



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

## Assessment Criteria For Council Supported Local Bus Services

### SUMMARY

- 1.1 The vast majority of bus services in Derby are operated by the various bus companies on a commercial basis without any direct financial support from the City Council. This is a result of the 1985 Transport Act which deregulated the bus industry. In the main this system has provided most suburbs of Derby with a reasonable bus service. There are however certain areas in the City which may need a bus service for social or accessibility reasons but which would not generate sufficient passenger numbers to make the service commercially viable. In this situation the City Council can choose to pay for a service to be introduced.
- 1.2 Last autumn the City Council paid for the introduction of a series of new bus routes following request from members of the public who found it difficult to reach the existing commercially operated bus services. These services were paid for using some of the money generated by the increase in car parking charges from earlier in the year. The exact routes the services took were decided following analysis by officers and detailed discussions with Councillors. These new services have attracted a growing number of users over the last year and it has been agreed that the contract to operate them should be extended for another year.
- 1.3 There is a steady demand from the public and Councillors for the introduction of additional new council supported bus routes or extensions to existing services. However as there is always going to be a limit to the financial support that is available some sort of system needs to be established which allows the costs and benefits of the various proposals to be compared equally to ensure that the money is spent to the best effect. Using work undertaken in neighbouring authorities as a model a system has been devised which allows the value to the City Council of supporting a bus service to be assessed.

### RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To agree that the proposed assessment criteria should form the basis on which bus services the Council provides financial support to in the future.

### REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Approval of the recommendation will ensure that the Council is able to access the value of providing financial support to various bus services on an equitable basis.



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

**PLANNING, HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT  
INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER MEETING  
13 DECEMBER 2006**

Report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration & Community

## **Assessment Criteria For Council Supported Local Bus Services**

### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 1.1 The majority of bus services in Derby are operated by the various bus companies in the area on a commercial basis without any direct financial support from the City Council. This is a result of the 1985 Transport Act which deregulated and led to the privatisation of the bus industry. Therefore the route a service takes, the frequency it operates, the type of vehicle used and the fares charged are all decided by the bus company themselves to meet their own business objectives. In the main this system has provided most suburbs of Derby with a reasonable bus service. There are however certain areas in the City which may need a bus service for social or accessibility reasons but which would not generate sufficient passenger numbers to make the service commercially viable. In this situation the City Council can choose to pay for a service to be introduced.
- 1.2 Last autumn the City Council paid for the introduction of a series of new bus routes following request from members of the public who found it difficult to reach the existing commercially operated bus services. These services were paid for using some of the money generated by the increase in car parking charges from earlier in the year. The new services were –
- the 17A from the city centre to the Park Farm Centre Allestree via the Broadway and Darley Abbey village
  - the 19 from the city centre to Spondon via Waterford Drive and the Asterdale Estate
  - the 35 from the city centre to Havenbault Avenue via Mickleover and Littleover
  - the 111 from the city centre to Wyvern Park via Pride Park and the park and ride site

The exact routes the services took were decided following analysis by officers of where in the city there was sufficient demand for new bus routes and detailed discussions with Councillors on the Bus Consultation Group. These new services have attracted a growing number of users over the last year and it has been agreed that the contracts to operate these services should be extended for another year.

- 1.3 There is a steady demand from the public and Councillors for the introduction of additional new council supported bus routes or extensions to existing services. However as there is always going to be a limit to the financial support that is available some sort of system needs to be established which allows the costs and benefits of the various proposals to be assessed. This will ensure that the money that is available is spent to the best effect.

Based on assessment procedures developed by Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham City Council, we have devised a system which will assess the value of providing financial support to a bus service. This process involves the appraisal of several factors. These are –

- Subsidy per passenger – Services which require lower levels of subsidy per passenger are scored higher than those require more.
- Passengers per journey – Services which carry on average more passengers per bus are scored higher than those that carry less.
- Availability of alternative Public Transport services in the area to be served by the supported service and the walking time required to access them. - Locations that have limited alternative services to the city centre and local district centre which can only be accessed by a long walk are scored higher than those with regular services within easy walking distance.
- Index of Multiple Deprivation – Using work done as part of the Local Transport Plan each of the areas in the city has been ranked in terms of deprivation compared to city and national averages. Routes which serve more deprived areas are scored more highly than those that served less deprived areas.

Each factor can score between 0-5 points. An overall score is arrived at by combining all the marks from these factors. Services which score more points are assessed as being of more value than those which get less. Whilst there is not an exact score below which support for an existing service will be withdrawn the other authorities which have used this method have stated that for a new service to be introduced it would need to gain 50% or more of the available points.

## OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2. Other forms of assessing services have been considered however they lacked the flexibility of this proposal and failed to take account of the wider social impacts of introducing a bus service. The fact that a similar system has been used in neighbouring authorities also shows the practicality of the process.

<b>For more information contact:</b>	Chris Hegarty Tel 01332 715045 e-mail <a href="mailto:chris.hegarty@derby.gov.uk">chris.hegarty@derby.gov.uk</a>
<b>Background papers:</b>	None
<b>List of appendices:</b>	Appendix 1 – Implications

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial**

1. The City Council spends approximately £180000 a year supporting bus services. Implementing the assessment criteria will ensure that this money is spent to the best possible effect.

**Legal**

- 2.1 Not directly arising

**Personnel**

3. None directly arising.

**Equalities impact**

- 4 The scheme has the potential to improve the quality of life of those people who are unable to reach the existing commercial bus network.

**Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

5. The proposal predominantly comes under the Council's Objective of
  - **strong and positive neighbourhoods,**
  - **a healthy environment**