

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORT POLICY STATEMENT - 2011**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Council has a duty, under sections 63 – 64 of the Transport Act 1985, to secure the provision of such passenger transport services as it considers appropriate to meet any public transport requirements in its area which would not, in its view, be met apart from action taken on its part. The Council also has a duty to formulate and publish, from time to time, general policies as to the description of services it proposes to secure.
- 1.2 When formulating policies for the purposes of securing passenger transport services, the Council must consult with other Councils affected by its policies and with persons operating passenger transport services in its area, and/or with operators' representative organisations. The Council's Public Transport Policy Statement must also be made available for inspection by the public.

### **2. Strategic Aims and Objectives**

- 2.1 The Council recognises public transport's role as a key element of the transportation system providing for travel both within and to/from its area. Public transport also offers considerable potential as a means of combating the adverse economic and environmental effects of increasing car use and associated traffic congestion.
- 2.2 The provision of an adequate public transport system is essential to maintaining the opportunities and quality of life for those without access to private means of travel.
- 2.3 The Council will, through the development of an integrated transportation strategy and through appropriate integration within its economic development strategies, seek to increase the role and usage of public transport.
- 2.4 The Council will seek to work in partnership with operators of public passenger transport services to ensure the delivery of high quality, reliable and efficient public transport services within the resources at its disposal.

### **3. Supported Passenger Transport Services**

- 3.1 The Council will exercise its powers under sections 63 – 64 of the Transport Act 1985, to secure the provision of passenger transport services to meet needs which are not otherwise met.
- 3.2 The Council shall monitor the provision of passenger transport services in its area and shall seek to ensure the provision of minimum levels of service in accordance with the standards outlined in Table 1 below :-

## Table 1 – Policy on Supported Service Provision

The Council will seek to provide a minimum level of service taking into account the financial resources at its disposal and value for money as indicated by cost/demand relationships. In determining priorities for subsidised service provision, the Council will have regard to:-

- (i) maintenance of the existing route network
- (ii) minimum levels of service defined by:-

<u>Population</u>	<u>Minimum Service Level</u>
< 100	1 – 3 days/week
100 – 400	Daily
400 – 750	2 – 3 buses/day
750 – 2500	2 hourly
2500 – 4500	Hourly
4500+	Hourly/Town Service

- (iii) application of maximum walking distance standards of:-
  - 400 metres in urban areas (population over 4000)
  - 1000 metres in rural areas.
- (iv) access to alternative facilities
- (v) in assessing cost/demand relationships, subsidies will be allocated on the basis of needs met in order of priority as follows:

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Trip Purpose</u>
1	Work, higher education and vocational training
2	Shopping
3	Health
4	Leisure and social
5	Non-statutory education
6	Seasonal/tourism

- 3.3 Where the Council considers the strategic transportation objectives justify the provision of service levels in excess of that provided commercially, the Council may, through negotiation with commercial operators and/or through exercise of the statutory tendering system, secure the provision of service availability to achieve its strategic transportation objectives.
- 3.4 Where commercially operated passenger transport services are withdrawn or reduced, the Council will consider supporting the introduction of replacement services to satisfy transport needs in the areas affected.
- 3.5 In securing the provision of supported Local Bus Services the Council shall enter into subsidy agreements with suitably qualified operators.

- 3.6 When securing supported public passenger transport services the Council will seek, wherever appropriate, to integrate these with School Transport and Social Work Transport services provided under the Council's wider statutory responsibilities and policies on the provision of passenger transport services, in a manner which achieves the most efficient application of the financial resources at the Council's disposal, whilst also having regard to the needs of those served and the achievement of strategic transportation aims and objectives.
- 3.7 The integration of statutory School Transport and Social Work transport demands with commercially operated passenger transport provision, through the purchase of season tickets, will be considered, where such arrangements achieve value for money to the Council, taking into account the needs of users and broader transportation aims and objectives.
- 3.8 The Council shall secure supported passenger transport services in accordance with the requirements of the Service Subsidy Agreements (Tendering) Regulations 1985 (SI 1921), as amended. The Council will exercise its powers to enter into negotiated subsidy agreements with suitably qualified operators, where such action represents best value for money and/or offers passenger benefits.
- 3.9 Invitations to tender shall specify the Terms and Conditions under which services shall be provided. Services shall be specified in accordance to satisfy identified unmet social needs and/or strategic transportation objectives, as appropriate.
- 3.10 In determining the award of contracts for the operation of supported services the Council shall seek to achieve best value for money within the resources at its disposal and, in addition to price, will take account of the ability of prospective operators to deliver services efficiently and effectively and the quality of service which operators propose to provide.
- 3.11 The provision of subsidised cross-boundary services shall be secured on the basis of negotiated agreements with adjoining Councils and shall take account of the respective policies and priorities of each funding authority.
- 3.12 Reducing emissions from transport sources as a contribution to achieving Scottish Government greenhouses gas emission targets requires a shift to more sustainable modes of transport. For people this means a shift from car-based travel to walking, cycling and public transport.

The planning system should support a pattern of development which reduces the need to travel and facilitates travel by public transport.

Planning permission should not be granted for significant travel generating uses in locations which would encourage reliance on the private car and where:

- direct links to walking and cycling networks are not available or cannot be made available,
- access to public transport networks would involve walking more than 400m

Where enhancement of public transport services or infrastructure is required to serve a new development but would not be provided commercially, a contribution from the developer towards an agreed level of service may be appropriate.

#### **4. Concessionary Travel for the Elderly and Disabled**

- 4.1 All services subsidised by the Council will offer concessionary travel in accordance with the provisions of the Scotland -Wide Free Bus Travel scheme.

#### **5. Other Passenger Fares**

- 5.1 The Council will seek to work in partnership with operators in order to secure the provision of appropriate fare levels and methods of payment which encourage usage of public transport services.
- 5.2 Fares on supported passenger services will normally be set to accord with commercial pricing in the area. In the event that commercial fare levels are considered by the Council to exceed a level consistent with meeting public needs and/or strategic transportation objectives, the Council may exercise its powers to secure alternative service provision at appropriate fares.
- 5.3 The Council expects that operators will, as a matter of commercial judgement, offer free travel to children under the age of 5 years, and reduced fares to children between the ages of 5 and 15 years inclusive.
- 5.4 The Council shall operate a policy of free travel for children under 5 years of age and half-fare for children aged 5 – 15 years inclusive.

#### **6. Traffic Regulations**

- 6.1 All Local Bus Service proposals shall be assessed in consultation with Grampian Police and the Transportation Manager, in order to ensure that routings and picking-up and setting-down arrangements present no road safety or traffic congestion problems.
- 6.2 The Council will, where appropriate, exercise its powers under the Road Traffic Acts, to regulate and manage the operation of public transport services where it considers that proposals or operation may represent a danger to the public or cause traffic congestion.
- 6.3 Where circumstances require, the Council may request that the Traffic Commissioner exercise his powers to apply a Traffic Regulation Condition to regulate the operation of public transport services.

- 6.4 Operators are encouraged to discuss any proposals for new or amended service registrations to the Scottish Traffic Area Office. The Council will notify the Traffic Commissioner of any failure on the part of operators to advise the Council of proposals through the statutory copying of Local Bus Service registration documents to the Council.

## **7. Publicity and Promotion**

- 7.1 The Council shall exercise its powers under section 63 of the Transport Act 1985 to promote the availability of all public passenger transport services in its area.
- 7.2 The Council will seek, in partnership with operators, to ensure the availability of comprehensive and accurate roadside and other passenger transport information and promotional material.
- 7.3 The Council shall, within the resources at its disposal, and in partnership with operators and other appropriate parties, seek to enhance the quality and image of public transport through the application of new technology, with a view to increasing public awareness and confidence in public transport services.

## **8. Public Transport Infrastructure**

- 8.1 The Council shall exercise its powers under section 63(6(b)) of the Transport Act 1985 to promote the convenience of the public in using all available passenger transport services.
- 8.2 In doing so the Council will have particular regard to the needs and convenience of the elderly and disabled when using public transport services. Consideration will be given to meeting the needs of the elderly, disabled and other encumbered passengers through the provision of Revenue and/or Capital grants towards the provision and operation of accessible taxi, bus and rail services.
- 8.3 Passenger infrastructure shall be designed to meet the needs of the elderly, disabled and other encumbered passenger groups in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act.
- 8.4 The Council shall manage and control the provision of bus stops and bus shelters. The Council shall ensure that public passenger transport infrastructure is provided and maintained to the highest standard possible within the resources at its disposal.
- 8.5 The Council will seek to work in partnership with operators and other appropriate agencies in order to secure the provision of high quality passenger infrastructure in the interests of encouraging greater provision and usage of public transport services.

## **9. Partnership with the Community**

- 9.1 The Council will exercise its powers under sections 19 – 22 of the Transport Act to encourage development of community based passenger transport services.
- 9.2 The Council will seek to work in partnership with the community, voluntary, health and other appropriate public and private sector organisations, with a view to achieving closer integration of the provision of passenger transport services in its area.
- 9.3 The Council will seek to consult with user groups and other representative groups in order to ensure that the views and needs of the community are reflected in the provision of passenger transport services and facilities.