

DRAFT Subject to Editing and Layout , and adding photos , maps and appendices

Devon on the Move

Devon Local Transport Plan 2006-2011

Bus Strategy 2006-2011

Developing the Devon Public Passenger Transport Network

Purpose and Scope

Context and Guidance - national ,regional ,local

Consultation and Key Responses

Vision – where we aim to be by 2011 - networks/services/facilities, interactions

/interfaces, targets

Where we are now – the position in 2005/6 - networks /services /facilities,

threats and opportunities ,assessment against the Vision

How we will work towards the Vision – key elements, plans and projects

Appendix 1 Transport Coordination Service
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Purpose and Scope

The Transport Act 2000 requires that a Bus Strategy be prepared to accompany the LTP . It can be incorporated into the plan or published as a separate document. The County Council has decided to put the headlines for public transport in the Devon LTP and draw up a separate document for the Bus Strategy to reflect the high priority of public passenger transport and buses in particular in achieving the seven objectives which form the core of Devon on the Move 2006-2011 (LTP2).

The Department for Transport has set out detailed guidance on preparing a Bus Strategy.

- The Transport Act 2000 requires all local transport authorities to prepare a Bus Strategy, as part of that authority's LTP. It also sets out specific requirements to consult other local authorities, local bus operators or their representatives and representatives of bus users on the Bus Strategy. The Department considers it essential for the development of a Bus Strategy to be fully integrated within the wider local transport strategy/LTP process, so that LTPs can demonstrate the full contribution of buses to the delivery of better transport outcomes – congestion, pollution, accessibility and road safety. Like the rest of LTPs, the aim of local Bus Strategies should be to deliver the best possible value from all available funding. Bus elements of LTPs should therefore take particular care to demonstrate how the LTP would maximise the value for money of any funds provided to support the operation of bus services, as well as capital funds for infrastructure.
- For certain purposes, it will be necessary for the Department to identify which elements of the LTP constitute the bus strategy (for example, when considering proposals for quality partnerships, quality contracts and certain ticketing schemes). Authorities may therefore under certain circumstances need to identify the elements of the LTP that constitute the bus strategy separately – perhaps through an LTP page that indexes or references those elements, or by producing a separate bus strategy annexed to the LTP. Appropriate guidance will be available on the DfT website, alongside a range of other suggestions and helpful advice on making the most of bus transport, and developing a bus strategy. Since a bus strategy is part of the Local Transport Plan, it must have the same lifespan as the Local Transport Plan to which it relates, and must be updated whenever the Plan is updated in a way that affects buses/bus policy.
- Policies and specific proposals relating to the use of buses should be clearly spelt out in relevant sections of an authority's LTP. Authorities may wish to draw together in one place all the policies and proposals which form part of their bus strategy. In which case this should be presented in an annex to the LTP. The exercise of other powers – to make quality partnership schemes, quality contract schemes or ticketing schemes – to the implementation of policies set out in the bus strategy.
- Since a bus strategy is part of the LTP, it must have the same lifespan as the LTP to which it relates, and must be updated whenever the LTP is updated in a way that affects buses/bus policy.
- There must be clear links and cross referencing with the Bus Information Strategy required by T A 2000 and the Access Strategy which Government requires to be incorporated into LTP 2 .

The Transport Act 2000 requires that a Bus Strategy contain the authority's general policies as to how best to carry out their functions, so that:

- Bus services meet those transport requirements of people within their area that the authority consider should be met
- Those bus services are provided to the required standards
- Appropriate additional facilities and services connected with bus services should be provided (this includes bus stations, bus shelters, bus priorities, information about bus services, interchanges and integration with other modes)

It should also describe policies for the authority's use of Rural Bus Subsidy Grant and for continued support of successful policies and projects initiated through Government funding schemes such as the Rural and Urban Bus Challenges / Kickstart and the Rural Transport Partnership.

The 2000 Act also requires authorities, in developing their bus strategies, to have regard to any measures required or proposed for meeting the transport requirements needed in carrying out their local education or social services functions. The bus strategy should therefore be set in this wider context and give details of any steps being taken to integrate the various transport requirements.

The Bus Strategy should also show how the authority's provision of subsidised services under the powers in the Transport Act 1985, as amended by the 2000 Act, supports the achievement of its local transport objectives and delivery of improvements in accessibility and social inclusion.

The inclusion in a bus strategy of other modes and service formats to complement the conventional bus is strongly supported. In particular the guidance encourages the incorporation of local / community rail, the integration of bus and rail, community transport, demand responsive transport and taxis/phv

This Document sets out the guidance and context against which the Bus Strategy for Devon has been developed, the important issues emerging from the consultation, the vision of where we aim to be by the end of the Plan period, the progress towards this vision so far and the action proposed to reach it.

Devon on the Move (LTP 2) contains the headlines of the bus, local rail, community transport etc policies so that this Bus Strategy expands and elaborates on these with much more detail. It brings together all the policies and the LTP area programmes of schemes relating to public passenger transport but also sets out our plans for supporting measures which are only summarised in the LTP. It identifies clearly the revenue as well as capital funding required to provide the public passenger transport network to achieve the objectives and targets

The Bus Strategy features strongly how the public passenger transport network will assist the achievement **of the 4 Shared Priorities and the additional 3 Devon priorities** –Tackling congestion, delivering accessibility, making roads safer, improving air quality, improving recreation, leisure and tourism, promoting health and wellbeing, improving public spaces. The new requirement for an **Access Strategy** is also embraced

In order to provide a comprehensive approach, all modes of public passenger transport and all travel requirements are covered in the Bus Strategy, hence the description "**Developing the Devon Public Passenger Transport Network**". The emphasis must be on the provision of local passenger transport which utilises the most cost effective and suitable mode and supplier to meet the all the travel requirements of residents and visitors. "Bus Strategy" is used for convenience only.

The future Public Passenger Transport Network for Devon will embrace -

- all modes of local transport in the county – conventional bus, drt (mini bus and car), community transport, ,local and community rail services , wheels to work, taxis and PHV etc,
- all travel requirements – school, health, work, shopping leisure, access to countryside, including services for disabled people , Park and Ride services etc
- a mixed economy of suppliers to provide it – private operators of all sizes, statutory agencies, community transport groups, charities and vehicles owned by the County Council .

Meeting the shared priorities, and corporate objectives of Devon and the wider public sector it will be necessary to extend across all the service areas – health, social services, education, travel planning etc – and to establish mechanisms for linking with those service areas/agencies and bodies.

Context and Guidance

National

The policy context of the Statutory Bus Strategy within LTP2 is set out by the Government in the White Paper – “**The Future of Transport – a network for 2030**” (July 2004) and in the LTP2 Guidance.

White Paper Para 5.7. “Improved bus services must be at the heart of Local Transport Plans To improve access to jobs and services, particularly for those most in need. They will be key to reducing congestion and pollution and are safer than travelling by car”.

White Paper Para 5.6: “We need to make better use of buses to help reduce congestion and tackle social exclusion. Buses need to be attractive enough for motorists to choose them over cars And they also need to provide mobility for people who do not have access to other forms of transport”

Clearly the Government requires that the provision of high quality bus services be given a high priority in LTP2 in order to meet the shared priorities of tackling congestion and improving access to services for all. This is further developed in **LTP 2 Guidance** Paras 16 – 19 for congestion:

16. As buses are the most significant form of local public transport in major urban areas, attracting motorists onto them is central to delivery of congestion reduction. The attractiveness of buses depends on a variety of factors, some in the gift of bus operators (e.g. quality of vehicles and drivers), some in the gift of local authorities (e.g. concessionary fares, bus priority measures) but most requiring partnership between authorities and local authorities (e.g. punctuality, personal security). Local authorities have a duty to develop and implement a bus strategy and should ensure that this strategy makes a positive and sustainable contribution towards achieving congestion objectives.

17. The Future of Transport', published on 20 July (2004), announced that the Government will be encouraging local authorities to develop innovative schemes to tackle congestion in their cities, involving tailored packages of bus and car restraint measures. The Road Pricing feasibility study report published in parallel with "The Future of Transport" has also suggested a continuing role for local congestion charging schemes as part of integrated strategies for dealing with congestion problems. Experience in London shows that bringing action on these two aspects together in one package offers the best chance of success in tackling congestion.
18. Key elements of the schemes will be:-
 - Radically improved bus services, likely to include for example, enhanced frequencies and route coverage, greater reliability, attractive ticketing, better passenger information and higher quality vehicles; and
 - Anti-congestion measures, likely to include for example, reduced parking capacity and higher parking charges and ideally a commitment to work toward the introduction of a congestion charging or workplace parking scheme at the earliest opportunity.
- 19 Bus elements of schemes might involve the introduction of a Quality Contract scheme where the statutory criteria can be met, or introduction of a Statutory Quality Partnership scheme. If the introduction of a Quality Contract is necessary to achieve such improvements the authority will need to demonstrate that it is the only practicable way of giving effect to its bus strategy. For example, an authority wishing to implement a car restraint policy without reducing accessibility may need Quality Contracts in order to guarantee a network of affordable, frequent bus services.

Delivering Accessibility

The Government requires that an Access Strategy be incorporated into LTP 2 and that Accessibility Planning be carried out for which guidance has been provided –

"Improving social inclusion lies at the heart of Government policies. The Government wants to see improved access to opportunities and to enable individuals and communities to realise their potential. Achieving these aims means making sure that everyone can get to work, schools, health care, food shops and other services".

The ability of people to get to services and facilities such as work, school, college, doctors, hospitals and shops can have a significant impact on their quality of life. The Government requires all local transport authorities to use accessibility planning techniques to understand the links between social exclusion and transport so as to reduce exclusion through improving access to key services. Helping to ensure that people can access the services they need is not just a matter of improving local transport, but also of changing how, when and where services are provided.

"These solutions require a range of public services and other organisations to work together over the long-term, including those involved in land-use planning, crime, education, healthcare, and social services."

("Making the Connections: Final Report on Transport and Social Exclusion", ODPM, February 2003)

Accessibility planning was introduced by this report to encourage authorities to promote social inclusion by tackling the accessibility problems experienced by those in disadvantaged groups and areas focusing on those opportunities that are likely to have the greatest impact on life chances –employment, education, health care and food shops

Maintaining a comprehensive network of public passenger services, scheduled, demand responsive, or community based to meet the travel need of all in the community will be fundamental to achieving the Access Strategy and a major challenge to be tackled in a Bus Strategy

Improved bus services must be at the heart of a LTP designed to improve access to jobs and services, particularly for those most in need. They will be key to reducing congestion and pollution and are safer than travelling by car. Initiatives to make bus use more attractive can include the following, many of which will be greatly improved by working in partnership with operators:

- Improving the speed of the bus relative to the car, for example, through quality bus corridors/showcase route schemes, dedicated bus lanes, guided busways and other bus priority schemes (including bus priorities at junctions)
- Park and ride schemes
- Improvements to bus stops with easy access walking routes from the catchment area, raised kerbs for flat floor bus access
- Providing easy to read public transport information at all stages of the journey and use of real-time information at bus stops and other key sites so that the bus route network is well publicised and easy to understand
- Improving coverage and frequency of the core bus network and the reliability and punctuality of bus services
- Ensuring the buses are accessible with widespread use of low floor buses, are comfortable, clean and well maintained
- Improving passenger safety and security on the bus network and Improving the attitude of staff towards customers
- Providing a broad range of appropriately priced and flexible tickets
- Influencing the local planning process to ensure that all significant new development is accessible by bus
- Integrating the bus network with education, social services, health services and voluntary sector transport and ensuring bus services integrate with the full range of travel options

Bus policies will need to be developed in the context of the deregulated legislative framework as strengthened by the Transport Act 2000. Under that framework, improving bus services will be delivered most effectively by **working in partnership with operators**, whether through formal quality partnerships (statutory or voluntary) or other less formal agreements. The Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT) and all the major operating groups are equally committed to the principle of working in partnership with local authorities.

The Bus Partnership Forum set up by the Secretary of State For Transport embracing operators, local government and DfT has produced a range of resources, good practice and guidance, approved by the CPT, LGA, ATCO and PTEG. These include:

- "Bus Priority: the Way Ahead"
- Service Stability Code (to limit timetable changes and improve public confidence)

- Ticketing templates (to facilitate multi-operator ticketing)
- Guidance on Bus Punctuality Improvement Plans
- Guidance on Statutory Quality Partnership Schemes
- A model of the Bus Industry to predict future trends based on varying scenarios of cost pressures , resource availability ,investment levels etc

The statutory powers under the Transport Act 2000 provide a range of opportunities for local authorities to take action where improvements are not being achieved by other means. As mentioned above, the powers to make quality partnership schemes, quality contracts schemes and ticketing schemes are all dependent on the bus strategy which they must pay a part in implementing. This dependency should be borne in mind when developing and setting out the bus strategy.

Where a local authority wishes to make a quality contract, the authority will need to demonstrate that this is the only practical way of delivering its bus strategy. For example, an authority wishing to implement measures to reduce congestion without reducing accessibility may need a quality contract in order to guarantee a network of affordable frequent bus services .

The LTP2 guidance lays considerable emphasis on “soft measures” such as public transport information and traveline, and travel planning to which public transport should make a big contribution. However, these items raise the issue of revenue funding to support LTP2 strategies and the availability of funding from the Integrated Transport programme.

Other policy measures and legislation bearing on the Bus Strategy are -

- The legislation governing Community Transport is under review with changes possible in 2006/7 which will facilitate an expanding role to assist in meeting Access needs .
- The Education Act 2000 requires LTAs to give serious attention to the travel needs of Post 16 students in LTP2. and Schools White Paper / bill could have significant impact by placing a statutory duty on Local Authorities to consider the travel needs of and transport provision for all children
- Guidance on Accessibility Planning issued to LEAs and health bodies as well as LTAs requires that all stakeholders work together to identify access needs, work up action plans and co-ordinate transport services.
- The community Rail Development Strategy issued by the SRA in November 2004 and which DFT is now implementing has an important role for LTAs . Pilots have been established on 3 lines in Devon and Cornwall including Looe Valley /Tamar Valley lines .
- Rural Bus Subsidy Grant is to be continued to 2007/08 at least The level of funding for 2006/7 for Devon is £ 2.3m up from £2.2m in 2005/6 .Rural Bus Challenge has been replaced with the Kickstart programme from which Devon has gained 2 awards in the 2005 competition totalling £1.04m
- Disabled Discrimination Act 2005 which requires that local authorities make best endeavours to ensure that disabled people can use transport services has implications for the provision of supported bus services and on street facilities to assist access to buses .

- Competition Act 1998 under which the Office of Fair Trading has applied severe restrictions on bus operators working together to generate passenger benefits such as coordinated timetables ,and network tickets . After much pressure from operators and L A s a more productive regime is now under consideration .
- The Ten Year Transport Plan (2000) set a target for increasing passenger trips by bus nationally by 1 % , year on year until 2010 i e by at least 12 % . Recently this has been put on a regional basis to take account of the huge growth in London and set a challenge to the rest of England .
- Haskins Report – transfer of Countryside Agency transport programmes and funding to the Regional Development Agencies creating concern and uncertainty for rural transport services and community transport .
- Transport Innovation Fund promoting schemes combining demand management of car use with extensive and innovative public transport
- Concessionary bus travel – implementation of a free scheme for the over 60 s and disabled people with additional funds channelled through the existing Travel Concession Authorities – Unitary and District Councils from April 2006 and a national scheme from 2008 .
- Compact for Voluntary and Community Groups to ensure fair treatment by local authorities .
- A higher status for Transport in the Corporate Performance Assessment means that a high score for the LTP and Bus Strategy is important for the County Council CPA Grade.
- Introduction of Local Development Frameworks to set the policies and zoning to determine planning and development in each authority, and Government proposals for Planning Gain Supplement to replace the current system of planning obligations and S 106 agreements. If these proposals are not changed then seeking local funding from developers for transport items including bus services and community transport will not be allowed .
- Dft and North West Centre of Excellence study into Transport Efficiencies and the achievement of Gershon Savings .

The Commission for Integrated Transport has been reviewing the workings of the bus industry . Two reports were produced in 2004 and the main conclusions are:-

- If Operators continue to raise fares in order to maintain revenue levels as passengers decline then Shire counties will suffer a 32% loss of patronage by 2010.
- But if improvements in quality through bus priority and marketing are implemented then a 7.5% increase in passengers is possible by 2010
- And if there is an increased level of investment in priorities, innovation, marketing etc then as much as 15.4% growth in the Shires may be achieved by 2010
- Co-ordination of services and partnership of operators and local authorities is vial to achieving the investment set out above
- Regulation such as Quality Contracts is not necessarily the answer, voluntary quality partnerships and Quality Network agreements may well be the best approach in the Shires.

Nationally the Bus Industry is experiencing severe cost pressures from fuel price increases, driver shortages, insurance and pensions. Much of this is being passed on to the passenger by way of high fare increases – up to 25 % in the last year and by 60 % over the last 10 years. Operators are also withdrawing commercially operated bus services and from tendered services so putting local transport authorities under increasing budget pressure. In marked contrast the real costs of motoring are going down – by 30% over the last 10 years .

The operating environment for bus services continues to get more difficult with increasing congestion from traffic growth and on street parking . With Police priorities elsewhere enforcement of bus priorities and against illegal parking is patchy except where decriminalisation of parking powers have been adopted . Operators are forced to put more resources into bus services to keep up punctuality – every 1 mph reduction in average bus speeds generates a 10% increase in operating costs.

Passenger trips by bus have been declining nationally except in London for many years. Indeed since 2000 outside London the loss of passengers has averaged 7%. Increasing bus passenger numbers against this background might be deemed impossible .

Regional Context

The SW Regional Assembly is required to develop a Regional Spatial Strategy and Regional Transport Strategy, which will become statutory after adoption following consultation. This will be completed by 2007 . The framework of the strategies is available to guide LTP2 and so the Bus Strategy.

The main thrust of the Regional Strategies will be PUAs (City Regions) i.e. principal urban centres and surrounding journey to work areas as the focus for development and growth. The strategy for the two city regions impacting on Devon – Exeter and Plymouth includes a public transport component-

- tackling congestion and improving air quality through demand management and better bus services
- maximising the role of local rail
- partnership with bus operators
- setting levels of service
- sharing risks with operators and reinvesting revenue gains in better services.

The Regional Assembly is considering its priorities for future investment in major schemes with schemes which help the PUA s work effectively featuring strongly.

The Great Western and Wessex Rail Franchises are now in one Greater Western Franchise from April 2006, embracing both Inter City to London Paddington and branch line /local train services within Devon which has been awarded to First Great Western Trains . The South Western Franchise for the London Waterloo route is being re-let during 2006 and the Cross Country franchise follows in 2007 .

The SRA/ Network Rail published in 2005 a Greater Western Route Utilisation Study which did not take on board the regional plans and expected growth rates . This is disappointing as it will determine the level and type of local services as well as Inter City for years to come through setting the parameters for the provision of the track and signalling throughout much of the South West. The South Western Mainline RUS (Exeter to Waterloo line) is being developed currently by Network Rail and the indications are that this will be more positive and reflect the regional requirements much better . . A Regional Assessment Plan looking to the long term for rail is to be drawn up by DfT in 2006

The Regional Development Agency will have a bigger role in public transport funding than before as it has inherited a social and community remit from the Countryside Agency. Ongoing funding for the Devon Rural Transport Partnership and Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership, and funding the public transport projects arising from MCT1 will be part of its responsibilities.

Local Context

Currently this is set by the County Council corporate goals and Strategic Plan which have been incorporated into the Environment Directorate Plan .

Corporate Goals – Passenger Transport Elements

- Achieving a prosperous Devon - identifying individual and community travel needs, and then delivering cost effective and flexible transport locally to enable residents, visitors and the local economy to benefit whilst reducing social exclusion and rural isolation and encouraging utilisation of Public Transport Services.
- Creating safer and stronger communities in Devon - balancing local environmental concerns with the need to provide high quality, effective ,economic safe transport services.
- Promoting a healthy caring Devon – close working with social services, PCTs and local communities to provide support and advice on initiatives to allow travel for all and through promoting sustainable transport, green travel plans and inter-modal transport to help to reduce local traffic and congestion.
- Promoting achievement through learning - accessing educational/lifelong learning and recreational facilities, including provision for Post16 and non-entitled students and after school club services.
- Improving travel and communication in Devon – comprehensive and innovative network planning to produce integrated transport solutions through an ongoing programme of development and reviews maximising the output from the resources allocated.
- Looking after Devon’s environment, culture and heritage - access to the Coast and Countryside and remote parts of the County and providing support for the local economy by encouraging tourism and protecting the culture of market towns and rural villages .through public transport services which reduce dependency on cars, allowing environmental concerns to be met by contributing to a safer, healthier environment.

Devon County Council’s Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan’s Goal of Improving Travel and Communication in Devon includes the Key Action of –

“Encouraging alternative forms of transport such as bus travel, walking and cycling to widen people’s choice of quality transport for local journey

Aligned with these goals is the Environment Directorate's aim which is "to improve the quality of life for the people of Devon by providing an infrastructure including spatial and transport strategies that support a vibrant economy for Devon, by maintaining the roads, providing bus services and enabling safe travel in Devon and by safeguarding the Devon environment including reducing the amount of waste going for disposal".

Making an important contribution to the Strategic Plan is the **Devon Strategic Partnership** which brings together District Councils, statutory agencies, the voluntary and community sector, the business community and the County Council. Local Area Agreements will link closely with the Access Strategy in the future

The County Council is developing a number of strategies and theme plans to support the Strategic Plan. Those impacting on the Bus Strategy include the **Equality Strategy** and **Role and Action Plans for Social Inclusion, Tourism and for Regeneration**

Devon suffers from a low per capita grant compared with other Shire authorities under the Local Government financing formulas which do not recognise the demands of a rural county with an elderly population. Each year the County Council faces **difficult revenue budget choices**, particularly when the only way to attempt to accommodate so many commitments including passenger transport services is to increase council tax.

Consultation and Key Responses

The Transport Act 2000 requires the local transport authority to consult:-

- Any other relevant local authority whose area may be affected by the bus strategy ('relevant local authorities' are: other local transport authorities (English or Welsh), metropolitan district councils, London transport authorities and councils in Scotland, but in the base of consultation by a PTA, a constituent metropolitan district council is not a "relevant local authority" in this sense);
- If the authority is a county council, any district councils in its area;
- Operators of bus services in their area, or organisations representing them;
- Organisations representing the users of bus services.

Consultation on the Bus Strategy should ideally take place in parallel with consultation on the LTP as a whole, though the elements of the LTP forming the Bus Strategy should be readily identified. The nature and timetable of the consultation process is a matter for authorities to decide, provided that it can be said to provide an early and effective opportunity for the public and stakeholders to influence the final version of the strategy.

Consultation carried out by the County Council

- **Panel Hearings**, chaired by Councillor Morrish, were held in March/April and November 2004 and Members heard from a total of 42 speakers.
- An eight page “**Moving Forward**” **consultation document** was sent to parish councils, partners, stakeholders and statutory consultees in October 2004 and 130 responses have been received.
- There were 477 responses from DCC staff and 59 responses from members of the public to the **online questionnaires** posted on the DCC website during September/October 2004.
- A total of 1,000 **on-street interviews** were conducted in Exeter, Exmouth, Tiverton, Holsworthy, Dartmouth, Moretonhampstead, South Molton and Sidford between 4 and 15 September 2004.
- **Focus Groups for Town Council Clerks** were held on 1 and 2 November 2004 in Barnstaple and Exeter.
- Other elements of the consultation have included involvement in the “**Devon Big Voice Reloaded**” event and a seminar, organised jointly with the South West Energy and Environment Group on **air quality**.
- Meetings and workshops involving the **Devon Association of Parish Councils and the Devon Rural Transport Partnership**

Key Responses

The Citizens’ Panel and Quality of Life MORI surveys have consistently shown public transport to be a high priority for Devon residents.

Market research carried out during the development of the LTP has identified the most important transport objectives as

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- Reducing congestion
- Improving bus services
- Reducing the price of public transport

From the Panel Hearings held to gather evidence for the LTP the following points relating to public passenger transport have emerged-

Improved access with more service coverage to alleviate rural Isolation /social exclusion affecting particularly ethnic minority, marginal and low income groups and give alternatives to help one and no car families. Maintaining the Devon Rural Transport Partnership is essential now that the Countryside Agency has gone.

More public transport for school children and students is required to promote post 16 participation and provide for the extended school day .Life in Bus Lane was an excellent initiative which should be rolled out across Devon.

Bus and local rail services should be promoted more with all operator Network tickets and a Devon rail card ,Smartcards would shorten boarding times

Bus driver customer care and particularly elderly and disabled awareness is improving but training must be maintained

CT is big business and a long term commitment from DCC to core funding is vital
Wheels to Work and Ring and Ride services should cover all Devon. Where there is no other public transport Ring And Ride should be allowed to carry the general public .

More spaces, higher quality sites and services should be provided in Park and Ride schemes with less town / city centre car parking

Public transport is important for prosperity- choice of travel mode will reduce car dependency for shopping and work trips, allow sustainable growth in the principal urban areas. More investment is need in travel planning and Local Development Frameworks must integrate planning with transport service provision

Investing in local rail services has generated a big increase in use .This must be continued through more stations and higher frequencies so that local rail can play an expanded role particularly in the Exeter sub-region.

Enforcement of bus priorities is poor. Illegal parking at bus stops must be curbed and more bus stops ,with better bus shelters provided to help the elderly

More capital funding should be applied to public transport at local level

Vision and Objectives – Where we aim to be in 2011

Embracing the national ,regional and local guidance and context , taking account of the response to consultation ,and also building on, expanding and improving current provision,

the Vision is that the public passenger transport network in Devon will by 2011 be developed to the stage where -

- Public passenger transport is mainstreamed in the corporate thinking of the County Council alongside education ,social and health care and economic regeneration as it is essential to the successful delivery of all these public services
- This step change for transport provision requires that public passenger transport has a high priority in planning, programmes and funding, as a real alternative to the car. This will be mainly bus, reflecting the Government Guidance that it should be at the heart of LTP 2, but local rail, demand responsive transport and community based transport services and the resources of the County Council and Statutory Agencies will also be playing a significant role
- There are in place the strategies , action plans, operating and funding arrangements required to support and maximise the impact and effectiveness of the passenger services network in achieving the Shared and Devon objectives ,and County Council Goals .
- Operators of all modes are engaged in Partnership , signed up to the Bus Strategy and investing with the County Council to realise it so that the mixed economy of modes , suppliers and the public sector is utilised to the full in delivering the network of passenger services.
- Quality Network Agreements, Statutory Quality Partnerships and Quality Bus Partnerships with Stagecoach and First Devon and Cornwall and other operators as appropriate are in operation.
- Communities are engaged in the process of identifying travel needs and working up local transport solutions and providing services where best placed to do so .
- The general public have increasing choice for their travel needs and are increasingly using public transport out of choice so that more travel opportunities can be provided for those who have no other option
- The network of passenger services and facilities in place will ensure the achievement of the shared priorities , that the needs of specific groups in Devon are met and communities are sustainable .
- The total journey requirements of the passenger are met by seamless travel from origin to final destination .for all travel needs through modal integration, smartcards, journey planning information and passenger facilities.
- Travel opportunities to employment, health facilities, education and shopping for everyone have been maximised and social exclusion by reason of transport factors is reduced significantly

- **The mandatory and local targets** are met -
 - 20 percent growth in passenger trips on local bus services from the 2003/4 baseline of 18.2m to 21.8m trips by 2010/11
 - bus punctuality improved from 62% to 90 % by 2010/11
 - satisfaction with local bus services at 75 % and with bus service information at 75 %
 - LPSA 2 priority 3 target of 8 % increase in local bus and train passenger trips over the 3 years from 2004/5 to 2007/8
 - 100% of buses on all registered local bus services to be low floor, easy access by 2011
- The Bus Information Strategy 2006-11 is being implemented so that the claim that the public do not know what services are available has no justification
- The best possible operating environment is available for bus services with the required allocation of road space in Exeter, Barnstaple and Newton Abbot and at other key locations and the highway is designed for the bus, incorporating bus priorities and supported by Bus Punctuality Plans and enforcement .
- A high and sustained investment by the two major bus operators to achieve a high quality bus product is in place particularly in the Exeter ,Newton Abbot and Barnstaple journey to work areas and along the main corridors from Devon into Plymouth and Torbay
- Partnerships embracing the County Council , operators and statutory agencies, and also close working with other local authorities and engaging with communities are in place to maximize joint investment and coordination of service delivery.
- There is general acceptance and inclusion in Local Development Frameworks that new developments and particularly public facilities should be located where access for all the population can be achieved and is provided, with Developers paying for their sites to be connected to public passenger networks through S 106 agreements until this is no longer possible .
- Targeted investment and ongoing capital and revenue funding has achieved the contribution to the Shared and Devon objectives as set out below with many of the measures and projects implemented meeting more than one of the Seven Objectives

The Contribution by the developing public passenger transport network to the Seven Objectives by 2011 will be -

Tackling Congestion

- Helping to make the urban areas work effectively by offering travel choice for as many travel needs as possible ,to grow bus and local train use and so reduce congestion as part of a comprehensive package of measures for the Exeter, Barnstaple and Newton Abbot journey to work areas with the aim of achieving a 20 % increase in passenger trips on bus , local train and Park and Ride services over the plan period and to move the proportion of all journey to work trips by public transport up from 10% to 20%.

- Provision of high frequency, quality bus services in the Barnstaple, Exeter and Newton Abbot principal urban areas linking residential areas to town/city centres, major employment zones and key service points such as hospitals with a minimum frequency of 10 minutes on the inner radials, 20 minutes for inner residential areas, 30 minutes for edge of PUA residential and employment areas, and an orbital route in Exeter every 30 mins with low floor, low emission buses on all services to be achieved through targeted joint County Council /operator investment / kickstart projects and Developer contributions where available.
- Implementing Showcase bus corridors in the principal urban journey to work areas committing the bus operators and County Council to joint investment in service enhancement, quality buses, marketing, RTPI, bus priorities, and passenger facilities backed by Statutory Quality Partnership schemes if appropriate with at least one project in each year of the LTP
- Provision of high quality bus services along the main corridors from the journey to work area to the city /town centres, employment zones, and key service points in the Exeter, Newton Abbot and Barnstaple, Plymouth and Torbay areas with a minimum frequency of 30 mins and low floor, low emission double deck buses through targeted joint investment /kickstart / showcase projects /developer funds .
- Reinvestment of the resources saved and revenue increases generated from the targeted investment / Kickstart / show case bus corridor projects and prioritising bus service operation on the road network., in the further development of the bus network .
- Local train services into Exeter from the journey to work area enhanced to half hour frequency (hourly on the Tarka Line) and four coach trains on each line with bus and Fare car links at railhead stations .
- Enhanced bus and train services on the Newton Abbot and Totnes into Torbay, and A38, Tavistock and Kingsbridge into Plymouth corridors jointly with Torbay and Plymouth Councils and the bus and train operators
- Provision of reliable, punctual services through a Bus Punctuality Improvement Plan and proactive bus service management based on management information generated by GPS/GPRS vehicle location systems which will also drive RTI.
- Smart card systems implemented throughout the County on bus and train services to improve boarding times, provide flexible payment arrangements, discounted travel and multi operator / network ticketing and improve management information to guide network planning.
- Active promotion of the bus as an alternative to the car in work place, school, attractions and personalised travel plans and Travelwise through better services, value for money travel, flexible payment systems, and tailored information.
- High quality, expanded Park and Ride schemes in Exeter and Barnstaple and a scheme for Newton Abbot aiming for 20 % growth in passenger trips over the plan period from 1.25 m to 1.5 m per year.
- Supporting the major improvement in bus and train service provision with a programme of upgrading passenger facilities on street, at interchanges and bus and rail stations, to include information provision through real time, and internet, SMS and traveline as well on street and at bus and train stations .

- An hourly frequency for longer distance services across the County such as North Devon to Exeter and Plymouth and Torbay – Dartmouth ,and into neighbouring Counties such as Exeter to Lyme Regis and Weymouth, Bude – Exeter and Barnstaple – Taunton , with accessible buses /coaches .
- Providing bus services aimed at school children and students with attractive fares , sufficient capacity and appropriate routing into schools and colleges so that the school run is reduced and Government Education initiatives are supported .
- Implementing the Bus Information Strategy.
- Contributing to the Transport Innovation Fund bid for Exeter based on a bus rapid transit system linking the new community east of Exeter to the City Centre and Marsh Barton and a package of traffic demand measures.
- Ensuring that the Local Development Frameworks of each District Council fully embrace the concept that transport should be integrated into planning and development and that every development is connected to the public passenger network .

Delivering Accessibility

- A fully developed Access Strategy which is being implemented to meet the Governments Accessibility Planning requirements ,so that lack of transport is not a barrier to access in Devon
- Public passenger transport providing the improved access to key services and facilities for those without a car available in the short and medium term solutions in the Access Action Plans, before changes to land use and location policies provide solutions in the longer term.
- Utilising the whole range of public passenger transport measures – buses, local train, drt, community transport, County Council and statutory agency resources , travel planning ,information provision ,affordable fares , passenger facilities and coordination of service delivery to reduce the access barriers faced by communities and individuals.
- For many communities the services provision developed to tackle congestion will provide excellent access to employment, health, education and shopping, but daily services on secondary routes linking villages to the PUA s and local networks in both urban and rural areas particularly in the smaller market and coastal towns will also be supported and enhanced to give adequate access to key services and facilities for all across the whole of Devon
- Achieving 100% provision of low floor, family friendly, fully accessible buses on all regular bus services by 2011 supported by the appropriate passenger facilities at bus stops and bus stations /interchange points .through targeted joint investment with bus operators and direct investment by the County Council .
- Addressing the need for well lit , level access to bus stops /stations and rail stations for passengers and the location of access points to bus a rail services relative to residential employment ,hospitals ,shopping facilities ,schools etc
- Utilising the Community Rail Development Strategy to secure the long term future of the Devon branch lines and services at smaller stations on the main lines and so retain public transport links not provided by bus services and a community asset .

- Exploring the spine and feeder route concept using drt to feed into bus and /or rail services to meet the longer distance access needs from the deeper rural areas
- Development of criteria for supporting the whole range of passenger transport services from public funds to assist the implementation of the Access Strategy ,the Devon Strategic Partnership objectives and the County Council Equality Strategy
- Ensuring in conjunction with the Devonwide Partnership and East Devon DC and bus operators adequate capacity to accommodate the elderly and disabled enjoying free concessionary travel .
- Providing affordable passenger transport services through discounts for young people and people on low incomes and a range of network tickets for all .
- The Devon Rural Transport Partnership is secure for the long term funded through the County Council

Providing Safer Roads

- Provision of comprehensive quality bus and train networks at affordable prices to promote modal shift from cars, particularly for the school run, at peak times and with young and people to reduce the high 17-25 and post 70 road accident rate.
- Working with bus operators on driver training to minimise accidents involving buses and passengers to maintain the excellent safety record and also promote considerate bus driving
- Ensuring safe layouts for bus stops and bus stations to protect buses, bus passengers / pedestrians and minimise hazards to other road users .and at railway stations

Improving Air Quality

- To reduce pollution by modal shift from car to bus and local train particularly for short trips within Exeter ,Barnstaple and Newton Abbot .
- Joint investment by the County Council and bus operators in new buses with low emissions to achieve only Euro 3 engined buses or better in regular operation on bus services in Exeter ,Newton Abbot and Barnstaple with a clear zone in the centre of Exeter by 2011 .
- To improve Air Quality hot spots such as bus stations, concentrations of stops on street .and in air quality management zones by reducing bus emissions .

Stimulating the Economy, Leisure and Tourism

- Provision of bus and local train services to facilitate regeneration and maintain economic growth by increasing travel choice for residential to employment areas journeys so helping urban areas to work effectively and increasing access to job opportunities across the county which will increase the proportion of journey to work trips by public transport .

- Provision of a comprehensive network of bus and local train services giving access to the coast and countryside to promote leisure and tourism without traffic, working with DNP and ENP, SW Coast Path, and the Jurassic Coast WHS and TVMH WHS in particular and with tourist attractions and accommodation to promote public transport for leisure and tourism to both residents and visitors.

Promoting Health, Well Being and Sustainable Communities

- Develop and implement appropriate bus transit /rail systems to link the new communities at Cranbrook, east of Exeter to the city centre and employment zones , and similarly from Sherford to Plymouth in partnership with Plymouth CC
- Maintain the Devonwide Concessionary Fares scheme in partnership with the District Councils and extend to additional groups when funding is secured.
- Achieve 100% low floor family friendly bus provision on all bus services in the County by 2011 with the appropriate highway / bus stop facilities including protection from car parking in place
- Establish a comprehensive network of bus and train services to facilitate access to the coast and countryside from the urban areas of Devon for recreational leisure fostering good health in the whole population.
- Work with the Health Service to ensure that access to health facilities is available to all so promoting preventative treatment and attendance at appointments, utilising bus services ,DRT and Community Transport ,Health vehicles and Devon CC resources in a coordinated way .
- Continue to support and expand over the plan period the network of community based transport services such as Ring and Ride, Shopmobility, Community Car, Wheels to Work and Community Buses and extend to the whole population where no other public transport exists.
- Assisting the Devon Strategy Partnership and Local Area Agreements to regenerate through better access the 25 % most deprived wards
- To ensure that the provision of public passenger transport services to developments forms a key requirement in Local Development Frameworks and is achieved through S 106 agreements until no longer allowed .

Improving Local Environments

- Invest in appropriate and quality designs and materials for bus stop equipment , bus shelters and information displays. and access routes to bus stops ,and bus and rail stations .
- Build bus passenger facilities including bus and rail stations into enhancement schemes to maintain good access for pedestrians and buses to town and city centres.
- Design bus routes and size of vehicles to be sensitive to local environments relative to the needs of passengers.
- Arrange bus passenger facilities on the highway to avoid conflicts with local features if at all possible

Where are we in now – the position in 2005/6

A comprehensive network of public passenger transport services is provided by a wide range of operators and modes, including the public sector. The efforts of the County Council over the years towards this have been recognised through Regional and National Awards for bus service projects and also by -

- The Best Value Review of Transport Services in 2001/2 highlighted that the integrated management approach to the delivery of transport services through the Transport Coordination Centre was successful. The Inspection score of “good service with excellent prospects for improvement” put Devon in the top quartile of all authorities.
- The County Council has been awarded Centre of Excellence status for Local Transport Delivery for 2006-2011 with particular emphasis on the delivery of road safety and public transport and appointed a transport pathfinder authority by the Department of Transport.

However the supporting measures infrastructure and passenger facilities are less well developed and the use of the networks available are not being maximised with much to do on the promotion of services to non users in particular. Significant improvement will be needed in some parts of the County and in a number of measures to meet the Bus Strategy Vision and the challenging targets and objectives in the D LTP .

A Review of the Current Provision

The Devon Local Bus Service Network

There are currently 27 bus companies of varying sizes in Devon, providing just over 300 registered The network is dominated by 2 big group operators ,First and Stagecoach who operate about 90% of all services and 25 small operators provide the other 10 % of services ,most of which are County-supported. In the order of 400 buses are employed in providing this network .

Commercial bus services are operated in Barnstaple, Exeter and Newton Abbot urban areas and on a good number of interurban corridors but large tracts of Devon rely on County Council supported local bus and community transport services and Fare car .Only 40 % of services are operated commercially but provided a much bigger proportion of total mileage and covey about 70 % of total passenger trips.

About two thirds of Devon's services run daily, Monday to Saturday, most of these including peak times. There are about 100 services which run less than daily, e.g. once or twice a week. Only about a quarter (100) of Devon's parishes do not have a daily bus service and over 99% of Devon's population lives in a town or parish with a bus service of some kind. There are 32 parishes without a service, but in total these represent less than 1% of the County population. Between 5% and 10% of the population have no access to a daily bus service .

Devon supports over 220 socially necessary bus services utilising both Devon funds and Rural Bus Subsidy grant. Additional journeys are also funded on individual commercial services to extend the coverage by route or time. Developer contributions and other funding programmes are used to introduce new and enhanced services. The total number of passenger trips on the bus services fully and partially by the County Council is expected to be 5.5 m in 2005/6.

For 2005/06 the demands on the County Council funding increased considerably to retain the current network in the face of reductions in commercial bus services and increases in tender prices . The pressure will be even greater in 2006/07, when over 40% of contracts are being retendered The cost pressures on bus operators of all sizes are a major concern. However ,it has been possible so far to retain a stable network and avoid service reductions through a significant increase in County Council revenue funding since 2002 coupled with Rural Bus Subsidy Grant .

The current network of local bus services is probably the most extensive and comprehensive since before deregulation in the 1985 Transport Act as a result of increasing revenue funding and coordination by the County Council ,Rural Bus Subsidy Grant, the Rural Bus Challenge /Kickstart programmes and expansion of services by Stagecoach since 2003 .

The current network of bus services is shown on these 7maps -

1 The Devon public transport map shows the current network and is colour-coded according to service frequency. It is often commented that geographical coverage is far better than is popularly believed.

3 shows which routes are wholly or partially commercially operated. Not surprisingly, urban and inter-urban services in more highly populated areas are more likely to be commercially viable than those in rural areas. In the deep rural areas 100% of services rely on County financial support.

3 Daily Services across the County

4, 5, 6 ,7 - showing the services within Exeter ,Newton Abbot ,Barnstaple and Exmouth .

Bus passenger trips have been growing in Devon since 2003 in contrast to the national picture. The data collected from operators of local bus services including park and ride for BVPI 102 illustrates that the decline has been reversed and numbers are going up (nearest 000)

2002/3 19,122 ,000

2003/4 18,169 ,000

2004/5 19,142,000

2005/6 19,730,000

Examples of high growth on individual services are -

- CoastlynX53, 70% in the first year

- Culm Valley Connect, 35% after 6 months

- Exeter City Service D,78% in 2005/6 cf 2004/5

This growth of 8.6% over the last 2 years is the result of investment in services through RBSG, and Rural Bus Challenge projects, expansion and improved reliability by Stagecoach, the Devonwide half fare scheme and County Council coordination and marketing, all attracting additional passenger trips.Meeting the passenger growth target of a 20% increase in bus passenger trips by 2010/11 compared with 2003/4 will require that recent investment levels by operators and the County Council in bus services ,passenger facilities, bus priorities and the supporting measures are not only maintained but increased significantly.

The Local Public Services Agreement 1 target for growth in passengers on bus and rail services in the Exeter area to 2005 has been well met.- 6 % required ,10% achieved, demonstrating the benefits of investing in improved services . A new target under **LPSA 2** has been agreed – increasing travel choice and reducing congestion through growing use of bus and local rail services over the whole of Devon - to increase bus and rail trips by 8% 2004/5 - 2007/8. This will require adopting the same approach in Barnstaple / Bideford and Newton Abbot as in the Exeter area for LPSA 1 to spur growth in patronage to complement further gains in Exeter.

Commercial bus Services

Under the Transport Acts 1985 and 2000, commercial services are provided by the bus operator according to their judgement as to whether the service is viable. It is not possible for the County Council to have any formal control over deciding where or how these operate. However, good relations with the operators enable a coordinated approach to the network to be maintained in most cases so that wasteful duplication and competition is avoided and services are adjusted to meet most requirements cost effectively.

Devon does not receive data as to the financial viability of commercial services but from discussions with operators and knowledge of approximate levels of patronage and vehicle costs there is reason to believe that a significant number of services are only marginally viable and are highly sensitive to increases in costs for items such as wages, fuel, insurance and accessible vehicles and the continuing difficulty in retaining good quality staff is likely to mean further reductions in the commercial bus network over the plan period. Locally bus operating cost are rising by 8% per year with fuel costs alone up by 20% in 2005.

Reliability punctuality, value for money and strong marketing by the commercial bus operators are essential to attracting the public to bus use This is very well demonstrated in Devon currently where Stagecoach in the east and south of the County including Exeter is experiencing continuous growth in provision ,quality and passenger trips from a low point in mid 2003 through investment and innovation, whilst bus use in the North ,and West of Devon and South Hams is at best static due to patchy service quality and low investment from First Devon and Cornwall .

Partnership with operators in Rural Bus Challenge and Kickstart projects on commercial services is a very positive development leading to a major uplift in the quality of the bus product and consequent strong growth in passenger use .Recent and current projects include Life in the Bus Lane with First in N Devon 2000-2004, Jurassic CoastLynX 53 with First Hampshire and Dorset 2003-2006 and Culm Valley Connect with Stagecoach 2004-2007 .Two further projects have received awards to start in 2006 for 3 years – Exeter City Services with Stagecoach and Tavy Goldline (Tavistock-Plymouth)with First Devon and Cornwall. More information on these projects is at appendix 1.To achieve the Vision this approach of joint Devon CC and operator investment in bus service enhancement will be required at a high level throughout the Plan period.

Supported bus Services

The cost of supporting services continues to rise, reflecting cost increases in the industry. All operators, large and small, are passing on these increases to the extent that in the twelve months up to October 2005 scheduled re-tenders recorded an average price increase of 15%. This compares with 40% for the previous twelve months. This drop in the rate of increase may partly reflect an unexpected (and probably temporary) recent flurry of commercial competition in part of the County and successfully encouraging smaller operators to tender for more services.

The role of smaller operators is crucial in maintaining a competitive, best-value approach to the securing of supported services, especially in rural areas but increasingly also in the urban or small-town context. Supported service work is important to their businesses and correspondingly, the demise of these operators would have a serious impact on the Council's ability to secure bus services at an acceptable cost. Since 1984 about 32 Devon bus operators have ceased local bus operation, the most common reasons being the death or retirement of the proprietor, selling up to another concern or deciding to focus on another area of business such as excursions, tours and school transport.

The rural supported network was considerably increased with the introduction of the **Rural Bus Subsidy Grant** in 1998 . At the time this doubled the public sector funding applied to bus services in Devon . For 2005/6 the RBSG allocation to Devon is £2.2 m and the County Council Budget £ 3.2 m. RBSG now forms an essential element of bus service revenue funding and must be continued beyond 2008 if the Vision is to be realised.

The dominance of 2 big operators has both benefits and dis-benefits Smaller operators can be overshadowed and deterred from tendering but big operators with their resources can take on the big projects and particularly offer network benefits. If all operators are providing reliable services then all is well, but the performance of First Devon & Cornwall over the last 3 years has been very patchy with the last 6 months particularly poor. The unreliability including journeys missed the wrong size buses operated ,shabby un-cleaned buses on local bus service contracts is prompting a review of existing contracts and First is losing work to other operators at retendering because of these failures. All this strains partnership and undermines projects which seek to promote network benefits .First will have to restore reliability very quickly under the new management if the current static position on passenger numbers is not to become one of decline .

Park and Ride services are funded by the County Council in Exeter and Barnstaple to help relieve congestion. Exeter City provides one of the sites in the Exeter scheme and one of the bus services in Exeter is primarily commercial. The others are secured through tender costing about £ 400,000 per year, funded from the On-Street Parking Account ..Seasonal park and rides operate in Dartmouth and Salcombe funded by the local council. Together Park and Ride in Devon has carried about 1.4 m passengers in 2005/6 .The Exeter and Barnstaple bus services and sites have been upgraded over the last 3 years including a marketing campaign ,better road signing ,improvements at the carparks and new buses with scheme branding which has generated a 25% growth in use .This level of investment must continue if a further 25% growth is to be achieved by 2011.

Local bus services and Home to School transport is well integrated. About 4000 students are conveyed on bus services each day out of 20,000 children and students conveyed to school/college putting some £ 2 m into the local bus network .The very successful and nationally recognised Life in the Bus Lane project which is providing more bus services and more affordable bus travel to post 16 students in North Devon was to be rolled out across the County through the Devon Post 16 Transport Partnership funded by DfES but is much delayed by technology problems ..

There is growing pressure from government and parents to assist under non entitled children for travel to school, and also to benefit from the extended day initiative but less willingness by operators to provide commercial services. To provide a comprehensive network within current resources means use of both School Transport and Public Transport funding to best effect is essential.

Leisure and Tourism Services are an important part of the Devon bus network and are encouraged and supported with the twin aims of giving the residents of Exeter Torbay and Plymouth the opportunity to enjoy the coast, countryside and moor without the need for a car and promote tourism without traffic to residents and visitors. Many services are provided on a commercial basis , some just for the summer but on all the year services the summer revenue effectively covers the winter operation .There are also specific projects funded by the County Council ,some in partnership with other bodies – Dartmoor Sunday Rover and summer weekdays network with Dartmoor National Park , bus services over Exmoor in the summer with Somerset CC and ENP , North Devon day out ticket and summer Sunday services , Jurassic Coast LynX53 with the World Heritage Site.

The County Council funds the promotion of many tourist oriented services in conjunction with the bus operators and with Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership for the Devon Branchlines. Devon further supports car free access to Dartmoor by supporting the summer Sunday train service from Exeter to Okehampton. Other links with obvious tourism potential yet to be developed are Plymouth to Dartmouth across the S Hams and from Torbay into the S Hams. Attracting leisure and tourism passengers to bus and local train services would be assisted by an all operator bus and rail day and weekly network ticket but so far this has been frustrated by the OFT competition rules and First Group. With relaxation of the OFT regime promised and First running local trains and buses from April 2006 it is hoped to progress this soon.

Integration of Bus , Rail and other modes is not very well developed in Devon often because bus and /or train timetables are not on a clockface basis and other priorities for the bus timings take precedence over connections with rail. Integrating cycling with rail is frustrated by lack of capacity on local trains and storage facilities at stations. Bus and ferry connect at Dartmouth.

In a few locations good interchange between bus and rail is in place with frequent bus services stopping at the front of rail stations, such as Exeter St Davids ,Honiton ,Tiverton Parkway and Newton Abbot. Bus and Train Operators have made progress with through fares from long distance train to bus in the last 2 years through the Plus Bus initiative which allows a bus add-on to be purchased with the rail ticket.

Better bus / rail integration is a frequent request made to the County Council both generally and for specific locations and links. For instance, with the rapid expansion of regional and budget flights for Exeter Airport there is pressure for a regular bus service from St Davids Station to the Airport. More bus services calling at Barnstaple Station is a constant request .

A Quality Bus Partnership Agreement was signed with First Devon & Cornwall in June 2005 but owing to the company restructuring, implementation has been delayed. Stagecoach favour area /corridor /service by service agreements. The aim of all partnership agreements is to provide a framework for joint DCC/Operator investment in buses, service developments, priority measures, passenger facilities, and marketing and in a Quality Network Agreement embrace school transport and other travel requirements as well .

Low floor buses which improve access to bus services for the elderly and disabled and families with buggies now account for about 45 % of the local bus service fleet in Devon. All new buses now have to be wheelchair accessible so this proportion will rise slowly over the Plan Period Meeting the target of 100% by 2011 will require delivery of a higher number of low floor buses per year so to make progress particularly on supported services and with the small operators may require more direct action by the County Council

Planning Gain Payments , S 106 ,have become a significant source of funds to enhance the urban bus networks in Exeter ,Barnstaple and Newton Abbot in the last 3 years required to access developments .. It is essential that developments are connected to the bus network to provide access to employment ,education, shopping and health for all ,so that for instance people without a car can enjoy better housing. Access to employment and retail developments on the edge of the urban areas, East of Exeter /Sowton for instance, for those with out cars has required new bus services which some of the developers are funding . Developers should pay for the connection to public transport in the same way as laying on water, electricity etc and it is of major concern that this may end in 2008. Small and medium sized residential developments have generally not made contributions and a system to set a levy per unit and pool funds towards enhanced bus services is required for the future .

Whilst the current service provision (March 2006) is comprehensive for a rural county when Assessed against the Vision a number of deficiencies are evident -

- Lower frequency on town services in Barnstaple and Newton Abbot - 30 min frequency rather than 20 min sought .
- Lack of evening services to facilitate access to education and shift working, away from Exeter, Barnstaple and Newton Abbot and some interurban routes
- Limited or no Sunday services all over the County to provide for changing retail patterns
- Less than hourly services on longer cross county and cross border routes – Exeter to S Hams ,North Devon to Taunton and Plymouth ,Plymouth-S Hams - where train services do not exist either .
- Deep rural areas without access to a daily passenger service
- Park and Ride scheme for Newton Abbot and more sites in Barnstaple and Exeter to cover all the main routes .

Information and Travel Planning

The current Bus Information Strategy was published in 2002,since when electronic provision of information has developed considerably . Market research has identified that printed material is comprehensive and valued, but should be improved on the roadside and in Bus Stations, and that increasingly electronic formats via traveline should be developed for journey planning, mobile phone texting and real time information in order to attract new bus users .

Public awareness of public passenger services is not good enough and more needs to be done to promote the comprehensive and improving network of services to non-users. The extent and quality of information and associated equipment such as bus stop flags is patchy across the County, which is reflected in the result of a survey in February 2006 giving a 58% satisfaction rating. Meeting the Vision will require a more coordinated effort and greater investment in the next five years with the County Council taking a stronger role. A new Bus Information Strategy is required to reflect the electronic age , address the gaps identified in current provision and the needs of people with disabilities and markedly increase awareness, if the satisfaction rate is to be raised to 75% by 20011.

The traveline telephone enquiry service for bus service information and journey planning is now in place with a fully populated data base after 5 years of development by the South West Public Transport Information regional partnership of 18 L As and 15 bus operators. It is currently handling 600,000 calls a year. The next stage of development is to expand the electronic provision of information through a website and mobile phone SMS texting.

Real time bus information provision is at an early stage in Devon. So far it is only available at a small number of bus stops in Exeter via a tag and loop system which does have technical difficulties. GPS /GPRS technology would be required to have a countywide application.

An important way to attract non-users to bus services is through Travel Planning – workplace, school, attractions and personalised, targeting both organisations to include bus and rail in their travel plans and individuals to try it. Bus and rail information, journey planning and quality services must feature strongly alongside walking and cycling in travel planning and in the Travelwise initiative generally, but this has not progressed much in Devon to date. A quality reliable bus and rail product offering value for money is essential to convert car users into regular bus and local rail users but also

Marketing, Fares and Tickets

Fares are consistently ranked 3rd or 4th by passengers as the most important features of bus and rail services. Bus fare levels in Devon are similar to most of southern England but high compared with the Midlands and North, and are set by the operators.

Until recently, fares in North Devon have been lower than the rest of Devon, but are catching up fast. Over the last year the big rise in fuel costs have been passed on to the passenger to varying degrees by operators, with fare increases as high as 20% being applied. And this at a time when motoring costs continue to fall in real terms.

High increases way above inflation and more than one increase per year drives passengers away, made worse if operator performance is also poor. Again it is a tale of two Devons, with Stagecoach passenger numbers not being affected too much by the necessary but moderate fare increases whilst First Devon and Cornwall have raised fares twice in 2005/06 and by big amounts with an inevitable decline in patronage.

A pleasing recent development has been the removal of time restrictions on return fares and the heavy promotion of discounted network and season tickets by Stagecoach. Whilst First have similar network season tickets there is little promotion. An all operator bus and rail network ticket offering travel by day and week for residents and visitors is frequently requested. If children and young people are to be engaged as the next generation of bus users, then a better deal for them is required – at least half fare at all times up to 19 for non- wage earners up to age 19.

Ticketing systems are a significant factor in the low average bus speed in Devon because current systems lead to slow boarding times. Whilst many passengers purchase network or season tickets they do this on the bus alongside the single and return tickets from the driver. More off-bus sale of bus travel must be developed, ideally based on Smartcard technology which provides for updating and topping up of travel value in offices or agents or electronically, so reducing the volume of on-bus cash transactions.

To make the public aware of the services available requires extensive, innovative and continuous marketing. Marketing of bus services, must encompass developing the whole product – route branding, frequency, accessible buses, smartcards real time information, passenger facilities, if the passenger growth targets in LTP and LPSA2 are to be achieved. That marketing can produce big volumes of new passengers is demonstrated by three County Council led projects in the last two years – upgrading and promotion the Exeter Park and Ride Scheme producing a 25% increase, Culm Valley Connect Kickstart project generating 35% growth in the first six months and Jurassic Coast Lynx 53, Rural Bus Challenge a massive 70% increase in the first year and continued growth since.

To demonstrate the value of marketing, i.e. building a quality bus product and then promoting it vigorously and also to identify travel needs and market potential, market research must be carried out. Only in the last two years has much market research been carried out in Devon in connection with bus services. A very strong result is that bus high visibility for a service sells it – branding of the service including vehicle liveries, promotional material, on street identification does generate use.

Passenger Facilities

Passenger facilities are an important part of the bus journey experience comprising bus stops, shelters, interchange points and bus stations. Provision has suffered from lack of investment and the quality and extent is patchy across the County. It does not have a high priority with operators and whilst a programme in LTP1 has delivered some improvements there is a huge gap in provision against the Vision. On the highway in urban areas and towns the gap in provision is raised kerbs for low floor buses and shelters, whilst in rural areas both paved waiting

areas and shelters are often missing. Bus stations and interchange points are, with the odd exception old and / or tired with poor facilities. Little is on record so an inventory is an urgent requirement

Bus stops require a paved waiting area and raised kerb section to allow low floor buses to draw up parallel for easy access by wheelchair users and families with buggies and be marked with a pole and flag carrying basic information as defined in a bus information strategy. In LTP 1 improvements have been made to selected stops on a corridor by corridor basis but the majority of bus stops require upgrading to this standard. Ideally the paved area should be lit and have a level lit pedestrian route to it. Bus information displays should be provided at most stops although the availability of mobile phone SMS texting may increasingly meet this requirement. There are about 5,500 stops in Devon but only 4,500 are marked and only a small proportion have a timetable display whilst a lot of the equipment is in poor condition.

Shelters at bus stops are currently provided by a mix of organisations – the County Council, district and parish councils and through advertising contracts but coverage is only even adequate in Exeter. Whilst most of the District Councils in Devon have advertising contracts in place to provide shelters, both the contracts and the shelters, except in Exeter City are in need of upgrading. Shelters in rural areas are very much at the dictate of the Parish Councils as to whether a shelter is built even with a DCC grant and if it is prepared to maintain them. If more and better shelters are considered necessary as part of upgrading passenger facilities then the County Council will have to play a big role.

Bus stations and interchange points are in operation in Exeter, Newton Abbot, Tavistock, Tiverton, Kingsbridge, Barnstaple, Yelverton Exmouth, Totnes Bideford, Dartmouth and Sidmouth. All would benefit from a refresh. Exeter particularly requires improvements including a passenger information system to complement the Health and Safety work just completed by Stagecoach but has been under threat of redevelopment. If this is not to happen for five years at least, then these works should be considered now by Stagecoach and the City Council as landowner.

Operating Environment / traffic management / bus priorities

A major factor in the effectiveness of bus service operation is the conditions on the highway – traffic volumes and congestion points, ease of access to bus stops /obstruction by other vehicles, arrangement of junctions and sequence of traffic lights, width of the road and so on. Traffic congestion in Exeter, Newton Abbot and Barnstaple has increased continuously over many years and average bus speed has declined steadily as a consequence, although driver only operation and slow ticketing systems have made a contribution by increasing dwell times at stops. The base line average bus speed at varying times of the day in Exeter and Newton Abbot is being established currently by using ANPR equipment.

In Exeter, Newton Abbot and Barnstaple there is continuous congestion on the main radial routes and associated junctions in both directions between 8 am and 6pm with traffic attempting to reach not only the city /town centre but also the edge of town employment and retail zones with only a slight lessening on Saturdays and Sundays. Virtually all bus services across the County are delayed every day to some degree and certainly town services have little chance to get back on schedule. In response operators have put more buses and drivers into the schedules to maintain frequency and punctuality which with an all day /all week bus costing between £ 80,000 and £ 100,000 a year to operate is contributing to cost pressures.

The County Council is required to include a bus punctuality target in LTP 2 and in October 2005 carried out survey work to establish the base line. DfT determined that 5,000 observations be obtained from 25 locations which were spread across the bus service network. The initial result is that only 62% of buses were within the punctuality “window” of 1 minute early and 5 minutes late. However, the results may need refining as many journeys were recorded as early on

reaching a bus station or terminus which is not a disadvantage to passengers as long as the bus was on time at the previous timing point .On the other hand the results show that late departures from bus stations contribute to some of the poor punctuality which suggests the need for better supervision of staff. The target of 90 % punctuality for bus services by 2011 looks formidable and will need considerable investigation of the reasons and locations of the delays in order to identify solutions. . .

Bus priority measures have been introduced gradually during LTP 1 and currently comprise lengths of bus lane on the radial routes in Exeter - on Topsham ,Heavitree and Pinhoe Roads, Exe Bridges and Cowick Street, and around the bus Station in Barnstaple .Also in place are bus priority streets in Exeter City Centre ,and bus gates in Exeter and Barnstaple to allow buses to avoid congested junctions . Exeter High Street is one of the best example in the Country of giving over road space completely to buses and pedestrians

Much opposition has been encountered from local residents, creating a reluctance in local politicians to approve schemes, so progress has been slow O n the most congested routes where the time benefits could be high it is rarely possible to create long bus lanes because there is not road space available .

Protection of bus stops from parking, legal and illegal and abuse of bus priorities is a major problem stopping buses reaching the kerb and making best use of the dedicated road space . Enforcement of traffic offences is not a priority with the Police and traffic wardens have limited powers. Bus stops are covered by different regulations at different locations – some now have bus stop clearway orders ,some double yellow lines ,some a single line and many no protection at all Often bus stop markings are faded so giving motorists the excuse that they did not see them This is an issue which must be addressed if the County Council is to carry out the provisions of the DDA 2005 to make reasonable efforts to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against in using bus services. There is little point in putting in raised kerbs if the bus cannot reach the pavement ,because adjacent parking is too close or cars are left in bus bays .

Concessionary Bus Travel

In response to the requirements in the TA2000 to provide half fare concessionary travel on buses for the over 60s and disabled, the eight District Councils in Devon and Torbay Unitary Council established the Devonwide Partnership with the County Council Transport Co-ordination Service as managers. Devonwide offers all the eligible residents of Devon and Torbay half fare bus travel after 0845 on Mondays to Fridays and all day Saturdays and Sundays throughout Devon, Torbay and Plymouth and to adjacent towns in adjoining authorities.

The scheme has developed and grown successfully over the last five years and now has 100,000 pass holders (about 40% of eligible residents) making 5m passenger trips per year. It costs £1.7m, made up of £1.5m reimbursement to operators and £200,000 management fee.

The current Devonwide scheme is being superseded by the free travel scheme starting on April 1st 2006. All the partners in Devonwide are continuing with the new scheme except for East Devon District Council which has not been able to agree to the Partnership cost allocation formula and is now introducing a separate more limited scheme for its residents. The new Devonwide Scheme has all the same features of the half fare scheme except that in order to avoid capacity problems in the morning peak it begins at 0900 on Mondays to Fridays.

Negotiations with the two major bus operators in Devon on the new scheme has been difficult and currently both have lodged appeals with Secretary of State for Transport against the participation notice served by the Devonwide Partnership – Stagecoach against the use of return fares as well as singles to establish the average fare for the reimbursement calculations and First that fare increases during the financial year are not allowed for in the reimbursement calculation.

Free travel for the elderly may have significant impact on bus services if passengers take up and trip rates rise dramatically as some predict. Whilst there are empty seats on off peak bus services presently operators are predicting that bigger, even double deck, buses and maybe frequency increases will be required on a number of services.

The fact that the Statutory scheme does not extend to train travel, Community Transport and Fare car is giving rise to some criticism and a prediction that local train services will lose passengers as pensioners switch to the free bus.

Government funding and its allocation to the Districts as Travel Concession Authorities is a major concern because of the mismatch of funding received to scheme costs allocated. Now that nationally available free bus travel is to be introduced from April 2008, it is hoped that Government will take the opportunity to have better funding arrangements which at the same time do not favour bus operators unnecessarily.

Fare Cars

The Devon bus network is currently supplemented by the innovative Devon Fare Cars experiment, which provides taxi-style services at bus fares in eight selected deep rural areas, covering nearly 80 parishes. Fare Cars are currently Government-funded through the Rural Bus Challenge programme (with the exception of the original Honiton area Fare Car which is County Council-funded on the same timescale as the Government-funded project) to early Summer 2006. Fare Cars offer journeys several times daily, unlike conventional buses in deep rural areas which often only run on market days

The level of support per passenger on Fare Cars, is high although the funding required for each Fare Car service of about £20,000 p a is modest. Figures of between £3.50 and £20.00 per passenger trip are being recorded on the different schemes for this year with usage ranging from a few hundred trips to 2,000 plus on some schemes. For deep rural areas, Fare Cars are more cost-effective than daily buses but they do not offer a cost-effective way of replacing traditional weekly market-day services if the passenger totals on these equal more than a car-load

As part of the Rural Bus Challenge project the specific benefits of Fare Car to individuals is being examined producing useful insights into social exclusion, rural isolation and cross sector benefits whereby improving access to employment, health etc reduces demand on other parts of the public sector such as unemployment benefit and health care. Ongoing funding of the current schemes with revisions and possible extensions is now being considered because with community transport this type of service could play a major role in the Access Strategy.

Map of Fare Car Schemes at March 32006 – Further information on the Fare Car project is in appendix 3

Local Rail Services

Local rail services are provided on the Barnstaple, Exmouth, Gunnislake and Torbay branch lines and at a number of intermediate stations on the 2 main lines. The County Council leads the Exe Rail Partnership of local authorities to promote the lines serving Exeter and also supports the Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership which promotes the branch lines

These local services are now in 2 Rail Franchises - a new Greater Western franchise covering most services in Devon and intercity to Paddington, just awarded to First Great Western Trains and South West Trains for the line to Waterloo which is being re-let to start in February 2007

The Devon Rail Map – passenger lines and stations

Improvements to the services offered by the train operating companies led to a steady growth in patronage on rail services to and within the county during the period of the Devon Local Transport Plan 2001-2006. Service reliability and punctuality has recovered following the period of severe disruption in the aftermath of the Hatfield rail accident in 2000, which resulted in many speed restrictions that affected both local and longer distance rail services.

Devon County Council places great importance on local rail journeys for commuting, education or recreation and works in close partnership with the rail industry to -

- Financially support additional train services
- Promote rail travel - both through direct provision of publicity and timetables, and through sponsorship of the Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership
- Fund small station improvements

This collaboration, particularly with Wessex Trains produced steadily improving timetables from 2000 and resulted in the best ever timetables running on local services from December 2005 which in turn has generated increases in passenger numbers on the local services in the County of between 5 and 26 % per line over the last 5 years. In the order of 2.6m local rail passenger trips were made in Devon in 2005/6 .

Local train services are becoming increasingly important, and Devon County Council has welcomed the Devon Metro initiative to link the Exmouth, Paignton and Barnstaple services into Exeter, with a clock-face timetable. This has improved cross-Exeter services, and significantly enhanced accessibility of the major employment area at Digby and Sowton east of Exeter city centre adjacent to the M5 motorway, which assists in tackling congestion as well as increasing job opportunities.

The County Council wishes to build on this growth and give services a strengthened role over the period 2006 to 2011 with the recent improvements to train service patterns continued into the future. The growth and improvement of these local rail services will need to continue to accommodate the new housing, employment and other development proposed over the period to 2026 in the Regional Spatial Strategy which has designated Exeter as a principal urban area.

Devon is therefore extremely concerned that the Greater Western Franchise draft timetables issued in February are much reduced and changed from the present ones. A lack of local knowledge and use of out of date passenger data is very evident. The strongest protests are being made to DFT and First Group to get the level of service and capacity at peak times reinstated. If not these savage cuts will reduce existing passenger use and revenue and considerably curtail the future contribution of rail to sub regional strategies and tackling congestion.. The use of blockades by Network Rail - complete closure of branchlines with bus replacement - for 2 weeks twice a year for maintenance and renewal is also having a detrimental impact on use and raise questions as to the actual work completed during the close down. Unless these negatives are resolved the Vision cannot be achieved.

The expansion and development of the Exeter PUA includes the provision of a new railway station on the Waterloo to Exeter line, at the new community in East Devon (Cranbrook). The new station is a crucial part of the access strategy for the new community and associated developments, which include Skypark - a high quality business park of 30ha, and the new terminal for Exeter airport. The Cranbrook new community, including the new railway station, achieved "minded to grant" planning status in May 2005, and opening of the station is planned for 2008/09, within the first phase of development. The station is included in the South Western Mainline RUS just issued and Devon has requested that train calls are included in the South Western Franchise

The County Council is also seeking improvement of rail services on the Waterloo to Exeter route, including an hourly through train service to London and half-hourly service between Axminster and Exeter as part of the future role for rail in the Exeter area in the Vision Devon and Somerset Councils, together with the South West Regional Development Agency, promoted a study to ascertain the track and signalling requirements for such services. The study concluded that there was a need for two additional passing loops, each around 3 miles long, at a total estimated cost of £23m. This has been recognised by the RUS and Network Rail have offered £ 5m towards the cost.

The County Council is currently considering with other authorities along the line and SWRDA how to promote the next phase of investigation, which would be the preparation of a business case for the scheme and identification of funding with the objective of it being included in the Regional Transport Strategy.

Devon County Council is an enthusiastic participant in developing the Community Railways initiative, through its involvement in the joint pilot for the Tamar Valley and Looe Valley branch lines and through the Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership. The Community Rail Development Strategy is promoting increasing patronage and revenue and reducing subsidy per passenger, and the development of lower cost models for railway operation on all branchlines, which should also help the potential for re-opening between Bere Alston and Tavistock which will be explored in 2006

Community Based Transport Services

The 1985 transport act defined the duties and powers of County Councils with regard to the needs of elderly and disabled members of the community, and in response DCC formulated a Policy for Disabled and Frail Elderly Persons in 1986. Community Transport (CT) is the main method of delivering this policy providing transport for people who are unable to access public transport, for example because of disability, age, infirmity, or rural isolation. It is organised on a non-profit basis by voluntary groups, usually registered charities, who provide services in their local areas of the County.

CT does not compete with mainstream public transport, but is complementary, filling in gaps in service and catering particularly for the elderly and disabled and also linking to it .. Because it is organised for and by local communities it is efficiently targeted and because of volunteer involvement it is cost effective. It provides services aimed at reducing social exclusion and delivering Access in both urban and rural areas. Devon County Council (DCC) supports 46 of these groups, and a further 6 local transport partnerships

CT provides flexible solutions to meet the needs of its users, and includes the following services some of which are **shown on 4 maps** - 1 Ring and Ride Schemes ,2 Community Buses , 3 County Supported Car Scheme ,4 Wheels to Work .

Ring and Ride (16 schemes supported by DCC, with funding support of £222,500 in 05/06)

Ring & Ride Schemes have been developed over the last 15 years and currently operate in approximately 80% of Devon. They provide a fully accessible mini-bus service into local towns to allow potentially house-bound people the opportunity to shop and use local amenities and 84,000 passenger journeys were made in 2004/5, with fare income of £ 93,400. The journeys are flexibly routed to allow the bus to collect passengers from their homes on one or two days a week The vehicles are specially adapted with a wheelchair lift and removable seats to accommodate wheelchairs . Devon provides most of the vehicles through a maintenance, insurance and lease package organised by its TCS fleet

management section which also arranges school transport / Social Services contracts for many of the groups to provide additional income/ share the costs of operation The groups were able to raise £13,977 (04/05) from hiring the vehicles to other community groups

Community Bus Schemes (6 schemes supported by DCC)

Operating under section 22 permits, using buses with volunteer drivers, these schemes provide regular, scheduled local bus services which are planned in response to local needs on a non-profit making basis. They are an important provision for rural communities where other services are not available. Many are well established, for example the Coleridge Bus in the South Hams is about to celebrate its 20th anniversary.

Community Car Schemes (14 schemes supported by DCC)

Community Car Schemes (also known as Voluntary Car Schemes) provide a cost effective and very flexible form of transport. Local volunteer car drivers use their own vehicle to carry passengers unable to use conventional transport to pre-booked destinations, most frequently medical appointments, in exchange for a specified mileage charge. Research undertaken in 2005 identified 65 car schemes operating in the County, and the Community Transport Team are now in regular contact with them. Statistics collected by 11 of the supported groups show they provided 28,366 passenger journeys in the year 2004/5. The survey shows that there are over 1,000 volunteer drivers providing this service in Devon.

Shopmobility (5 schemes supported by DCC)

Shopmobility provides manual and powered wheelchairs and scooters to help people with limited mobility to shop and use town and city centre facilities. It is available to users of any age, residents or visitors, no matter whether their disability is temporary or permanent.

Wheels to Work (3 schemes supported by DCC)

These schemes provide access to employment , education and wider social activities for young people who have no alternative transport. They are loaned powered cycles, mopeds or scooters, and given training. Some schemes also offer subsidised driving lessons, travel planning, and emergency vehicle repair grants. Wheels to Work gives independence to young people in rural areas but cover only a small part of the County at present .

Local Transport Partnerships

For the last 10 years the County Council has been working with community transport groups to establish a locally available “one stop shop “ information and booking service to help residents to access transport to meet their travel needs .The Partnerships also coordinate in many locations the provision of all the services covered above and are now in full operation in Honiton ,Barnstaple and Tiverton and partially in other market towns .

Financing Community Transport is difficult as so much in the past has been short term and for fixed periods. Reliance on the lottery and similar funders is no answer to long term needs. In 2005/6 DCC provided £340,000 revenue funding to support the full range of Community Transport initiatives. This levers in support from District Councils and other funders of £ 200,000 or so .p. a. but this funding is vulnerable to revenue budget pressures Most of the total is used to maintain current provision, leaving a small amount for development . Community Transport groups generate income from passengers and vehicle hire and work hard to raise funds but they depend upon County Council support for their survival. Contracts operated by local organisations for provision of services is limited to a maximum of 50% of their income so that local fund raising and grants from L A s are essential to Community Transport

A Community Transport team (currently 2 members of staff) i part of the Transport Co-ordination Service (TCS) work closely with the 2 officers of the Devon Rural Transport Partnership (part funded by County Council) and together have the role of providing and developing appropriate CT networks across Devon to meet the travel needs of vulnerable residents and visitors as described above by working closely with the community groups which provide the services. Community Transport will require help with fund raising and business development if the sector is to play an expanded role in delivering the Access Strategy .

The Devon Rural Transport Partnership assists communities to identify local travel needs and solutions and to achieve recognition of the contribution that community based transport services can make to social inclusion and access. Promotion of fair treatment for community transport groups in accordance with the County Council compact with the voluntary and community sector is another important role. The continued funding of DRTP is uncertain beyond March 2007 with SWRDA taking over from the Countryside Agency as the sponsor of rural transport initiatives

Home to School Transport / Post 16 Student Travel

Transport is organised to meet the specification established from policies on entitlement to transport, decided by the Education Directorate, which holds the budget. The operation of integrated transport networks and travel arrangements covers the County Council's 340 primary, junior and senior schools as well as the 21 Further Education/Post 16 establishments.

Around 22,000 children and students are conveyed each day of which 1,000 have special needs and 4,000 are in post education. Where possible at no extra cost, provision is also made for children who are not entitled to free home to school transport through a concessionary fee paying place on the contract transport network or by developing local bus services on which non entitled children can pay fares

Expenditure is running at £ 19.5 m per year and containing expenditure in a climate of 10% increases in costs year on year is a major challenge requiring continual achievement of savings through network reviews and other efficiency measures. In 2005/6 these generated saving in the order of £ 400,000.

A Post 16 Student Transport Partnership has been established jointly with the Education Directorate. It has a 3 year strategy to improve transport for Post 16 students funded by DfES but ending in July 2006. Two Travel Co-ordinators are now working with all the colleges and sixth forms to identify opportunities and needs. It is planned to roll out countywide many of the features of the North Devon "Life in the Bus Lane" smartcard project, to encourage student bus travel through wider network benefits at all times

The Transport for school children and students is provided by a mix of contracted taxis, coaches, rail bus and ferry services using scholars season tickets, community groups and the County Council's own vehicles. The DCC in-house fleet is managed as a whole including an Approved Driver Register (including vetting), accident monitoring, quality control, vehicle specification, purchase and contract hire (short and long term) and managing the external vehicle maintenance contract. Most of the total fleet of 250 minibuses and accessible vehicles are employed on school transport, Social Services and Community Transport as coordinated resource

There is growing pressure from government and parents to assist non entitled children to travel to and from school and all children home from school with the extended day initiative. The Schools Bill just introduced into Parliament is likely to have a major but unknown impact on the provision of school transport and bus services from 2008. These developments would require more local bus service provision but there is less willingness from operators to provide commercial services. Clearly more funds are required to provide a comprehensive network for school children and also that both School Transport and Public Transport funding is employed to best effect. This has been well demonstrated by the Life in the Bus Lane project for post 16 students in North Devon on which there is more information in appendix 2

Behavioural incidents on school buses are an increasing problem and must be reduced if the willingness of operators to work with Devon is to be retained.

Social Services /Health Transport

For Social Services transport is provided to the specification developed jointly with care managers & centres that hold the budget. This transport is reviewed regularly and currently the impact on transport of major changes to care patterns is being assessed.

Closer working with the Health service is being fostered to meet the new Accessibility Planning responsibilities. A pilot projects already implemented cover: better links by bus services to hospitals, rural access to health facilities, joint utilisation of DCC and PTS vehicles, a single point of contact for the public, and more effective transport commissioning arrangements with Trusts. A joint DCC/ Devon NHS Trusts Partnership was signed in 2005 to facilitate this joint work.

A mix of private contractors and the DCC in house fleet is deployed on this work. Most of the DCC vehicles are shared with school transport and community use. Joint working of Social Services, and Health ,increases in demand as the population ages, and major changes in care patterns will impact on resources, and administration and change the services and vehicle types required.

Taxis and Private Hire

Taxis and private hire vehicles (phv) come under the jurisdiction of the District Councils in Devon who issue licences for vehicles and drivers. The County Council as Highway Authority designates the Taxi ranks. In Exeter, Newton Abbot Barnstaple and Exmouth there is a high availability of taxis and phv which both complement and compete with bus services but there is much less provision in the smaller towns and rural areas . In the towns fares for short distances are often close to bus fares but with long distances in rural areas fares are high. The County Council contracts over 1,000 taxis and phv for school transport /social services each day and it is claimed that the general public cannot book one at school opening and closing times .

Accessibility Planning

A new requirement on the County Council is to implement a process of Accessibility Planning as set out in Guidance for LTP2.and incorporate an Access Strategy in L T P 2

Being able to access everyday key services such as jobs, education, food shops and healthcare is vital for the quality of life and economic prosperity of Devon's residents. Devon's rural nature, varied geography and ageing population provide many challenges for improving accessibility

Present Position in Devon

“Get it right for older people and you get it right for everyone” (Help the Aged Devon).

“The priority should be equity of access to services where no-one feels disadvantaged by virtue of where they live or their own personal circumstances” (South Hams District Council).

“Schemes such as Fare Cars and Wheels to Work moped schemes have a high potential and need to be developed further” (Connexions Cornwall and Devon).

“There is a high dependency of children over 16 on parental transport. This has been proven to contribute to social problems within households” (Devon Wheels to Work coordinator).

- 41% of respondents found they had difficulty accessing or interpreting travel information.
- 72% of respondents without access to a car experienced problems accessing social and leisure activities. (“Young People and Transport in Rural South Devon”, Dr Zoe Harris, 2004)
- In North Devon 64% of unemployed respondents highlighted transport as a reason for not being able to obtain a job. (“Study of the Transport Needs of Young People in North Devon District Area”, 2003, Nicholas Curley)
- 31% of people without a car have difficulties travelling to their local hospital, compared to 17% of people with a car (1.4m missed health appointments nationally because of transport difficulties)
- The main transport difficulties experienced by young people were access to after school activities

The levels of access and deprivation in Devon are being mapped against the current passenger service provision. A number of criteria have been tested but walking distance of an hourly passenger service provision be it bus fare car or community based service has yet to be completed Access and deprivation hot spots have been identified at Princetown and Rural Torridge

Access Maps

The Access Strategy suggests that the **criteria for supporting services and therefore establishing levels of service** should be reviewed.-

Levels of Service – Present policy

Through commercial and supported services, the current aim is to achieve the provision of minimum levels of service for each parish according to size of population and level of car ownership. However, in the case of supported services, this provision is qualified by a requirement that all services must meet criteria for support in the form of a maximum support per passenger trip, dictated by the available budget.

The current support-per-passenger limits are £2.00 for daily services; £3.00 for less-than-daily services, and £4.00 for a service which forms a last remaining weekly link for one or more communities along its route but these limits have not been adjusted for inflation for many years As a general point, rural services cost more per passenger trip because of the high mileage and low use In order to afford these some additional protection, we allow a higher support per passenger for less than daily services, these being the type most prevalent in rural areas.

Abandoning the higher limits for less than daily services - and thereby easing the pressure on daily services - would have the effect of removing sizeable parts of the less-than-daily network and leaving some rural areas with no services at all . This is well illustrated on the bus map - see those areas with solely green lines.

Services are ranked by contract price and passengers carried. A budget reduction of, say, £100,000, would require the withdrawal of the lowest £100,000-worth of services in the table. In practice, given sufficient time and data , a review is carried out of most services to see whether any savings by cutting out failing sections, or trimming journeys , although this requires reliable data about passenger loadings on every single bus Complete withdrawal is a last resort when all other ways of bringing the service in line with the criteria have been exhausted.

Logically, any reduction in budget results in lower support per passenger limits. An increase in commitments resulting from commercial service withdrawals could also have this effect. This may mean adding services which score well against the criteria so knocking weaker services off the bottom of the table. However since 2001 sufficient budget has been provided by the County Council to avoid service reductions, except for the normal small adjustments which are made to the network, and also deal with some high increases in contract prices

New Priorities for Service Support

The subject of higher or lower limits for categories of service highlights the question of whether resources should be concentrated on busier services or spread more thinly across the County. The County Council is under pressure by the Government to achieve growth in bus patronage and to tackle congestion - which argues for the former approach, but at the same time is expected to improve accessibility in rural areas - which suggests the latter alternative.

In developing an Access Strategy it will be necessary to consider levels of service and support criteria based on needs not resource limits. Factors to be included will be the deprivation indices, the level of other services such as shops and their location, population structure, the level of access to a car for the whole range of activities. Funding on an area /community basis rather than service by service may better provide the access required .

Public Sector Funding of the Passenger Transport Network

Revenue Funding

The majority of funding and investment by the public sector in passenger services in Devon currently is from revenue sources. Obtaining funds to support bus and train services and supporting measures and projects from a wide range of sources by the County Council in recent years has been significant for the creation of the present network. The County Council revenue funding of bus services, park and ride community transport, local rail etc including RBSG has doubled from £ 3 m in 1998 to over £ 6 m for the current year An additional £ 1m is being spent on externally funded projects such as Kickstart and services for new developments.

The total revenue funds from all local public sector sources allocated to public passenger transport services in 2005 / 06 were spent as follows - (to nearest £ 000)

Devon County Council Public Transport Budget

-	Supported Local Bus Service network	2,942
-	Community Transport, Community Rail, DRTP and Rural Transport Developments	534
-	Marketing and Promotions including Park and Ride	75
	Total	3,551

Rural Bus Subsidy Grant

-	Supported Local Bus Service network	1,940
-	Staffing	190
-	Publicity	120
	Total	2,250

Rural Bus Challenge/Kickstart

Coast LinX 53	135
Fare Car	209
Culm Valley Connect	150
Total	494

On Street Parking A/C

Park and Ride Services in Exeter and Barnstaple	412
Exe Rail Partnership	100
Total	512

Post 16 Pathfinder /Student Travel (DFES funds)

- Travel Co-co-ordinators	62
- Post 16 Charge discount	16
- Smartcards and Systems	20
- Disabled Training/Special Services	10
Total	108

Developer Contributions S 106

Exeter Area Bus Services	190
Tiverton Bus Services	38
Total	228

Devonwide Partnership Half fare Bus Travel **1,700**

School and College Transport **19,500**

Social Services **3,500**

PTS /ambulance car service (non emergency health transport) **2,500**

Capital Funding

LTP 1 contained a programme of schemes for public and community transport averaging **£1 m per year**. The programme included bus lanes and gates in Exeter and Barnstaple. Improvements to passenger facilities at selected locations on a number of corridors such as raised kerbs at bus stops, bus shelters, funding for SWPTI /traveline, research and monitoring, promotion of car free enjoyment of the countryside and contributions to buses for community groups. More information can be found in the Annual Progress Reports

Transport Coordination – Integrated Service Delivery

Devon County Council adopted an integrated approach to the management ,planning and provision of transport services to support the delivery of its services and in the wider public sector as long ago as 1986 when it created a **Transport Coordination unit** Devon has since then been at the leading edge of transport service provision in local authorities ,recommended by the Audit Commission and highly rated by the Best Value inspectors so that nearly all local government has followed. The Transport Coordination Service is regularly consulted by Government and other authorities and is engaged in the development of transport policy and practice at central and regional level. At present the Head of Service is a member of the Steering Group for a new study by DFT into Transport Service Efficiencies and also on the DFT Community Rail Development Strategy Steering Group .

The Transport Coordination Service is a massive operation involved in all the areas covered by the Bus Strategy and more The business handled has grown to £ 46 m in the current year and has 40 technical and 6 financial staff .A major benefit of the integrated approach and large scale operation is the capacity and skill to develop many and different projects, set up, lead and engage in local and regional partnerships and influence the market . The costs of the current volume of transport falling on the County Council would be about 20% higher without the integrated approach A full picture of the breadth of the services delivered and the activities engaged in is set out in appendix 1

How we will work towards the Vision and Achieve the Targets

Working towards the Vision in this Bus Strategy to 2011 will concentrate on 7 key elements -

Contributing to the LTP packages to tackle congestion manage traffic and improve air quality in Exeter, Barnstaple and Newton Abbot

Implementing the Access Strategy

Seeking minimum levels of public passenger transport services

Achieving a better operating environment for bus services

Passenger facilities

Marketing ,Information and Travel Planning

Working in Partnership

Key Elements

Contributing to tackling congestion , the management of traffic and improving air quality

Packages of measures to tackle congestion and improve air quality in Exeter ,Barnstaple and Newton Abbot are at the core of the Devon LTP.

These provide for investment over the plan period in enhanced bus services ,passenger facilities ,marketing and information ,fare deals etc and to assist effective bus operation including bus priority measures , protection of bus stops and designing the highway for the bus. Supported by investment by the bus operators in new low floor ,low emission buses, driver training etc it is the aim to put in place a high quality bus product which will attract new bus users and retain existing ones.

Similarly the role of local train services will be maximised through close working with the new Franchisees to secure for the Exeter area , 30 min frequency services on the Exmouth ,Paignton and Axminster lines and hourly on the Barnstaple line building on the Devon Metro initiative. Rail services into Plymouth and Torbay will be considered with those councils. Investment to improve station facilities ,interchange and access across the Devon rail network is planned .

The levels of bus and rail service required to achieve this contribution to tackling congestion and improving air quality are above the minimum set out below so significant investment through the LTP revenue funding ,developers contributions and by operators is planned.. It is expected that on and off street parking charges in the city / town centres which will always be well above the park and ride fare and local bus fares and indeed will generate funds to invest in the packages.

A Summary of the LTP Funded Schemes in the Area Programmes is set out below and more details are in the DLTP . Additional revenue or externally funded schemes or specific actions under this element are -

Exeter City Bus Services Kickstart – 20 new easy access buses ,increased frequencies and additional capacity on services A E/F and H and low floor buses on all services ,joint investment by DCC ,Stagecoach ,DFT and Developers .2006 for 3 years

Tavy Goldline (Tavistock to Plymouth) Kickstart – 14 upgraded ,easy access buses ,increased frequency ,route branding and manager funded by DFT .2006 for 3 years .

Investigate with the appropriate bus operators the uplifting of town bus services in Newton Abbot, Exmouth and Barnstaple to at least the minimum level set out below and establish the case for investment in enhanced services as part of the LTP and Development strategies for these towns.

Press the case for the new rail franchises to retain the current timetables on the Barnstaple, Exmouth, and Newton Abbot / Paignton lines into Exeter as the Devon Metro and to increase the service to Axminster to every half hour and for all trains to call at the new community of Cranbrook as soon as the new station is open.

Access Strategy

Improving access for everyone to employment, health, education and activities and vital services and identification of travel needs and local transport solutions through [partnership and Action Plans must now be developed as a core activity within the LTP and Bus Strategy Following the completion of the access mapping and audits in 2006 action plans will be drawn up in conjunction with stakeholder partnerships of which 4 are in existence already- Devon Rural Transport , Devon And Cornwall Rail , Devon Post 16 Student Travel and the Devon Health Transport . Rural Torridge and Princetown have already been identified as high deprivation areas The needs of elderly and disabled people will be given a high priority in this work .

Action on 3 main themes is proposed to 2011,mainly revenue funded by the County Council and in some cases with partners -

1: Support and sustain existing community and voluntary transport services

- Ensure continuation of the work of the Devon Rural Transport Partnership and seek to expand the local transport partnerships across the county
- Put in place a stable long term secure funding regime for existing community transport initiatives and services which contribute to accessibility, and press the District Councils to maintain their contributions .
- Engage community transport groups and partners in service planning and provision
- Ensure compliance with Government guidance in developing a collaborative approach to voluntary sector funding.
- Implement a Devon Community Transport Compact to mirror the national compact., including preferred supplier status for community groups and 5 years commitment to funding
- Provide business development and fund raising expertise and support .

2: Work in partnership to deliver improved accessibility

- Contribute to the Devon Health Transport Partnership which will focus on:
 - Rural access to GP surgeries and hospital appointments;
 - Hospital access issues;

- Providing a single contact point for the public, to access information on transport and decisions on eligibility to non-emergency NHS transport Patient Transport Services;
 - Adopting effective transport commissioning practice including evaluation of the Patient Transport Service
 - Effective collaborative working between Devon County Council passenger transport vehicles and health service patient transport services vehicles.
 - Expanding community transport to absorb the work of the Ambulance Car Service
- Contribute to the work of the Devon Post 16 Student Travel Partnership which includes representatives from Devon County Council (as local education and local transport authority), schools and colleges, neighbouring local authorities, transport operators, Learning and Skills Council, Connexions and the Devon Youth Network:
 - Implement smart ticketing systems in order to provide wider access to travel and discounted fares including for travel during evenings, weekends and holidays.
 - Utilise local bus services rather than contracted services.
 - Provide enhanced travel information with wider accessibility including the Young Transnet Information Project.
 - Introduce Independent travel training for students with Special Needs, including a "Buddy" system.

3: Deliver accessibility through better public transport

- To Improve public passenger services the County Council will -
 - Promote the provision of low floor bus services across Devon .including investment in DDA compliant buses both directly and jointly with operators to achieve 100% coverage by 2011
 - Improve access to public transport for people with communications difficulties and other disabilities through the "Devon Access Pass" in 2006 and high visibility destination displays and on- bus information through the Bus Information Strategy
 - Work with bus operators on driver training to help drivers deal with incidents, avoid conflict and be aware of the needs of all passengers .including the disabled
 - Establish ring and ride services in 2006/7 in areas not currently served and seek the extension of existing schemes to evenings and weekends by 2011
 - Promote shopmobility schemes in Districts which have non at present
 - Prepare a project in 2006 for the extension of Wheels to Work to the whole of Devon including the appointment of a Devon Wheels to Work coordinator.
 - Support Car Clubs and community car schemes.
 - Provide demand responsive transport and community based transport initiatives, such as Fare Cars, to address local access needs and meet the minimum service levels set out below
 - Work with Regional Development Agency (RDA) to maintain the provision and funding of rural and community transport through the Devon Rural Transport Partnership (RTP) and secure firm funding arrangements from 2007 .
 - Work with the Devonwide Partnership, East Devon District Council and bus operators to ensure provision of bus free travel for senior citizens and disabled people operates smoothly and that there is sufficient capacity as demand grows
 - Develop in 2006/7 a new assessment criteria for local passenger transport service support to determine levels of service using community profiles ,accessibility indices, availability of services ,and access needs.
 - Vigorously press the case for continuation of the current timetables and stopping patterns on community rail lines and at the smaller stations on the mainline in Devon.
 - Continue support for the Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership and utilise the Community Rail Development Strategy to secure the future of the Devon Branchlines through action plans agreed with DFT and Train operators
 - Identify the interurban and cross boundary routes where a combination of bus and rail services do not meet the minimum set out below and the work up potential solutions within 2 years

- o Ensure the inclusion in each District Council Local Development Framework the principle that all developments are connected to passenger transport services to provide access for all and that developers pay for the connection via a levy and pool System plus negotiations on developments

Minimum Levels of Passenger Service

The aim to have in place by 2011, the network of services and frequencies set out below as a **minimum**, through a combination of commercially provided local bus services, supported local bus services, demand responsive services using 4-8 seat vehicles, community transport using 4-16 seat cars and minibuses, taxis and phv, local authority vehicles of all sizes and rail services where available. All vehicles except 4 seat cars to be fully accessible DDA compliant.

It is expected that levels of service above these minimum will be justified by demand, or developed as part of investment in enhanced services and /or will be provided commercially in many locations including extra journeys at peak times and for school children and also for the free concessionary fares schemes.

Exeter City and the surrounding journey to work area i.e. the City/region.

10 minute frequency on all radial corridors, 20 min service in all residential and employment areas in the inner city, a 30 min frequency in the edge of town residential and employment zones, all day Monday – Saturday and half this frequency on Sundays
 30 min orbital bus route to be introduced later in the plan period as the edge of city develops
 30 min from the main points in the journey to work area into the city on Mondays to Saturdays all day with half the M-S frequency on Sundays -
 mainly bus but also drawing on the Devon Metro local rail lines

Barnstaple, Exmouth and Newton Abbot and journey to work area.

20 minute frequency on routes to all parts of the town, half this level on Sundays
 30 service on the main routes from the journey to work area all day M-S and half this level on Sundays
 Mainly bus with minor rail contribution

Smaller towns such as Sidmouth, Bideford, Tavistock, Teignmouth, Honiton, Ilfracombe, Totnes, Seaton, Crediton, Tiverton, Dawlish, Okehampton, Dartmouth, Ivybridge

hourly frequency within the town and from the journey to work area M-S

School services conveying both entitled and fare paying children contributing to packages to tackle congestion and reduce the school run.

Inter-urban and cross border services – serving many villages –

Hourly frequency 0800 – 2000 M-S and 2 hourly on Sundays

Big Villages not already served by the above

5/6 journeys per day M-S to area centre

Deep Rural

a drt or community transport link into the designated / nearest market town plus links to main bus routes and rail stations, offering up to 8 journey opportunities per day M-S.

Leisure and Tourism Services

networks of train and bus services supporting sustainable tourism / tourism without traffic / access to the coast and countryside for residents and visitors running from Easter to end October each year to Dartmoor, Exmoor, Jurassic coast ,Mining Heritage WHS and coastal resorts links to SW Coast Path at various points . Daily services in some cases, weekends and daily in school holidays mixture of commercial and supported bus and local train services including Dartmoor Railway

Park and Ride

Exeter 4 sites, Barnstaple 2 sites and Newton Abbot. 1, with 10 / 15 Mins frequency bus service all day M-S and 30 min in Exeter on Sundays from at least one site .

Services into Plymouth and Torbay from their journey to work areas falling in Devon

planned jointly with those Councils but similar levels to the relevant categories above

In order to maintain the current levels of services not provided commercially and work towards these minimum service levels the County Council has increased **the budget available in 2006/7** including Rural Bus Subsidy Grant . However, whilst this level of funding has been requested for future years through the Medium Term Financial Plan it cannot be committed in advance due to the very severe budget pressures faced each year. Cost pressures increasing contract prices and the need to mainstream externally funded services such as kickstart on the one hand and the provision made in the LTP to enhance bus services together with developer contributions on the other, will also influence how far and how fast the minimum level can be achieved and it may vary every year to 2011 .

Achieve a better operating environment for buses

It is essential that bus services enjoy free flow conditions on the road network in order to minimise average journey speeds and the resources required for a given timetable and to maximise easy access to buses at stops and taken together the attractiveness of the service. Reliable and punctual services are a vital component of a high quality bus product. Public confidence and use can easily be eroded by uncertainty of arrival of the bus and total journey time .

Delivering the massive increase in bus use by 2011 to meet the 20% target requires a big improvement in punctuality from the current 62 % to which designing the highway for the bus, bus priority measures and protection from obstruction by other traffic must contribute. Operators will be asked to reinvest in better bus services any savings in resources resulting from these actions

Proactive management of the road network under the new Traffic Manager powers and responsibilities and specific actions will be implemented (see also the scheme summary below)

In Exeter, Barnstaple and Newton Abbot and at congestion hotspots in smaller towns, effective bus priority measures will be provided where the delays from congestion are serious

All bus stops will be protected from car parking and obstruction with bus stop clearway orders and road layouts and parking arrangements will be adjusted to allow access by low floor buses to the kerb. High visibility markings will be provided and maintained.

Junctions will be adjusted to accommodate buses and other large vehicles to minimise route mileage and delays to buses,

Parking will be restricted on radial routes to assist access to bus lanes and free flow conditions

Key bus streets in town centres will be designated for pedestrians and buses only.

Enforcement will be at as high a level as powers allow with Wardens scheduled to monitor key bus corridors regularly

Delays diversions and cuts in bus services resulting from road closures will be minimised by early consultation with bus operators and taking a strong position with Utilities and contractors including seeking payment to provide alternative services

Developing and implementing Bus Punctuality Improvement Plans, jointly with the bus operators as recommended by the Bus Partnership Forum, which will provide for the gathering of data via vehicle location systems and the development of joint action to deal with delay points, and service management problems identified.

Until the electronic data is available carry out annual survey of bus punctuality supported by on-bus monitoring of progress and timings to obtain a complete picture of the reasons for and location of delays .

Establish a standard design for highway layouts and markings at bus stops to accommodate low floor buses properly and provide protection from car parking .

Passenger Facilities

It was identified in the Review of the Current Position in the previous section that the extent and quality of passenger facilities on the roadside, at interchange points and bus and rail stations in Devon is very patchy. Yet passenger facilities are an important part of the bus and rail journey experience and also the requirements of DDA 2005 prompt urgent attention be given to the needs of all passengers Facilities aimed at the elderly and disabled passenger will benefit all .

By the end of the plan period all registered local bus services in the county will be operated by DDA compliant low floor buses, so the bus stop provision must match. Achieving this standard also helps families with buggies and speeds up bus boarding. New bus users must not be put of the service by poor waiting and shelter provision or shabby bus and rail stations.

A significant programme of investment in passenger facilities is planned with the County Council taking a strong role in setting standards and coordinating delivery (see also the summary of schemes below) .

To achieve the 100% operation of registered local bus services by 2011 as set out in the Access Strategy to assist elderly and disabled people extra investment by operators and the public sector in new buses will be required .. The target is likely to be achieved in Exeter and on many interurban routes through operator investment, Kickstart projects and developer contributions but else where ,particularly on rural and supported services, the County Council envisages having to invest in DDA compliant vehicles. In some case a grant under S106 of the T A1985 will match operator investment, but for tendered routes the County Council has decided to

purchase the buses out right through the prudent borrowing system to loan to contractors. It is planned to buy 5 narrow DDA compliant buses in 2006/7 at a cost of £ 500,000 to ensure that moving to DDA compliant buses does not cut villages off from daily services. Additional buses may be purchased in 2007/8 if required .

Roads on new developments will be laid out so that buses can reach to 400 metres of all houses /offices . .

All bus stops on main routes , in town centres , residential areas and employment zones and at village /community centres will have a DDA compliant paved area /kerbing , bus stop pole and flag, and information display to a DCC standard design .

Bus shelters will be provided and maintained at all stops with more than occasional use The County Council will work with District Councils to maximise the volume of shelters from Advertising Contracts and take over from district and parish councils non advertising shelters

Bus stops will be laid out and protected from car parking such that buses can draw up alongside the paved area to allow flat floor entrance /exit for wheelchairs and buggies

Interchange points will be provided for bus /bus, bus / rail and drt feeder services into bus and rail with RTI displays in addition to the bus stop /shelter.

Rail Stations throughout the County will be improved with better facilities on the platforms ,better access and carparking with major schemes at the Gateway Stations of Exeter St Davids ,Exeter Central and Newton Abbot and Tiverton Parkway funded by a combination of LTP ,Rail industry and PSA 1 Reward money.

New/ enhanced bus passenger facilities will be explored for Totnes , Exeter ,Ilfracombe, Tavistock ,Exmouth, Honiton, and Okehampton

Pedestrian routes to bus stops, rural stations will be paved and lit as far as possible.

Marketing Information and Travel Planning

In the section on the current position the value of marketing – developing a complete bus product and then giving potential users all the information needed for successful use was highlighted It was also identified that there are weaknesses in that the network of bus services is not being promoted sufficiently to non users and many people claim not to be aware of what is available .

Significant investment by 2011 is planned to address this . Most of the funding will come from DCC revenue sources but funds for the provision of equipment is allocated in DLTP – see the Scheme summary below. Operators also spend considerable amounts of money on these items

A new Bus Information Strategy will be issued shortly after consultation.(draft available) It provides for a major upgrading of the provision of information reflecting the availability of new electronic formats whilst improving the current paper one . A high quality, more consistent standard for equipment is proposed at bus stops and bus stations with the County Council taking a stronger role in specifications and coordination of delivery .

The programme for implementation envisages carrying out an audit in 2006 /7 followed by 4 years of schemes commencing in Exeter, Newton Abbot and Barnstaple and the moving out along the radial routes The deeper rural areas will only be reached if additional funding over the planning guideline is received .

Strong support for the SWPTI regional partnership providing traveline will continue and the database will be exploited more Devon will co-ordinate the local work for data base input and is subscribing to the regional targets for which 100% timetable accuracy and verification has been achieved

Mobile phone SMS texting will be made available countywide and RTI displays will be provided at interchange points, key public places, hospitals and major employers. These systems and the vehicle location system required to support them will be developed and implemented jointly with the major bus operators.

A major awareness campaign –Connect Devon - is planned for 2006 jointly with Stagecoach, First and traveline Exhibition stand at events and shows supported by media and travel promotions

Fares and Promotion and Ticketing

Smartcards on all bus and local train services to facilitate inter -modal journeys interchange between services and stored value, provide monitoring information and speed up boarding To be used by Devon for school children and students and Devonwide and by the operators for commercial products such as network , season and travel value tickets .

Half fares for children and un-waged young people up to 16-19 on a commercial basis in return for DCC grants towards smartcard systems

A simple ,easily understood range of weekly ,monthly and annual network tickets for both city/ town networks and journey to work areas

A day and week rover ticket on all operators services throughout the whole of Devon and day network tickets for town / city networks and tourist areas

Specific / short term targeted fares offers in support of bus service development projects and tackling congestion packages and awareness campaigns

A programme of market research on bus and train and of non users

Promotion and production of publicity and information for leisure and tourist services

Promotion of marginal commercial services to boost revenues

Travel Planning - schools ,colleges , workplace , hospitals , tourist attractions , personal

Local bus and train services will be incorporated into travel planning initiatives in which the County will substantially increase its investment for 2006-11.

Green Travel will be promoted with schools, employers, hospitals and tourist attractions to reduce traffic pressure and generate increased bus and train use through site specific services, information and fares discounts.

Personal travel plans will be developed for the first time to help with access problems and promote bus and rail instead of car Residential developers will be required via planning conditions to provide purchasers /tenants with passenger service information provided by DCC

Tourist attractions and events will be approached to promote access by bus and rail services through joint promotions, and website information

Devon will work with major travel generators on bus service developments and Park & Ride and will facilitate attractive fares offers from operators through Smartcards. RTI displays will be set up for big employers and public areas plus internet links to travel information.

Developing Bus Services – Kickstart

Investing in bus services both commercial and supported is central to the Bus Strategy. Only by providing frequent high quality bus services will the shared priorities and the passenger growth targets be achieved. New low floor, low emission buses, route branding frequency increases, information, passenger facilities, priorities and fares could all feature and passenger growth rates of 20% over 3 years will be sought. In this way the investment in buses and bus services will contribute to many of the Seven LTP Objectives

A series of projects is planned starting with the Exeter Kickstart and Tavy Goldline projects in 2006 to be followed in 2008 onwards by projects in Barnstaple, Newton Abbot and on the main journey to work services into Exeter. Operator investment is essential to complement the provisions in the DLTP. More projects will be possible if developer contributions are obtained and LPSA 2 reward grant becomes available after 2008. Whilst in the Government funded Kickstart schemes there is an element of support to operating costs as well as capital investment, it will be a requirement of the Devon version that the operator agrees to cover any increase in operating costs from the higher revenue levels.

Integration

There is much that can be improved in modal integration in Devon, although the stance of the large bus and train operators will determine progress. The County Council will -

- Work to have in place a Devon day rover ticket allowing travel on all operators services in the County at one price.
- Improve bus interchange at the major rail stations
- Provide a direct hourly bus service with easy access buses from Exeter St Davids Stn to Exeter Airport starting in 2006
- Bring frequent bus services to Barnstaple Rail Stn from 2007 via a dedicated bus link under the new Bypass
- Work with First Great Western, Stagecoach, First Bus and the new South Western and Cross Country franchisees on bus /rail connections across the county. With more clockface timetables on bus and train this should be easier than currently
- Support the plans of First Great Western to improve provision for cyclists.

Working in Partnership

Partnerships of all kinds are essential to the delivery of many aspects of the Bus Strategy as envisaged in the Vision without them. It will not be possible to develop the public passenger services network as envisaged in the Vision without them.

Partnerships fall broadly into 2 groups –

- public and community sector, formal and informal designed to bring agencies, LAs and other bodies together to promote coordinated planning management and delivery of services. The ones of particular importance for this Strategy are –
 - Devon Health Transport Partnership
 - Devonwide Concessionary bus travel

Devon Strategic and Local Strategic Partnerships
Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership – promoting and developing branchlines
S W PTI – traveline service
Devon Rural transport Partnership

- partnerships with operators which can be operator wide , for specific areas or corridors , statutory or voluntary . The objective in every partnership is to set up a mechanism for committing to investment and to planning and developing the passenger service network by both the operator and the County Council. First Devon and Cornwall have signed an operator wide voluntary Quality Bus Partnership Agreement ,but the recent changes to senior management have precluded implementation so far but It is hoped to commence shortly once the new M D is settled in. Stagecoach have declined to work with Devon on a operator wide agreement preferring to work on by way of simple agreements for areas , and specific projects corridors

What the County Council envisages is more or less a Quality Network Agreement which provides the framework for a series of plans and actions. Joint plans would be developed for bus services, passenger facilities, punctuality,(BPIP) marketing and promotion, IT/technology,and data with an annual Action list . The agreement would also include commitment to the Bus Strategy and reinvestment of revenue gains above agreed levels from Bus Service Development projects .

Stagecoach particularly favours Statutory Quality Partnership Schemes for which DFT / Bus Partnership Forum Guidance is expected any time. These are schemes established by the Local Transport Authority for individual corridors and involve commitment to bus priority, Passenger facilities etc by the LTA and the setting of standards for buses etc that operators must meet in order to have use of what the LTA has provided . Frequency and fares have to be agreed separately . Torbay Council is considering one for the Service 12 route and has invited Devon to bring the Newton Abbot to Kerswell Gardens section of this service in to the Scheme.

Funding

Local Transport Plan

In order to make real progress towards the Vision a substantial proportion of the funds available to the County Council through the integrated Transport Block in the LTP has been allocated to programmes of schemes to support directly or indirectly the delivery of the Bus Strategy .A summary is set out in the table below . The total for the 5 years 2006/7 – 2010/11 is £ 18.8 m, averaging £ 3.8 m per year more than 3 times L TP 1 and approximately 45 % of the total Integrated Transport Block .

Revenue

As explained in the previous section many sources of public sector revenue funding are brought together to secure passenger services for the public in the County. Reference has also been made to the difficulties of committing to future levels of funding. However it is possible to be firm on the funding available for 2006/7 for local bus services, park and ride community transport and local rail which will total £ 8.7 m. This includes developer contributions ,Kickstart Awards from DFT, Rural Bus Subsidy Grant ,On-street Parking A/c , PSA 1 Reward Grant and the Devon public transport budget . At over £12 per head of population, Devon is in the top group of Authorities in England for spending on passenger services

LTP Programme Directly and Indirectly Supporting The Bus Strategy

£000's

	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	Total
Transport Innovation Fund Exeter Bus Transit Study & Submission	85	330	785			
Total	85	330	785			1200
Bus Priority including Traffic Management at key junctions & on corridors and ITS						
Exeter	1355	725	550	650	550	
Newton Abbot	125					
Country Villages & Rural	155	125	100	185	290	
Barnstaple/Bideford	100	290				
Total	1735	1140	650	835	840	5200
Bus infrastructure, passenger facilities, bus service enhancement						
Exeter	210	500	375	625	850	
Sustainable Transport	60	40	95	55	45	
Newton Abbot			10	240	230	
Plymouth Sub Regions	155	90	20		40	
Barnstaple/Bideford	20		20	50	70	
Town & villages & rural	105	125	125	125	75	
Total	550	755	645	1095	1310	4355
Park & Ride						
Exeter	20	35	35	710	660	
Barnstaple			250	400	300	
Total	20	35	285	1110	960	2410
Rail						
Plymouth Sub Regions	30	50	50			
Exeter	25	100	100	500	475	
Total	55	155	150	500	475	1335
Public Transport Interchanges						
Exeter	100	275	180			
Newton Abbot			340	290	100	
Plymouth Sub Regions	5		50	50		
Total	105	275	570	340	100	1390
Access & Community Transport						
Town & Village & Rural	225	190	210	150	150	
Exeter		10	10		25	
Total	225	200	220	150	175	970
Information /BIS Ticketing/Smartcards, traveline						
Exeter		50	50	100		
Whole County	90	400	400	400	400	
Barnstaple	80					
Total	170	450	450	500	400	1970
Grand Total	2945	3340	3755	4530	4260	18830

Transport Co-ordination –Integrated Management of Service Delivery

The planning management and procurement of the whole range of passenger services ensuring co-ordinated delivery of transport services by all suppliers and for all agencies by Devon County Council Transport Co-ordination Service will continue. The current successful provision and operating arrangements will be maintained and enhanced. The total business handled in 2006/7 will approach £50m and a small increase in staff is envisaged to coordinate the additional investment in passenger facilities and information and also to collect and analyse the data for the LTP and LPSA targets .

School transport and Post 16 Student Transport

Overall the numbers of children and post 16 students to be conveyed are expected to fall slightly as the total population of children in school is fall slowly at present .However,.the extension of transport to over 8 s living between 2 and 3 miles from school will generate more passengers whilst, the increase in the charge levied on post 16 students may cause a decline in this group. Expenditure in 2006/7 is expected to be just over £20 m.

Generally, **actions in School travel** are only planned for a year or so ahead -

A comprehensive study of School travel policy and practice is now under way ,to include the implications of the Schools Bill now in Parliament

Stronger links with School travel planning will be set up to anticipate the requirements of the Schools Bill

Reviews of school transport networks to achieve significant savings for the Children and Young Persons Directorate budget will be maximised including the transfer of children and students to local bus services where possible and exploring new approaches such as independent travel training for special needs children and students

Work with EAL schools and operators to improve behaviour on School Transport.

The Devon Post 16 Student Transport Partnership will be continued if possible although DFES funding ceases in July 2006, in order to Implement the strategy for Post 16 Transport improvements particularly the use of Smartcards.

New contract and network planning formats including the integration of school and public transport .will be explored

Social Services / Health

Two items of work will dominate over the next 2/3 years -

Work with the new Adult Services Directorate to ensure that the transport requirements from the changing care patterns are met and that a high level of customer satisfaction is retained,

Develop the partnership working with the health service including the transfer of the Ambulance car service work to community groups and building capacity at local community level to deliver co-ordinated services such as interworking with ring and ride schemes

Appendix 1 Information on the Transport Coordination Service

Appendix 2 Full Details of Bus Service Development Projects

Appendix 3 The Devon Fare Car Project

\DOCS\Local Transport Plan 2 draft bus strategy 210904.doc