

"A Step Change for Bus"

Bus Action Plan Summary

"A Catalyst for Change"

The Regional Transport Strategy for the west
of Scotland 2007-2021

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Purpose

This Action Plan is one of a series supporting Strathclyde Partnership for Transport's (SPT) Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), approved by the Scottish Government. This Action Plan sets out the key issues, objectives and recommendations for bus in the SPT area, in line with the Regional Transport Strategy's aspirations for "A Step Change for Bus", aiming to provide significant positive improvements for the travelling public. It summarises work undertaken in analysing the issues, challenges and opportunities for bus, and is intended to set out a clear programme of action to take forward the development of the regional bus network.

Issues, Constraints and Opportunities

The following issues, constraints and opportunities were identified following analysis by SPT and consultation with SPT member councils and stakeholders as part of the RTS development process:

- Bus is the main public transport mode in the west of Scotland – accounting for 75% of all public transport journeys.
- Bus services were de-regulated by the 1985 Transport Act and while overall bus patronage has declined compared to 1986, recent years have seen a limited recovery of bus use. Since 1999/2000, bus patronage in Strathclyde has risen by 8%¹ - annual average of 1% pa.
- The bus networks are determined independently by private operators with minimal consultation with SPT and local authorities.
- Services varies widely in range and consistency so that densely populated urban areas can have too many buses and rural areas too few.
- Commercial services account for 93% of all registered mileage (operated) on the local bus network². SPT supports more than 10 million kilometres of services³. These supported services carried 5 million passengers (approximately 3% of total bus passengers) during 2005/06⁴ at a cost of approximately £4m.
- SPT has introduced demand responsive schemes and currently operate 8 Ring'n'Ride services and extensive Dial-a-Bus services as a response to a gap in the commercial market. There is considerable scope to increase demand responsive bus services.
- Bus operators receive public funding support through the Bus Service Operators' Grant, the consolidated additional cost element of concessionary fare reimbursement as well as the Bus Route Development Grant.
- Regulation of the bus industry through the Traffic Commissioner for Scotland who has 6 inspectors covering the whole country.

¹ DfT / Scottish Executive

² SPT, 2005/06

³ SPT, 2005/06

⁴ SPT, 2005/06

Objective

To implement "A Step Change for Bus" in the west of Scotland over the lifetime of the Strategy, meaning significant positive changes for the travelling public in the region.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed in partnership with member councils and key stakeholders. These recommendations were approved by the Strategy and Programmes committee on 25 January 2008.

A Step Change for Bus - Services and Standards

- SPT to act as agent for Councils to regulate compliance requirements for the operation of registered local bus services including the application of Traffic Regulation Conditions when these become introduced in the area
- SPT to survey on behalf of Councils existing bus provision to ensure adequate service provision which meets customer need
- SPT on behalf of Councils, to scope optimum bus network based on local needs
- SPT, in partnership with Councils, lead on developing Statutory Quality Partnerships, Performance Improvement Plans and where appropriate, Quality contracts
- SPT to pursue a regime of signing up all operators to provide bus stop information or SPT to provide on a recharge basis
- SPT, on behalf of Councils, to develop a programme to improve public transport information, including SPT managing bus stop information
- Continued support for socially necessary bus services, including revitalising criteria for SPT intervention reflecting more dynamic vehicles, car ownership, areas of deprivation, access to services etc
- Develop further protocols for partnership working e.g. Stability and Growth Pact between SPT, Glasgow City Council and First
- Develop and implement initiatives to improve bus provision between areas within the west of Scotland and external areas, and liaise with other RTPs in this regard
- Introduction, further development and implementation of Glasgow City Centre Bus Priority measures
- Development and implementation of Quality Bus Corridors across the region, and expansion of BIAS Streamline
- Agree joint working protocol with Traffic Commissioner / VOSA on bus enforcement and traffic orders
- Investigate and develop improved circumferential routes, including City Regional Orbital bus services
- Improve the notification process for roadworks, including contribution to development of Scottish Guidelines for Roadworks
- Develop a co-ordinated transport network for people using public transport to access healthcare

- Ensure earlier notification of service changes, and limit bus timetable changes to fixed times
- Through partnership, establish minimum standards and an effective consultation vehicle for all stakeholders involving bus operators, member councils and SPT
- Develop and enhance SPT Conditions of Contract - pre-service checks, penalty points, driver training, Traveline, cleanliness, vehicles supplied on mileage-based contracts, turnkey maintenance package.
- Roll-out more remote travel stops with electronic departure times and links to Traveline
- Develop proposals for the provision of bus information to mobile phones
- Improve bus provision to, from and within rural areas, including connections to villages, deprived areas, services in the evening/weekend, and integration of services (e.g. with rail)
- Expand provision of Ring'n'Ride

A Step Change for Bus - Stations and Infrastructure

- Examine and develop provision for buses within Glasgow City Centre, including potential infrastructure developments e.g. Glasgow City Centre (south) bus station
- Promote new or refurbished high-quality bus stations in strategic locations such as town centres - including Clydebank, Paisley and Partick
- Increase development and delivery of other infrastructure improvements e.g. interchange between services at bus stations
- Evaluate and assess the accessibility of existing bus infrastructure, analyse the results and investigate locations for new infrastructure to improve accessibility
- Identify with partners grant funding for bus infrastructure provision
- Identify and co-ordinate sources of funding for supported bus services
- Research, develop and implement use of biofuels and other power source technologies for SPT-supported bus services
- Improve quality and reduce emissions from buses – including Particulate Traps through e.g. Quality Bus Partnerships
- Encourage operators in SPT area to adopt 'Euro' standards ahead of legislative deadline
- Survey DDA compliance of SPT area operators
- Encourage operators in SPT area to adopt 'Euro' standards ahead of legislative deadline, and introduce variable departure charges (dependent on level of pollution from bus) from bus stations to encourage environmental progress
- Bus stop improvements – including assess feasibility of introducing illuminated bus information panels at bus stops, large print route numbers, graffiti removal, ensure bus stop design is complementary to surrounding environment
- Improve linkages between bus services / hubs and walking and cycling facilities

- Promote disabled access for buses with operators, aiming to ensure ongoing compliance prior to legislative deadline

Demand Responsive Transport - Bus, Other Modes, Community Transport

- SPT will seek to co-ordinate the booking processes for the fleet of vehicles currently used to provide travel to school and for connections between schools, additional needs provision, community transport initiatives, health care transport schemes, social work transport, demand responsive services and taxi operators
- Continue to deliver school transport / develop 'Class Connections' for people under 16 outside school hours to leisure / social activities
- Further develop Additional Support Needs provision
- Patient Transport / non-emergency transport provision - transport for patients with social/ geographic issues regarding access to healthcare
- Community Transport - conduct audit of services provided, and develop minimum standards within legislative context
- Community Transport - develop protocol for SPT to assist in driver training
- Progressively introduce Flexibus vehicles into contract provision for schools / Social Services / Health and DRT provision
- Provide guidance to member councils on providing specification for Flexibus vehicles
- Community Transport - develop voluntary register of CT schemes in west of Scotland
- Community Transport - develop protocols for SPT to issue 'Section 19' permits
- Community Transport - In partnership with Traffic Commissioner / VOSA, work on protocols for issuing of 'Section 22' permits
- Community Transport - develop feasibility of CT schemes being able to access SPT contract work
- Develop a co-ordinated transport network for people using public transport to access healthcare (via Access to Healthcare Action Plan) including expansion of Evening Visitor Service, in partnership with Community Transport and NHS
- Ensure needs of equality groups – race, gender, disability – are taken into account in the development and provision of bus services

Developing the Mass Transit Network

- Glasgow Conurbation Public Transport Study – bus elements
- Investigate, and potentially implement, Bus Rapid Transit
- Promote further bus priority and enforcement measures.

Transport Planning and Provision for the Commonwealth Games 2014, and Connections for Tourism and Major Events

- SPT to assist Games Organising Committee to effectively manage all Games transport provision with reference to existing bus provision, registration compliance and preparation planning for roads and infrastructure.

- Development and delivery of emerging Commonwealth Games transport projects
- Improved linkages to National Park, Tourist sites and Major Events across the region by all modes
- Connections for Homecoming Scotland 2009

Linwood-Bridge of Weir-Kilmacolm Public Transport Corridor

- Improve public transport links

Sustainable Access to Airports (Glasgow and Prestwick)

- Improved access to Glasgow International Airport (excluding GARL) and Prestwick International Airports by all modes, including potential hard shoulder running on M77 and M80 to improve links to both Airports

Improve connectivity to Stranraer and Cairnryan Ports

- Improve bus, road and rail links to the Loch Ryan ports

Safety and Security for Transport Users

- Roll-out of CCTV / Help Points / other initiatives across the public transport network
- Development and implementation of "Safe Routes to Public Transport"
- Develop further initiatives to improve safety and security on bus services

M74 Completion - Complementary Transport Measures

- Development and delivery of complementary transport measures in anticipation of and arising from M74 completion

Regional public transport interchange improvements

- The delivery of Partick interchange
- The investigation of Clydebank and Govan bus stations, Hamilton Central and Motherwell rail stations, Ardrossan Harbour rail to ferry terminal facility
- Support for Gourrock terminal development
- Other identified locations

Bus Services to Support Park and Ride

- Development and delivery of bus services to support Park and Ride, including Stepps- Blochairn- Alexandra Parade- Royal Infirmary- Buchanan Bus Station- Queen Street / Central 'loop', and Monkton

Clyde Fastlink

- Phase 1 - Glasgow City Centre to Glasgow Harbour
- Phases 2 and 3 - to Clydebank and Renfrew, via Southern General

Transport hubs for regenerating Town Centres

- Providing and improving transport for regeneration areas and provision of transport hubs for town centres

Transport for Ravenscraig

- Transport links and interchange for Ravenscraig
- Further transport improvements for Ravenscraig

Further develop transport planning - regional and sub-regional, including innovative technologies

- Further development of transport modelling capabilities at regional and sub-regional levels
- Seek to safeguard transport routes and infrastructure in the planning process - walking and cycling, road, mass transit, waterways (incl. Jetties) and access to these
- Development of transport studies in the west of Scotland
- Identify opportunities for use of 'green technology' in buses

Revitalising the Waterway Network

- Improve bus linkages for riverfront developments and marinas

Target

To develop a programme for the implementation of the Bus Action Plan through SPT's Business Plan.

Monitoring

Monitoring of the agreed programme will be incorporated within SPT's Business Plan monitoring process.

Further Information

Related reports are available on our website www.spt.co.uk and further information is available from rts@spt.co.uk or by contacting:

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