



# SUBSIDISED BUS ROUTES AND THROUGH TICKETING



A report of the Growth and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Panel - Task and Finish Group following a review of subsidised bus routes and ticketing.

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## **I. SUMMARY**

The Growth and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Panel agreed to hold a scrutiny review into subsidised bus routes and through ticketing, which was endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on 5 September 2012.

The scope of this review encompassed analysing the city's existing bus network and proposed changes to the network to ensure an appropriate level of subsidised bus service provision was offered. In addition, the review was to engage with the city's bus operators in an effort to identify a potential way forward in implementing a citywide multi-operator ticket, or 'through ticket'. In undertaking the review it was important that all bus operators were invited to attend and that the views of the general public were provided in a proportional and representative manner.

The panel, in developing their knowledge of subsidised bus services and through tickets, were robustly informed about service history, government legislation and existing subsidised provision and through tickets within Plymouth. To aid the discussions all the city's bus operators were invited to participate in the review, with Citybus, Target Travel and First Devon and Cornwall Ltd providing representatives to address the panel. To receive a balanced public opinion the panel received representations from the Plymouth Youth Cabinet, the Senior Citizen Forum and Travel Watch South West.

The panel in analysing all the information agreed to make a number of recommendations, which will be submitted to Cabinet, via the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board. The recommendations were aimed at improving the existing provision of through tickets and the contracting of subsidised bus services within Plymouth as well as improving the public transport experience in general for citizens of Plymouth.

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

2.1 This report gives the findings from the Growth and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Panel's Task and Finish Group review on the topic of subsidised bus routes and through ticketing.

2.2 The Task and Finish Group's review took place on four separate dates through October, November and December 2012.

2.3 Members appointed to the group were as follows:

- Councillor Patrick Nicholson (Chair of the group)
- Councillor Jean Nelder (Vice-Chair of the group)
- Councillor Ian Bowyer
- Councillor George Wheeler

2.4 Officers supporting the group were as follows:

- Adrian Trim, Head of Sustainable Transport (Lead Officer)
- Andy Sharp, Public Transport Controller and ASTM
- Ralph Ellis, Public Transport Officer
- Ross Johnston, Democratic Support Officer

2.5 This report summarises the findings of the Task and Finish Group review and makes recommendations for improvements.

### 3. **BACKGROUND – WHAT ARE SUBSIDISED BUS ROUTES?**

3.1 This section provides an overview of the subsidised bus services, the Council's activities around subsidised bus services, providing information on which services are supported, why they are supported, contract management, usage data and a review of the existing services. Plymouth City Council supports a range of bus services across the City either in their entirety or partially supporting specific additions to existing commercial services. The Public Transport Team fulfil this function utilising an annual budget of £382k securing services through a combination of full Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) tender processes and competitive quotes based on the nature of the service procured.

#### 3.2 Subsidising a bus service

There are a range of different circumstances whereby a bus service is subsidised. The three main areas are:

- At the end of the existing contract period or following a regular review.
- Intervention following changes to either subsidised or commercial routes.
- Utilising section 106 funds as they become available

Bus services subsidised as part of Section 106 agreements were outside the scope of this scrutiny review.

#### 3.3 Regular review

Patronage data is reviewed on a quarterly basis to track the effectiveness of each individual service and the cost per passenger.

All services are reviewed regularly through the deployment of on board staff that collect data on the actual journeys passengers are making; this is necessary as the monthly patronage data received from bus operators only gives overall trip data and not specific journey data. These reviews enable the team to prioritise the sections of existing routes where the majority of trips are made, where there are no alternative services and offer the best service to communities.

Based on the data provided in Table 1, below, Plymouth residents make an average of 8397 weekly journeys, at an average subsidy of £0.88 per journey.

#### 3.4 Bus Service Operators Grant

The Department for Transport (DfT) has decided to allocate the fuel duty rebate, Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG), directly to Local Authorities in respect to all subsidised services from 2013/14.

#### 3.5 Community Transport

Community Transport which is largely provided by the charity Access Plymouth plays a key role in the provision of transport to Plymouth residents. The Ring and Ride and

Community Car services offer door to door transport for elderly and/or disabled residents who are unable to use conventional public transport either because of availability or due to difficulties accessing it. A current trial is underway for residents in the north of the City through the provision of a Dial a Ride service which allowed pre book-able journeys at staggered costs to any destination including the Hospital, supermarkets, or even bus stops to allow passengers to interchange with bus services taking them into the City Centre or elsewhere.

The combined trips in 2011-2012 on all Community Transport services were 12,728.

### 3.6 Review of existing subsidised services

The routes that the Council provides subsidy towards are provided below in Map 1 (the black lines are the overall bus network for Plymouth with the coloured lines representing the routes subsidised by Plymouth City Council). Table 1, below, lists the existing services the Council provide subsidy towards including the overall cost and the cost per passenger.

Map 1

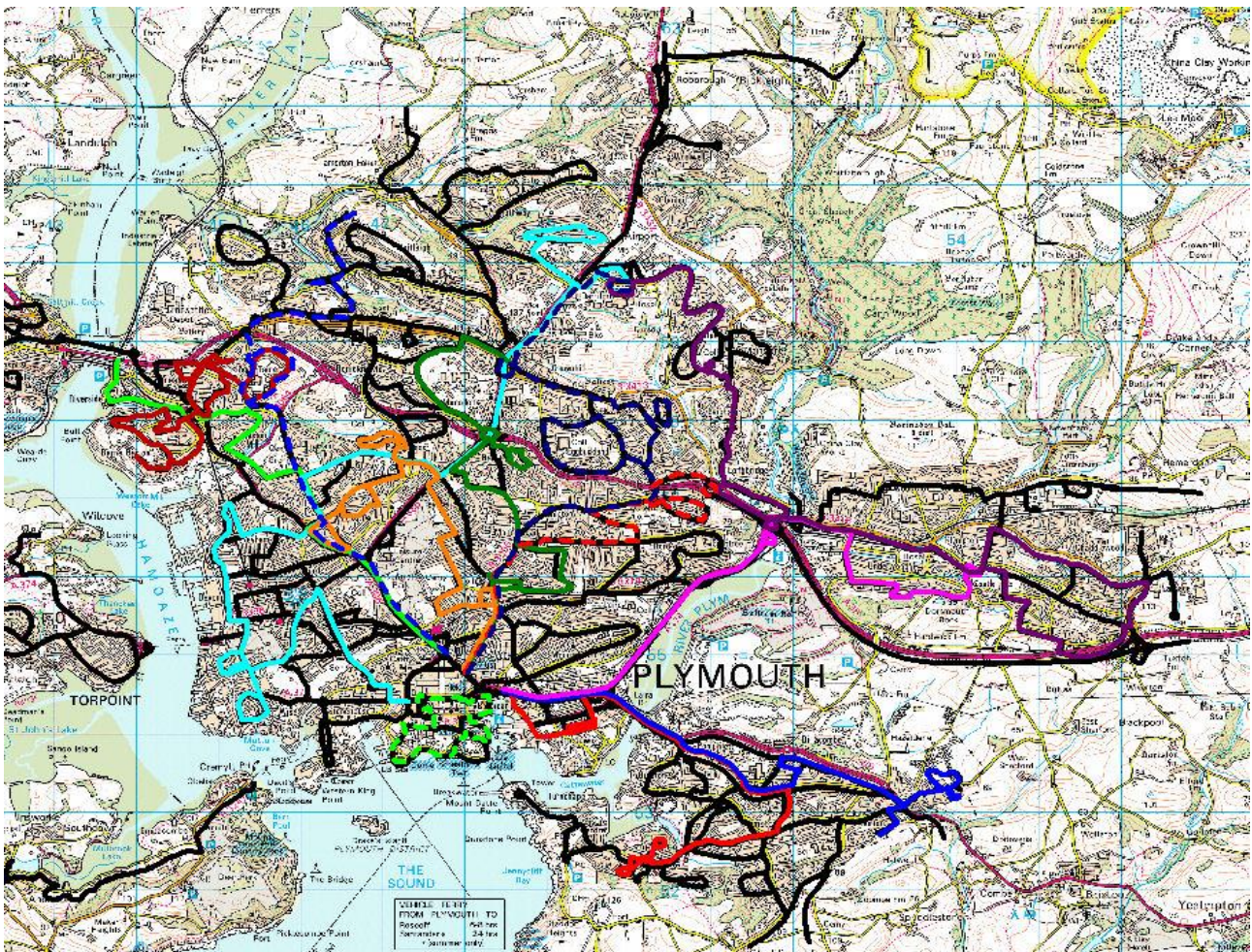


Table I

Service	Route Details	Operator	Days Subsidised	Frequency	Operating Period	Full/Part Subsidy	Subsidy per passenger	Average Weekly Trips	Contract expiry date
<b>7D</b>	City Centre - Plymstock - Hooe	Target Travel	Monday to Friday	Hourly	Off -peak	Full	1.04	620	23 May 2015
<b>13</b>	City Centre - Weston Mill & Saltash Passage	Plymouth Citybus	Monday to Friday	Hourly	09.00 to 19.00	Full	0.54	1,106	23 May 2015
<b>14</b>	City Centre - Devonport - Keyham - Ham - Crownhill - Derriford	Target Travel	Monday to Friday	Hourly	07.30 to 18.30	Full	0.97	1,418	23 May 2015
<b>16B</b>	City Centre - Kings Tamerton - Holly Park	Plymouth Citybus	Daily	Hourly	Evenings Only	Part (Evenings only)	0.69	757	31 May 2014
<b>18</b>	City Centre - Plymstock - Elburton	Target Travel	Monday to Friday	Hourly	09.10 to 17.40	Full	1.56	438	23 May 2015
<b>19</b>	City Centre - Coxside - Cattedown - Merafield	Target Travel	Monday to Friday	Hourly	07.30 to 18.10 Provides peak hour service in Coxside and Cattedown	Full	0.88	539	Rolling contract subject to full review
<b>25</b>	City Centre - Barbican - Hoe	Plymouth Citybus	Sundays & Bank Holidays - Summer Only	Every 30 minutes	09.30 to 18.00	Part (Sundays & Bank Holidays Summer Only)	0.98	203	31 May 2014
<b>27</b>	City Centre - Mutley - Efford - Deer Park - Austin Farm	Plymouth Citybus	Sundays & Bank Holidays Only	Hourly	08.45 to 17.45	Part (Sundays & Bank Holidays)	0.69	227	23 May 2015
<b>28B</b>	City Centre - Eggbuckland - Derriford Hospital	Plymouth Citybus	Sunday to Thursday	Hourly	Evenings Only	Part (Evenings only)	0.67	673	31 May 2014
<b>31</b>	City Centre - Ford - Beacon Park	Plymouth Citybus	Monday to Friday	Hourly	08.55 to 17.55	Full	0.63	689	31 May 2014
<b>39</b>	City Centre - Compton - Morrisons - Hartley Vale	Target Travel	Monday to Friday	Hourly	07.50 to 18.20	Full	1.36	532	23 May 2015
<b>52</b>	Plympton - Derriford Hospital	Target Travel	Monday to Friday	Hourly	06.10 to 19.15	Full	1.02	779	23 May 2015
<b>223</b>	St Budeaux - Kings Tamerton Circular	St Budeaux Taxibus	Monday to Friday	Every 30 minutes		Full	0.53	387	29 March 2013

### 3.7 Criteria for providing subsidised bus services

Plymouth City Council worked to provide the most effective balance between offering services which positively impacted upon residents lives and having as great coverage as possible. The limited size of the budget and the unprecedented amount of changes in local bus services over the last three years has required a flexible and dynamic approach to ensure as comprehensive a service as possible. The following factors were taken into account when subsidising a bus service.

- Available budget.
- Cost per passenger journey based on total passengers (from surveys and ETM data for existing services). The Council's maximum guide cost is £1.65 per passenger. This is reviewed annually subject to industry costs and inflation.
- Total passengers per journey.
- Total unique passengers per journey (those who would not have access to an alternative service within 400 metres at least an hourly frequency)
- Knowledge and detailed understanding of both historical and current context of services.
- Feedback from residents, stakeholders and Members.
- Topography.
- Car ownership levels.
- Accessibility links to the following:
  1. Main and local shopping centres / health facilities
  2. Key hubs to secure connections elsewhere
  3. Employment
  4. Education
  5. Leisure/tourism facilities

Detailed tender specifications were given to Bus Operators to quote against, but the Public Transport Team was always clear that innovative proposals were welcome.

### 3.8 Process for subsidising a bus service

The existing subsidised bus network has been developed over a number of years.

During the contract period, any comments and requests received from ward members, members of the public or bus operators are taken into account when planning for the next contract period or sooner if cost effective benefits can be provided for residents by making changes during the existing contract term.

Receipt of de-registrations for commercial services led the public transport team to gather patronage data for the withdrawn service and look at alternative service provision options. Where it is felt that a replacement service is warranted for all or part of that route, consideration is given to either putting a new service out for tender or amending an existing service.

The team also have regular liaison meetings with all of the city's bus operators and they are always asked for their views on the effectiveness of the subsidised service network, any potential changes they think may be required at the end of the contract terms, any

upcoming commercial service changes they are prepared to share or any requests they have received from customers for new or amended services.

Most services are put out to tender using the open tender process, and in view of the general contract cost, the OJEU process is normally followed. To achieve the best possible value for money the team provide options for service contracts to be awarded as either a whole package or a number of smaller packages, rather than as individual services. This is why most contracts have the same expiry date.

Contracts are generally awarded for a period of 3 years with an option to extend the contract for a further 2 years although the Council does have the ability to award contracts for 5 years with the option to extend them for a further 3 years. Contracts are normally awarded for 3 years as this provides greater flexibility for the Council should it need to amend them following changes to the commercial services. However, it is acknowledged that shorter contract terms are not necessarily conducive to encouraging investment in newer vehicles by operators.

Under the 1985 Transport Act the Council is also able to award contracts on a *de minimus* basis. This is used when a contract is awarded for the extension of an existing service. An example could be where a Monday to Saturday daytime service is provided commercially but the evening and Sunday service is subsidised. There are limits on the value of such contracts.

### 3.9 Types of contract

There are two main types of contract that are offered by Plymouth City Council; net and gross. In the case of the gross contracts, payments are fixed and the Council retains all on bus revenue and the concessionary bus pass reimbursement. Whilst this provides budget certainty for the bus operator it does limit any incentive they have to encourage passenger growth. The Council's contracts are generally let on a net basis which provides greater opportunity for growth and secures financial certainty for the Council.

## 4. BACKGROUND – WHAT ARE THROUGH TICKETS

4.1 The term through ticketing for the purpose of this report encompasses the ability to travel between different bus services operated by the same or different operators and the addition of different modes of travel such as rail and ferry. This report sets out these definitions of through ticketing and what is currently available in Plymouth.

### 4.2 Through ticketing background

Through ticketing can take a number of forms but in essence is usually used to describe a ticket which enables the passenger to travel between one public transport service and another. Setting up these tickets within a deregulated bus industry is not simple and requires careful attention to competition law to avoid issues around cartels, detailed discussion on data sharing and how revenue is apportioned between partners. A successful ticketing scheme usually requires good partnership working between the Local Authority and the bus operators and most significantly requires a good deal of will on behalf of all parties.



Powers provided in the Transport Act 2008 give Local Authorities the opportunity to mandate a multi operator ticketing scheme but significantly the bus operators are able to set the price and therefore without a positive working relationship a resulting ticket could be unaffordable.

#### 4.3 Smart ticketing

Although through ticketing can and does exist in simple formats such as paper tickets purchased from drivers the introduction of smart ticket machine technology on board buses does open up further opportunities. The UK's Interoperable Ticketing Technical Standard, now known as ITSO, and Plymouth has worked in partnership on a regional project over the last few years with all bus companies and Local Authorities in the South West to either upgrade or replace ticket machines to meet this standard. The ITSO standard spans all forms of transport and has been featured in all recent rail franchise tender documents in recent years. The benefits include improved boarding times which result in fewer delays and specifically in relation to through ticketing the ability to encode ticketing products with specific acceptance rules which will work regardless of the ticket machine supplier. The data collected can be used to give accurate revenue reimbursements to bus operators based on actual journeys made.

However, regardless of the technology the introduction of such a ticket is still dependent upon the will, partnership working and satisfaction of legal requirements to introduce a product.

#### 4.4 Electronic Money

As part of the regional project mentioned above, which is led by the public/private company South West Smart Applications Limited a new form of smart ticketing will be available in Plymouth subject to the findings of a current trial in the Bristol area and the buy in of local bus companies. Known as E Money a company called sQUID has been awarded a contract to provide an independent smart card which will be useable on all ITSO ticket machines. The technology is similar to the wave and pay function offered by certain UK banks and credit card companies such as Barclaycard. In the case of the sQUID card customers are able to load up credit in advance or automatically top up their balance online and then deductions are made each time they travel.

However, this is purely a payment mechanism and in order to meet the spirit and objective of through ticketing require the actual multi operator tickets to be available in the first place.

#### 4.5 Bus operators

Commercial bus operators will consider further expansion or the introduction of new through tickets subject to the detail required. Despite being easier for the passenger in terms of use it is unfortunate that electronic ticketing enabled through the ITSO specification does entail significant cost and complexity to set up and maintain.

#### 4.6 Ferry operators

Recent discussions with ferry operators in the City revealed that they were very keen on both the technology and the principles of increased through ticketing. A general summary

would be that they would be likely to support such a roll out subject to the operational and revenue detail.

#### 4.7 Rail operators

Further through ticketing with rail services will be very complex but certainly possible if the companies can be convinced. The current postponement of the Greater Western franchise will make any discussion on this matter in the short term unlikely.

#### 4.8 Review of through tickets available in Plymouth

Table 2, below, provides a list of the existing through tickets currently available in Plymouth.

Table 2

<b>Ticket</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Return – single operator	Available for an outward and return journey on a particular operator.
Day ticket – single operator	Available for unlimited journeys within a defined area on a particular operator.
English National Concessionary Ticketing Scheme	Known as the concessionary bus pass the physical pass is fully interoperable both as a flash pass to the driver and also encoded with ITSO technology to allow smart recording on certain ticket machines.
Plus Bus	A national initiative allowing rail passengers to add on bus travel to their train ticket within their destination location. This is available in Plymouth.
Plymouth Green Travel Pass	A Plymouth City Council led partnership between Plymouth Citybus, First Devon and Cornwall, Target Travel and Western Greyhound allowing unlimited travel on any bus service within defined areas which cover 3 different zone options from a City Centre only zone through to a Country Zone extending as far as Dobwalls and Kingsbridge. Set up as a travel plan initiative and currently only available to employees of nine current member employers in the City, the cost of the tickets are deducted directly from salaries. The products have migrated to the ITSO technical standard and are in the process of being accepted by all Operators.
Ferryrider	An agreement between Plymouth Citybus and the Cremyll Ferry enabling travel on the Cremyll Ferry and on Plymouth Citybus services between Stonehouse Bridge and the City Centre.
Dayrider + Ferry	An agreement between Plymouth Citybus and the Cremyll Ferry enabling travel on the Cremyll Ferry and unlimited travel on Plymouth Citybus services within the City.
Explorer Plus	An agreement between Stagecoach Devon and Plymouth Citybus allowing unlimited travel on both operators.
Dartmoor Sunday	Available on Sunday and Public Holidays. Unlimited travel on most bus

Rover	services in Devon including First Devon and Cornwall buses in Plymouth and various train services including the Tamar Valley line trains between Plymouth and Gunnislake.
Travel on Plymouth's subsidised bus services	As part of the contract process Plymouth City Council ensures that other operators tickets are accepted on subsidised bus services.

#### 4.9 Plymouth Green Travel Pass

Following a request, the Task and Finish Group were vigorously informed about the Plymouth Green Travel Pass.

- 4.9.1 The Plymouth Green Travel Pass is a multi-operator bus pass which is available to employees of participating companies. Overall co-ordination and marketing of the scheme is managed by Plymouth City Council with financial matters on behalf of both the participating companies and bus operators being managed by Plymouth Citybus.

The scheme was set up in 2002 and was designed as an initiative to encourage employers to promote sustainable transport to their employees. The bus operators currently participating in the scheme are Plymouth Citybus, First Devon and Cornwall, Target Travel and Western Greyhound. The participating bus companies and City Council form the Green Travel Pass steering group. Liaison with member organisations also helps to inform the management of the scheme.

There has been a decline in membership over recent years as the cost of the passes have risen at a higher rate than standard ticket prices. Prices are determined on an annual basis by the participating bus operators and the current cost of the passes has been set on the basis that the passes are a premium product, due to the multi-operator nature of the pass, and therefore should attract a premium price compared to a single operator season ticket. The pass is now becoming a niche product for those who regularly use more than one bus operator.

#### 4.9.2 How the pass works

Companies are able to apply for membership of the scheme if they have an active travel plan. The application is considered by the Green Travel Pass steering group. Additional bus operators are also able to apply for membership of the Green Travel Pass scheme if they wish to.

On joining the scheme employees of participating companies are able to have one of three passes; a city zone, all zone or outer zone, which is shown in the map below. These zones mean the pass covers the City's travel to work area. Payments for the pass are managed by the employee's company who are subsequently invoiced on a monthly basis by Plymouth Citybus.

Green Travel Pass holders are entitled to unlimited travel 7 days a week on all services provided by the four participating operators within the specified zone (except Park & Ride 1 and 2).

The City Council, in partnership with the participating companies, manage the development of the marking material for the scheme to the employees of partner organisations and the Council leads on the promotion of the scheme to new businesses.

In the case of Plymouth City Council payment for the Green Travel Pass is made through direct monthly deductions from member's salaries.

#### 4.9.3 Benefits for employers

There are a number of benefits for employers joining the scheme including:

- Green credentials - demonstrating their commitment to encouraging sustainable travel, through reducing traffic congestion and carbon emissions.
- Staff benefits – setting up a monthly payment through the payroll system for the pass reduces the need for staff to do the hard work themselves.
- Addresses staff travel – a valuable tool for the company's travel plan.

#### 4.9.4 Benefits for employees

Benefits for employees joining the scheme include:

- Multi operator ticket – offering flexibility and choice. The scheme is designed to save money for those who regularly use more than one operator to get to work.
- Payment and renewal – passes only need to be renewed annually and payment is organised by the employer increasing the convenience of the pass to the employee
- Greener travel – helping reduce congestion and carbon emissions.
- Quicker travel – journeys can benefit from the city's bus priority measures such as bus lanes and traffic signal priority.

#### 4.9.5 Future Growth

All companies who develop a travel plan with the City Council are informed about the Green Travel Pass scheme as one of the measures they could introduce to support sustainable travel amongst staff and a website has been set up to answer initial enquiries about the scheme.

The Sustainable Transport Team will continue to promote the scheme to all companies in the City. The Plymotion at Your Workplace programme, the business focussed personalised travel planning component of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund Plymotion programme, which runs for the next three years, will provide an opportunity to promote the scheme to companies in the Plymotion area which spans from Devonport in the west to Plympton and Plymstock in the east.

#### 4.9.6 Participating companies

There are 10 companies who currently participate in the scheme with a total of 769 members. Full details of the companies and their pass-holders are shown in table 3, below:

Table 3

<b>Company</b>	<b>City Zone</b>	<b>All Zone</b>	<b>Country Zone</b>	<b>Total Passes</b>
Derriford Hospital	0	347	16	363
Royal Mail	0	14	0	14
Plymouth University	83	82	15	180

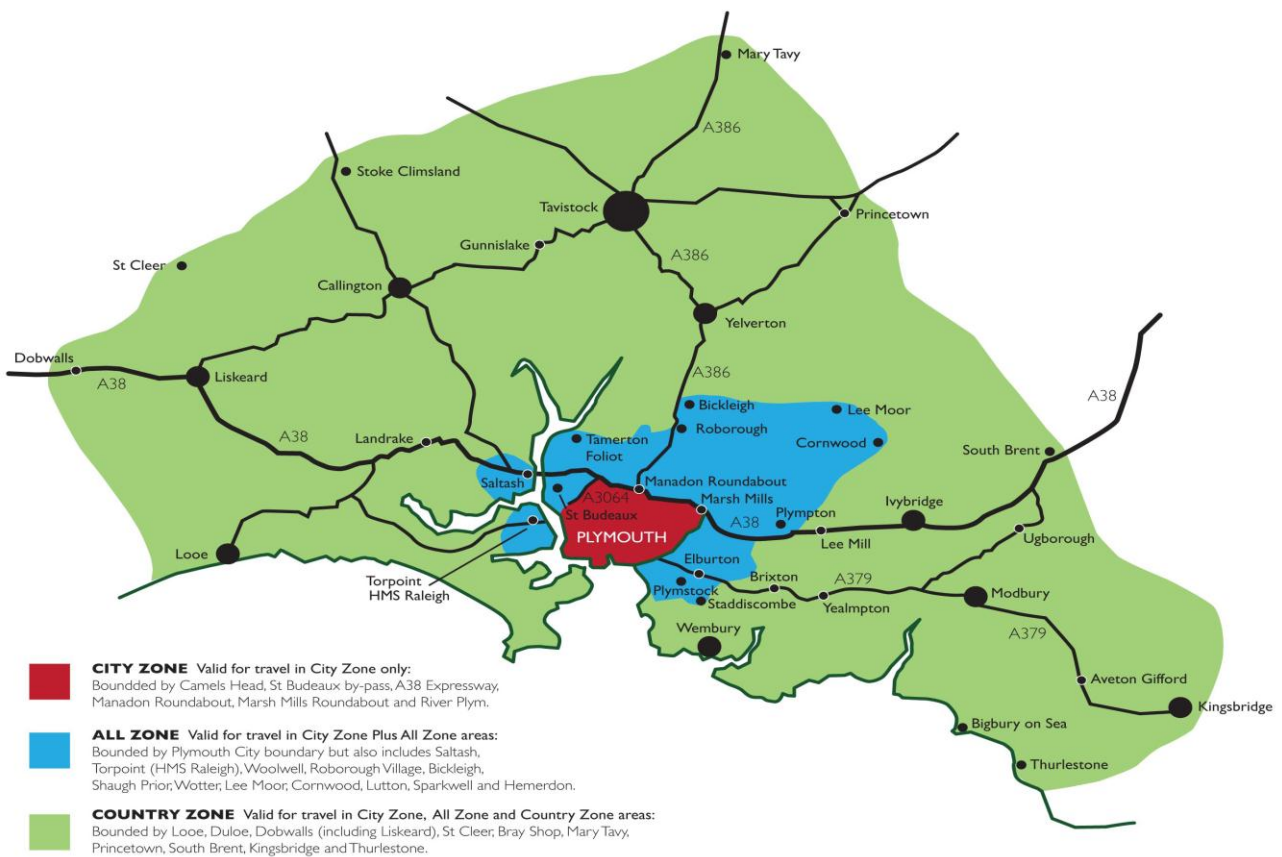
EDF Energy	6	3	1	10
City College Plymouth	4	4	0	8
Plymouth City Council	57	105	7	169
Foot Anstey	4	2	0	6
Stoke Damerel	1	3	0	4
Plymouth Community Homes	2	6	0	8
Harbour Drug & Alcohol	3	4	0	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>769</b>

#### 4.9.7 Plymouth Green Travel Pass Zone and cost

The Plymouth Green Travel Pass zone covers all of Plymouth and much of the surrounding area as detailed in Map 2, below.

Map 2

### GREEN TRAVEL PASS ZONES



For further information please visit us at: [www.greentravelpass.co.uk](http://www.greentravelpass.co.uk) Tel: 01752 307790

The monthly cost of the pass to the employee is:

- City Zone - £45 (£540 per annum)
- All Zone - £59 (£708 per annum)
- Country Zone - £85 (£1,020 per annum)

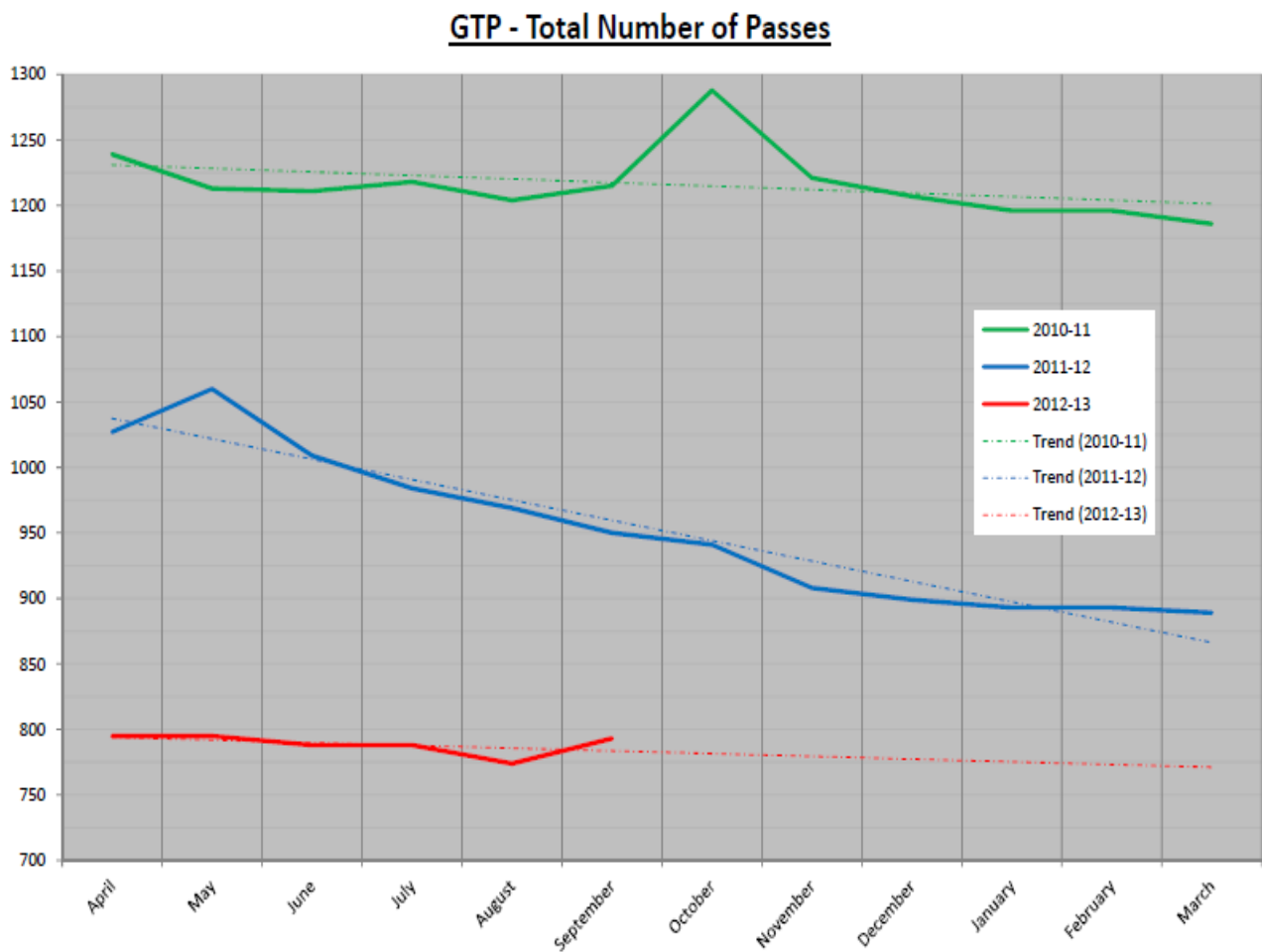
#### 4.9.8 Plymouth Green Travel Pass History

The Plymouth Green Travel Pass has seen a rapid increase in price in recent years, as explained in table 4, below, which has also coincided with a significant decrease in the number of passes purchased, highlighted in chart 1, below.

Table 4

Pass Zone price per month	City	All	Country
2009-10 Price	£32.00	£47.50	£63.00
2010-11 Price	£34.00	£50.00	£66.00
2011-12 Price	£39.00	£56.00	£75.00
2012-13 Price	£45.00	£59.00	£85.00

Chart 1



## 5. GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION AND ADVICE

### 5.1 Subsidised Bus Services

The 1985 Transport Act defines the role of Local Authorities in subsidising services. Section 63 of the act can be summarised as follows.

- To secure the provision of such public passenger transport services as the council considers appropriate to meet any public transport requirements which would not otherwise be met.
- In exercising functions relating to public passenger transport services, to have regard to the needs of elderly or disabled persons.

### 5.2 Through Ticketing

Following recommendation from the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) a Block Exemption was approved in 2001 and extended in 2006 to cover public transport ticketing agreements in relation to the 1998 Competition Act. The legislation allows schemes to exist subject to strict criteria, which are designed to ensure competition is not distorted as a result of them. The Block Exemption specifies the following definitions which for the sake of the Scrutiny Panel discussions, have all been covered under the heading 'Through ticketing':

- Multi-operator travelcards (MTCs) which entitle ticket holders to make multiple journeys on a number of different operators' services across a number of different routes, provided those routes and services are not substantially the same - bus zonal tickets and travelcards, for example, are likely to be types of MTC.
- through tickets (TTs) which entitle ticket holders to make a particular journey using two or more services run by different operators where those operators do not compete with each other over a substantial part of the route covered by the ticket in question.
- multi-operator individual tickets (MITs) where two or more different operators provide services which can be used to make a particular journey and ticket holders can choose whichever service they use to make part or all of that journey.
- short distance add-ons which allow passengers to purchase an MTC as an extension to a ticket on an individual local route, and
- long distance add-ons which allow passengers to purchase a single-operator local service ticket, MTC or TT as an extension to a ticket on an individual long distance route.

The criteria the OFT may apply upon request is a competition test which gauges the impact of a proposed ticketing scheme on the local bus market.

### 5.3 Contracts, Schemes and Partnerships

The group were informed of various options available for public transport systems as set out under the Local Transport Act 2008. The main options informed were specifically:

- Voluntary Partnership Agreements - an agreement where a local transport authority undertake to provide particular facilities or to do other things of benefit to passengers, and an operator, or operators, undertake to provide services to a particular standard.
- Quality Partnership Schemes (QPS) - A QPS involves the council providing “facilities”, and operators wishing to use those facilities must undertake to provide “services” to a particular standard specified. A QPS is a statutory scheme, and the Traffic Commissioners have powers to impose sanctions on operators who use the facilities without meeting the standard. QPSs are able to include requirements about service frequencies, timings or maximum fares as part of the specified standard of service.

The definition of facilities is varied examples include: off site buildings such as the George Park & Ride, bus stops, accessible raised bus boarders, real time information, bus stop clearways, signal priority for buses, bus lanes, and enforcement of restrictions which benefit bus operators.

Services can be specified relating to the minimum standards required to operate under the QPS. These can include; vehicle quality, age, emissions and facilities, frequencies, timetabling, driver training, punctuality, reliability, customer care standards, maximum fares (if not objected to by an Operator) and data sharing.

- Quality Contract Schemes (QCS) - A QCS involves replacing the existing deregulated market with a system of contracts – as currently operates in London. Under a QCS, the local authority specifies the bus services that are to be provided in the area of the scheme, and invites tenders from operators to provide those services under contract.

There are five public interest tests which need to be applied in order to demonstrate why a QCS is required, they are:

- increased patronage;
- passenger benefits
- achieving the Authority’s policy objectives;
- economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- the proportionality of the benefits identified in relation to the first four tests to any dis-benefits to incumbent operators.

Despite a number of reports in the media since legislation was first introduced in 2000 there have been no Quality Contracts implemented outside of London. Metro, in West Yorkshire, is the closest to introducing a quality contract following a number of years of consultation and research. Work on this scheme commenced in 2009 and a forecast date for contracted services to start is June 2014.

## **6. RELEVANT NATIONAL STATISTICS AND INFORMATION**

- 6.1 Bus passenger journeys in England increased by around 15 per cent between 2004/05 and 2008/09, but have remained broadly flat since then, with an increase in London offset by decreases outside London (see chart 2).



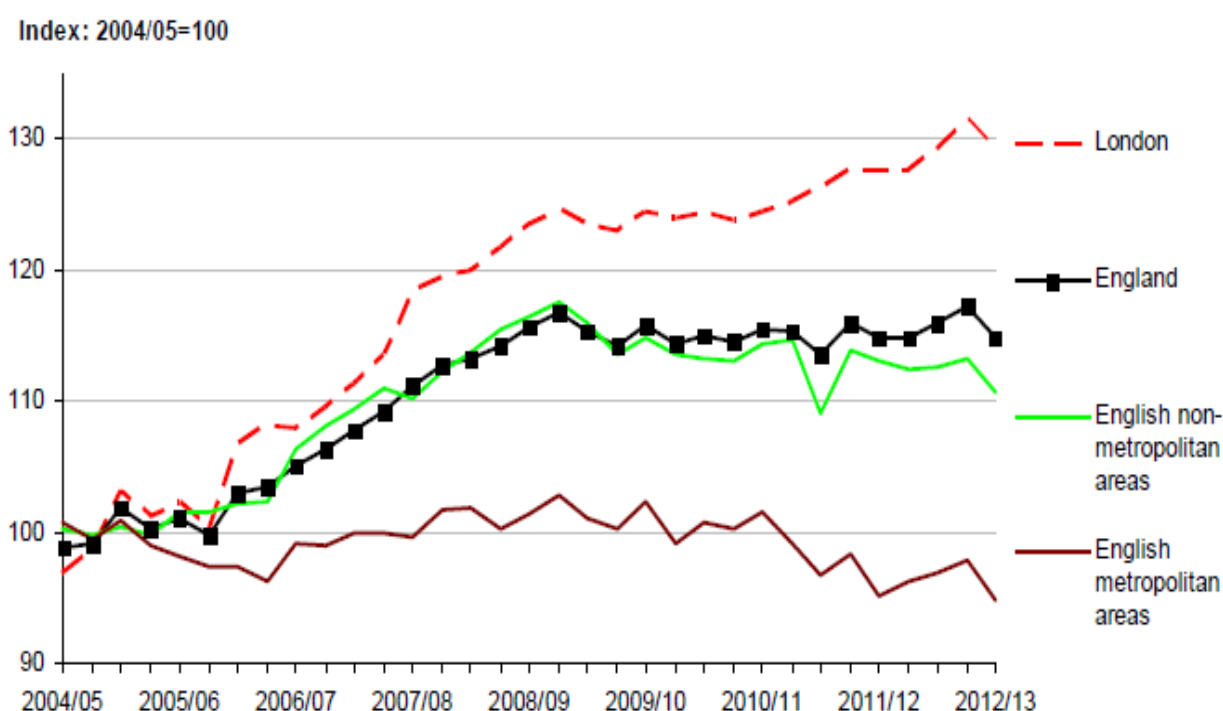
Between 2009/10 and 2010/11, journeys in England increased by 0.1 per cent to 4.61 billion, of which 2.27 billion (49 per cent) were in London. There were decreases of 1.7 per cent in metropolitan areas and 0.6 per cent in non-metropolitan areas, but an increase of 1.4 per cent in London.

Though figures for individual quarters should be interpreted with caution, they show a fall in seasonally adjusted journeys of 2 per cent for England compared with the previous quarter, with falls in London, metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas.

The table below uses 2004/05 as a base to compare changes in bus patronage levels. The axis is not actual trips but rather percentage changes since this base year to demonstrate the changes in each of the compared areas more clearly. For example London is shown to have increased by 30% from the base year to the first quarter of 2012/13.

Chart 2

**England Bus Passenger Trends indexed from 2004-05**



## 7. RELEVANT LOCAL STATISTICS AND INFORMATION

### 7.1 Plymouth's Bus Patronage Trends

Plymouth's bus patronage has largely followed the same national trends for non-metropolitan areas identified above since the base year of 2004/05. However, rather than levelling off or reducing after 2008/09 Plymouth's patronage continued to rise with a reduction observed in 2011/12 which is in line with national trends (see Table 3).

Table 5

Year	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Passenger journeys (million)	18.56	17.77	20.43	19.78	20.57	20.61	20.71	20.18

## 7.2 Bus Operators in Plymouth

Plymouth is served by a number of bus operators. The two major operators are Plymouth Citybus Ltd and First Devon and Cornwall Ltd, who between them provide the majority of commercial local bus services in the city. Target Travel provides the majority of subsidised bus services.

### Plymouth Citybus

Plymouth Citybus is the largest operator in the city and can trace its roots back to the early tramway companies established in the city in the latter decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Since late 2009 Plymouth Citybus has been part of the Go – Ahead Group based in Newcastle Upon Tyne. Citybus operates 35 local bus routes in Plymouth with a few going outside the city into Saltash and the South Hams, and in addition runs many journeys for local schools and colleges from within the city as well as from East Cornwall and West Devon. The current bus fleet is approximately 175

### First Devon and Cornwall

First Devon and Cornwall has been established in Plymouth since the 1920s and from 1995 has been part of First Group based in Aberdeen. First Devon and Cornwall operates 19 local bus routes in the city many of which run beyond the city boundary to East Cornwall, West Devon and South Devon. Since 2006 First has operated the city's Park and Ride services and these have been provided commercially since late 2010. The company also runs local services from depots in Cornwall. The current fleet based in Plymouth is 111.

### Target Travel

Target Travel was established in 1997 and operates 11 local bus routes, most of which are operated with financial assistance from Plymouth City Council. Target operates the Park and Ride service between The George Junction and Derriford Hospital. The current bus fleet is 20.

### Western Greyhound

Western Greyhound Ltd are based at Summercourt near Newquay and the current bus fleet numbers 109. Whilst the vast majority of its routes are within Cornwall Western Greyhound runs 3 services into the city.

### Stagecoach Devon

Stagecoach Devon, based in Exeter, is part of the Stagecoach Group based in Perth operates one service into, the X38, into Plymouth from Exeter. Stagecoach is the main operator in East Devon, North Devon and Torbay.

### Tally Ho!

Tally Ho! Coaches based in Kingsbridge operates service 94 from Noss Mayo and Newton Ferrers into Plymouth.

### St Budeaux Taxibus

Besides the conventional operators detailed above Plymouth City Council has also been a pioneer in the promotion of taxibus services. These refer to local services being operated with Hackney Carriages. The City Council currently supports the St Budeaux Taxibus. This service runs 5 days a week within the St.Budeaux & Kings Tamerton areas.

## **8. TASK AND FINISH GROUP PROCESS**

8.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board approved in principle on 5 September 2012, the establishment of a Task and Finish Group to review subsidised bus routes and through ticketing with membership drawn from the Growth and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

### 8.2 Task and Finish Group Objectives

The main criteria for the group in undertaking this review was to:

- Review of existing provision
- Review of changed commercial network
- Identify gaps and assess provision against agreed criteria / budget
- Review opportunities for through ticketing with Operators and continue with options for exploiting Smartcard technology

With the overall aim to make recommendations to Cabinet, via the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board about how the subsidised services criteria and network could be improved and

The Project Initiation Document (PID) is attached as Appendix I.

### 8.3 Task and Finish Group Methodology

The Task and Finish Group convened over four days on the following dates:

- 24 October 2012
- 6 November 2012
- 20 November 2012
- 3 December 2012

At each meeting the group met to consider evidence, review background information and hear from witnesses.

The witnesses who presented evidence to the panel were:

- Harry Samuels, Plymouth Youth Cabinet
- Dylan Thomas, Plymouth Youth Cabinet
- Richard Stevens, Plymouth Citybus Ltd.
- Ashley Taylor, Target Travel
- Matt Callow, First Devon and Cornwall Ltd.
- Ray Bentley, Travel Watch South West

- Mary Lacey, Senior Citizens Forum

## 8.4 Contextual Overview

In order to aid members of the task and finish group Adrian Trim, Head of Sustainable Transport, Andy Sharp, Public Transport Controller and ASTM and Ralph Ellis, Public Transport Officer presented a number of reports which provided members with the required background knowledge to aid their questioning of witnesses. All background information was included as agenda items and published accordingly with the agenda.

## 9. PROCEEDINGS FROM THE TASK AND FINISH GROUP

### 9.1 The first meeting

The group met on 24 October 2012 where they received an introduction from Adrian Trim highlighting the remit of the task and finish group and an explanation of the background reports submitted.

The group invited Harry Samuels and Dylan Thomas, members of the Plymouth Youth Cabinet, to address the group on behalf of young people in the city. Harry and Dylan presented the Plymouth Youth Cabinet – Transport Consultation document (attached as Appendix B) and explained that the evidence had been gathered from a recent Young Persons’ Transport Summit and the main points relevant to the remit of this group were that –

(a)	many young people saw the merits in a through ticketing service as bus prices were high and bus services operated by the one company did not service all areas in the city. Although young people saw this as an ideal scheme it was appreciated that it could be unrealistic as it required competing bus companies to work together;
(b)	young people were seen as adults in regards to bus company prices and feel that extending the age of a Young Person on all bus operators over the age of 16 would be fairer.

Members commented that it seemed apparent that young people did not consider current bus fares to be fair or affordable and encouraged the Youth Cabinet to undertake a survey to establish ‘how much do young people consider being an affordable bus fare?’ The results of this survey have been provided and are attached as Appendix C.

### 9.2 The second meeting

The group met for a second time on 6 November 2012 where they received further reports submitted by Public Transport Officers, following members’ requests from the first meeting.

Andy Sharp informed the group that all five local bus operators had been invited to the meeting, however only Citybus and Target Travel were able to send a representative to this meeting with Citybus being represented by Richard Stevens and Target Travel by

Ashley Taylor. First Devon and Cornwall Ltd. would be attending the third meeting of the group.

The session was split into two parts, firstly, to discuss through ticketing and secondly, to discuss subsidised bus routes.

■ Through Ticketing

During the discussions between councillors and bus representatives on through ticketing the following information was provided by Richard Stevens:

(a)	currently First and Plymouth Citybus have signed up to rolling out new smart ticketing machines within Plymouth, which would make any through ticketing products easier for customers to use; Citybus had fully rolled out the technology and First are expected to do this in the New Year;
(b)	there were two major issues to the inter-operability of a ticket, these were –
	■ that the income received from the tickets reflects what the operator is due for the service that has been provided;
	■ that the cost incurred on the operators in the administration of through tickets should not harm the operators;
(c)	the price of a multi-operator ticket would need to be set at a higher cost than current all-day-travel tickets;
(d)	one of the major issues on setting up a through ticket was that the law prohibits bus companies from discussing prices together and as such in order for any through ticket to be discussed the Council would need to act as a third party;
(e)	smart card technology was seen as the future for bus tickets but it was very difficult to administer and also very costly as ITSO standards are ever evolving and bus operators are continually having to catch up;
(f)	a voluntary partnership could offer the best solution to providing a through ticket.

Ashley Taylor commented that Target Travel already accepted other operator’s tickets as it was part of the contract for providing subsidised bus services and so through ticketing was more of an issue to Plymouth Citybus and First Devon and Cornwall Ltd.

■ Subsidised Bus Routes

During the discussion the following information was provided by Richard Stevens –

(a)	subsidised bus route contracts were often tendered for short term contracts, this often leads to more expensive contracts. Stability and long term contracts is
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	important for all parties involved;
(b)	the criteria for tendering needed to have more clarity, with the council being more transparent on how it would base its decisions; this would encourage companies to align their submissions with what the Council require.

During the discussion the following information was provided by Ashley Taylor –

(c)	offering increased levels of stability on subsidised bus route contracts would encourage more companies to bid and would ensure that a route when it was being operated would have time to develop its patronage levels;
(d)	if companies knew that the contract was for three or five years and was not going to be reviewed in one year then it would encourage operators to deliver improvements to the buses and the network.

Both operators raised other issues affecting the bus trade including the rise in fuel prices and the reimbursement for concessionary bus passes.

### 9.3 The third meeting

The group met for a third time on 20 November 2012 where they received further evidence provided by Matt Callow, representing First Devon and Cornwall Ltd, Ray Bentley, representing Travel Watch South West and Mary Lacey, representing the Senior Citizens Forum.

Andy Sharp informed the group that First Devon and Cornwall Ltd, who were unable to attend the previous meeting, were in attendance and were represented by Matt Callow. Also, in attendance were Ray Bentley, Travel Watch South West and Mary Lacey, Senior Citizens Forum.

The attendees all provided their evidence individually and in the following order:

1. Matt Callow, First Devon and Cornwall Ltd
2. Ray Bentley, Travel Watch South West
3. Mary Lacey, Senior Citizens Forum

#### ■ Matt Callow, First Devon and Cornwall Ltd

Councillor Nicholson introduced the discussion and informed all attendees that the aim of the group was to determine if there were any options to allow through ticketing in the city.

During the discussions between councillors and Matt Callow on subsidised bus routes the following information was provided:

(a)	overall the procurement process was simple and transparent, which was good for the city as it encouraged organisations to tender;
(b)	the difficulty with tendered contracts was the length, it was difficult for bus

	operators to balance out the income from the contract against the risk of increased prices from, for example, rises in fuel and changes to concessionary fare reimbursement, this often led to high levels of pricing in the tendering exercise.
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Councillor Nicholson moved the discussion on to through ticketing, and during the discussion the following information was provided by Matt Callow –

(c)	First Devon and Cornwall Ltd do not have a problem with the principle of a through ticket, however, they questioned whether there were enough people in Plymouth who would use it to make it worthwhile;
(d)	a through ticket operated by First in Southampton/Portsmouth is not very well used and due to the lack of numbers the administration to distribute monies to different operators is not worthwhile and therefore the seller of the ticket keeps the money;
(e)	if a through ticket was to be created in Plymouth then the use of smart card ticketing machines could make the administration of allocating monies to different bus operators easier and more accurate, although, the difficulty is that smart card machines do not operate on an alighting point meaning that it is impossible to know how far a passenger has travelled;
(f)	the price of a through ticket would need to be set at such a rate so as not to undermine the equivalent tickets sold by each of the bus operators and this, unfortunately, would not appeal to a wide audience, only those who need to travel a two legged journey repeatedly that requires the use of both bus operators.

■ Ray Bentley, Travel Watch South West

Councillor Nicholson invited Ray Bentley to address the panel. Ray Bentley read out a statement (attached as Appendix D) and following questions further informed members that –

(g)	the lack of demand of a through ticket was due to price, if companies only added a small increase to the prices of the current all-day tickets then these tickets would be more widely purchased;
(h)	bus companies were often providing too many buses to compete against each other in a kind of bus war, for example, in Barne Barton and Plymstock, this competition must be subsidised from other routes in the city;
(i)	the Council should review the public transport model adopted in Oxford, which offered a multi-operator ticket for £4, this has improved public transport for the public in Oxford.

■ Mary Lacey, Senior Citizens Forum

Councillor Nicholson invited Mary Lacey to address the panel and during the discussion members were informed that –

(j)	despite a lot of Senior Citizen Forum members having a concessionary bus pass they were unable to use public transport due to the location of bus stops, these were often too difficult for older people to get to;
(k)	the removal of bus routes had been an issue for many older residents, especially in Glenholt, the consequence of this was that many residents now used their cars or had to use other forms of community transport, which were more expensive;
(l)	older people would be more likely to use a bus if the bus stops were more easily accessible or, if possible, a hail and ride system operated on low frequency bus routes so people did not have to walk further than their front door;
(m)	many older people used scooters and in order to help these people the Council should produce a map which identifies where there are drop down pavements as often scooter users were unable to exit pavements.

Members commented that Mary Lacey had raised a valid point about the siting of bus stops and encouraged the Senior Citizen Forum to review the areas where they felt additional bus stops were required and provide this information to the public transport team.

## 10. CONCLUSION

In reviewing all of the evidence and analysing all of the data provided the panel identified a number of points of concerns regarding through ticketing and subsidised bus routes. These concerns are summarised in the sections below:

### 10.1 Through ticketing

The common feeling amongst members during these discussions was that the GTPS scheme was an area that could be improved, and was probably the most likely way of developing a through ticket in Plymouth at present. Members were concerned at the level of employers in the scheme as well as the decrease in employees who used the pass. Also, of concern was the quite significant increase in cost of the GTPS over the past few years.

Members were concerned that smart ticketing technology, a major factor in the ability to offer quality through tickets, was not being utilised by all bus operators and it was felt that all bus operators should be offering a similar service and promoting smart ticketing technology to patrons.

The four recommendations, included in Section 11.1 have been suggested as ways of improving an existing multi-operator ticketing scheme, the GTPS, whilst holding and developing on the ambition of having a universal multi-operator ticket available. It was felt by members that this aspiration needed to be achieved in sections and encouraging advanced technology; use of smart tickets and the increased use of an existing service was seen as a sensible and achievable way forward.



## 10.2 Subsidised bus routes

Members were concerned that bus operators did not have a great deal of confidence in the length of contracts offered as part of the tendering process for subsidised bus services and it was felt that this could have had a detrimental effect on any service improvements that a bus operator may want to implement. Members agreed that the length of contracts were an issue and a stabilising solution was required so as to increase levels of confidence amongst bus operators. In addition, the clarity of the tendering process was questioned and members felt that this was an area that could be improved.

The two recommendations, included in Section 11.2 have been suggested as firstly, a way of improving confidence and offering stability to bus operators providing subsidised services and secondly, to improve clarity on the tendering process for all bidders.

## 10.3 Other issues

There were many other issues raised by witnesses during the scrutiny process and members took many of these issues into account when evaluating the evidence presented and formulating the recommendations. The other issues which concerned members included –

- The varying age range for young people's bus tickets;
- The lack of an easily obtainable comment and suggestion telephone number for all city bus operators;
- The potential impact of the transfer of the reimbursement of fuel duty from bus operators to the council and the future of subsidised services;
- The lack of information and notice provided to local communities and elected members on struggling bus services prior to them being withdrawn;

The additional recommendations, included in Section 11.3 have been suggested as ways to improve the situation for all of Plymouth's citizens and address the concerns identified.

## 11. RECOMMENDATIONS

The below recommendations, were agreed by the group to be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for referral to Cabinet, and have been split into three categories for ease of reference.

### 11.1 Through ticketing

1.	The Sustainable Transport Team, in partnership with the Economic Development Department and all city bus operators, actively encourage an increased level of employers to participate in the Plymouth Green Travel Pass Scheme (GTPS) to increase the number of patrons travelling on Plymouth's network using a GTPS. In addition the Planning Department are encouraged to give a stronger emphasis to employers on the GTPS when applications are received from major employers. The increase in patronage is to be undertaken with all bus operators signing up to a commitment to aspire to deliver a universally available multi-operator ticket in the future.
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2.	The GTPS should be subject to a nil price increase in 2013; however, if bus operators consider a price increase is necessary for the continued delivery of the GTPS then the level of increase should be no higher than the Retail Price Increase (RPI) at that time.
3.	Plymouth City Council aspires to deliver a thriving growth centre by creating conditions for investment in quality homes, jobs and infrastructure and asks all operators to commit to this vision by adopting a technological platform that ensures the investment and incorporating of ITSO compliant ticket machines on all buses by the end of the financial year 2012 – 2013.
4.	In order to encourage the increased use of smart tickets and the benefits of smart technology are achieved all bus operators are encouraged to commit to offering incentives to users of smart tickets, subject to the influence of market services and companies profitability.

## 11.2 Subsidised services

1.	In order to deliver a more stable subsidised bus network tendered services will generally be offered contracts of 3 years with an option to extend for a further two years and all will be subject to a 120 day notice period (an increase on the current 56 day statutory clause).
2.	The Sustainable Transport Team is asked to provide greater levels of detail in the tendering process for all subsidised services in order to provide more clarity for bidders about how the council will be scoring the process.

## 11.3 Additional recommendations

1.	To deliver a fair and equal bus network all bus operators are asked to provide a young persons' bus ticket in the city to anyone 18 and under (up to their 19 <sup>th</sup> birthday) or up to their 23 <sup>rd</sup> birthday if still in full-time education, as raised by the representatives of the Youth Cabinet.
2.	To provide a more open and customer friendly service all bus operators are encouraged to develop a way that provides an easily identifiable contact number for bus patrons to provide comments and suggestions.
3.	The Sustainable Transport Team, are to investigate Oxford City Council's experiences, challenges and successes in developing the public transport system that is currently operated in the city, to establish whether a similar system could be implemented in Plymouth, as per the recommendation in Ray Bentley's report (included as Appendix D).
4.	Following the expected devolution of Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) funding from Operators to Local Authorities in respect of subsidised services the recommendation is made to permanently ring fence this funding towards the provision of subsidised bus services.

5.	Sustainable Transport Officers are requested to notify the relevant ward members when the continuation of an individual subsidised bus services becomes at risk.
6.	The Sustainable Transport Team will investigate initiating a pilot hail and ride project in Devonport, as proposed by the Senior Citizen's Forum.
7.	Sustainable Transport Officers continue to incentivise the bus operators to increase passenger numbers by offering net contracts for subsidised bus services as opposed to gross, where possible and suitable.
8.	The Council are encouraged to seek the support of local MPs to encourage them to make representation to the Secretary of State for Transport on the current financial pressures facing the bus industry and the knock on effect to passengers. These pressures are compounded by a reduction and changes to Bus Services Operators Grant (BSOG), general fuel cost increases, inflation and uncertainties over concessionary travel reimbursement rates.

## 12. APPENDICES

The following appendices have been included for further information:

A: Project Initiation Document

B: Youth Cabinet – Transport Consultation document

C: Ray Bentley, Travel Watch South West representation

## APPENDIX A: Project Initiation Document

	<b>Title of Work Programme Item</b>	<b>Review of Subsidised Bus Routes and Through Ticketing</b>
2	<b>Responsible Director</b>	Anthony Payne, Director for Place
3	<b>Responsible Officer</b>  <b>Tel No.</b>	Adrian Trim, Head of Sustainable Transport  (01752) 307729
4	<b>Relevant Cabinet Member(s)</b>	Councillor Coker, Cabinet Member for Transport
5	<b>Objectives</b>	Review Subsidised Policy and criteria for intervention Review of Through Ticketing progress
6	<b>Who will benefit?</b>	The Council will benefit with regard to value for money, The community with regard to the identification of service gaps and measures to address / provide access to jobs health leisure and improve quality of life.
7	<b>Criteria for Choosing Topics (see table at end of document)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue consistently identified by Members as key through constituency activity</li> <li>• Public interest issue covered in local media</li> </ul>
8	<b>What will happen if we don't do this review?</b>	Lack of awareness of accessibility related issues and oversight of VFM and service provision. Constituent feedback to Members following revised services.
9	<b>What are we going to do?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Review of existing provision</li> <li>■ Review of changed commercial network</li> <li>■ Identify gaps and assess provision against agreed criteria / budget</li> <li>■ Review opportunities for through ticketing with Operators and continue with options for exploiting Smartcard technology</li> </ul>
10	<b>How are we going to do it? (witnesses, site visits, background information etc.)</b>	Analysis of Operator Data Analysis of geographical service provision Assess opportunities and options for improved ticketing
11	<b>What we won't do.</b>	N/A

<b>12</b>	<b>Timetable &amp; Key Dates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Review of proposed commercial network changes and comparison of existing subsidised provision - subject to Plymouth Citybus network overhaul but expected to be available by mid August. Therefore review will take 2 weeks from Citybus announcement.</li> <li>○ Full review of subsidised bus routes to commence in October 2012.</li> <li>○ Work with bus operators to secure a citywide multi operator ticket by September 2013. With future expansion to ferries once technology is available.</li> <li>○ Roll out of Electronic Money card technology by late 2012.</li> </ul>
<b>13</b>	<b>Links to other projects or initiatives / plans</b>	Growth and economic improvement agenda. 2011/12-2012/13 Regional Smart Ticketing Project
<b>14</b>	<b>Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel / Membership if Task and Finish Group (to be decided by OSP before submission to OMB)</b>	Growth and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Panel Task and Finish Group.  Members – Councillors Michael Leaves, Mrs Nelder, Nicholson, and Wheeler.
<b>15</b>	<b>Where will the report go? Who will make the final decision</b>	Scheduled meeting dates of Panel – Dates to be confirmed Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – Dates to be confirmed Cabinet /Council – Dates to be confirmed
<b>16</b>	<b>Resources (staffing, research, experts, sites visits and so on)</b>	Democratic Support Public Transport Team Operating Companies
<b>17</b>	<b>Is this part of a statutory responsibility on the panel?</b>	No
<b>18</b>	<b>Should any other panel be involved in this review? If so who and why?</b>	No
<b>19</b>	<b>Will the task and finish group benefit from co-opting any person(s) onto the panel.</b>	Representatives of Operating Companies
<b>20</b>	<b>How does this link to corporate priorities?</b>	Delivering Growth, Raising Aspiration, Reducing inequalities, Value for Communities.

## APPENDIX B: Youth Cabinet – Travel consultation document

# Plymouth Youth Cabinet Transport Consultation



The following question was answered by young people who attended the transport fair on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> October. These young people are from various schools and colleges from around the city. Students from Woodlands school also answered this question in school and fed the responses back.

### **What are your views on transport and travel in Plymouth?**

We have collated the main themes together to form this list of feedback.

#### **Car use**

- Petrol needed to be cheaper!
- Parking costs needs to be cheaper for young adults! You're extorting us.
- Drivers aged between 17 and 21 are more dangerous
- Too many young drivers

#### **Pedestrians**

- How about footbridge between Oreston & Turnchapel? It could be on the old railway bridge.

#### **Cycling**

- We should be able to hire bikes
- No bicycles on North Road it reduces traffic flow significantly
- Transports rubbish so I use my bike
- Buses not keeping to their lanes is dangerous for us
- Cycling paths need to be wider and more of them
- Cycle paths need to be wider. Concentrating on cycling is difficult while ignorant car drivers hog the road. This could be a way to reduce cyclist deaths on the road.

#### **Buses**

##### **General bus comments**

- They are quite dirty
- Public transport needs to be safer for young people.
- Access to bigger supermarkets by bus would help!(Large Tesco)
- I like buses!
- Citybus = Rude, impolite and expensive.
- It's too long to wait 15 mins
- The bus companies are taking kids for a ride. It is immoral, illogical and utterly irresponsible.
- The amount of public transport in this city is good

## **Wheelchair access**

- Not all pavements are lowered
- We would like to get a bus on our own but are worried in case the bus is full and we are turned away because of no wheelchair space or people not being patient
- Only one wheelchair allowed on a bus
- There is not enough room to move our wheelchairs into position.
- People aren't patient enough with wheelchair users- they stand over us
- Not all buses have a ramp
- If 2 prams are on a bus, I have to wait for the next one because I'm in a wheelchair. *This was also a question asked to the bus companies at the Travel Summit Question Time on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> October. Their answer to this was that it is actually illegal for this to happen as the space is for wheelchair users in line with the disabilities act and pushchairs can use the space if empty. Perhaps the issue is drivers feeling confident enough to enforce this message and the publicity surrounding these areas on the bus.*

## **Cost**

- OVERPRICED and not reliable.
- Too expensive
- Reduce the cost of buses. But, they are good.
- They are good but are very expensive so prices should be lowered
- Child fares available all day not just between half 8 and 9am
- Buses are too expensive for students.
- It's too expensive to get the bus
- Costs too much
- Buses are cheaper than where I used to live
- The prices on buses needs to be cheaper because we can't pay for it
- Cheaper fares, cheaper petrol.
- I have heard of teenagers who have had to move schools in the middle of their GCSE's because the bus fares keep going up
- Bus fare is getting too expensive
- Buses are too expensive and should be cheaper
- Expensive & some are impolite
- Expensive, not many attractive offers
- Reduce the cost of buses and keep them at one price instead of changing it every month
- Damn Pricy
- Day rider should go to Tavistock; I can't afford £8 a day!

## **Timing**

- The timetable is too small and confusing.
- Why do buses come at the same time then not for 20 minutes?
- Its rubbish because I'm always late for college every day because bus always late.
- Buses are late often, over-crowded too, noise level(music etc) is high
- Its rubbish. Buses should run later and more often
- They always run late
- Buses not always on time but when they are they're fine – New Look

## **Driver behaviour**

- Stop asking under 16's for ID- we are in our uniform!!!

- We want nicer bus drivers!
- Some bus drivers over fill the buses and it is packed.
- Whilst I appreciate that everyone has bad days, some of the bus drivers can be really foul tempered and moody.
- Bus drivers need to be better informed about what goes on within the bus service so that they can give correct information to passengers using the service
- Bus drivers are arrogant, moody and very intimidating for younger kids
- Some bus drivers can be impolite. However the new Citybus buses are much nicer to travel in
- Improve training for drivers- I once had a bus driver who got lost and said it was her first time!

We also asked four more specific questions surrounding buses. These were:

**Would it be helpful to have a through ticket?**

**Do you struggle to get anywhere in particular at any particular time?**

**Are buses frequent enough?**

**Do buses offer fair pricing?**

**Would it be helpful to have a through ticket?**

49 people said yes, some even said please! Some people explained their reasoning:

- It would definitely be helpful for journeys away from the city.
- If people had forgot their pass, the card could give you access to both buses. No one would ever miss the bus again.
- If to get to your school you need to get the first bus but the bus to town is a Citybus, you could use both buses to get to school and if you miss one, you could get the other bus company. *People agreed with this point and said that it was very important.*
- It would make it a lot easier to get around.
- It would be something I'd buy every day.
- It would widen the choice.

Even though they said yes, some people thought that this was not feasible as they didn't think the bus companies would ever agree to it. Someone also commented that it would make the prices go up and the public won't like it; "the bus companies can't win."

One person said no for a similar reason stating "No because the price of the cheaper buses will go up even if the ticket is optional".

**Do you struggle to get anywhere in particular at any particular time?**

- No x 4
- Yes x 3
- Sometimes x 4
- Evenings x 3
- Sundays x 5, specifically town to Hooe and anywhere to town after 5.30pm. A lot of people thought that the service was reduced on a Sunday so drivers could have some time off.



Specific issues:

- Yes, to Vue cinemas on Wednesdays (after school)
- I don't know where buses go to- website is rubbish
- Plympton to Ivybridge
- No, I live in Plympton so there are many buses at different times.
- To Plymouth hoe.
- Yes to Plymstock from City Centre
- Yes- to Saltash after 8pm on a Wednesday and in general on a Sunday.
- To Cornwall- beaches which are only accessible from Plymouth by car after the Torpoint ferry.
- Dartmoor

### **Are buses frequent enough?**

The biggest theme surrounding this question was the evening service. The majority of people felt that the buses were frequent enough apart from evenings and late at night. Some people felt that a service that runs every 30 minutes during the day isn't good enough and that more often would be ideal.

### **Do buses offer fair pricing?**

The overwhelming response was no. No one said yes. Comments explaining their answers included:

- £5 is a rip off for bus travel
- No, the school I go to, I only go because it's cheapest to get to
- I think there needs to be more consideration, and buses for uni are expensive
- No it's a rip off, it's cheaper to get a coach!
- No especially for young people
- Not for short journeys
- No some get charged adult prices when they're not

## APPENDIX C: Youth Cabinet Survey Results



**Youth Parliament**  
MAKING OUR MARK

## **Bus Fare Affordability Survey Results**

When we attended the first meeting of the task and finish group we were asked if we could find out what young people thought was an affordable bus fare. We made a survey for people to complete over the period of a week. We had 19 responses and this is not intended to represent the views of all young people across the city. It is however, a snapshot of how a selection of young people living in the city feel about the affordability of bus travel.

Young people were asked to imagine a journey into the city centre from either where they live or where they attend school / college.

They were asked where they were travelling from, which bus company they use, how much they pay for their journey, whether they thought this was affordable or not and what they would consider as being affordable.

The responses in full can be found in appendix I.

79% felt that that the price that they currently paid for their journey is not affordable to them, with the majority of respondents stating that a price under £1.50 is what they would consider to be affordable.

There were 3 respondents from St. Budeaux who paid differing amount depending on what part of the area they started their journey with Plymouth Citybus. They all felt that the ticket price of between £1.50 and £2.50 was not affordable to them and felt that a ticket price of between £1 and £1.50 to be more suitable.

There were 2 respondents from Saltash who paid differing amount depending on what part of the area they started their journey with First Devon and Cornwall. They felt that the ticket price of between £2.50 and £3.50 was not affordable to them and felt that a ticket price of between £1.50 and £2 to be more suitable.

Only 2 people answered that the price they would consider being affordable for their journey was the same as what they currently pay.

Harry Samuels and Dylan Morris  
Plymouth Youth Cabinet

Appendix I: Table of responses

<b>Where are you travelling from?</b>	<b>How much does your single journey cost?</b>	<b>Do you think this is affordable?</b>	<b>Which bus company do you use for this journey?</b>	<b>What price would you consider being affordable for your journey?</b>
Hartley	Between £1.50 and £2	No	Plymouth Citybus	Between £1 and £1.50
Saltash	Between £3 and £3.50	No	First Devon and Cornwall	Between £1.50 and £2
Saltash	Between £2.50 and £3	No	First Devon and Cornwall	Between £1.50 and £2
Mutley	Between £3.50 and £4	No	Western Greyhound	Between £2.50 and £3
Elburton	Between £2 and £2.50	No	Plymouth Citybus	Between £1 and £1.50
Albert Road	Between £1 and £1.50	Yes	First Devon and Cornwall	Between £1 and £1.50
Hatt, Cornwall	Between £3 and £3.50	No	Western Greyhound	Between £1.50 and £2
Ernesettle	Between £1.50 and £2	No	Plymouth Citybus	Under £1
Callington	Between £3.50 and £4	No	Western Greyhound	Between £2 and £2.50
Yelverton	Above £4	No	First Devon and Cornwall	Between £3 and £3.50
St. Budeaux	Between £1.50 and £2	No	Plymouth Citybus	Between £1 and £1.50
Mannameed	Between £2 and £2.50	No	Plymouth Citybus	Between £1 and £1.50
St. Budeaux	Between £2 and £2.50	No	Plymouth Citybus	Between £1 and £1.50
Peverell	Between £1.50 and £2	Yes	Plymouth Citybus	Between £1 and £1.50
St. Judes	Between £1 and £1.50	No	Plymouth Citybus	Under £1
Ivybridge	Between £1 and £1.50	Yes	Plymouth Citybus	Between £1 and £1.50
Crownhill	Between £1.50 and £2	Yes	Plymouth Citybus	Between £1 and £1.50
St. Budeaux	Between £1.50 and £2	No	Plymouth Citybus	Between £1 and £1.50
Laira	Between £1.50 and £2	No	Plymouth Citybus	Between £1 and £1.50

## APPENDIX D: Ray Bentley, Travel Watch South West representations

### Scrutiny Panel 20th November 2013-Subsidised Bus Routes & Through Ticketing

1. TWSW is a CIC, non-profit organisation with voluntary labour. Membership is available to any organisation whose objectives include the promotion of the interest of public transport users. There are 100+ such organisations as members in the SW.
2. The subsidised bus services budget should not be considered in isolation. As stated in Appendix A of the papers for this committee, the budget allows access to employment, shopping and medical services. This should be borne in mind when considering the future of the budget.
3. The major concern that TWSW have with the PCC bus subsidy process is the lack of contingency plans and a strategy to grow the bus market via the subsidy budget. This would need dialogue with operators to consider the interaction between the commercial and subsidised networks. There are unsustainable aspects of the overall bus network in Plymouth that the City Council need to address.
4. The process purely within the current budget for selecting which services to subsidise seems generally sound. TWSW agrees the need for a maximum subsidy per passenger, possibly higher than £1.65, but only the services to Elburton (£1.56) and Hartley Vale (£1.36) get near this. The lack of weighting between the accessibility factors in Appendix A suggests a lack of clear policy on the priority uses of the budget. If employment access were considered of higher priority it would require peak subsidised services which are likely to be higher cost. It may be appropriate to set a higher maximum subsidy per passenger for routes that allowed access to employment.
5. There are 12 subsidised routes+ Taxi bus. 8 of those 12 are hourly daytime services-the other 4 are Evening/Sunday services. The bulk of the budget will go on the 8 hourly daytime services and 6 of these are operated by Target Travel. Target Travel are the saviours of the subsidised network and long may they continue but the age profile of their ownership and management does not offer an obvious succession plan. The papers for this scrutiny suggest no contingency plan to cover a situation where Target Travel was not around.
6. The bus war between First and Go-Ahead has fizzled out in some areas but is in full flow in Barne Barton with 14 buses per hour (bph) between the 2 operators. Barne Barton deserves a good service but 6 bph would be adequate. So there could be 8 bph 'surplus' in Barne Barton. These are paid for by losses to the operators and/or cross subsidy from other parts of the network. Money is found by both operators to increase patronage by taking market share from each other. The bulk of PCC's subsidy budget goes on 8 bph in the daytime, hopefully to grow patronage in those areas. Should PCC be talking to operators to see if some of the 'waste' at Barne Barton could be released to cover some of the subsidised routes to allow the budget to be used to develop the overall market? This does happen elsewhere in the country
7. The bus war has crossed the City boundary to Saltash and Ivybridge. It may be that this is cross subsidised from revenue within the City.

8. In Oxford a partnership has been established between the Oxfordshire County Council and Go Ahead and Stagecoach to reduce frequencies on over bussed corridors and redeploy resource to lower frequency corridors. Operators share the operation of busy corridors and have experienced growth on the lower use corridors that have seen enhanced frequencies. The partnership has also introduced multi-operator tickets. There are some similarities between the over bussing of some areas of Plymouth and Oxford. PCC could usefully look at the Oxford situation.
9. PCC should give itself a slap on the back for holding faith with the people of Kings Tamerton and providing an evening service with the 16B. That service has now become commercial. PCC should use this as an example of how the money being wasted in Barne Barton could be used to constructively grow the bus market. Most other industries expect to invest in growing the overall market as well as increasing their market share.
10. Some operators will tell LTAs what routes are profitable or loss making but rarely say by how much. It would be helpful to PCC, when planning for changes in the subsidised network, to know which routes don't cover marginal costs, which do so and make a partial contribution to overheads and which routes fully cover overheads and contribute to profit.
11. There could be problems to come for the subsidy budget in Plympton and Plymstock. The bus war has finished in Plympton but still rages in Plymstock. Plympton with 31,000 population has 8 commercial buses per hour and one subsidised. Plymstock with a population of 25,000 has 17 commercial buses per hour and 2 subsidised. Will Plymstock require more subsidy when the bus war closes? Will it need less? The 21/21A in Plympton is the high frequency spine route that operators seem to want to move towards but is the 20 set to remain commercial. The 46/47 was cut from 2 bph to none, will the 20 be reduced from 2 to 1 bph or suffer the fate of the 46/47?
12. Talks between PCC and operators should consider how to manage the subsidy budget and its interaction with operator's intentions of what may happen in Plympton and Plymstock and whether the resources deployed to take market share from each other may be better used to grow the overall market.
13. Passengers would very much appreciate through and multi-operator tickets. Some areas (e.g. Nottingham) have introduced these at a small (10%) premium and take up is good. In other areas high premium against single operator tickets suppresses use. The omens in Plymouth are not good. The City Zone Green Travel Pass (that is multi-operator) has increased above other fare increases (40% over 4 years). Such tickets should be part of talks and partnership consideration with operators as in the Oxford example but the utility of a multi-operator ticket to passengers only exists if the premium cost is small. In Oxford the single operator tickets in the City Zone have been abandoned and only a multi-operator ticket (£4 all day) has been introduced
14. TWSW believes that the suggestions above are in the interest of passengers and would be willing to work with PCC and operators to secure a more balanced and sustainable network with a multi-operator ticket as a key part of the improvements for passengers.

**Plympton and Plymstock Annex-Daytime bus frequencies Monday to Friday\***

Routes	PLYMPTON			PLYMSTOCK		
	BPH	Sub / Comm	Operator	BPH	Sub / Comm	Operator
2				5	Comm	First
5/5A				6	Comm	Go Ahead
6				3	Comm	First
7				3	Comm	First
7D				1	Sub	Target Travel
18				1	Sub	Target Travel
19	1	Sub	Target Travel			
20	2	Comm	Go Ahead			
21/21A	6	Comm	Go Ahead			
Total	8 Comm and 1 sub			17 Comm and 2 sub		
Population	30,915			25,325		

\*Excludes services such as 48, 49, 93 and 94 that pass through the areas and non-City Centre services such as the 52.

BPH = Buses per hour  
 Sub = subsidised  
 Comm = commercial