



12 February 2015

Agenda Item:

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORT, PROPERTY AND ENVIRONMENT

STRATEGIC PASSENGER TRANSPORT FRAMEWORK – LOCAL BUS SERVICES

Purpose of the Report

1. To advise Committee of the outcome of the stakeholder consultation exercise on the proposed changes to the Strategic Passenger Transport Framework (SPTF).
2. To report on the progress with the monitoring arrangements for the Council's Strategic Passenger Transport Framework.
3. To implement the revised Strategic Passenger Transport Framework from March 2015 and use it as part of the review of all bus service provision in Summer 2015.

Information and Advice

4. On 9 October 2014 Committee approved a revised Strategic Passenger Transport Framework for assessing the need for the future provision of supported local bus services in Nottinghamshire. The County Council currently spends over £4m a year on local bus services and it is vital that the funding is used efficiently and effectively.

The SPTF scoring criteria includes six factors covering the following:

- Subsidy per passenger
- Passengers per journey
- Availability of alternative public transport services in settlements served
- Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)
- Primary Journey purpose i.e. employment, shopping, education
- Car ownership levels in the settlements served.

The criteria scores were reviewed to better reflect:

- changing national and local priorities which focus on economic regeneration, job creation and learning;
- the County Council's Strategic Plan – Re-defining Your Council;

- ongoing funding pressures;
- the new Strategic Management Framework;

The draft SPTF scoring approved by the Committee in October for consultation includes an increase in the scores for the IMD (Index of Multiple Deprivation) and journey purpose factors in order to better reflect the Council's strategic objectives. It was also agreed to simplify the journey purpose categories to emphasise the importance of employment and training.

Stakeholder Consultation

5. Stakeholders were consulted on the proposed changes through:
 - the County Council website; Consultation pages
 - Emails; sent to all operators on the County Council's 'Provision of Transport Services in Nottinghamshire' framework
 - Operator Liaison and Quality Bus Partnership meetings
6. A Stakeholder consultation on the proposed changes was concluded in December 2014.

The responses from the Quality Bus Partnership and Operator liaison meetings were broadly supportive of the changes and the operators understood the rationale and implications of the changes on continued support for local bus services.

Future Monitoring Arrangements

7. The use of the revised SPTF will greatly enhance the Council's capability to effectively monitor and review supported local bus services, and enable objective assessments and recommendations to be made about future service developments.
8. A particular feature of the SPTF is the facility to rank contracts using both financial and operational criteria, therefore supporting a fairer approach to decisions about future support for services, especially during these times of reduced spending.
9. SPFT is a comprehensive and flexible management tool and relies on patronage and income data from the bus operators. Ongoing bus operator investment in ticketing technology helps to improve the robustness of data which is being supplied regularly for the contracts that commenced in summer 2014.
10. As reported to Committee in October 2014, the SPTF will be used when reviewing existing contracts and commissioning new services in the future.
11. It is anticipated that a comprehensive review of all local bus service provision will be undertaken in Summer 2015. The SPTF will form an important part of the review process and resulting recommendations.

Proposals

12. The outcome of the consultation resulted in no changes to the proposal agreed by Committee in October 2014 and attached is the revised SPTF.
13. The revised SPTF is adopted and used to monitor local bus performance and help inform the future decisions on the development of local bus services.
14. A review of all local bus service provision is undertaken in Summer 2015.

Outcomes

15. The SPTF will:
 - better inform decision making on the commissioning of new bus services
 - improve on-going performance management of existing services, by identifying poor performing services
 - better reflect national and local priorities,
 - use the recently established County Council's Strategic Management Framework (SMF) to ensure that services are effectively managed in terms of data and performance
 - ensure prioritisation for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in Nottinghamshire and those without access to alternative means of travel
 - ensure value for money and the provision of good affordable services

Statutory and Policy Implications

16. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Implications for Service Users

17. The introduction of the revised SPTF to determine local bus service investment helps improve the transport offer to new and existing users, therefore, improving their quality of life.

Financial Implications

18. The adoption of the new SPTF for future investment in local bus services will ensure that funding is efficiently and effectively used.

Implications for Sustainability and the Environment

19. The provision of better local bus service options helps promote alternative ways of travel and helps tackle congestion and rising CO2 emissions from transport.
20. The provision of a robust methodology for allocating resources ensures services are economically sustainable in the long term.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 1) The Committee notes the outcome of the stakeholder consultation exercise and adopts the revised SPTF from March 2015.
- 2) The Committee notes the progress with monitoring the Council's Strategic Passenger Transport Framework.
- 3) The Committee agrees to the review of local bus service provision in Summer 2015.

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For any enquiries about this report please contact:
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Constitutional Comments (SMG 15/01/2015)

21. The proposals in this report fall within the remit of this Transport and Highways Committee. By virtue of its Terms of Reference set out in the Council's Constitution, the Committee has responsibility for passenger transport services, including bus and rail initiatives.

Financial Comments (TMR 13/01/2015)

22. The financial implications are set out in paragraph 17 of the report.

Background Papers

None.

Electoral Divisions Affected

All