

# Consultation on review of bus services in Herefordshire 18 July - 16 October

## Introduction

Around 39% of the 3.1 million bus journeys made each year in the county are supported by a subsidy from the council. The total cost of the subsidy is around £1.3 million. The remainder of journeys are made on services run commercially by bus operators. The services supported with subsidy are listed at the end of this document. The council spends an additional £1.4 million reimbursing bus operators for concessionary travel - free travel on the bus network for older and disabled people. In addition, £150,000 is used to provide community transport services for those unable to use conventional public transport or who are in areas with no other transport.

You will be aware that public services are facing significant financial pressure as central government reduces funding to local authorities as part of its austerity measures. As part of its medium term financial strategy, Herefordshire Council has agreed to make further reductions in spending for passenger transport over the next 3 financial years (2017/18 to 2019/20).

## Implications of financial reductions

Over the last 2 years, the council has already saved £1 million on passenger transport provision through effective planning and integration of services, and by working closely with operators. It is likely that further savings will only be achieved by withdrawing subsidy from services, which may lead to services being withdrawn.

We carried out a consultation in 2014, which asked about your bus service priorities. We would like to update that consultation in the light of this significant budget reduction and to help guide the decisions we will have to make. We will carry out further consultation with parish councils and local communities as we finalise which services are proposed for reduction or withdrawal.

However, it is unlikely that we will achieve £1 million savings purely through efficiencies. Therefore, we will have to consider withdrawing subsidy for some services. We carried out a comprehensive consultation in 2011, which asked about your bus service priorities. We would like to update that consultation in the light of this significant budget reduction and to help guide the decisions we will have to make following contract negotiations with operators. We will carry out further consultation with local communities as we finalise what operators are prepared to provide with lower levels of subsidy.

## Your views

Please let us know your views by answering the following questions, so that we can take them into account in this further review of bus and community transport services. Before getting started on the main responses, please answer the following two questions:

If you have any queries, need help to complete the questionnaire or would like it in another format or language, please call 01432 260211 or e-mail [publictransport@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:publictransport@herefordshire.gov.uk)

## Data protection

The information in response to this survey will be held and used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The council will share this information with external consultants who will analyse the results and publish a report of findings in an anonymised format. The council will not disclose your information to any unauthorised person or body.

# Questionnaire

**A. Are you completing this form for yourself, on behalf of someone else, or on behalf of an organisation?**

- Myself*                       *For someone else*                       *For an organisation*

**If it is on behalf of someone else or an organisation, please say why (e.g. as someone's carer) or for which organisation:**

**B. Please provide your postcode or the person you are completing this form for. This is essential, as it will help us identify which areas have the greatest need for services.**

**Q1 Do you use buses or community transport in Herefordshire?**

- Yes*                       *No (If no, please go to Q8)*

**If you use buses, please answer the questions below. If you only use community transport, please go straight to question 11.**

**Q2 Which bus service(s) do you use mainly (service number(s))?**

**Q3 Where do you travel from and to on the bus?**

**From:**

**To:**

**Q4 How often do you use the service(s)? (tick one answer)**

- Three or more times per week*                       *Once or twice per month*  
 *Once or twice per week*                       *Once or twice per year*

**Q5 What is the main purpose(s) of your journey by bus? (tick one answer)**

- Travelling to/from school or college*                       *Attending medical appointments at hospital, GP or dentist*  
 *Travelling to/from work*                       *Travelling for leisure or recreation*  
 *Travelling to/from shops to do food shopping*                       *Visiting friends or relatives*  
 *Travelling to/from shops to do non-food shopping*                       *Other, please give details*

**Q6 If your main bus service was no longer available, what alternative(s) would you use? (tick all that apply)**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Walking</i>         | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Lift with friend or relative</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Motorcycle / moped</i>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Cycling</i>         | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Taxi</i>                         | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Community transport</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Car (as driver)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Train</i>                        | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>No alternative</i>      |

**Q7 If your main bus service was no longer available, what would be the impact on you? (tick one answer)**

- High impact*       *Low impact*       *Some impact*       *No impact*

**Q8 The current Local Transport Policy (LTP) suggests that priority should be given to a network of core services on Monday to Saturday during the daytime period (as shown on the map). Do you agree that these services should be treated as a priority?**

- Yes*       *No*

**If no, please say what you think should be the priority for the council to support:**

**Q9 Faced with making significant savings, which types of services do you consider should be reduced or withdrawn? (tick all that apply)**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Monday - Friday daytime</i>  | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Town / city services</i>     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Saturday daytime</i>         | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Market day only services</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Rural / village services</i> |  |

**Q10 The amount of subsidy per passenger varies between bus services, ranging from £0.79 to £4.55. What do you consider to be the maximum level of subsidy per passenger that is acceptable for the council to pay?**

- |                                 |                                 |                                 |                                 |                                  |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> <i>£1</i> | <input type="radio"/> <i>£3</i> | <input type="radio"/> <i>£5</i> | <input type="radio"/> <i>£7</i> | <input type="radio"/> <i>£9</i>  |
| <input type="radio"/> <i>£2</i> | <input type="radio"/> <i>£4</i> | <input type="radio"/> <i>£6</i> | <input type="radio"/> <i>£8</i> | <input type="radio"/> <i>£10</i> |

**If you make use of one of the community transport services available across Herefordshire, please answer questions 11 to 14. If not, go straight to question 15.**

**Q11 Do you use any of the following community transport services? (tick one answer)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> <i>Hereford Dial-a-Ride</i>                          | <input type="radio"/> <i>Hay Dial-a-Ride</i>          |
| <input type="radio"/> <i>Ledbury Ring and Ride or volunteer car scheme</i> | <input type="radio"/> <i>Dore Community Transport</i> |
| <input type="radio"/> <i>Bromyard Community Transport</i>                  | <input type="radio"/> <i>Ross Area Transport</i>      |
| <input type="radio"/> <i>Leominster Community Wheels</i>                   |   |

**Q12. Where do you mainly travel from and to by community transport?**

**To**

**From**

**Q13 How often do you use community transport? (tick one answer)**

- Three or more times per week*                       *Once or twice per month*  
 *Once or twice per week*                               *Once or twice per year*

**Q14 What is the main purpose of your journey by community transport? (tick one answer)**

- Travelling to/from school or college*  
 *Travelling to/from work*  
 *Travelling to/from shops to do food shopping*  
 *Travelling to/from shops to do non-food shopping*  
 *Attending medical appointments at hospital, GP or dentist*  
 *Travelling for leisure or recreation*  
 *Visiting friends or relatives*

**Q15 If your main bus service was no longer available, what alternative(s) would you use? (tick all that apply)**

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Walking</i>         | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Lift with friend or relative</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Motorcycle / moped</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Cycling</i>         | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Taxi</i>                         | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Bus service</i>        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Car (as driver)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Train</i>                        | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>No alternative</i>     |

**Q16 If your main bus service was no longer available, what would be the impact on you? (tick one answer)**

- High impact*                       *Low impact*                       *Some impact*                       *No impact*

**Q17 Which of the following measures would you most support to help maintain some sort of bus or community transport services in your area (tick one answer)**

- Increase in bus fares*  
 *Fewer journeys on services (i.e. less frequent services)*  
 *Parish and town councils to fund through a higher precept on their council tax payers*  
 *Withdrawing financial support for community transport services*  
 *Development of new community-based self-help transport schemes*

**Q18 In previous consultations, some people with concessionary bus passes have indicated that they would be prepared to pay a fare rather than travel for free, if that would help to maintain their bus service. Whilst it is possible for any pass holder to voluntarily do this now, by choosing not to use their pass for every journey they make, the government will not allow local authorities to promote such arrangements.**

**Do you think that Herefordshire Council should lobby government to change legislation to be able to introduce a charge for pass holders using buses, in order to help maintain bus services?**

- No*     *Yes*

**If yes, please say what you think a reasonable cost per journey would be:**

**Q19 If the council decides to further reduce funding for bus and community transport services, how would you prefer to see this implemented? (tick one answer)**

- Withdraw financial support as soon as possible, in order that the council can make savings quickly and protect other council services*
- Phase the withdrawal of funding over the next 2 years, to provide time to adjust and for other self-help transport schemes get established*

**Q20 Please provide any other comments about bus or community transport services in Herefordshire here.**

### **About you:**

The following section asks you about yourself. This is important when identifying which groups of people will be most affected by any changes, and so we can keep in touch with you when looking at detailed changes to services. All information will remain confidential and will not be used for any other purpose beyond this analysis.

If you are completing this on behalf of someone else, then please answer the following questions as they apply to that person.

**Q21 Are you male or female?**

- Male*
- Female*

**Q22 What is your age?**

- 0-15 years*
- 16-24 years*
- 25-44 years*
- 45-64 years*
- 65-74 years*
- 75+ years*

**Q23 Which of the following best describes your work status?**

- Full time employment*
- Part-time employment*
- Unemployed and available for work*
- Retired*
- Full-time education*
- Not working due to disability/ illness*

**Q24 Do you have access to a car?**

- Yes*
- No*

**Q25 Do you have a disability or long term illness?**

- No*
- Yes, but this does not limit my ability to get out and about*
- Yes, and this does limit my ability to get out and about*

**Q26 Do you make use of the concessionary bus pass scheme?**

- No*
- Yes, I have an older person's bus pass*
- Yes, I have a disabled person's bus pass*

**Q27 How would you describe yourself?**

- White British (English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish)*
- Other white (please specify)*
- Any other ethnic group (please specify)*

Other white (please specify)

Any other ethnic group (please specify)

**Q28 We want to ensure that the changes made are fair to everyone. To help us do this, please tell us if you think that changes to bus services will particularly affect any group of people due to characteristics such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.**

- Yes*
- No*

If yes, describe why:

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please submit your response by 16 October 2016, either on-line or to the following freepost address:

Freepost RLSE-HHZC-XTUG, Bus Consultation, Herefordshire Council Hereford HR4 OLE

Additional copies of this document can be downloaded from our website and the questionnaire can also be completed on line: [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/busreview](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/busreview)

**What happens next?**

All responses will be assessed and the findings included in a report for Herefordshire councillors to consider. The information will be used to make informed decisions, including an Equality Impact Assessment on any service changes.

We will not respond directly to your feedback, but we will produce a summary at the end of the process. This will be available on our website by end-November 2016.

Any proposals for bus service changes will not be introduced until at least September 2017.