



House of Commons
Transport Committee

Bus services in England outside London

Ninth Report of Session 2017–19

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to the report*

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Transport Committee

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Summary

The deregulation of bus services outside London in the 1980s was meant to address the steady decline in bus use since the 1950s and bring in a new era of bus travel. In the 1984 Buses White Paper the then Government asserted that:

Without the dead hand of restrictive regulation fares could be reduced now on many bus routes and the operator would still make a profit. New and better services would be provided. More people would travel.

[...] bus operators will look keenly to see where and when people want to travel. If one operator fails to provide a service that is wanted, another will.¹

Successive governments have stuck with deregulation, but the promised benefits have never materialised. Deregulation has, at best, done little more than slow the decline in bus use.

Without buses people would not be able to get to work, places of education, healthcare appointments or travel for leisure or social reasons. Nearly three in every five journeys by public transport in Great Britain were by bus in 2017/18. However, in most parts of England bus use is falling and hundreds of bus routes have been withdrawn. This has direct consequences for people's lives. Without buses people face the unpalatable choice of using cars and taxis or giving up work or educational opportunities entirely. This also narrows their choice around such opportunities. We heard that buses are not reliable, making it difficult for people to get to work or medical appointments on time. We also heard that routes are often too far from people's work, home, school, college or other places they need to visit.

If this trend continues not only will it make it difficult for those who use the bus the most—and particularly those who, for economic, social or health reasons, have no alternative—it will have both economic and environmental impacts. It would reduce economic growth and make congestion and air quality worse as people move from buses to cars and taxis.

In most places local authorities help to fund socially necessary services, where such services are not being provided on a commercial basis by a bus operator. Financial pressure on all non-statutory council services is, however, putting such routes at risk. Routes are being withdrawn, or their frequency reduced, and the communities they serve are becoming isolated.

Bus passengers want reliable and timely services, they want to know when and where a bus will turn up. Congestion is not the only reason that buses can be unreliable, but it has a major impact on reliability. Unlike other factors, like bus or driver availability, bus operators can do little to address it. Tackling congestion, by using bus priority measures or encouraging people out of cars and onto buses—modal shift—will not only improve reliability but will also improve air quality. Better bus reliability could encourage other people to leave their car at home and take the bus instead, further reducing congestion.

¹ Department of Transport, Buses, Command paper 9300, July 1984 paras 1.4–1.6

Bus priority measures can be deployed best when local authorities work with bus operators to understand pinch points and where such measures can make the most difference. Active enforcement of these bus priority measures by local authorities achieves the most effective results. We recommend that local authorities be given the powers they need to enforce moving traffic violations. We recommend also that the Government update its guidance on bus priority measures to better reflect new technologies.

We believe that bus services need to be more passenger focused. It is important too to think about the people that currently choose not to use the bus. Getting people out of cars and into buses—modal shift—is a major part of reducing congestion. Making sure people have correct and timely information about tickets, fares and when buses will arrive makes bus use more convenient and can entice new passengers. We recommend that the Government and bus operators invest more to make sure that passengers can access the right information how, where and when they need it.

Having options for bus travel built into new developments can be an effective way of encouraging people to change from cars to public transport. This works best when planning teams and transport teams work together within local authorities. At present too many new developments or changes to services, like relocating doctors' surgeries, housing offices or hospitals, do not have adequate access to public transport.

Successive governments have tried to improve services for passengers by legislating for different bus operating models, where local authorities and bus operators work together: quality contracts, advanced quality partnerships, enhanced partnerships and franchising. Most bus partnerships are voluntary, with no legal framework, and some of the models provided for in legislation have never been used. Some areas can adopt any of the statutory models they like, while others must seek the permission of the Secretary of State. The Committee believes local authorities are best placed to know which model is right for their area, and recommends that the Government bring forward legislative proposals to make all models available to all areas on the same basis.

Funding for buses mainly comes through bus passenger fares but the Government, through a variety of mechanisms, provides over 40% of the money. A lack of long-term funding means that money from the Government is often seen by local authorities and bus operators as uncoordinated and fragmented. Long-term certainty over Government funding would mean that bus operators and local authorities could plan bus networks more effectively than they do now. The Committee recommends the Government consider how funding of bus services could be reformed to give local authorities and bus operators greater certainty about funding. The Government has long-term funding plans for roads and for rail investment; it seems strange not to have a similar plan for the most used form of public transport.

We recognise that it is unlikely there will be more funding available from the Government for bus services. As well as a long-term funding settlement, the Government needs to ensure current funding is used to best effect and helps to increase bus use. This will require reform of some of the current funding mechanisms, like the Bus Service

Operators Grant. Some investments, like investment in low carbon buses, will not return the greatest value for money unless they are accompanied by measures that will get people out of cars and onto buses.

The Committee concludes that a bus strategy is needed to halt the decline in bus use and give passengers a fairer deal. The Government has not provided evidence that it has tried to halt or reverse the decline in bus use and bus passenger numbers are still falling. Given the scale of the contribution that taxpayers make to funding bus services we conclude that the Government should more clearly set out what it expects to achieve from this investment. Any strategy must be passenger focused but should also address the reasons why people choose not to use buses and what changes are needed to encourage them to make a different choice. A strategy would give a clear indication that there was ambition to improve bus services and provide a single point of reference for local authorities and bus operators to increase bus use. This strategy could:

- set out clearly the Government's ambitions for increasing bus ridership;
- show how the full suite of operating models can be made available to all local authorities;
- describe a more stable and multi-year funding framework;
- assess the evidence for the effectiveness of bus priority measures, and provide information on good practice in their use and examples of where they have worked; and
- provide a framework for setting and tracking targets for modal shift, while also providing examples of the kinds of things local authorities could do to meet such targets.

Conclusions and recommendations

Delivering bus services

1. A range of bus service operating models is available across England, but only some areas have automatic rights to certain models, while others must apply for these rights. The Government has also put in place legislation to prevent local authorities from creating new municipal bus companies. We do not see why all local authorities should not have access to all bus operating models. We believe that local authorities should be able to choose the best model for their area and all areas should have the same rights to manage bus services using the full suite of operating models in a way that they believe best meets their local needs. (Paragraph 25)
2. *We recommend that the full suite of operating models, including franchising, should be available to all local authorities, without the extra condition of going through the Secretary of State. In addition, all local authorities should have the option of creating a municipal bus company. The Department for Transport should not be the gatekeeper for which operating models local authorities decide are most appropriate for providing bus services in their areas. This should be left to local authorities to decide for themselves.* (Paragraph 26)
3. It is difficult to understand why the Secretary of State has not brought forward the necessary orders to enable franchising to proceed. *We recommend that the Government do so immediately.* (Paragraph 27)

Funding of bus services

4. We recognise that in the current financial situation additional funding for bus services is not likely to be found. Whilst we would welcome more funding, the Government and local authorities need to think about how best to spend the funds they already have. Consistent long-term funding for local authorities would help to provide local authorities and bus operators with a degree of certainty, making it possible for them to plan more effectively how to meet the needs of passengers. *We recommend that the Government bring forward a more stable multi-year funding model for local transport, including bus services, by the summer of 2020.* (Paragraph 33)
5. The Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) is clearly in need of reform. The Government claims that it is committed to reforming BSOG, but for five years little has happened. It now looks like no decision will be taken until after the 2019 Spending Review. The arrangements for BSOG appear to have evolved organically and there is no obvious rationale for the different arrangements under which payments can be made, or the different choices some local authorities can make in respect of the things for which BSOG is paid. In certain areas Government has recognised that local authorities are able to use this funding as they see fit, but this is not true everywhere. (Paragraph 38)
6. *We recommend that, before the start of the Spending Review later this year, the Government set out a plan for how BSOG will operate, what it is intended to achieve and how it will be reformed to achieve these aims.* (Paragraph 39)

7. At present reimbursement of concessionary fares for bus operators does not meet the principle of “no better and no worse off”. This principal is objectively impossible to test. The reimbursement calculator given to local authorities by the Department for Transport is based on fares in 2005/06. Local authorities, with already stretched resources, often feel compelled to cover the shortfall. This potentially puts bus services at risk. If services are withdrawn it could have a disproportionate effect on vulnerable people, and they may become more isolated. This runs counter to the stated aim of the concessionary fares policy: improving the lives of older and disabled people. (Paragraph 44)
8. *We recommend that the Government review how it finances concessionary bus passes, and the guidance to local authorities on reimbursement of bus operators, with a view to meeting the principle of both local authorities and bus operators being “no better and no worse off”. As a priority, the Government should re-baseline the reimbursement rates on ticket prices for 2017/18 prices; and should continue to re-baseline fares every four years so that the principle of “no better and no worse off” is maintained and the reimbursement rate remains broadly in line with current fares.* (Paragraph 45)
9. We intend to return to the issue of concessionary travel, across different modes of transport, later in the Parliament. (Paragraph 46)
10. We are pleased that the Government accepted our recommendation to introduce pilots for Total Transport and are encouraged by the positive stories we have heard of these pilots. However, we are concerned that it has taken the Government four years to publish an evaluation of the pilots. *We recommend the Government publishes its evaluation of the Total Transport pilots by the end of the summer 2019. If the results of the pilots are successful, the Government should continue to fund and roll out this approach.* (Paragraph 49)
11. Many local authorities lack the capacity and expertise to bid for grant funding. Local authorities with experience and expertise in formulating bids may be disproportionately benefitting from such funding. The Government has a responsibility to make funding accessible for all local authorities that could use it effectively to improve bus services in their area. *In the short term, the Government should directly inform all local authorities of the bid-for funding available. In the longer term, we recommend that there should be a review across all bid-for funding for buses from the Department for Transport. By the end of 2019 the Department should, in concert with the Local Government Association, assess and publish details of how much it costs local authorities to bid for this funding, whether they receive the funding or not.* (Paragraph 52)
12. In the absence of bus funding reform, the extent to which local authorities are able fund socially necessary services could be severely constrained. *We recommend that the Government review, as a matter of urgency, the financial ability of local authorities to fund socially necessary services and report on this by the end of 2019.* (Paragraph 56)

13. While local authorities have the flexibility to make tendering decisions based on the particular circumstances of their locality, there is no clear direction or strategy about what services should be deemed necessary and protected. *The Government should define socially necessary services by the end of 2019, and provide guidance on the services it expects local authorities to prioritise when tendering for socially necessary services.* (Paragraph 57)

Barriers to travel

14. Modal shift is essential to reduce congestion and tackle air quality issues. It is critical that the Government and local authorities encourage bus use. Local authorities can act to improve reliability through bus priority measures, but the value for money of any such investment would be increased if accompanied by measures to reduce car use and encourage modal shift, and if the Government acted to stop the cost of public transport rising relative to the cost of motoring. (Paragraph 67)
15. The Government must recognise the importance of modal shift to achieving many of their ambitions for reducing pollution and congestion. *We recommend that the Government sets targets for modal shift to meet the policy outcomes of cleaner air for towns and cities and bring forward specific actions for how modal shift will be achieved, including by encouraging people to switch from private car use to travel by bus or other forms of public transport.* (Paragraph 68)
16. If bus priority measures are seen to reduce congestion and increase bus speeds, it might give local politicians in other areas the incentive to take the sometimes difficult decisions to introduce such schemes. *The Government should review the evidence for the effectiveness of bus priority measures across England, with a view to demonstrating the value of these measures in reducing congestion and increasing bus speeds. Local authorities must have the evidence base they need to give bus priority measures proper consideration.* (Paragraph 74)
17. The Government's guidance is out of date and even the planning guidance the Department directed us to is at least eight years old. It is clearly unacceptable that the Government does not have up-to-date guidance on bus priority measures that is easily accessible to local authorities. Guidance needs to cover rural as well as urban areas, but producing guidance is not enough. The Government must also make sure there is an effective framework for sharing examples of good practice. The Government has an important role in highlighting and sharing the benefits of such schemes to bus users and non-bus users alike, including how much such schemes have increased bus use. (Paragraph 75)
18. *We recommend that by October 2019 the Government reviews, and updates as necessary, all guidance relating to bus priority measures. We also recommend that the Government creates a buses guidance portal on the GOV.UK website where all the guidance on bus priority measures and good practice can be easily accessed by local authorities. This can then be linked to by those providing additional information and examples of good practice, such as Greener Journeys.* (Paragraph 76)
19. Commencing Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 will have two benefits. It will enable local authorities to enforce the law, which should ease congestion, and

it will also provide a revenue stream that local authorities could invest in measures to tackle congestion. As there is no ring-fenced funding available exclusively for bus priority measures we believe that the Government should welcome alternative ways of raising revenue to assist with improving bus services. *We recommend that Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 be commenced as soon as possible, as our predecessors have recommended twice before.* (Paragraph 81)

20. We welcome the investment in improving location information for local bus services. We await with interest the results of this investment, but we are concerned that the Government has not said when these services will be able to be accessed by bus users. *We recommend that the Government set out when the Real Time Information platform it is funding will go live. We expect to be updated if they will not meet their deadline.* (Paragraph 89)
21. We welcome that the Government has undertaken consultations with a view to producing guidance for Audio Visual (AV) announcements and is trying to remove barriers to bus use, but this is happening too slowly. Provision of information on routes, ticketing and fares is a basic thing that all the bus operators should be doing well, AV is no exception. We are concerned there is no consistency for data provision across the industry. Although we have heard some bus operators focus on the needs of passengers, not all do this well enough. All bus operators should focus on the needs of bus passengers and wherever possible remove barriers to bus travel, AV announcements will play a part in this, but the Government must ensure that any requirements on bus operators find the right balance between improving service for passengers, and not creating prohibitive costs for bus operators. (Paragraph 91)
22. *We recommend that the Government publishes its response to the accessible information consultation as soon as possible, and brings forward guidance and good practice around the provision of information by the end of 2019. Guidance should raise awareness of the common barriers to bus use and show bus operators and local authorities what they can do to reduce them.* (Paragraph 92)
23. Bus drivers are vital to local bus services and we recognise the important role they play in providing information to passengers. Enhancing the Certificate of Professional Competence would ensure drivers were equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to provide the best information for passengers about tickets, fares, network and routes. *We recommend that, by the end of the year, a specific customer service training module is added to the Certificate of Professional Competence syllabus for Public Service Vehicle drivers of local bus services within the UK. This will ensure that over a five-year period all drivers are trained in their customer service role. The roll out of this training should be undertaken following an impact assessment and consultation with all bus operators, big and small, and the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.* (Paragraph 96)

24. We are concerned that recruitment and retention in the bus industry is hampered by long hours and poor pay. Long hours are also a concern for safety. *We urge the Government to explore how recruitment and retention in the bus industry can be improved and recommend that it consult on whether legislation governing bus drivers' hours in Great Britain is still fit for purpose, or whether it should be amended, for example as is proposed by the Bus Drivers (Working Hours on Local Routes) Bill 2017–19.* (Paragraph 97)
25. Simplifying fares and ticket structures will make it easier for people who do not currently use a bus to make informed decisions about the cost of a journey, and to pay their fare if they do choose to travel by bus. Bus passengers and potential passengers need to understand fare and ticket options if they are to make an informed choice. Ticketing information needs to be simplified. We welcome the work the Government is doing to simplify ticket structures and increase the number of payment methods accepted on buses. *We recommend that the Government update us on the success of these schemes once they are implemented.* (Paragraph 103)
26. We conclude that since young people are required to be in education or training until they are 18 they should benefit from a concessionary fares scheme. Young people are also key to securing the future of bus use. Inconsistency in how young people are treated when using buses is a barrier to travel. This needs to be examined in more detail and we intend to come back to this in our future inquiry about concessionary fares later in this Parliament. (Paragraph 107)

Planning and buses

27. Some local authorities are good at joining up their transport and planning teams, but many are not. It is critical that different levels of local authorities work together to make sure that their planning and transport priorities are aligned, and new developments have access to public transport. (Paragraph 112)
28. It is not just the planning side but the commissioners of services that need to assess the transport impacts. Consultations on local service reconfiguration or new development, including of services, must include questions on the provision of transport and the need for public transport provision and how this will be delivered. (Paragraph 113)
29. *We recommend that the Government review the guidance for planning teams and those commissioning changes that affect service provision to ensure that public transport is being appropriately considered when planning permission is granted for new developments. We expect the Government to set out in their response to this Report the steps they are taking, and will take in future, to ensure local government at all levels is making good use of available guidance. We also recommend that Government thinks carefully about how to maintain transport links with vital services.* (Paragraph 114)

A bus strategy

30. Bus use has declined year after year, and successive governments have made no concerted or coordinated effort to reverse or even to stem the decline. In fact, the 30-year policy of deregulation, outside of London, has made the situation worse in most areas. The Government needs to take action now to halt the decline in bus use. The Government provides 42% of the funding for bus services, with the rest coming from passenger fares. It is a significant amount of funding and a sum for which the taxpayer is entitled to receive good value for money. To secure good value for money we believe the Government needs to be clearer about the outcomes it wants to secure for the investment it makes. These outcomes must be passenger focused. We conclude that the Government should set out a bus strategy. A bus strategy would help the Government arrest the current decline by setting out a clear plan of the Government's ambitions for bus use, and how it will support local authorities to improve local bus services and increase bus ridership. Any strategy must be passenger focused but should also address the reasons why people choose not to use buses and what changes are needed to encourage them to make a different travel choice from the one they make at present. A bus strategy would also provide a single point of reference for local authorities and bus operators to see their options and make the right decisions for their local areas. (Paragraph 117)
31. *We recommend that the Government develop and adopt a bus strategy by the end of 2020. This should include:*
- *the Government's ambitions for increasing bus ridership;*
 - *a commitment to making the full suite of operating models, including franchising, available to all local authorities, and guidance on how different bus operating models can be used most effectively and implemented quickly with a minimum of bureaucratic impediments;*
 - *a more stable multi-year funding model for local transport, including bus services, and a clear strategy for and details of how to access any bid-for funding;*
 - *an assessment of the evidence for the effectiveness of bus priority measures across England, and guidance on how best to implement bus priority measures; and*
 - *specific targets for modal shift, and actions to encourage people to switch to bus use. (Paragraph 118)*
32. *In its response to this Report the Government should lay out a clear timescale for the development of this strategy, including the impact assessments and consultations which will accompany the development of such a strategy. We believe there is merit in such a national strategy being underpinned by a national forum involving representatives from bus operators, trade unions and other stakeholders to examine and share information on issues such as improving services, recruitment and retention, skills, apprenticeship and bus safety. (Paragraph 119)*

1 Introduction

Our inquiry

1. Since the mid-1980s, buses have been deregulated everywhere in England, except London—where Transport for London controls services and fare levels, including specifying service frequency, setting and monitoring quality and safety standards, and setting vehicle capacities and minimum standards. Buses in England are operated by private companies on a commercial basis. Five companies—Arriva, FirstGroup, Go-Ahead, National Express and Stagecoach—account for 70% of the market, with the remainder made up of small, and often local, operators.

2. Bus companies determine what routes they want to run, how they run them and what fares to charge, provided they meet some basic notice and licencing obligations. Bus operators and drivers require a licence to operate and vehicles must comply with certain safety requirements. The Traffic Commissioners have overall responsibility for operator licensing compliance and must be notified of changes to routes, including decisions to withdraw routes.

3. A local authority can only step in where a service it deems to be socially necessary is not being provided by the market. Councils can contract bus operators to provide such services. In some circumstances, councils may face difficult decisions about whether to divert funds from other local services or to not support such bus services at all.

4. The 1984 buses White Paper set out the then Government’s aims of deregulation:

There is good evidence that services could be improved and costs reduced if we went about it in a different way. Without the dead hand of restrictive regulation fares could be reduced now on many bus routes and the operator would still make a profit. New and better services would be provided. More people would travel.

[...] If the customer has the final say, bus operators will look keenly to see where and when people want to travel. If one operator fails to provide a service that is wanted, another will.²

Nicholas Ridley, the then Transport Secretary, stated that the aim of deregulation was “to halt the decline that has afflicted the bus industry for more than 20 years”.³

5. Recent research has shown that the total amount local authorities spend supporting bus routes has fallen and 3,088 routes have been reduced, altered or withdrawn in England since 2010/11.⁴

6. We decided that the risks presented by declining bus use and continuing financial pressure on local authorities meant it was important that we should hold an inquiry into the health of the bus market. In only a few places is there genuine competition on the road or a choice for passengers. The powers that enable competition for the market on the

2 Department of Transport, Buses, Command paper 9300, July 1984 paras 1.4–1.6

3 HC Deb 12 February 1985, [col 192](#)

4 Campaign for Better Transport, [Buses in Crisis](#), 2 July 2018, page 4

road⁵ have yet to be used outside of London. The Transport Act 1985, which deregulated bus services outside of London, promised to deliver lower fares and improved services; it has failed to do so.

7. During the inquiry we received 187 pieces of written evidence and held six evidence sessions, including sessions in Bristol and Liverpool. We are grateful to all those who contributed to our inquiry.⁶

8. We also held three public engagement events in Leicester, Bristol and Liverpool. We are grateful to the staff of the UK Parliament's Education and Engagement Service for their help in organising these events, and everyone who came to these events to share their views with us.

5 This means the competition on specific bus routes as opposed to competition within an area.

6 A list of the witnesses the Committee took evidence from, and written evidence submitted to the Committee, is printed in this report. Written evidence and transcripts of oral evidence are available on the Committee's website.

2 Delivering bus services

Bus use in England outside London

9. Most journeys on public transport in Great Britain are made by bus.⁷ In 2017 6% of all journeys—4,941 million journeys—in the Great Britain were made by bus compared with 3% by train.⁸ For many people buses are essential to their quality of life. Buses allow people to travel for work, education or leisure and provide access to vital services, including hospitals, schools, and community services. Bus operators should put passenger needs first and recognise the extent to which particular groups—young people, older people, and people with reduced mobility or other specific needs—depend on them. Where bus services do not work for passengers it can seriously disrupt people’s lives and reduce their choice and opportunities when it comes to work, education and leisure. People who use buses are largely satisfied with the service they receive. The annual Transport Focus Bus Passenger Survey in 2018 reported that passenger satisfaction with their most recent journey was at 88%.⁹ This of course does not include people do not use the bus or who have had their bus services withdrawn—who are, unsurprisingly, very dissatisfied. In its evidence to us the Department for Transport recognised the importance of buses:

Buses serve city economies by helping people access work, deepening labour markets, and helping to tackle congestion. They also have an important contribution to make in reducing emissions in cities through moving people from cars onto cleaner ultra-low emission buses. Outside of city centres, they provide access to jobs and services, especially for those without access to a car.¹⁰

10. Car use and congestion are both increasing.¹¹ While a few areas of England, mainly cities, are increasing bus use and growing their networks, in most areas fewer people are using buses.¹² Across Great Britain the number of passenger kilometres fell by 38% from 2002 to 2017.¹³ In England, this compares to a 9% fall in the average number of trips across all modes.¹⁴ Bus services have been in long-term decline and many individuals and communities who depend on buses have become isolated. This will happen to more individuals and communities if bus services continue to be reduced and withdrawn.

11. In most places local authorities help to fund socially necessary services, which are not being provided on a commercial basis by a bus operator. Spending by local authorities on supported bus services is not ringfenced and has fallen in recent years. In England it fell by £171.6 million between 2010/11 (£374.3 million) and 2017/18 (£202.7 million)—a 46% reduction.¹⁵ In many rural and urban areas services have been withdrawn when they are no longer funded by local authorities.¹⁶

7 In England, outside London, 59% of public transport journeys were by bus in 2017/18. Department for Transport, [Transport Statistics 2018](#), 6 December 2018, page 14

8 Cars account for 62% of trips and walking 26% of trips. Department for Transport, [Transport Statistics 2018](#), 6 December 2018, page 4

9 Transport Focus, [Bus Passenger Survey – Autumn 2018 report](#), in England, outside London, 14 March 2019

10 Department for Transport ([BHC0052](#))

11 Department for Transport, [Transport Statistics 2018](#), 6 December 2018, page 16

12 Department for Transport, [Annual Bus Statistics](#), 30 January 2019, page 1

13 Department for Transport, [Passenger transport by mode since 1952](#), November 2018, Table TSGB0101

14 Department for Transport, [National Travel Survey 2017](#), 26 July 2018, NTS0101

15 Campaign for Better Transport, [Buses in Crisis](#), 2 July 2018, page 9

16 Campaign for Better Transport, [Buses in Crisis](#), 2 July 2018, page 4

Bus operating models

12. Bus services in England, Scotland and Wales are devolved. They are also deregulated, except in London, where buses are regulated and operate under a franchising model. Deregulation means that bus operators can determine how, when and where they run their services as well as setting their own fares, as long as they meet certain basic requirements. In England there are six municipal bus companies, where a local authority-owned company operates some local bus services.¹⁷ These municipal companies are open to competition from private bus companies, so are not a local monopoly.

13. In London, where bus services were not deregulated, Transport for London (TfL) controls fares and routes, including specifying service frequency, setting and monitoring quality and safety standards, and setting vehicle capacities and minimum standards. It lets contracts to private companies on a route-basis. There have been calls for all parts of England to be able to use similar franchising powers should they so wish. Successive governments have proposed various types of partnership and contracting to improve deregulated bus services and give local authorities outside London a greater say in the provision of bus services. It is too early to say whether the latest attempt, as set out in the Bus Services Act 2017, has been successful. Previous efforts have done little more than slow the decline in bus use that has continued since the 1950s.

14. There are a number of ways that local authorities can work with bus operators. These include voluntary partnerships, statutory partnership schemes and under a franchising model. Many areas choose to implement voluntary partnerships—where local authorities and bus operators work together voluntarily to improve local bus services. When voluntary partnerships are not possible, statutory partnerships can be used.¹⁸ Bus partnerships have been encouraged since the publication of a White Paper in 1998: *A new deal for transport: better for everyone*,¹⁹ which proposed statutory Quality Partnerships Schemes (QPS). This allowed local authorities and bus companies to enter into mutual agreements to provide services and infrastructure. This operating model was made easier to implement by the Local Transport Act 2008.²⁰ The main changes were the replacement of the requirement that a scheme must be the “only practicable way” of implementing the policies of the local authority’s bus strategy with a new set of criteria, abolition of the requirement for schemes in England to be approved by the Secretary of State, a new right to appeal for bus operators, and employment protections for affected workers.

15. The Transport Act 2000 provided for Quality Contract Schemes (QCSs).²¹ In theory these were available for local authorities to regulate their local bus services. QCSs were a similar scheme to franchising where local authorities had “similar powers to grant exclusive operating rights on defined routes or within a defined area”, on the basis of “best value”.²² To implement a QCS a local authority had to jump through a number of hoops.²³

17 Blackpool Transport Services Ltd.; Halton Borough Transport Ltd.; Ipswich Buses Ltd.; Nottingham City Transport Ltd.; Reading Buses; and Network Warrington

18 [Q501](#)

19 UK Government, [A new deal for transport: better for everyone](#), July 1998

20 [Local Transport Act 2008](#), Part 3

21 [Transport Act 2000](#), sections 124–134

22 Department for Transport, [From workhorse to thoroughbred: a better role for bus travel](#), March 1999, chapter 6

23 Department for Transport, [Quality Contract Schemes: Statutory Guidance](#), December 2009, Annex A

To date no local authority has implemented a QCS. Nexus, the Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Executive, worked on a QCS from 2012 to 2015,²⁴ but the QCS Board decided that Nexus was unable to proceed with the QCS.²⁵

16. The Bus Services Act 2017 provided for several models of partnership working,²⁶ building on QPSs, but not every local authority is automatically able to use the full suite of models. The 2017 Act also ruled out the creation of new municipal bus companies. The Government's view is that passengers will see the most benefit where the commissioning and provision of bus services are kept separate.²⁷ Voluntary partnerships are more widely used as bus operators and local authorities are encouraged to look at the voluntary option first, as it may be able to deliver change more quickly.²⁸

17. Local authorities are under no obligation to tell the Department about any voluntary partnership they have entered, making it difficult to know how many exist. The Department for Transport's annual bus survey appears to be the best source of information about partnerships. The Minister, Nusrat Ghani MP, told us 20% of bus operators were involved in some kind of partnership,²⁹ either voluntary or statutory. The annual bus survey reports that those who responded to the survey said they were involved in 107 voluntary partnerships in 2017/18. As some local authorities may have a voluntary partnership with more than one operator, this might not mean that 107 different local authorities have bus partnerships.³⁰ Legislation requires that local authorities must inform the Traffic Commissioner when a statutory partnership is created. There are 22 separate statutory partnership schemes in England linked to 14 authorities.³¹

Bus Services Act 2017—Franchising

18. Franchising allows local authorities to decide how bus services are provided, determine routes, and set fares and standards of service within an area. It is available to all local authorities but only Mayoral combined authorities, and Cornwall as part of its devolution deal, have an automatic right to franchise bus services.³² All other local authorities must apply to the Secretary of State for permission before they can use franchising for provision of bus services in their area. A franchising scheme may be made by one authority, or two or more acting together, and can cover the whole or any part of their area.³³ No authority has yet exercised these powers. Franchising has only been an option for a short period of time and there are requirements that must be met before franchising can take place.³⁴ Greater Manchester Combined Authority said that they are looking into using the

24 Traffic Commissioners for Great Britain, [QCS Board publishes report on Tyne and Wear scheme](#), 3 November 2015

25 North East Combined Authority (NECA) ([BHC0138](#))

26 [Bus Services Act 2017](#)

27 Bus Services Bill Committee, 14 March 2017, [Col 57](#)

28 Department for Transport, [Bus Services Act 2017, Enhanced Partnerships Guidance](#), 27 November 2017, para 2.4

29 [Q474](#) [Nusrat Ghani]

30 [Letter received 5 March 2019 from Nusrat Ghani MP](#), Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department for Transport

31 [Letter received 5 March 2019 from Nusrat Ghani MP](#), Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department for Transport

32 The Secretary of State has said he is minded to grant franchising powers to Cornwall upon request – this is not automatically granted on the face of the Act. The Secretary of State's reasoning is set out in: Department for Transport, [The Bus Services Act 2017: Franchising Scheme Guidance](#), 2017, p9

33 Transport Select Committee, [Bus Services Bill Inquiry](#), 25 November 2016, paragraph 12

34 See House of Commons Library Briefing Paper: [Bus Services Act 2017](#), page 32–3 for more detail

franchising powers and were preparing an assessment of a proposed franchising scheme.³⁵ Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, told us “We are moving, as quickly as we can, towards using the powers in the 2017 Act.”³⁶

19. The Department for Transport said that “by the end of [2018], all the necessary guidance and secondary legislation will be in place for local authorities to use the full suite of franchising and partnership powers.”³⁷ This has not yet happened. The Minister told us on 13 February 2019 that it would be done “later this year.”³⁸

Bus Services Act 2017—Partnership working

20. The 2017 Act provides for two types of statutory partnership: Advanced Quality Partnership (AQP) and Enhanced Partnership (EP) schemes. AQPs extend the measures that local authorities can offer as part of a partnership from purely infrastructure facilities, such as bus lanes, to service-based initiatives such as parking restrictions and traffic management policies. The Bus Services Act 2017 broadens the requirements that can be placed on operators under an AQP to include the marketing of services, tickets and fares.³⁹ AQPs rely on good relationships between the local authority and the bus operator. EPs go further than AQPs. The local authority and bus operators can agree shared standards. These can include route requirements (such as frequency and timetables) and operational requirements (such as branding, payment methods, ticketing structure and real time information). An EP can only be implemented if a “sufficient number”⁴⁰ of operators of qualifying local services do not object.⁴¹

21. Advanced Quality Partnership Schemes are in use in Birmingham,⁴² Solihull and Wolverhampton.⁴³ There are no EP schemes currently in use in England, although the DfT said that they are being considered in some areas.⁴⁴

Voluntary bus partnerships

22. A voluntary bus partnership is an agreement between local authorities and bus operators, whether contractual or not, regarding the provision of bus services. Voluntary partnerships can take many different forms. A partnership allows a local authority and bus operator to make joint commitments to invest in local bus services. For example, a local authority could invest in bus stops and the bus operator will invest in low emission buses.

35 Transport for Greater Manchester, [The future of bus services](#), accessed 21 November 2018

36 Oral evidence taken before the Transport Committee on 7 March 2019, Active Travel, HC (2017–19) 1487, [Q191](#)

37 Department for Transport ([BHC0052](#)), paragraph 10. We do not have a definitive list of the powers that are not enacted.

38 [Q504](#)

39 House of Commons Library Briefing Paper: [Bus Services Act 2017](#), page 31

40 “Sufficient number” means such number of persons as together provide certain proportion of qualifying local services (by number of operators and/or market share). These percentages will be defined in secondary legislation. [Explanatory notes to the Bus Services Bill](#), [Bill 100 (2016/17) - EN] para 162

41 Transport Committee, Eighth Report of Session 2016–17, [Bus Services Bill](#), HC 611, para 12

42 It was originally a Quality Partnership under the Transport Act 2000 and was converted into an AQP following the passage of the 2017 Act.

43 Transport for the West Midlands, [Bus Alliance](#), accessed 31 January 2019

44 Department for Transport ([BHC0052](#)), paragraph 12

23. Bristol is an example of a voluntary partnership—between a large operator, FirstGroup, and the local council—that has seen ridership increase. 14.2 million more bus journeys per year have taken place in the City of Bristol from 2009/10 to 2017/18.⁴⁵ While it has seen ridership increase, Tim Bowles, Mayor of the West of England, told us that there had been problems.⁴⁶ We heard from the public during our visit that there were continuing issues around the delivery of reliable services. In Merseyside, voluntary partnerships with two large operators, Arriva and Stagecoach, saw the introduction of a new young person’s ticket in July 2015, which has increased the number of young people using buses by 168%.⁴⁷ Brighton and Hove, where the main provider is Go-Ahead, has seen a 50% increase in bus journeys from 2004 to 2014, which has been attributed to the voluntary partnership.⁴⁸

24. Matthew Goggins, from MerseyTravel, told us that partnerships work well when both the bus operators and the local authorities have similar aims.⁴⁹ Anecdotally we have heard that the success of these relationships, which lack the structure of statutory partnerships, can also depend on the individuals involved.

25. A range of bus service operating models is available across England, but only some areas have automatic rights to certain models, while others must apply for these rights. The Government has also put in place legislation to prevent local authorities from creating new municipal bus companies. We do not see why all local authorities should not have access to all bus operating models. We believe that local authorities should be able to choose the best model for their area and all areas should have the same rights to manage bus services using the full suite of operating models in a way that they believe best meets their local needs.

26. We recommend that the full suite of operating models, including franchising, should be available to all local authorities, without the extra condition of going through the Secretary of State. In addition, all local authorities should have the option of creating a municipal bus company. The Department for Transport should not be the gatekeeper for which operating models local authorities decide are most appropriate for providing bus services in their areas. This should be left to local authorities to decide for themselves.

27. It is difficult to understand why the Secretary of State has not brought forward the necessary orders to enable franchising to proceed. We recommend that the Government do so immediately.

45 Department for Transport, [Local Bus Passenger Journeys](#), 30 January 2019, table BUS0109a. The data set starts in 2009/10.

46 [Q98](#)

47 Merseytravel/Liverpool City Region ([BHC0071](#)), paragraph 21

48 Brighton and Hove City Council, [Brighton & Hove: A bus success story](#), slide 4, accessed 3 July 2018

49 [Q318](#)

3 Funding of bus services

28. While 58% of revenue for bus operators comes from passenger fares,⁵⁰ the Government funds bus services in several ways to a total of approximately £2 billion per year.⁵¹ The bulk of Government funding comes through the Revenue Support Grant paid to local authorities.⁵² This includes the monies for concessionary fare reimbursement that the local authorities then pay to bus operators. The Bus Services Operator Grant (BSOG) is paid to either local authorities or bus operators, and was originally introduced as a mechanism for bus operators to recover their fuel duty costs. The Government has also made available grant funding for specific initiatives, for example: the Ultra-Low Emission Bus Scheme,⁵³ the Clean Bus Technology Fund⁵⁴ and the Transforming Cities Fund.⁵⁵ Local authorities and bus operators can bid for these funds.

29. Transport for Greater Manchester said that the current funding system was not always useful and that the Government has “masked the lack of long-term assurance over funding for a mode that, of necessity, must play a major role in tackling congestion and air pollution and in safeguarding economic growth and social inclusion.”⁵⁶ FirstGroup told us that the “Government invests significant sums in the bus sector, but it is uncoordinated, fragmented and piecemeal, and there is an unfortunate habit of specifying the public policy outcomes but failing to fund the means (concessionary fares being the most damaging example).”⁵⁷ These views were reflected by most of the local authorities and bus operators we heard from.

Certainty of funding

30. How local authorities spend public money on buses is a political choice. Most of the funding that can be used for bus services is not ringfenced and can be used to fund other local services. Each local authority will have different priorities and funding pressures. Some of these will be statutory duties, for example social care and other socially necessary services. It can be hard for local authorities to prioritise the funding of buses when they are already struggling to fund social care.

31. We heard that while grant funding was useful in treating discrete problems, it did not look at the bus network in totality.⁵⁸ Grants for specific purposes, like green buses, are time-limited and can be withdrawn. Darren Shirley, from the Campaign for Better Transport, told us that local authorities often choose to fund critical services rather than bus services. He said: “We need to have the funding from central Government given to local authorities ring-fenced, so that it goes towards funding transport services locally, especially buses.”⁵⁹ A consequence of funding bus services in this way is that there is no

50 Department for Transport, [Government support for the bus industry and concessionary travel \(England\) \(BUS0501b\)](#), 30 January 2019

51 [Q537](#)

52 The main un-ringfenced central government grant given to local authorities.

53 Department for Transport, [Ultra-low emission bus scheme: successful bidders](#), 6 February 2019

54 Department for Transport, [Government funding boost for bus industry in drive to improve air quality](#), 8 February 2018

55 Department for Transport, [Transforming Cities Fund](#), 17 December 2018

56 Transport for Greater Manchester ([BHC0167](#))

57 FirstGroup ([BHC0122](#))

58 [Q19](#), [Q38](#) [Darren Shirley], [Q118](#), [Q402](#) [Paul Woods], [Q404](#) [Giles Fearnley]

59 [Q32](#) [Darren Shirley]

certainty from one year to the next on the total funding available for bus services and the Government can choose to withdraw schemes it deems no longer necessary.⁶⁰ This limits effective planning for bus services, which can only take place when a local authority has a stable funding stream for a sustained period. The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport and ITS UK told us that current funding does not provide certainty for bus operators or local authorities.⁶¹ Giles Fearnley from First Bus also told us “certainty of funding is so important for investment decisions” by operators.⁶²

32. The Government’s Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) is designed to improve transport links and promote local growth within city regions with five years of funding.⁶³ It has been welcomed as it will provide certainty of funding and investment in transport. Paul Woods from the North East Combined Authority said that the TCF provides “a more effective funding source over the next four or five years.”⁶⁴ But the TCF has limited coverage. It is only for cities; towns and rural areas cannot access it. The 10 city regions⁶⁵ shortlisted for the Transforming Cities Fund were announced in December 2018.⁶⁶ Even for those cities which are eligible for funds from the TCF, only limited spending plans have been confirmed by Government so far. A press release of 26 March 2019 stated: “As part of the first tranche of the £2.5 billion Transforming Cities Fund, Derby and Nottingham, the North East, Portsmouth and Southampton will see the deployment of bus priority traffic lights to speed up trips to the city centres.”⁶⁷

33. We recognise that in the current financial situation additional funding for bus services is not likely to be found. Whilst we would welcome more funding, the Government and local authorities need to think about how best to spend the funds they already have. Consistent long-term funding for local authorities would help to provide local authorities and bus operators with a degree of certainty, making it possible for them to plan more effectively how to meet the needs of passengers. We recommend that the Government bring forward a more stable multi-year funding model for local transport, including bus services, by the summer of 2020.

Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG)

34. Bus operators must pay fuel duty, while aviation and rail services do not.⁶⁸ The Bus Services Operators Grant (BSOG) was originally conceived as a fuel duty rebate, although it is no longer calculated on that basis. In some areas the Government gives BSOG directly to bus operators. In others, such as Mayoral combined authorities, the local authority receives the payment and can decide how it is paid to bus operators. A local authority does not have to spend the money in the way outlined in BSOG guidelines, for example providing a rebate on fuel duty paid by operators, but are able to spend it on other measures,

60 The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in the UK ([BHC0106](#)), ITS United Kingdom ([BHC0128](#))

61 The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in the UK ([BHC0106](#)), ITS United Kingdom ([BHC0128](#))

62 [Q404](#) [Giles Fearnley]

63 Department for Transport, [Record boost to R&D and new transport fund to help build economy fit for the future](#), 20 November 2017, Department for Transport, [Transforming Cities Fund](#), 17 December 2018

64 [Q402](#) [Paul Woods]

65 Derby & Nottingham, Leicester City, the North East, Norwich, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Southampton, Sheffield, Stoke-on-Trent and West Yorkshire.

66 Department for Transport, [Transforming cities: shortlisted cities](#), 18 December 2018

67 Department for Transport, [Bus revolution to put power in passengers’ hands](#), 26 March 2019

68 Mr Raymond Wilkes ([BHC0006](#)), Friends of DalesBus ([BHC0037](#)), Devon County Council ([BHC0063](#)), FirstGroup ([BHC0122](#)), Plymouth City Council-additional written evidence ([BHC0177](#)), [Q37](#)

such as encouraging operators to invest in smart card readers for contactless payments.⁶⁹ In some areas BSOG is spent on buses powered by alternative fuels. Electric buses do not have a “fuel” on which any duty is paid and so are not eligible for BSOG in areas where it is used as a fuel duty rebate.

35. We heard from the Government, local authorities and bus operators that BSOG was necessary for the bus industry to function. The Government told us that “BSOG keeps fares 3% lower, service levels 6.7% higher and patronage [bus passenger numbers] 4.4% higher.”⁷⁰ Local authorities have told us that BSOG has lessened the impact of budget pressures⁷¹ and we heard from bus operators that they depend on BSOG payments.⁷²

36. In October 2010, the spending review reduced funding for BSOG by 20%, saving £300 million by 2014/15.⁷³ Further reform of BSOG has been proposed by two previous administrations in the last five years.⁷⁴ The Coalition Government proposed further reform of BSOG in July 2014. In the next Parliament the Department for Transport said, “A decision on the changes to be made on BSOG is expected later in 2018.”⁷⁵ To date nothing further has been published. Many of our witnesses welcomed the commitment by the Government to reform BSOG. But a decision is not imminent; the Minister told us that the Government would look at the funding of BSOG after the Spending Review in 2019.⁷⁶

37. Claire Walters from Bus Users UK suggested that, instead of BSOG, fuel duty for buses should be removed: “If we could stop having to do all the work involved in BSOG and just exempt buses and coaches from fuel duty, it would make life a bit easier for the people running those services.”⁷⁷

38. BSOG is clearly in need of reform. The Government claims that it is committed to reforming BSOG, but for five years little has happened. It now looks like no decision will be taken until after the 2019 Spending Review. The arrangements for BSOG appear to have evolved organically and there is no obvious rationale for the different arrangements under which payments can be made, or the different choices some local authorities can make in respect of the things for which BSOG is paid. In certain areas Government has recognised that local authorities are able to use this funding as they see fit, but this is not true everywhere.

39. *We recommend that, before the start of the Spending Review later this year, the Government set out a plan for how BSOG will operate, what it is intended to achieve and how it will be reformed to achieve these aims.*

69 Department for Transport, [Bus Services: Grants and Funding](#), 29 September 2016

70 Department for Transport ([BHC0052](#)), paragraph 15

71 Devon County Council-additional written evidence ([BHC0176](#)), Plymouth City Council-additional written evidence ([BHC0177](#)), West of England Combined Authority ([BHC0178](#))

72 [Qq356–357](#), [Q383](#). For more information please see House of Commons Library standard note, [Buses: grants and subsidies](#), 4 December 2013

73 HM Treasury, [Spending Review 2010](#), Cm 7942, October 2010, para 2.28

74 For more information please see the House of Commons Library standard note, [Buses: grants and subsidies](#), 4 December 2013

75 Department for Transport, [Bus Services: Grants and Funding](#), September 2016

76 [Q547](#)

77 [Q37](#) [Claire Walters]

Concessionary fare reimbursement

40. Free local concessionary bus travel, with the aim of improving the lives of older and disabled people,⁷⁸ was introduced across England in 2008.⁷⁹ The statutory scheme provides for travel between 0930 and 2300 on weekdays and at any time at weekends and on Bank Holidays on scheduled services. Pass holders can travel for free on any local bus service in England. There were 8.5 million concessionary passes in England in 2017/18, down 1.4% on the previous year. Concessionary passes are available to older people when they reach state pension age and eligibility is linked to changes in that age (i.e. rising to 66 by October 2020).⁸⁰ The journeys taken by concessionary pass holders were down by 4.8% to 884 million journeys in 2017/18.⁸¹ There are separate statutory schemes in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland with different eligibility criteria and benefits. Local authorities can also fund additional discretionary schemes.

41. Local authorities are responsible for reimbursing bus operators for journeys made by passengers with a bus pass entitling them to concessionary travel. The Government funds this reimbursement as part of the main Revenue Support Grant for local authorities. Local authorities can offer more than the statutory concessions, for example allowing concessionary pass holders to use their pass before 0930. Local authorities are responsible for funding any concessionary travel that goes beyond the scheme introduced by the Government.

42. The reimbursement rate offered to bus operators for concessionary fares is based on a principle of “no better and no worse off” than had the scheme not existed. We have been told that, at present, the reimbursement scheme does not achieve this. The Minister agreed with the view that concessionary fares are not fully funded and that some of the cost of them is borne locally and indeed subsidised by full-fare-paying passengers.⁸²

43. Reimbursement covers a single journey regardless of length; a journey of 1 mile and a journey of 10 miles are reimbursed at the same rate, irrespective of whether a normal fare would be greater for a longer journey. This affects rural bus services as journeys are likely to be longer. The rate at which bus operators are reimbursed for concessionary fares varies across the country.⁸³ The average reimbursement per fare, per passenger received by bus operators across England is 99p. In London it is 84p, in metropolitan areas it is 99p and in non-metropolitan areas is 110p.⁸⁴ The Department has issued guidance around concessionary fare reimbursement,⁸⁵ and a calculator to work out the reimbursement rate.⁸⁶ John Godfrey, from the TAS Partnership, told us that the base fares being used to calculate reimbursements are from 2005/6 and the reimbursement level tends to be below the level of current fares.⁸⁷

78 UCL, [Has the policy of concessionary bus travel for older people in Britain been successful?](#), accessed 15 January 2019, p2

79 Department for Transport, [Concessionary travel survey 2016/17 notes and definitions](#), 14 December 2017, p1

80 HM Treasury, [Pre-Budget Report 2009](#), 9 December 2009, para 5.45

81 Department for Transport, [Concessionary Travel Statistics England, 2017/18](#), 30 January 2019, page 1

82 [Q558](#)

83 Department for Transport, [Concessionary travel for older and disabled people: guidance on reimbursing bus operators \(England\)](#), November 2018, para 3.3–3.5

84 Department for Transport, [Concessionary travel survey 2016/17 notes and definitions](#), 14 December 2017, p6

85 Department for Transport, [How to reimburse bus operators for concessionary travel](#), 26 November 2018

86 Department for Transport, [Calculate your concessionary bus travel reimbursement](#), 10 January 2019

87 [Q430](#)

44. At present reimbursement of concessionary fares for bus operators does not meet the principle of “no better and no worse off”. This principal is objectively impossible to test. The reimbursement calculator given to local authorities by the Department for Transport is based on fares in 2005/06. Local authorities, with already stretched resources, often feel compelled to cover the shortfall. This potentially puts bus services at risk. If services are withdrawn it could have a disproportionate effect on vulnerable people, and they may become more isolated. This runs counter to the stated aim of the concessionary fares policy: improving the lives of older and disabled people.

45. *We recommend that the Government review how it finances concessionary bus passes, and the guidance to local authorities on reimbursement of bus operators, with a view to meeting the principle of both local authorities and bus operators being “no better and no worse off”. As a priority, the Government should re-baseline the reimbursement rates on ticket prices for 2017/18 prices; and should continue to re-baseline fares every four years so that the principle of “no better and no worse off” is maintained and the reimbursement rate remains broadly in line with current fares.*

46. In this inquiry we specifically looked at the issue of reimbursement for bus operators from local authorities on concessionary travel on buses. Although we have taken evidence on funding from central Government for reimbursement to local authorities, this issue is complicated, and we wish to dedicate time to investigate it thoroughly. We also identified a number of issues regarding concessionary fares more widely on other modes of transport. There appear to be a great many inconsistencies in concessionary travel policy. We have also heard some evidence to suggest that the policy outcomes might be delivered more effectively by other means. **We intend to return to the issue of concessionary travel, across different modes of transport, later in the Parliament.**

Total Transport

47. Total Transport is the bringing together of budgets and expertise across policy divides, such as education, health and transport. In their report on “Passenger Transport in Isolated Communities”, our predecessors encouraged the Government to consider Total Transport.⁸⁸ The Government accepted that recommendation and, in 2015, launched a Total Transport Pilot Fund.⁸⁹ It allowed “Local authorities in England [to] bid for resources to implement a cross-sector approach to the delivery of supported public road passenger transport services.”⁹⁰ The fund was intended to enable hospital transport, school transport and other services to be more coordinated and provide better value for money for the taxpayer.

48. Devon County Council told us that their Total Transport money had provided a real benefit for their rural area. It funded a patient transport advice service that was still operating even though the funding had ended.⁹¹ Karen Rose, from Devon County Council told us:

88 Transport Committee, Fourth Report of Session 2014–15, [Passenger Transport in Isolated Communities](#), HC 288, para 42

89 Department for Transport, [Total Transport Pilot Fund](#), 14 January 2015

90 Department for Transport, [Total Transport Pilot Fund](#), 14 January 2015

91 [Q110](#)

In terms of the passenger advice service, some lessons learned are that it does take a while to build up the partnership that is required to make things happen. The benefits are better planning, refining eligibility, as I mentioned, opening up a larger supplier basis, and good financial management of those processes. The challenge is marrying up the different processes of different parties and managing expectations [...] Sharing data has been an issue. Perseverance is a big issue there. We have had a lot of different people come and go in that partnership and it is about maintaining contacts with people who have the relevant information to make sure we can help that process go forward.⁹²

Nusrat Ghani MP told us that an evaluation of the Total Transport pilots would be published later this year.⁹³

49. We are pleased that the Government accepted our recommendation to introduce pilots for Total Transport and are encouraged by the positive stories we have heard of these pilots. However, we are concerned that it has taken the Government four years to publish an evaluation of the pilots. We recommend the Government publishes its evaluation of the Total Transport pilots by the end of the summer 2019. If the results of the pilots are successful, the Government should continue to fund and roll out this approach.

Bidding for grants for bus services

50. The Government has provided grants for infrastructure and buses that local authorities and operators can bid for. Bidding for such grants is costly. Some local authorities are much more effective at bidding for such grants and as a result can benefit disproportionately from them.⁹⁴ While there is variable interest in bidding for grant funding among local authorities, we heard that budget cuts and a loss of skills had made some local authorities less capable of applying for such funding.⁹⁵ Paul Woods from the North East Combined Authority said “There is a kind of postcode lottery in where that funding might go and the benefits that might come from it.”⁹⁶

51. The Minister told us that when looking at the bids for funding “sometimes the same bunch of names comes forward.” She said, “I have challenged the [Department for Transport bidding] team to do what we can to make sure that we are supporting the widest possible group of people”.⁹⁷ Catriona Henderson, Head of Buses and Taxis at the Department for Transport, said that the Department had been told people “get really tired of bidding for things” and meeting the cost of bidding.⁹⁸

52. Many local authorities lack the capacity and expertise to bid for grant funding. Local authorities with experience and expertise in formulating bids may be disproportionately benefitting from such funding. The Government has a responsibility to make funding accessible for all local authorities that could use it effectively to improve bus services in

92 [Q111](#)

93 [Q536](#)

94 [Q407](#)

95 [Q39](#), [Q60](#), Telford & Wrekin Council ([BHC0079](#))

96 [Q407](#) [Paul Woods]

97 [Q535](#)

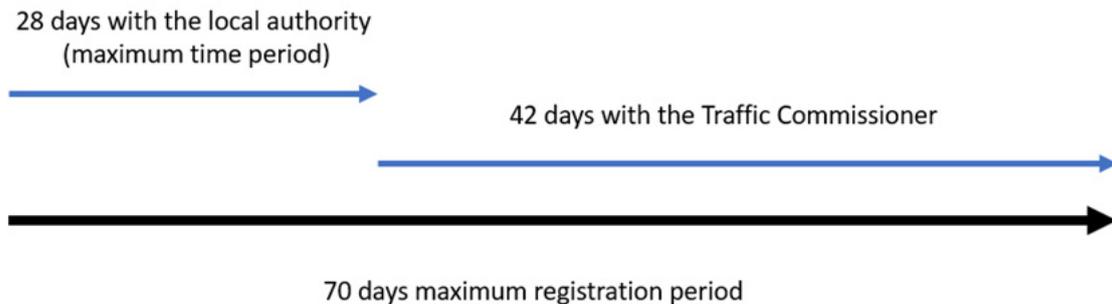
98 [Q535](#)

their area. In the short term, the Government should directly inform all local authorities of the bid-for funding available. In the longer term, we recommend that there should be a review across all bid-for funding for buses from the Department for Transport. By the end of 2019 the Department should, in concert with the Local Government Association, assess and publish details of how much it costs local authorities to bid for this funding, whether they receive the funding or not.

Socially necessary services

53. When the bus market was deregulated in the 1980s there was no clear definition of a socially necessary service. Rural areas are less likely to have bus services as there is less population density when compared to urban areas. It was expected that local authorities would be able to subsidise routes that bus operators did not find profitable, but there is no requirement for local authorities to provide socially necessary bus services. Over time, pressures on local authority budgets have made it more difficult for local authorities to fund services that are not commercially viable.

54. Local authorities have powers to provide services, under tender, to meet public transport requirements within their area that would not be met in any other way.⁹⁹ This is common practice. Some services in any given area are likely to be subsidised as councils have deemed them important routes for social and economic reasons. Bus operators must give notice to the local authority and Traffic Commissioner that they plan to introduce, change or withdraw a bus route, as shown below.¹⁰⁰ The longest notice period is 70 days (it was formerly 56 days) but this can be reduced—ultimately to 42 days—if the local authority responds before the end of the 28-day period it has to respond.¹⁰¹



The initial 28-day period is to allow the local authority to consider if they will provide a replacement service¹⁰² by putting the route out to tender as a socially necessary service.¹⁰³

99 Transport Act 1985, [Section 63 \(4\)](#)
 100 Public Service Vehicles (Registration of Local Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 ([SI 2018/439](#))
 101 Increased from 42 days by the Public Service Vehicles (Registration of Local Services) (Amendment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2002 ([SI 2002/182](#))
 102 Traffic Commissioners of Great Britain, [Notifying a local authority of a bus registration](#), 13 June 2018
 103 If the operator receives a reply from the local authority indicating that they have received and considered the draft application before 28 days have passed, the operator can apply to the traffic commissioner straight away: Department for Transport, [Bus Services Act 2017: Guidance on the New Arrangements For Registering, Varying And Cancelling Local Bus Services](#), accessed 24 August 2018, Page 4

55. Local authority spending on tendered routes has fallen over time. The Campaign for Better Transport has highlighted that since 2010/11 local authorities have reduced their spending on supported bus services in England by 46%, a net reduction of £172 million.¹⁰⁴ 290 bus routes in England were reduced or withdrawn in 2017/18.¹⁰⁵

56. In the absence of bus funding reform, the extent to which local authorities are able to fund socially necessary services could be severely constrained. We recommend that the Government review, as a matter of urgency, the financial ability of local authorities to fund socially necessary services and report on this by the end of 2019.

57. While local authorities have the flexibility to make tendering decisions based on the particular circumstances of their locality, there is no clear direction or strategy about what services should be deemed necessary and protected. The Government should define socially necessary services by the end of 2019, and provide guidance on the services it expects local authorities to prioritise when tendering for socially necessary services.

104 Campaign for Better Transport, [Buses in Crisis](#), 2 July 2018, page 2

105 Campaign for Better Transport, [Buses in Crisis](#), 2 July 2018, page 7

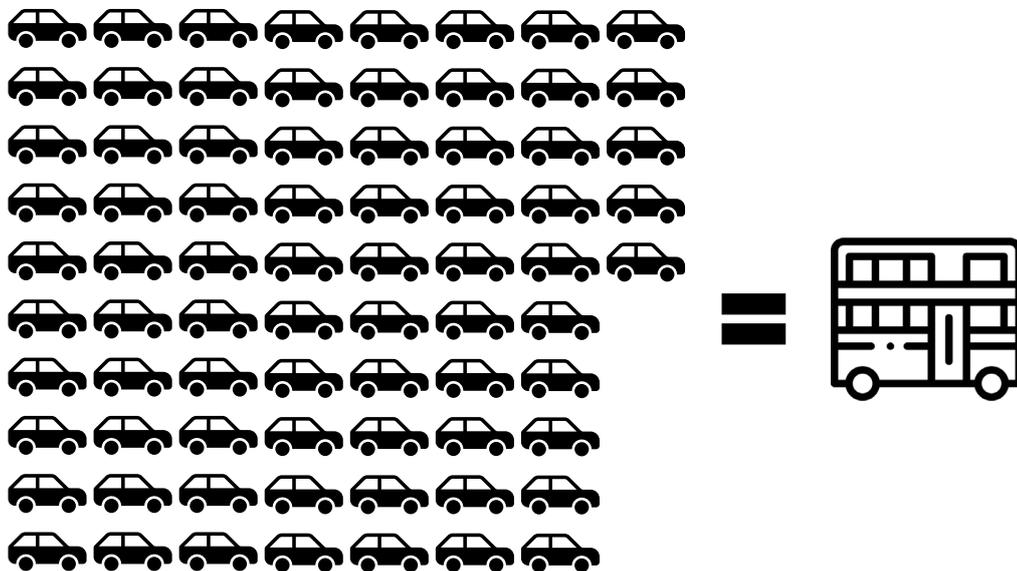
4 Barriers to travel

Congestion

58. Bus users want reliable, timely services. Linda McCord from Transport Focus told us that punctuality and reliability were passengers’ top priority for improvements.¹⁰⁶ Claire Haigh from Greener Journeys told us that from their research speed and convenience were fundamental.¹⁰⁷ The Campaign for Better Transport affirmed this from their research.¹⁰⁸ Buses that have reliable timetables are more likely to attract potential passengers. While there are other factors, like the availability of buses and drivers, that affect the reliability of buses, congestion has a major impact and is widely thought to be a key factor in the decline of bus use.¹⁰⁹ The Department for Transport has recognised that congestion is not something that bus operators can control.¹¹⁰ Local authorities have a network management duty. The Traffic Management Act 2004 “requires local traffic authorities to do all that is reasonably practicable to manage the network effectively to keep traffic moving.”¹¹¹

59. Increasing bus use is a good way to reduce congestion on local roads; a fully laden double decker bus can take up to 75 cars off the road.¹¹² Reducing congestion and increasing bus use is not only good for the bus user but can help other road users.

Figure 1: Illustration of bus capacity compared to cars with one occupant



106 [Q5](#)
 107 [Qq3–4](#)
 108 [Q7](#)
 109 Mr Raymond Wilkes ([BHC0006](#)), ALBUM ([BHC0051](#)), Exeter and District Bus User Group ([BHC0056](#)), Salfords and Sidlow Parish Council ([BHC0062](#)), Bedford Area Bus Users Society (BABUS) ([BHC0073](#)), Arriva UK Bus ([BHC0074](#)), FirstGroup ([BHC0122](#)), York Bus Forum ([BHC0005](#))
 110 [Q50](#), Department for Transport ([BHC0052](#)), paragraph 6
 111 Department for Transport, [Traffic Management Act 2004, Network Management, Duty Guidance](#), November 2004, paragraph 8
 112 Greener Journeys, [Improving Air Quality in Towns and Cities](#), 21 April 2017, page 2

60. Congestion can be reduced, and journey times can be improved, by:

- Encouraging modal shift—getting people out of their cars and onto buses;
- Introducing effective bus priority measures; and
- Enforcement of Traffic Management Orders and a range of traffic offences.

We look at each of these in turn below.

Modal shift

61. Modal shift is when people change the mode of transport by which they travel. Bus operators,¹¹³ campaign groups,¹¹⁴ experts¹¹⁵ and local authorities¹¹⁶ told us that modal shift, from private cars to buses, will reduce congestion and improve reliability and journey times. Modal shift can also make a significant contribution to efforts to improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions. The choices people make about their mode of travel are affected by several factors:

- Convenience;
- Frequency;
- Reliability;
- Journey length, and
- Cost.

62. Convenience, frequency, reliability and journey length can be tackled in numerous ways and have other benefits, such as reliability and improved air quality. These are described below. The perception of cost is a factor in how people choose to travel. It can also be difficult to find out the fare for a journey and, given the huge variation from place to place, determine if it is fair.¹¹⁷ If a journey is convenient and reliable but the price is too high, people are likely to choose a cheaper option. The real terms cost of motoring has decreased as bus and rail fares have increased over the period 1987 to 2017.¹¹⁸ This could influence the decisions individuals make when it comes car use. The whole cost of a bus journey is clear, but the cost of an individual car journey is not clear. When planning a journey people generally consider petrol and parking costs and not other costs associated with using a car. Figure 2 shows the cost rises of motoring expenditure compared with rail and bus fares from 1987 to 2017.

113 [Q294](#)

114 [Q13](#)

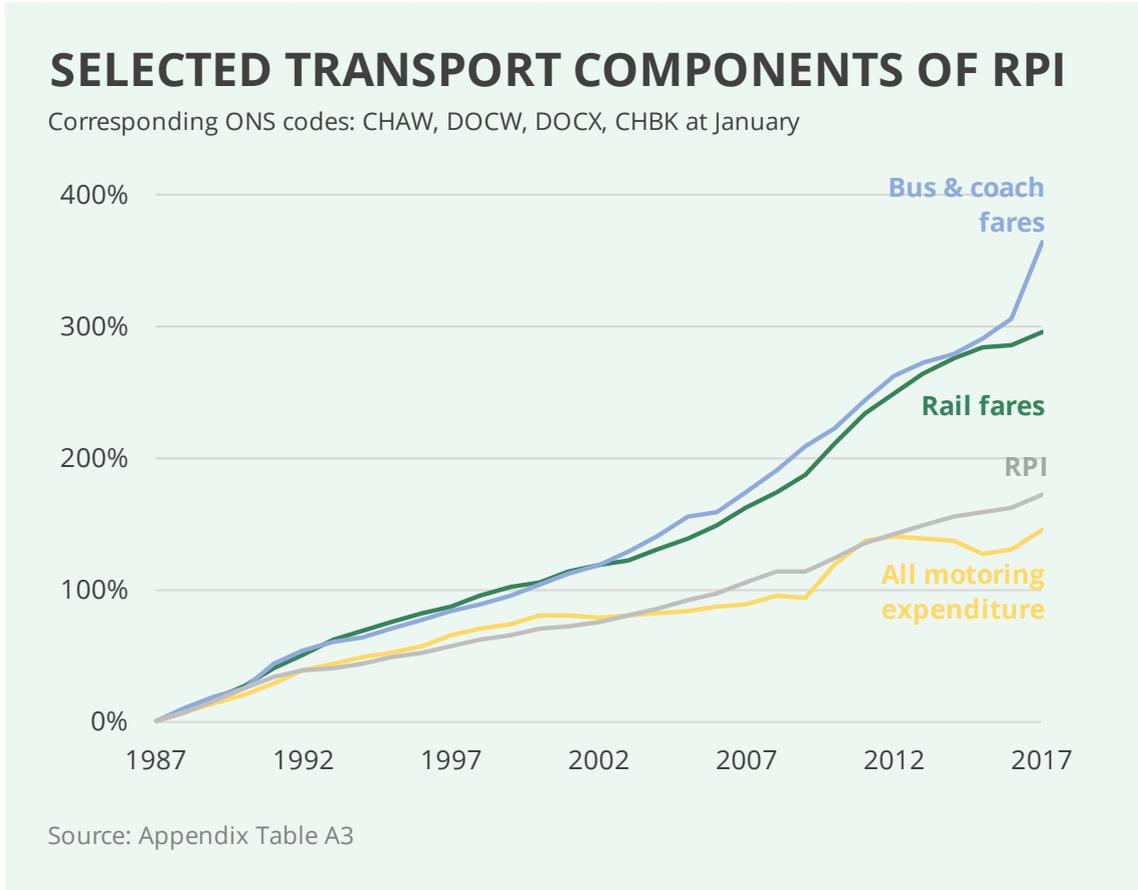
115 [Q48](#)

116 [Q107](#), [Q359](#) [Rob Jones]

117 The Guardian. [Massively unfair' gulf in bus fares between London and rest of England](#), 5 May 2019

118 House of Commons Library, [Railways: fare statistics](#), 20 November 2018, page 5

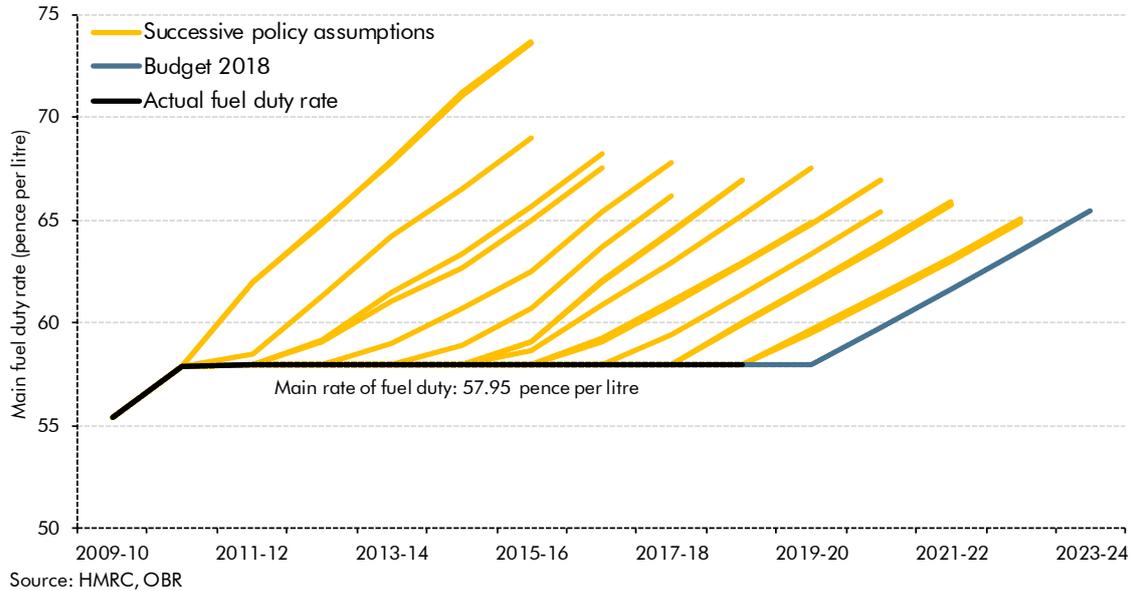
Figure 2: Increase in cost of different forms of transport



Source: House of Commons Library, [Railways: fare statistics](#), 20 November 2018, page 5

63. The Government does not set bus fares, although local authorities can set fares if they run a municipal company or use the franchising powers introduced in 2017.¹¹⁹ It has been government policy since 2010/11 not to increase fuel duty. Had fuel duty been increased by inflation over this period it would have seen revenues increase by £9 billion per year, as can be seen in figure 3 below. The Government has explained that this policy is to assist with the cost of living by freezing fuel duty, but has not explained why this principle does not extend to the costs associated with bus (or rail) fares (other than through concessionary fares).

119 Where councils own municipal bus companies they will in that capacity set fares, but these municipal companies are separate corporate entities and are run on a commercial basis

Figure 3: Successive fuel duty uprating assumptions

Source: [Office for Budget Responsibility, Economic and fiscal outlook, October 2018](#), chart 4.4 p122

64. There are examples of modal shift campaigns, such as the “better by bus” campaign in Liverpool,¹²⁰ and the Leeds and Harrogate route work undertaken by Transdev,¹²¹ which have been successful at getting people to switch from driving their own car to getting the bus. These could be used as examples of where encouraging modal shift has increased bus passenger numbers and reduced congestion. Alex Hornby from Transdev Blazefield told us about the importance of establishing modal shift when someone moves house. He told us that with all the upheaval in someone’s life, “it is a great way to get them to change their mode of travel as well.”¹²² An example of this can be seen in Nottinghamshire where the local authority is working with property developers to offer residents of new developments free travel in conjunction with the developers.¹²³

65. The HCT group told us that the Government has not prioritised modal shift,¹²⁴ but Nusrat Ghani MP told us that the Department was encouraging modal shift through the Bus Services Act 2017.¹²⁵ She could not, however, point to any practical things the Department was doing to achieve modal shift.

66. The Clean Air Strategy from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs aims to reduce air pollution from transport.¹²⁶ Clean air zones are due to be introduced in many areas to reduce pollution. These zones are where targeted action is taken to improve air quality. The only practical way that these zones will meet their targets is if people move

120 Merseytravel, Arriva and Stagecoach, [Better by Bus](#), accessed 18 February 2019, [Q326](#)

121 [Q295](#)

122 [Q280](#)

123 Nottinghamshire County Council, [New Housing Developments: Apply for a free travel pass](#), accessed 10 April 2019

124 HCT Group ([BHC0132](#))

125 [Q456](#)

126 Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, [Clean Air Strategy 2019](#), 14 January 2019

out of cars and onto public transport, take up walking and cycling, or there is a switch to non-polluting fuels. Local authorities should be given autonomy to decide how they will encourage modal shift within the framework of the clean air zones set by Government.

67. Modal shift is essential to reduce congestion and tackle air quality issues. It is critical that the Government and local authorities encourage bus use. Local authorities can act to improve reliability through bus priority measures, but the value for money of any such investment would be increased if accompanied by measures to reduce car use and encourage modal shift, and if the Government acted to stop the cost of public transport rising relative to the cost of motoring.

68. The Government must recognise the importance of modal shift to achieving many of their ambitions for reducing pollution and congestion. *We recommend that the Government sets targets for modal shift to meet the policy outcomes of cleaner air for towns and cities and bring forward specific actions for how modal shift will be achieved, including by encouraging people to switch from private car use to travel by bus or other forms of public transport.*

Bus priority measures

69. Giving buses priority over other road users can reduce congestion, improve bus reliability, reduce journey times and, when used effectively, increase passenger numbers. Bus priority measures can include a range of interventions: bus lanes, park and ride schemes, priority signalling and guided busways. They work best when they are part of an integrated transport system, including parking restrictions or increased parking charges.¹²⁷

70. For bus priority measures to have the greatest effect, bus operators need to share information about congestion pinch points with local authorities. Tom Forth from ODI Leeds and Jason Humm, Head of Transport at the West of England Combined Authority, told us that sharing information enables local authorities to introduce the most effective measures, in the correct areas, to increase the frequency and reliability of buses.¹²⁸

71. The Department's guidance on bus priority measures dates back to 1997.¹²⁹ Derek Fishpool from Devon County Council highlighted that the guidance around bus priority measures is often more geared to heavy urban areas.¹³⁰ Rural areas also have problems with congestion and the current guidance does not address this. We asked representatives of local authorities from across England about the effectiveness of this guidance, and every group said it needs to be reviewed. The West of England Combined Authority told us that the guidance needs updating, although the key principles should remain the same.¹³¹ Recent innovations are not covered in the 1997 guidance, an example is bus priority signalling with traffic light communication in Swansea, which was deployed in 2018.¹³²

127 [Q332, Q359](#)

128 [Q81, Q129](#)

129 Department for Transport, [Keeping buses moving, a guide to traffic management to assist buses in urban areas](#), 14 October 1997

130 [Q119](#)

131 [Q133](#) [Jason Humm]

132 Wales Online, [Buses in Swansea first in Wales to communicate with traffic lights when they're running late](#), 5 March 2018

72. The Department for Transport did not seem clear about guidance on bus priority measures. Officials from the Department told us that they had to look it up after we had raised it in oral evidence sessions with local authorities.¹³³ Arguing that the current guidance was still relevant Catriona Henderson, Head of Buses and Taxis at the Department for Transport, referred to the *Manual for Streets 1 and 2*,¹³⁴ published in 2007 and 2010 respectively. Both focus on planning and contain little detail on bus priority measures.

73. Catriona Henderson told us that there is a “Transport knowledge Hub” available on the Greener Journeys website.¹³⁵ She said: “This is a place where local transport officers can look for information on a whole variety of different issues, and which brings together the views of the Government, where best practice is done, and information from the private sector.”¹³⁶ It seems strange to ask local authorities to rely on a third-party website as the authoritative source—it is not clear to us why local authorities would turn to this source for guidance issued by Government, rather than the GOV.UK website, or how they would know that it was the most current advice and guidance from the Government. The Department acknowledged that this may not be the right place for bus priority guidance.¹³⁷

74. If bus priority measures are seen to reduce congestion and increase bus speeds, it might give local politicians in other areas the incentive to take the sometimes difficult decisions to introduce such schemes. *The Government should review the evidence for the effectiveness of bus priority measures across England, with a view to demonstrating the value of these measures in reducing congestion and increasing bus speeds. Local authorities must have the evidence base they need to give bus priority measures proper consideration.*

75. The Government’s guidance is out of date and even the planning guidance the Department directed us to is at least eight years old. It is clearly unacceptable that the Government does not have up-to-date guidance on bus priority measures that is easily accessible to local authorities. Guidance needs to cover rural as well as urban areas, but producing guidance is not enough. The Government must also make sure there is an effective framework for sharing examples of good practice. The Government has an important role in highlighting and sharing the benefits of such schemes to bus users and non-bus users alike, including how much such schemes have increased bus use.

76. *We recommend that by October 2019 the Government reviews, and updates as necessary, all guidance relating to bus priority measures. We also recommend that the Government creates a buses guidance portal on the GOV.UK website where all the guidance on bus priority measures and good practice can be easily accessed by local authorities. This can then be linked to by those providing additional information and examples of good practice, such as Greener Journeys.*

133 [Q522](#)

134 Department for Transport, [Manual for Streets 1](#), 29 March 2007, Department for Transport, [Manual for Streets 2](#), 29 September 2010

135 Greener Journeys, [Transport Knowledge Hub](#), accessed 18 February 2019

136 [Q523](#)

137 [Q523](#)

Moving traffic offences

77. Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 covers parking, bus lane contraventions, the London lorry ban and moving traffic contraventions. Local authorities can apply for powers that will allow them, rather than the police, to take action against motorists committing such offences. The parking provisions are already in force in virtually all areas of England. There has also been widespread take up of the powers for enforcing bus lane infringement.

78. The provisions on moving traffic offences have not yet been commenced. Doing so would give local authorities powers to enforce and issue penalty charges for offences such as ignoring one-way traffic signs, failing to give priority to oncoming traffic, or disregarding box junction markings. Local authorities want these powers to reduce congestion without needing to rely on the police to enforce moving traffic violations. The police have had budget cuts and their priorities have changed. They do not have the resources to police these offences effectively.

79. A 2011 Transport Committee report recommended that Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 be brought into force “by 2013”.¹³⁸ In 2016 the Transport Committee again called for Part 6 to be commenced.¹³⁹ In response Andrew Jones MP, the then roads Minister, told our predecessor Committee that he had doubts about the desirability of this and that there was no call for it. He argued that he had only heard support for devolving moving traffic enforcement powers from the Local Government Association (LGA), and remarked that “not all councils are members of it.”¹⁴⁰ Our predecessors noted that almost all English councils are members of the LGA with the exceptions of Sheffield City Council and the London Boroughs of Bromley and Wandsworth.¹⁴¹ We heard evidence during this inquiry that local authorities still want these powers.¹⁴²

80. When the Bus Services Bill 2016–17 was going through the committee stage in the House of Commons, the Government admitted that “a key concern remains that if the powers are granted, they could be misused to generate revenue for local authorities.”¹⁴³ A similar argument was made when parking enforcement was decriminalised in the 1990s.¹⁴⁴ However, there are restrictions on the spending of surplus parking enforcement income raised by local authorities.¹⁴⁵ Similarly, there are powers under Section 88 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 that will allow the Secretary of State to make regulations specifying what surplus income can be spent on from activities undertaken under Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004.¹⁴⁶ The Government could use these powers to specify that any surplus income from enforcement of moving traffic offences is spent on measures to tackle congestion.

138 Transport Committee, Ninth Report of Session 2010–12, [Out of the jam: reducing congestion on our roads](#), HC 872, paragraph 16

139 Transport Committee, Second Report of Session 2015–16, [Road traffic law enforcement](#), HC 518, paragraph 99

140 Oral evidence taken before the Transport Committee on 7 December 2015, Second Report of Session 2015–16, [Road traffic law enforcement](#), HC 518, Q290 [Andrew Jones]

141 Transport Committee, Second Report of Session 2015–16, [Road traffic law enforcement](#), HC 518, paragraph 98
142 [Q132](#), [Q377](#)

143 Bus Services Bill Committee, 14 March 2017, [col 4](#)

144 This was further reformed under the Part 6 of Traffic Management Act 2004

145 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, [section 55](#)

146 Traffic Management Act 2004, [section 88](#)

81. **Commencing Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 will have two benefits. It will enable local authorities to enforce the law, which should ease congestion, and it will also provide a revenue stream that local authorities could invest in measures to tackle congestion. As there is no ring-fenced funding available exclusively for bus priority measures we believe that the Government should welcome alternative ways of raising revenue to assist with improving bus services. We recommend that Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 be commenced as soon as possible, as our predecessors have recommended twice before.**

Information about buses

82. Research from Transport Focus noted that the “embarrassment factor” of not knowing how to use a bus is a major issue stopping people using buses.¹⁴⁷ To be able to use a bus people need to:

- have access to tools for journey planning, such as timetables;
- have access to Real Time Information so they know when their bus will arrive;
- know the cost of the journey and how they can pay for it; and
- know how many stops there are to their destination and where the bus stop is located.¹⁴⁸

Information that is patchy or difficult to find is a significant barrier to bus travel. Linda McCord from Transport Focus told us that that providing information to bus users would increase confidence and attract new bus users.¹⁴⁹

83. The Bus Services Act 2017 contains provisions on open data and accessible information, which the Government intends to use to make more and better information available to bus passengers. The Government has been running consultations on open data and accessible information,¹⁵⁰ including the provision of audible and visible information onboard local bus services. Both consultations ran from July to September 2018. The results for the open data consultation were published on 26 March 2019.¹⁵¹ We are glad to see that the Government acknowledged the importance of data within the *Future of mobility: Urban strategy* report.¹⁵²

Sources of information

84. It will be very difficult to attract passengers if access to information about services is limited. Bus operators have told us that they are providing information, but this varies significantly from area to area.¹⁵³ Good information about bus services is available in some areas—we heard that Devon’s “Travel Devon” website provides good information

147 [Q23](#)

148 Thomas Forth and Neil McClure ([BHC0015](#))

149 [Q23](#)

150 Department for Transport, [Bus Services Act 2017: bus open data](#), 5 July 2018, Department for Transport, [Bus Services Act 2017: accessible information](#), 5 July 2018

151 Department for Transport, [Bus Services Act 2017: bus open data](#), 26 March 2019

152 Department for Transport, [Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy](#), 19 March 2019, page 57

153 [Qq221–224](#)

on routes and timetables.¹⁵⁴ However, Claire Walters from Bus Users UK told us that in some areas information about bus services, including timetables, was not always available at bus stops.¹⁵⁵ Bill Hiron from the Association of Local Bus Company Managers also pointed out that some rural areas do not have bus stops, let alone somewhere to provide a timetable.¹⁵⁶ Websites and apps can help especially given the prevalence of smart phones—mapping tools provide real time information about bus stops—but even these may not always be accessible as not everyone can afford data connectivity.¹⁵⁷ Traveline has a national telephone service,¹⁵⁸ but few people are aware of this.¹⁵⁹ Bus drivers are a useful, and sometimes overlooked, source of information for bus users, but are only able to help once a passenger is already on a bus.

85. Bus passengers cannot always rely on a single source of information. They might have to look up information provided by several operators, potentially in different formats, to plan their journey.¹⁶⁰ Bus operators are investing in apps. In Transport Focus’s 2018 report *Using the bus: what young people think*, young people said apps were useful but “space on young people’s phones is limited” and apps had to earn their space.¹⁶¹ We heard the same from attendees at the public engagement event we held in Leicester. Having to use several sources of information, and more than one app, to complete a journey is a barrier to travel for those of all ages.

Real Time Information

86. Real Time Information (RTI) is important for bus users as it lets them know when the next bus will arrive, not just when it is scheduled to arrive. This data is not available for all areas in England. Where it is available, it might be provided online only and not displayed at bus stops. This is a barrier for those whose access to the internet is limited.

87. RTI works through Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) software. John Godfrey from the TAS Partnership told us that 97% of buses were equipped with an AVL device,¹⁶² but that did not mean that RTI was available for all these buses.¹⁶³ AVL allows bus operators to know where a bus is but the technology to display this as RTI, and let users know the location of a bus, is not always available. Matthew Goggins from Merseytravel told us that although all the buses in the Merseytravel area have AVL, the data was only 90% reliable and they would not roll RTI out more widely until they have found a more dependable system.¹⁶⁴

88. The Government has announced £4 million to fund a platform to provide location information about bus services, which will connect AVL to an RTI interface for passengers.¹⁶⁵ We note that there will be a post implementation review in 2023/4.¹⁶⁶

154 [Q134](#)

155 [Q24](#)

156 [Q224](#)

157 [Q65](#)

158 [Q218](#) [Martin Dean]

159 [Q219](#)

160 [Q54](#)

161 Transport Focus, [Using the bus: what young people think](#), 5 February 2018, page 6

162 Department for Transport, [Annual Bus Statistics: year ending 2018](#), 30 January 2019, page 9

163 [Q409](#) [John Godfrey]

164 [Q362](#)

165 Department for Transport, [Bus revolution to put power in passengers’ hands](#), 26 March 2019

166 Department for Transport: [Bus Services Act 2017: bus open data](#), 26 March 2019, para 5.17

89. We welcome the investment in improving location information for local bus services. We await with interest the results of this investment, but we are concerned that the Government has not said when these services will be able to be accessed by bus users. *We recommend that the Government set out when the Real Time Information platform it is funding will go live. We expect to be updated if they will not meet their deadline.*

Audio Visual announcements

90. Audio Visual (AV) announcements, telling passengers the destination and next stop on the route, are useful for everyone, but particularly people with disabilities, as well as tourists and people who do not regularly use the bus. AV announcements were part of the Government's consultation on accessible information, but the Government response has not yet been published.¹⁶⁷ ALBUM, Arriva Merseyside and Stagecoach Merseyside said they are concerned that the guidance for AV equipment will be too prescriptive, making it prohibitively expensive.¹⁶⁸ Paul Woods from the North East Combined Authority told us that there needs to be specific funding to ensure that AV announcements become standard on all buses.¹⁶⁹

91. We welcome that the Government has undertaken consultations with a view to producing guidance for Audio Visual (AV) announcements and is trying to remove barriers to bus use, but this is happening too slowly. Provision of information on routes, ticketing and fares is a basic thing that all the bus operators should be doing well, AV is no exception. We are concerned there is no consistency for data provision across the industry. Although we have heard some bus operators focus on the needs of passengers, not all do this well enough. All bus operators should focus on the needs of bus passengers and wherever possible remove barriers to bus travel, AV announcements will play a part in this, but the Government must ensure that any requirements on bus operators find the right balance between improving service for passengers, and not creating prohibitive costs for bus operators.

92. *We recommend that the Government publishes its response to the accessible information consultation as soon as possible, and brings forward guidance and good practice around the provision of information by the end of 2019. Guidance should raise awareness of the common barriers to bus use and show bus operators and local authorities what they can do to reduce them.*

Drivers' role in providing information

93. Bus drivers play an important customer service role, especially when it comes to vulnerable and lonely passengers. We heard concerns about pay, retention issues, driver fatigue and drivers' hours.¹⁷⁰ These things can impact the ability and effectiveness of drivers providing information for passengers. We note that there can be limited incentives for bus operators to invest in driver training when retention rates are so poor, but there is

167 Department for Transport, [Bus Services Act 2017: accessible information](#), 5 July 2018

168 [Q231](#), [Q362](#) [Howard Farrall] [Rob Jones]

169 [Q409](#) [Paul Woods]

170 [Qq166-171](#), [Qq181-182](#), [Qq196-199](#), RMT-supplementary evidence ([BHC0148](#)), Unite the Union ([BHC0146](#))

also an argument that bus operators could improve retention by investing in their drivers and making themselves more attractive as long-term employers. Bobby Morton from Unite the Union told us drivers face many pressures:

[...] the pressure on a driver who, outside London, has to be an accountant dealing with maybe £1,000 in cash every day. They have to be a health and safety expert responsible for the health and safety of maybe 80 passengers on their bus. They have to be a psychologist as well, because very often members of the public who have been waiting in the rain for a bus that is 10 minutes late are not in the best of moods when they get on.¹⁷¹

94. A Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) is required to drive a bus. This is a European Union requirement. To hold a CPC, drivers must undertake 35 hours of training every 5 years.¹⁷² The CPC syllabus includes training about interacting with passengers and focuses on the driver's ability to ensure passenger comfort and safety.¹⁷³ This training prepares drivers to interact with passengers, including the needs of certain groups of passengers, such as people with disabilities. The training does not specifically cover customer service or the provision of information to passengers.

95. Some bus operators focus on the customer service element of the driver's role. The bus alliance in Merseyside had customer service come up "as part of the targets, so as part of the CPC training we made sure that all our staff went through the customer service training that was provided by the three of us [Arriva, Stagecoach and Merseytravel]."¹⁷⁴

96. Bus drivers are vital to local bus services and we recognise the important role they play in providing information to passengers. Enhancing the Certificate of Professional Competence would ensure drivers were equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to provide the best information for passengers about tickets, fares, network and routes. We recommend that, by the end of the year, a specific customer service training module is added to the Certificate of Professional Competence syllabus for Public Service Vehicle drivers of local bus services within the UK. This will ensure that over a five-year period all drivers are trained in their customer service role. The roll out of this training should be undertaken following an impact assessment and consultation with all bus operators, big and small, and the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

97. We are concerned that recruitment and retention in the bus industry is hampered by long hours and poor pay. Long hours are also a concern for safety. We urge the Government to explore how recruitment and retention in the bus industry can be improved and recommend that it consult on whether legislation governing bus drivers' hours in Great Britain is still fit for purpose, or whether it should be amended, for example as is proposed by the Bus Drivers (Working Hours on Local Routes) Bill 2017–19.

171 [Q166](#)

172 Department for Transport, [Driver CPC training for qualified drivers](#), accessed 14 March 2019

173 Department for Transport, [Driver Certificate of Professional Competence \(CPC\) syllabus](#), 15 July 2003

174 [Q374](#)

Tickets and fares

98. Bus users can find it difficult to understand ticketing and fares options.¹⁷⁵ A journey across an area may require multiple (non-transferable) tickets,¹⁷⁶ and multiple payments, possibly on different websites and apps. It is not always clear how a passenger is able to pay their fare, and if they can use cash on a bus whether they must provide correct change.

99. Generally, people want to get on the first bus that turns up. Where there are multiple operators on a route, people must choose between the convenience of taking the first bus or waiting for another bus because they have a return ticket with that operator. It is sometimes a choice between the quickest or the cheapest bus.

100. We have been told that action needs to be taken to reduce the complexity of fares. The North East Combined Authority said that “fare structures continue to be complex and this is something in partnership with industry that should be addressed.”¹⁷⁷ The Minister said that in her constituency she looked at the different bus tickets available throughout the day, how much it costs and how many journeys a ticket would include, and told us: “It was such a large chart that it would not even fit on my phone.”¹⁷⁸

101. Ticketing and payment methods are inconsistent. Mobile ticketing, which allows people to buy tickets on a phone, is available in some but not all areas. Contactless payment methods, which can reduce dwell times at bus stops by enabling passengers to pay their fare more quickly, are becoming increasingly common but are by no means universal.¹⁷⁹ Claire Walters from Bus Users UK told us that contactless should not be the only method for payment on buses as not everyone had a bank account.¹⁸⁰ Alex Hornby, from Transdev Blazefield, told us about investment by bus operators and the Government in systems to overcome inconsistent ticketing and payment methods.¹⁸¹

102. The Government wants to use the open data provisions in the Bus Services Act 2017 to simplify tickets and fares.¹⁸² It has been consulting on accessible information, including sharing ticketing and fares data and published the results of the consultation in March 2019.¹⁸³ The Government said it will require bus operators to have simple fares data available for the public to use by 2020 and complex fares data by 2022.¹⁸⁴ A post implementation review is planned for 2023/24.¹⁸⁵

103. Simplifying fares and ticket structures will make it easier for people who do not currently use a bus to make informed decisions about the cost of a journey, and to pay their fare if they do choose to travel by bus. Bus passengers and potential passengers need to understand fare and ticket options if they are to make an informed choice. Ticketing information needs to be simplified. We welcome the work the Government

175 Thomas Forth and Neil McClure ([BHC0015](#)), Christopher Easthope ([BHC0036](#)), TravelWatch NorthWest ([BHC0059](#)), The Portsmouth Society ([BHC0098](#)), National Pensioners Convention ([BHC0139](#))

176 Hayley Lawrence ([BHC0019](#)), Mr Jonathan Haw ([BHC0034](#)), Mr Nigel Bray ([BHC0101](#))

177 North East Combined Authority (NECA) ([BHC0138](#))

178 [Q517](#)

179 [Q26](#)

180 [Q24](#)

181 [Q206](#) [Alex Hornby]

182 [Q517](#)

183 Department for Transport, Bus Services Act 2017: bus open data, 26 March 2019

184 [Q518](#)

185 Department for Transport, [Bus Services Act 2017: bus open data](#), 26 March 2019. Para 4.12

is doing to simplify ticket structures and increase the number of payment methods accepted on buses. We recommend that the Government update us on the success of these schemes once they are implemented.

Young people's fares

104. Bus operators and local authorities told us that getting young people on to buses would help to grow the bus market.¹⁸⁶ Buses are essential for many young people to get to education, apprenticeships and work. Getting young people on buses also means that they are more likely to use them in the future.

105. Fares for young people are not consistent. The Transport Act 1985 allows local authorities to provide, at their discretion, travel for specified groups of people. For young people local authorities can provide concessionary schemes for all young people up to the age of 16, and people aged 16 to 18 if they are in full-time education.¹⁸⁷ In some areas a young person's discount goes up to the day before a person's 19th birthday, in others it is 16. The Slough Youth Parliament pointed out that young people are legally required to be in education or training until they are 18 and if they are earning money, they are likely to be on a low wage, stating: "how can we be expected to get to these places when we cannot suddenly afford the increase of fares that often kicks in at the age of 16."¹⁸⁸

106. Merseytravel, as part of the bus alliance, has introduced "MyTicket", which offers a discount up to someone's 19th birthday. Young people's bus use has increased by 168% since the introduction of this scheme in July 2015.¹⁸⁹ MyTicket's operators told us that this discount was not yet commercially sustainable but they were pleased to be getting more people onto buses.¹⁹⁰

107. We conclude that since young people are required to be in education or training until they are 18 they should benefit from a concessionary fares scheme. Young people are also key to securing the future of bus use. Inconsistency in how young people are treated when using buses is a barrier to travel. This needs to be examined in more detail and we intend to come back to this in our future inquiry about concessionary fares later in this Parliament.

186 [Qq412-413](#)

187 [Transport Act 1985](#), section 93(7) (b and c)

188 Slough Youth Parliament ([BHC0084](#))

189 Merseytravel/Liverpool City Region ([BHC0071](#))

190 [Q346](#)

5 Planning and buses

108. Planning applications for new developments, domestic, commercial or industrial, may not always consider public transport options. We have heard that when vital services—such as doctors’ surgeries, hospitals or housing offices—are moved, means of transport to these vital services are not always delivered.¹⁹¹ Relying on the market to provide services risks a situation where operators choose not to introduce new routes or change existing ones to serve new or relocated services.

109. There is no requirement that new developments have access to public transport. Policy in this area is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, but there is no requirement that new developments have access to public transport.¹⁹² Transport and planning do not always work in a joined-up way. How well transport and planning work together depends on the responsibilities of the different tiers of local government and how well these work together. Unitary authorities who gave evidence all said that they were working well with their planning departments to make sure that local transport was considered with new developments.¹⁹³

110. Local authorities should be considering public transport in the planning process, but bus operators also need to be involved. Arriva and Stagecoach told us that they worked effectively with planning teams,¹⁹⁴ and recognised their role as a consultee in development proposals.¹⁹⁵ Derek Fishpool from Devon County Council and Ralph Ellis from Plymouth City Council told us that developers want to make the best use of their space and money and so do not always consider access for buses.¹⁹⁶ Stagecoach has issued guidance for developers in order that bus access is considered from the beginning of any new application,¹⁹⁷ in the hope that this situation will improve.

111. The Minister recognised that one of the Government’s responsibilities is to share information about good practice between local authorities and bus operators and that they need to improve how they do this.¹⁹⁸

112. Some local authorities are good at joining up their transport and planning teams, but many are not. It is critical that different levels of local authorities work together to make sure that their planning and transport priorities are aligned, and new developments have access to public transport.

113. It is not just the planning side but the commissioners of services that need to assess the transport impacts. Consultations on local service reconfiguration or new development, including of services, must include questions on the provision of transport and the need for public transport provision and how this will be delivered.

191 Louise Haigh MP ([BHC0203](#))

192 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, [National Planning Policy Framework](#), CP48, February 2019, chapter 9

193 [Qq138–140](#), [Q363](#)

194 [Q275](#), [Qq364–365](#)

195 [Q273](#)

196 [Qq139–140](#)

197 Stagecoach, [Bus Services and new residential developments](#), 12 July 2017

198 [Q505](#)

114. *We recommend that the Government review the guidance for planning teams and those commissioning changes that affect service provision to ensure that public transport is being appropriately considered when planning permission is granted for new developments. We expect the Government to set out in their response to this Report the steps they are taking, and will take in future, to ensure local government at all levels is making good use of available guidance. We also recommend that Government thinks carefully about how to maintain transport links with vital services.*

6 A bus strategy

115. During our inquiry we have identified that changes are needed to the range of bus operating models available to local authorities, financing of bus services needs to be reviewed, tackling congestion must be taken seriously and modal shift given specific targets. The right way to ensure that action is taken across all these areas is for the Government to set out a bus strategy.

116. We have heard repeated calls from local authorities, passenger groups and bus operators for a Government-led bus strategy, and no evidence against. Given that the taxpayer provides 42% of funding for buses the Government should be clear about the outcomes such funding should achieve. The Minister Nusrat Ghani MP indicated that she is in favour of a bus strategy in principle “at the right point, with all the stakeholders and getting buy-in from local authorities as well.”¹⁹⁹

117. **Bus use has declined year after year, and successive governments have made no concerted or coordinated effort to reverse or even to stem the decline. In fact, the 30-year policy of deregulation, outside of London, has made the situation worse in most areas. The Government needs to take action now to halt the decline in bus use. The Government provides 42% of the funding for bus services, with the rest coming from passenger fares. It is a significant amount of funding and a sum for which the taxpayer is entitled to receive good value for money. To secure good value for money we believe the Government needs to be clearer about the outcomes it wants to secure for the investment it makes. These outcomes must be passenger focused. We conclude that the Government should set out a bus strategy. A bus strategy would help the Government arrest the current decline by setting out a clear plan of the Government’s ambitions for bus use, and how it will support local authorities to improve local bus services and increase bus ridership. Any strategy must be passenger focused but should also address the reasons why people choose not to use buses and what changes are needed to encourage them to make a different travel choice from the one they make at present. A bus strategy would also provide a single point of reference for local authorities and bus operators to see their options and make the right decisions for their local areas.**

118. *We recommend that the Government develop and adopt a bus strategy by the end of 2020. This should include:*

- *the Government’s ambitions for increasing bus ridership;*
- *a commitment to making the full suite of operating models, including franchising, available to all local authorities, and guidance on how different bus operating models can be used most effectively and implemented quickly with a minimum of bureaucratic impediments;*
- *a more stable multi-year funding model for local transport, including bus services, and a clear strategy for and details of how to access any bid-for funding;*

- *an assessment of the evidence for the effectiveness of bus priority measures across England, and guidance on how best to implement bus priority measures; and*
- *specific targets for modal shift, and actions to encourage people to switch to bus use.*

119. *In its response to this Report the Government should lay out a clear timescale for the development of this strategy, including the impact assessments and consultations which will accompany the development of such a strategy. We believe there is merit in such a national strategy being underpinned by a national forum involving representatives from bus operators, trade unions and other stakeholders to examine and share information on issues such as improving services, recruitment and retention, skills, apprenticeship and bus safety.*

Formal minutes

Wednesday 15 May 2019

Members present:

Lilian Greenwood, in the chair

Ruth Cadbury

Grahame Morris

Huw Merriman

Daniel Zeichner

Draft Report (*Bus services in England outside London*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 119 read and agreed to.

Summary agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Ninth Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

[Adjourned till Wednesday 22 May at 9.15am]

Witnesses

The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

Tuesday 30 October 2018

Claire Haigh, Chief Executive, Greener Journeys, **Linda McCord**, Senior Stakeholder Manager, Transport Focus, **Darren Shirley**, Chief Executive, Campaign for Better Transport, and **Claire Walters**, Chief Executive, Bus Users UK; **Tom Forth**, Head of Data, and **Neil McClure**, Head of Transport Innovation, ODI Leeds, and **Nick Richardson**, Director & Trustee, Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport.

[Q1–96](#)

Monday 12 November 2018

Tim Bowles, Mayor of the West of England, **Jason Humm**, Head of Transport, West of England Combined Authority, **Karen Rose**, Community Transport Adviser, **Derek Fishpool**, Devon County Council, and **Ralph Ellis**, Public Transport Officer, Plymouth City Council

[Q97–155](#)

Monday 26 November 2018

Mick Lynch, Assistant General Secretary, RMT, and **Bobby Morton**, National Officer, Unite the Union; **Martin Dean**, Managing Director, Bus Development, Go-Ahead Group plc, **Bill Hiron**, Chair, and **Malcolm Robson**, ALBUM, **Alex Hornby**, CEO, Transdev Blazefield, and **Steven Salmon**, Director of Policy Development, Confederation of Passenger Transport (UK)

[Q156–312](#)

Monday 14 January 2019

Matthew Goggins, Head of Bus, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Merseytravel, **Howard Farrall**, Area Managing Director, Arriva Merseyside, **Rob Jones**, Regional Managing Director, Stagecoach Merseyside

[Q313–379](#)

Wednesday 30 January 2019

Paul Woods, Interim Chief Finance Officer, North East Combined Authority and Local Government Association, **James Carney**, Finance Director, Blackpool Transport, **Giles Fearnley**, Managing Director, First Bus, **John Godfrey**, Principal Consultant, TAS Partnership

[Q380–450](#)

Wednesday 13 February 2019

Nusrat Ghani MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport, and **Catriona Henderson**, Head of Buses and Taxis, Department for Transport

[Q451–580](#)

Published written evidence

The following written evidence was received and can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

BHC numbers are generated by the evidence processing system and so may not be complete.

- 1 Abellio UK ([BHC0075](#))
- 2 ALBUM ([BHC0051](#))
- 3 ALBUM-supplementary written evidence ([BHC0185](#))
- 4 Anonymous ([BHC0193](#))
- 5 Arriva UK Bus ([BHC0074](#))
- 6 Association of British Commuters ([BHC0125](#))
- 7 Valerie Baker ([BHC0055](#))
- 8 Mr Chris Banks ([BHC0173](#))
- 9 James Baughan ([BHC0033](#))
- 10 Bedford Area Bus Users Society (BABUS) ([BHC0073](#))
- 11 Blackpool Transport ([BHC0200](#))
- 12 Mr Andrew Boag ([BHC0057](#))
- 13 Councillor Andy Boddington ([BHC0120](#))
- 14 John Brace ([BHC0198](#))
- 15 K W Brant ([BHC0192](#))
- 16 Mr Nigel Bray ([BHC0101](#))
- 17 Bridport Local Area Partnership ([BHC0160](#))
- 18 Bristol City Council ([BHC0104](#))
- 19 The Bus Project ([BHC0095](#))
- 20 Bus Users UK ([BHC0078](#))
- 21 Mr Michael Bussell ([BHC0021](#))
- 22 Cambridge Area Bus Users ([BHC0082](#))
- 23 Campaign for Better Transport, West & North Yorks ([BHC0035](#))
- 24 Campaign for National Parks ([BHC0105](#))
- 25 Caversham and District Residents Association ([BHC0040](#))
- 26 Centre for Cities ([BHC0144](#))
- 27 Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research ([BHC0090](#))
- 28 Mrs Jo Chamberlain ([BHC0014](#))
- 29 The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in the UK ([BHC0106](#))
- 30 Stuart Ching ([BHC0172](#))
- 31 Chinley and Buxworth Transport Group ([BHC0096](#))
- 32 Mr Dave Cockle ([BHC0208](#))
- 33 Community Transport Association ([BHC0121](#))

- 34 Confederation of Passenger Transport (UK) ([BHC0094](#))
- 35 Confederation of Passenger Transport-supplementary written evidence ([BHC0184](#))
- 36 Cooper-Smith, Mr David ([BHC0066](#))
- 37 Cropwell Bishop Parish Council ([BHC0048](#))
- 38 Cropwell Bishop Parish Council ([BHC0182](#))
- 39 Cropwell Bishop Parish Council ([BHC0199](#))
- 40 Lynne Crowe ([BHC0135](#))
- 41 Mr Stephen David ([BHC0042](#))
- 42 Mrs Jane de Garston ([BHC0023](#))
- 43 Department for Transport ([BHC0052](#))
- 44 Devon County Council ([BHC0063](#))
- 45 Devon County Council-additional written evidence ([BHC0176](#))
- 46 Dr John Disney ([BHC0058](#))
- 47 East Sussex County Council ([BHC0119](#))
- 48 Christopher Easthope ([BHC0036](#))
- 49 Mr Christopher Easthope - further written evidence ([BHC0039](#))
- 50 Mrs Barbara Edwards ([BHC0002](#))
- 51 Mr Peter Elvidge ([BHC0102](#))
- 52 John Emmas ([BHC0194](#))
- 53 Exeter and District Bus User Group ([BHC0056](#))
- 54 J Fagon ([BHC0162](#))
- 55 FirstGroup ([BHC0122](#))
- 56 Flit Technologies ([BHC0077](#))
- 57 Mr Dane Ford-Mitchell ([BHC0030](#))
- 58 Foundation for Integrated Transport and its project Transport for New Homes ([BHC0165](#))
- 59 Rebecca Fricker ([BHC0024](#))
- 60 Friends of DalesBus ([BHC0037](#))
- 61 Friends of the Settle Carlisle Line ([BHC0065](#))
- 62 Dr Michael Fulton ([BHC0016](#))
- 63 Mr Alan Gale ([BHC0044](#))
- 64 Go South Coast ([BHC0179](#))
- 65 The Go-Ahead Group plc ([BHC0103](#))
- 66 Go-Ahead Group-supplementary written evidence ([BHC0186](#))
- 67 Godsmark, David ([BHC0004](#))
- 68 Amanda Gray ([BHC0190](#))
- 69 Greener Journeys ([BHC0068](#))
- 70 Growing Places ([BHC0152](#))

- 71 Louise Haigh MP ([BHC0203](#))
- 72 Mr Geoffrey Hanson ([BHC0001](#))
- 73 Duncan Harris ([BHC0054](#))
- 74 Mr Jonathan Haw ([BHC0034](#))
- 75 HCT Group ([BHC0132](#))
- 76 Susan Hedley ([BHC0159](#))
- 77 Dennis Hemsley ([BHC0161](#))
- 78 Lynn Hieatt ([BHC0086](#))
- 79 Mr Ronald S. Hindmarch ([BHC0093](#))
- 80 Mr David Hissey ([BHC0163](#))
- 81 Martin Hogan ([BHC0204](#))
- 82 Holme Hall Unite ([BHC0137](#))
- 83 Institute of Place Management, Manchester Metropolitan University ([BHC0145](#))
- 84 Intu Properties plc ([BHC0170](#))
- 85 ITS United Kingdom ([BHC0128](#))
- 86 Brian Jhumun ([BHC0018](#))
- 87 Diana Johnson MP ([BHC0205](#))
- 88 Andrew Johnson ([BHC0046](#))
- 89 Karin Smyth MP ([BHC0174](#))
- 90 KeeleSU ([BHC0032](#))
- 91 Terry Kirby ([BHC0168](#))
- 92 Kirkby Stephen Town Council ([BHC0064](#))
- 93 Sam Knight ([BHC0180](#))
- 94 Knighton Neighbourhood Forum ([BHC0158](#))
- 95 David Laing ([BHC0031](#))
- 96 Hayley Lawrence ([BHC0019](#))
- 97 Mr Shaun Leonard ([BHC0029](#))
- 98 Mrs Mags Lewis ([BHC0153](#))
- 99 Nell Lewis ([BHC0155](#))
- 100 Dave Lloyd ([BHC0047](#))
- 101 Local Government Association ([BHC0053](#))
- 102 London Borough of Sutton ([BHC0020](#))
- 103 London Borough of Sutton ([BHC0112](#))
- 104 Philip Longdon ([BHC0060](#))
- 105 Mr Nicholas MacDonald ([BHC0013](#))
- 106 Iain Mackinnon ([BHC0076](#))
- 107 Bernard Marriott ([BHC0166](#))
- 108 Dr Paul McGowan ([BHC0049](#))

- 109 Mr Christopher McIntosh ([BHC0027](#))
- 110 Merseytravel/Liverpool City Region ([BHC0071](#))
- 111 Moorsbus Community Interest Company ([BHC0085](#))
- 112 Stephen Morris ([BHC0022](#))
- 113 National Express West Midlands ([BHC0099](#))
- 114 National Pensioners Convention ([BHC0139](#))
- 115 NECTAR (North East Combined Transport Activists' Roundtable) ([BHC0107](#))
- 116 Mr John Nicholas ([BHC0100](#))
- 117 North East Combined Authority (NECA) ([BHC0138](#))
- 118 (NECA) - additional written evidence ([BHC0202](#))
- 119 North Salop Wheelers ([BHC0025](#))
- 120 North Yorkshire County Council ([BHC0164](#))
- 121 Northern Ryedale Public Transport Group ([BHC0088](#))
- 122 Mr Simon Norton ([BHC0115](#))
- 123 Nottingham City Transport ([BHC0072](#))
- 124 Mr Mark Ovenden ([BHC0140](#))
- 125 Papworth Trust ([BHC0114](#))
- 126 Mrs Kathy Peacock ([BHC0009](#))
- 127 Deryck Pimblett ([BHC0195](#))
- 128 Mr Christopher Plummer ([BHC0171](#))
- 129 Plymouth City Council ([BHC0111](#))
- 130 Plymouth City Council-additional written evidence ([BHC0177](#))
- 131 The Portsmouth Society ([BHC0098](#))
- 132 Potters Bar and St Albans Bus User Group ([BHC0045](#))
- 133 Miss Alison Power ([BHC0089](#))
- 134 Miss Marianne Quinn ([BHC0189](#))
- 135 Ramsey Million Big Partnership (Big Local) ([BHC0041](#))
- 136 RMT ([BHC0141](#))
- 137 RMT-supplementary evidence ([BHC0148](#))
- 138 RMT-supplementary written evidence ([BHC0187](#))
- 139 Mr Andrew Rolph ([BHC0109](#))
- 140 Salfords and Sidlow Parish Council ([BHC0062](#))
- 141 Dr Roger Sexton ([BHC0007](#))
- 142 Dr Roger Sexton - supplementary written evidence ([BHC0169](#))
- 143 Dr Roger Sexton - supplementary written evidence ([BHC0197](#))
- 144 Sherborne Transport Action Group ([BHC0008](#))
- 145 Mr Donald Sherriff ([BHC0156](#))
- 146 Slough Youth Parliament ([BHC0084](#))

- 147 SMMT ([BHC0118](#))
- 148 Somerset County Council ([BHC0191](#))
- 149 South West Transport Network & Bus Users UK Southwest ([BHC0038](#))
- 150 South West Transport Network & Bus Users UK Southwest ([BHC0154](#))
- 151 South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive ([BHC0209](#))
- 152 SpeakEasy NOW ([BHC0136](#))
- 153 Stagecoach UK Bus ([BHC0117](#))
- 154 Suffolk People First ([BHC0151](#))
- 155 Syresham Parish Council ([BHC0092](#))
- 156 TAS Partnership ([BHC0206](#))
- 157 G Taylor ([BHC0134](#))
- 158 Telford & Wrekin Council ([BHC0079](#))
- 159 Thomas Forth and Neil McClure ([BHC0015](#))
- 160 Thorncombe Parish Council ([BHC0081](#))
- 161 Totnes and Rural Community Transport ([BHC0181](#))
- 162 Transdev Blazefield - supplementary written evidence ([BHC0188](#))
- 163 Transport Focus ([BHC0113](#))
- 164 Transport for Greater Manchester ([BHC0167](#))
- 165 Traveline ([BHC0201](#))
- 166 TravelWatch NorthWest ([BHC0059](#))
- 167 TravelWatch SouthWest CIC ([BHC0123](#))
- 168 trentbarton ([BHC0069](#))
- 169 Tyne and Wear Public Transport Users Group ([BHC0175](#))
- 170 Unite the Union ([BHC0146](#))
- 171 Unite the Union-additional written evidence ([BHC0183](#))
- 172 University of Lincoln Students' Union ([BHC0127](#))
- 173 Urban Transport Group ([BHC0070](#))
- 174 Caroline Walker ([BHC0061](#))
- 175 Warhurst, Councillor Hazel ([BHC0129](#))
- 176 West Cheshire Access Group ([BHC0028](#))
- 177 West Dorset Western Area Transport Action Group ([BHC0087](#))
- 178 West Midlands Campaign for Better Transport ([BHC0080](#))
- 179 West of England Combined Authority ([BHC0178](#))
- 180 West of England Local Authorities ([BHC0108](#))
- 181 Matt Western MP ([BHC0207](#))
- 182 Mr Raymond Wilkes ([BHC0006](#))
- 183 Mrs Joan Wilkinson ([BHC0050](#))
- 184 Miss Janet Woollon ([BHC0026](#))

- 185 York Bus Forum ([BHC0005](#))
- 186 York Bus Forum ([BHC0126](#))
- 187 Mr Tim Young ([BHC0083](#))

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

All publications from the Committee are available on the [publications page](#) of the Committee's website. The reference number of the Government's response to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number.

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Second Report	Improving air quality	HC 433 (HC 1149)
Third Report	Airports National Policy Statement	HC 548 (Cm 9624)
Fourth Report	Rail Infrastructure investment	HC 582 (HC 1557)
Fifth Report	Intercity East Coast rail franchise	HC 891 (HC 1729)
Sixth Report	Appointment of the Chair of the Office of Rail and Road	HC 1510 (HC 1859)
Seventh Report	Rail timetable changes: May 2018	HC 1163 (HC 1939)
Eighth Report	Mobility as a Service	HC 590 (HC 1984)
First Special Report	Vauxhall Zafira fires: Government Response to the Committee's Tenth Report of Session 2016–17	HC 516
Second Special Report	Community transport and the Department for Transport's proposed consultation: Government Response to the Committee's First Report of Session 2017–2019	HC 832
Third Special Report	Improving air quality: Government Response to the Committee's Second Report of Session 2017–2019	HC 1149
Fourth Special Report	Rail infrastructure investment: Government and Office of Rail and Road Responses to the Committee's Fourth Report of Session 2017–19	HC 1557
Fifth Special Report	Intercity East Coast franchise: Government Response to the Committee's Fifth Report of Session 2017–19	HC 1729
Sixth Special Report	Appointment of the Chair of the Office of Rail and Road: Government Response to the Committee's Sixth Report	HC 1859
Seventh Special Report	Rail timetable changes: Government and Office of Rail and Road Responses to the Committee's Seventh Report	HC 1939
Eighth Special Report	Mobility as a Service: Government Response to the Committee's Eighth Report	HC 1984