

# PARK & RIDE BUS SERVICE

## Scrutiny Panel Report



### 1. Introduction

Plymouth has a range of Park & Ride services. PR1 links Milehouse and the George Junction sites with the city centre whilst PR2 links Coypool to the City Centre, and both are operated by First Devon and Cornwall. PR3 links the George Junction site with the University of St Mark and St John and Derriford Hospital, and is operated under contract by Target Travel.

### 2. Strategic purpose of Plymouth's Park and Ride services

Plymouth's Third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) places a strategic importance on the need for a park and ride services as an intervention for those driving into the city. The strategy acknowledges that the *'more cars intercepted at park and ride sites, the greater the benefits to the city in terms of reductions in traffic levels, congestion, pollution and reduced parking pressure.'* The strategy also makes specific reference to the importance of striking a balance between offering competitive fares balanced with city centre parking charges whilst not abstracting from other local bus services. The sites effectively work to intercept traffic before heading into the City Centre. Whilst Coypool and the George Junction are well located to achieve this aim the close proximity of Milehouse to the city centre means the benefits are more limited from this site.

### 3. Current Operation

The PR1 and PR2 bus services have operated without financial subsidy from the Council since November 2010. This is very rare with only a handful of other locations in the UK having a commercial park and ride bus service. Plymouth's service may be unique in the country as the only Park and Ride which actually charges the operator to serve the sites. The PR3 is operated under contract utilising section 106 funding.

The three sites are managed and maintained by the Council including having responsibility for all costs associated with the maintenance and national non domestic rates (NNDR). The total cost for all sites is £178,447. However, this is partly offset by the Plymouth NHS Trust who contribute a third of the NNDR charge for the George Junction and a payment from First Devon and Cornwall of £0.75 per service departure from the Milehouse and Coypool sites. Charges are not applied to the George Junction as it was designed as a bus interchange and other services are encouraged to use it. There is also income from the Motorcycle training school at Coypool.

**Table 1: Park & Ride Site income and expenditure in 2012/13**

Site	Expenditure (£)	Income (£)	Total site cost (£)
George Junction	83,764	18,355	65,409
Coypool	52,471	17,958	34,513
Milehouse	42,212	13,158	29,054
<b>Totals</b>	<b>178,447</b>	<b>49,471</b>	<b>128,976</b>

Passengers pay on the bus for single or return journeys and English National Concessionary Bus Passes can be used within the scheme times which in the case of park and ride are after 0930 Monday to Friday and any time on a Saturday.

First Devon and Cornwall staff the building and waiting area at the George Junction and provide intermittent site supervision at Milehouse and Coypool.

#### 4. Service usage data

Table 2 shows the total number of passengers which is split by concessionary pass holders over the last 28 months with a forecast full year for the current financial year. It should be noted that the PR3 frequency was doubled and newer branded buses introduced in November 2012 utilising section 106 funding which has led to the significant increase in passengers. Last year 44% of all Park and Ride journeys made in Plymouth were by concessionary pass holders.

**Table 2: Total Passengers using each service**

	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14 Year to date	
	Total	Concessions	Total	Concessions	Total	Concessions
<b>PR1</b>	644,070	301,910	632,522	286,444	224,337	86,019
<b>Full Year Forecast</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	673,011	258,057
<b>PR2</b>	294,408	128,103	312,555	129,415	119,483	44,288
<b>Full Year Forecast</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	358,449	132,864
<b>PR3</b>	50,037	23,829	78,834	35,494	37,302	17,769
<b>Full Year Forecast</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	111,906	53,307

#### 5. Summary of Appendix A: Benchmarking of Park and Ride sites

26 Local Authorities or cities with park and ride services around England were asked about their operating model. The results were varied;

##### Concessionary Travel

- 17 locations accept concessionary pass holders.
- 4 locations do not accept concessionary passes at all and offer no discount.
- 5 locations do not offer free travel to concessionary pass-holders but offer a discounted fare.

##### Parking

- 22 locations do not charge to park.
- 3 locations charge to park with travel included in the price.
- 1 location (Oxford) charge to park in addition to the bus fare.

## **6. Concessionary Travel**

The English National Concessionary Travel Scheme follows primary legislation to permit free travel on all local bus services within England from 0930 to 2300 Monday to Friday and at any time over weekends and bank holidays for anyone of pensionable age or those who are disabled and meet set eligibility criteria. Each time a journey is made the Local Transport Authority responsible for the area the passenger boards reimburses the bus operator a set fee. As the Park and Ride services in Plymouth are registered as local bus services they have been included in the concessionary travel scheme since it started. However, in 2009 an amendment known as The Travel Concessions (Eligible Services) (Amendment) 2009 was introduced which clarifies eligible services and gives Local Transport Authorities the option to make changes should they wish to. One of these clarifications is detailed below and explains a service could be exempt if an amenity element is included within the fare. In the case of Park and Ride's this may include the provision of car parking.

### **Direct quote from The Travel Concessions (Eligible Services) (Amendment) 2009**

*"4.—(1) A service is not an eligible service under section 146 of the Transport Act 2000*

*if—...*

*(e) the fare for the service includes a special amenity element.*

## **7. Other uses of the sites**

George Junction – Car boot sales

Coypool – Motorcycle Training School, ad hoc charity events, potential cycle hire scheme, Plym Valley Railway staff and users, and the Speedway.

Milehouse – Central Park users, Plymouth Argyle matchday parking.

## Appendix A: Benchmarking of Park and Ride sites

Local Authority	Concessionary Passes (ENCTS) Accepted on P & R	Car Parking Charged at P & R Car Park	Notes
Truro	Full Fare before 09.30 £1.00 per person return after 09.30 on production of ENCTS pass	No	
Exeter	Passes accepted after 09.30 on Mon to Fri and at all other times	No	
Oxford	Passes accepted after 09.30	Yes	2 sites are free for up to 11 hours 3 sites are £2.00 per car per day
Taunton	No £2.20 per Adult Day Return	No	Somerset has always excluded ENCTS holders from free travel.
Bristol	Passes accepted after 09.00 on Mon – Fri and all day Saturday Before 09.00 peak return is £4.00	No	
Bath	Valid after 09.00 on Mon to Fri and all other times	No	BNES has Exclusive Licence with First to operate the Bath P & R services
City of York	Full Fare before 09.00 on Mon- Fri Special Concessionary Single fare of 70p after 09.00 and at all other times	No	70p special single fare introduced from Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> April 2013

City of Cambridge	Passes valid after 09.30 on Mon – Fri and at all other times. Full fare before 09.30		ENCTS pass holders are NOT entitled to take children under-16 free Cambridge P & R carries 3.65M passengers per year
Derby City	Concessions not accepted at any time	Yes	Charge is per car and then up to 7 persons can travel into Derby for £2.70 per car Single ticket is £1.00
Stoke –on –Trent	Free after 09.30 on Mon to Fri and at all other times	Yes	£3.20 per car and then up to 4 persons travel into Stoke and return No dedicated Park & Ride Bus Services
Durham City	Free to all ENCTS holders after 09.30. Between 07.00 and 09.30 there is a 50p flat fare for holders of County Durham – issued Passes	No	Free parking only for P & R bus users. Those who Park & walk or Park & cycle will receive a Penalty Charge Notice
Weymouth and Dorchester	Free to all passengers	Yes	P & R services are not registered as Local Bus Services
Poole	Yes as P R Service only operates on the 4 Saturdays preceding Christmas	No	Christmas Shoppers P & R on 4 Saturdays only
City of Chester	Full fare before 09.30. Adult Return fare of £2.00 after 09.30 and 2 children under 16 can travel free with ENCTS holder	No	Charge for ENCTS holders introduced from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2013
Portsmouth	ENCTS not accepted.	Yes: £2.50 to park car and up to 8 passengers travel on bus	Operates on Saturdays only throughout the year. Customers can hop on/ hop off all day on P & R route within

			Portsmouth
Brighton	Yes, after 09.30 on Mon to Fri and all other times	No	
Leicester City	Free after 09.30 on Mon – Fri and all other times. Before 09.30 charge of £1.50 per ENCTS holder issued by City of Leicester and £3.00 all other English ENCTS	No	
City of Norwich	Full adult fare before 09.30. After 09.30 return fare for ENCTS holders is £1.10	No	Change was made following the 2009 amendment. Reported a number of complaints from residents, a small reduction in concessionary passengers but an overall increase in revenue.
City of Gloucester	Full fare before 09.30 on Mon- Fri. Free travel after 09.30 and at all other times	No	
Preston, Lancashire	Full fare for Senior Citizens before 09.30; special 50p single fare for Disabled holders before 09.30  Free travel for both categories after 09.30	No	
Kingston Upon Hull	ENCTS holders entitled to free travel all day, every day	No	
Nottingham City	On sites served by Nottingham Trams no free travel for non-Nottingham City ENCTS holders at any time  Sites served by buses charge full fare before 09.30 and free travel after 09.30 and at all other times	No	7 sites within the City of Nottingham

Ipswich	Full fare before 09.30. Special £1.00 return fare after 09.30 on Mon- Fri and at all other times	No	
Swindon	Full fare before 09.30 Mon- Fri and then free after 09.30 and at all other times	No	Bus Service provided by Thamesdown Transport with some journeys supported by Swindon
Salisbury	Free travel at all times for ENCTS holders	No	Website encourages Park and Walk and Park and Cycle
Stratford Upon Avon	Full fare before 09.30 on Mon- Fri for Non- Resident ENCTS holders  Full fare before 09.00 for Local residents  Free travel at all other times	No	