
Executive

20 January 2009

Report of the Director of City Strategy

Review of Public Bus Services in York

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As identified in the second Local Transport Plan, the Council continues to seek to develop bus travel by working in partnership with the bus industry to ensure that bus patronage in the city continues to rise. The Local Transport Plan (2006-2011) and annexed Bus Strategy form background papers to this report.

The Council supports the delivery and operation of public bus services for two principal reasons:

- A. To provide transport for those with no alternative (ie socially necessary)
- B. To provide transport which will encourage and result in modal shift

These two aims are often contradictory as services designed to serve one purpose (eg Dial and Ride) are seldom attractive to the other (eg car drivers). Both demand direct investment and support if they are to be delivered successfully.

This report provides Members' with a review of the above aspects of the public transport network and outlines the supporting initiatives currently in place in York. A summary of the main points is outlined below.

Options are presented for Member's consideration in each section and officers recommendations are outlined at the end of the report. The options presented consider potential savings, improvements to service and possible efficiencies.

Commercial Bus Services

- York is currently fortunate to have one of the most modern bus fleets in the United Kingdom. York has five commercial bus service operators.
- The current network of routes largely meet the accessibility demands for the City and there are no major adjustments planned.
- Fares are comparable with other towns and cities.
- An effective voluntary Quality Bus Partnership enables good working relations with bus operators.
- The 2008 Transport Act provides an opportunity to introduce formal quality contracts for bus services. Whilst there are no intentions to introduce a formal contract at present, the Council will continue to review this option.
- A number of the commercial services in York are 'fragile'. In the past year the Council has stepped in to fill the gap left by de-registrations with subsidised services.

- The coming year could see a maximum 10% (as a proportion of the total network) loss in commercial services. The Council will have to consider whether it plans to always subsidise failed commercial services?

Subsidised / Tendered Bus Services

- Subsidised services to the value of £700,000 supplement the commercial network.
- The subsidised network has been developed over time in response to a number of different pressures, both political and commercial. The main role of the network is currently to address social exclusion although it does play a small role in encouraging modal shift.
- As a result of this focus, there is possibly unmet latent demand for services.
- Fares follow the market and are therefore comparable with commercial services.
- York has contracts with a number of bus operators of varying quality (in terms of vehicle quality, maintenance and standard of publicity).
- The quality of services is gradually improving. Often this is the result of a reduction in the quantity of services.
- Alternatives to traditional bus services exist, options for Demand Responsive Transport, etc are presented. Officers are of the view that the traditional bus is still the option of first choice for York.
- To this end, officers propose that all subsidised services are retained, to run to September 2011, with the exception of those services outlined in table 5 which should be discontinued (paragraph 87).
- Officers do propose that by utilising a new Dial & Ride vehicle, peak, scheduled journeys could be delivered to villages more efficiently and suggest a pilot scheme.
- For immediate action, a decision on the award of bus tenders (due to commence April 2009) is requested.
- To maintain services at current levels will require a budget of £750,000 for 2009/10.
- Annual inflation on the cost of bus services is likely to be at least 5% and Members are advised that approximately £130,000 of additional funding could be required if consideration is given to the fragility of existing commercial bus services.

Dial & Ride (D&R)

- D&R provides a door to door minibus service for those unable to use the bus.
- The service has three 12-seat minibuses, all equipped with wheelchair lifts and serves different shopping and social destinations in the daytime (inter-peak).
- The D&R vehicles have several steps to access the vehicle, a cramped interior and do not meet current standards for new vehicles.
- The purchase of new vehicles during 2009-10 is recommended.
- Fares have not been increased for several years and are now significantly cheaper than local bus fares. Members are therefore asked to approve an increase of £1 on the return fare (to £3.50).
- The Service Level Agreement under which D&R operates has now expired. Members are asked to support the re-negotiation of the contract with local charity and existing provider, York Wheels.

Park & Ride (P&R)

- Operated from five sites to the city centre by the First Group under exclusive licence.
- Patronage has risen year on year ever since the service started.
- This service operates at no cost to the York taxpayer and is a key measure in encouraging modal shift and easing city centre congestion.

- Fares are comparable to other non-subsidised P&R services.
- A new contract starts in February 2009 with new buses and an enhanced service.
- Whilst possible improvements/efficiencies are offered, there are no 'savings' that can be made in this area as the contract has been agreed for a five year period.
- Bus punctuality is impacted upon by lengthy boarding times.
- To reduce the dwell times at stops, consideration is given to the enhancing of ticketing arrangements both on bus and at site.
- Officers propose to bring a further report outlining the options available.

Concessionary Travel

- There are currently two options for those entitled to transport concessions in York, the Concessionary Bus Pass or £20 of National Transport Tokens.
- The pass will cost the Council an estimated £4.2 million in 2008/9. Central government has provided £1.12 million of assistance towards this total.
- The cost of tokens issued has reduced from £550,000 in 2007/8 to a forecast of £195,000 for 2008/9.
- When considered in its entirety, the cost of delivering concessionary travel has, however, risen by around one million pounds in the past year.
- The Council has no choice as to whether to offer the English National bus pass, it is a mandatory requirement.
- York does offer enhancements to the national minimum bus pass concession (eg an earlier start time of 0900 as opposed to 0930, etc).
- The report considers the cost of these enhancements and concludes that there is no certainty that their removal would achieve any saving.
- The provision of National Transport Tokens is also a locally determined decision.
- The report considers whether the tokens should be removed but again, concludes that this would result in an increased bus pass take up. However there would be a marginal saving for the Council of £60,000.
- To achieve a more equitable situation, however, the report offers a cost neutral option for the same sum of money currently spent on tokens to be better focussed on those who really need them.
- Tokens are anonymous and are therefore open to potential fraud. There is no way of tracking the use and for this reason an intelligent 'taxi card' is proposed for future years in place of tokens.
- It is proposed that token distribution is restricted to the over 75s, eligible qualified disabled and those with poor bus service access and the amount is increased.

YOzone

- YOzone is a proof of age card which currently entitles 11-16 year olds to reduced cost bus travel at a level specified by the bus operators.
- Full Council approved an investigation into the possible extension of the YOzone card to all young people in full time education up to the age of 19 years.
- All bus operators have responded to a written request to participate. Three of the major operators are not willing to do so on the basis of the current arrangements.
- If Council wishes to pursue the proposal, officers propose to bring a further report outlining the options for implementation.
- The alternative to the current arrangement would be to subsidise this service.

Bus information

- Bus information is delivered by a variety of means. Printed matter at bus stops and in leaflet form are available from libraries, Council offices, Park & Ride sites and Tourist Information Centres. Bus information is also available via the web and mobile phone in real time and via the Cityspace columns in the city centre.
- There have been several major steps this year to improving bus information standards, not least the re-launch of the bus route map.
- The report requests that Members support the continued delivery of the best possible bus information and publicity with the resource available.
- To further improve the 'Traveline' internet and telephone service, officers could investigate the feasibility of remotely accessing York PTI data from Metro to improve the quality of data and reduce the levels of inaccuracy recently experienced.
- The 'Traveline' telephone call centre agreement has now expired.
- Officers propose to tender the travel information telephone service and retain the existing local telephone number (01904 551400)
- The 'BLISS' real time information system has improved over the course of the past year and the data the system produces would allow better management of the city network.
- With agreement from bus operators, the purchase of a licence for the Real Time Passenger Information 'Bus Operator Reports' product is recommended to monitor bus punctuality and frequency.

Bus Stop Infrastructure

- The Council is responsible for approximately 1,100 bus stops and over 100 shelters around the city. Maintenance for this equipment is managed internally by the Council's Highway Infrastructure Team with a budget of £51,000 this year.
- Parish Councils within the administrative area have a responsibility for a further 86 shelters and the Council have a partnership with the advertising company JCDecaux who are responsible for an additional 138 shelters, many of which are located on key corridors and routes.
- The Council is seeking to improve the image of bus services around the City, particularly on key commercial corridors, by enhancing bus waiting facilities, bus information displays and by working to ensure that all bus stops are fully accessible. This work will continue throughout the next year.
- Most bus stop flags in York are now labelled with their own, unique, 'yournextbus' code, allowing intending passengers to send a text message to find out their next bus in real time.

Air Quality

- The commercial bus network boasts one of the cleanest, most modern fleets in the UK. The subsidised / tendered bus network is currently at Euro 2 level (buses age from the mid 1990s)
- It is recommended that subsidised bus tenders reflect a minimum (2001 or newer) Euro 3 emissions base from 2011.

Summary

1. This report is in response to the items in the Policy Prospectus for 2008/9 and the Council motion to investigate extension of the YOzone card. The report provides Members with a review of the bus services in York and the supporting initiatives currently in place. It outlines a number of key messages and seeks Member's recommendations for progressing options in several areas. The options are presented on the basis of potential savings, possible efficiencies and improvements in services.
2. This report considers :
 - Commercial Bus Services
 - Subsidised / Tendered Bus Services
 - Dial and Ride / Demand Responsive Transport
 - Park and Ride Services
 - Concessionary Travel Scheme
 - YOzone Card Scheme
 - Public Transport Information
 - Bus Stop Infrastructure
 - Air Quality

Background

3. At the Executive Meeting on 17 June 2008, officers were instructed to carry out a review of public transport options in the city and a further review into subsidised and community transport.
4. At the Full Council meeting on 28 September a motion was approved to investigate the implications of working with the City's bus providers to extend the YOzone card to all young people in full time education up to the age of 19 years.

Introduction

5. Bus services in and around York are operated to serve a variety of user needs across differing geographic areas. The majority of bus services are commercially operated, with a smaller number of Council supported bus services including the Dial & Ride network. Alongside these services sits the Park & Ride network, operated on a licence basis at no cost to the York taxpayer.
6. Commercially operated bus services are predominantly urban in nature, connecting commuters and leisure travellers from the suburbs to the City Centre. In addition, there are a number of inter-urban, commercially operated services (eg. Selby-York) which serve largely the same function. The Council has little control over the operation of these services. However it is in the interests of the Council to invest in quality infrastructure, as a failure to sustain the services could result in reduced patronage and increased cost to the Council in the form of bus service subsidy.

7. Aside from the need for a core patronage base, several factors can impact upon the viability of a commercially operated bus service. These are; the buoyancy of the economy, city centre car parking charges, bus fares and the cost of fuel. If all of these are in balance, the viability of a commercial bus service will be sustained.
8. The subsidised bus service fulfils two principal functions. Firstly it fills the gap where commercial bus services are not deemed viable (eg route 22, Skelton to York via Rawcliffe). Secondly, it provides key links to the rural villages on the outskirts of York (eg. Elvington and Wheldrake). These services provide, in some cases, the only public transport option to York and in many cases, are operated in partnership with neighbouring authorities, running beyond the local authority boundary. Halcrow were commissioned to prepare a study into subsidised bus services in York. A copy of the full study forms a background paper to this report, a copy of which is in the Members' Library.
9. The Council supports Dial & Ride for York residents who cannot use other local bus services and is the only demand responsive service in York, collecting customers from their own homes. The service is provided by York Wheels under a Service Level Agreement with the Council.
10. Park & Ride offers a service for commuters and visitors to York, helping to restrict traffic levels in York City Centre and in so doing, improving air quality.
11. The Council also has a mandatory responsibility to provide home to school transport to entitled children. It does this using a variety of means with fixed school bus provision, taxis or Council owned vehicles. The ongoing "Collaborative Transport Project" is currently working on a range of improvements to be made to these services to improve efficiency of vehicle use.
12. Whilst this report outlines some of the detail of bus service provision, much of this work was carried out as part of the development of the second Local Transport Plan 2006-2011. The Council identified different categories of bus routes, each serving a different purpose and having different investment priorities. The Bus Strategy, Annex D of the Local Transport Plan, forms a background document to this report, providing a historical context.
13. Concessionary travel, bus information and infrastructure all impact upon the provision of public transport services. For this reason, following a significant analysis of the services themselves, these supporting elements are reviewed and the same criteria (saving, efficiency or improvement) is applied.
14. The Local Transport Bill was enacted at the end of November 2008. It gives Local Authorities powers to improve the quality of local bus services, formation of new transport governance bodies in the metropolitan areas and new powers to introduce local road pricing schemes.

Commercial Bus Services

15. Since de-regulation of service provision in the mid 1980's, the majority of bus services have been initiated and provided by private sector companies, without any public sector intervention. The companies use their best endeavours to devise and provide a network of bus services which is self financing, mainly from

fare box revenue. Over this period, commercial service development has been evolutionary, adapting to changing travel demands, where possible, and removing many of the compromises in network design which characterised the previous tightly regulated system. The commercial imperative has been to turn around declining patronage by offering the most attractive possible services to existing and potential new customers.

16. This private business culture has delivered substantial improvements in vehicle design. Great strides have been made in passenger comfort and convenience, alongside considerable progress in reducing noise and exhaust emissions, often in advance of legislative requirements for environmental performance and accessibility. York is currently fortunate to have one of the most modern bus fleets in the United Kingdom, taking full advantage of this progress, due to the willingness and ability of local bus companies to invest. Improvements in customer service standards have also been made through staff training and development programmes. Fare structures have been simplified along with the route network.

Key message - York has a comprehensive and high quality network of bus services, making publicity and marketing of the network easier than in many other parts of the country.

17. 2001 was a turning point, following a complete recast of the network of services provided by the City's main bus company First York Ltd., combined with concentrated effort to improve all aspects of service provision. Patronage decline was successfully reversed, with significant growth leading to further service development over the next few years (see Fig. 2). By 2005/6 patronage levels had stabilised, but grew again in 2006/7, largely as a result of the introduction of free concessionary travel for elderly and disabled persons. Patronage fell slightly in 2007/8 in spite of continued growth in travel by concessionary pass holders and currently amounts to just under 15,000,000 bus passenger journeys per year starting within the City boundary. This figure understates the full contribution bus services make to the life and vitality of the City, as it excludes passengers brought into the City from outside our boundaries.
18. The impact of steeply rising costs for bus service providers, combined with reducing numbers of fare paying passengers, has led to withdrawal or reduction of some commercially provided services during 2008. Informal discussions with bus service providers suggest that there are other bus services in the City, which are now struggling to remain commercially viable and may be subjected to cutbacks in the near future.
19. Access to affordable transport is an important social requirement and the bus occupies a prominent role in enabling people to reach their desired destinations, whether for work, healthcare appointments or recreation. The map below (Fig. 1) demonstrates that many rural areas are reliant on subsidised bus services for transport.
20. The subsidised network fills the 'gaps' in the commercial network, leaving very few areas of residential inaccessibility.

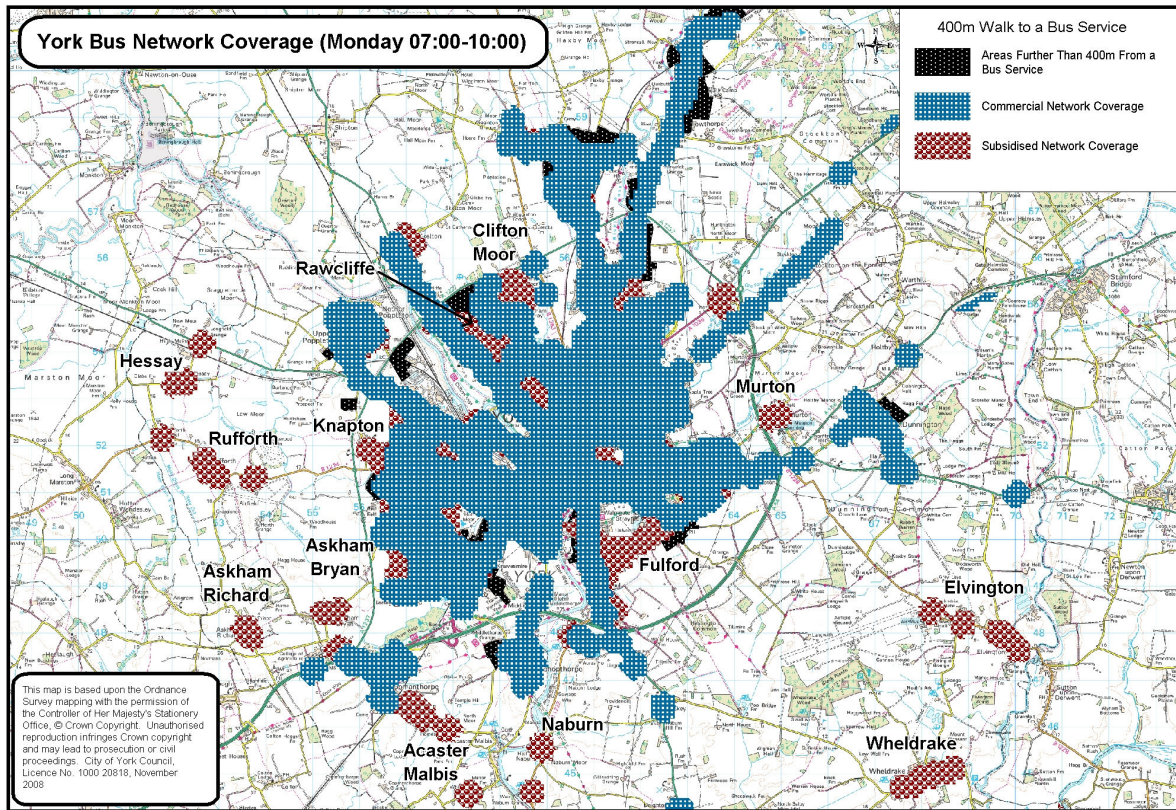


Figure 1

21. **Key message** - A number of routes in the commercial bus service network are fragile. It should be noted that this stability can easily be threatened by factors that are outside the control of either the Council or the bus operators.

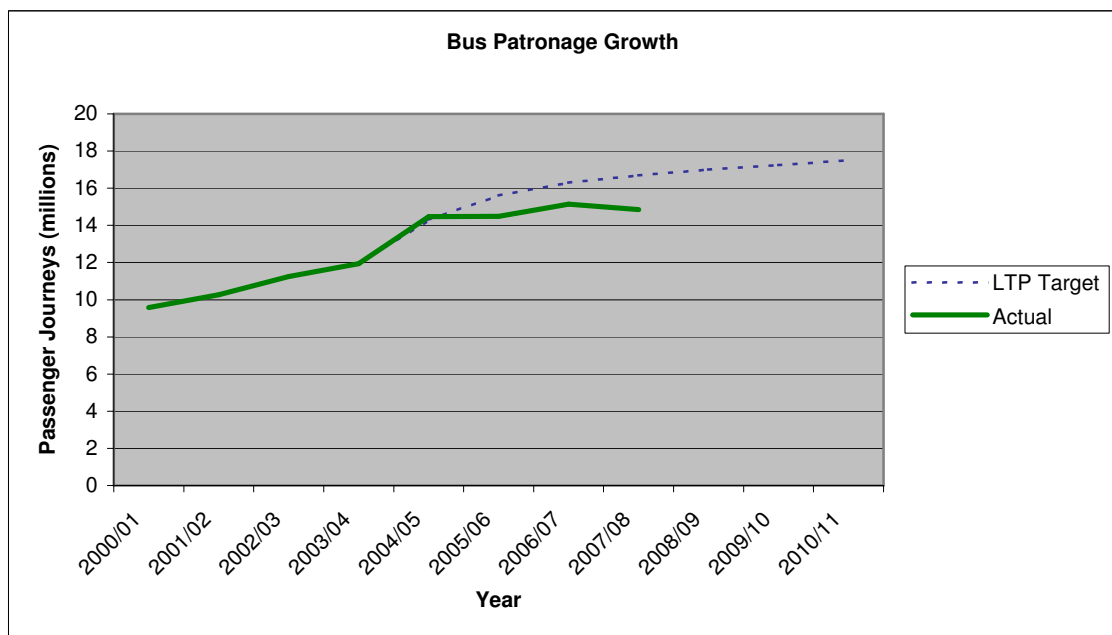


Figure 2

22. The Council has a role in supporting the network of commercial bus services, mainly through the provision of on-street infrastructure (bus stops, shelters and information displays), and traffic management measures to assist the efficient and consistently reliable provision of bus services by the private sector.
23. The Council is also working closely with bus service operators on the joint development of public transport information systems which maximise the benefits of modern technology. The principal medium through which dialogue and joint working is currently maintained between bus service providers and the Council is the Quality Bus Partnership. This is a voluntary partnership within the current framework governing how bus services are organised. Successful implementation of initiatives arising from this forum will assist the Council in meeting Local Transport Plan targets for public transport usage in the City and could reduce the extent to which the Council needs to subsidise non-commercial bus services.

Key message - A close working relationship with bus operators is crucial and the potential consequences of not investing in this partnership are increased costs to the taxpayer in the form of bus service subsidy.

24. Application of Demand Management techniques, recognising the inter-relationship between the availability and price of car parking in and around the City Centre and the popularity of public transport has the potential to contribute further to attainment of these objectives. This approach has already been used in development of the City's Park & Ride services but could possibly be further developed.

Key message - The cost of car parking in the City has a direct impact on the commerciality of local bus services.

Options for Commercial Bus Services

25. High frequency, high quality urban or inter-urban services are delivered on a commercial basis. As a result, the Council has little direct role in the provision of the service.

Saving

26. If the Council wishes to make a saving on commercial bus service expenditure, it could reduce the current expenditure on bus stop infrastructure (shelters, timetable cases and other stop facilities) or reduce expenditure given to bus information. The Council should be mindful, however, that there are certain statutory duties placed upon it, eg. contribution to the operation of 'Traveline', which cannot be avoided.
27. In the year to date, £170,000 has been spent on the improvement of bus stop infrastructure for local bus services. A further £38,000 is spent in the provision of bus information.

Efficiency

28. The Local Transport Act 2008 gives local authorities the power (with the agreement of the relevant bus operators) to introduce a formal Quality Partnership

on an identified corridor or route. In exchange for delivering a package of investment measures (eg. bus lanes, high quality shelters, etc) the Council can specify minimum standards for the bus services that use those facilities. These may take the form of a maximum fare level, or a minimum frequency.

29. Such a formal partnership approach may result in the more efficient focus of resource on key corridors (eg. Fulford Road) and a resulting improvement in bus service provision. Such measures cannot be achieved, however, without the consent and active participation of the bus operators in question and commit the Council to ongoing expenditure resulting from a package of improvement measures.

Improvement

30. Aside from the possible introduction of formal quality partnerships on identified corridors, further and continued improvement is best achieved by continued publicity and promotion of the bus network via the existing, voluntary Quality Bus Partnership which already exists in York. Continued efforts should be made to improve passenger waiting facilities and bus priority measures across the city with effort focussed on commercial routes. Further details of proposals can be found in paragraph 225, 'Priority for the bus'.

Subsidised / Tendered Bus Services

31. The arrangements put in place in 1986, governing the provision of bus services, gave councils powers to provide subsidies for bus services. These powers could be used where a social need was identified, in accordance with Council policies, that was not being adequately met by the network of commercially provided services. In effect, this enabled complimentary services to receive financial support from the public purse. In most cases, subsidies can only be awarded following a competitive tendering process, to ensure value for money of available funding. In recent years, this has been done in a way which complies with European Union Procurement rules. U.K. regulations currently restrict subsidy contract length to a maximum of five years.
32. Initially, the City Council shared these powers with North Yorkshire County Council but, since moving to Unitary Authority status in 1996, York has had sole responsibility for public transport policy and its implementation within the city. Total spending has risen progressively and was projected to be around £636,500 in the 2008/9 financial year. Funding includes £138,000 Rural Bus Subsidy Grant, provided by Central Government since 1999 to help local councils maintain and improve bus services in rural areas. The funding rises annually to reflect inflation and will be £141,500 in 2009/10 and £145,000 in 2010/11.
33. The same pressures that are threatening the viability of some commercial services are also affecting the Council's subsidised network. Subsidy requirements have risen significantly when contracts have been renewed, sometimes following early termination by contractors unable to maintain services for the original subsidy.
34. Subsidy has also had to be provided for formerly commercial services, when their operators have no longer been able to sustain them unaided.

Key message - There is the prospect of further, currently commercial, services needing subsidy in the future. As a consequence of these pressures, actual forecast spending in 2009/10 will be £750,000 (over £110,000 above budget), despite some previously supported services being discontinued to contain expenditure.

Halcrow Report on Subsidised Services

Introduction

35. At the end of July 2008 the Executive considered a report on subsidised public bus services that set out the background to the service and the policy framework. It also identified a number of service pressures and resolved to maintain services in the short term pending the outcome of this review.
36. The Council commissioned Halcrow to undertake the review of the subsidised bus network in York. The aim of the study was to assess the efficiency of the current network and to suggest alternatives to the provision of traditional subsidised bus services in the City of York and from York to surrounding areas.
37. The Council currently has 24 contracts with bus companies for the provision of non-commercially viable local bus services. The services involved carry approximately 700,000 passenger journeys each year.

Service Review

38. To determine new criteria for assessing bus services in York a review of Best Practice was undertaken, drawing from the experiences of other local authorities.
39. Given that York has a relatively compact urban core surrounded by a rural hinterland, and that most of the network is commercially operated, it was felt reasonable to consider different criteria for limiting subsidises and to explore the use of a £2 per passenger as a limit to subsidy. The Halcrow report concludes that some flexibility should be given to this criteria especially when reviewing more rural routes. Table 1 compares the criteria used between unitary authorities within the Council's CIPFA family.

Table 1 Unitary Authorities using subsidy per passenger as a limit to subsidy.

Local Authority	Support Criteria (£ per passenger)
North Lincolnshire	£2.50
North Somerset	£1.50 (£3.50 for rural services)
South Gloucestershire	£2.50
Southampton	£2.00
Swindon	£2.00
Mean	£2.10

40. The Council's current policy is based upon a minimum limit of 9 passengers / bus hour which aligns with the £2 criteria for all but one service. The problem with using a fixed sum approach is that this will need to be under constant review as the cost of travel increases.
41. Table 2 provides detailed information on all the current subsidised bus services for York.
42. Currently, a majority of the supported services provide a socially necessary function, providing access to retail and healthcare facilities for those people who have no alternative means of transport. Given this backdrop, it is very difficult to estimate what the latent demand for bus services is, suffice to say that the more affordable, higher quality and more frequent a service is, the more likely it is to be used by people who would otherwise use the car.

Table 2 Schedule of Subsidised / Tendered Bus Services

Service No	Terminal 1	Terminal 2	Days/Period	Frequency	Budget 08/09	Subsidy 08/09	Forecast subsidy 09/10	Annual Passengers (2007/8 Actual)	Passengers / Bus hr	Subsidy / passenger @ 08/09 Current ann.cost prices
11, 24	City Centre	Bishopthorpe	Weekday evenings	hourly	£21,594	£22,668	£23,235	17,162	12	£1.32
11	City Centre	Bishopthorpe	Sundays	hourly	£4,110	£4,320	£4,428	7,498	21	£0.58
12	City Centre	Acomb Park	Weekday evenings	hourly	£20,904	£21,936	£22,485	14,332	13	£1.53
12	Haxby	Acomb Park	Sundays	hourly	£17,376	£18,240	£18,696	22,198	14	£0.82
13	Monks Cross	Copmanthorpe	Sundays	hourly	£7,884	£8,280	£8,487	13,831	20	£0.60
14,14A	City Centre	Clifton	Weekday daytime	hourly off peak +	£25,315	£26,688	£27,244	32,325	15	£0.82
18	City Centre	Holme on SM	Weekday daytime	two hourly +	£6,684	£12,440	£14,226	32,442	17	£0.41
18A	City Centre	Holme on SM	Sundays	two hourly	£1,895	£1,990	£2,089	736	7	£2.70
20	Monks Cross	Askham Bar	Mon-Sat	hourly	£93,184	£98,163	£100,296	81,277	13	£1.21
20A	Monks Cross	Clifton Moor	Sunday/ BHM	hourly	£12,255	£12,939	£13,188	6,100	9	£2.12
21	City Centre	Acaster Malbis	Tue/Thur/Fri	two h'rly off peak	£21,840	£22,932	£1,820	7,887	10	£2.91
22	City Centre	Skelton	Mon-Sat	hourly	£29,490	£59,384	£60,615	Est. 96,500	22	£0.62
22	City Centre	Skelton	Mon-Sat evenings	occasional	£10,140	£10,140	£10,647	900	3	£11.27
22	City Centre	Skelton	Sundays	hourly	£12,390	£5,772	£6,060	Est. 4,000	7	£1.44
24, 26	Acomb	Fulford	Weekday daytime	hourly	£135,775	£143,283	£146,112	Est.166,850	14	£0.86
27, 28	Monks Cross	University	Mon-Fri daytime	hourly	£60,734	£126,434	£115,156	48,760	13	£2.59
37, 37A	Heworth	Fulford School	Mon-Fri schooldays	occasional	£38,000	£40,090	£40,896	Est. 43,700	131	£0.92
42	City Centre	Selby	Daily daytime	hourly	£7,200	£7,560	£7,938	36,454	18	£0.21
142	City Centre	Ripon	Weekday daytime	hourly	£9,464	£10,434	£10,956	3,362	11	£3.10
195	City Centre	Pocklington	Sat	occasional	£242	£254	£267	322	16	£0.79
195	City Centre	Pocklington	Various	occasional	£17,666	£18,494	£19,416	3,397	5	£5.44
196	City Centre	Aughton	Various	occasional	£1,338	£10,000	£10,000	Est. 2,100	8	£4.76
412,413	City Centre	Wetherby	Weekday daytime	hourly	£30,753	£32,291	£33,905	23,581	10	£1.37
415	City Centre	Selby	Bank Holidays	half hourly	£165	£165	£165	no data	Na	Na
746	City Centre	Pocklington	Weekday a.m.	one journey	£4,580	£4,832	£4,926	1,607	11	£3.00
Connex's			Transfers		£1,200		£1200		Na	Na
C1/21	Askham Bar	Tadcaster	Weekday daytime	approx.hourly	Est.£39,389	£41,767	£40,410	12,283	6	£3.40
C3	Askham Bar	Askhams	Weekday peak	occasional peak	£18,400	£37,440	£2,560	4,680	6	£8.00
Total					£639,827		£747,423			

43. Analysis of the services schedule in table 2 has identified the services in table 3 as failing to meet either criteria for subsidised services.

Table 3.

18A	York – Holme – on – Spalding -Moor	Sundays and Bank Holidays
20/20A	Askham Bar – Monks Cross	Sundays and Bank Holidays
21	York – Acaster Malbis	Tues, Thurs and Fri daytime
22	York – Skelton	Mon – Sat late evenings
27/28	University – Monks Cross – York (circle)	Weekday daytime
195	York – Elvington - Pocklington	Weekdays
196	York – Elvington - Aughton	Thursday and Saturday
746	York – Pocklington	Weekdays (1 AM journey)
C1	Askham Bar – Tadcaster	Weekday daytime
C3	Askham Bar – Askhams	Weekday occasional peak

44. Accessibility mapping undertaken as part of the study identified a number of key areas which would be affected considerably should the suggested services be withdrawn. The areas affected include:

- Hessay
- Wheldrake
- Elvington
- Heslington
- Acaster Malbis
- Skelton
- Askham Richard and Askham Bryan.

Review of Alternatives to Subsidised Bus Services

45. A number of potential alternatives to providing conventional subsidised bus services are explored in this report and include the following:

- Demand Responsive Transport (DRT)
- Community Transport (CT)
- Shared Taxi services
- Taxi buses

Demand Responsive Transport (DRT)

46. Conventional bus services do not always meet the needs of a large section of the population. This is often the case in rural areas. One solution is public transport services that can operate effectively with lower and more dispersed patterns of demand than the bus, i.e. Demand Responsive Transport.
47. At present, there are no demand responsive bus services that are open to all in York. Although bus operators are able to register local bus services on flexible routes, no operators in York have done so.
48. DRT covers a wide range of flexibly operated services. These services can operate on fixed or flexible routes and are pre booked by the user, usually via a telephone booking system/co-ordination centre. DRT services are often categorised as either:
 - a. One to Many - passengers are picked up from fixed boarding points and taken to various destinations;
 - b. Many to One – passengers are picked up from their specified location and taken to a single fixed destination;
 - c. Many to Many – flexible service allowing passengers to be taken from various locations to disparate destinations.
49. The introduction of DRT type services can often be at great expense to the implementing authority. In addition to the running costs associated with running a bus service, DRT type services require significant set up costs including on going costs to operate the booking/co ordination centre. The levels of subsidy can also be higher than the services that they replace.
50. The purchase of external DRT provision from an established organisation outside York would be likely to cost in the region of £60,000 per twelve-seat vehicle purchased and a further revenue cost of £35,000 per vehicle, per annum. For a city the size of York, it is estimated that three vehicles would be required to adequately serve the rural hinterland.
51. To operate the service internally would require further significant set-up costs as the Council currently has no scheduling expertise.
52. The Halcrow report focuses on the experiences of Wiltshire and their significant DRT scheme and highlights that York has an existing DRT scheme in the form of Dial and Ride.
53. Research undertaken by the Department for Transport identified that DRT services operated at subsidies ranging from less than £1 per passenger to around £10 (the higher subsidies often resulting from high end vehicles and complex booking facilities).
54. **Key message** - DRT does have the potential to deliver subsidies of around £2 per passenger should existing facilities in York be made use of. The Halcrow report makes clear, however, that the utilisation of Dial and Ride vehicles for this function may be impossible without significant expansion/modernisation.

Community Transport (CT)

55. Community and voluntary transport is a response to the transport needs of individuals or groups not met by conventional bus or train services. CT can take many forms and be operated by many different organisations. CT providers also deliver their own transport services for the community in the forms of group transport or individual services such as volunteer car schemes.
56. In some areas scheduled bus services are delivered by CT operators. The 'Little Red Bus' in North Yorkshire delivers a number of scheduled bus and DRT services using community transport vehicles and also through harnessing spare capacity on other vehicles. The 'Little Red Bus' network in North Yorkshire is offering more opportunities for collaborative working within the community transport sector and there are examples of regional collaboration instigated from within the Little Red Bus network.
57. Residents in rural areas are provided with transport services to local market towns, hospitals and GPs. As with all similar operations the organisation is heavily dependent on external funding and the infrastructure and IT in place to take bookings and plan routes. The organisation is supported financially by North Yorkshire County Council, Yorkshire Forward and a number of commercial organisations such as Asda and Marks and Spencer. Little Red Bus also offers organisations training through their own Driver Training Agency.
58. The Halcrow report concludes that CT services should not be considered as viable replacements for subsidised bus services in York. The set up costs and ongoing funding requirements of schemes such as the Little Red Bus may well result in higher subsidy per passenger figures than are currently experienced.
59. City of York Council has a good working relationship with York Wheels and contributes towards its core costs (£19,260 in 2008/09). The Shadow Executive Member for City Strategy is a trustee on York Wheels' board and an officer from Transport Planning regularly attends these meetings. In addition, there is close liaison through the Dial & Ride service.
60. The Council does not have a regular relationship with other community transport operators, such as British Red Cross within York and others outside of York.
61. The Council remains a partner of Selby and York Rural Transport and Access Partnership, with the Member for Wheldrake Ward and a Transport Planner attending meetings.
62. York Wheels and other community transport operators are not currently part of the York Quality Bus Partnership and there is no formal network of community transport operators.

Shared Taxi Services

63. Section 11 of the 1985 Transport Act makes provision for the carriage at separate fares in licensed hackney carriages and private hire vehicles of passengers who have booked their journeys in advance.

64. Such a service may be offered only if all passengers have booked their journey in advance and consented to the sharing of the vehicle on the basis of separate fares. In this situation each passenger is allowed to pay a separate fare to the driver but the vehicle does not become a Public Service Vehicle (PSV).
65. The feasibility of operating such services is heavily dependent on the capacity and enthusiasm of the taxi and private hire businesses. Across the UK there has been little take up of this provision under the Act. Within York there are approximately 600 private hire vehicles and 173 hackney carriage vehicles.
66. As the private hire fleet is the dominant force and located across all of York it is more likely that they would operate shared taxi services. In order to generate interest within the trade we recommend that taxi drivers are invited to a workshop detailing the operation of the proposed services prior to tendering. The hackney carriage fleet are predominantly based in the urban core of York but a number of private hire firms operate in the rural wards.
67. Introducing shared taxi services is a potential solution for those settlements that are affected through the withdrawal of subsidised bus services.
68. Research undertaken by the DfT identified that shared taxi services can offer a low-tech alternative to DRT services. However levels of subsidy range from £1 per passenger to some in excess of £10. The costs are typically lower than operating a DRT service due to the taxi operator providing the booking facility as opposed to a costly call centre.
69. **Key message:** Shared taxi services are an effective way of serving rural communities and could be used to provide evening and Sunday links between rural villages and York. Unlike other options, the vehicles will only operate when booked so deliver a significant environmental benefit. Unfortunately there are few examples from elsewhere in the UK that this option have worked successfully, in part due to a reluctance on the part of taxi firms to participate.
70. **Taxi-buses**
71. A taxi-bus allows a person or persons who hold a hackney licence to apply to the Traffic Commissioner for such a licence and to register a local service. Vehicles remain subject to the regulations of the local authority in which the taxi is licensed. The Local Transport Act also allows for private hire cars to operate as taxi-buses.
72. **Key message:** A taxi-bus scheme could be launched to serve the rural areas in a more efficient manner, to a fixed timetable with a limited stop operation. As with the shared taxi option, the Council would currently be dependent on the limited hackney carriage network to deliver such a service.

Options – Subsidised / Tendered Bus Services

Saving

73. Possible Options

The Halcrow review concludes that :

The following services may be withdrawn completely and not replaced with an alternative :

- 22 – Late Evenings £10,647
- 27 and 28 £115,156
- 746 £4,926

The following services should be reworked into a more regular, simplified timetable :

- 195 and 196 £29,683

The following services should be withdrawn and replaced with one (or more) Demand Responsive Transport, Shared Taxi Services or Taxi Buses :

- 18A £2,089
(CYC contribution to a service jointly funded with East Riding CC)
- 20 and 20A (Sundays) £13,188
- 21 £1,820
- 142 £10,956
(CYC contribution to a service jointly funded with NYCC)
- C1 £40,410
- C3 £2,560

74. Bus service subsidy - To achieve a cost reduction on overall bus subsidy, existing services will have to be discontinued. Members are therefore requested to consider the services outlined in Table 3 for withdrawal. All of these services require significant subsidy at present. The withdrawal of these journeys will go some way to reducing the current budgetary shortfall without significantly reducing weekday accessibility to key attractors.

75. If an even greater saving is required, Members may wish to consider withdrawing all of the services, urban or rural, not meeting the subsidy criteria.

Efficiency

76. The Halcrow report highlights several areas where improvements to existing bus services might be made. The recent changes to transport legislation may also assist the Council to make better use of the City's private and Council-owned vehicles than at present. Members may therefore wish to award contracts for all of the services listed in Table 6 and consider discontinuation of selected services after consideration of alternative solutions with a view to possible implementation by Spring 2010.

Improvement

77. The strategy is to encourage modal shift by progressively improving the quality of service delivered. Officers have identified three areas where this can be achieved:
- Increasing service frequency
 - Maintaining affordable fares
 - Modernising the fleet (improving both the accessibility and perception of the services)
78. If the Council is to consider launching its own Demand Responsive Transport operation and proposes to replace all of the existing subsidised services, the maximum budget available is £750,000.
79. Within the confines of this budget, it is not possible to enhance the service from its current level. The estimated cost of a DRT operation would require initial capital investment of £400,000 and an ongoing revenue costs of £1.75m. However, to offset these revenue costs would require a patronage level in the order of 32 passengers per bus hour, the level at which the Council currently expects services to operate on a commercial basis.
80. Given the estimated costs and the lack of information concerning latent demand, such a project could not be supported unless there was better evidence that patronage levels would be achieved.
81. Officers recommend the continuation of regular, timetabled, bus services rather than DRT, (although this does have a role in the provision of assisted travel) for the following reasons:
- Intending passengers can 'turn up and travel'
 - The cost to the Council is likely to be lower
 - Use is made of existing vehicles within the commercial fleet
 - Public is sceptical of DRT services and uptake is likely to be low
82. The retention of all subsidised services is proposed, to run to September 2011, with the exception of those services outlined in table 5, which should be discontinued.
83. Officers also propose, however, that a trial is undertaken, utilising a Dial & Ride vehicle to deliver peak commuter journeys for a rural village. This would require the purchase of new Dial & Ride vehicles as the existing buses are not fit for this purpose. See table 4.
84. Tables 4 and 6 outline the financial implications of the above.

Table 4 – Cost of trial

Available for Improvements if services outlined in table 5 are discontinued	£96,000
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Cost of peak hour commuter service utilising one new Dial & Ride vehicle (if purchased)	£25,000
Approximate cost of a new Dial & Ride vehicle	£60,000

85. Incorporating recommendations from the Halcrow report, the following analysis considers the current situation and examines the options presented above that would make a saving, offer an improvement in service, or more efficiently use the resources at the Council's disposal.
86. The Council's Executive approved service economies, to be introduced in April 2009, to contain expenditure in 2009/10. A significant increase in budget is still forecast for 2009/10 to enable all existing subsidised bus services to be maintained. Alongside the possibility of increasing the budget to enable the continuation of existing services, consideration is being given to budget savings which will necessitate some existing services being discontinued.
87. Having considered the Halcrow report, officers recommend that the services outlined in table 5 be considered for withdrawal (those marked "#" are involved in current tender invitations):

Table 5 – Subsidised services to be considered for withdrawal

Service No	From	To	Outline of Timetable	Est. annual Value (09/10)	Notes
18A	York	Holme on Spalding Moor	Sunday & Bank Holiday 2 hourly	£2,089	Jt.funding ERYC
20	Clifton Moor	Monks Cross	Sunday & Bank Holiday Hourly	£13,188	Mon-Sat service retained
22#	York	Skelton	Mon-Sat Late evening journey	£10,140	Daily daytime service retained
28#	University	Monks Cross	Mon-Fri hourly	Est.£60,000	27 retained assumed cost split 50/50
196#	York	Aughton	Thursday occasional	£5,971 (gross cost)	Sat service retained
746	York	Pocklington	Mon-Fri Early morning journey	£4,926	Rest of service commercial

Table 6– Projected out-turn cost of current service

Budget (08/09)	£639,000
Forecast mid-year inflation	£38,000 per annum
Speculative cost of replacing de-registered commercial services	£65,000 per service
Outturn (08/09)	£742,000

88. The majority of current Council contracts for subsidised bus services will be due for renewal in September 2011, requiring tenders to be invited no later than January/February 2011. If the Council wished to discontinue any of these services before routine contract expiry, six months' notice of early termination would have to be given to the contractor.
89. **Key message** - A minimum of six months' notice is required to terminate a bus contract
90. Tenders have recently been invited for a small number of services crossing into North Yorkshire, routinely planned to end at a different date (co-ordinated with County Council tendering in the same area), and for some service contracts that have arisen unexpectedly. Tenders were submitted on 23 December 2008. It is planned to present details of the bids, their implications for the Council's budget, and recommendations on acceptance at the meeting. The affected services are set out in Table 7 below:

Table 7 – Bus services currently being re-tendered

Service No.	From	To	Outline of timetable	Start Date	End Date	Notes
18	York	Holme on Spalding Moor	Mon–Sat 2 hourly + extra peak	30/03/09	27/04/13	Early surrender Jt.funding NYCC/ERYC
21 (including former C1)	York	Colton and Bolton Percy	Mon-Sat 2 hourly + extra peak	27/04/09	27/04/13	Routine renewal Jt.funding NYCC
22	York	Skelton	Daily hourly	29/03/09	03/09/11	Formerly commercial
27,28	University	Monks Cross	Mon-Fri hourly	30/03/09	02/09/11	Early termination by CYC (University contribution)
195*	York	Pocklington	Mon-Fri occasional	30/03/09	02/09/11	Routine renewal (experimental service)

196*	York	Aughton	Thur/Sat occasional	02/04/09	03/09/11	Formerly ERYC funded
19	York	Sutton-on-Derwent	Mon-Fri or Mon-Sat 2 hourly	30/03/09	03/09/11	Possible alternative to 195/6*

Dial a Ride (D&R)

91. City of York Council operates Dial & Ride (D&R) for York residents who cannot use other local bus services. Dial & Ride is the only service that contributes to Local Transport Plan (2006-2011) performance indicator 2E 'Use of demand responsive transport services'.
 92. D&R operates on a zonal timetable covering all of the city, taking residents to a range of shopping locations. The service could be opened to a wider passenger group, subject to having the capacity, but would then need to operate under a different legislative framework. At present, the vehicles operate under a Small Bus permit (often referred to as a 'Section 19' permit). The use of a Small Bus permit has benefits for the Council, such as not requiring an Operator's licence and Public Service Vehicle drivers.
 93. Current patronage is variable depending on route, with some routes regularly running at 100% occupancy whilst others carry small numbers. Additional officer resource, adjustments to the timetable and improved publicity towards the end of 2008 and onwards should result in improved patronage from those areas which are underutilised.
 94. The service has three 12-seat minibuses, all equipped with wheelchair lifts, to operate the service. These vehicles have several steps to access the vehicle, a cramped interior and are no longer fit for purpose. In the period since the Council purchased the minibuses, other small buses with a better level of accessibility have become available. Given the type of passengers that use the service, it would be beneficial to purchase higher specification vehicles at the next opportunity.
- Key Message:** It is proposed to support the inclusion of three new accessible minibuses for York Dial & Ride in the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme for 2009/10.
95. The Council has a service level agreement with 'York Wheels' for the provision of D&R. York Wheels are a registered charity providing transport services to those, who by reason of age, disability or need find that they cannot access public transport.
 96. The agreement sets out the responsibilities of each party; York Wheels provides driver and office staff responsible for the day-to-day operation of the service, whilst the Council are responsible for service planning, maintenance of resources and promotion of the service.
 97. The original service level agreement was signed in March 2005 and ran for three years. This was subsequently extended to allow time for the wider review of public transport services to be undertaken. Prior to 2005, there was a similar

arrangement in place with the former Tees, East and North Yorkshire Ambulance Service. The Council took the decision in 2003 to end this and enter into the new agreement with York Wheels. The reasons for this decision were that York Wheels seemed more suited to deliver the level of care needed for D&R passengers and that the operation of Dial & Ride would help to support the core activities of York Wheels itself.

98. The value of the service exceeds current procurement limits, and as a result the service would have to go through a full procurement process, including advertising in the Online Journal of the European Union, if it was tendered externally. However, because of the restricted market for this type of service, it may be possible to renegotiate a new service level agreement with York Wheels, without the need to tender the service externally. This approach has been taken successfully by other local authorities, such as Reigate and Banstead Borough Council. This option would need further investigation by officers.

99. Members are requested to consider which of the following options they would like officers to pursue :

Option 1: Re-tender Dial & Ride service using an open EU process.

Option 2: Instruct officers to investigate the possibility of renegotiating a new service level agreement with York Wheels.

100. The Council originally set fares on D&R to be comparable to other local bus services. As fares have not been reviewed for several years, they have now fallen behind these with a return fare still being £2.50 and a single £1.25.

Key Message: Should the fares for Dial & Ride be reviewed?

101. When the Government introduced half-price fares for concessionary pass-holders, the Council took the decision to make this available to D&R passengers. Since the changes to full-fare concessionary travel in 2008 (referred to elsewhere in this report), the Council has not made any additional concessions for D&R passengers, who are, by definition, unable to use registered local bus services. However, as D&R provides a 'premium' door-to-door service, other local authorities have taken the view that there should be a charge to concessionary pass-holders, albeit at a reduced level.

Key Message: Consideration needs to be given to what (or whether) concessionary rates should apply to D&R.

102. In September 2008, as part of the Collaborative Transport Project within Learning, Culture and Children's Services, D&R drivers and vehicles started to provide home-to-school transport outside of core D&R hours (09:00 – 16:30). Following some initial problems, this has largely been successful and enables better utilisation of Council resources. Whereas the early morning school journeys integrate well with the D&R timetable though, the afternoon return school journeys do restrict the availability of the vehicles for D&R.

103. As suggested in the Halcrow study, it may be more appropriate for D&R vehicles to be used for 'mainstream' peak local bus journeys instead of home-to-school

transport, as it will provide a better timetable fit. The small size of the vehicles would only allow them to serve some of the smaller settlements in York but may be suitable for serving some smaller rural communities away from main roads and bus routes. However, the current vehicles are not appropriate for local bus services and, if the Council chose to pursue this, the specification for new D&R vehicles would need to be different and possibly have a marginally higher cost .

104. D&R currently provides out-of-hours journeys bringing people to Edmund Wilson Swimming Pool for the 'Dolphins' swimming sessions on Monday evenings and Sundays. This provides a valuable service for those who use it but is relatively expensive in staff overtime and additional charges for out-of-hours access to the Hospital Fields Road site where the vehicles are kept overnight. No other sport or leisure facilities are served – all other D&R journeys are inter-peak shopping journeys.

The Local Transport Act

105. The Local Transport Bill has recently received Royal Assent in the Parliamentary process. The Act will make a number of changes to the way in which CT services are currently operated. The effects of this are intended to make the provision of CT easier by relaxing legislation on what vehicles and drivers can do.
106. With the revisions to the S.19 and S.22 permit documented in the Local Transport Act there may be the potential in the future to deliver such services.
107. The changes made to CT services as a result of the Local Transport Act may pave the way for new services to be introduced in York. Local voluntary groups will be able to run scheduled bus services without the cost or burden of meeting the requirements of operator licensing. These services can be used to fill a gap not being met by a commercial operator and will in the future allow drivers to be paid.
108. **Key message:** CT has the potential to deliver local bus services in the future and could efficiently serve rural areas, but York is starting from a low operational base.

Options – Dial and Ride (D&R)

Saving

109. D&R currently costs the Council £90,000 per annum. Approximately £10,000 is recouped through the fare box.
110. Members are requested to agree to an increase in fares from £2.50 to £3.50 for a day ticket and from £1.25 to £1.75 single on D&R. Further, Members are asked to devolve future fare increases to the Officer in Consultation process.
111. Offer one, standard fare to all D&R users, removing the existing concessionary half fare discount.

Efficiency

112. Investigate the use of Dial & Ride vehicles for peak local bus journeys in place of home-to-school journeys (eg Grimston Bar – Elvington – Wheldrake link).

113. Investigate the possibility of renegotiating a new service level agreement with York Wheels, supporting this local charity who also operate a shared car scheme.

OR

114. Let a contract for the Dial and Ride service by tendering on the open market through an EU competition.
115. Review the most cost-effective way of transporting passengers to 'Dolphins' swimming sessions at Edmund Wilson Swimming Pool.

Improvement

116. Support the inclusion of new, fit for purpose, 12-seat minibuses, to replace (or in addition to) the existing buses in the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme for 2009/10 at a cost of £60,000 per vehicle.

OR

117. Consider increasing the existing fleet size to 5 vehicles to improve the Dial & Ride service and to offer some rural bus services. This would cost of £300,000 in capital outlay and an additional operational sum of £60,000 per annum.
118. Provide free travel for York concessionary pass-holders on York Dial & Ride service. Whilst it is difficult to predict what additional take-up there would be as a result of making the service free, it is estimated to cost £10,000 more than at present.

Park and Ride

Background

119. 'Park and Ride' was first introduced in York in the 1970s and has been expanding ever since.
120. In 1988, the Council adopted Park and Ride as a key part of its strategy for managing traffic demand. Four sites were proposed, offering 3,000 spaces. In 2003, Park and Ride increased to the 5 sites currently in operation. From 2011, it is planned that Park and Ride will be further expanded to 7 sites as part of the current 'Access York' project.
121. The bus services are operated on an exclusive licence basis by the First Group.
122. All the sites are close to the intersections between key radial routes and the Outer Ring Road.

Operation

123. The service has been operated using fully accessible, low floor buses since 1995. Currently a fleet of 26 vehicles is required to operate the service on weekdays with additional buses on Saturdays and during school holidays. Upon commencement of the new five year licence agreement in February 2009, all of the buses regularly used to operate the P&R service will be less than one year old. Whilst the Council assists in the provision of bus priority measures, the bus service is financially self-supporting and operates at no cost to the York council tax payer.
124. **Key message** - From February 2009, all P&R buses will be less than one year old and will operate to the latest emissions levels (EEV) at no cost to the York taxpayer.
125. All of the services allow visitors, commuters and shoppers to reach their destination as quickly as possible with only one or two stops en-route. The 'Designer Outlet' (Red Line 7) service is the one exception to this rule. This operates as a local bus and whilst it is branded as 'Park & Ride', it serves every stop between the retail park and the City Centre.
126. Fulford Road is currently served by routes 415, 42, 18 and for much of the road, services 24 and 26, providing a frequency of 7/8 buses per hour. Design work is currently being progressed which will allow the bus priority over queuing traffic. When these works have been undertaken, officers would like to reduce the number of stops served by the Park & Ride service in the interests of decreasing journey times between the City and P&R site.

Fares & ticketing

127. Park & Ride fares have always competed well with City Centre car parking charges. The current return fare from the car parks is £2.30 (August 2008) compared to day parking charges of between £9.00 and £9.50 (January 2008).
128. First York accept their season products (FirstDay, FirstWeek, etc) on the Park & Ride services in addition to local service buses.

129. Concessionary pass holders are entitled to use the service for free after 09:00 Monday to Friday and at any time on weekends and public holidays, in line with all other local bus services in York.
130. Pre-pay season tickets offer substantial savings for regular travellers and the electronic 'Minstercard' accelerates boarding times and reduces the quantity of cash handled by drivers.
131. Any form of ticket machine, capable of accelerating boarding times through the use of smart ticketing is positive, especially with the quantities of passengers carried on the P&R services. The machines currently installed on the P&R services are not capable of reading the ENCTS (English National Concessionary Travel Scheme) passes however. All boardings are therefore recorded on a 'push button' basis which, in busy periods especially, is likely to result in a degree of error. The eventual installation of ENCTS-reading ticket machines will provide a more reliable stream of data, not just recording card usage, but recording which area of the country the pass holder has come from and delivering potentially valuable information on visitors to York.
132. The introduction of new ticket machines will also have the added benefit of preparing for the potential arrival of 'Yorcard', for which pass-reading ticket machines will be essential.

Off bus ticketing

133. The introduction of higher capacity vehicles from February will potentially result in longer boarding times at stops. Whilst a number of passengers pre-pay using the MinsterCard, or First season tickets, the introduction of off bus ticketing machines would assist to further accelerate boarding, especially at peak times.
134. There would be a requirement for the cash to be removed each day but this task could be completed by the supervisor who does not, generally, have sufficient time to sell tickets to individuals at the same time as completing his other duties.
135. A number of other bus operations (including London) utilise off-bus ticketing, in some cases eliminating the need for on-bus sales completely and significantly reducing boarding times.
136. **Key message-** The introduction of off bus ticketing facilities will accelerate the rates of boarding and reduce bus stop dwell times. Officers will investigate the possibility of introducing off-bus ticket machines at Park & Ride sites.

Bus Priority

137. Four of the five routes currently benefit from bus lanes and associated priority measures. The fifth route (Designer Outlet) will do so from 2009. All of the services take approximately 15 to 20 minutes on their inbound journey, with the outbound Designer Outlet journey taking slightly longer.

138. The following peak hour advantage exists for the bus over the private car:

	Inbound	Round trip time
Grimston Bar	marginal	4-12 minutes
Askham Bar	1-5 minutes	1-5 minutes
Rawcliffe Bar	1-3 minutes	1-3 minutes
Designer Outlet	Zero	Zero
Monks Cross	1-5 minutes	1-5 minutes

Bus priority measures have improved reliability considerably with time benefits increasing when traffic volumes are higher.

139. Under the terms of the new licence agreement between the Council and First Group, a uniform livery will be applied to all P&R vehicles, many of which are already in operation. February will see an increase in passenger capacity on all P&R routes and an entirely new fleet of vehicles.
140. All of the vehicles are to have full digital CCTV coverage and air conditioning as standard. They will also be equipped with a full complement of bus tracking (GPS/radio) hardware which will enable both remote, live bus monitoring and real time passenger information.
141. In addition to ensuring that the operation of the service is as good as possible, First will be responsible for the marketing of the service with specialist support from the Council. Continuous service monitoring and customer research are to be undertaken to maintain high standards and the Council will independently monitor operator performance using a combination of on-street staff and the ACIS 'Busnet Live' electronic GPS system.
142. If service levels are not met, the Council's Park and Ride Monitoring Officer can issue Default Notices. If the number of Defaults reaches a particular level within a given timescale the operator may be penalised.
143. In the same vein, in the interests of providing an attractive service, the Council has committed to ensuring that its car park pricing policy continues to make P&R an attractive financial option.

Future Developments

144. A successful Major Scheme bid to the Department for Transport will see the introduction of two entirely new Park & Ride services for the A59 and Wigginton Road (Clifton Moor). In addition, the P&R site at Askham Bar is to be moved to a new location on the other side of Tesco with a much increased car parking area.
145. The new sites, due for completion in 2011, will include a terminal building with waiting room, toilet facilities and a supervisors office with good visibility for staff to provide security and monitor any problems. It is also intended that the site will incorporate wind turbines to provide a significant proportion of the power for operation of the terminal.

146. Cycle lockers and Sheffield stands will be provided at all three sites. It is intended that the lockers will be loaned on a period by period basis so that the use can be correctly controlled and facilities do not lie empty for long periods.
147. Bus lanes and intelligent traffic light bus priority measures will be installed on the new routes to ensure that they are attractive to car drivers.
148. The licence to operate the existing five Park & Ride services has just been let. The agreement includes the capacity to incorporate the new services into the same agreement. It is possible that the new services will not be able to operate on the same financial basis as the existing routes from the outset. For this reason it may be necessary for the Council to 'pump-prime' the service. Members may decide that to achieve best value, it is appropriate to return to the market place to procure the new services. Once final approval has been received from the DfT, agreement will need to be reached on this issue.
149. **Key message** Arrangements must be made for the operation of the new Park & Ride services. Within the next eighteen months, Council must decide whether it would like to go out to tender for this service or operate it as an addition to the existing contract.

150. **Options**

Savings

151. This section of the report does not offer any areas for savings as the service is subject to a binding contract from 2009 - 2014.

Efficiency

152. The Council is requested to support the production of a further report on the partnership working, cost and potential options involved for the upgrading of P&R on-bus ticket machines to make them compatible with national smartcard standards.

Improvement

153. In the interests of speeding boarding times both in town and at site, officers seek Council approval to explore the introduction of off-bus ticketing facilities.

Concessionary Travel

154. Full details of Concessionary Bus Travel arrangements (including YOzone) are outlined in Annex A of this report but a brief summary is given here.
155. Concessionary travel in York is currently offered to three sections of the community.

- Over 60s
 - Eligible disabled persons
 - 11-16yrs
156. All York residents aged 60 or over currently have the choice of claiming an ENCTS (English National Concessionary Travel Scheme) bus pass, offering free bus travel across England subject to peak-hour restrictions, or £20 (per annum) of National Transport Tokens.
157. Residents aged under 60 with a qualifying disability may opt to either claim an ENCTS bus pass or purchase £100 of tokens per annum at a 75% discount.
158. All secondary school pupils aged 11-16 who live or study in the City of York area are entitled to a free 'YOzone' card. The card permits reduced-fare travel for all local journeys on participating companies' bus services. As the Council provides no fare subsidies, the amount of discount is set by each bus company, but is typically at or below half the adult fare for the trip.
159. **English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS)**
160. The ENCTS bus pass was introduced in April 2008 offering all over 60s and registered disabled free-fare, off-peak, bus travel anywhere in England.
161. Most significantly, the change from local to national pass validity was accompanied by a shift in responsibility for making compensation payments to bus service operators for lost revenue from the pass issuing authority to the authority in whose area the pass is used. Places, like York, which are local centres for the surrounding area, or attract leisure visitors, have therefore incurred increased liability, whilst some other Councils have benefited from reduced liability.
162. The combined effect of these changes has been to raise the cost to the Council of funding bus pass concessions, in stages, from around £600,000 in 2003/4 (the last year of half-fare local travel) to an estimated £4.2 million in 2008/9. In this financial year, Central Government has provided £1.12 million of assistance towards this total.
163. Government funding is intended to meet the costs of providing the Statutory Minimum Concession. Any enhancements, using discretionary powers, must be funded by councils themselves. Our current scheme includes the following enhancements.
- Free weekday travel between 0900 and 0930 and after 2300 hours available to any National Concessionary pass holder
 - Free all day travel wholly within York for York residents qualifying on grounds of blindness
 - Free travel for necessary companions of persons with disability

Options – ENCTS

Saving & Efficiency

164. Removal of the local enhancement to the Concessionary scheme, with free travel commencing from 0930 rather than 0900.
165. There is substantial use of passes between 0900 and 0930, but any cost saving from withdrawing this facility is difficult to predict. Many journeys may simply be delayed until 0930 or later. This could cause service capacity problems and, if so, could lead to “Additional Cost” claims from bus service operators which might actually increase our funding liability. Bus operators may be in support of a later concessionary start as the ‘second rush hour’ at 0900 often further slows already delayed buses. A move to a 0930 start may improve bus punctuality.

Improvement

166. Free bus travel for all ENCTS pass holders at any time. This could cost as much as £250,000 in increased fare re-imburement and “additional cost” claims from bus service operators in the AM peak should they need to provide additional vehicles.
167. Whilst specific data is not currently available, it is believed that there are a significant number of bus passengers in the 60-70 age group using services pre-9am to get to work. The provision of free concessionary travel at all times would result in a further reduction to the bus operators revenue stream and a further, significant increase in re-imburement required from the Council.
168. The provision of free concessionary travel at any time would go far beyond most local authority provision in England currently on offer. Indeed even London only offers free concessionary travel from 0930.

National Transport Tokens

169. The popularity of tokens has declined in recent years as a result of the increasingly generous bus travel concessions for older & disabled people. Token take-up also decreased significantly in 2008/09 due to the Council halving the amount of tokens offered (to £20), coincident with the introduction of a free national bus pass.
170. The value of tokens issued has reduced from £525,000 in 2007/8 to £170,000 this year. This appears to represent a significant reduction in Council expenditure. The cost of delivering concessionary travel has, however, risen by around one million pounds in the past year when considered in its entirety.
171. Many other local authorities in England, provide an alternative to the bus pass, but this alternative is commonly better targeted than it is in York at present, to increase the value of the concession for those who need it most.
172. Withdrawal of any alternative to the bus pass is estimated to save approximately £60,000 once consideration has been given to the resulting increase in bus pass use.

173. Improved targeting of tokens would deliver an increased level of tokens to a reduced audience and would be cost neutral (ie £170,000). The result would be an improvement to the quality life of those who, through lack of mobility or provision, rather than as a result of choice, are unable to use the bus.
174. The current system allows the eligible disabled under 60 to purchase £100 worth of tokens for the cost of £25. In the interests of simplicity and to reduce bureaucracy, it is proposed to abolish the purchase system and issue £75 for the financial year to the 90 entitled residents who choose to claim this benefit.
175. The main weaknesses of the current system are that once the tokens are distributed, the Council has no way of monitoring how (or indeed, if) they are used, their availability to all eligible persons as an alternative limits the value of assistance with travel costs which the Council can provide for those in most need, and their use for the intended purpose is not adequately controlled.
176. Alternatives in the form of a 'taxi card' exist in the market place and are used by other local authorities. These schemes have relatively low capital and running costs and provide reliable data on usage. In addition, at the end of a given period (eg monthly, quarterly or annually), cards can be re-set and the Council would only pay for journeys made during this period, ensuring that there is better financial control.
177. The estimated capital cost of introduction of a taxi card scheme is thought to be in the region of £100,000. On the basis that each claimant received £50 per annum, with a total take up of 5,000 passes, the estimated annual cost could potentially be £300,000. This sum would be offset by any stored value not used within the given period and the administration cost is unlikely to be significantly higher than that of the existing tokens scheme.
178. An Open EU tendering process, which would take about six months to carry out, would have to be undertaken for the procurement of a taxi stored value card system. This has therefore been proposed as an option for delivery from 2010/11.
179. In 2008, a month long event was held at the Guildhall to distribute both tokens and the newly created national bus pass. This year there is no need to have such an extensive event for the distribution of bus passes as none of them will have expired.
180. In previous years, tokens have been distributed centrally at the Guildhall, at parish venues and by direct delivery to nursing homes. In 2008, the total cost of this operation was £28,147. Many parish venues are barely visited, with Council employees distributing tokens to a handful of people. Alternatively, the handful of people who are unable to reach the remaining parish venues could have their tokens delivered directly.

Options – National Transport Tokens

Saving

181. Withdraw any alternative to the bus pass. This option would save £60,000 in token distribution once consideration has been given to the increase in bus operator re-imburement resulting from token users switching to bus passes.

OR

182. Retain the status quo (eg. £20 distribution of transport tokens alternative for over 60 concessionaires and younger disabled discount purchase scheme).
183. To distribute tokens only from The Guildhall and key parish venues (reducing the number of parishes from 30 to around 10), requesting that nursing homes collect their allocation from either of the above saving approximately £6,500.

Efficiency

184. Better target priorities by restricting token distribution to the over 75s and eligible disabled
185. Simplify the system for the under 60s disabled, abolishing the purchase of tokens set up and issuing a fixed sum of £75 for the year.
186. To distribute tokens only from The Guildhall and key parish venues (reducing the number of parishes from 30 to 10).

OR

187. Distribute £50 worth of tokens to the eligible disabled and abolish distribution events. It is anticipated that the net increase cost of providing this will be £15,000.

Improvement

188. Increase the value of tokens to £40 (or estimated cost neutral amount) for this year and replace the anonymous token system with an auditable stored value taxi card system from 2010/11.
189. To distribute tokens from The Guildhall, parish venues and by delivery to nursing homes.

YOzone

190. The YOzone card is issued to secondary school pupils aged 11-16 who live or study in the City of York area. The card permits reduced-fare travel for all local journeys on participating companies' bus services. As the Council provides no fare subsidies, the amount of discount is set by each bus company, but is typically at or below half the adult fare for the trip. The principal objective of the YOzone card is to encourage young people to use public transport and continue to use sustainable modes of transport as they enter adulthood.

191. It has long been an aspiration to extend discounted bus travel to include the 5500 (approx.) students in full-time further education (i.e. aged 16-19).
192. Following members' endorsement of the 16-19 scheme, letters were sent out to all local bus operators asking for their views on the initiative. Two operators in the city already offer reduced fares for this age group, so are thought likely to offer some degree of discount. The willingness of other operators to participate will depend on their current corporate priorities.
193. A number of significant operators have declined to participate in the YOzone 16-19 scheme, legitimately citing loss of revenue as their main concern.
194. The launch of a YOzone 16-19 pass which does not deliver some level of discount on all bus services in York is likely to confuse the 11-16 product. It is the view of officers that this product should not be introduced unless and until all operators can be convinced of its merits.
195. Many local authorities offer discount travel schemes to the 16-19 year old student market. Unlike the YOzone model, this usually involves a formal arrangement with bus operators who, as with ENCTS, are reimbursed for the perceived loss of revenue.

Options – YOzone

Savings

196. Do not proceed with a YOzone 16-19 scheme.

Efficiency

197. Proceed with the YOzone 16-19 product, irrespective of certain operators' refusal to participate on the terms of the YOzone 11-16 product.

Improvement

198. Investigate the options available to the Council in launching an 'all operator' YOzone 16-19 product and produce a subsequent report outlining the implications.

Public Transport Information

199. Full details of Public Transport Information arrangements are outlined in Annex B of this report but a brief summary is given here.
200. Current and understandable public transport information is key to encouraging modal shift and to making the majority of York accessible for visitors and residents alike without the need for a car.
201. The quality of printed literature has been greatly improved during 2008 to support the publicity of the York bus network. Key highlights of the past year and plans for the year to come include the following :
 - A. Publicity events for public transport including, 'In town without my car!' and 'Bus it!'
 - B. Printed material including the 'choose the bus' route map and information guide.
 - C. Real time passenger information brought to the general public via SMS messaging under the 'yournextbus' banner.
 - D. Re-branding and refreshing of existing services, including the 'Park & Ride' re-launch.
 - E. Bus only day
 - F. Leave your car at home.

Options – Printed Material

202. Essex County Council and their local bus operator agree to a set number of bus service change dates per year. If operators keep to these dates, the County Council will print standard-format timetables free of charge for any stops within the county boundary. Any timetable amendments arising due to changes outside the agreed dates are undertaken at the bus operators' cost.
203. Bus operators then install the timetables along their routes, with agreements in place for larger operators to assist smaller ones where required. The initiative is reported to have been highly successful in providing county-wide standardised public transport information at a lower cost than previous, less-coordinated, efforts.
204. West Yorkshire PTE uses a custom-designed system (COSA Trackbuilder) to input timetable data and print on-street information displays. Current arrangements mean that York timetable data is already entered onto the Metro system for 'Traveline' (see below) purposes. It may be possible to develop this system, at an unspecified cost, to produce printed on-street displays in a York-specific format.
205. **Key message** - The feasibility of using COSA Trackbuilder to produce York branded timetable displays is worth considering if financially viable.

Saving/Efficiency

206. Continue to deliver the best possible printed bus information and publicity with the existing resource available. Commit to the printing of two bus route maps per annum.

Improvement

207. Provide additional staff resource (either internal or external) to better deliver printed bus information, possibly implementing the Essex and or Metro models.

Options – Traveline

208. The Council has to formally tender a contract for bus information telephone service provision and officers plan to have awarded this work by late 2009.
209. Depending on the outcome of the tendering exercise, which could result in York Bus Info calls being handled from a location anywhere in the UK, the Council will have to decide whether to retain the local number and continue to finance the as-yet un-quantified difference in call costs, or to adopt the National Traveline number (0871 200 22 33) adopted by many other parts of the country.
210. Every bus stop in the city would be re-labelled and all printed materials containing the widely-publicised 551400 number would need to be re-designed and published.
211. The Council has never previously publicised the national Traveline number as calls to this are charged at a minimum of 10p per minute (from a BT landline), significantly more expensive than a local call and therefore a potential disincentive to using the service.

Saving

212. Replace the number with the National Traveline number (0871 200 22 33).

Efficiency

213. Retain the existing local telephone number (01904 551400)

Options – Internet Journey Planner (Traveline)

214. Bus information is available free of charge on the internet by using the Yorkshire Traveline Internet Journey Planner (www.yorkshiretravel.net). This site is jointly funded by PTEs and local authorities across Yorkshire through the regional Traveline agreement.
215. Timetable data for York is currently input on our behalf by Metro (West Yorkshire PTE) at their Leeds offices. Data entry work is now done by Metro at cost. A formal tendering exercise could potentially take place to contract this work but is unlikely to result in cost savings for the council, and would most likely increase overall costs.

216. The only notable drawback of the current arrangement is that the data entry staff in Leeds have limited real-world knowledge of York and do not always appreciate local idiosyncrasies. This leads to occasional errors that cannot be rectified promptly as CYC have no direct access to Metro's COSA Trackbuilder system. Minor errors could potentially be corrected more quickly by TPU staff if a secure remote connection into Metro's system could be established.
217. The cost of this connection has not been established at this current time.

Saving

218. Continue to react to errors as and when they arise, appreciating that there will be a minimum two week lag on any incorrect information published on Traveline.

Efficiency/Improvement

219. Request that officers investigate the feasibility of remotely accessing York PTI data within the Metro 'COSA Trackbuilder' to improve data quality.

Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI)

220. Annex B provides Members with a detailed summary of progress on 'BLISS' (Bus Location Information sub-system).

Options – RTPI

221. Council staff currently undertake on-street surveys over a two week period, once per annum to monitor bus punctuality. This is largely carried out to fulfil LTP targets and does not provide an ongoing and precise indication of bus punctuality throughout the year.
222. First Group have a licence for a programme 'Bus Operator Reports' which provides accurate data for every bus service operated (as long as the vehicle is equipped with Real Time Passenger Information kit). On occasion, First have been happy to provide this data to the Council but are not in a position to do this on a regular basis.
223. As much of the information collated in Bus Operator Reports is 'commercially sensitive' to bus operators, the Council does not have a licence to access this data. Initial conversations with bus operators have suggested that they would be willing for the Council to purchase a licence to access the software if a data sharing agreement was signed, restricting the use of such information with regard to bus services operated on a commercial basis.
224. The cost of Bus Operator Reports is approximately £12,000 for a five year licence. If successful, this monitoring software could remove the need to employ casual staff to complete the LTP monitoring and over the five year period, deliver a saving.

Saving

225. There are no options for savings proposed in this area.

Efficiency

226. Purchase a licence for the 'Bus Operator Reports' product and run alongside on-street bus monitoring for one year before fully transferring to this stream of information

Bus stop infrastructure & priority for the bus

Infrastructure

227. Strategic direction for on-street bus infrastructure is set out in ANNEX C of this report.
228. **Key message:** Members note the contents of ANNEX C and support officer efforts to improve and maintain bus stop infrastructure to a high standard in York.
229. The Council uses high quality box-section flags and poles for city centre stops, which are custom made for York. In 2009, Transport Planning will begin a procurement exercise to identify framework suppliers for the following equipment:
- a) High quality box-section flags (portrait and landscape orientation)
 - b) High quality bus stop shelters suitable for use in the City Centre Conservation Area
 - c) Standard bus stop shelters
 - d) City Centre Improvements

Priority for the bus

230. The Council has a range of studies and works aimed at providing bus priority on key routes in York. Most of these are part of the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme and are usually multi-modal studies. In 2008/09, there are studies in progress and implementation for Blossom Street, Fishergate/Paragon Street/Piccadilly area and Fulford Road.
231. In addition, external consultants are carrying out an Orbital Bus Study. This will firstly look at long-term travel demands in the city, both on public and personal transport, making use of previous work. The second stage will look at cross-city and orbital movements, which are currently poor due to the natural geography and traffic congestion in York, and produce an outline programme of infrastructure improvements in the medium-term to enable the development of orbital bus routes. The study will also quantify the benefits of any such improvements and any effects on the existing network.

Air Quality

232. One of the key aims of LTP2 is to improve air quality. York does not currently have a Low Emission Zone however it does have an Air Quality Management Area, which covers the major roads in (and in close proximity to) the City Centre

area. Many of these roads are also bus corridors so the issue of air quality is pertinent to buses.

233. Cleanliness of engines is indicated by EURO standards. Buses are linked with HGV's in the 'heavy-duty vehicles' category, for which EURO V has recently been introduced. The table below shows EURO rating alongside date implemented:

Pre 1992	Pre EURO
1992	EURO I
1996	EURO II
2000	EURO III
2005	EURO IV
2008	EURO V
2013/14 (Proposed)	EURO VI

234. Latest figures show that 47% of the total York bus fleet is at EURO III standard. The LTP2 target for 2011 is 89% EURO III or better. City of York Council has no direct influence over how modern / environmentally friendly buses should be on commercial routes, however the First York fleet is one of the most modern subsidiaries of First Bus in the country.
235. A 2004 TAS study found that First York had the lowest average Nitrous Oxide output of any fleet in the country and ranks 5th and 6th in the tables for the least carbon monoxide and hydrocarbon emissions respectively. The fleet has been improved further by the introduction of the new Park and Ride fleet and FTR vehicles since the study. EYMS and Yorkshire Coastliner have also recently invested in new buses at EURO IV standard.
236. **Key message** - The commercial bus network compares well in terms of vehicle age when placed alongside many other British cities.
237. The minimum standard for tendered services is EURO II. On school services the current minimum requirement is lower, at EURO I, though Shadow Executive on 1st October 2008 hoped that "a higher standard would be sought for environmentally friendly vehicles...". In agreement with this, there is an officer desire to raise these standards to EURO III in the future, which will bring the school and tendered services in line with the aforementioned LTP targets.
238. Officers will continue to monitor the development of hybrid buses, where an electric motor could be used as the primary power source when in an air quality management area or the City Centre for example. Through the Quality Bus Partnership officers will also endeavour to encourage local bus operators to invest in more modern, cleaner vehicles, which will benefit those who choose to travel by bus and indeed, those who don't.

Options – Air Quality

239. This option would result in some very old (up to nineteen years at the start of the contracts) and potentially unappealing buses operating in York with little or no incentive for the operators to renew them.
240. This would project a negative image of buses and is undesirable. Air quality would suffer and as the hackney carriage taxi licences are moving towards a maximum vehicle age of eight years, this could be seen as penalising other modes of transport whilst the bus operators can run much older vehicles.
241. It is likely, however, that by pursuing this option, tender prices are likely to be lower.
242. All buses running on tendered services would be 11 years or younger commencing from the start of the contract. Generally speaking, modern buses are beneficial to the image of a service and are more likely to attract passengers as opposed to older vehicles. This is dependant on the operator however as a well looked after older bus can be more attractive than a poorly maintained newer one. Should children travel to school on more modern buses then perhaps they will be more inclined to view the bus as a mode of transport they are comfortable travelling on later in life. Measures to reduce reliance on cars are integral to LTP2.
243. The major limiting factor in raising the standards is the cost to the Council. More modern buses naturally cost more than like-for-like older ones so the operator is more than likely to pass the cost of improved vehicles onto the authority. The ‘flip side’ to this is that some of the companies who run more modern vehicles may be able to offer more competitive prices whereas with lower EURO rating guidelines they would not be able to contend on price. A balance therefore has to be achieved between the desire to provide more modern, environmentally friendly vehicles and the desire to simply provide a service
244. A rough indication of service bus costs taken from a second hand dealer shows a fourteen year old bus costing £8,000, a ten year old one costing £19,500 and an eight year old model priced at £33,000. This clearly shows significant variation in the price of older vehicles and the latter two both have EURO II engines so there is likely to be a fair variation in the quality of vehicles COYC could expect to run its services.
245. Other authorities have implemented similar initiatives and have experienced an increase in prices, though some doubt surrounds the validity of using an age or EURO minimum standard as it does not necessarily reflect the quality of vehicles used. EURO III may also not benefit CO2 levels as this is related to fuel consumption and due to the measures taken to reduce other pollutants fuel consumption is often worse in EURO III vehicles than EURO II. The benefits of having lower levels of the other pollutants, such as nitrous oxides, still stand though.

Saving

246. Retain the current conditions.

Improvement

247. Raise the minimum standard of engine rating on all tendered local bus services to EURO III from 2011.

Policy Framework

248. The introduction of some or all of the 'improvement' and 'efficiency' measures as outlined above will serve to further raise the image of York's public transport network and thus support modal shift.

Consultation

249. There is a recognition that any decisions made affecting the provision of public transport will potentially impact both the passenger and bus operators alike. Efforts have been made over the past year to strengthen the relationship between operators and the Council through the various guises of the Quality Bus Partnership and this work will continue into 2009.
250. No formal public consultation has been carried out on any of the options presented in this report.

Options & Analysis

251. Each option is presented and analysed in its own distinct section in the body of the report

Corporate Objectives

252. Council involvement in the provision of bus services contributes towards the following Corporate Aims as set out in the Council Plan. In particular, it contributes towards the "Sustainable City" and "Inclusive City" strategic objectives in the Community Strategy and Corporate Aim 1.3 to "make getting around York, easier, more reliable, and less damaging to the environment".
253. Council involvement also contributes towards achievement of the objectives embodied in the Council's Second Local Transport Plan; to reduce congestion, improve safety, improve air quality, improve accessibility, and improve other aspects of quality of life.

Implications

254. Implications for the proposals are:

Financial

255. The financial implications of the options considered in the report are shown in Annex D. Should Members agree to proposals that will change current budget levels the growth/savings implications will need to be included as part of the

2009/10 council budget proposals to be considered by the Executive 16th February 2009 and Budget Council 26th February 2009.

Human Resources (HR)

256. None

Equalities

257. None

Legal

258. None

Crime and Disorder

259. The introduction of a intelligent taxi-card scheme would eliminate the possibility of anonymous fraud, suspected in the misuse of national transport tokens.

Information Technology (IT)

260. None

Property

261. None

Risk Management

262. The risks associated with the recommendations of this report are assessed at a net level below 16.

Recommendations

263. That Members note the options presented in the various sections contained within the report and consider the following Officer recommendations:

264. *Commercial Bus Services*

A. Continued efforts should be made to improve passenger waiting facilities and bus priority measures across the City with effort focussed on commercial routes. Current investment levels in these areas should be sustained.

265. *Subsidised Bus Services*

A. Retain all subsidised services, to run to September 2011, with the exception of those services outlined in table 5 which should be discontinued (paragraph 87).

- B. Undertake a trial utilising a new Dial & Ride vehicle to deliver peak commuter journeys for a rural village.
- C. Do not consider replacing traditional buses with DRT or other community provision at the current time.

266. Dial & Ride

- A. Agree to the inclusion of one new, fit for purpose, minibus in the LTP Capital programme to be used for both Dial & Ride and rural, peak time, scheduled services.
- B. Instruct officers to investigate the possibility of renegotiating a new service level agreement with the current provider, York Wheels.
- C. Agree to an increase in fares from £2.50 to £3.50 for a day ticket and from £1.25 to £1.75 single on D&R and devolve future fare increases to the Officer in Consultation process.

267. Park & Ride

- A. Support the production of a further officer report on the partnership working, cost and potential options involved for the upgrading of P&R on-bus ticket machines to make them ITSO smartcard compatible.
- B. In the interests of speeding boarding times both in town and at site, officers seek Council approval to explore the introduction of off-bus ticketing facilities.

268. Concessionary Travel

- A. Retain the current operating hours for bus pass acceptance
- B. Withdraw any alternative to the bus pass to the over 60's however increase the value of tokens to £50 for eligible disabled.

OR

- C. Restrict token distribution to the over 75s, eligible disabled
- D. Increase the value of tokens to £40 (or estimated cost neutral amount) for this year and replace the anonymous token system with an auditable stored value taxi card system from 2010/11.
- E. Simplify the system for the under 60s disabled, abolishing the purchase of tokens arrangement and issuing a fixed sum of £75 for the year.
- F. Distribute tokens from The Guildhall and key parish venues (reducing the number of parishes from approx. 30 to around 10) and request that nursing homes collect their allocation from either of the above.

269. YOzone

- A. Instruct officers to investigate the options available to the Council in launching an 'all operator' YOzone 16-19 product and produce a subsequent report outlining the implications.

270. Bus Information

- A. Continue to deliver the best possible printed bus information and publicity with the existing resource available. Commit to the printing of two bus route maps per annum.
- B. Request that officers investigate the feasibility of remotely accessing York PTI data within the Metro 'COSA Trackbuilder' to improve Traveline telephone and internet data quality.
- C. Tender the travel information telephone service and retain the existing local telephone number (01904 551400)
- D. With agreement from bus operators, purchase a licence for the Real Time Passenger Information 'Bus Operator Reports' product and run alongside on-street bus monitoring for one year before fully transferring to this stream of information

271. Air Quality

- A. Raise the minimum standard of engine rating on all tendered local bus services to EURO III from 2011.

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Report Approved

 Tick

Date 08.01.09

Report Approved

Date Insert Date

Wards Affected: List wards or tick box to indicate all

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

- 1) Review of subsidised bus services by Halcrow (in hard copy in the Members' library or available electronically from the Members' M: drive)
- 2) Local Transport Plan (2006-11) & Annex D, Bus strategy

Annexes

- Annex A: Concessionary Travel
- Annex B: Public Transport Information
- Annex C: Bus Stop Infrastructure policy
- Annex D: Financial implications of recommended options