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| meeting | ENVIRONMENT STANDING SELECT COMMITTEE | |
| date | 29 JUNE 2004 | agenda item no |

FINAL PROGRESS REPORT ON THE BEST VALUE REVIEW OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT OPERATIONS

Purpose of Report

1. To provide a final report on the Best Value Improvement and Implementation Plan for Public Transport Operations.

Background

2. The Best Value Improvement and Implementation plan was agreed by Cabinet on 8 May 2002. An update report was presented to this Committee on 1 September 2003 showing that good progress had been made in implementing the proposals, although some targets had slipped.

Key Issues

3. For local bus services, major steps forward have been taken against a background of commercial deregistrations; reinstatements for some service gaps were possible during 2003/04 due to the availability of £350k additional funding. The local bus management framework, approved by Cabinet in July 2003 has been trialled against thirty contracts and the results will be reported to Cabinet in July. A full review of all contracts will then be undertaken during Autumn 2004.
4. The second annual public transport forum will be held on 12 July 2004. The programme this year will concentrate on accessibility planning, LTP(2) and the bus strategy action plan.
5. A key recommendation of the Best Value Review was follow up work concerning Education Transport Policy. An Ad-hoc Select Committee has completed this work and the final report was accepted by Overview Select in March 2004 and subsequently endorsed by Cabinet. No major changes were recommended but an action plan to deal with some softer issues was agreed. This action plan is being prepared by the Education Department.

6. New Service Level Agreements and funding provision has been implemented for Community Transport and Voluntary Car Schemes.
7. The bus information strategy agreed by Cabinet 23 July 2003 is being implemented in consultation with the operators and a marketing strategy has been prepared. This will see marketing directed to specific routes to achieve growth in patronage and sustainability.
8. In line with the LTP Strategy for Greater Nottingham and the implementation of Bus Quality Partnerships (BQP) a BQP has been launched for the North Notts LTP area. The development of a programme for improvements to major interchanges is a key priority and will feature predominantly in future funding bids. This work will be supported by the implementation of the successful Urban and Rural bus challenge projects in the Ashfield and Ollerton areas and the bus strategy action plan.

Conclusions

9. In terms of improving and promoting public transport there is never an end state but a process of continuous improvements. There has been significant improvements as a result of the best value review which is now complete. The work will, however, continue as part of the Environmental Department Business Plan. The additional appendix provides the final update in tabular form for the review with the action taken since September 2003 shown in italics.

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Director of Environment

MHenv.25

| | Actions required | Timescales/milestones | Final Report 29 June 2004 |
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| Project 1 | Improve local bus services | | |
| 1.1 | <u>Structurally integrate public transport strategy and operations</u> | November 2002 | Complete |
| 1.2 | <u>Develop bus strategy</u> | Strategy incorporated into August 2002 Local Transport Plan APR submission to government | Complete - strategy approved by Cabinet on 23 July 2003 Action Plan Prepared |
| 1.3 | Introduce performance-based appraisal framework for tendered services | Framework in operation by November 2002 | Complete – performance framework approved by Cabinet on 23 July 2003 – Trial completed April 2004 to be reported to Cabinet in July 2004 |
| 1.4 | Develop and adopt minimum standard for bus services | April 2005 | Consultants work complete. Cost implications will be assessed over next 12 months. New Service Agreements implemented. |
| 1.5 | Improve public transport through PSA bid | Agreement signed – December 2002. New services in place – September 2003 | Public transport target has been dropped corporately from PSA agreement. However £200k new County funding applied to local bus services in 2003/4 - Deleted |
| 1.6 | Amend contract conditions for tendered services | New contract conditions in place - August 2002 | Complete |
| 1.7 | Develop integrated ticketing proposals | Strategy agreed - March 2003. First schemes implemented – March 2004 | Draft strategy prepared. Further discussions with operators and City Council under way. Kangaroo ticket launched. Further proposals to be involved in the Bus Strategy Action Plan Autumn 2004. |
| 1.8 | Introduced enhanced inspection activity | Three Operation Coachman events annually subject to co-operation by the police and the vehicle Inspectorate | All our inspectors are now Vehicle Inspectorate trained to spot defects. VI called in when defects discovered. Capacity of police to support programme being discussed. |
| 1.9 | Improve consultation over local bus services, and establish a Public Transport Forum | First Forum to be held by March 2003 | Complete Second Forum 12 July 2004 |

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| 1.10 | Integrate local bus strategies with the Rights of Way Improvement Plan | Between April 2005 and April 2007 | Discussions held over selection of transport representative on statutory Rights of Way Forum. RoW Improvement Plan now scheduled for early completion, with a pilot in the Sherwood Forest area by October 2003. Linkages with LTP and local bus strategy will be made. Complete. |
| 1.11 | Develop New Deal theme for bus drivers | New Deal option established by April 2003 | Bus operators have established own training/recruitment programmes, with 2 years car driving experience only, obviating need for New Deal theme. Task no longer valid. |

| | Actions required | Timescales/milestones | Final Report 29 June |
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| Project 2 | Improve school transport | | |
| 2.1 | Apply measures 1.6 and 1.8 above also to school transport | New contract conditions in place – August 2002 Three operation coachman events annually subject to co-operation by the police and the vehicle Inspectorate | See 1.6 and 1.8 above Complete |
| 2.2 | Prepare for introduction of in-house fleet, and monitor contract costs to establish if and when this is appropriate | Annual evaluation of contract costs undertaken in October | Complete. Price differentials are being reassessed on an annual basis. |
| 2.3 | Additional provision of school bus transport associated with school travel plans | Scheme developed and marketed to schools by March 2003 | Overtaken by education transport policy review and local bus performance framework (see 1.3 above) – Ad Hoc Select Committee Report Complete. |
| 2.4 | Implement measures to tackle bad behaviour on buses | Up to 30 CCTV units purchased and installed by September 2002 | Major increase in use of CCTV due to start in September 2003, with installations programmed over the school summer holiday. Complete and ongoing. |
| 2.5 | Complete roll-out of smartcard | 95% of school buses operating smart by December 2002. Hot listing operational by March 2003 | Roll-out almost complete on tendered services. Integrated Transport Smartcard Project (ITSO) £1.7m project to upgrade the current system agreed by Cabinet May 2004. |
| 2.6 | Introduce on-line application for school travel passes | On-line application possible by March 2005 | Essentially complete. Information now available on internet. However need for photograph and signature still requires paper application. Completed April 2004. |
| 2.7 | Ensure transport impacts of Bassetlaw schools PFI are understood, and that optimal transport arrangements are in place following reorganisation | Dependent on PFI progress | Complete |

| | Actions required | Timescales/milestones | Final Report 29 June |
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| Project 3 | Improve the concessionary travel scheme | | |
| 3.1 | Undertake marketing initiative to increase uptake of passes | Marketing campaign complete by December 2002. 10% increase in pass ownership by March 2003 | Marketing plan implemented involving radio adverts, doctors surgery leaflets, pre-retirement course information, leisure centres, County contact, large employers, and articles in social service publications. However only 12% of eligible men aged 60-64 have taken up the pass, consistent with national average, and reflecting car ownership levels in this age group. This has reduced, not increased overall take-up rate from all eligible people. <i>Complete and Ongoing.</i> |
| 3.2 | Complete roll-out of smartcard | 95% of all local bus services operating smart by March 2003 | See 2.5 above <i>Complete</i> |
| 3.3 | Introduce on-line application for concessionary travel passes | On-line application possible by March 2005 | Discussions with District Councils has raised verification issues (photographs and signatures). These are being further researched. <i>To be introduced following evaluation of 2.6.</i> |

| | Actions required | Timescales/milestones | Final Report 29 June |
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| Project 4 | Improve community transport | | |
| 4.1 | Implement review of community transport provision | New criteria for funding agreed by November 2002. New funding, SLA and performance management framework in place by April 2003 | New criteria complete, due for adoption by Cabinet member in September 2003 Completed April 2004 with the introduction of new SLAs and funding arrangements. |
| 4.2 | Increase involvement of Local Strategic Partnerships and Rural Transport Partnership in community transport | LSP consideration of community transport within all Districts by March 2003 | Contact with LSPs has involved all aspects of public transport. A more structured programme of engagement is required. Work with the CT Forum continuing including the RTP. |
| 4.3 | Agree operational responsibilities with health and social services transport | Operational boundaries and responsibilities agreed by all parties by December 2002 | Complete. |
| 4.4 | Marketing initiative to attract new volunteers | Major conference in October 2002 Marketing campaign for volunteers implemented by March 2003 | Volunteer campaign discussed at conference, and press promotion undertaken in June 2003. Further work in progress with the cross sector working group. |
| 4.5 | Establish centralised booking facility for CT schemes who wish to participate | Feasibility study complete by August 2002. Funding secured by December 2002. Scheme implemented by March 2003 subject to funding. | RENEW demand responsive transport call centre to be launched 28 July 2003. This will be a pilot for wider countywide adoption. Work in progress with Social Services Dept to purchase a new IT system and route calls via their Riverside Depot, Dial a Ride call centre. |

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| Project 5 | Improve publicity and information | | |
| 5.1 | Finalise and deliver the Public Transport Information Strategy | Strategy finalised by June 2002. Formal agreement with operators over ownership of infrastructure by September 2002. | Complete - strategy approved by Cabinet on 23 July 2003 |
| 5.2 | Improve marketing of public transport | Marketing strategy agreed by June 2002. | Draft strategy being developed, first major campaign planned for September 2003 (with £30k identified). – Completed May 2004 |
| 5.3 | Rename website and improve management | Website management arrangements agreed and implemented by December 2002 | Complete |
| 5.4 | Undertake market research and decide on future of area booklets and route map | Market research undertaken and feature of documents agreed by June 2002. | Complete |
| 5.5 | Absorb Worksop Travelwise Centre into one-stop-shop | Travelwise Centre incorporated into one-stop-shop by October 2002 (subject to progress on one-stop-shop) | Travelwise Centre now closed following end of government funding. However proposals to spread travel advice to all county contacts and any future one-stop-shop being pursued. Complete |
| 5.6 | Pressurise operators to provide registration data in electronic format | Migration path agreed with operators by September 2002, subject to their co-operation. | Incorporated into strategy, but enforcement requires change in legislation. To be completed under the DfT Transxchange Project Spring 2005. |

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| Project 6 | Improve bus quality partnerships and infrastructure | | |
| 6.1 | Develop bus quality partnership strategy in North Notts and revise a strategy in Greater Nottingham | Strategies agreed by October 2002 | Gt Notts strategy – consultants report finalised. BQP partnership to be relaunched. Complete N Notts – preliminary discussions with operators undertaken, but development of the strategy requires more time. Launched May 2004 |
| 6.2 | Implement measures agreed within bus quality partnerships | Annual Performance against LTP capital programme and BQP strategies | Programme up-to-date |
| 6.3 | Scrutinise operators performance under BQP arrangements and introduce contracts if necessary | Annual Performance against BQP strategies. Contracts introduced as and when necessary | Draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) discussed with operators. Final agreement planned on 28 August 2003. MOU agreed – Complete |
| 6.4 | Develop programme for infrastructural investment outside quality corridors | Programme for delivery of DDA measures and other infrastructure agreed by August 2002. | Programme of infrastructural investment outside bus quality almost finalised for implementation over next 4-5 years Complete |
| 6.5 | Implement recommendations of real-time passenger information or review | Refurbishment of system complete by December 2002 | Fundamental review of real time system being undertaken, results expected August 2003. Business case being prepared July 04. |
| 6.6 | As part of wider BQP strategy, develop a programme for improving key transport interchanges, particularly between mode, and link into Local Transport Plan | Prioritised programme in place by March 2003 | Subsumed into Bus Strategy (see 1.2) and BQP strategies (6.1) above. Complete |
| 6.7 | In particular, lead on the analysis on the public transport impacts of any extension to NET, and develop measures to ensure effective integration between the tram and public transport networks (physical interchange, park & ride, ticketing, timetabling, information) | Concept work undertaken before end of 2002; details relate to spring 2003 TWAO submission. | Discussions have commenced on the integration of NET with bus service routes. This includes physical interchange, network and timetable integration, and integrated ticketing. Work is ongoing |

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| Project 7 | Improve the administration of the public transport service | | |
| 7.1 | Undertake detailed analysis of Babbie proposals | Final agreement on any cost saving measures by September 2002 | Analysis of Babbie report complete |
| 7.2 | Adopt internal cost saving measures if appropriate | Cost saving measures, if appropriate, delivered by March 2004 | Staffing in PT Group to be reduced by 2 posts as part of Departmental restructuring in 2003/4 – Complete |
| 7.3 | Implement other structural, organisational, management and procedural changes within consultancy report where appropriate | Appropriate measures implemented by March 2003 | Most other changes now implemented, with positive results New structure in place Sept 03 |
| 7.4 | Improve performance measurement and reporting | All performance indicators monitored accurately on a quarterly basis by October 2002. Performance reported to Public Transport Forum annually, starting by March 2003 | Incorporated into Departmental Performance Management system. Performance reported to PT Forum on 13 March 2003 Complete |