



Leicestershire County Council

Passenger Transport Strategy

December 2023

Passenger Transport Strategy

Foreword

Leicestershire County Council recognises the important role that passenger transport services have to play in keeping people and places connected, especially in a rural county such as Leicestershire. Use of such services rather than private car travel also helps reduce congestion and limit emissions.

Facilitating and supporting an appropriate mix of services, working with communities and commercial and 3rd sector operators, is a key aim for the Council, against a backdrop of a challenging funding situation. This will help:

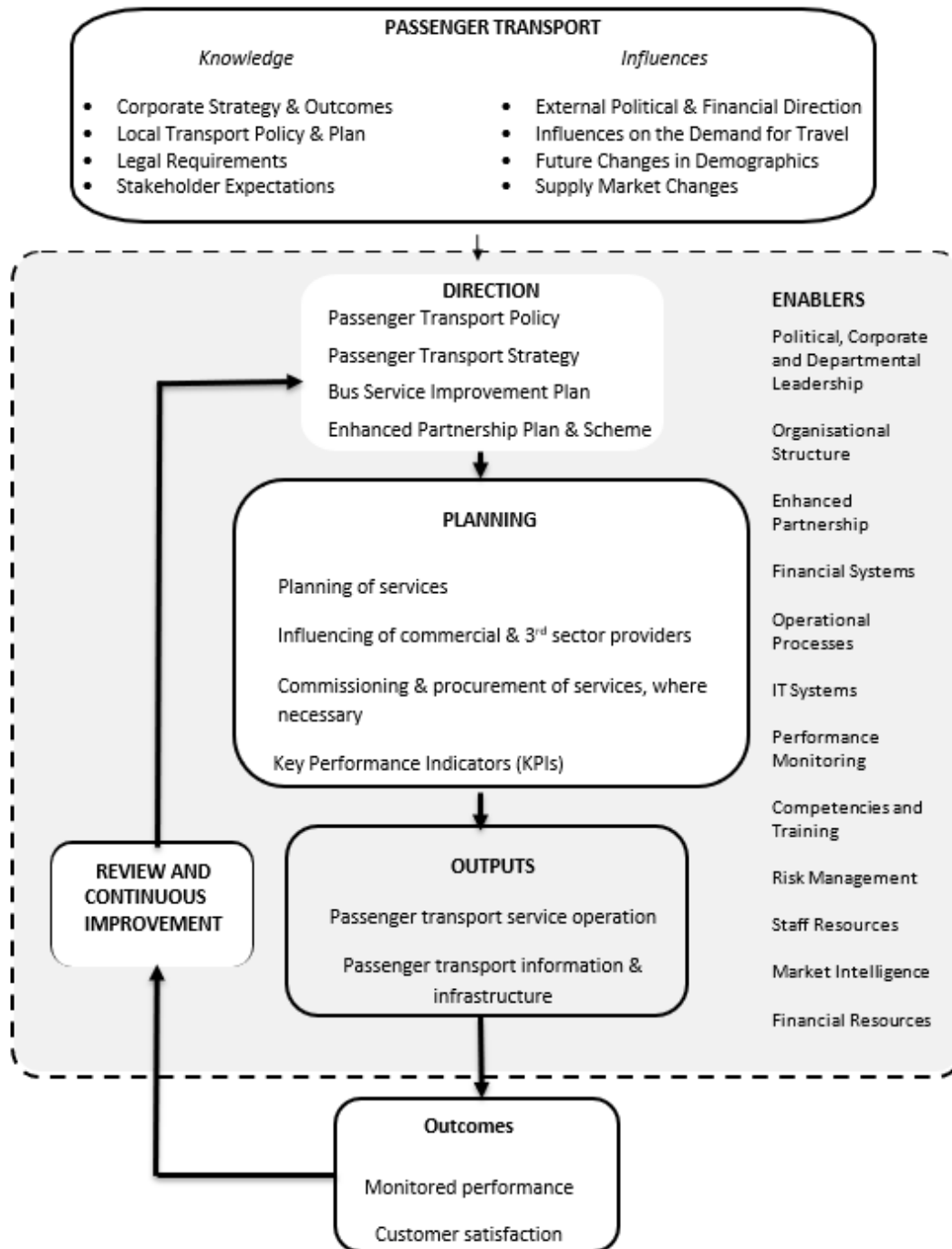
- Meet statutory requirements.
- Leicestershire County Council deliver on its strategic priorities and outcomes.
- Support the people of Leicestershire in accessing key services.

Our Passenger Transport Policy (PTP) - and the associated Passenger Transport Strategy (PTS) to deliver that Policy, set out in this document – have been developed to help us to take account of these needs and challenges.

1. The passenger transport framework

- 1.1. The framework shown in Figure 1.1 places our approach to supporting passenger transport in Leicestershire in context. The PTP and PTS set the context against which service delivery and performance will be monitored on an ongoing basis. The framework reflects current Government thinking on service development, delivery and performance.

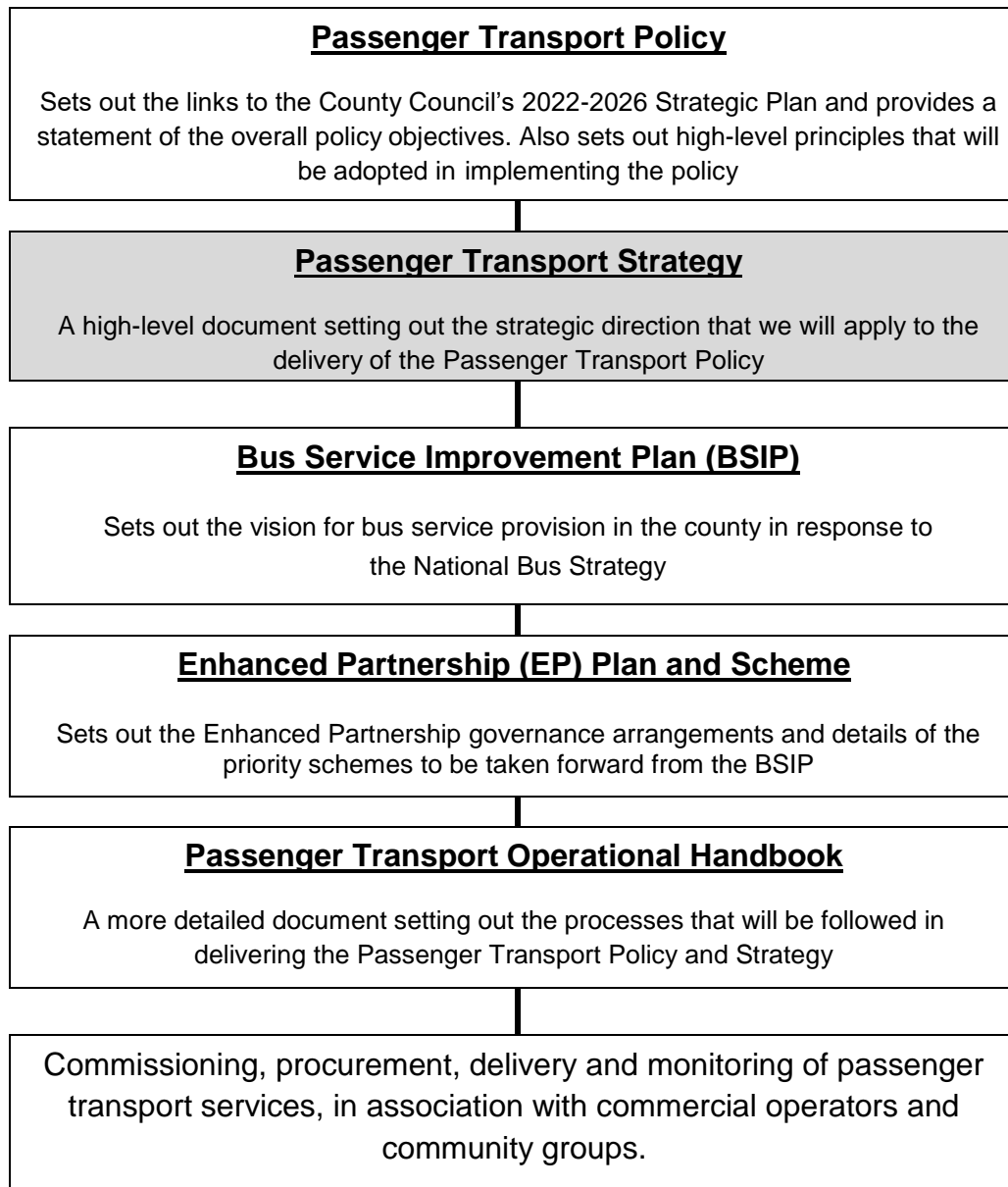
Figure 1.1: Passenger Transport Framework



2. The document framework

- 2.1. This PTS document sits within a framework that is similar to those used in other areas of responsibility covered by the Council's Environment and Transport Department, as shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: Document Framework



3. Purpose and scope

- 3.1. This document sets out the overall strategy that Leicestershire County Council will adopt to pursue the policy goals and supporting principles set out in our Passenger Transport Policy. It supersedes the County Council's 2018 Passenger Transport Strategy.
- 3.2. This Strategy is focussed on road-based general passenger transport services within Leicestershire, including conventional 'big bus' services and other passenger transport solutions using a range of appropriate smaller vehicles.

4. Priorities

- 4.1. Many people's passenger transport needs in Leicestershire will be met by commercial services. One of our priorities will therefore be to support the commercial market to the extent that we can, by encouraging use of those services in preference to the private car and by working with operators to create the conditions in which commercial services can thrive. Other passenger transport needs may be met by community transport services.
- 4.2. Where some transport needs cannot be met by the commercial market or by community transport services, the council has to consider whether it should intervene in the market by offering organisational, operational or financial support to any additional passenger transport services. We therefore need to look at what our priorities for such support are, in the context of limited funding availability.

Priority groups

- 4.3. As noted in our PTP document, to deliver the Council's Strategic Plan priority outcomes there is emphasis on supporting a high level of health and wellbeing (including combating isolation), and on helping deliver the right conditions for a thriving local economy. We also have a statutory obligation to consider the needs of 'elderly and disabled' people in determining what to support and how to provide passenger information.
- 4.4. Meeting some key needs of older, disabled or isolated people is therefore given higher priority than meeting needs of other sectors of the population. We also give higher priority to meeting the needs of people living in employment-deprived areas in order to help them access the job market. This prioritisation is in line with Leicestershire's Third Local Transport Plan (LTP3), which emphasises 'continuing to improve the connectivity and accessibility of our existing transport system for vulnerable individuals, groups and

communities’.

Access to services and facilities

- 4.5. Passenger transport can potentially help Leicestershire’s residents access a range of important services and facilities. Where we are considering supporting services to supplement those provided commercially, as noted in our PTP we will give highest priority to access to:
- Employment and training
 - Food shopping
 - Primary healthcare¹
- 4.6. Our Strategy is therefore focussed on supporting passenger transport services that are most likely to enable people to access a range of such services and facilities. Priority is given to trying to ensure that as many Leicestershire residents as possible are able to reach settlements which offer those services and facilities at least once per week. It must be accepted, however, that in some cases it may not be possible to offer a meaningful level of service at acceptable cost.
- 4.7. Our strategy also recognises that enabling access to larger settlements is likely to enhance residents’ ability to benefit from a wider range of opportunities, particularly employment and training. Where affordable, we will seek to support improved access to such opportunities.

Core times

- 4.8. Our Strategy focuses on supporting passenger transport trips on certain days of the week and at certain times. In general, these are the times when access to employment and training, food shopping and primary healthcare is likely to be accommodated and demand is likely to be highest, thus giving the greatest benefit to the greatest number of residents within the available resources. We will, generally, only consider supporting service runs that depart from or arrive at their first Leicestershire location between the following times:
- Monday to Friday 07.00 to 19.00
 - Saturday 08.00 to 18.00
- 4.9. We will particularly consider the need to support services that operate in the morning and afternoon peak periods that can support employment and training and contribute to congestion reduction.

¹ Primary healthcare provides the first point of contact in the NHS and includes general practices (GPs), community pharmacies, dental, and optometry (eye health) services (source: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/participation/get-involved/how/primarycare/>)

5. Elements of our Strategy

5.1. The following sections of this document each deal with one of the following areas:

- Commercial passenger transport services
- Community transport services
- Subsidised passenger transport services
- Intervention in the planning system
- Passenger information
- Supporting infrastructure
- Fares and ticketing
- Concessionary travel
- Dealing with service disruptions

5.2. Transport specifically to serve educational establishments (schools, colleges) is not explicitly dealt with in this Strategy as it will be covered in other County Council policy and strategy documents². Nevertheless, we fully recognise that integration of general purpose passenger transport provision with education transport provision, where possible, can sometimes deliver the best overall solution. In looking at provision of subsidised passenger transport services, we will therefore always consider how educational transport needs and other transport needs can be served together.

5.3. Park and Ride bus services are also not dealt with in this Strategy, since they form part of transport schemes that the County Council (working jointly with Leicester City Council) has previously implemented to tackle congestion in and around the Leicester urban area.

² <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/school-transport/school-transport-policy-documents>

6. Commercial passenger transport services

- 6.1. The primary providers of passenger transport services in Leicestershire are commercial organisations that operate local bus services on a profit-making basis, as envisaged when the local bus service market outside London was de-regulated in 1985. It is generally in the interests of the people of Leicestershire for commercial bus networks to be attractive, efficient and stable. Such networks can meet the needs of many people in providing a means of collective transport that reduces congestion on our roads, limits vehicular emissions and provides access to work and life opportunities.
- 6.2. While commercial bus services are outside the Council's direct control, we will work in cooperation with all commercial operators, as far as possible, to help them deliver high quality and low emission services that meet Leicestershire's needs. This may include working with operators through the Leicestershire Enhanced Partnership to grow the commercial market.
- 6.3. The Bus Services Act 2017 introduced possibilities for new partnership models (e.g. Advanced Quality Partnerships and Enhanced Partnerships) or for bus franchising. Subsequently, the Government's National Bus Strategy (2020) required all Local Transport Authorities (LTAs), whether alone or in conjunction with neighbouring LTAs, to enter into an 'Enhanced Partnership' with its local bus operators to deliver Enhanced Partnership 'Schemes' as identified within its Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). The Leicestershire BSIP was made on 31st October 2021 and the Enhanced Partnership was established in March 2022.
- 6.4. Our role will focus on supporting operators in delivering high quality services that meet people's needs. For example, this may include:
 - Working with operators to ensure that bus stops, shelters and service information are provided and maintained.
 - Helping ensure that buses do not suffer unduly from traffic congestion, and planned road works, so that they can operate punctually and reliably.
 - Highlighting opportunities for bus operators arising from development plans and the potential to grow new markets.
 - Applying for Government funds open to local authorities for investment in low emission vehicles or other aspects of bus service provision.

7. Support for community transport services

Current schemes

- 7.1. Community transport (CT) services currently provide a valuable service for people from vulnerable groups in particular (for example, disabled or older people with impaired mobility, and people who live in isolation), helping them to access key services and activities that they can't reach using the commercial bus network. These services are provided by community organisations, with much of the work involved being undertaken on a voluntary basis.
- 7.2. Users of CT services pay towards the cost of their travel, but at present this does not cover all costs of the service. Community organisations rely on external fundraising to cover the rest of their costs. Leicestershire County Council has historically provided significant grant funding to CT scheme operators and, following an in-depth review and consultation process in 2013-14, this moved towards a system where a defined overall grant fund is allocated to scheme operators according to a combination of the number of passengers carried and the size of the scheme catchment population for each operator. The NHS (via Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland's Integrated Care Board) also makes a grant contribution to CT services, in recognition of their role in connecting people with healthcare.
- 7.3. In line with practice in other local authorities, we will encourage existing CT scheme operators to become less reliant on Council grants to deliver their services, with an ultimate aim of them becoming financially self-sustaining. We will also work with the existing operators to encourage them to broaden their appeal to population groups other than older and disabled people.

Potential future community initiatives

- 7.4. In communities that currently only have a limited community transport service, we will work with groups of local people who may wish to offer some form of additional service to encourage and help them. These may be based on small vehicles, including cars, taxis or minibuses. In particular, we will offer advice on organisational, operational and funding issues. Engagement will be undertaken by officers where there is clear interest from a community in delivering a new community service.

Financial support

- 7.5. Leicestershire County Council will continue to pay a grant to community transport organisations based on the number of trips carried and size of catchment population. A defined grant fund will be maintained to this end. Part of the grant fund may also be used to help communities establish and start to operate any new transport services for local communities.

8. Financially supported passenger transport services

- 8.1. Leicestershire County Council is not a major passenger transport provider. However, where commercial bus services or community transport services do not meet a community's high priority transport needs (as defined above), or where an existing commercial bus service or community transport service is withdrawn or significantly curtailed, the Council may consider intervening by offering organisational, operational or financial support for retention of existing or provision of alternative transport.

Service hierarchy

- 8.2. In common with many parts of the country, demand for bus travel has struggled to recover to pre-Covid levels in Leicestershire as travel habits have changed following the pandemic. We are aware that 'big bus' solutions are not always the most efficient way to meet the needs of users and there are negative effects on the environment from running timetabled buses carrying few passengers, even if those services are operated using electric buses.
- 8.3. This Strategy focusses on matching the type of provision to the level of demand. Big bus services are most likely to be supported which serve key routes and provide access to larger settlements. In more rural areas where demand is lower, we will consider more tailored ways of providing services; these might include bus services which either operate on a fully flexible basis, such as the county's 'FoxConnect' Digital Demand Responsive Transport service, or deviate off route in response to bookings received. Flexible services will feed into scheduled bus services as appropriate, to avoid competing for passengers and to ensure that the on-demand services are available for more local trips. In deeper rural areas, taxi-based on-demand services will provide trips at scheduled times but only operate when bookings are received.

Financial support for bus services

- 8.4. Financial support will, generally, only be considered where there is demonstrable and significant unmet demand³ for passenger transport to provide access to high priority opportunities, namely employment or training, food shopping and primary healthcare. In line with the priorities set out earlier in this Strategy document, financial support will, generally, only be considered for services that arrive at or depart from their first or last stop in Leicestershire between the hours of 07.00 and 19.00 Monday to Friday or between the hours of 08.00 and 18.00 on Saturday, and that link the area concerned with a nearby settlement where there is access to employment or training, food shopping and primary healthcare, or offer wider access to a larger settlement

³ The level of passenger demand meeting this test will depend on the nature and cost of the particular potential service or part-service under consideration.

centre where more high priority opportunities are available^{4 5}. Any financial support will only be provided if a supported replacement service or part-service scores well under Leicestershire's objective assessment scoring scheme as set out below.

- 8.5. Supported services or part-services will normally be subject to competitive tender unless consideration of their nature indicates that partial support in the form of a 'de minimis'⁶ arrangement will provide the most effective and economic application of funds. The Council is however bound by bus service tendering legislation which does not allow more than 25% of its forecast expenditure on passenger transport service support to be used on de minimis services. For this reason, supported services and de minimis arrangements will be considered separately within the scoring mechanism.
- 8.6. All candidate bus services will be put through an objective scoring mechanism to capture some of the key aspects of the benefits and costs of supporting that service. This will use three key indicators:
1. Net subsidy cost per passenger-km. This is the main indicator of value for money and compares the cost of supporting the service with the actual or forecast demand⁷.
 2. Number of Leicestershire residents within the bus service's catchment area⁸ that don't have access to another service and aren't within reasonable walking distance (800m) of a settlement centre. This indicator relates to the number of people for whom a particular service has a high value. Where the catchment area includes areas of employment deprivation⁹, people within the employment-deprived areas will count double for this measure.
 3. Access to opportunities. Bus services that provide access to a greater range of high priority facilities and services, particularly employment and training, which tend to be found in larger settlement centres, are considered more 'valuable' than those that focus primarily on access to lower priority facilities and services.

⁴ Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council will also work together to procure contracted bus services linking the County Council's Park & Ride sites with Leicester city centre. These services are intended to be self-funding. Park & Ride services form part of transport schemes that Leicestershire County and Leicester City Councils have previously implemented to tackle congestion in the Leicester urban area. Park and Ride services are therefore not covered in any detail in this passenger transport strategy document.

⁵ Leicestershire County Council will also seek to work with businesses at other existing significant places of employment outside settlement centres, for example Magna Park, to explore the possibility of achieving third party delivered passenger transport solutions to provide access to employment and training opportunities. We will also seek to work through the planning system to seek to secure delivery of such solutions for new major employment sites

⁶ 'De minimis' refers to award of small amounts of bus subsidy without tender, as allowed by bus service tendering rules set out in Government regulations. This is especially valuable where a variation or addition to an otherwise commercial service is the most effective way of meeting a particular need

⁷ Consideration will be given to the carriage of eligible school pupils on supported services and the cost of alternative provision for those pupils on a case-by-case basis

⁸ Catchment area defined as within 800m of a bus stop

⁹ Defined for this purpose as Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) within the 30% most employment-deprived LSOAs in England, according to the latest Indices of Deprivation published by Government

- 8.8. The objective scoring mechanism we will use against each of these measures reflects their relative importance and is sufficiently 'fine-grained' to enable us to differentiate between the merits of different service options.
- 8.9. The indicators will effectively be given different weightings to reflect their relative importance with the balance differing between fully supported services and de minimis arrangements (see Table 8-1).
- 8.10. Fully supported services will score 0-20 for indicator 1 (cost per passenger-km), 0-10 for indicator 2 (access to an alternative bus / rail service) and 0-5 for indicator 3 (access to opportunities).
- 8.11. De minimis services will be assessed in relation to indicator one only – cost per passenger-km – in the first instance. De minimis funding requests will be data-led from the outset, with any funding awards being time limited and subject to available budget. Service performance will be closely monitored on an ongoing basis to measure progress towards commercial viability. Should a de minimis arrangement not return a service to commercial viability by the end of the funding period, it will be assessed for support in the form of a contract, based on all three indicators, alongside other services supported by the Council.

Table 8-1: Comparison of scoring for fully supported and de minimis services

Indicator	Fully supported bus service	De minimis bus service
Cost per passenger-km	0-20	0-20
Access to an alternative bus / rail service	0-10	-
Access to opportunities	0-5	-
Overall score	Out of 35	Out of 20

- 8.12. The scoring mechanism is set out in Table 8-2.

Table 8-2: Scoring mechanism for assessment of the case for supporting a bus service

Indicator 1	Range¹⁰	Score
Net subsidy cost per passenger-km¹¹	£0.90 or more	0
	£0.85 - £0.89	1
	£0.81 - £0.84	2
	£0.77 - £0.80	3
	£0.72 - £0.76	4
	£0.68 - £0.71	5
	£0.62 - £0.67	6
	£0.58 - £0.61	7
	£0.52 - £0.57	8
	£0.48 - £0.51	9
	£0.43 - £0.47	10
	£0.38 - £0.42	11
	£0.32 - £0.37	12
	£0.28 - £0.31	13
	£0.24 - £0.27	14
	£0.20 - £0.23	15
	£0.16 - £0.19	16
	£0.12 - £0.15	17
	£0.08 - £0.11	18
	£0.04 - £0.07	19
Less than £0.04	20	

¹⁰ Monetary values increased to reflect inflation since previous Strategy published in 2018.

¹¹ Values may be updated by the County Council from time to time to take account of inflation.

Indicator 2	Value range ¹²	Score
Number of Leicestershire residents within the service's catchment area who don't have access to another service and aren't within reasonable walking distance (800m) of a settlement centre	< 750	0
	751-1500	1
	1501-2250	2
	2251-3000	3
	3001-3750	4
	3751-4500	5
	4501-5250	6
	5251-6000	7
	6001-6750	8
	6751-7500	9
	> 7500	10

Indicator 3	Value range	Score
Access to opportunities (as measured by the relative size of the destinations served by the service, reflecting the availability of a range of facilities and services)	Provides access to a city plus at least one large settlement	5
	Provides access to at least two large settlements	4
	Provides access to at least one large settlement	3
	Provides access to at least two medium settlements	2
	Provides access to at least one medium settlement	1
	Provides access to at least one small settlement	0

¹² People within employment-deprived areas will count double for this indicator

- 8.13. Once a service has been through the scoring mechanism, the resultant overall score will be viewed in the context of a case-for-support rating. This is shown in Table 8-3. This information will be used by officers to make the decision on whether to financially support a particular service. Any decision on the future of services will consider the implications of service removal on the overall provision of passenger transport in the local area. For de minimis funding requests, only those with a strong case for support rating (i.e. have a score of 17 or more out of 20) will be considered for financial support.

Table 8-3: Case-for-support ratings

Case-for-support rating	Overall service score	
	Supported services score out of 35	De minimis score out of 20
Strong	25 or more	17 or more
Marginal	20-24	15 - 16
Weak	<20	<15

Lifeline DRT services

- 8.14. Where an existing supported bus service scores poorly under the objective scoring mechanism and is therefore withdrawn or curtailed, Leicestershire County Council will consider the case for providing a localised 'lifeline' demand responsive transport (DRT) service. Such lifeline services recognise the importance of passenger transport links in combating isolation. The best candidate service option will be determined by officers (in collaboration with community representatives, where possible) and will normally be the option that offers the best value within affordability constraints.
- 8.15. Such services will be operated by contracted small vehicle or taxi operators and will only be considered where there is demonstrable evidence of people who were previously reliant on a bus service (that is now withdrawn or curtailed) who cannot reasonably use other means of travel (e.g. community transport, private car, car-sharing, commercial taxi/minicab, walking or cycling) for access to employment and training, food shopping and primary healthcare (as defined in section 4 of this document) to a nearby settlement centre at core times.
- 8.16. Where these criteria are met, and such a service is affordable within budget constraints, the County Council will attempt through competitive tendering to procure an appropriate DRT service. The case for maintaining such DRT

services will be reviewed at least every three years.

Our enhanced offer

- 8.17. Without funding from external sources, our 'core' offer will be full or partial support in the form of a scheduled bus within our budgetary constraints, replacing buses with the type of lifeline services described above where services are not deemed to offer value for money.
- 8.18. Should external funding for passenger transport be made available to the Council, for example BSIP+, or Section 106 developer funding, our 'enhanced' offer will involve trialling some of the more flexible means of service provision, such as new operating zones for the FoxConnect Digital Demand Responsive Transport, or new 'Flexibus' services.
- 8.19. We will also consider awarding short-term support in response to new de minimis requests with a view to assisting borderline commercial services to return to commercial viability.
- 8.20. Any 'enhanced' service provision supported with external funding will be reviewed at the end of the funding period and considered for ongoing support in relation to other 'core' service provision, subject to staying within the Council's budgetary constraints.

9. Influencing through the planning system

- 9.1. In the planning of new development in Leicestershire, the County Council will work with District Councils (planning authorities) and development promoters (developers) to seek to ensure the delivery of planned development brought forward in locations that offer genuine opportunities to be accessed by a range of travel modes. This includes ensuring that commercially viable, long term accessibility by passenger transport to key services and facilities is appropriately and properly considered. This will be done alongside consideration of other sustainable travel modes (e.g. cycling and walking).
- 9.2. Where appropriate, we will either:
 - encourage and look to developers to engage with passenger transport operators to seek to develop and implement a passenger transport solution that aligns with the type and nature of the development to be served, including new major employment developments, and which is likely to be commercially viable and sustainable over the long term (we will seek appropriate legal agreements to ensure that the solution is secured); or
 - seek developer contributions to facilitate such accessibility through an agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The size of contribution sought for all sustainable travel modes will depend on the size, nature and location of the proposed

development.

- 9.3. Section 106 developer contributions may be sought for revenue funding support for a fixed period of either an existing passenger transport service that might be altered to suit the development, or for a new service. However, this will only be sought where there is a reasonable prospect that the service alteration or new service can become self-funding due to patronage growth at the end of the defined period. Contributions may also be sought for passenger transport infrastructure (e.g. bus stops or shelters, passenger information systems).
- 9.4. In wording the Section 106 agreement or seeking development conditions, the County Council will work with planning officers to include sufficiently flexible wording, such that if the situation changes before the development is built the contribution can still be used on other sustainable transport interventions to achieve the same aims, where other feasible options exist. Then, for example, if the specific bus service they might contribute to is withdrawn or changed, the funding can be re-deployed – e.g. to improve cycling or walking links with a development site beyond the identified lifetime of such a supported service.
- 9.5. Where funding for passenger transport is sought from a developer, we will work with planning officers to ensure that this is taken into account in the required Travel Plan for the development. This should help ensure that best advantage is taken of any passenger transport services by the development occupants.

10. Passenger information

- 10.1. Leicestershire County Council recognises that the provision of service information and marketing can encourage more travel by passenger transport, which in turn sustains services and supports network enhancements. We also have a statutory duty to determine what local bus information should be made available and to make information available if operators do not do so.
- 10.2. The primary responsibility for providing passenger transport service information will lie with the operators. However, we will work in conjunction with commercial bus operators and Traveline¹³ to ensure that information on local bus services is provided for Leicestershire's workers, residents and visitors. Where appropriate, this will be done through the Leicestershire Enhanced Partnership. We will also work with relevant community groups and organisations to help them publicise the community transport services that they operate.
- 10.3. Information provision will primarily focus on:
- What services operate
 - Where services run
 - How to book services that are not conventional local bus services (e.g. community transport or DRT)
 - Service times and frequency
 - Current status of services (e.g. any service disruptions)
 - Days of operation
 - Costs / fares and ticket products
 - Service provider contact details
- 10.4. Our aim is to ensure that information is:
- Comprehensive and covers all services
 - Accurate, up-to-date and reliable
 - Available at all key stages of planning and making a journey
 - Accessible by people with disabilities
- 10.5. Information may be provided through a range of media, as set out below. We will liaise with commercial operators to try to ensure that our respective information sources are complementary rather than duplicative.
- 10.6. **Printed information** – In general, printed service leaflets may be provided by service operators. Through our contracting processes for procuring

¹³ Traveline is the national public transport enquiry service

supported services, we will encourage operators to provide printed leaflets that fit with the style used for their commercial services. We will encourage operators to conform with current best practice.

- 10.7. **Websites and apps**– We will encourage operators to make information available to passengers through their own websites and apps. We will also provide service information to Traveline, so that it can be accessed by passengers through telephone enquiries, through the Traveline website, or through apps that use the Traveline data feed. We will also continue to keep service information up-to-date in Leicestershire’s ‘Choose How You Move’ multi-modal journey planner. The Leicestershire County Council website will signpost passengers to these sources of information.
- 10.8. **Information at bus stops** – We will work with bus operators to ensure that they provide accurate and up-to-date timetable information at all bus stops within Leicestershire. This information will be provided in large print, as far as reasonably practicable, and we will work with operators to ensure that principles set out in ATCO best practice guidance are followed as far as possible.
- 10.9. **Real time information (RTI) displays** – As far as possible within budget constraints, we will provide real time information displays at selected bus stops. Selection of sites for RTI displays will be planned in cooperation with neighbouring authorities for cross-boundary services and with bus operators.
- 10.10. We will continue to monitor usage and user satisfaction with passenger information provision actions, and will work with service operators to adjust and fine-tune them based on those actions. This will meet the Transport Act 2000 requirement to consult on information provision.

11. Supporting infrastructure

- 11.1. Leicestershire County Council will continue to provide and maintain infrastructure that facilitates passenger transport use, in cooperation with operators where appropriate. This includes bus stop poles/flags and shelters, information display cases and digital information at stops, and interchange facilities. We will apply our ‘Bus Stop Infrastructure Standards’, developed in cooperation with operators within the Enhanced Partnership, which introduced a hierarchy of stop types to take into account factors such as the nature of the stop location, the frequency of services, level of passenger usage and space available for installing infrastructure. Selection of locations for any new bus stops and shelters will follow the Standards document, developed in consideration of the Department for Transport’s Inclusive Mobility guidance¹⁴.

¹⁴ [Inclusive mobility: making transport accessible for passengers and pedestrians - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

- 11.2. Responsibility for maintenance of bus stop poles/flags, display cases and shelters may, by agreement with all operators concerned, be delegated to bus operators. Where such agreement cannot be reached, Leicestershire County Council will retain the responsibility for maintaining the infrastructure.
- 11.3. Interchange facilities will continue to be provided at key locations where people change between different bus services or between the bus and other forms of transport. As a minimum, these will be provided with a timetable information case and a cover to protect passengers from inclement weather.
- 11.4. The County Council will also continue to work closely with service operators to identify any problems on the road network for passenger transport vehicles that could be improved by targeted infrastructure improvements. These might range from measures to reduce junction delays at peak times to filling in potholes. Any such improvements will be considered based on the potential benefit and cost of making the improvement and of affordability.

12. Fares and ticketing

- 12.1. Bus fares for commercial services and Community Transport fares are primarily a matter for the operators of those services. As part of our cooperative working with local bus operators in Leicestershire through the Enhanced Partnership we will encourage them to keep fares as low as possible within commercial viability. We will also encourage operators to offer discounted fare products such as day, weekly or monthly tickets and to participate in multi-operator ticketing to help grow the overall bus market and reduce the cost of use where more than one operator's services are used in making journeys by connection.
- 12.2. Bus fares for supported services will be set in line with those on commercial services in the area. On supported local bus service contracts children's fares will be available at all times. Children are defined by age as being 5 to 15 inclusive. Children under the age of 5 will be carried free of charge provided they do not occupy a seat to the exclusion of a fare-paying passenger. We will monitor the fares on supported services operating in Leicestershire to ensure fairness and consistency.
- 12.3. **Multi operator tickets** are tickets that can be used on buses provided by more than one service operator. They can make bus use more convenient and affordable and can help attract new passengers to bus services. We strongly support multi operator ticketing as a way of growing the bus travel market and will work cooperatively with operators to pursue any opportunities to provide additional schemes in the future.
- 12.4. **Smart ticketing** is where a ticket is stored electronically on a microchip rather than printed on a paper ticket. This microchip can be embedded in a smartcard or on a smart phone. Smart ticketing is also now achievable using

contactless EMV bank cards (rather than dedicated transport smart cards), as used in London.

- 12.5. Smart ticketing opens up alternative ways of buying, collecting and using tickets that are often easier for passengers and also reduce boarding times at bus stops. Leicestershire County Council strongly supports smart ticketing (particularly where used in conjunction with multi-operator ticketing) and is willing to work with operators through Enhanced Partnership arrangements or other means to realise greater use of smart tickets and ticket capping in Leicestershire.

Our enhanced offer

- 12.6. Subject to availability of external funding, we will consider and trial schemes to encourage public transport usage. Such schemes might include fares and ticketing trials to reduce the cost of travel, and enhanced marketing and promotion of services to raise awareness of public transport among the general public for whom lack of information is often a barrier to use.

13. Concessionary travel

- 13.1. We will continue to fund the statutory English National Concessionary Travel Scheme for older and disabled people boarding local buses in Leicestershire. This gives free bus travel within the nationally-defined days and times for eligible older and disabled people.
- 13.2. We will also continue with a discretionary enhancement to the scheme in Leicestershire, provided it remains affordable. This allows concessionary pass holders to travel on Park & Ride buses in the county (which are not covered by the mandatory national concession) for a reduced fare on production of their pass.

14. Dealing with service disruptions

- 14.1. The County Council understands that road works on the highway network can cause service disruption and delays to passenger transport services. The majority of these works are undertaken by utility companies, the County Council or developers.
- 14.2. Through the introduction of a new Road Works Permit Scheme the County Council will seek to improve the co-ordination, control and communication of road works on the highway. Experience has shown that a permit scheme can reduce disruption for passenger transport operators caused by road works and minimise the impact these works have on service reliability and punctuality. As part of the new Road Works Permit Scheme promoters of roadworks in Leicestershire will be advised if their proposed works are on a

passenger transport route.

- 14.3. Where planned road works may affect passenger transport services, we will expect that road works promoters:
- Engage early with and provide timely, clear, accurate and appropriate information to stakeholders, including public transport operators; and
 - Provide evidence that they have considered and understood the breadth/impact of their proposals on all road users, including passenger transport users, and have adequately mitigated any adverse avoidable impacts before they are implemented.
- 14.4. In most cases, we would expect operators to modify their service routing temporarily (including suspension of stops) to accommodate the works and publicise the temporary changes accordingly. In a minority of cases the passenger transport services may need to be curtailed temporarily.
- 14.5. In all cases of passenger transport service disruption, the works promoter will be expected to consider the needs of users of those services and, if necessary, put forward a proposed alternative solution (in cooperation with service operators and the County Council) for meeting those needs. This will need to take account of:
- The nature and extent of the works
 - Their duration
 - The availability of alternatives
- 14.6. The County Council will seek to obtain any relevant costs associated with such solutions from the works promoter.
- 14.7. Where the duration of disruption is one weekday (excluding public holidays) or less or the extent of disruption is minor, there may be no need for alternative service provision, provided the service disruption is appropriately publicised.
- 14.8. Passenger service operators will be encouraged to access the road works website (www.roadworks.org) regularly to obtain up to date information regarding all known roadworks in the county, to enable collaborative and effective service planning.