



21 May 2015

Agenda Item: 9

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR TRANSPORT, PROPERTY AND ENVIRONMENT

PASSENGER FOCUS – BUS PASSENGER SURVEY RESULTS

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform the Committee of the results of the autumn 2014 Passenger Focus Bus Passenger survey and key findings.

Information and Advice

2. Passenger Focus is the statutory body that represents bus passenger interests, and conducts research related to buses including, since 2011, a bus passenger satisfaction survey. The survey superseded the Department for Transport (DfT) bus passenger satisfaction surveys. The survey is of bus passengers' journey experiences carried out between 10 September and 30 November 2014, and included more than 47,000 passengers overall nationally.
3. In 2014 the County Council provided £6000 match funding to boost the target level of responses which enabled operator specific reports to also be provided for the main operators.
4. The survey was carried out across 27 local authority areas across the UK including 15 unitary or shire authority areas. Nottinghamshire was last included in the 2012 survey.
5. This survey complements the NHT Public Satisfaction Benchmarking Survey reported to the Transport and Highways Committee on the 19th March 2015.

Background

6. Routes considered for selection were all bus services shown on *traveline* (National Bus Enquiry Service) where at least 30% of a route, or more than 15 minutes of a route, runs within Nottinghamshire. The survey was conducted among passengers who board those routes within the County boundary. The County Council match funding enabled a total of 803 responses to be received for Nottinghamshire which exceeded the target number of 700 and represented a survey response rate of 28%.

Summary of Results

7. The results indicate that overall bus satisfaction in Nottinghamshire has improved since 2012 to 93% (from 87%). Compared against other local authority areas included in the survey Nottinghamshire was ranked 3rd for overall satisfaction with the journey and was the No. 1 ranked authority for Bus Stop satisfaction.
8. The following is an extract of the Executive Summary of the report:
“Across the English areas we surveyed, overall satisfaction has remained at 88 per cent satisfaction with value for money rose to 63 per cent (last year 61 per cent). Tyne and Wear stayed the top Passenger Transport Executive (PTE) area for overall journey satisfaction and West Midlands again continued to improve. Outside the PTE areas, both York and Nottinghamshire achieved the highest overall passenger satisfaction.”
9. A summary of Nottinghamshire’s performance across some of the 30 individual satisfaction measures, compared against other local authority areas is shown below:

Category	Score 2014	Score 2012		Rank 2014	Rank 2012	
Overall Satisfaction	93%	87%	↑	3	9	↑
Bus Stop Overall	90%	81%	↑	1	4	↑
Information	83%	75%	↑	2	5	↑
Punctuality *	86%	69%	↑	3	14	↑
The bus driver - helpfulness/attitude *	86%	79%	↑	1	2	↑
On Bus Journey Time *	89%	84%	↑	6	12	↑
Personal Safety	83%	80%	↑	4	2	↓
Value for Money	68%	65%	↑	7	2	↓

Note: * Key driver of satisfaction in Nottinghamshire

10. Overall the key elements of passenger satisfaction identified from the survey were; on bus journey time, punctuality, safety of driving, value for money and smoothness of driving. In Nottinghamshire the top 3 drivers of passenger satisfaction were bus drivers’ helpfulness/attitude, on-bus journey time and punctuality.
11. The 2012 survey didn’t generate sufficient results for a detailed analysis for the main operators in Nottinghamshire to be made, except for Nottingham City Transport whose overall satisfaction (92%) was ranked 14/61 of bus company areas in 2014 compared to (95%) 1/31 in 2012. Overall results from the 2014 survey for the other main operators in Nottinghamshire are as follows:

 Stagecoach 94% - ranked 7/61; TrentBarton 92% - ranked 15/61.
12. A chart illustrating a more detailed breakdown of the Nottinghamshire results from the 2014 survey is shown at Appendix 1.

Conclusions

13. The survey results indicate that overall bus satisfaction in Nottinghamshire has improved from 87% in 2012 to 93% in 2014 with Nottinghamshire **ranked 3rd** of 27 local authority

areas surveyed for overall satisfaction (up from 9/20 in 2012), **No. 1 local authority for Bus Stop satisfaction** and **3rd for punctuality**.

14. The results reflect the sustained investment in all aspects of the bus journey experience, in particular bus stations, bus stop facilities, information provision including real time information together with the investment by operators in fully accessible vehicles, driver training and information including the use of social media.
15. A particular area for improvement identified is **Value for Money**. Whilst the score increased to 68% in 2014 (ranked 7/27) from 65% in 2012 (ranked 2/20), it is the lowest scoring of the 30 individual satisfaction measures, in particular amongst passenger's aged 16-24.
16. To address Value for Money, Transport & Highways Committee at the March meeting, approved the Integrated Ticketing Strategy Delivery Plan for Nottinghamshire, which is playing an important role in helping to achieve the County Council's vision for a better value for money and more affordable public transport offer.
17. The survey was undertaken soon after the introduction of significant changes to the Nottinghamshire tendered bus network in autumn 2014. The survey, therefore, might not fully reflect the experience of passengers following the introduction of the changes. Transport and Travel Services will continue to work with partners including bus operators to ensure these impressive results are sustained.
18. The national launch of the survey results was held on 12 March with keynote speakers including Baroness Kramer, Gordon Marsden MP and Jon Lamonte (CEO- Transport for Greater Manchester). Passenger Focus is to be renamed Transport Focus from April 2014, reflecting its enhanced role representing users of the strategic road network.
19. Nottinghamshire County Council's high ranking in this survey is consistent with the finding in the NHT Public Satisfaction benchmarking Survey.

Proposals

20. It is proposed that:
 - a) The report is noted.
 - b) To approve the Council's continued match funding contribution to the survey for the next 5 years (2019 survey).

Reasons for Recommendations

21. The recommendations including the continued match funding support for the surveys will ensure that Nottinghamshire County Council is included in future Passenger Focus surveys, and ensures that sufficient responses are received to allow for the production of operator specific reports for the main operators.
22. The survey is becoming increasingly relied upon by local authorities and bus operators as an independent benchmark of bus passenger satisfaction.

Statutory and Policy Implications

23. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Implications for Service Users

24. The provision of a quality local bus network giving users access to key services, jobs, health and leisure together with continued investment in all aspects of the journey experience will help to ensure the results of the 2014 survey are maintained in the future.

Financial Implications

25. The cost to match fund Nottinghamshire's involvement in the survey for the next 5 years is estimated at £30K which is contained in the current revenue budget.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Committee:

- 1) Note the report
- 2) Approve the match funding for survey from 2015 to 2019

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For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (SJE 25/03/2015)

26. This decision falls within the Terms of Reference of the Transport & Highways Committee to whom responsibility for the exercise of the Authority's functions relating to the provision of passenger transport services, including bus initiatives, has been delegated.

Financial Comments (TMR 25/03/2015)

27. The financial implications are set out in paragraph 25 of the report.

Background Papers

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Passenger Focus – Autumn 2014 Bus Passenger Survey Report:

<http://www.passengerfocus.org.uk/research/bus-passenger-survey>

Passenger Focus – Autumn 2014 Bus Passenger Survey Report data tool:

<http://data.passengerfocus.org.uk/bus/>

Transport and Highways Committee, 19th March 2015; PERFORMANCE REPORT– Transport and Travel Services

Electoral Divisions and Members Affected

All