



North

Yorkshire County Council

Annex F

Bus Information Strategy



March 2006



keep north yorkshire moving

A responsive County Council providing excellent and efficient local services

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Introduction

The Transport Act 2000 requires Local Authorities to produce a Bus Information Strategy as part of a general duty to produce a Local Transport Plan.

The Bus Information Strategy has to include a “Minimum Enforceable Requirement” for the provision of bus information. This is a statement of the type and quality of information the

Council expects Bus Operators to provide. By specifying this the Council is then entitled to enforce these standards and if they are not adequately met, make alternative arrangements and recover the costs from the bus operator.

Local Policy Context

The Council has adopted the following seven Corporate Objectives.

Corporate Objectives

| | | | | | | |
|------------------|------------------------------------|--------------|------------------------|---------------------------|--|------------------|
| Security for all | Growing up prepared for the future | Independence | Keeping us on the move | Strengthening our economy | Looking after our heritage and environment | Keeping in touch |
|------------------|------------------------------------|--------------|------------------------|---------------------------|--|------------------|

These are reflected by the vision, aims and objectives in the Councils Local Transport Plan 2006 – 2011 which are:

Vision

Better access and sustainable communities for all

Aims

To make North Yorkshire a better place by:

- Providing equality of opportunity for all
- Protecting and enhancing the environment
- Improving the safety and health of residents and visitors
- Increasing economic prosperity
- Building sustainable communities
- Reducing the need and demand for travel

LTP2 Objectives

Objective 1 (Accessibility) - To ensure good access to key services (Education, Health, Food, Employment and Recreation) for everyone.

Objective 2 (Safety) - To improve safety for all highway users.

Objective 3 (Environment) – To enhance the natural and built environment through the appropriate provision of services and transport and where necessary protect it from the impacts of these provisions.

Objective 4 (Congestion) – To ensure that traffic congestion, and its adverse environmental and social effects, is minimised in both rural and urban areas.

Objective 5 (Quality of Life) – To ensure that transport provision contributes towards the promotion of healthy and sustainable communities.

Objective 6 (Economy) – To provide and maintain an efficient transport network contributing towards increased economic prosperity for everyone.

Objective 7 (Efficiency) – To ensure that the management and maintenance of the transport infrastructure contributes towards the efficient use of resources.

Why have a Bus Information Strategy?

The Bus Information Strategy sits alongside the Councils Bus Strategy and helps to define how the Council will develop bus services within the period of the Local Transport Plan, and builds on the achievements delivered through the Council's current Public Transport Publicity & Information Strategy.

Readily available comprehensive public transport information makes the services easier to use, and contributes towards generating more passengers which in turn helps operators maintain a stable bus network. Publicity and information are an essential part of our programme to improve accessibility by making best use of existing services and help to maximise the contribution bus services will make towards achieving our shared priorities. Our Bus Information Strategy sets out minimum standards and does not preclude more innovative ways of giving people information.

This strategy covers information about bus services; however there are other transport services available to the public and it is our intention to ensure that full information is readily available about all transport services particularly rail services and community transport services.

Consultation

The Transport Act 2000 stipulates that the Local Transport Authority must, before determining what information should be provided, consult with user groups and with the Traffic Commissioner as well as liaising with adjoining LTA's to explore appropriate opportunities for joint initiatives. In developing this strategy the Council has complied with the consultation requirements.

Current Situation

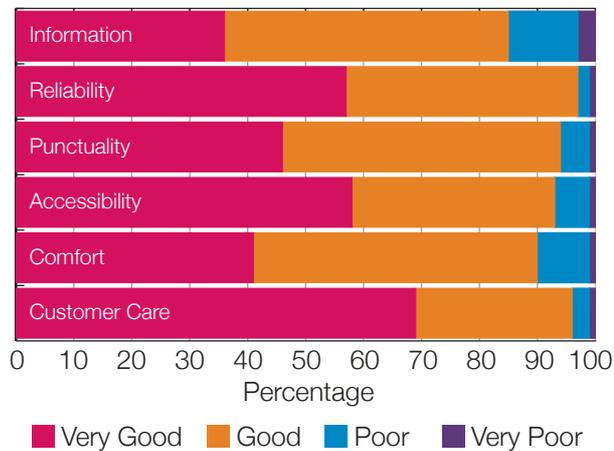
In developing this strategy for the future provision of local bus service information it is important to consider current standards of provision and the extent to which they meet the public's aspirations (both of users and non-users of public transport).

A review of the existing provision of local bus information and the preferences of bus users has been undertaken in order to provide a baseline for going forward.

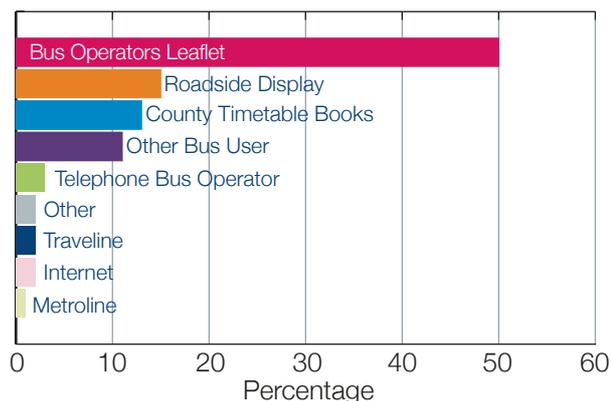
There has been an improvement in the promotion and provision of information about bus services in the County in recent years with each of the major operators adopting corporate standards for individual timetable leaflets. This is

reflected in the user satisfaction surveys undertaken as part of BVPI 103 where the percentage of people satisfied with the information provided has increased from 41% in 2000 to 52% in 2003¹ which put us in the top ten authorities in the Country. The Council has supplemented this work with its own research into both public satisfaction with bus information and how people expect to access information about bus services. The results are set out below:

Passenger Satisfaction with local Bus Quality Measures



Where Passengers expect to get Information



Strategy

Objectives and principles

The overarching objective of this strategy is to improve the availability and quality of local bus service information to the public of North Yorkshire. This will encourage more people to use public transport and improve the ability of bus users both to plan journeys and travel with confidence. We want to increase the percentage of people satisfied with bus information to 75% by the end of the plan period.

The underlying principles are that local bus service information should be:

- High quality – i.e. reliable, accurate and attractive
- Comprehensive to include all bus services, and reference to rail services and community transport services.
- Readily available at all stages of the journey
- Easy for the public to understand and compliant with the requirements of the Disability and Discrimination Act.

Priorities

This strategy for the provision of local bus service information needs to balance the demand for information with the resources that can reasonably be made available for its provision. In so doing, strategic choices have to be made between the different media for the provision of information. For this reason, the importance of different types of information provision has been prioritised as follows. The following priorities have been agreed with the main bus operators in the County.

¹ This figure was later re-calculated using a revised methodology by the Audit Commission resulting in 73% satisfaction

Priority 1

| Information Type | Comment |
|---|---|
| Comprehensive and freely available leaflets for all appropriate local bus services, showing both route and timetable information. | Our research has confirmed that bus users currently expect to access information about bus services from leaflets produced by operators. A well designed, attractive leaflet also provides bus operators with an opportunity to market their services. |
| Bus stops which are clearly marked with a standard format. | In many areas, people are not aware that there is a bus service. A bus stop flag is a simple basic mechanism for raising awareness amongst non bus users. |
| Comprehensive and accurate information at bus stations, rail stations and other key interchange points. Comprehensive and accurate information at all stops served by bus services defined as priority one in the Councils Bus Strategy. | It is essential that information at bus stations, rail stations and other key interchange points is clearly available. This helps to build passenger confidence and avoids confusion. In addition to marking bus stops providing details of bus departures in a clear and simple format enhances the awareness of non bus users to the number of journey opportunities which are available. Our research has indicated that bus stop displays are also a popular source of information for bus users. |
| Accurate timetable and journey planning information via the telephone through the traveline service | Use of the traveline service is steadily increasing – one of our call centres has reported that use of the service in February 2005 was double that of the previous year. It is expected that this trend will continue over the next few years and it is important that we develop and promote the service. traveline is a national service and information is provided to standards set out by the National traveline Board. The dataset for the traveline service is also used in the internet journey planner and can be adapted to produce printed timetable material. This ensures that information provided through different media is accurate and consistent. [Information provided through traveline or the internet journey planner is more up to date than printed material and more cost effective to provide.] |
| Journey planning information down to bus stop level including timetable/ route information available via the internet. | The Council has maintained a journey planning website for a number of years and use has grown steadily. In autumn 2004 we were able to provide live data for the web site www.yorkshiretravel.net journey planner which has been developed as part of the Yorkshire Local Information Partnership. |
| Access to timetables from the North Yorkshire Web Site | The Council aims to develop its web site to provide access to bus timetables and route maps. |
| Access to bus service information through SMS text messaging and WAP. | Text messaging is popular with younger people who are an important market for increasing bus use. The Council has an opportunity to work with neighbouring authorities and bus operators to introduce this service in areas of the County where a mobile phone network is readily available. The cost of providing this service will be met by the county council until 2010, subject to budget availability and subject to operator contribution to traveline |
| Build on existing real time information schemes. | Real time information is already available in some areas of the county. It is useful as a means of providing information to passengers at bus stops and can also become an integral part of the traveline service. In addition, it can help bus operators improve reliability by more accurately identifying journey times and help local authorities to better target bus priority measures by identifying regular delays on specific routes. |
| Area route maps. | Area route maps provide a basic journey planning tool and help people get the most out of the Internet journey planner. They are particularly valuable to tourists and visitors who will be unfamiliar with the extent of the bus network in North Yorkshire. |

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| Priority two | |
| Comprehensive and accurate roadside information at other key stops such as in village centres or those on corridors which are not identified as priority one in the bus strategy. | Building on the work we have done as part of Priority 1 above. |
| Provision of fares information through traveline. | Non bus users are often unaware of the cost of using a bus service and this can deter them from trying. Bus use often represents good value for money and making information about the cost of a journey will encourage more use. |
| Area booklets showing the public transport network. | The Council has produced seven area timetable books and two tourist related guides for the past four years. At the time they were first introduced they filled an important gap in the bus information market. Since that time the range and quality of leaflets produced by operators has increased and the continued production of the area books needs to be reviewed to avoid unnecessary duplication. At the present time we produce our books once a year. |
| Access to bus service timetable information via SMS and WAP | To build on the work undertaken in priority 1, promoting and marketing the service |
| Introduction of new real time facilities. | To build on the work undertaken in priority 1. |
| Priority 3 | |
| Marketing initiatives, including destination marketing. | There are significant opportunities to promote bus usage through marketing initiatives and in particular destination marketing. North Yorkshire has a healthy tourist industry and many tourist destinations are accessible by bus. The Council and bus operators will encourage tourist destinations to identify their accessibility by bus on promotional literature and their web sites. We have already negotiated entry discounts for bus passengers at some major attractions such as Lighwater Valley theme park and intend to expand this work whenever possible. |
| Touch screen remote information points | The provision of remote enquiry terminals within the County with links to public transport information is limited to only one at the Yorkshire Dales National Park Centre in Grassington. These terminals are touch screen facilities which tend to be located in high profile public places. In essence, they allow the public access to the internet journey planner. It is proposed that remote enquiry terminals will be introduced at appropriate sites throughout North Yorkshire, subject to finance being available through the LTP. |
| Access to Bus service timetable information via SMS and WAP | To build on the work undertaken in priority 1, promoting and marketing the service |
| | |

Minimum Enforceable Requirements

The Council wants to ensure that the Bus Information Strategy is administered equitably and fairly. It is not our intention to over complicate issues and we look to operators to work together with the council in a practical way which results in simple high quality information to the public.

A Minimum Enforceable Requirement is important to ensure that information is available in consistent formats and to an

acceptable standard. It is intended that the MER is achievable but can be supplemented by “Good Practice”.

The following Minimum Enforceable Requirements will apply; examples of acceptable material incorporating good practice are available from the Passenger Transport Group on request. The MER does not apply to registered services which cater mainly for school children and from time to time the Council will identify other exemptions from the MER.

| Main Issue | Details | County responsibility | Operator Responsibility |
|-------------------|--|--|---|
| Bus stop flags. | <p>Minimum Enforceable Requirement</p> <p>Bus stop flags must include: The words “Bus Stop” A standard bus stop symbol. traveline logo and telephone number. Web site address which links to a traveline compliant journey planner eg www.yorkshiretravel.net. SMS stop identification number. In locations where there is a cluster of stops, the services which depart from that stop must also be shown.</p> | <p>The Council will develop a programme to mark bus stops throughout North Yorkshire.</p> | <p>Bus Operators may choose to mark stops where they are the main provider of services.</p> |
| | <p>Good practice</p> <p>Company or organisation logo Contact telephone number Service numbers for that stop. Stop name as identified in the agreed North Yorkshire bus stop database</p> | | |
| Roadside displays | <p>Minimum Enforceable Requirement</p> <p>Roadside displays must include: A description of all services which use that stop including the name of the Operator. The times at which all services are scheduled to depart from that stop unless the combined frequency is at least every ten minutes. The traveline logo and telephone number. Web site address which links to a traveline compliant journey planner eg www.yorkshiretravel.net. Displays should be replaced annually or more frequently if illegible. Timetable inserts must be prepared to the full size of the display case and be waterproof.</p> | <p>The Council will provide display cases at all stops on priority 1 services. The Council will make suitable templates available for bus stop information and will identify details of all services to be included.</p> | <p>The “Main operator” will provide, install and maintain inserts for the display cases. Display cases should updated during the weekend of a service change and no later later seven days after the change.</p> |
| | <p>Good practice.</p> <p>A diagrammatic map showing the places served. A contact telephone number for the operators customer services dept.</p> | | |
| Bus stations | <p>Minimum Enforceable Requirement</p> <p>A central display providing: timetable information for all bus services which are scheduled to depart from the bus station. A bus station plan showing the location of stands and indicating which services depart from each stand. The traveline logo and telephone number. Web site address which links to a traveline compliant journey planner eg www.yorkshiretravel.net. At individual stands: The stand number or letter Details of all departures from that stand.</p> | <p>The Council will provide the display infrastructure and advise of service changes as they occur.</p> | <p>The bus station manager will be responsible for providing and maintaining the information displays. All costs associated with this should be reflected in the departure charge for use of the bus station.</p> |

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|--|---|---|---|
| <p>Service timetable leaflets.</p> | <p>Minimum Enforceable Requirement A separate timetable leaflet or small booklet must be produced for all registered bus services and these must be made available free of charge for personal use. Leaflets must include a “valid from” date and be issued at least 10 working days prior to any timetable change. Leaflets must meet the ATCO/CPT code of good practice. The publication must be available on bus and operators are encouraged to distribute them via the outlets listed at appendix A. Leaflets must include the traveline logo and telephone number and Web site address which links to a traveline compliant journey planner eg www.yorkshiretravel.net Services provided by different operators which operate over a common corridor should be included in a single publication.</p> | <p>The Council will provide information with regard to joint corridor operation.</p> | <p>The Main Operator will produce and distribute leaflets. Where a leaflet is produced for a group of services along a common section of route the “Main Operator” will produce the leaflet, other operators will contribute to the cost. Leaflets should be reproduced annually or to correspond to with service changes.</p> |
| | <p>Good practice A route map A route description Details of fares information.</p> | | |
| <p>Bus Operator web sites.</p> | <p>Minimum Enforceable Requirement Operator web sites must contain links to a traveline compliant journey planner eg www.yorkshiretravel.net</p> | | <p>To make sure that the link is there.</p> |
| <p>Vehicle interiors.</p> | <p>Minimum Enforceable Requirement The following should be clearly displayed inside each vehicle used on a registered local bus service: traveline logo and phone number, web site address which links to a traveline compliant journey planner eg www.yorkshiretravel.net details of the company’s customer services contact phone number and address for correspondence.</p> | | <p>To ensure that the information is provided and displayed</p> |
| <p>Registration Details</p> | <p>Minimum Enforceable Requirement Copies of bus service registrations (new services, changes and cancellations) to be supplied to the Council. Details of Bank Holiday services and service changes over Christmas and the New Year must be notified to the Council with a minimum of 56 days notice. Good Practice To discuss proposals in confidence with the Council prior to submission to the Traffic Commissioner. To supply comprehensive faretables to the Council within seven days of them being valid.</p> | <p>The Council will ensure that details are included in traveline and at www.yorkshiretravel.net</p> | <p>To supply registration details to the Council within three working days of submission to the Traffic Commissioner. To ensure that details of bank holiday services are provided within the timescale.</p> |
| <p>Traveline and Internet journey planner.</p> | <p>Minimum Enforceable Requirement A telephone enquiry service for the whole of North Yorkshire which meets national traveline standards. An internet journey planner which provides information at individual stop level within North Yorkshire.</p> | <p>The council will provide a data management service and negotiate contracts with the providers of the traveline service.</p> | <p>Operators who have registered bus services within North Yorkshire will contribute to all reasonable and appropriate charges associated with the development and maintenance of these services. The charges to be paid by Operators will be agreed annually with a minimum of one months notice being given before any change is implemented.</p> |

Apportionment of Costs.

The Council wants to ensure that the Bus Information is administered equitably and fairly. It is not our intention to over complicate issues and we look to operators to work together with the council in a practical way which results in simple high quality information to the public; it is not possible to define a set of rules which cover every eventuality.

There needs to be a mechanism to deal with the apportionment of costs associated with publicity information where routes or sections of routes are served by more than one operator. The table above refers to the “Main Operator” as having responsibility for producing joint publicity. For this purpose the “Main Operator” for roadside publicity is defined as being the one with the greatest number of journeys serving a stop excluding seasonal journeys; with regard to timetable leaflets, the “Main Operator” is the one with the most registered journeys in the leaflet based on Monday – Saturday services.

Before determining a method of cost apportionment the Council will monitor situations where costs should have been shared in the first 12 months of this strategy. Discussions will subsequently be held with the main operators to agree an appropriate method.

Traveline

The basis for the apportionment of costs associated with traveline has been agreed with operators and will be reviewed annually.

Appendix A

Outlets for public transport leaflets

- Bus stations
- Libraries
- Bus operator Travel Centres
- Tourist Information Centres
- National Park offices
- Staffed railway stations
- Post Offices
- Health Centres
- Citizens Advice Bureaux
- District Council Offices
- Hospitals
- Doctor’s surgeries
- Employment Centres
- Community Centres
- Key Tourist Destinations
- House to House along appropriate corridor, as agreed

