

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION TAKEN BY AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER

This form **MUST** be used to record any decision taken by the Elected Mayor or an individual Executive Member (Portfolio Holder).

The form must be completed and passed to the Chief Officer Legal, Performance and Democratic Services no later than NOON on the second working day after the day on which the decision is taken. No action may be taken to implement the decision(s) recorded on this form until 7 days have passed and the Chief Officer responsible for Legal, Performance and Democratic Services has confirmed the decision has not been called in.

1. Description of decision

- Withdraw decision item 13 from the Executive Committee of 20 November 2024.
- Agree to Re-tender the rural bus services routes on the basis of both re-provision as is currently and also an optimised service level requirement based on the bus patronage information set out in Appendix 1.
- Instruct officers to develop a proposal(s) for the sustainable funding and also priority of funding for future bus services and that to be brought back to the Executive for approval prior to implementation.
- Confirm the intention to make the best use of Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding to support bus operations across the Borough.
- In line with recommendation 50 (2)/24 in relation to the Efficiency Plan to review the savings proposals following consultation and setting the 25/26 budget to remove the bus related saving.

2. Date of decision

30 December 2024

3. Reasons for decision

To facilitate the procurement of Rural Transport contract to allow continuation of service together with the measures detailed in this report will afford the local authority a fair, consistent, transparent, methodology to determine the priority in which it assists with the provision of public transport services in the future. Applying a criteria based approach to analysing the priority of bus service provision will also bring the Council in line with other Local Authorities who already have such measures and matrixes in place.

4. Alternatives considered and rejected

Consideration was briefly considered but quickly rejected to not renewing the Rural Transport Contact, as this would have a detrimental impact on rural communities, creating social isolation, inability to attend healthcare facilities, and potentially increasing financial deprivation for removing access to job opportunities, educational establishments and more economical food and retail suppliers.

5. How decision is to be funded

The financial implications are unknown at this stage and will not be confirmed until the routes go through a procurement process and are retendered early 2025 with a commencement of 1st April 2025. The current passenger Transport/ Route Support budget is £1.4m some of this budget is offset with

(Bus Services Review: Report 30 December 2024)

Government Grants.

6. Conflicts of interest

Name of all Executive members who were consulted AND declared a conflict of interest.	Nature of interest	Did Standards Committee give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and date of dispensation)	Did the Chief Executive give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and the date of the dispensation).

The Mayor has been consulted on this decision

Approved

Signed *Nicola Gribble*

Date: 30 December 2024

Name of Decision Taker: Councillor Nicola Gribble

This is a public document. A copy of it must be given to the Chief Officer responsible for Legal, Performance and Democratic Services as soon as it is completed.

Date decision published: 31 December 2024.....

Date decision can be implemented if not called in: 09 January 2025.....

(Decision to be made exempt from call in...NO)

Bedford Borough Council - Portfolio Holder for Environment

Date of Report: 30 December 2024

Report by: Chief Officer for Environment

Subject: BUS SERVICES: REVIEW OF COUNCIL FUNDED PROVISION

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the withdraw recommendation for decision item 13 from the Executive Committee of 20 November 2024 relating to the review of Rural Transport Contracts. The report sets out the review which has now been conducted on these services, by assessing passenger usage data (appendix 1 shows patronage on the services during the full months of September, October 2024) and bus user feedback acquired via the Bus Users survey which was carried out at the beginning of this year (appendix 2). The following routes form part of this contract: 22, 25, 27, 28, 28A
- 1.2 The report also highlights the bus network and commercial services which receive additional support using Section 106 (S106) funding and de minimis agreements (*service subsidy to enhance existing service*) as well as Community Transport, for those unable to access mainstream services.
- 1.3 To help future decision making on the requirements of local bus service funding, this report also sets out recommendations on a criterion to be established to be reported back to Executive for approval prior to implementation.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Portfolio Holder for Environment to consider, seek clarification and, if satisfied to:

- (i) Withdraw decision item 13 from the Executive Committee of 20 November 2024.**
- (ii) Agree to Re-tender the rural bus services routes on the basis of both re-provision as is currently and also an optimised service level requirement based on the bus patronage information set out in Appendix 1.**
- (iii) Instruct officers to develop a proposal(s) for the sustainable funding and also priority of funding for future bus**

(Bus Services Review: Report 30 December 2024)

- services and that to be brought back to the Executive for approval prior to implementation.
- (iv) **Confirm the intention to make the best use of Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding to support bus operations across the Borough.**
 - (v) **In line with recommendation 50 (2)/24 in relation to the Efficiency Plan to review the savings proposals following consultation and setting the 25/26 budget to remove the bus related saving.**

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The current rural bus contract requires 5.5 buses on weekdays. However, the passenger data suggests that these routes are over resourced with vehicles running empty at various times. The proposed changes would accommodate the current travelling patterns displayed in the passenger data while allowing the services to run more efficiently, thereby optimising the number of vehicles required to deliver the services (Appendix 1 shows passenger number on the services covering the last recent two months). Both as is and proposed changes will be tendered and assessed prior to a decision being made.
- 3.2 These measures detailed in this report will afford the local authority a fair, consistent, transparent, methodology to determine the priority in which it assists with the provision of public transport services. With an open review process which will give the Council, operators and the travelling public notice of any possible changes to transport services. Applying a criteria based approach to analysing the priority of bus service provision will also bring the Council in line with other Local Authorities who already have such measures and matrixes in place.

4. THE CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 The previous Rural Transport contract was in place with Grant Palmer Passenger Transport since 2015; this expired on 31st July 2024, ahead of current review period. Following a procurement exercise, Stagecoach East, was awarded the contract on a short term basis, whilst we conducted the network review. The network has been largely without a formal review of passenger traveling patterns, usage or service requirements since 2011. Nationally, the demand for public transport has changed significantly over this period, further exacerbated but the change in travel patterns since the Covid19 pandemic. This has led to concerns that some of the routes may be running with very few or no passengers at various times of the day.
- 4.2 In addition, there are a number of routes which serve areas of new residential and commercial development that are arranged by the Council, using section 106 contributions from developers. These tend to be for periods of up to 3 years to help establish bus services to those developments, with the aim that they may be commercial at the end of the period. In some cases, the funding of these services has continued beyond the initial period of section 106 funding.

Service Improvements to commuters

4.3 Through the recent procurement exercise and the award on the rural contract to Stagecoach East, the Council has worked with the operator to introduce longer hours of operation, with early peak and late evening services, and albeit still in the early stages of this new contract it appears that as a council we have received fewer reports of punctuality which is positive.

4.4 Following a request and grant funding provided to the company by the Department for Transport, Bedford Borough Council has been chosen to be the 'flagship' for a new system. This will provide passengers with live real time information at bus stops, which will also allow bus users to receive journey alerts on their desired services, on platforms such as Whatsapp, messenger and text message.

The same project brings with it the ability to have a journey planner platform on our BBC webpage, that will give bus user the ability to plan their public transport bus journey, from door-to-door with information on nearest bus stops, available infrastructure at locations, timetabling information and cancelled services. The plan is to implement this new innovation on the Bedford network before the end of this current financial year.

5. **DETAILS**

5.1 Bedford Borough Council arranges for several bus services that wouldn't otherwise be provided by the commercial bus market. By their very nature, these tend to be to the rural areas or evening services, where usage is lower. The most significant contract is the Rural Transport Contract which covers the provision of bus services to many of the villages north of Bedford, either side of the A6 corridor.

5.2 Currently, the Council has not set out any formal published criteria to help determine what services, or levels of service, the Council should financially support. Those services supported to date are historically ones that have been necessary to provide to ensure that all villages have a daytime bus service (Monday to Saturday), linking them to Bedford (services 25, 27, 28, 28A, 41). Furthermore, support has been provided to maintain some level of evening service to some parts of the town (services 4,7,8). A local shopper service (22) has also been provided within Bedford and to Peppercorn Park, specifically allowing people who can't access the main bus network to do their shopping. More recently, time-limited BSIP plus funding has been used to support the provision of a Park & Ride service (service 44). Support is also allocated to support community transport, for those users who are unable to access mainstream services. The agreement currently in place are as follows:

5.3 The table below details the other agreements currently in place funded from the route support budget. Some of these are long standing de-minimis agreements and/ or previous section 106 agreements which have continued without formal review of usage or travel patterns for many years. The criterion proposed in this paper can be applied to the local travel patterns to assess the ongoing requirement for these agreements in the future

Further work will be undertaken on these routes detailed below next year (2025): but this actual report focuses on the rural bus routes, due to the requirements of a forthcoming tendering exercise which needs to be undertaken to have a new contract in place for 1st April 2025.

Route	Operator	Area	Agreement type	Description
44 service	Grant Palmer Passenger Transport	Wilstead	De minimis	Extension of service into Wilstead
44 Wilstead	Grant Palmer Passenger Transport	Wixams	De minimis	Extension of service into Wixams
68	Grant Palmer Passenger Transport	Kempston West End	S106	Extension of route to serve Wilkinson Road, development
68	Grant Palmer Passenger Transport	Stewartby	S106	Enhancement of peak time services
41	Stagecoach East	Stagsden	De minimis	Extension of service into Stagsden
53	Stagecoach East	Wootton	De minimis	Extension of route to serve the Fields Road, developments
9	Stagecoach East	Shortstown	S106	Extension of route to serve New Cardington development
4, 7, 8	Stagecoach East	Queens Park, Great Denham, Goldington, Putnoe,	De minimis	Late evening town services (after 5.30)
Door to Door	Beds Rural Communities Charity (BRCC)	Various	Community Transport	Dial-a-Ride community transport service

5.4 Current rural contract route operation and analysis

Service 22: Bedford Shopper (Peppercorn Park; Tavistock Court; Woodlands

A2B on behalf of Stagecoach (financially supported by BBC) Monday – Friday (local shopping journeys off-peak morning. Average 34 passengers per day; equates to 5.67 passengers per bus trip.

Service 25: Bedford – Harrold – Hinwick or Souldrop/Knotting – Wymington - Rushden

Stagecoach (financially supported by BBC) Monday – Saturday (approximately hourly) between 0630 and 1930 (requirement for 2 buses). Full route covered.

(Bus Services Review: Report 30 December 2024)

Typical week - total 1022 passenger journeys; equates to average of 6.55 passengers per bus trip or 511 passenger journeys per bus operated.

Grant Palmer (commercial) Monday – Saturday (hourly) between 0645 and 1830. Operates only between Harrold and Bedford, with no service to Stevington, Odell, Hinwick, Podington, Sharnbrook, Souldrop, Knotting, Yelden, Wymington. Also, does not provide some early morning or late afternoon/evening journeys. Based on usage data for the w/c 9/9/24, this would mean a total of 374 passenger journeys (36% of all journeys on the service) over the 6 days would not be satisfied by the commercial service. About a third of these are journeys between the villages to/from Rushden, particularly Wymington.

Service 27: Bedford – Cardington – Cople – Willington – Great Barford – Renhold – Wilden – Ravensden – Salph End - Bedford

A2B on behalf of Stagecoach (financially supported by BBC) Monday – Friday (irregular) between 0720 and 1855 (requirement for 1 bus).

Typical day – average of 35 passengers per day; equates to 3.9 passengers per bus trip; average of 175 passengers per bus per week.

Service 28: Bedford – Thurleigh – Riseley – Swineshead – Upper/Lower Dean – Kimbolton

Stagecoach (financially supported by BBC) Monday – Saturday (every 2 hours) between 0710 and 1845 (requirement for 1 bus). Typical week - total 337 passenger journeys; equates to average of 4.7 passengers per bus trip or 337 passenger journeys per bus operated.

Riseley and Thurleigh account for 60% of passengers. In w/c 9/9/24 there were just 3 passengers from Swineshead and 5 from Kimbolton, with no one from Upper or Lower Dean, bringing into question the need to operate a service north of Riseley.

Service 28A: Bedford – Colmworth – Keysoe – Little Staughton

Stagecoach (financially supported by BBC) Monday – Saturday (every 2 hours) between 0810 and 1915 (requirement for 1 bus). Typical week - total 151 passenger journeys; equates to average of 2.1 passengers per bus trip or 151 passenger journeys per bus operated.

About half the passengers travel within Bedford between the town centre and Kimbolton Road, meaning that there is limited demand from the villages. Most use is off-peak.

5.5 The Rural Transport contract services review – optimised service requirements

(Bus Services Review: Report 30 December 2024)

Service 22: Bedford Shopper (Peppercorn Park; Tavistock Court; Woodlands

- Continue as present (with option to optimise a number of days per week operated depending on patronage, to be kept under review). Timetable could be interworked with other services, with some flexibility on actual times of journeys.

Service 25: Bedford – Harrold – Hinwick or Souldrop/Knotting – Wymington – Rushden

- Much of the requirement between Harrold, Carlton, Pavenham and Bedford, will be met by the Grant Palmer commercial service. Therefore, it would be possible to procure a more limited service to fill the gaps around the commercial service, either times or to serve those villages not otherwise served. This would optimise the number of vehicles required from 2 to 1 over current arrangements.
- There may also be scope to work with North Northamptonshire Council to jointly provide a service covering the Wymington area.

Service 27: Bedford – Cardington – Cople – Willington – Great Barford – Renhold – Wilden – Ravensden – Salph End - Bedford

- Transfer Renhold, Wilden and Ravensden to service 28A. Provide 2 or 3 journeys (off-peak) for Cople, Cardington and Great Barford; timetable interworked with other services, so no dedicated vehicle required.

Service 28: Bedford – Thurleigh – Riseley – Swineshead – Upper/Lower Dean – Kimbolton

- Maintain number of journeys but only operate between Riseley and Bedford, freeing up time for the bus to interwork with another service.

Service 28A: Bedford – Colmworth – Keysoe – Little Staughton

- Cater for the demand by providing 3 off-peak journeys each way and amend route to include Wilden, Ravensden and Renhold (instead of service 27).

5.6 It is proposed to tender the rural bus services on the basis as is now (without changes) and as an optimised service requirement level to allow the industry to respond in an innovative way.

5.7 Proposed criteria to measure priority of funding

Funding source	Considerations and criteria
Developer s106 funding	Funding provided for duration of agreement. At the end of the period the bus operator should determine whether it can continue the service in full or partially commercially. The Council will not consider potential funding unless a community of more than X population is more than 800m from a bus service. If this criterion is met, then consideration would be given to a supported bus service, but in line with the criteria and measures used for other supported bus services as set out below.
Council funded bus services – de minimis agreements and contracted	<p>Priority for the provision of bus services will be given as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monday to Saturday daytime services for communities of more than X population that would otherwise be more than 800m away from a bus service or unserved. 2. Bespoke off-peak services (certain days of the week) to assist access to shops for people with limited mobility. 3. Sunday services in Bedford town. 4. Evening services in Bedford town. 5. Other services <p>The criteria used to compare the current service performance will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patterns of current usage. • Subsidy cost per passenger. • Demand – average passenger per trip or per vehicle hour. • Main journey purposes provided for (employment, education, shopping and personal business, leisure/recreation) • Catchment - population within Xm of the service. • Proportion of households without access to a car in the catchment of the service.

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5.8 Officers will contract manage the transport contracts robustly, making sure passenger and other contract data is provided in a timely manner throughout from all operators, thus will enable the council to react to demand and be able to better plan services in the future. Though our enhanced partnership and regular operator meetings now in place officers will review patronage, service performance e.g. punctuality to ensure an effective and efficient bus service operate across the borough.

6. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

6.1 Implementation of a Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) service – Consideration was given to a DRT service but was rejected as the initial investment required for vehicles and a management system tends to be significant and can require additional staffing to operate this system.

6.2 Consideration was briefly considered but quickly rejected to not renewing the Rural Transport Contact, as this would have a detrimental impact on rural communities, creating social isolation, inability to attend healthcare facilities, and potentially increasing financial deprivation for removing access to job opportunities, educational establishments and more economical food and retail suppliers.

7. KEY IMPLICATIONS

<p>7.1 Legal Issues</p>	<p>Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) and operators were required by Government to jointly produce a local Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) to help deliver the National Bus Strategy.</p> <p>The Transport Act 1985 places a requirement on local authorities to have regard to the needs of their residents and to provide financial support for local bus services as they see fit to meet those needs. The duty is ‘to have regard to the needs’, rather on the actual provision of services. There is a requirement to consider the specific needs of older and disabled people, with powers to provide funding for service provision, such as community transport. Over time, pressures on local authority budgets have made it more difficult for local authorities to fund services that are not commercially viable.</p> <p>Local authorities have powers to provide services, under tender, to meet public transport requirements within their area that would not be met in any other way. This is common practice. Some services in any given area are likely to be subsidised as councils have deemed them important routes for social and economic reasons. Bus operators must give notice to the local authority and Traffic Commissioner that they plan to introduce, change or withdraw a bus route.</p>
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	The procurement of the supported bus service contracts will need to be compliant with public procurement law as well as the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. Ongoing support from Procurement and Legal is required throughout any procurement process.
7.2 Policy Issues	Local authorities are required to set out their transport policies in a Local Transport Plan (LTP), which is subject to periodic review.
7.3 Resource Issues	<p>Although progress is being worked on to improve the Council's financial position, the financial environment remains challenging. The UK is experiencing the highest levels of inflation for decades, putting significant pressure on the cost of delivering our services. Coupled with continued increasing demand for council services and fixed Government funding this requires an increased focus on financial management to ensure we can continue to deliver services within available funding. In addition to these immediate challenges, the medium-term financial outlook beyond 2024/25 remains uncertain.</p> <p>With no clarity on central government funding in the medium term, our working assumption is that financial resources will continue to be constrained, as they have been for the majority of the past decade. This places an onus on the Council to continue to consider issues of financial sustainability as a priority in order to ensure stable provision of services in the medium term.</p> <p>The financial implications are unknown at this stage and will not be confirmed until the route go through a procurement process and are retendered early 2025 with a commencement of 1st April 2025.</p>
7.4 Risks	A critical risk for all Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) and bus operators has been rising cost pressures. This is causing industry-wide problems with the cost of fuel, competition for drivers with other industries, and the increased cost of materials for maintenance. This is happening at the same time as travel patterns have changed and we have still not reached patronage recovery to pre-pandemic levels.
7.5 Environmental Implications	The Council supporting a more efficient and optimised bus service will reduce transport emissions.
7.6 Equalities Impact	There will be impacts on people maintaining independence where bus routes are changed. There are mitigating options for people to change travel habits to deal with changing timetables, by using alternative bus routes that may be in the area. Please see Appendix 3.

7.7 Impact on Families	Concessionary Travel Scheme, providing discounted travel to vulnerable users where cost may be a barrier to using public transport.
7.8 Community Safety and Resilience	Not applicable
7.9 Impact on Health and Wellbeing	Where locations have an air quality issue, and in conjunction with other measures, reducing transport emissions will help mitigate health issues. Providing access to reliable bus services can help to reduce social isolation, and increase the opportunity to attend health care appointments, access to employment and educational facilities.

8. **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS AND OUTCOME**

8.1 The following Council units or Officers and/or other organisations have been consulted in preparing this report:

Director of Environment – Craig Austin
Chief Officer for Finance – Rhian Bevan
Interim Monitoring Officer – Lee Phanco

All relevant comments have been incorporated into the report, as necessary.

9. **WARD COUNCILLOR VIEWS**

9.1 This report is not relevant to an individual ward but affects all wards.

10. **CONTACTS AND REFERENCES**

10.1 Please see references in the table below:

Report Contact Officer	Paul Pace – Chief Officer (Environment) paul.pace@bedford.gov.uk ext. 47275 Saragh Fleckney - Manager for Passenger Transport and Sustainable Travel saragh.fleckney@bedford.gov.uk ext. 42122
File Reference	I: Environment/Committees/Reports/Decisions

Previous Relevant Minutes	None
Background Papers	<p>Executive - Wednesday, 20th November 2024 6.30 pm – Agenda Item 13 Bus Services: Review of Council Funded Provision Bus Service Report</p> <p>Executive - Wednesday, 20th November 2024 6.30 pm – Agenda Item 9 Budget Preparation Process: 2025/2026 – Efficiency Plan Savings Proposals for Public Consultation Efficiency Plan Savings Report</p> <p>Records of Decision - 20 November 2024 Item 6. Budget Preparation Process 2025/2026: Efficiency Plan Savings Proposals for Public Consultation Item 10. Bus Services: Review of Council Funded Provision Records of Decision</p>
Appendices	Appendix 1 - Passenger Data Appendix 2 - Bus users survey

Appendix 1. Passenger data for September and October 2024

Sum of Passengers								
Row Labels	Sept	Oct						
22	391	161	Union Street	147	179	Tyne Crescent	3	0
Bedford bus station	75	56	West End	0	16	28A	529	453
Clapham Green	21	0	Wymington	142	160	Bedford TC	162	167
Cowper Road	13	0	Yelden/Rushden Road	1	0	Bolnhurst	1	1
Peppercorn Park	216	72	27	255	81	Cleat Hill	37	22
Sainsbury's	7	0	Bedford bus station	246	65	Colmworth	35	36
The Limes	25	24	Cardington	0	2	Keysoe	16	12
Warwick Avenue	34	9	Cardington Road	0	3	Keysoe Row	3	1
25	3621	4190	Renhold	4	10	Kimbolton Road	38	22
Bedford TC	1195	1318	Salph End	1	0	Little Staughton	10	15
Carlton	270	282	Wilden	4	1	Pemberley Avenue	186	71
Clapham	741	895	28	1308	1536	Roothams Green	0	2
Harrold	300	366	Bedford TC	563	700	Union Street	26	102
Higham Park Rd	7	9	Bletsoe	28	16	Wilden	15	2
Hinwick	12	8	Cleat Hill	82	79	(blank)		
Knott Green	1	4	Kimbolton	27	40	(blank)		
Knotting	1	0	Kimbolton Road	24	40	Grand Total	6534	6613
Lt Odell	3	10	Pemberley Avenue	131	80			
Melchbourne	0	1	Pertenhall	4	3			
Newton Bromswold	3	7	Riseley	265	299			
Oakley	123	161	Swineshead	10	13			
Odell	4	5	The Deans	2	3			
Pavenham	73	80	Thurleigh	139	186			
Podington	5	3	Union Street	33	77			
Rushden	287	339	22A	430	192			
Sainsbury's	156	180	Ashmead Road	226	61			
Sharnbrook	91	98	Baptist Church	3	1			
Souldrop	10	6	Bedford bus station	174	55			
Stevington	43	63	Dove Road	0	14			
			Gainsborough Rise	1	3			
			Kempston	2	2			
			Larkway	6	31			

	Park Road North	13	25	
	Saxon Centre	2	0	

- The table above shows the total travelling figures for each route and boarding point, for each month. Average boarding numbers per routes are detailed in 5.4 - Current rural contract route operation and analysis

Appendix 2. Bus users survey

This report was generated on 27/02/24. Overall 2490 respondents completed this questionnaire. The report has been filtered to show the responses for 'All Respondents'. A total of 2490 cases fall into this category.

Are you responding to this survey: (Please select one box)

On your own behalf (2359) 94.7%
On behalf of another individual (117) 4.7%
On behalf of an organisation (14) 0.6%

Last week, which of the following modes of travel did you use to make local journeys within Bedford Borough or to/from neighbouring areas? (Please select all boxes that apply)

Bus (1472) 59.1%
Train (255) 10.2%
Walk (1366) 54.9%
Car/Van (as driver) (1102) 44.3%
Car/Van (as passenger) 36.3% (904)
Bicycle (212) 8.5%
Wheelchair or Mobility Scooter (42) 1.7%
Motorcycle or motor scooter (32) 1.3%

How often do you use a bus? (Please select one box)

2-4 days pr week (592) 23.8%
Once per week (275) 11.0%
Very Occasionally (578) 23.2%
Never (238) 9.6%
5 or more days per week (386) 15.5%
Once per month (120) 4.8%
Less than once per week, but more than once per month (301) 12.1%

Which bus service do you mainly use? (Please select all options that apply)

Stagecoach (1447) 86.4%
Grant Palmer (Passenger Transport) (476) 28.4%
UNO (University Bus) (110) 6.6%

To what extent does this bus service meet your day-to-day travel requirements? (Please select one box)

It meets some of my travel (675) 40.3%
It doesn't meet my needs (512) 30.6%
It meets a lot of my travel my needs (477) 28.5%
Don't know (10) 0.06%

What is your main purpose for using the bus service? (Please select one box)

Travel to or from shopping (627) 37.5%
Travel to or from work (468) 28.0%
Travel for another reason (417) 24.9%
Travel to or from education (162) 9.7%

How satisfied are you with various aspects of the bus service that you mainly use?

(Please select one box per row) (Times the service runs)

Fairly satisfied (503) 30.0%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (165) 9.9%
Very dissatisfied (451) 26.9%
Very satisfied (120) 7.5%
Fairly dissatisfied (426) 25.4%
Don't know (3) 0.2%

How satisfied are you with various aspects of the bus service that you mainly use?

(Please select one box per row) (Friendliness of drivers)

Fairly satisfied (689) 41.2%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (294) 17.6%
Very dissatisfied (55) 3.3%
Very satisfied (528) 31.5%
Fairly dissatisfied (99) 5.9%
Don't know (9) 0.5%

How satisfied are you with various aspects of the bus service that you mainly use?

(Please select one box per row) (Value for money)

Fairly satisfied (475) 28.4%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (203) 12.1%
Very dissatisfied (77) 4.6%
Very satisfied (734) 43.8%
Fairly dissatisfied (119) 7.1%
Don't know (66) 3.9%

How satisfied are you with various aspects of the bus service that you mainly use?

(Please select one box per row) (Information about the service)

Fairly satisfied (352) 21.0%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (363) 21.7%
Very dissatisfied (357) 21.3%
Very satisfied (150) 9.0%
Fairly dissatisfied (352) 21.0%
Don't know (16) 1.0%

What sort of improvements would you most like to see to the bus service you use the most?

(Please select no more than three boxes)

More reliable service (i.e. bus turns up according to timetable) (1252) 74.8%
Buses run more often (9838) 56.0%
Longer time of operation (earlier in the morning; later in the evening; Sunday) (511) 30.5%
Provision of live information on vehicle arrival and departure times (356) 21.3%
Cost of fare (256) 15.3%
Faster journey times (more direct route; buses with priority over other traffic) (254) 15.2%
Stations and stops that allow interchange with other bus/rail services (189) 11.3%
Ability to use one ticket on any bus (172) 10.3%
Low or zero emission buses (117) 7.0%
Provision of journey planning information websites (92) 5.5%
Provision of on-bus Wi-Fi (70) 4.2%
Better seat comfort and leg room on the bus (68) 4.1

If the improvements you have chosen were made, would you use the bus... (Please select one box)

A lot more (1015) 60.6%
A little more (436) 27.7%
The same as now (183) 10.9%
Don't know (13) 0.8%

What do you consider are the most important factors that would encourage you to use the bus?

(Please select no more than three boxes)

More reliable service (i.e. bus turns up according to timetable) (486) 59.6%
Buses run more often (390) 47.8%
Cost of Fares (227) 27.8%
Longer time of operation (earlier in the morning; later in the evening; Sunday) (191) 23.4%
Faster journey times (more direct route; buses with priority over other traffic) (149) 18.3%
Provision of live information on vehicle arrival and departure times (117) 14.3%
Stations and stops that allow interchange with other bus/rail services (116) 14.2%
Ability to use one ticket on any bus (76) 9.3%
Other (please provide details) (76) 9.3%
Provision of journey planning information (e.g. websites) (62) 7.6%
Shorter distance to the bus stop from start / end point of journey (57) 7%
Low or zero emission buses (41) 5.0%

If the improvements you have chosen were made, would you use the bus....

(Please select one box)

A lot more (362) 44.4%
A little more (338) 41.4%
Don't know (77) 9.4%
The same as now (39) 4.8%

Do you believe that buses are relevant in today's society? (Please select one box)

Yes (2429) 97.6%

No (61) 2.4%

If "Yes" to question 14, what is the most important reason for you thinking that? (Please select one box)

Provides transport for those without a car (1152) 47.4%

Provides an alternative to the car (choice) (363) 14.9%

Provides access to facilities and opportunities (shops, work, education, healthcare) (275) 11.3%

Reduces congestion (one bus can carry the same number of people as up to 70 cars) (265) 10.9%

Allows independent travel for young people (150) 6.2%

Helps tackle climate change reducing carbon emissions (116) 4.8%

Environmental and health benefit (air quality) (108) 4.4%

Please indicate your age group? (Please select one box)

56 - 70 (639) 25.7%	41 - 55 (529) 21.2%
21 - 40 (556) 22.3%	Under 20 (165) 6.6%
71+ (544) 21.8%	Prefer not to say (57) 2.3%

Do you hold an older or disabled person's concessionary bus pass? (Please select one box)

No (1625) 65.3%

Yes (865) 34.7%