Public Transport Supplementary Strategy Document

www.slough.gov.uk
Slough
Borough Council

Contents

1. Introduction

This Public Transport Strategy Supplementary Document describes in detail Slough Borough Council's (SBC) strategy and implementation plan for public transport. It is one of a family of documents which describe its plans for specific modes and activities.

The preparation of Slough's Second Local Transport Plan (LTP2) Bus Strategy, considered in Chapter 2, included a phase of stakeholder and member consultation. The Council is now working with many of those stakeholders including SEGRO, Heathrow Airport Ltd and the Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust to deliver specified improvements to bus services. For LTP3 we have consulted widely with members of the public about their journey experiences in order to inform further proposals for delivering bus service improvements that will contribute towards the fulfilment of Slough's transport objectives. This consultation, conducted in May 2010, is considered in Chapter 3.

This document replaces the LTP2 Bus Strategy with the remit extended to other public transport modes including rail, taxi, and community transport. This Supplementary Document has been developed under the context of a number of public transport improvements which will benefit Slough:

- Committed rail schemes to improve journey times and accessibility to central London;
- Growing bus patronage in response to service development particularly to Heathrow Airport and the Trading Estate, as well as an increase in concessionary bus travel;
- Generally good at-stop bus service information; and
- Re-development of Slough bus station with improved levels of bus priority in the town centre.

Challenges continue to be the maintenance of reliability and the allocation of resource to highway measures that will address reliability issues. Consultation with stakeholders revealed concerns such as:

- The continued need to raise the awareness of public transport services;
- Not all public transport routes run in the evenings which may curtail the social life of people who rely on public transport;
- Physical design of public transport vehicles and waiting facilities may not be able to accommodate more than one wheelchair users (for buses) and difficult for wheelchair uses to board/alight the vehicle on their own; and
- Location of bus stops are often not close enough to key facilities which then requires passengers with disabilities to cross a busy road.

The remainder of this document is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2, Context; and
- Chapter 3, Challenges and Options;

The development of this Public Transport Supplementary Document incorporates the findings from the following stakeholder groupings:

- Face-to-face interviews of 750 respondents in Slough Town Centre, Bus Station and Car Parks, May 2010;
- Focus group with Slough Disability Panel, May 2010;
- Focus group with Physical Disability and Sensory Needs Project Development Group (PDG), May 2010; and
- Meeting with the Slough Chamber of Commerce, May 2010.

2. Context

2.1 Legislative Background and Application to Slough

2.1.1 Bus Services

Bus services in Great Britain outside London are provided under the framework established by the Transport Act 1985. Under this Act, bus services are provided primarily on a commercial basis and without direct involvement on the part of any local authority. Further, any operator of passenger service vehicles may register to run local bus services provided he or she meets the required safety and quality standards, and regardless of any pre-existing services.

However, under the same Act, Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) (including Slough) have a **duty** "to secure the provision of such public passenger services as the council consider it appropriate to secure to meet any public transport requirements…which would not in their view be met apart from any action taken by them for that purpose". Hence LTAs are required to provide services which would not be provided commercially. Inevitably, that requires subsidy.

Subsequent legislation has provided LTAs with further **powers**. The current position (following the passage of the Local Transport Act 2008) is that LTAs may:

- Take control of bus services in their area and franchise their operation through a Quality Contract Scheme;
- Provide infrastructure and require any operator who wishes to make use of that infrastructure to comply with specified quality standards – these can now include maximum fare and minimum frequency – through a Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) Scheme; and
- Make an agreement with operators to provide services to a particular standard – again with the potential to include maximum fare and minimum frequency – through a Voluntary Partnership Agreement.

The Greater London Authority Act 1999 confers a **power** on Transport for London (TfL) to provide public passenger transport services to, from or within Greater London.

Bus Services in Slough

Commercial bus services are provided in Slough by First Beeline Buses Ltd and Arriva the Shires Ltd. These constitute the majority of services operated in Slough.

SBC provides revenue support to bus services for three main reasons:

1) To provide a level of service during evenings and weekends when commercial services would not operate but where it believes there is a need for these services;
2) To provide bus services in certain circumstances where a significant number of residents live outside a reasonable walking distance to the line of bus route; and
3) To provide services where developer funding is available for bus services to new developments.

SBC also contributes financially to services procured by neighbouring authorities which operate into its administrative area. Overall, SBC's spend on supported bus services in 2009/10 was around £487,000. In addition, a number of third parties are involved in procuring and funding local bus services in Slough, notably Heathrow Airport Ltd and SEGRO.

TfL procures one service (route 81 between Hounslow Bus Station and Slough Bus Station). It specifies the route, frequency, vehicle type and fares but has a **duty** to consult local transport authorities on its proposals. SBC currently makes no financial contribution to route 81.

SBC currently does not exercise the Local Transport Act 2008 powers listed above although it did support two successful bids made by neighbouring authorities in 2009 for Kickstart funds which

involve the formation of Voluntary Partnership Agreements. Unfortunately government withdrew funding in June 2010 before the schemes could be implemented.

Slough Borough Council also has a non-statutory 'umbrella' Quality Bus Partnership and Punctuality Improvement Partnership with First in Berkshire. These provide a useful forum for the exchange of information; review of performance; and identification of future priorities.

2.1.2 Fares and Concessionary Travel

Authorities designated as Travel Concession Authorities (such as Slough) have a **duty** under the Concessionary Bus Travel Act 2008 to provide a free bus travel concession to any holder of a national concessionary bus pass starting a journey in its area between 09:30 and 23:00 Mondays to Fridays, and at any time on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays. It also has a **duty** to provide a national concessionary bus pass to any valid applicant:

- Certain classes of disabled person; and
- Any person (of either sex) of or over the current female pensionable age. The effect of this to increase the eligible age from 60 to 65 between 2010 and 2020.

Travel Concession Authorities have a **duty** to reimburse bus operators so that they are no better off and no worse off than if no concession had existed.

Any authority also has the **power** under the Transport Act 1985:

- To extend this concession for journeys starting in its area to all-day (for some or all people eligible for the national bus pass concession) and to allow pass holders who in their opinion cannot use public transport unaccompanied to have a companion when using buses;
- To extend this concession to other means of transport such as rail or community transport services for journeys in its local area; and
- To offer a concession to young people aged between 16 and 19 in full-time education for travel on any mode for journeys in its local area.

Certain authorities have used well-being powers to extend this concession to all young people aged between 16 and 19.

The powers contained in the 1985 Act will lapse in April 2011 but well-being powers to implement concessionary schemes additional to the national bus pass scheme will remain.

Beyond these powers and duties with respect to concessionary travel, local authorities have no direct influence over commercial bus fares unless they make a Quality Contract Scheme. Through the Quality Bus Partnership Schemes and Voluntary Partnership Agreements noted above they may specify (with the agreement of the operators concerned) a maximum fare. However, an agreement on maximum fare can in no way constitute price fixing. They also have a **power** under the Transport Act 2000 to make a multi-operator ticketing scheme. The most common forms of this are 1) an agreement for operators to accept each others tickets, and 2) an area-based day or season ticket product accepted by all operators in that area. Even here the authorities have no direct influence over the fares to be charged.

Fares and Concessionary Travel in Slough

In addition to its duties, SBC currently:

- Extends the national bus pass concession to enable all-day and companion travel for all national bus pass concession passholders with one exception: journeys on Green Line services to London before 09:00 Mondays to Fridays; and
- Offers a half-fare pass to students aged 16-19 resident in Slough for travel on either First Beeline bus services or First Great Western (FGW) train services (but not both).

There are around 14,000 national concessionary bus pass holders resident in Slough. Reimbursement out-turn was £1,997,000 in 2009/10.

In the half-price scheme for 16-19 year olds in further education, the recipient can choose between one valid on First Beeline buses or on FGW trains, and the pass is valid as far as the recipient's place of education, which may be outside Slough. The number of passes issued in 2009/10 was 627 (bus) and 125 (rail) at a cost of £56,000 (bus) and £10,000 (rail).

2.1.3 Road Network

The duties and powers regarding the highway are considered in more detail in the Network Management Plan. However, the network management duties under the Traffic Management Act 2004 do influence the provision of bus services, particularly reliability.

If an operator is failing to operate services as registered, the Traffic Commissioner "may direct a local traffic authority to provide him...with specific information connected with any aspect of the performance of their duties under section 16 or 17 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 (the network management duty, and arrangements for network management).

The Traffic Commissioner can identify remedial action to be undertaken by the LTA as well as by the operator (i.e. action that would allow operators to run reliably) and may publish that report. He may direct either or both of the operator and LTA to make improvements.

The Council also has powers and duties with respect to parking controls and highway safety, which often involve physical measures on-street. The design, implementation and enforcement of these measures have a considerable impact on the speed and reliability of local bus services.

Road Network in Slough

SBC has appointed a Traffic Manager. It is currently investing in a number of measures to improve traffic conditions in the borough and where feasible and appropriate measures to improve bus journey times and punctuality.

One area of concern is that of the design of traffic calming measures. Slough has a mix of vertical and horizontal measures intended to reduce traffic speeds. A number of locations have speed humps and tables. The design of these, such as entry/exit gradients to a speed table and the length of the plateau of the table, can have a particular impact on bus speeds (and hence on operating speed and reliability) and bus passenger comfort.

2.1.4 Bus Passenger Infrastructure

Highway authorities have general **powers** to provide bus stops and bus shelters on street, subject to the same duty of care as would apply to the design and implementation of any piece of highway infrastructure. Bus operators also have **powers** to provide their own fittings at bus stops but not to designate formal bus stops on the highway.

Part 3 of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 gives disabled people a "right of access" to goods, services and facilities. At present there is an exemption for public transport vehicles but the dates by which all buses and coaches must be wheelchair accessible are:

- 1 January 2016 all single deck buses;
- 1 January 2017 all double deck buses; and
- 1 January 2020 all coaches.

The Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000 state that the gradient of the boarding ramp to a 125mm kerb shall be no more than 7 degrees as measured relative to the ground (which is assumed to be flat). Transport for London's 'Accessible Bus Stop Design Guidance' (January 2006) elaborates that the gradient of the ramp should be no more than 1:8 or 12 percent onto a kerb of at least 125mm in height. However, depending on the angle of slope relative to carriageway and footway surfaces this gradient may not be achievable, and TfL's guidance states that 140mm kerb heights are preferred as they reduce the ramp gradients.

It may therefore be reasonably inferred that by 2017 (2016 if single deck buses are used) the local transport authority has a **duty** to ensure that persons in wheelchairs are capable of boarding and

alighting from buses. This means that by 2017 highway authorities will have a **duty** to ensure that all:

- Kerbs at boarding and alighting points must be of sufficient height; and
- Bus stop clearways must be of sufficient length to enable buses to pull sufficiently close to the kerb to deploy the ramp.

The authority will also have a **duty** to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to keep clearways clear of illegal stopping and loading activity by other road users.

Finally, both local authorities and operators have powers to provide and maintain off-street bus stations. Charges must be reasonable and (provided space is available) allocation of space non-discriminatory (Transport Act 1985).

Bus Passenger Infrastructure in Slough

There are 407 designated bus stops and 174 bus shelters in Slough. Clearchannel provides and maintains shelters under contract to SBC. This agreement expires in 2018.

The Council generally takes the view that it (as opposed to operators) will designate bus stops and provide appropriate infrastructure. The exception is at stops served by TfL's route 81 where TfL as a matter of policy provides bus stop poles, flags and passenger information at the poles (but not in shelters).

Almost all buses operating local bus services in Slough are fitted with a kneeling mechanism to lower the suspension at bus stops and with wheelchair ramps – albeit that some have to be deployed manually by the driver. Provided therefore that when deployed the ramp achieves a gradient of no more than 1:8, the kerb height will by definition be sufficient to meet the requirements of the DDA.

This assumes that the bus can access the kerb in the first place, and that the stop is not obstructed by parked cars. Following standards issued by Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive, SBC has adopted 23 metres as the absolute minimum cage length to protect a bus stop from obstructive parking.

The detailed data from one bus route, reported below, indicates progress towards meeting the requirements of the DDA:

- Only 26% of stops have a cage length of 23 metres or greater;
- 48% of stops have a cage length less than 23 metres;
- 26% of stops have no cage markings at all;
- Only 38% of stops have a kerb height of 125 mm or greater (and so could – subject to site specific survey – meet the PSV accessibility regulations); and
- 62% of stops have a kerb height less than 125 mm.

Further, many (188) of the clearway operational times are less than the provision of the bus service – for example many are '7-7' when they are served by buses running between around 0430 and 2300.

Slough has 47 stops (12%) fitted with raised kerbs (for the most part 'kassell' kerbs) of 160 or 180 mm height which may be assumed to meet DDA requirements. These were mostly implemented around 10 years ago and in recent years very few have been installed. Issues may arise, however, with the use of particular types of vehicle or where pavement rutting results in an inability to deploy the ramp.

SBC is currently developing Heart of Slough Bus Station, operations at which will be managed on a day-to-day basis by First Beeline Buses.

2.1.5 Bus Passenger Information

The premise of the Transport Act 1985 is that bus operators will provide a level of passenger information appropriate to their commercial needs.

The Transport Act 2000 imposes a **duty** on Local Transport Authorities to determine what local bus information should be made available and the way in which it should be made available. By local bus information is meant information on routes, timetabling, fares, concessions or facilities for disabled passengers. If the operator(s) is not willing or able to provide the information required, then the **LTA** has the **power** to do so and recover the cost from the operator as a civil debt. We are aware of very few instances where this power has been exercised.

Bus Passenger Information in Slough

SBC has a Bus Passenger Information Strategy and this is currently being reviewed. It is hoped to attach a revised BPIS as an addendum to this Strategy.

As noted above, TfL provides stop specific information for all services using stops it provides. First Beeline provides stop specific timetable information (but only for its own services) at all stops it serves. It also provides its own network map in shelters.

Other operators generally do not provide information at stops. SBC does not generally provide this either. There is therefore a small proportion of stops with incomplete or no information.

SBC has recently been implementing stops which display on the flag the route number(s), direction, and Traveline logo. A timetable case is provided at these as at other stops.

SBC is in the process of implementing a Real Time Passenger Information system. This will display information at bus stops in both a visual and (on request by the user) aural format. Future phases may include the provision of real time information on-bus (as is already the case on TfL's route 81). The Council already has 10 displays on street, displaying a mix of scheduled and Real Time information.

SBC until 2008 produced an annual Bus and Train Travel Guide in paper format. This information is available on Traveline.

General information on public transport (including concessions) is provided on Slough Borough Council's website.

2.1.6 Community Transport

Community Transport takes a number of forms, notably car-sharing schemes; dial-a-ride services and even public bus routes. Underpinning most of this sector is that is provided on a not for profit and/or on a charitable basis. Authorities have no specific duties towards this sector. They do, however, have **powers** to provide financial support and to include them in concessionary travel schemes (Transport Act 1985).

Community Transport in Slough

The main provider of these services in Slough is Slough Community Transport and Shopmobility. The main services this organisation provides are dial-a-ride services and mobility scooter hire in Slough town centre. The dial-a-ride services are provided under a 'section 19' permit (Transport Act 1985) which means that the services are available only to people who first register to use the service. Eligibility is based on the applicant having a difficulty using mainstream public transport either on grounds of age or disability.

2.1.7 Rail Services

Rail services are provided by train operating companies working under franchise to Department for Transport. They use infrastructure provided by Network Rail. The Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) is a statutory board which is the combined economic and safety regulatory authority of Network Rail's stewardship of the rail infrastructure. Local transport authorities have no explicit duties or powers with respect to rail services except for those described above, e.g. concessionary travel.

Local authority involvement in rail tends to be at interchanges and at other locations where the highway interfaces with rail infrastructure. Local authorities such as Slough have no explicit powers to influence train service patterns or station facilities. There is, however, a **duty** on Network Rail to facilitate third party enhancements to the railway network.

Rail Services in Slough

Slough is located on the Great Western Main Line with stations at Langley, Slough and Burnham and is served by the FGW franchise and the stations are managed by FGW. A short branch line connects Slough with Windsor and Eton Central.

A number of major projects will influence rail services in Slough:

Crossrail

Work on the route began in 2009 at the future Canary Wharf station. Services between Maidenhead, Central London, Docklands and beyond are due to commence in 2017 but commitment to the full scheme (eg. to Maidenhead) has yet to be made.

Great Western mainline electrification

DfT announced plans in the summer of 2009 to electrify the route between Paddington and Bristol, Swansea, Oxford and Newbury. The works are currently scheduled for completion by 2017 but may now be subject to review. The effect of Crossrail and Great Western electrification on the timetable currently offered between Reading, Slough and Paddington is at present uncertain.

Reading station remodelling

Amongst other things, this scheme provides more capacity at the eastern end of the station for services terminating here so is of particular relevance to proposals to increase the number of commuter services in the Thames Valley, including to Slough.

High Speed 2 (HS2)

Early in 2010, Government published a Command Paper outlining the case and preferred alignment for High Speed 2. The first phase of HS2 provides for a new route between Euston and Birmingham via an interchange at Old Oak Common. This will provide interchange opportunities between stations in Slough and destinations served by HS2 such as Birmingham without the need to change stations in central London.

Great Western Rail Access to Heathrow (GWRATH)

In 2009, Slough Borough Council acting on behalf of the Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum and Buckinghamshire County Council commissioned a study to consider at high level the engineering feasibility and business case for a rail service giving access from the Thames Valley to Heathrow Airport.

The advice of the consultants (Atkins) was:

- Passive provision at Terminal 5 facilitates projection of rail infrastructure west;
- To be viable, the scheme has to provide connections at Reading from the Great Western and cross country routes, as well as more local connections from the Thames Valley;
- To pursue an alignment between Terminal 5 and the Great Western main line either via the existing Colnbrook branch line alignment or via a new alignment to Langley, at a likely cost of £500 million; and
- The forecast fares revenue from the service comfortably exceeds the projected operating cost.

The scheme is considered in outline in the Great Western Route Utilisation Strategy (March 2010).

An alternative means of providing western access by rail is being promoted privately. This envisages a link via Windsor, with tunnelling under Windsor town centre.

2.2 Themes, Objectives and Outcomes of Local Transport Plan 2

Table 2.1 – Slough LTP2 Bus Strategy – Objectives, Outputs and Outcomes

Objectives	Intended Outputs in LTP2 period	Outputs in LTP2 period	Achievement of LTP2 Outcomes
Bus Performance and Network Development			
Further raise bus punctuality and reliability	SBC: Implement bus lanes on key corridors and further SVD SBC and police: Enforce bus priority measures Operators: Continue to review scheduled and address out-of –course running SBC & operators: Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnership (PIP)	Implementation: SCOOT on A4 west of town centre; No new bus lanes; scheme developed to re-instate SIETAG sites on Stoke Road Atkins commission to review bus lane TROs. Operators: a number of schedule changes to maintain reliability PIP in operation as part of QBP process RTPI scheme procured in 2010 includes provision for bus priority at signals	Patronage ✓ Punctuality ✓ Satisfaction ✓
Increase journey speeds on the bus network	Operators: Network restructuring to offer quicker journeys where this is commercially viable SBC: Bus priority, bus stop boarding and town centre measures to speed bus journey times	Network: New bus links to Heathrow T5. SBC: Limited progress	Patronage ✓ Punctuality ✓ Satisfaction ✓
Ensure developer funding for bus services appropriate & appropriately timed	SBC: Review Policies SBC: Issue Guidance to Developers	Guide to developers prepared Have secured developer's contributions for (i) Cippenham Phase III and IV (between the development and Slough Town Centre and the development and Slough Trading Estate) and (ii) SEGRO (extends the support for existing Hoppa bus services to November 2014).	Patronage ✓ Punctuality ✓ Satisfaction ✓
Create conditions whereby frequencies can be improved commercially	SBC and operators: Review opportunities for pump-priming funding higher frequencies.	2 successful Kickstart bids to DfT submitted 2009 but DfT funding subsequently withdrawn	Patronage ✓✓ Punctuality ✓ Satisfaction ✓
Accessibility			
Ensure that the bus network is accessible in terms of its catchment	SBC: Formulate appropriate accessibility standard SBC: Review bus network and stop spacing with reference to this standard SBC: Actions including reviewing stop spacing and tendering in-fill services	400 metres used Continual review bus network and stop spacing - Informal Mixed progress: buses withdrawn Langley St Marys but reinstated Telford Drive area (Cippenham) through the new service to Cippenham phase III development.	Patronage ✓ Punctuality ✓ Satisfaction ✓
Ensure that the bus network is accessible to those without access to car or van	SBC: Keep accessibility under review SBC: Tendering in-fill services if necessary	Yes S.106 funding for Cippenham service	Patronage ✓ Punctuality Satisfaction ✓
Improve accessibility to Slough Town Centre	SBC: At-grade pedestrian crossing Wellington Street SBC: Review town centre bus routeing and permeability SBC & stakeholders: Improve environment for bus passengers	No but planned as part of Heart of Slough No Minor H&S improvements to existing bus station; Heart of Slough under development	Patronage ✓ Punctuality Satisfaction ✓
Improve accessibility to employment: Slough Trading Estate	Slough Trading Estate: Investigate and take actions to bring Linx route 1 to viability	Services restructured 2008 with further minor adjustment due 2011	Patronage ✓ Punctuality Satisfaction ✓

Objectives	Intended Outputs in LTP2 period	Outputs in LTP2 period	Achievement of LTP2 Outcomes
Improve accessibility to Wexham Park Hospital	NHS Trust & SBC: Develop business case for town centre – hospital route NHS Trust & SBC: Consider policies to improve competitive position for bus	NHS Trust has gone to tender for new route due to start late 2010 NHS Trust implementing restrictive parking policies for staff	Patronage ✓✓ Punctuality Satisfaction ✓
Improve the ability of the bus network to meet times of passengers' activity	SBC, First & Slough Estates: review bus times to Slough Estates & other employers SBC: Review accessibility to BAA Heathrow Airport SBC: Review tendered services: rail commuters, Sunday shopping, evening leisure	Done Major network change for Heathrow T5 Review tendered services upholds strategy to maintain evening and Sunday services	Patronage ✓✓ Punctuality Satisfaction ✓
Improve Interchange with Rail	SBC: Ensure best possible bus/rail interchange in Slough major scheme bid SBC: Develop improvements to bus/rail interchange at Burnham & Langley SBC: Encourage First's bus/rail combined ticket and promote PlusBus	Forecourt scheme due for implementation No improvements Langley and Burnham although bids have been made Slough reported to be high usage area for PlusBus	Patronage ✓ Punctuality Satisfaction ✓
Develop linkages beyond Slough, notably limited stop and express services	First: Direct bus service to Heathrow Airport SBC, First & BAA: Further opportunities to serve Heathrow Airport including Terminal 5	Heathrow network has improved with additional services to T5.	Patronage ✓✓ Punctuality Satisfaction ✓✓
Make the bus network accessible for all users	SBC: Implement raised kerbs at bus stops SBC: Encourage all commercial services operated by low floor bus SBC: Specify low floor buses for tendered services	£84k 2006/7 then average spend £3k p.a. All services now operated by Super Low Floor buses Yes	Patronage ✓ Punctuality Satisfaction ✓
Address perceived and actual security and safety concerns	SBC: Review security at known trouble spots and implement relevant measures Operators: Fit CCTV to bus fleet SBC and operators: schools visits and education	Multi-agency approach to vandalism problem in Britwell CCTV fitted to 7-series routes No school visits	Patronage ✓ Punctuality Satisfaction ✓
Passenger Information, Marketing and Fares			
Further improve the provision of information	SBC: Travel Guide: develop; issue electronically, extend availability SBC & operators: Real Time Pass, Info, Help-Points; web-based Journey Planners SBC & operators: Standard style info bus stops, standardised timetable changes SBC, operators & stakeholders: Pursue direct marketing campaigns	Travel Guide withdrawn owing to funding constraints RTPI due for implementation 2011 First standardise timetable changes Not done	Patronage Punctuality Satisfaction
Address the Cost of Travelling by Bus	SBC, neighbouring LTAs and operators: Develop business case for Smartcard SBC, neighbouring LTAs and operators: Formulate multi-operator ticketing scheme	Not done Not done	Patronage Punctuality Satisfaction
Provide Cross-Boundary Concessionary Fares	SBC and neighbouring authorities: Maintain cross-boundary travel	Implemented as part of national concession	Patronage ✓✓ Punctuality Satisfaction ✓✓
Working Collectively			
Develop Partnership	SBC and operators: Review and renew	Bus PIP implemented and subject to further	Patronage ✓

Objectives	Intended Outputs in LTP2 period	Outputs in LTP2 period	Achievement of LTP2 Outcomes
Working	QBP, formulate Bus PIP SBC: Keep statutory QBP and QC under review SBC and stakeholders: Continue and strengthen partnership working SBC and neighbouring authorities: Continue and develop joint working	review Kickstart bids (DfT funding now withdrawn) required voluntary partnership agreements Excellent working relations with neighbouring authorities on PT co-ordination	Punctuality Satisfaction ✓

2.2.1 Performance: National Indicators and Local Targets

Slough Borough Council has set the following targets relating to the LTP2 Bus Strategy and their performance against those targets is summarised in Table 2.3. Specifically:

- **BVPI 102 / NI 177: Bus Patronage** – Increase in the number of local bus passengers journeys originating in the local authority area by 4.6% (0.66% p.a.) from 3.941 million in 2003/04 to 4.125 million in 2010/11. The long term aspiration is to increase bus patronage by 26.9%. In terms of actual performance, this **national target has been met** in 2006/07, 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10;
- **BVPI 104: Bus Satisfaction** – Increase the percentage of respondents to the user satisfaction survey satisfied with the local bus service from 43% in 2003/04 to 60% in 2010/11. The long term aspiration is to increase bus satisfaction levels to 85%. This **national target has been met** in 2006/07, and there is no requirement for bus satisfaction survey until 2009/10;
- **LTP5 / NI 178: Bus Punctuality** – Increase the % of buses starting route on time and on time at intermediate timing points from 82% in 2005/06 to 87% in 2010/11. This **national target has been met** in 2008/09;
- **Journeys made on buses travelling to Heathrow Airport** – Increase the annual journeys on bus routes serving the airport, by 20% (3.3% p.a.) from 1,712,539 in 2003/04 to 2,055,047 in 2010/11. The long term aspiration is to increase patronage by 46%; and
- **Proportion of the population within a 45 minute journey to Heathrow door to door via public transport –** Increase the proportion of Slough population within a 45 minute journey to Heathrow door to door via public transport on a weekday between 7:00 am and 9:00 am from 61% in 2007 to 67% in 2010/11. This **local target has been met** since 2008/09.

Table 2.2 – Performance against Slough LTP2 Bus Strategy Indicators

Indicator	Baseline		LTP2				
			2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
BVPI 102 / NI 177: Bus Patronage	3.847m 2003/04	Actual	4.326m	4.448m	4.784m	4.906m	Not yet available
		Trajectory	3.998m	4.027m	4.056m	4.117m	4.178m
BVPI 104: Bus Satisfaction	43% 2003/04	Actual	55%	Survey not required	Survey not required	No Data	Survey not required
		Trajectory	50%	50%	50%	55%	60%
LTP5 / NI178: Bus Punctuality	82% 2005/06	Actual	82%	81%	81%	78%	Not yet available
		Trajectory	83%	84%	85%	86%	87%
NI175 (a) Proportion of the population within a 45 minute journey to Heathrow door to door via public transport	61% 2007/08	Actual	N/A	61%	77%	TBC	Not yet available
		Trajectory	N/A	61%	63%	65%	67%
Journeys made on buses travelling to Heathrow Airport	1.713m 2004/05	Actual	1.70m	1.80m	TBC	2.78m	Not yet available
		Trajectory	1.770m	1.827m	1.88m	1.998m	2.055m

2.3 Summary and Vision

It can be seen that in a number of areas the Council, its operator partners and key stakeholders have been successful in improving standards and driving up the level of service.

However, before considering the contribution that public transport can make to Slough's objectives and outcomes (Chapter 3), it may be worth just considering what might constitute a high quality public transport network in its own terms. It is hoped that this will aid interpretation of the assessment against Slough's objectives and outcomes by highlighting the efforts that need to be made to bridge the gap between current performance and the performance charactised by an excellent public transport network.

- **Accessibility**
  - Accessible to all passengers who are disabled or who have learning difficulties; and
  - Bus stops within a 5 minute walk of 95% of residents.
- **Connectivity**
  - Provides a high level of coverage to the town centre and other major areas for shopping and services at all appropriate times;
  - Enables passengers to reach all shifts at key employment sites; and
  - Provides strategic connections to the UK national transport network.
- **Cost and Ticketing**
  - Easy to use ticketing systems which deliver faster journeys and reduced on-bus cash; and
  - Concessions to particular groups in need including the disabled and younger people.
- **Generalised and Perceived Journey Times**
  - Buses immunised from congestion so that running times are both fast and consistent between peak and off-peak time periods with consequent ability to schedule at regular (and therefore memorable) headways;

- Reasonable fares with minimal transaction time and effort with the driver and no financial penalty for changing vehicle or mode;
- The user knows (and is able to find out) how his or her bus(es) and/or train(s) are running at any point before and during their journey appropriate and reliable Real Time Passenger Information systems; and
- Bus routeings through developments permit fast and progressive journeys.

- **Safety and Security**
  - The passenger feels safe and secure at every point on his journey from walking to the bus stop to waiting for the bus to travelling on the bus to walking to their destination.
- **Environment**
  - Public transport vehicles are to low emission standards both in terms of air pollutants and noise

3. Challenges and Options

3.1 LTP3 Objectives and Outcomes

3.1.1 LTP3 High Level Objective and Desired Outcome

Table 3.1 shows that public transport contributes to a number of Slough LTP3 High Level Objectives as well as Desired Outcomes.

Each outcome is considered in Table 3.2 in terms of whether the high level objectives to which it relates are met; current performance; and measures currently being planned or delivered that support that outcome.

Table 3.1 – Linkages between Slough LTP3 High Level Objectives, Desired Outcome and this Public Transport Strategy

High level objective	Desired outcomes											
	Less unnecessary movement of people and goods.	Travel by sustainable modes is more attractive than travel by private car.	Minimise effects of stop/start traffic conditions (congestion).	Journey times more reliable on all modes (incl. freight)	Better public transport connectivity to jobs & services, especially from disadvantaged areas	Better public transport connectivity to key locations outside Slough	Better public transport information to all including those with disabilities and those for whose English is not the first language	An integrated, high quality, accessible public transport network	Safer roads and public transport networks.	Reduced impacts of travel and transport on our communities.	Reduced impacts of travel and transport on our natural environment & heritage	Enhancement of the public realm
Reduce CO2 emissions.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				
Economic competitiveness	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓
Facilitate new housing growth	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		
Make sustainable travel options accessible to all							✓		✓			
Enhance social inclusion & regenerate deprived areas					✓		✓			✓		✓
Reduce the number of road traffic injuries	✓								✓			
Improve personal health	✓	✓	✓						✓		✓	
Maximise personal safety, minimise crime and perception of crime.									✓			✓
Mitigate effects of the transport system on the natural environment, etc.											✓	
Improve quality of life for local residents.		✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Improve the journey experience							✓	✓				✓

Public Transport contribution	✓

Table 3.2 - Outcomes: Current and Planned Performance

Desired Outcome 1	Travel by sustainable modes is more attractive than travel by private car.
Does current performance fulfil the outcome?	During the LTP2 period there have been a number of bus network initiatives driven mostly by: • The opening of Heathrow Terminal 5; • A re-assessment of services through Slough Trading Estate; and • Introduction of a new service to Cippenham using developer contributions. On fares, introduction of Oyster cards has led to a reduction in fares on TfL route 81, although there are no Oyster outlets in Slough. Over the course of the LTP2 period the eligibility for and scope of use of the concessionary bus travel scheme have increased. However, a brief analysis suggests that door-to-door journey times by bus are typically double those of car. In addition, some travel needs e.g. early and late shifts at Heathrow Airport are outwith the current scope of the bus network forcing reliance on car. Design of some traffic calming measures have a disproportionate impact on buses (speed and passenger comfort)
Measures currently being delivered for Slough	• Heart of Slough Bus Station and bus priority measures in Slough town centre • Real Time Passenger Information system (some screens already implemented). Scope for system to tie in with SCOOT (A4; planned for A355) and at other junctions to give selective bus priority • Wexham and Heatherwood Hospitals Trust staff parking restrictions and direct bus service Slough town centre – Wexham Park Hospital • Limited roll-out of 'Trueform' bus stop posts and flags improves visibility of and information on bus services
Measures currently planned for Slough	• A Major Scheme Bid to DfT for delivering intensive bus priority measures on the A4 Bath Road is at a putative stage

Desired Outcome 2	Minimise effect of stop/start traffic conditions (congestion)
Does current performance fulfil the outcome?	• Improvements needed to reduce the variability in bus running time and differential in peak and off-peak. For instance route 75 (Maidenhead – Heathrow CBS) AM peak journey time is 85 minutes. This reduces to 66 minutes between the peaks and 54 minutes in the late evening – a 36% reduction in scheduled running time compared to peak. • Recent increases in bus travel may have resulted in a reduced number of car trips
Measures currently being delivered for Slough	• Heart of Slough Bus Station and bus priority measures in Slough town centre • Bus priority at selected signalised junctions • SCOOT (A4; planned for A355) • Wexham and Heatherwood Hospitals Trust staff parking restrictions and direct bus service Slough town centre – Wexham Park Hospital
Measures currently planned for Slough	• A Major Scheme Bid to DfT for delivering intensive bus priority measures on the A4 Bath Road is at a putative stage. • Bus priority at further signalised junctions

Desired Outcome 3	Journey times more reliable on all modes (incl. freight)
Does current performance fulfil the outcome?	No: variability in bus running times and differential in peak and off-peak running times are key constraints in providing reliable and even headway (and therefore attractive to use) bus services. See example of route 75 above.
Measures currently being delivered for Slough	• SCOOT currently being implemented on A4 Bath Road and is planned for A355 Farnham Road • Heart of Slough Bus Station and bus priority measures in Slough town centre • Efforts being made to ameliorate the impact of roadworks by identifying on a case-by-case basis where and in what circumstances roads can remain open for use by buses

Desired Outcome 4	Better public transport connectivity to jobs & services, especially from disadvantaged areas
Does current performance fulfil the outcome?	To an extent: bus services provide a good level of connectivity to Slough Trading Estate and the Heathrow Airport campus.
Measures currently being delivered for Slough	• As part of its section 106 Agreement SEGRO has radical proposals to deliver demand responsive transit and enhanced fixed route bus services to Slough Trading Estate. • Wexham and Heatherwood Hospitals Trust staff parking restrictions and direct bus service Slough town centre – Wexham Park Hospital**.**
Measures currently planned for Slough	• Successful Kickstart bids (DfT funding subsequently withdrawn) for: ○ 24 hour access to Heathrow Airport; and ○ Improved level of service to High Wycombe with regular fast

	journeys.

Desired Outcome 5	Better public transport connectivity to key locations outside Slough
Does current performance fulfil the outcome?	• During the LTP2 period there have been a number of bus network initiatives driven mostly by the opening of Heathrow Terminal 5, widening the area of Slough with direct connections to both a major employer and regional transport node.
Measures currently being delivered for Slough	• Improved level of service on Greenline services to central London starting 29 May 2010
Measures currently planned for Slough	• Successful Kickstart bids (DfT funding subsequently withdrawn) would have seen: o 24 hour access to Heathrow Airport; and o Improved level of service to High Wycombe with regular fast journeys. • Crossrail due for implementation 2017 or later

Desired Outcome 6	Better public transport information to all including those with disabilities and those for whom English is not the first language
Does current performance fulfil the outcome?	• Current public transport information systems (at stop; paper; internet) are visual and entirely in English
Measures currently being delivered for Slough	• Limited roll-out of 'Trueform' bus stop posts and flags improves visibility of bus services for the visually impaired • Real Time Passenger Information will include aural information at stops with possibility of providing some multi-lingual information.

Desired Outcome 7	An integrated, high quality, accessible public transport network
Does current performance fulfil the outcome?	• Most bus stops require implementation / modification of bus stop clearways and other measures to achieve DDA-compliant bus network • All buses used in Slough are Super Low Floor specification • Physical proximity of bus and rail is reasonable at Slough centre • Plusbus ticketing with reported (relatively) high take-up in Slough • "First Bus & Rail Cards" available for unlimited travel on all FGW train services and all First bus services in specific areas for 1 day and 7 days in Slough, Maidenhead and Windsor area.
Measures currently planned / being delivered for Slough	• Rail station forecourt improvements • Heart of Slough Bus Station closer to rail station with scope for Real Time for both bus and rail modes to be displayed • Real Time Passenger Information system (some screens already implemented). This is under procurement. Scope for system to tie in with SCOOT (A4; planned for A355) to give selective bus priority at these and other junctions. • Wexham and Heatherwood Hospitals Trust staff parking restrictions and direct bus service Slough town centre – Wexham Park Hospital
Measures currently planned for Slough	• Successful Kickstart bids (DfT funding subsequently withdrawn) for: o 24 hour access to Heathrow Airport; and o Improved level of service to High Wycombe with regular fast journeys. Overall frequency on Farnham Road 8 buses/hour. • A Major Scheme Bid to DfT for delivering intensive bus priority measures on the A4 Bath Road is at a putative stage.

Desired Outcome 8	Safer roads and public transport networks
Does current performance fulfil the outcome?	• Reported crime on bus and rail networks reported to be low. • However, LTP2 consultation suggested that fear of crime, particularly in the walk to and from and at bus stops is a significant deterrent to increased use. This is unlikely to have changed since 2005/6 • Most buses fitted with CCTV
Measures currently planned / being delivered for Slough	• None

Desired Outcome 9	Reduced impacts of travel and transport on our communities
Does current performance fulfil the outcome?	• All buses based at First's Slough garage and used on route 81 conform to TfL Low Emission Zone standards • Batch of Mercedes Citaro buses bought for start of T5 services in 2008 are Euro V emission standards. • Bus stop location policy seeks to avoid placing bus stops outside residential frontages where possible. • Recent increases in bus travel may have resulted in a reduced number of car trips
Measures currently planned / being delivered for Slough	None

Desired Outcome 10	Reduced impacts of travel and transport on our natural environment and heritage
Does current performance fulfil the outcome?	• All buses based at First's Slough garage and those used on route 81 conform to TfL Low Emission Zone standards • Batch of Mercedes Citaro buses bought for start of T5 services in 2007/8 are Euro V emission standards. • Recent increases in bus travel may have resulted in a reduced number of car trips
Measures currently planned / being delivered for Slough	None

Desired Outcome 11	Enhancement of the public realm
Does current performance fulfil the outcome?	• TfL stops are 'Trueform' design to a high standard • Much of the bus fleet is modern with high emissions control standards and to attractive standard • Bus shelters in town centre and at key sites are to Landmark design higher cost and maintenance but more attractive than standard (Insignia)
Measures currently being delivered for Slough	• Heart of Slough Bus Station will further enhance the public realm in Slough town centre. • Enhanced public realm through the Slough Station Forecourt project. • Limited roll-out of 'Trueform' bus stop posts and flags to an improved visual standard compared to previous stops.

3.2 Gaps and Interventions

This section draws together evidence gathered so far to produce a set of interventions that should contribute to the Public Transport Strategy.

It relates the 'model' public transport system briefly described at the end of Chapter 2 to the outcomes that such a system might be expected to achieve. It then – using evidence shown in Table 3.2 – considers the performance of the current public transport system against those outcomes. It then develops interventions required to address shortcomings identified in performance.

3.2.1 Accessibility

- Accessible to all passengers who are disabled or who have learning difficulties; and
- Bus stops within a 5 minute walk of 95% of residents.

The outcomes to which accessibility contributes are:

- Travel by sustainable modes is more attractive than travel by private car;
- Better public transport connectivity to jobs & services, especially from disadvantaged areas;
- Better public transport information to all including those with disabilities and those for whose English is not the first language; and
- An integrated, high quality, accessible public transport network.

On the positive side:

- All buses operated in Slough are to Super Low Floor specification; and
- The bus network provides a high degree of accessibility with few residential areas more than 400 metres from the line of a bus route.

On the negative side:

- As described in 2.1.4 only a small proportion of bus stops fulfil the requirements of the PSV accessibility regulations;
- None of the rail stations in Slough currently has disabled access;
- Public transport information is often hard to obtain, and is (generally) only available in English. Whilst information at stops is generally fairly comprehensive, it tends to be in a dense format relatively difficult to read. The fares system is relatively complex and itself a barrier to use;
- No travel training or 'buddying' takes place which could enable those with learning difficulties to learn to use the public transport network independently. This often results in the double whammy of the authority incurring the high costs in transporting special education needs children by taxi, and these children subsequently having to learn how to use public transport; and
- Awareness of Community Transport alternatives is generally low.

The interventions proposed are therefore:

- To review all bus stop kerb heights, clearway operational times and cage lengths by 2016 to ensure that they meet the requirements of the PSV accessibility regulations and that therefore they are accessible to disabled users;
- In areas where it is not viable – or where the support costs would be high – to provide a conventional bus service, to pursue alternative means of delivering mobility. Measures include increasing support for the Slough Community Transport dial-a-ride scheme; issuing vouchers or tokens for reduced price travel by taxi; or considering further alternatives such as Demand Responsive Transport;
- To continue to pursue with the rail industry measures to make at least one of the Slough rail stations wheelchair accessible to all platforms, and in particular, to ensure that the investment currently programmed as part of the National Stations Improvement Programme delivers improved accessibility and station facilities;
- To introduce a travel training and mentoring scheme for disabled people, focussing particularly on special educational needs children capable of learning how to use public transport;

- To encourage the commercial operators to follow TfL's lead and to implement Smart ticketing and simpler fares structures to reduce the psychological barriers involved with cash fare transactions and lack of knowledge of fare values and types;
- Producing targeted information taking account of those with disabilities and those for whom English is not their first language; and
- Encouraging customer-facing staff to undergo disability awareness training, and making this a condition of any contracts to provide supported bus services.

3.2.2 Connectivity

- Provides a high level of coverage to the town centre and other major areas for shopping and services;
- Enables passengers to reach all shifts at key employment sites; and
- Provides strategic connections to the UK national transport network.

The outcomes to which this heading contributes are:

- Travel by sustainable modes is more attractive than travel by private car;
- Better public transport connectivity to jobs & services, especially from disadvantaged areas;
- Better public transport connectivity to key locations outside Slough; and
- An integrated, high quality, accessible public transport network.

On the positive side:

- Slough's bus network is focused on the town centre and serves a number of out-of-town foodstores;
- Some major employers (eg the Sorting Office) are located in the town centre and therefore benefit from excellent connectivity;
- Slough has good bus links to the Trading Estate (SEGRO) and Heathrow Airport – the latter also acting as a national transport hub (for example, through the National Express coach network);
- SBC provides financial support for a basic provision of bus services on Sundays and in the evenings. A recent survey of users of these services suggested that a high proportion of users were doing so for work purposes; and
- The NHS Trust is shortly to introduce a new bus service between Slough town centre and Wexham Park Hospital, designed to give good connections with rail and bus services at Slough bus and rail stations. This will benefit both hospital staff and visitors.

On the negative side:

- The bus network does not meet all shift times at Heathrow Airport, forcing many into car usage and denying those without access to a car access to full-time jobs at the Airport;
- Similarly, the bus network does meet all shift change times at the Trading Estate;
- The evening and Sunday supported bus network operates only to an hourly frequency, which is not very attractive to users especially those with access to a car; and
- Slough is largely excluded from direct links with major destinations on the Great Western mainline such as Bristol and Cardiff.

The interventions proposed are therefore:

- To continue to explore means by which bus services can be adapted to meet the needs of all shift workers at key employment sites such as Heathrow Airport. This was the focus of one

of the Kickstart bids made in 2009, and had funding not been withdrawn, many areas of Slough would by now be benefiting from such services. A key issue is that these services are unlikely to be commercially viable; and

- To continue to explore means by which accessibility to rail services can be improved, particularly through the Heathrow Western Access proposals.

3.2.3 Cost and Ticketing

- Easy to use ticketing systems which deliver faster journeys and reduced on-bus cash; and
- Concessions to particular groups in need including the disabled and younger people.

The **outcomes** which these attributes deliver are:

- Travel by sustainable modes is more attractive than travel by private car;
- Journey times more reliable on all modes (including freight);
- Better public transport connectivity to jobs & services, especially from disadvantaged areas;
- Better public transport connectivity to key locations outside Slough;
- An integrated, high quality, accessible public transport network;

On the positive side, Slough Borough Council operates:

  - The national concessionary bus pass scheme, although there are doubts as to its medium to long-term viability; and
  - A half-price scheme for 16-19 year olds in further education, though this is only on First buses or trains and is cash limited.

- TfL has Oyster Smartcard ticketing on its route 81, while Arriva has recently introduced ticketing by phone for season ticket products.

On the negative side:

- Cash fares on the commercial bus network are perceived to be high – with point-to-point bus fares often being higher than the equivalent train fares;
- There is no means by which (other than on the TfL network) occasional users such as part-time workers can obtain a discount over the day ticket price;
- There are few opportunities to pay other than in cash ‘over the cab door’, contributing to long bus stop dwell times and perceptions of high fares and poor value compared to the costs of motoring; and
- There are no concessions for young people in general or concessions for other disadvantaged groups such as job seekers.

Whilst fares are primarily the concern of bus operators, both the medium by which fares are paid and the fares structure can influence users’ and would-be users’ perceptions of the public transport offer.

The Strategy should be:

- To continue to operate (as required) the national concessionary bus fare scheme but to continue to seek improved levels of funding from government;
- To seek to extend the current half-fare pass scheme to more young people, directing the scheme towards those in greatest need (using well-being powers) as funding allows;
- To pressure operators to introduce ticketing schemes which benefit part-time workers;
- To pressure operators to review their fare systems to make them more transparent; and

- To work with operators to implement cashless payment systems such as Smartcard or mobile phone.

3.2.4 Generalised and Perceived Journey Times

- Buses immunised from congestion so that running times are both fast and consistent between peak and off-peak time periods with consequent ability to schedule at regular (and therefore memorable) headways;
- Reasonable fares with minimal transaction time and effort with the driver and no financial penalty for changing vehicle or mode;
- The user knows (and is able to find out) how his or her bus(es) and/or train(s) are running at any point before and during their journey; and
- Bus routeings through developments permit fast and progressive journeys.

The outcomes which these attributes deliver are:

- Travel by sustainable modes is more attractive than travel by private car;
- Minimise effects of stop/start traffic conditions (congestion);
- Journey times more reliable on all modes (including freight);
- Better public transport connectivity to jobs & services, especially from disadvantaged areas;
- Better public transport connectivity to key locations outside Slough;
- An integrated, high quality, accessible public transport network;
- Safer roads and public transport networks; and
- Reduced impacts of travel and transport on our communities.

This is possibly an area where the gap between the 'ideal' network and achieved performance is at its greatest. As briefly outlined in Table 3.2 (desired outcomes 1 and 2), door-to-door journey times by bus are typically double those by car, while bus schedules are up to a third longer in the peak compared to off-peak periods. This variability is caused by:

- Poor bus stop design, with a number of stops in laybys;
- Poor traffic calming scheme designs, with a disproportionate effect on buses;
- Congestion and delays at key junctions, exacerbated by unreliability on the M4 motorway;
- Dwell times at bus stops, where a complex fares system, a high proportion of on-bus cash transactions, poor information and language barriers all cause long dwell times at bus stops; and
- Poor design in recent residential housing areas.

On the positive side, Slough Borough Council is addressing these issues through:

- A Real Time Passenger Information system. This will reduce perceptions of long waits at bus stops by providing passengers with knowledge of when their bus is due;
- As part of the RTPI system SBC is introducing selective bus priority at key junctions;
- SBC is introducing SCOOT on the A4 and A355;
- TfL ticketing is now by Oyster Smartcard, with little remaining cash and a very simple fares structure; and
- Arriva (a minority operator in Slough) has introduced a facility to purchase season tickets by mobile phone.

Further Interventions:

- Extension of RTPI to other applications such as home-based internet and mobile phones will give public transport users the opportunity to use their time more productively in the event of delays;
- Further roll-out of on-street RTPI;
- Critically review bus stop layout designs;
- Intensification of priority at signals;
- Ensure that on-street bus priority is enforceable;
- Target parking resources on problem areas identified by bus operators;
- Continue to develop proposals for Rapid Transit on the A4 corridor;
- Ensure that new developments are laid out to provide direct, progressive public transport routeings; and
- Operators (particularly First as the major operator in Slough) to recognise that a major cause of journey time variability is in their own control, and to consider streamlining their ticketing products and offering facilities for cashless payment to reduce dwell times at bus stops. First to replace their antediluvian ticket machines with Smartcard-enabled machines to enable quicker boarding and a wider range of ticket products.

3.2.5 Safety and Security

- The passenger feels safe and secure at every point on his journey from walking to the bus stop to waiting for the bus to travelling on the bus to walking to their destination.

The outcomes which this attribute delivers are:

- Travel by sustainable modes is more attractive than travel by private car;
- An integrated, high quality, accessible public transport network; and
- Safer roads and public transport networks.

This is clearly connected to the walking strategy. In terms of the public transport network, rail stations and many buses have CCTV fitted. The current Brunel Way Bus Station with its very poor ambience and pedestrian routes to the town centre is to be replaced by Heart of Slough Bus Station with surface pedestrian routes to the town centre.

Further interventions should include:

- A review of walking routes to key bus stop locations to ensure that they are well-lit and secure; and
- Pursue a scheme with First Great Western to improve access to stations, particularly Burnham.

3.2.6 Environment

- Public transport vehicles are to low emission standards both in terms of air pollutants and noise

The outcomes which this attribute delivers are:

- An integrated, high quality, accessible public transport network;
- Reduced impacts of travel and transport on our communities;
- Reduced impacts of travel and transport on our natural environment & heritage; and
- Enhancement of the public realm.

The performance of the bus network is already relatively good with emissions standards ranging from Euro II to Euro V. Nonetheless, Arriva currently operate some buses with highly visible emissions while of First's vehicles, the Dennis Darts are relatively noisy and a source of complaint in residential areas.

In the current economic climate it is a matter of concern that the major operator is not undertaking fleet renewal. SBC has leverage in the form of 1) Contract Conditions for supported bus services and 2) the implementation of Quality Bus Partnership Schemes - in which operators commit to particular operational standards, including vehicle emissions standards. We describe this further in the next section.

Table 3.3 summarises the service attributes for a high quality public transport network against desired outcomes as discussed in section 3.2.

Table 3.3 – How the Desired Outcomes are supported by the Service Attributes

Desired Outcomes	**Service Attributes for a High Quality Public Transport Network**					
	Accessibility	Connectivity	Cost and Ticketing	Generalised and Perceived Journey Times	Safety and Security	Environment
Travel by sustainable modes is more attractive than travel by private car	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Better public transport connectivity to jobs & services, especially from disadvantaged areas	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Better public transport information to all including those with disabilities and those for whose English is not the first language	✓					
An integrated, high quality, accessible public transport network	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Better public transport connectivity to key locations outside Slough		✓	✓	✓		
Journey times more reliable on all modes (including freight)			✓	✓		
Minimise effects of stop/start traffic conditions (congestion)				✓		
Safer roads and public transport networks				✓	✓	
Reduced impacts of travel and transport on our communities				✓		✓
Reduced impacts of travel and transport on our natural environment & heritage						✓
Enhancement of the public realm						✓

3.3 Challenges

Challenges to delivery of all the above include:

- Lack of financial and officer resource at the Council to develop and implement programmes;
- Lack of specific Council budget and programme to develop public transport infrastructure;
- Limited Council funds to provide an adequate bus network at times of reduced demand;

- A potential for misalignment of public transport operators' commercial objectives with the outcomes desired by the Council;
- Continued pressure on traffic volumes and congestion caused by increasing levels of car ownership and location of employment, retail and leisure activity; and
- Public attitudes in Slough, with a demographic, much of which prizes highly car ownership and use over and above use of sustainable modes, and which is therefore resistant to mode shift.

Public transport provision is unusual amongst service areas in that its structure in the UK (outside London) means that delivery of local authority objectives is to a large degree achieved by a commercial provider over whom the authority has no direct control and whose objectives may well be different. The aim of the strategy therefore has to be seeking outcomes that each party finds acceptable, and to commit each party to delivery of agreed parts of the package. There is also an opportunity to engage with the third sector in delivery.

In the key area of journey times and reliability, where performance is probably furthest from meeting an acceptable standard and therefore contributing to SBC's desired outcomes and objectives, both SBC and the operators should commit as an output to this Strategy to a pre-agreed programme of investment, action and commitment.

For instance, delivery of bus priority enables the provision of faster and more reliable bus journeys; if it attracts more users to the bus, it meets the Council's objectives of mode shift and improved accessibility. It also meets the operators' objectives of reduced costs and increased revenue. The challenges from the authority's viewpoint are two-fold:

1) To ensure that operators also commit to measures that in their turn will also contribute to faster bus journey times; and
2) To ensure that the improvement in the bus operators' margins are captured through commitments in vehicle investment, service provision or other operational standards that will benefit bus users.

Therefore the starting point of the strategy is a consideration of the means by which operators may be engaged. Chapter 2 considered some of the tools available to local authorities. A (statutory) Quality Bus Partnership Scheme, for example, would enable SBC to negotiate specific commitments from bus operators such as investment in vehicle standards, or provision of services which meet key shift change times – but also in measures whereby bus operators themselves would contribute to reduced journey times - such as Smart or phone-based ticketing schemes. These commitments would be in return for the provision of priority by the Council. These considerations will inform the LTP3 Implementation Plan.