) are two measures for local authority performance. Within each of these measures there are specific indicators for local authority passenger transport. They are:

#### *BVPIs*

- BV102      Number of passenger journeys on buses
- BV103      Satisfaction with local provision of public transport information
- BV104      Satisfaction with local bus services

### *CPA<sup>1</sup>s*

- E14: Satisfaction with local provision of public transport information
- E15: Satisfaction with local bus services

The best performing and most consistent local authorities across the two measures (BV103 & E14 - relating specifically to the local provision of passenger transport information) have been identified as best practice for information provision.

Additional local authorities and private passenger transport operators have also been identified as best practice marketing and information for:

- Increasing patronage across a service/network through effective delivery of marketing and/or information
- Being publicly recognised for their marketing and/or information delivery achievements
- Having produced information or a marketing campaign which was informative, innovative and inclusive

Whilst the examples of best practice given in this report are by no means exhaustive, they do highlight a number of contemporary examples of best practice in the marketing of passenger transport networks, and the delivery of quality timetable and service information to the public. In particular, it reports on best practice in passenger transport marketing and information by transport authorities in the United Kingdom and elsewhere.

Identified key best practice marketing and information organisations include:

- Brighton & Hove City Council
- Derbyshire County Council & Derby City Council
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Translink (Belfast)
- Transport for London
- Traveline
- Trent Barton Bus Company

### *Recommendations*

This section of the report proposes a set of recommendations, based on best practice within the UK and abroad, for the delivery of a passenger transport marketing and information strategy for Worcestershire. These recommendations take account of the context within which local passenger transport operates in Worcestershire and also the national and regional policies on sustainable transport provision.

---

<sup>1</sup> Satisfaction from users of the bus service within the last 12 months

### Recommendation 1:

#### *Overarching Recommendations*

It is recommended that any prospective strategy must be constructed in such a way that Worcestershire County Council is sufficiently prepared to apply a consistent and cohesive approach to the marketing and delivery of information on passenger transport services in Worcestershire.

It is also recommended that Worcestershire County Council prepare a review of all their printed, electronic and face-to-face information and marketing in line with this best practice report and other strategic documents to ensure that information needs of existing and potential users are met. The use of focus groups is recommended to support this. The review must also identify the extent to which the marketing and information strategy must be amended to enable the county council to access external funding opportunities from bodies such as the Department for Transport and Advantage West Midlands.

It is also recommended that all passenger transport marketing and information that is produced by, and on behalf of, Worcestershire County Council adhere to the branding guidelines as set out in Worcestershire County Council's Brand Book.

### Recommendation 2:

#### *Transport Act 2000*

It is recommended that, where an operator fails to ensure the provision of required information, Worcestershire County Council uses its powers under the Transport Act 2000 to arrange for the necessary information to be made available to the public and to recover from the operator the reasonable costs of doing so.

### Recommendation 3:

#### *ATCO Codes of Good Practice*

It is recommended that Worcestershire County Council adopt, wherever possible, the appropriate Association of Transport Coordinating Officers (ATCO) Code of Good Practice in the development of its passenger transport marketing and information provision.

#### Recommendation 4:

##### *Printed Information*

It is recommended that in order to deliver cost-effective printed information the number of timetable changes per year remains at the three scheduled currently. More frequent timetable changes will jeopardise the quality, cost and delivery of high quality printed information.

It is recommended that, subject to funding and where practical, Worcestershire County Council, produce a countywide passenger transport map in partnership with local bus and rail operators. As it may not be cost effective to produce a printed countywide map for dissemination, an electronic version of a countywide passenger transport map should be explored in the first instance.

It is also recommended that printed district, town and city maps, which meet best practice design standards, supplement the countywide passenger transport map. (See Figure 6.1)

It is recommended that printed timetable booklets and leaflets are produced in partnership with rail, bus and community transport operators. This will provide the public with the opportunity to build a bespoke portfolio of individualised passenger transport information, thereby ensuring value for money for both the local authority and passenger transport operator.

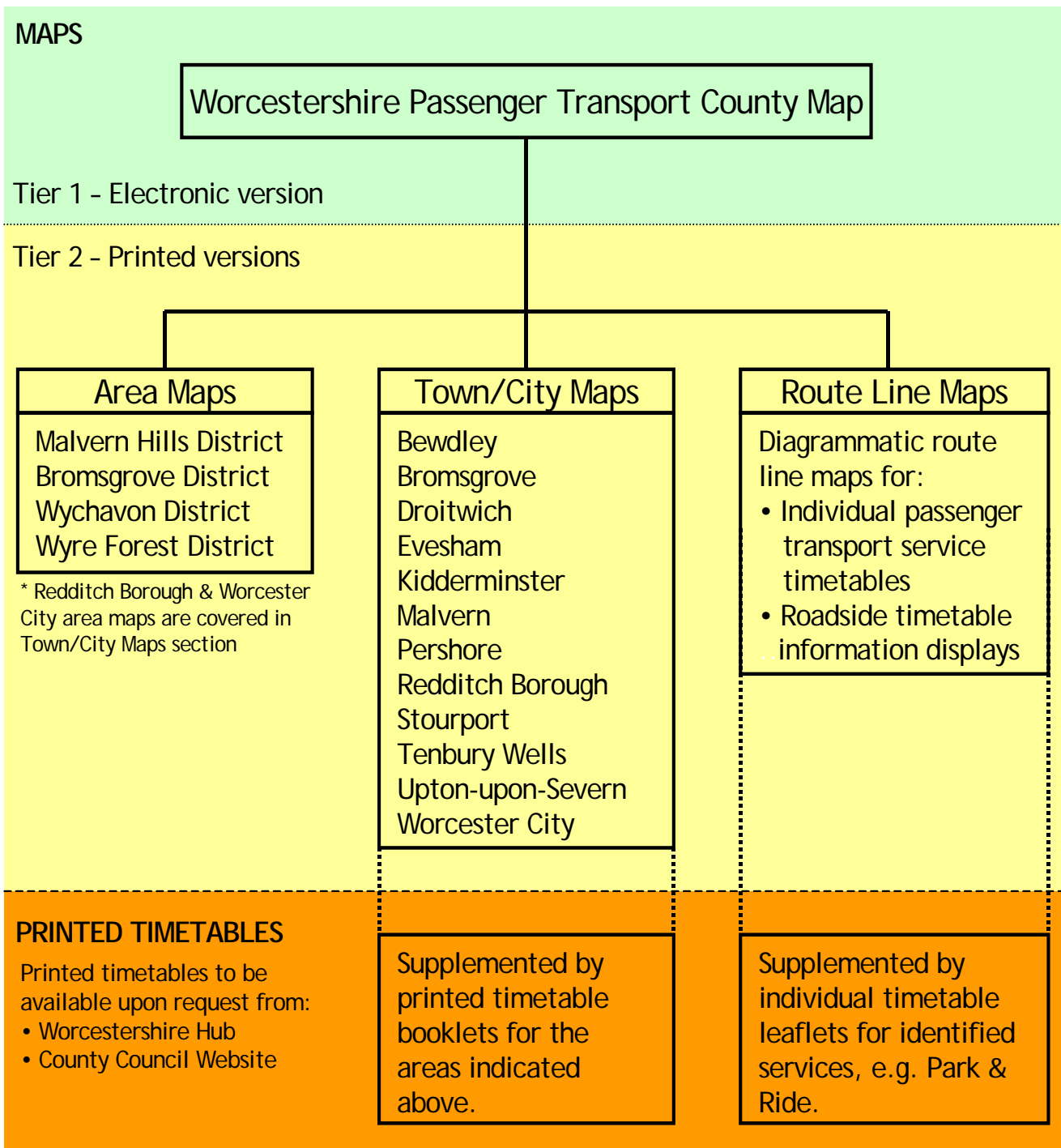
#### Recommendation 5:

##### *Timetable Publications / Leaflets*

It is recommended that:

- Worcestershire County Council work in partnership with passenger transport operators in the production of printed timetable information
- When a multiple timetable booklet is produced, it should include:
  - How to use the book
  - Advice for users and non-users
  - Single or composite bus and rail timetable information
  - Full area passenger transport service route map(s)
  - Indexes on how to find your passenger transport service information
  - Information on concessionary fares, service changes, community transport services
  - Worcestershire County Council's role in passenger transport planning and provision
- When a single service timetable leaflet is produced, it should include:
  - Full passenger transport service timetable information
  - Full passenger transport service route map
- Any printed information should be complementary to and supplement that produced by passenger transport operators

Figure 6.1 - Illustration of Worcestershire County Council Map & Timetable Production



## Recommendation 6:

### *Passenger Transport Maps*

It is recommended that, subject to funding, different levels of passenger transport maps are produced, including:

- County level map, to include:
  - Title indicating the area the map covers and the publication date
  - Linear based bus routes with route numbers (often coloured by frequency)
  - Basic bus frequency guides, detailing origin and destination with key timing points (numerical order)
  - Operator contact details and local authority contact details
  - Railway lines & stations, rail frequency guides and operator contact details
  - Places of interest (e.g. Hospitals, Tourist Information Centres, Churches, Youth Hostels)
  - Information on local non-conventional passenger transport services (e.g. community transport schemes)
  
- Area/city/town level map, to include:
  - As above
  
- Individual passenger transport route map, to include:
  - Linear based route of the service
  - Origin and destination points of the service
  - Stops and stations along the route
  - Route/Service number or description
  - Key characteristics (e.g. vehicle accessibility)

## Recommendation 7:

### *Roadside Information*

It is recommended that:

- Subject to funding all bus stop flags are provided exclusively by Worcestershire County Council, and should include:
  - A passenger transport network logo and local authority logo
  - The allocated bus stop name
  - Directional information (e.g. towards Town Centre)
  - All bus service numbers using that stop (including night buses)
  - The individual SMS eight lettered or numbered code
  
- In partnership with passenger transport operators, roadside bus timetable display information is developed and agreed to a uniform best practice standard and adopted across all of Worcestershire's timetable display cases, to include:
  - Composite or service specific timetable
  - A line diagram showing timing points
  - The service number
  - Accessibility symbols such as whether the bus is likely to be wheelchair/pushchair friendly
  - Operator details
  - Worcestershire County Council details and contact information
  
- The above service would be provided at a cost-covering charge to operators who do not have the provision of in-house resources to supply this level of information

It is also recommended that roadside information is graded in line with the Passenger Transport Infrastructure Best Practice Report Recommendation 5 - Bus Route Grading Structure for Prioritisation of Bus Infrastructure Investment (see Table 1) & Recommendation 6 - The Worcestershire Standard for Roadside Bus Infrastructure.

**Table 1: Bus Route Grading Structure for Prioritisation of Bus Infrastructure Investment**

	PRIMARY AND CORE ROUTES				OTHER (FEEDER) BUS ROUTES	
	PARK & RIDE	URBAN EXPRESS	INTERURBAN EXPRESS	URBAN CORE	URBAN LOW FREQUENCY	RURAL ROUTES
DESCRIPTION	High frequency (at least 6bph in both directions) express routes, limited stops	High frequency (at least 6bph in both directions) express routes, limited stops	Medium frequency (at least 3bph in both directions) express routes, limited stops	Medium frequency (at least 3bph in both directions) express routes, limited stops	Low frequency routes (<2 bph per direction) with regular stops and request stops	Low Frequency routes with mostly request stops (unmarked and Custom & Practice Stops)
BUS STOP LOCATION	Limited stops serving only key trip attractors en-route to/from City Centre of Park & Ride Site	Minimum 400, maximum 750 metre distance between stops	Distance between stops 400-750 metres when passing through urban areas. Limited stops in rural areas	Minimum 400 metre distance between stops	Minimum 400 metres distance between registered stops, some request stops	Published route with timing points, most stops are by request
BUS STOP INFRASTRUCTURE	Bus Stops will be graded according to 'The Worcestershire Standard for Roadside Bus Infrastructure'	Bus Stops will be graded according to 'The Worcestershire Standard for Roadside Bus Infrastructure'	Bus Stops will be graded according to 'The Worcestershire Standard for Roadside Bus Infrastructure'	Bus Stops will be graded according to 'The Worcestershire Standard for Roadside Bus Infrastructure'	Bus Stops will be graded according to 'The Worcestershire Standard for Roadside Bus Infrastructure'	Bus Stops will be graded according to 'The Worcestershire Standard for Roadside Bus Infrastructure'
BUS STOP INFORMATION	Real time information, otherwise timetable displayed at all stops	Timetable displayed at all stops	Timetable displayed at fixed (non-request) stops only	Timetable displayed at fixed (non-request) stops only	Timetable displayed at fixed (non-request) stops only	Timetable displayed at fixed (non-request) stops only
BUS STOP OWNERSHIP	Bus Stops are managed & maintained as part of the Park & Ride contract/ Statutory Quality Partnership by the County Council	Bus Stops are managed & maintained by County Council, possibly as part of Statutory Quality Partnership	Bus Stops are managed & maintained by County Council as part of Statutory Quality Partnership	Bus Stops are managed & maintained by County Council as part of Statutory Quality Partnership	Bus Stops are managed & maintained by County Council	Bus Stops are managed and maintained by County Council. Bus Shelters will be provided according to the Worcestershire Standard
VINYL FLAG	See Recommendation 6 - Gold	See Recommendation 6 - Gold	See Recommendation 6 - Silver	See Recommendation 6 - Silver	See Recommendation 6 - Bronze	See Recommendation 6 - Bronze

*The "Worcestershire Standard" for Roadside Bus Infrastructure*

**The Gold (High Use) Standard (In excess of 500 users a week)**

- FLAG - The bus stop flag design and content should adhere to best practice and include:
  - A passenger transport network logo and local authority logo
  - The allocated bus stop name
  - The individual SMS eight lettered or numbered code
- TIMETABLE INFORMATION - For all routes serving the stop.

**The Silver (Moderate Use) Standard (250 to 499 users a week)**

- FLAG - The bus stop flag design and content should adhere to best practice and include:

- A passenger transport network logo and local authority logo
- The allocated bus stop name
- The individual SMS eight lettered or numbered code
- TIMETABLE INFORMATION - For all routes serving the stop.

**The Bronze (Low Use) Standard (less than 249 users a week)**

- FLAG - The bus stop flag design and content should adhere to best practice and include:
  - A passenger transport network logo and local authority logo
  - The allocated bus stop name
  - Directional information (i.e. towards Town Centre),
  - All bus service numbers using that stop (including night buses), and
  - The individual SMS eight lettered or numbered code

**Recommendation 8:**

*Interchange Information*

It is recommended that:

- At **bus only** interchanges all bus timetable and service information is provided in partnership with Worcestershire County Council and bus operators, to include:
  - Full bus service timetable information for that interchange
  - Full bus service route map for that interchange
- At **rail only** interchanges rail timetable and service information continues to be provided by the franchised rail operators, as part of their franchise commitments
- At **multi-modal** interchanges Worcestershire County Council work with all passenger transport operators, to ensure that comprehensive information is provided for all passenger transport services, to encourage multi-modal travel, and include:
  - Full bus, rail and other passenger transport service timetable information for that interchange
  - Area maps displaying destinations served by passenger transport services from that interchange
- Clear and appropriate signage to platforms or bus stands must be provided for all services
- Clear and appropriate signage must be provided for walking links both within the interchange and also towards town/city centre locations
- Subject to funding, a staffed travel shop should be provided to access further information relating to passenger transport services

### *Interchange Information continued*

It is also recommended that interchange information is aligned with Recommendations 1 & 2 of the Passenger Transport Infrastructure Best Practice Report:

- Recommendation 1 - The "Worcestershire Standard" for Interchanges - Gold Standard (Main Rail & Main Bus Stations), and
- Recommendation 2 - The "Worcestershire Standard" for Interchanges - Silver Standard (Minor Rail & Minor Bus Stations).

### **Recommendation 9:**

#### *Dissemination of Information*

It is recommended that:

- All outlets should be explored for the dissemination of information, and should include as a minimum:
  - Libraries
  - Customer Service Centres (e.g. Worcestershire Hub)
  - Tourist Information Centres
  - County and District/Borough Council offices
  - Passenger Transport Interchanges (including rail stations)
  - Ticket Sales Outlets/Travel Centres
  - Post Offices
  - Hospitals, Health Centres and Surgeries
  - Leisure, Shopping, Sport and Community Centres
  - Jobcentres
  - Major Employers
  - Schools, Colleges and Universities
  - Museums and Art Galleries
- Full use should be made of the bus, rail and other operators vehicles and carriages, where practical

#### Recommendation 10:

##### *On-bus / On-train Information*

It is recommended that:

- Full service specific timetable information should be provided on the vehicle or carriage operating that service, available upon request from the bus driver or train conductor
- Full service specific fare information should also be provided on the vehicle or carriage operating that service, available upon request from the bus driver or train conductor

#### Recommendation 11:

##### *Other Paper-based Information*

It is recommended that:

- Full information should be provided for non-conventional forms of passenger transport, including:
  - Comprehensive community and voluntary-sector transport information
  - Guides on how to access and use passenger transport
  - Guide to alternative means of transport, e.g. cycling and walking
- Appropriate information should be displayed on concessionary fares and fares information
- Appropriate information should be provided on accessibility at bus stops and rail stations, passenger transport interchanges and on vehicles/carriages

## *Electronic Information*

### Recommendation 12:

#### *Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI)*

It is recommended that:

- Worcestershire County Council work in partnership with passenger transport operators, district/borough authorities and other key stakeholders to provide, where appropriate and subject to funding, passenger transport information in electronic format including Real Time Passenger Information at key passenger transport interchanges, such as bus and rail stations.
- The further roll out of RTPI systems to other locations should be explored in terms of costs and benefits. The additional locations to include:
  - Hospitals
  - Town and city centres
  - Major leisure and sport facilities
  - Along key passenger transport service corridors that carry a large volume of passengers

It is also recommended that RTPI follows best practice and is aligned with Recommendations 1 & 2 of the Passenger Transport Infrastructure Best Practice Report:

- Recommendation 1 - The "Worcestershire Standard" for Interchanges - Gold Standard (Main Rail & Main Bus Stations), and
- Recommendation 2 - The "Worcestershire Standard" for Interchanges - Silver Standard (Minor Rail & Minor Bus Stations).

### Recommendation 13:

#### *Database Information*

It is recommended that Worcestershire County Council:

- Review the extent to which current passenger transport databases are being used
- Explore how passenger transport databases could be managed to support provision of integrated passenger transport information
- Explore the development of an integrated passenger transport database with other functions within the local authority

It is recommended that, subject to the findings of the above review and the availability of funding, a new information database is sourced to perform the following vital roles in passenger transport information provision:

- Help in the coordinated delivery of printed interchange/passenger transport stop/station specific timetable display information
- Directly update the Worcestershire County Council-maintained passenger transport website
- Directly update the Traveline database

### Recommendation 14:

#### *Website Information*

It is recommended that:

- A review is conducted on the extent to which the Worcestershire County Council passenger transport website is being used for access to passenger transport information
- A review is conducted on the entire content held on the passenger transport website and its format
- Following the review, ensure that Worcestershire County Council's passenger transport website is:
  - Concise, accurate and understandable in its provision of information
  - Maintained and up-to-date
  - Structured in a way that key information is easily located
  - Has appropriate links to other websites (e.g. Traveline, passenger transport operators)
  - Designed to be aesthetically pleasing
  - Regularly updated and monitored by appropriate staff

**Recommendation 15:**

*Traveline*

It is recommended that Worcestershire County Council:

- Ensure information held on Traveline for the county's passenger transport network is regularly updated and accurate
- Ensure that the information is provided to Traveline in a cost effective manner
- Work in partnership with all passenger transport operators in respect of financially contributing to Traveline calls relating to their services
- Fully promote Traveline on all county and operator-produced literature and infrastructure

**Recommendation 16:**

*Electronic Information Points*

It is recommended that Worcestershire County Council:

- Explore the development of alternative formats of information provision through kiosk-based technology
- Understand how alternative formats of electronic information meet the needs of users, perhaps through conducting market research
- Conduct an initial trial of kiosk-based journey planning technology in key areas, e.g. major passenger transport interchanges

## Recommendation 17:

### *Face-to-face Information*

It is recommended that Worcestershire County Council:

- Review how information is disseminated in a face-to-face fashion
- Implement the following:
  - **Staff Training:** Front line staff to undertake regular customer service training, in addition to attaining a recognised qualification in Customer Service.
  - **Informing Staff:** Staff must be provided with all the necessary information. Well informed and well prepared staff will be sufficiently empowered to serve the public effectively and provide impartial advice on all passenger transport enquiries. Relaying information to staff could be via information technology, formal training or printed information or a combination of these, dependent on the enquiry.
  - **Working Environment:** All council and operator owned outlets should be clean, maintained and fully stocked with all relevant passenger transport information, as a result staff are much more likely to take pride in their jobs and the quality of service that they provide.
  - **Dress:** Smart, tidy and appropriate clothing presents a professional image to customers. It is strongly recommended that all front line staff are provided with uniforms. This is to promote “belonging”, develop pride in the service, empower staff and make them easily recognisable to members of the public.

#### Recommendation 18:

##### *Marketing*

It is recommended that:

- All marketing activity should be customer focused, seek to increase passenger transport patronage and support the achievement of local, regional and national policies and targets relating to passenger transport
- A clearly defined marketing strategy should be produced in order to develop passenger transport within Worcestershire

#### Recommendation 19:

##### *Market Research*

It is recommended that

- Regular market research is undertaken to:
  - Identify key market segments for targeted marketing campaigns
  - Identify key areas and services for improvement in the passenger transport network
  - Confirm current marketing and information strategies or to initiate change
- Market research is conducted through both quantitative (i.e. numerical) and qualitative (i.e. emotive) methods, and in regular consultation with representative user groups as defined in the Passenger Transport Consultation Strategy
- **Quantitative** methods are used, and include:
  - Annual satisfaction surveys (postal/web-based)
  - Regular face-to-face service and/or topic specific questionnaires
  - Mystery Shopper surveys
  - Promotion monitoring and evaluation
- **Qualitative** methods are used, and include:
  - Focus groups
  - In-depth interviews
  - Consultation with representative user group
- Worcestershire County Council adopt a best practice market research approach, such as the Translink model

- Recommendation 20:

*Campaigns*

It is recommended that:

- Service, area or network specific marketing campaigns should be used to rejuvenate existing services or launch new passenger transport services
- Integrated passenger transport marketing campaigns should be conducted to highlight multi-modal travel opportunities
- Worcestershire County Council and passenger transport operators should work in partnership to develop targeted marketing campaigns
- A structured marketing campaign model is developed to include:
  - Planning
  - Implementation
  - Evaluation of each campaign
- Marketing campaigns are innovative and creative in design to promote, attract and encourage both existing and new users to the passenger transport network
- The most appropriate method of promotion is used for each marketing campaign to ensure best value for money. Promotions may include:
  - Advertising (e.g. for countywide campaigns)
  - Promotion (e.g. for specific events)
  - Public Relations (e.g. for raising public awareness)
  - Direct Marketing Communications (e.g. for specific bus services/routes)
  - Sponsorship (e.g. for raising network/key service profile)

## Recommendation 21:

### *Branding*

It is recommended that:

- Worcestershire County Council in partnership with passenger transport operators develop a county passenger transport network brand that:
  - Is clearly identifiable
  - Is carried on all passenger transport marketing and information, including all ticketing where appropriate (further information on ticketing can be found in the Passenger Transport Fares & Ticketing Best Practice Report)
  - Is adopted in partnership with all passenger transport operators
  - Ensures a strong relationship between the brand, the passenger transport network and the end-user
- This network brand provides an identity to Worcestershire's entire county network of passenger transport services
- Individual or area specific route branding should be developed to rejuvenate or promote new services in line with primary or core routes as identified in Recommendation 5 of the Passenger Transport Infrastructure Best Practice Report, for example, Park and Ride
- Worcestershire County Council work in partnership with passenger transport operators to promote new areas of bus and/or rail services

## Recommendation 22:

### *Events*

It is recommended that:

- Worcestershire County Council host an annual passenger transport conference focusing on amongst other things key themes relating to passenger transport marketing and information
- Regularly attend appropriate events to disseminate passenger transport marketing and information including:
  - Local community/county events
  - County and/or District council-led events
  - Regional/National events
- Arrange regular (e.g. quarterly) focus groups to discuss improvements to passenger transport marketing and information

**Recommendation 23:**

*Stakeholder / Partnership Involvement*

It is recommended that Worcestershire County Council:

- Improve partnerships and build strong working relationships, to support the effective delivery passenger transport marketing and information, with:
  - Both passenger transport operators
  - District and Borough authorities
  - Other key passenger transport stakeholders
- Develop regular focused consultation with passenger transport operators, and other transport stakeholders to improve passenger transport marketing and information

**Recommendation 24:**

*Funding & Staffing*

It is recommended that Worcestershire County Council:

- Review its current annual budgetary spend on passenger transport marketing and information
- Develop an annual budget based on what is required to provide passenger transport marketing and information to a best practice standard that meets public expectations and ensures value for money
- Work in partnership with passenger transport operators to realise additional cost-savings and/or funding
- Seek additional sources of funding such as Regional Development Agencies and major employers through their travel planning, for the provision of passenger transport marketing and information
- Include budgetary provision for marketing and information as part of all bids for passenger transport related projects



---

**Passenger Transport  
Vehicles and Rolling Stock  
Best Practice Report**  
November 2007

---



Executive Summary



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Vehicles and Rolling Stock Best Practice

This report was commissioned as part of the project to develop a Vehicles and Rolling Stock Strategy for Worcestershire for inclusion within the Worcestershire Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy. The report sets out vehicle and rolling stock best practice and draws from examples in the UK and elsewhere. The Vehicles and Rolling Stock Strategy will link closely with the other Strategies such as for passenger transport infrastructure and bus priority in Worcestershire and the definition of the Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy. It will also provide the evidence base required to underpin funding bids to external bodies (such as the Department for Transport) for enhancement of the Worcestershire passenger transport network.

Passenger Transport Vehicles (buses, coaches, Community Transport and Social Transport vehicles) and rolling stock is a key element of the passenger transport system and as such it is vital that these vehicles are safe and attractive to use, efficient and effective in their operation and form the basis for a modal shift away from the use of the private car and towards more sustainable methods of transport. These aims are in line with national, regional and local transport policies on encouraging use of sustainable transport.

Increasing traffic volumes and its associated adverse impacts on congestion, air quality and carbon emissions is a key problem in Worcestershire and elsewhere in the UK. The situation is likely to continue to deteriorate, as long as the private car remains the dominant mode of travel choice, even for short journeys. In addition, the impact of the proposed growth in travel demand arising from the Regional Spatial Strategy puts further emphasis on the need to provide a sustainable and realistic alternative to the car for certain types of journeys.

Addressing the issue of travel demand solely through large-scale road construction is neither a viable nor a sustainable option as the impact on our local communities would be huge in terms of the environment, land take, property demolition and isolation. We must, therefore, find other solutions that can meet peoples' desire to travel, by creating an attractive alternative that will encourage greater use of passenger transport, cycling and walking and reduce the reliance on the car.

There is clear evidence that improving the quality of passenger transport vehicles has a major role in supporting balanced and integrated transport strategies. Passenger transport vehicles meeting the needs of users in terms of safety, accessibility, capacity, comfort and information can support the development and funding of a passenger transport network offering a realistic and sustainable alternative to the private car.

## *Government Influence*

Passenger Transport Vehicles and rolling stock in the United Kingdom is determined by a variety of passenger needs, operator constraints, government regulations and local authority influences. Central Government in its policy documents, statements and Transport Acts has sought to improve the quality of the vehicles used for the transportation of people. In the last ten years "A Better Future for Buses", "From Workhorse to Thoroughbred: A Better Role for Bus Travel" and "Putting Passengers First" amongst others, have explored methods of achieving this.

The design and quality of railway rolling stock is regulated by the Office of the Rail Regulator. This body is responsible for ensuring that rolling stock in use on the rail network in the United Kingdom is fit for purpose and safe for general public use. In the Bus Industry, these powers are held by the Traffic Commissioners who are responsible for driver and Public Service Vehicle licensing.

In recent times, perhaps the most significant changes have been brought about as a result of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Regulations (The Passenger Transport Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000) which specify minimum standards for Passenger Transport Vehicles and rolling stock. These regulations are currently being phased in across the United Kingdom, and seek to ensure all Passenger Transport Vehicles and rolling stock is fully accessible to all passengers; the fully mobile, mobility impaired (such as the elderly or those with push chairs) and wheelchair users.

More accessible vehicles are beneficial for all passengers, whether by virtue of easier access or because the quicker boarding and alighting shortens the journey time and increases service reliability. The resulting shorter journey times and increased reliability can deliver cost savings for the operator. The Disability Discrimination Act (2000) requires that all large buses (over 20 seats) are DDA compliant by 2017.

### **The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Regulations 2000**

These govern the provision and minimum standards for various features including:

- A space for a wheelchair with suitable safety provisions
- A boarding device to enable wheelchair users to get on and off vehicles
- A minimum number of priority seats on buses for disabled passengers
- The size and height of steps
- Handrails to assist disabled people
- Colour contrasting of features such as handrails and steps to help partially sighted people
- Easy to use bell pushes throughout a bus
- Audible and visual signals to stop a bus or to request a boarding device
- Equipment to display the route and destination

## **Recommendation 1 - Vehicle Specification (Accessibility)**

It is recommended that Worcestershire County Council:

- Insist on the provision of DDA compliant vehicles on all contracted services as these are re-tendered
- Encourage the use of DDA compliant vehicles on other commercially operated passenger transport services
- Develop funding bids (potentially as part of larger passenger transport scheme bids) for investment in the passenger transport vehicle fleet

All Passenger Transport Vehicles and rolling stock must be fit for purpose. That is to say that they must take account of existing and potential user requirements, in addition to mandatory safety and emissions standards.

The specification of the required Passenger Transport Vehicles or Rolling Stock is dependent upon:

- Travel market, i.e. user needs (e.g. short journey commuting, inter-urban express, schools)
- Operating regime (fast non-stop or slower urban stop-start and terrain over which it operates)
- Forecast demand (determining capacity)
- Seating:standing ratio (also influenced by the three previous factors)
- Fares & ticketing systems
- Number and layout of entry and exit doors (strongly influenced by demand, fares & ticketing systems, operating regime and bus stop spacing)
- Seating layout and design (in terms of pitch and legroom)
- Luggage carriage requirements
- Passenger information system
- Emissions standards/targets (if above mandatory levels)
- Propulsion systems

These will also impact on the choice of chassis, engine and body. The more prestigious services will require "higher specification" buses with additional features.

Thus, the user requirements and consequent service specification directly determines the Passenger Transport Vehicles or rolling stock required to deliver an attractive service that is fit for its designated purpose (which may include general public service, or restricted services for certain groups such as school children).

## **Recommendation 2 - Vehicle Specification (Service Requirements)**

It is recommended, that Worcestershire County Council consider all these factors when determining the vehicle specifications for:

- Premium (Bus Rapid Transit) Routes
- Core Routes
- Other (Feeder) Routes
- Community Transport
- Education Transport
- Taxibuses / Shared Taxi
- Special Needs Transport

### **Recommendation 3 - Propulsion and Emissions**

In terms of vehicle propulsion systems and emissions, it is recommended that:

- As a minimum, all passenger transport services in Worcestershire should be operated by vehicles which meet Euro 4 with EGR (Exhaust Gas Re-circulation) specification engines
- New or re-tendered services should be operated by vehicles which meet the Euro 5 exhaust emissions and EEV (Enhanced Environmentally-friendly Vehicle) standards
- An assessment is made of the case for a pilot scheme for alternative propulsion systems (such as hybrid/dual mode/trolley bus) on a high demand Premium Route corridor in Worcestershire.

### **Recommendation 4 - (Passenger Safety and Security)**

Public perception of safety on passenger transport is poor (often unnecessarily so). Nevertheless there are various actions that can be taken to improve actual safety as well as perceived safety.

It is recommended that:

- Best Practice security measures should be incorporated in the design of all passenger transport vehicles operating in Worcestershire (such as the use of bright colours and good lighting)
- Good operating practices should be implemented such as utilising the most suitable vehicles for the time of day (for example, not using a double deck vehicle at night if the capacity is not required)
- CCTV is installed on all passenger transport vehicles as a visible deterrent to crime and a tool for prosecution of offenders.

### **Recommendation 5 - Citizenship on Passenger Transport Vehicles and Rolling Stock**

The education of passengers, especially young people, is essential to avoid bad behaviour and aid the smooth operation of passenger transport. Use of training sessions in schools is recommended to point out the merits of, for example, using a seat belt if provided or, for example moving to the rear of the bus and holding a hand rail if standing, or taking care when entering or alighting rolling stock at stations. This can be instilled into children at an early age, in a way that is fun and interesting. Over time, this will have a direct effect on the way passenger transport is perceived, and will improve the public's experiences of using passenger transport in the United Kingdom.

### **Recommendation 6 - Passenger Transport Vehicle and Rolling Stock Branding**

Branding of vehicles is recommended to aid identification, information and a sense of loyalty. It can be successfully used to highlight the quality of a service being provided as well as identifying the route or service on which a particular bus is being used. It is also a good advertisement for a service.

It is recommended that a concept such as the easyLINK brand, which was well respected and understood as being applied to those high quality services utilising modern buses and trained drivers, as well as referring to other aspects such as the service level and

infrastructure provided, should be researched with a view to its application where appropriate and marketed as such.

The County Council will be operating the Perdiswell Park and Ride service from early 2008 using the word "Woosh" as the key brand. This is to represent an Express Bus that is travelling faster than other traffic. It represents both the sound the bus may make as it goes by, in addition to the connection with the word "Worcestershire".

### **Recommendation 7 - Taxis, Private Hire Cars, Shared Cars and Community Transport**

Smaller Passenger Transport Vehicles range in size from a saloon car to a minibus vehicle. It is recommended that further research is undertaken to determine the needs of the passenger as various district licensing authorities justify the application of different specifications according to passenger needs in their respective areas. Can any common standard be applied with respect to the provision of a smaller Public Service Vehicle? Should the London TX4 taxi or similar vehicle with side ramp (which is accessible to people in a wheelchair) be specified? Does this cater adequately for people able to walk but not climb in to such vehicles or use the ramp? By specifying these vehicles, and perhaps also their branding, will this enhance the perception of these services as part of the passenger transport network in Worcestershire? The dimensions, position and other specifications of ramps, lifts, doors, hand rails, alarms, signs and CCTV all need to be investigated, determined and then stipulated. Other aspects such as the age of vehicles and the training of drivers should be researched and then standardised.

It is accepted that different standards will be required for different purposes, such as Private Hire Cars, Hackney Carriages and social car schemes. However, the standards will be based on the same aspects or characteristics or areas of detail (for example the age of the vehicle) but with different specifications as appropriate for the purpose to which they are to be used. Also, these standards will be applied across the county so that passengers can be reassured of the same quality of service no matter where they travel. Clearly liaison with the authorities in neighbouring counties (as well, of course, with the district councils in Worcestershire) would be beneficial for all parties concerned.

Work-based car share schemes and community based car-hire schemes such as WhizzGo should be encouraged to reduce the usage of the private car. The use of innovative forms of transport such as tuk tuks and pedicabs was considered but it was felt that further experience throughout the country is needed before these could be considered for Worcestershire.

It is recommended that further research is undertaken on the use of emission-free electric cars which could, if successful, have an impact on congestion (as they tend to be small and take up less road space) as well as the obvious environmental benefits of reduced emissions and noise. More awareness of the availability of electric bicycles is needed to bring to the public's attention the possibilities of this environmentally friendly and healthy congestion-reducing mode of transport.

The use of taxibus vehicles enables the provision of a service when the operation of conventional fixed or demand responsive bus services is not viable, such as in the evening or on Sundays in urban areas or at any time in less-well populated rural areas.

Community Transport is a term covering a myriad of different forms of transport and is covered in detail by a separate report. However the types of vehicles used, whether car,

people carrier or minibus, should be categorised and subjected to appropriate standards to ensure that they are fit for their intended purpose.

### **Recommendation 8 - Passenger Transport Vehicles for Mainstream Education Contracts**

These are generally large vehicles and as such are covered in many respects by the section above on buses. However there are particular needs due to the large number of unaccompanied school children being carried on the vehicles.

It is recommended that, as a principle requirement, every child has access to a seat fitted with a suitable belt. This is, of course, different from the standard practice when children travel on local bus services. Secondly many counties (including Worcestershire) have additional requirements, which must be considered when defining best practice principles for the carriage of schoolchildren. Many of these feature in the American Yellow School Bus concept and have been introduced in this country by First Group plc under the 'First Student' banner.

Features of the 'Yellow Bus' concept, certain of which could be worth further investigation to determine the value of their incorporation in dedicated Education Contract services in Worcestershire:

- The vehicle has construction features such as a rigid steel body, chassis and roll-over bars and has at least an environmentally-friendly Euro 3 engine
- The bus is painted bright yellow to be clearly visible and identifiable as a school bus and has high-backed seats with integral seat belt
- The driver (and bus) is dedicated to the service, is CRB checked and specially trained in handling children and has a register of his / her pupils so that they can be checked off as they arrive so that only the correct pupils may board
- There is a fixed seating plan so that each child always sits in the same place
- These features, together with the use of cctv, encourage the children to be well behaved

However a vehicle with certain of these specifications could prove significantly more expensive than vehicles conventionally used and might have limited other uses outside school hours.

Walking or "virtual" buses are recommended as an environmentally-friendly way to reduce urban traffic congestion whilst at the same time giving children some healthy exercise, some road sense and a little independence from their parents.

### **Recommendation 9 - Passenger Transport Vehicles for Special Education Needs and Social Services Contracts**

The requirements for special education needs and social service contracts are becoming specialised with the provision of services being transferred to smaller, more localised establishments thus demand for travel to these services is for more smaller, more specialised vehicles such as cars, people carriers, minibuses and other specialist vehicles.

It is recommended that the in-house Fleet continues to be used where there is a cost benefit saving, such as where there is a need for all day provision. However for other

work, which is only for part of the day and often only short term, it is more economically viable to hire privately owned vehicles to meet bespoke needs.

The need for more specialised features on smaller Passenger Transport Vehicles used for special education needs and social services contracts suggests that the following specifications are considered for use to ensure that the service provided to the County Council's clients continues to improve:

- Energy efficient engines (i.e. Euro 4 and above).
- Energy efficient fuel/alternative fuels types (i.e. hybrid vehicles).
- Increased comfort and modernisation of vehicles.
- CCTV on larger vehicles.
- Improvements in wheelchair access and low floor access to vehicles.
- Improved training and qualifications of drivers (in line with new CPC driver requirements).

### **Recommendation 10 - Public Service Vehicle and Rolling Stock Funding**

New or improved rolling stock and Passenger Transport Vehicles is often an integral element of the delivery of a high quality passenger transport system. As such it is therefore necessary to seek appropriate to deliver improvements to Passenger Transport Vehicles and rolling stock as required.

It is recommended that Worcestershire County Council:

- Develop an IPTS, which addresses (amongst other things) the policies and targets of key funding agencies, in particular the Department for Transport and Advantage West Midlands (the Regional Development Agency).
- Implement Development Control guidance that incorporates the recommendations within the Land Use and Development Control for Passenger Transport Best Practice Report, such that the mechanisms are in place to gain developer contributions toward the provision of a high quality passenger transport system that support new developments.
- Provides the transport planning resources necessary to develop technically sound and fully justified passenger transport scheme business cases (including those with new/enhanced rolling stock) suitable for inclusion within Major Scheme funding bids.
- Work closely with Advantage West Midlands to explore the range of funding opportunities for passenger transport schemes (including those with new/enhanced rolling stock), which help to meet their policies and targets (particularly those associated with the Regional Economic Strategy).

### **Recommendation 11 - Passenger Transport Vehicles for Bus Rapid Transit**

This report includes some description and analysis of bus rapid transit and light rail transit vehicles, as these could be employed for certain applications within Worcestershire, as part of a major funded development. Whilst it is clear that a number of aspects of the attractive elements of a tram or light rail transit (LRT) service can be provided with bus rapid transit (BRT) by use of modern BRT vehicles, this will not deliver in full the standards of a rail-based system, such as a tram.

BRT schemes, however, tend to cost significantly less than equivalent rail based schemes and on the basis that they are supported by systematic priority measures, including segregated busways are inevitably better than a conventional bus service in terms of

journey times and reliability. BRT schemes, may, therefore, be justified where there is insufficient patronage to justify the investment in a LRT scheme requiring continuous (and expensive) infrastructure.

It is recommended that the concept of BRT or LRT (if there is sufficient demand) be considered if a development or urban area has the potential to generate sufficient patronage to make such a service sustainable in economic and financial terms as required by existing Department for Transport guidelines).

### **Recommendation 12 - Rolling Stock for Heavy Rail Transport**

Whilst the County Council does not directly fund any train services currently (this is managed on behalf of Local Authorities by the Department for Transport's Rail Group), rail services in Worcestershire form a very important element of the transport network.

Worcestershire County Council already purchase a substantial number of scholar's season tickets, which indirectly fund provision of rail services through guaranteed patronage. Passengers transferring between different parts of the network, whether road or rail based, will expect a similar high quality of service. The County Council either strongly influences or provides the connecting or feeder services to the train network, which can have a direct effect on the levels of patronage on rail services. It is reasonable, therefore, to expect the County Council's recommendations regarding the type and quality of rolling stock used on the rail routes serving Worcestershire, to be given due consideration when planning rail service provision.

It is recommended that the County Council gather information to provide far more detailed specifications to Train Operating Companies and the Department for Transport's rail group, for consideration when rail franchises are awarded. The following specifications (amongst others) must be considered:

- The seat
- Seat reservations
- Light Luggage facility
- Heavy Luggage facility
- Passenger Information on the journey
- Heating/Air conditioning
- Lighting
- Power points
- Toilet
- Tables
- Security on board

### **Recommendation 13 - Partnership Working for Improving Public Service Vehicle and Rolling Stock Quality**

It is important to recognise that the County Council does not have full control of the passenger transport network in Worcestershire. The majority of passengers travelling on local bus services, for example, travel on commercially operated journeys over which the County Council has limited influence. Worcestershire County Council does, however, have close working relationships with local bus and rail operators, District Councils and other partners such as Health Authorities. The consolidation and strengthening of these

partnerships will enable further improvements to the passenger transport network, which will deliver mutual benefits.

It is recommended, therefore, that Worcestershire County Council build on existing partnerships to influence improvements to the quality and suitability of Passenger Transport Vehicles and rolling stock in use in the county. This can be achieved by:

- Encouraging other operators to provide suitable high quality vehicles (fit for purpose)
- Setting high standards in all of its contracts, and ensuring that these standards are adhered to fully through the enforcement of penalty notices
- Setting an example in the operation of Council operated local bus, Education and Social Services Transport contracts

In this way, Worcestershire County Council will ensure that the vehicles and rolling stock operated in the county meet the highest quality standards (as expected by our residents) so as to encourage modal shift from private cars and ensure that the integrated passenger transport network operates efficiently and effectively, delivering a prestigious image to residents and visitors alike.



---

**Passenger Transport Contracts  
and Performance Management  
Best Practice Report**  
November 2007

---



Executive Summary



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Contracts and Performance Management Best Practice

Worcestershire County Council has a duty to obtain best value for money when procuring transport services. Although this document is an examination of best practice from around the country there are stages of the procurement process that are governed by EU guidelines, and English law, give detailed steps and timeframes to be adhered to when tendering contracts. However, within these regulations there are choices we can make and it is the direction we should take that this document concerns itself with.

Any contract, to be tendered, with an anticipated total value of above £144,371 (the lack of a rounded figure is due to the conversion rate of the Euro when the limit was set by the EU) has procedures that must be observed. Worcestershire County Council's Procurement Code and the Environmental Service's Procurement Guidelines deal with the specifics of procurement. Any recommendations made as a result of consultation will have to be approved by both our Procurement and our Legal teams.

### Establishing a Need

We have looked at the events that trigger a need to procure passenger transport services throughout Worcestershire either in line with our planned tendering exercise or unplanned and outside our control.

### Education Transport

*Planned Tendering:* When a contract comes to the end of its agreed term we re-tender the contract using our planned tender process. All changes of this nature are visible and we are able to plan, in advance, to ensure services fit effectively into the existing network. Our Planning & Review teams liaise with schools, parents and Pupil Admissions as early as possible to ensure we make an accurate estimate of the likely future demand on transport services at each establishment.

*Emergency or Negotiated Tendering:* The nature of education transport is such that we cannot always foresee last minute alterations, to demand, that can be caused by events such as late admissions or changes in circumstances that make a walking route unsafe for a number of children. We may also encounter an instance where the contracted operator is either unable to continue operating the service or is removed from the contract for reasons of poor performance.

### Public Services

*Planned Tendering:* When the term of a public service contract is due to end we are aware at an early stage and can use survey data and information, sourced from operators, to establish the likely profile of the replacement service. Being able to plan in advance allows Planning & Review to work to agreed strategies in order to progress towards an efficient integrated network.

*Emergency or Negotiated Tendering:* Our contracted services have to dovetail with those provided by commercial operators. The County Council has no control over these services

other than by a voluntary agreement, (usually at the County Council's request and the operator's discretion). If an operator cancels a commercial route we have limited time to establish whether there is a need to continue the service (using County Council funding) and what form the new service should take (do we amend an existing route to provide transport to the "abandoned" area or do we offer a reduced/increased service?). We may also have to deal with an operator being removed from a contract at short notice due to poor performance.

Planned tender exercises will take place to coincide with our agreed service change dates. This groups contracts, in an area, together for efficient tendering. Any unplanned tendering has to be authorised by the County Council's Procurement team and will be by a negotiated procedure. Due to the EEC tendering threshold of £144,371, the length of any contract procured in this manner will generally be short term and will ensure service is maintained until the next relevant planned tender exercise.

## Contract Types

Contracts can be grouped into three main categories (further details in 5.1 to 5.6).

*Closed Contracts:* These are mainly used for education and social services transport. The County Council pays the tendered price for the route and instructs the operator on who is to be carried. This service is "closed" and only available to passengers authorised by the County Council. No fares are taken.

*Cost Based Contracts:* The County Council pays the tendered price to the operator and retains all fares taken on the service. The County Council bears the risk and either suffers any loss or retains any operating surplus. Cost based contracts are common where a new public service route is operating and passenger figures may be unknown or there could be alterations to the service whilst it "beds in".

*Subsidy Based Contracts:* The County Council pays the tendered price for provision of the service and the operator retains all fares taken. The risk is the operators. However, there is a real incentive for the operator to improve the service as he retains all profits. This type of contract will generally be used on established public service routes when existing passenger figures are known.

## Tendering

To tender effectively the Planning & Review and the Development teams review an area at a time. All education transport and public service contracts are re-evaluated in conjunction with the existing commercial network. A planned schedule of reviews allows survey work to be undertaken in advance to provide accurate passenger figures. We can then tender the contracts for this area at the same time. This allows operators to target groups of contracts where they can work efficiently and offer a competitive price for the work, rather than having to cope with individual contracts scattered around the county. This grouping is important if we are using e-auctions to award the contracts, and places even more emphasis on planned area reviews.

Once we establish the requirement for the service the first decision to be taken, is whether we offer it out to tender or if there is an under-utilised resource within the County

Council's own fleet. If we have fleet vehicles that can provide the service, without detriment to their existing role, we should first investigate making use of them.

#### Recommendation 1:

Any spare capacity within the in house fleet should always be considered as an effective method of providing transport services.

When specifying the requirements of a contract we need to consider the following:

What does our strategy dictate for this service/route?

What frequency of service is required?

What type, capacity, size and age of vehicle, is needed to meet the anticipated demand for this service?

What length of contract should we offer? A longer contract may tempt the operator to invest in a better vehicle but could reduce our flexibility. How does it impact on future plans?

Cost or Subsidy based contract? A subsidy-based contract will reward an efficient operator but may alienate good operators not comfortable bearing risk. A cost based contract will leave all risk with the County Council but could attract more competition, and, therefore, a better price.

What do we want the operator to do in order to help us grow the service? We might ask that they provide support such as publicity, advertising, driver training, vehicle branding etc..

#### Recommendation 2:

Financial incentives to operators to aim for passenger growth should be considered in suitable contracts.

#### E-Auctions

Following the initial success of Worcestershire County Councils e-auction we will adopt this as the preferred tender method for all passenger transport contracts. The process ensures all operators have the opportunity to submit their most competitive bids, should they wish to, and obtains the most economically advantageous prices for the County Council whilst maintaining the quality levels set within the contract specification.

#### Recommendation 3:

Worcestershire's e-auctions initiative is at the forefront of procurement best practice and steps should be taken to disseminate experience to other local authorities possibly through the medium of workshops and the preparation of a technical paper.

## Contract Operators

We will only award contracts to operators that have met the criteria set by our Framework qualification documents. Operators will be invited to join a Framework prior to any tender exercise, or e-auction, in order to pre-qualify them. Anyone can register on Worcestershire's e-tender portal and receive an automatic update when tenders are advertised, but they will need to satisfy us that they have the correct licences, insurances, policies and procedures in place before we consider awarding contracts to them. This ensures that only operators capable of fulfilling a contract can tender for it. Should an operator be under-performing on any of their existing contracts they would be deemed to be incapable of fulfilling an additional contract. We would then preclude them from tender exercises until their performance was in line with contract specifications and any issues had been satisfactorily resolved. The current Frameworks will be reviewed in 2011 but documents, such as insurance details, will be regularly updated during this period.

### Recommendation 4:

A Framework should be maintained to pre-approve operators wishing to work with Worcestershire County Council.

## Tender Award

The award of a contract will be based upon an agreed specification that is measurable and achievable. We work closely with operators to ensure that they are able to perform to the contracted standards and the accepted Contract terms & conditions.

### Recommendation 5:

A single unified Local Bus and Education Transport Contract terms & conditions should be produced.

## Performance Monitoring

Unless we monitor contract performance effectively all the efforts to raise the standard of transport in Worcestershire will be wasted. Contracts are monitored against the agreed specification and operators instructed to rectify any faults we may find. Journeys are observed, covertly, at predetermined intervals. Any lapse in standard increases the frequency of our checking.

Penalty points are awarded for each default on that contract. A proportion of these may be removed each time the service is monitored and found to be performing correctly. Incorrect invoicing and failing to provide passenger numbers and financial information are

defaults that will also attract penalty points. This highlights operators not performing to our standards and allows us to work together in rectifying problems quickly. Monitoring officers will annually review contract performance, at a formal meeting, with each operator.

#### Recommendation 6:

To raise standards and improve the attractiveness of public transport, the award of contracts and grants should take greater account of historic operator compliance with contract specifications including

- Reliability and Punctuality
- Condition and specification of the vehicle(s)
- Staff appearance, training and attitude
- Invoice history (timely submission and accuracy)

#### Performance Management

A strategy on performance monitoring at a high level underpins processes to achieve best value by targeting resources and to meet mandatory reporting requirements. The strategy must cover Local Bus Services, in house services and Community Transport.

This will be achieved through identifying and quantifying opportunities for improvement, measuring performance of in house services for comparison with the private sector, supporting contract management processes and allocation of grants by measuring compliance with agreed deliverables and complying with reporting requirements at local and national levels by providing accurate information in a timely manner.

More detailed performance information is required to plan and implement new initiatives so that robust Business Cases and implementation plans will be created to ensure that future projects result in successful outcomes. These requirements will be infrequent and very specific.

In designing the strategy, we must be mindful of the potential issues relating to the sensitivity of commercial bus services and capability and expertise of the local bus operators who must supply this data and the resources available to the County Council for the processing and analysis of the data provided.

In making this judgment, it is vital to ensure that the data required is sufficient in terms of frequency, reporting periods and detail to meet the purpose for which it is intended. There must also be a distinction between data required for ongoing monitoring and data required for specific in depth exercises.

**Recommendation 7:**

Performance Monitoring by the County Council should include the following areas

- Bus passenger journey Information
- Performance of Contracted Services and Grant Supported Services against strategic targets.
- Performance of In-House Operated Services

**Recommendation 8:**

Specific performance measures relating to home to school transport are required to address the requirements of the new national indicators

**Recommendation 9:**

The new national performance indicators will require that the County Council takes greater account of accessibility to employment and increasing use of public transport during morning and evening peak travel periods when allocating resources, therefore measures introduced to evaluate contracted services will require further development to make greater allowance for these factors.

**Recommendation 10:**

The application of standard transport industry performance measures to in house services potentially offers scope for improved efficiency.

---

# Community Transport Best Practice Report November 2007

---



## Executive Summary



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Community Transport Best Practice

This report was commissioned as part of the project to develop the Community Transport Strategy for Worcestershire. It sets out examples of best practice within the Community Transport arena and draws on these to help shape the future strategy for this element of Worcestershire's passenger transport network. The Best Practice Report will form a vital input to the definition of the Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy.

Community Transport is a vital component of the Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy as it provides an important passenger transport resource, which, if well planned, complements other services provided by, for example rail and local bus. In so doing Community Transport helps to provide and enhance passenger transport accessibility in geographic areas (such as deep rural areas) and for particular market sectors (such as the mobility impaired) which other passenger transport modes find difficult to serve.

The effective use of Community Transport and the developments of these schemes should be used to contribute towards an effective, deliverable passenger transport network for Worcestershire, which will meet the diverse needs of its residents.

Community Transport schemes seek to meet local passenger transport needs on a non-profit-making or social enterprise basis, often involving large numbers of volunteers. A wide range of transport services can be classified as 'community transport'. These include, for example:

- Car-sharing and vehicle-pooling schemes
- Minibus operations, including fully accessible vehicles
- Partnership work between operators to provide 'feeder' services to the wider passenger transport network
- Ferry or train services which are promoted by a community organisation
- Door-to-Door Transport<sup>1</sup>

This best practice report examines the current climate of Community Transport in Worcestershire and the areas of potential development, drawing on examples of best practice elsewhere within the sector across the country. Based on the research a series of recommendations have been made on how to best shape the Community Transport strategy as part of the over-arching Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy.

The following sections summarise the key recommendations on the Community Transport Strategy.

### Recommendation 1: Social Enterprise

Social Enterprise is defined as:

---

<sup>1</sup> Enterprising Approaches to Rural Community Transport Research Report and Outline Development Programme  
<http://www.plunkett.co.uk/communitytransport/Resources/transport.pdf>

*"a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners."*<sup>2</sup>

There is considerable potential for Community Transport Operators (CTO's) to adopt a more enterprise-based focus as a way to increase their financial sustainability, and thereby better achieve their social goals. A social enterprise approach can be mutually beneficial to the public and community transport sectors as a move from annual grants to multi-annual service contracts can aid long-term planning and create closer links between funding and delivery targets. This approach can enable some CTOs to provide more services to users for the same level of public sector subsidy.

### **Recommendation**

The social enterprise approach should be considered, where appropriate, as a method to more effectively and efficiently deliver community transport services.

Working in partnership with local authority, particularly in relation to operating services under contract to them, can increase a CTO's viability as a social enterprise.

CTOs operating as social enterprises often need continuing support from their local authority in the form of both funding and advice.

Social entrepreneurs can be key to ensuring the success of a social enterprise.

### **Recommendation 2: Partnership Working**

It is essential that any strategy addresses positive partnership working and promotes this not only between the Authority and local Community Transport schemes but also between the schemes and external organisations with shared goals and social targets.

Community Transport schemes rely on funding from a variety of sources and by working in partnership with a variety of organisations enable them to grow and develop within their communities. This requires Community Transport Operators (CTO's) to be successful in partnership working with these other organisations and funding bodies. In this section we will be looking at examples of successful partnerships within the Community Transport sector and how this can be related back to Worcestershire and it's development of a Community Transport Strategy.

---

<sup>2</sup> DTI Social Enterprise Unit, "Strategy for Success" 2004

## Recommendation

At present Community Transport schemes in the county are generally independent of one another and while they interact at a local forum level do not have this unified approach to their operations. This would require a sharing of resources and recognition of shared interests across the County rather than the current more localised approach. Through a joint approach to common problems resources that are shared will allow greater development possibilities within both the local view of the schemes and countywide approach of a Community Transport strategy.

By working in partnership with other organisations with similar strategic goals and objectives a more unified approach can be made to tackling collective issues. Instead of separate organisations trying to achieve the same goals individually a more collective approach can have greater outcomes for all. The Community Transport Strategy should encourage this, not only with partnerships between the County Council and local Community Transport Schemes, but with the Health Authority and other local agencies with similar strategic objectives and, importantly, funding opportunities.

## Recommendation 3: Funding

Sustainable funding is a key issue for all Community Transport schemes. How we manage our funding streams to these schemes impacts greatly on their success or failure and their ability to meet Worcestershire's integrated passenger transport objectives. This section examined the funding available within the voluntary and community sector. By looking at examples of best practice, through the Best Practice in Grant Funding Report commissioned by Worcestershire County Council as part of its Shopping, Investing and Giving programme funding opportunities will be identified.

The County Council corporately is changing the way it funds the voluntary sector and this will have a change on the way Community Transport schemes are funded in the future. The traditional one-year grants are now being adapted to three-year strategic grants to help both Voluntary and Community Schemes have more stability and development opportunities and the Authority to meet it's strategic objectives. Funding in this area can be both locally based and from National income streams therefore Community Transport Schemes should be encouraged to look at all possibility's for funding their schemes with the County Council as a key partner.

## Recommendation

The key funding recommendation is to develop the existing funding arrangements in line with the corporate policy for funding the Voluntary and Community Sector. By ceasing the rolling 12 month grant scheme and moving towards strategic grants over 3 years it will allow greater development and opportunity for schemes in line with the strategic vision of the County Council.

These 3-year grants will be awarded with increased expectations on the Community Transport Sector and the County Council will want greater emphasis put on areas of development such as:

- Quality of services
- Types of vehicles
- Driver Training provided
- Greater Integration with mainstream public transport services
- Development of modern ticketing systems
- Increasing passenger information

There are areas that are also in line with other parts of the Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy and can demonstrate this joined up approach across the passenger transport services. Part of this vision is to increase the ability to realise best value from the grants that are awarded.

## Recommendation 4: Integration

The Community Transport strategies and policies of the Local Authorities studied, all recognise that Community Transport is part of a wider passenger transport network, and cannot and should not be considered in isolation. The majority of passenger transport journeys will continue to be made by conventional scheduled services, provided by the commercial sector.

It is a statutory duty of the County Council to co-ordinate services thus where possible avoiding duplication with parallel services, which will maximise the use of resources both in terms of vehicles and funding. The other sub-strategies must fully consider the role and needs of Community Transport.

Through the area review process and accessibility mapping Worcestershire County Council will be able to evaluate and plan the network as a whole, and then identify how these accessibility levels can be achieved using the whole spectrum of passenger transport available.

### **Recommendation**

Community Transport is recognised as part of the Integrated Transport Network for Worcestershire.

There should be co-ordination between schemes to increase effectiveness and efficiency, and to ensure a fair and equitable service across the County.

The needs of Community Transport users and operators are given full consideration when formulating other Strategies and Policies and when their recommendations are implemented.

### **Recommendation 5: Information Technology**

Providing transport services that respond to the needs of our communities, whilst balancing costs and service quality, is an ongoing challenge for many planning, funding, and service delivery organisations. Information Technology (I.T.) is crucial to the development of any Community Transport Scheme in the present day. IT systems can help automate many tasks - including client registration, trip booking, route planning and general daily administrative tasks to help improve business and operational processes.

IT systems can be used to help schemes with their scheduling, dispatching and performing 'what if' scenarios that are key functions that help deliver services and manage costs.

### **Recommendation**

Through partnership working IT should be used to develop Community Transport schemes and look to optimise opportunities operationally, financially and administratively. It is recommended that such systems be introduced across the Community Transport sector in Worcestershire in partnership with both the local districts and the County Council. Through partnership the appropriate systems can be identified, sourced and managed with less problems and increased chances of success than individual schemes trying to implement systems individually.

### **Summary**

This report provides several examples of best practice within the area of Community Transport that should be considered in developing a Community Transport Strategy for Worcestershire. The resulting recommendations should be used in consultation with other passenger transport officers within the County Council. Community Transport Schemes affected by such a strategy and other interested parties to help shape the strategy in a unified way.

## Recommendation

To help deliver the recommendations arising from this best practice review it is recommended that the County Council commit to recruiting a dedicated Community Transport Officer. This will facilitate Community Transport schemes in achieving the recommendations and act as a liaison between the sector and both internal departments and external agencies.

The areas looked at within this report should not limit the development of the strategy to these specific areas but are here to contribute towards its overall development. It is understood that through consultation other areas of development, and indeed other priorities identified elsewhere in the Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy, may be highlighted as important to developing an effective Community Transport Strategy for Worcestershire.

---

# Passenger Transport Driver Training Best Practice Report

November 2007

---



## Executive Summary



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Driver Training Best Practice

This review of best practice was undertaken to create a framework within which a Driver Training Strategy could be developed as part of a planned overall Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy.

The most recent comprehensive review of best practice in Driver Training was undertaken by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as part of the Beacon Scheme (Round Seven). This scheme is designed to identify and reward excellence and innovation in local government.

It is recognised that Worcestershire County Council is innovative, as the administration of Driver Training has been separated from Road Safety. This change was made in recognition of the importance of Driver Training in the provision of a high quality public transport service, as well as the part it plays in creating a safer driving environment.

The Beacon Scheme identified certain objectives needed for best practice. These include improved partnership working, an effective data/evidence lead approach, the importance of leadership and culture and the targeting of certain groups

#### Recommendation 1:

Targeted Driver Training will enhance the safe use of the county's roads by whatever mode. This approach will be developed in full consultation with partners and stakeholders, and will require a thorough review of the objectives and methods of consultation and partnership working.

The expected result is the comprehensive training of drivers for all the different modes of road transport, including public transport provision. This will cover customer care, disability and customer awareness, first aid, as well as traditional driving skills including legislative compliance. It will ensure that we take the lead in championing best practice.

In addition, a targeted approach towards developing risk awareness, and training the most vulnerable groups of road users (newly qualified drivers, the elderly and motorcyclists), will ensure that Worcestershire continues to 'raise the bar' in the overall area of Road Safety.

## Recommendation 2:

Driver Training in Worcestershire County Council through cost effective partnership with properly qualified and mentored third party service providers, will offer:

- *Comprehensive driver training for all passenger-carrying vehicles on behalf of Worcestershire County Council.*
- *Driver Assessment as required for all WCC employees/subcontractors, delivering reduced accident rates and improved insurance costs.*
- *Continued delivery on behalf of our partners of Driver Improvement, and any further courses (such as Speed Awareness), which may be introduced as part of a comprehensive offender re-education programme*
- *Delivery of advice, training and assessment for all drivers of passenger carrying vehicles used for private and commercial hire, especially those providing subcontract services for schools, special needs, hackney and private hire taxi in Worcestershire.*
- *Development and delivery of CPC training and assessment programmes from September 2008 (Passengers) and September 2009 (Freight) for all small and medium sized commercial operations in Worcestershire*

