

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY 19 MARCH 2002 AT 10.30 A.M.

Agenda Item No.

1

**TRANSPORT OPERATIONS BEST VALUE REVIEW
IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING SHEET**

Report of the Director of Environment

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Executive Member: Iris Tarry

1. Purpose of the Report

Following the request of the Resources, Prosperity, Partnership and Consultation Select Committee in July 2001, to enable the Committee to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the Transport Operations Best Value Review.

2. Summary

- 2.1 Progress has been made on all 12 recommendations from the original Best Value Review, which was completed in September 2000.
- 2.2 Following changes to the Best Value processes, the development of the Bus and Intalink Strategies and in preparation for the Audit Commission Best Value Inspection (December 2001), a revised improvement plan has been developed. This shows a broad range of activities designed to improve the service.
- 2.3 The Audit Commission Inspectors have published their draft report on the findings of their inspection. The headline findings of this draft report are that the service is “Good” with “Promising” prospects for improvement.
- 2.4 Whilst these findings are encouraging, there is no room for complacency and given the increasing problems being experienced by bus operators, the need to find new ways of improving the service is essential. To this end the inspectors have made a number of recommendations, contained at Appendix 3.

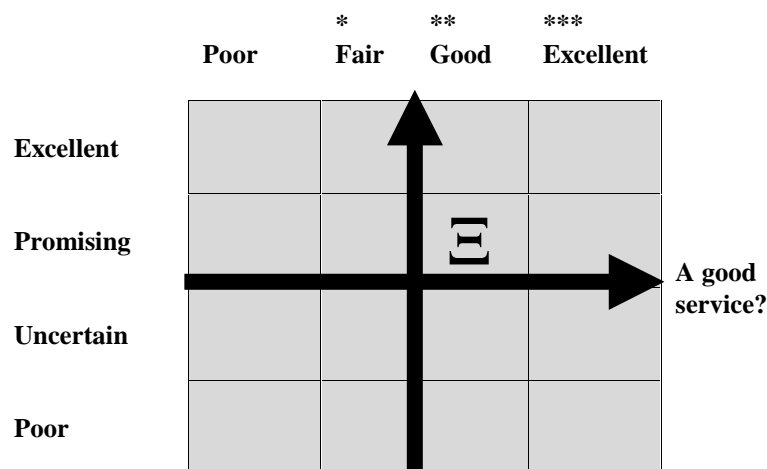
3. Conclusions

The Committee are invited to consider whether it would be appropriate to accept the recommendations in the inspectors’ draft report, for inclusion in the improvement plan and approval by Cabinet and whether or not any further scrutiny is required.

4. Background

- 4.1 The Resources, Prosperity, Partnership & Consultation Select Committee in July 2001 decided that all scrutiny committees should monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the relevant Best Value Reviews.
- 4.2 This paper reports on the progress of the recommendations agreed following the Best Value Review of Transport Operations. It also updates the Committee on work done since the Best Value Review was completed in September 2000 and on the outcome of the Audit Commission Best Value Inspection of the service carried out during the week beginning 3 December 2001.
- 4.3 The Transport Operations Best Value Review took place during 2000 and its conclusions and recommendations were agreed by the Executive Committee on 18 September 2000. The recommendations and progress on them is given in Appendix 1.
- 4.4 Following the development of the Bus and Intalink Strategy and building on our experience of Best Value Reviews and Inspections, an Improvement Plan has been developed that reflects the County Council's programme for this service. This is shown as Appendix 2.
- 4.5 The Audit Commission's Best Value Inspectors visited the authority to carry out an inspection of this service once in the week commencing 3 December 2001. The inspectors discussed the service with members of the public, school children, head teachers, day centre managers, bus operators, CTS drivers, staff (Environment, Children Schools & Families and Adult Care Services), local environmental groups, Government Office, District Council officers and several County Councillors.
- 4.6 Their report, whilst currently only available in draft, has as its conclusions that the service is "Good" with "Promising" prospects for improvement.

5. Prospects for Improvement?



- 5.1 The inspection was a thorough and rigorous process and the conclusions it draws seem sensible and reasonable. It would, therefore, be appropriate to adopt the recommendations in the draft report (once confirmed) – see Appendix 3, and incorporate them into the improvement plan for approval by Cabinet.

6. Financial Implications

Savings have been made out of budgets as reported in Appendix 1.

Future improvements will be provided within the financial resources made available by the County Council and through the Local Transport Plan.

Background papers used by the author in compiling this report

Executive Committee 18 September 2000 item 3

**BEST VALUE REVIEW OF TRANSPORT OPERATIONS (TOPS)
IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING SHEET**

Best Value action/target	Responsible officer	(Savings) to date/ projected	Progress	By when <u>Original</u> <u>Date</u>	<u>Current</u> <u>Estimate</u>
A CORPORATE outsourcing strategy be developed (to consider appropriate packages) for the whole or parts of the transport operations including options on management and administration	<u>R Smith/C</u> <u>Kaye</u>	250	Corporate Procurement and Outsourcing Framework approved by Executive Committee. Initial investigation has revealed a wide variety of possible options. Options investigated with DTLR and Cabinet Panel. Total outsourcing and outsourcing of PTU considered inappropriate. Business case for outsourcing CTS to be pursued if financially advantageous.	<u>Sept 2002</u>	Cabinet Panel March 2002
To prepare a priority action programme on physical changes to vehicles and training/education to tackle pupil behaviour on school transport.	R Smith/ R Edwards	150	First phase of installation of video cameras complete. Budget for 2 nd phase now secured. Proposal put to CSF for training/education.	April 2002	April 2002 phase 1 April 2003 phase 2 April 2002 - training
To provide more training to escorts employed by contractors to improve quality and to meet changing requirements.	R Smith/ R Edwards	112	New costed proposal submitted to CSF.	July 2001	April 2002

Best Value action/target	Responsible officer	Savings to date/ projected	Progress	By when <u>Original</u> <u>Date</u>	<u>Current</u> <u>Estimate</u>
To establish a common comprehensive database detailing all non-bus/coach passenger transport available	R Smith/D Neilan	3	Complete. Project to be extended as part of the integrated transport project.	April 2001	Sept 2002 April 2002 project plan
To continue to review the Pindar publicity leaflets, timetable booklets, timetables contract with aim of reducing unit costs and to improve roadside publicity.	R Smith/G Hughes	0	New contract drafted. Contract monitoring ongoing.	April 2002	April 2002
To develop with District Councils, and to devise protocols to determine the basis on which all development applications are assessed for passenger transport provision	R Smith/ G Hughes	0	Planning guidance and protocols published in March 2001 with a seminar for all Districts. Complete.	<u>May 2001</u>	<u>May 2001</u>
To test the market by trial tendering of mixed transport contract combinations	R Smith/K White	(20)	Mixed mainstream and local bus contract tendering trial successful and extended to other areas. Next round to include ACS contracts.	June 2001	Sept 2001 Phase 1 April 2002 Phase 2
To update the Dial A Ride membership list to assist with prioritising for those with mobility difficulties and to consider the introduction of a registration fee	R Smith/D Neilan	0	Membership list updated based on usage Membership fee considered and rejected New contract out to tender	April 2001 April 2001 April 2002	Aug 2001 April 2001 April 2002

Best Value action/target	Responsible officer	Savings to date/ projected	Progress	By when	
				<u>Original Date</u>	<u>Current Estimate</u>
Renegotiate the renewal of the concessionary scheme for children by April 2002 with the commercial operators based on Herts Smart Scheme (smart cards will save on admin and increase accuracy through direct payment of operators) reimbursement.	R Smith/K White	100	Negotiations under way.	Sept 2002	Sept 2002
To proceed with advertising on County vehicles to generate income by appropriate procurement processes (if wider outsourcing is pursued include in appropriate contract).	R Smith/M Halls	(35)	Considered and rejected.	June 2001	Dec 2001
To integrate Social Services (district areas) taxi contracts with County Transport Services taxi contracts to provide an integrated service.	R Smith/D Robinson	(25)	Progress delayed due to overspends and disaggregation of budget to CSF and ACS.	April 2001	April 2003
To request a review of the policy on free home to school transport to nearest (available) school.	R Smith/J Findley	5	Policy review under way.	Sept 2002	Sept 2002

APPENDIX 2

TRANSPORT OPERATIONS – IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN JANUARY 2002

Objective 1	Performance Indicators		Target			
Increase public transport ridership as an alternative to private car use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patronage on local bus services. (LT)) • Bus ridership. (BVPI 102). • User satisfaction with local bus services (BVPI 104). • Local bus services – vehicle kilometres per year (BVP Local L061) • % users saying they were satisfied with public transport information (BVPI 103) • Availability of information on service changes 		<p>10% increase between 2000/01 & 2005/6 Increase from 33.5 million passenger journeys per year in 2000/01 Increase from 2000/01 38%, year on year.</p> <p>Reverse decline. 2000/01 29.6km/yr, 1999/00 30.57km/yr</p> <p>Increase from current level of 40% (National Average 47%) Available to users at least one week before the service changes</p>			
Strategy	Action					
Improve reliability of buses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conclude agreements with bus operators to develop and implement a system for electronic tracking of buses and sharing of the data produced by October 2003 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use the data produced to analyse actual against scheduled performance ▪ Use data to establish a target for reliability ▪ Use data to identify most effective siting of bus priority measures and implement where this can be done within currently available resources 					
Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	
	£25,000	£175,000	£175,000	£185,000	£145,000	
Responsible Officer: Geraint Hughes						

Strategy	Action					
	▪ Agree protocol for consultation/liaison with bus operators on road works by 1 April 2002					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
	No budget reqd	Within programme of unit staff				
	Responsible Officer: Keith White					
	▪ Agree road works programme with bus operators by 1 April each year					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
	No budget reqd	Within programme of unit staff				
	Responsible Officer: Keith White					
	▪ Identify and Implement a programme of bus priority measures to help bus reliability within the current LTP period					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
		£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000
	Responsible Officer: Geraint Hughes					
	Improve Network Stability	▪ Improve cash flow and reduce administration overheads for bus operators on contracted services through introduction of electronic transfer of contract data and financial returns				
Budget		01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
		£10,000	£15,000	£5,000	0	0
Responsible Officer: Keith White						
▪ Review Criteria for contract awards by June 2002 to reflect the priority of contract stability						
Budget		01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
No budget reqd		Within programme of unit staff				
Responsible Officer: Keith White						
▪ Agree network hierarchy and service levels with districts and bus operators by July 2002						
Budget		01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
No budget reqd		Within programme of unit staff				
Responsible Officer: Keith White						

Strategy	Action					
Improve Service Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Criteria for contract awards by June 2002 to reflect the priority of service quality 					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
	No budget reqd	Within programme of unit staff				
	Responsible Officer: Keith White					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define standards for design and layout of bus stops by 2002, use standards to determine and deliver an annual programme of stop enhancements 					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
		£160,000	£175,000	£175,000	£175,000	£175,000
	Responsible Officer: Geraint Hughes					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce pre-qualification for local bus contracts which will introduce a base line quality standard by June 2002 					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
	No budget reqd	Within programme of unit staff				
	Responsible Officer: Keith White					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll out provision of shelters (200/year for 5 years) under Adshel agreement 					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
	Not HCC funds	£500,000	£2,100,000	£2,000,000	£500,000	0
Responsible Officer:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise Home to School Transport Code of Conduct by September 2002 						
Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	
No budget reqd	Within programme of unit staff					
Responsible Officer: Tony Edwards						
Improve Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trial of a flexible bookable minibus in an area of the county during 2003/4 					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
	No budget reqd	0	0	0	0	0
	Responsible Officer: Keith White					

Strategy	Action				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with voluntary Sector to identify funding and bidding opportunities for community transport schemes 				
Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
Income	0	0	- £200,000	- £200,000	- £150,000
Responsible Officer: David Neilan					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use powers under section 135-138 of the Transport Act 2000 to promote multi-operator and cross modal ticketing schemes in all areas of Herts before the end of the Intalink agreement in March 2004 				
Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000
Responsible Officer:					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend SmartCard scheme county wide, rolling programme taking in 2-3 Districts per year 				
Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
	£100,000	£100,000	£200,000	£100,000	0
Responsible Officer: Rob Smith					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simplify Concessionary fares arrangements 				
Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
No budget reqd	Within programme of unit staff				
Responsible Officer: Keith White					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target walk to bus stop should be less than 400m in residential, business and industrial areas; less than 200m at schools and railway stations and within town centres 				
Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000
Responsible Officer: Geraint Hughes					

Strategy	Action					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement (in partnership with the rail industry) the agreed programme of bus/rail interchanges to improve the access to rail services by bus passengers, cyclists and pedestrians 					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
		£200,000	£485,000	£420,000	£430,000	£470,000
	Responsible Officer: Geraint Hughes					
Improve Passenger Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduce Real Time Passenger Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review Available systems by March 2002 ▪ Determine preferred system by October 2002 ▪ Trial implementation by October 2003 					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
		£40,000	£300,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000
	Responsible Officer: Geraint Hughes					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Set and apply minimum standards for passenger information through the Intalink partnership 					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
		£15,000	£80,000	£50,000	£20,000	£20,000
	Responsible Officer: Geraint Hughes					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue the Intalink partnership beyond the end of the present agreement in March 2004 and use it to promote new developments in information delivery 					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
	Includes partners' contributions	£350,000	£350,000	£350,000	£350,000	£350,000
	Responsible Officer: Geraint Hughes					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extend trial of site specific timetables 					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
		£5,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	0
	Responsible Officer: Geraint Hughes					

Objective 2	Performance Indicators		Target			
Manage cost pressures on transport provision.	% Increase in costs of demand lead services (home to school and home to day-care transport). Cost per passenger journey of subsidised bus services (BVPI94(1))		Increase no greater than in comparator authorities. Maintain position of lowest cost of any Shire County – currently 0.43			
Strategy	Action					
Achieve Maximum Value from Contracted bus services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with District and Borough Councils to maximise the value and passenger benefit obtained from De Minimus agreements with local bus operators 					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
	No budget reqd	Within programme of unit staff				
	Responsible Officer: Keith White					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer all bus contracts other than schools only with the option of 5 or 10 year maximum vehicle age (currently subject to consultation) 					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
	Saving	0	- £30,000	- £50,000	- £50,000	- £50,000
	Responsible Officer: Keith White					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimise administration of reimbursements through use of Smart Cards 					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
	Saving	0	£5,000	£10,000	£10,000	£15,000
	Responsible Officer: Keith White					
	Externalise the provision of the County Transport Service if a clear business case is established.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce business case by Mar 2002 				
Budget		01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
Unknown						
Responsible Officer: Rob Smith						

Strategy	Action					
Maximise funding from private sector developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support District and County colleagues in identifying and agreeing service improvements with private sector developers 					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
	Target Income	- £200,000	- £200,000	- £200,000	- £200,000	- £200,000
	Responsible Officer: Keith White					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support District and County colleagues in identifying and agreeing infrastructure improvements with private sector developers 					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
	Target Income	- £500,000	- £500,000	- £500,000	- £500,000	- £500,000
	Responsible Officer: Geraint Hughes					

Objective 3	Performance Indicators		Target			
Promote independence for those unable to use conventional transport through promoting viable alternatives	No. people using Dial-a-ride Dial-a-Ride journeys Cost per passenger journey Dial-a-ride % of buses complying with DDA (low floor)		2,500 in 2002 70,000 per year in 2002 £9.10 in 2002 40% by 2002/03			
Strategy	Action					
Promote Alternative Transport Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Award new contract for Dial-a-Ride commencing 2002 and use this opportunity to work with District Councils to improve the effectiveness of the service 					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
	No increase	Within programme of unit staff				
	Responsible Officer: Keith White					
Improve cost effectiveness of transport for those unable to use conventional means through integration of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish the Hertfordshire Integrated Partnership Project Board to integrate the transport provided by Health, Councils and Voluntary organisations through a single point of access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Manager appointed by Jan 2002 ▪ Board approval for selected model Sept 2002 					
	Budget *	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
		£6,000	£85,000	Unknown		
	Responsible Officer: Clare Kaye					
Improve accessibility of conventional transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage investment in the public transport fleet so that all vehicles meet Disability Discrimination Act access standards 					
	Budget	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
		£180,000	£160,000	£160,000	£175,000	£200,000
	Responsible Officer: Keith White					

* Funding for this project comes from a variety of sources. The budget shown here is the total budget, not the HCC contribution.

EXTRACT FROM AUDIT COMMISSION INSPECTORS' DRAFT REPORT**Recommendations**

To rise to the challenge of continuous improvement Councils need inspection reports that offer practical pointers for improvement. In this context, the inspection team feels that the Council should now take action to resolve a number of general, political, managerial and partnership issues.

We recommend that the Council should:

- Give greater consideration to measures to help bus services to avoid delays, including bus priority facilities, parking controls, the planning of road works and information about road works.
- Develop ways of engaging users in on-going dialogue, consultation and market research about the services and the way that they are provided.
- Clarify the reporting arrangements for incidents on school transport and improve monitoring of service standards.
- Integrate environmental, school and social services transport policies more closely, particularly with regard to school travel and reducing congestion.
- Continue to explore innovative procurement options in order to manage cost pressures.
- Develop through its Business Plan and its Bus Strategy:
 - A more detailed and clearly-costed programme of improvements.
 - Clear outputs and outcomes in ways that are meaningful to the public.
 - More comprehensive performance monitoring of the service against relevant quality standards, output targets and comparable authorities.