



To: Members of the Cabinet

***Notice of a Meeting of the Cabinet***

**Tuesday, 10 November 2015 at 2.00 pm**

**County Hall, Oxford, OX1 1ND**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Clark".

Peter Clark  
Head of Paid Service

October 2015

Contact Officer: **Sue Whitehead**  
Tel: (01865) 810262; E-Mail: [sue.whitehead@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sue.whitehead@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

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**Membership**

*Councillors*

Ian Hudspeth	Leader of the Council
Rodney Rose	Deputy Leader of the Council
Mrs Judith Heathcoat	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care
Nick Carter	Cabinet Member for Business & Customer Services
Melinda Tilley	Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families
Lorraine Lindsay-Gale	Cabinet Member for Cultural & Community Services
David Nimmo Smith	Cabinet Member for Environment
Lawrie Stratford	Cabinet Member for Finance
Hilary Hibbert-Biles	Cabinet Member for Public Health & the Voluntary Sector

*The Agenda is attached. Decisions taken at the meeting will become effective at the end of the working day on Wednesday 18 November 2015 unless called in by that date for review by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.*

*Copies of this Notice, Agenda and supporting papers are circulated to all Members of the County Council.*

*Date of next meeting: 15 December 2015*

County Hall, New Road, Oxford, OX1 1ND

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk) Fax: 01865 783195 Media Enquiries 01865 323870

## Declarations of Interest

### The duty to declare.....

Under the Localism Act 2011 it is a criminal offence to

- (a) fail to register a disclosable pecuniary interest within 28 days of election or co-option (or re-election or re-appointment), or
- (b) provide false or misleading information on registration, or
- (c) participate in discussion or voting in a meeting on a matter in which the member or co-opted member has a disclosable pecuniary interest.

### Whose Interests must be included?

The Act provides that the interests which must be notified are those of a member or co-opted member of the authority, **or**

- those of a spouse or civil partner of the member or co-opted member;
- those of a person with whom the member or co-opted member is living as husband/wife
- those of a person with whom the member or co-opted member is living as if they were civil partners.

(in each case where the member or co-opted member is aware that the other person has the interest).

### What if I remember that I have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the Meeting?.

The Code requires that, at a meeting, where a member or co-opted member has a disclosable interest (of which they are aware) in any matter being considered, they disclose that interest to the meeting. The Council will continue to include an appropriate item on agendas for all meetings, to facilitate this.

Although not explicitly required by the legislation or by the code, it is recommended that in the interests of transparency and for the benefit of all in attendance at the meeting (including members of the public) the nature as well as the existence of the interest is disclosed.

A member or co-opted member who has disclosed a pecuniary interest at a meeting must not participate (or participate further) in any discussion of the matter; and must not participate in any vote or further vote taken; and must withdraw from the room.

Members are asked to continue to pay regard to the following provisions in the code that *“You must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself”* or *“You must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned.....”*.

Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer prior to the meeting should you have any doubt about your approach.

### List of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:

**Employment** (includes *“any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain”*.), **Sponsorship, Contracts, Land, Licences, Corporate Tenancies, Securities.**

For a full list of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and further Guidance on this matter please see the Guide to the New Code of Conduct and Register of Interests at Members’ conduct guidelines. <http://intranet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/Insite/Elected+members/> or contact Glenn Watson on (01865) 815270 or [glenn.watson@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:glenn.watson@oxfordshire.gov.uk) for a hard copy of the document.

**If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.**

# AGENDA

## 1. Apologies for Absence

## 2. Declarations of Interest

- guidance note opposite

## 3. Minutes (Pages 1 - 12)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2015 (**CA3**) and to receive information arising from them.

## 4. Questions from County Councillors

Any county councillor may, by giving notice to the Proper Officer by 9 am two working days before the meeting, ask a question on any matter in respect of the Cabinet's delegated powers.

The number of questions which may be asked by any councillor at any one meeting is limited to two (or one question with notice and a supplementary question at the meeting) and the time for questions will be limited to 30 minutes in total. As with questions at Council, any questions which remain unanswered at the end of this item will receive a written response.

Questions submitted prior to the agenda being despatched are shown below and will be the subject of a response from the appropriate Cabinet Member or such other councillor or officer as is determined by the Cabinet Member, and shall not be the subject of further debate at this meeting. Questions received after the despatch of the agenda, but before the deadline, will be shown on the Schedule of Addenda circulated at the meeting, together with any written response which is available at that time.

## 5. Petitions and Public Address

## 6. Public Consultation Report - Supported Transport (Subsidised Buses and Dial-A-Ride) (Pages 13 - 158)

*Cabinet Member:* Environment

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2015/095

*Contact:* Alexandra Bailey, Service Manager, Business Development & Fleet Management Tel: (01865) 797228

Report by Director for Environment & Economy (**CA6**).

On 26th May 2015, the Cabinet approved the launch of a full public consultation on proposed changes to subsidised bus services and Dial a Ride. This report details the consultation process that was followed and summarises the main themes which arose throughout the consultation. Finally it offers a number of recommendations for cabinet to consider.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### ***Delivery of the agreed Medium Term Financial Plan savings***

***In order to deliver the savings required in the MTFP, the Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to***

- (a) Consider the consultation feedback regarding subsidised bus services.***
- (b) Proceed with reducing bus subsidies by £2.3 million and:***
  - 1. Consider the consultation feedback regarding subsidised bus services and decide which services to prioritise – off-peak, peak, or other.***
  - 2. Update the methodology used for ranking services in the following ways:***
    - i. Include additional criteria which ensure that rurally isolated and deprived areas are also prioritised.***
    - ii. Agree to continue to pay for (i.e. protect in the methodology) subsidised bus routes which are used to take entitled students from home to school, where on the whole it is cheaper for us to do so, instead of paying for separate dedicated school transport. (This will vary routes available on a year by year basis as school cohorts change).***
    - iii. Ensure a consistent methodology by treating all providers in the same way, whether they are external providers, OCC fleet or community transport providers.***

***If cabinet approves this request, then approximately two-thirds of the subsidies due to be withdrawn would cease in April 2016, and the remaining third would cease in June 2016. The £2.3m savings under option 2 would be realised in financial year 16/17, assuming notice was served in November / December 2015.***

***The exact details cannot be finalised at this stage due to variables including whether contract renewal renegotiations are required, which could alter costs.***

- (c) Cease funding the Dial a Ride service as of April 2016.***

***Delivery of further savings subject to Council approval***

- (d) The withdrawal of all bus subsidies would deliver the full £3.7m savings if the cabinet makes this decision, subject to full council's approval in February 2016 to further reduce the Supported Transport budget. The full £3.7m savings, would be realised once all contract termination processes have been completed.***

***If Council approves this request, then the subsidies would cease at the following time:***

- ***50% of subsidies (59/118 services) require 17 weeks' notice and could terminate on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2016, assuming notice was served on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016.***
  
- ***31% of subsidies (37/118 services) require 16 weeks' notice but also require 16 weeks to modify the "Authorised Change Date". This means they would take 32 weeks to terminate. They could therefore terminate on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016, assuming notice to change the "Authorised Change Date" was served on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016, and notice to terminate the contract was served 16 weeks later on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2016.***
  
- ***9% of subsidies (11/118 services) require 16 weeks' notice and could terminate on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2016, assuming notice was served on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016. These are services operated by Oxfordshire County Council.***
  
- ***9% of subsidies (11/118 services) will expire naturally on or before the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.***

***Annex E shows which routes fall into each category.***

***Allocation of one-off, pump-prime funding***

***The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:***

- (e) Allocate (from the efficiency reserve) £500k of one-off, pump-prime funding for groups to bid for, in order to set-up community transport initiatives which meet an identified transport need in their area***

**Exploring a new approach to Transport**

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**

**(f) Approve the suggested implementation approach, including the request to explore the option of undertaking a larger scale commissioning exercise which includes a range of supported transport services, in addition to subsidised bus services.**

**N.B. Depending on the cabinet's decision on whether to withdraw all bus subsidies, this commissioning exercise will either include the remainder of the subsidy budget, or exclude it if cabinet decides to withdraw all funding.**

**7. Treasury Management Mid Term Review (2014/15) (Pages 159 - 172)**

*Cabinet Member:* Finance

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2015/060

*Contact:* Lewis Gosling, Financial Manager - Treasury Management Tel: (01865) 323988

Report by Chief Finance Officer (**CA7**).

The report sets out the Treasury Management activity undertaken in the first half of the financial year 2015/16 in compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice. The report includes Debt and Investment activity, Prudential Indicator monitoring and forecast interest receivable and payable for the financial year.

***The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the report, and to RECOMMEND Council to note the Council's Mid-Term Treasury Management Review 2015/16.***

**8. Staffing Report - Quarter 2 - 2015 (Pages 173 - 176)**

*Cabinet Member:* Deputy Leader

*Forward Plan Ref:* 2015/061

*Contact:* Sue Corrigan, County HR Manager Tel: (01865) 810280

Report by Chief Human Resources Officer (**CA8**).

The report provides an update on staffing numbers and related activity for the period 1 July 2015 to 30 September 2015. Progress is being tracked throughout the year on the movement of staffing numbers from those reported at 31 March 2015 as we continue to deliver required budget savings.

***The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the report.***

## 9. **Forward Plan and Future Business (Pages 177 - 178)**

*Cabinet Member: All*

*Contact Officer: Sue Whitehead, Committee Services Manager (01865 810262)*

The Cabinet Procedure Rules provide that the business of each meeting at the Cabinet is to include “updating of the Forward Plan and proposals for business to be conducted at the following meeting”. Items from the Forward Plan for the immediately forthcoming meetings of the Cabinet appear in the Schedule at **CA**. This includes any updated information relating to the business for those meetings that has already been identified for inclusion in the next Forward Plan update.

The Schedule is for noting, but Cabinet Members may also wish to take this opportunity to identify any further changes they would wish to be incorporated in the next Forward Plan update.

***The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the items currently identified for forthcoming meetings.***

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## CABINET

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Tuesday, 20 October 2015 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 3.45 pm

**Present:**

**Voting Members:** Councillor Ian Hudspeth – in the Chair  
Councillor Rodney Rose  
Councillor Mrs Judith Heathcoat  
Councillor Nick Carter  
Councillor Melinda Tilley  
Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale  
Councillor David Nimmo Smith  
Councillor Lawrie Stratford  
Councillor Hilary Hibbert-Biles

**Other Members in Attendance:**

Councillor Liz Brighthouse (Agenda Items 7 & 14)  
Councillor Nick Hards (Agenda Items 6 & 18)  
Councillor Laura Price (Agenda Items 9, 10 & 11)  
Councillor Gill Sanders (Agenda Items 12 & 13)

**Officers:**

Whole of meeting Peter Clark (Head of Paid Service); Sue Whitehead (Corporate Services)

Part of meeting Item	Name
6	Lorna Baxter, Chief Finance Officer
7	Maggie Scott, Head of Policy
8, 9, 10 & 11	Kate Terroni, Deputy Director, Joint Commissioning
12 & 13	Jim Leivers, Director for Children's Services
18	Mark Kemp, Deputy Director Commercial

*The Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting, together with a schedule of addenda tabled at the meeting, and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda, reports and schedule, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.*

**85/15 MINUTES**

(Agenda Item. 3)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2015 were approved and signed as a correct record.

## **86/15 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

(Agenda Item. 4)

Councillor Tanner had given notice of the following question to Councillor Nimmo Smith:

“Now that Oxford has a new transport strategy when does the Cabinet member anticipate being able to install double yellow lines on both sides of Donnington Bridge Road in Oxford to prevent parked cars blocking the cycle lanes?”

Councillor Nimmo Smith replied:

“As part of the county council’s Oxford Transport Strategy (OTS), adopted as part of the LTP in September, a number of key ‘Cycle Super Routes’ across the city, including Donnington Bridge Road, are identified as corridors for implementing upgraded cycle infrastructure. As set out in the draft OTS, changes to parking restrictions will be considered as part of these upgrades, and local residents would of course be consulted. We do not currently have funding for cycling improvements on Donnington Bridge Road and have no expectation of the funds in the short term.

OCC is continually looking for funding opportunities to introduce and enhance cycling schemes across the County, which Councillors will be pleased to note includes Donnington Bridge Road.”

### **Councillor Howson had given notice of the following question to Councillor Nimmo Smith**

“Could the Cabinet member please explain why the closure of the Woodstock Road for the Oxford half marathon did not take place at the location cited in the temporary traffic order published in the Oxford Times only two days before the race was held?”

Councillor Nimmo Smith replied:

“Officers walked the route prior to the event and have confirmed that Woodstock Rd was closed at Little Clarendon St junction only, as per the Traffic Order. It was not closed at St Margaret’s Rd junction.

We believe the confusion may be that there was a ‘Road Closed Ahead access and public transport only’ sign on Woodstock Rd junction with St Margaret’s Rd as per the agreed plan. St Margaret’s Rd was the signed traffic diversion in both directions for through traffic.

St Margaret’s Rd, Kingston Rd and Walton Street is also the signed diversion in both directions for other events which close Woodstock Rd (namely St Giles Fair and Remembrance Service). Leckford Rd, Observatory Street and Little Clarendon Street are not the signed diversion routes for these events and the Oxford Half Marathon used the same diversion route with some

parking suspensions at key traffic 'pinch points' to ease the traffic congestion where possible.

Supplementary: Councillor Howson noted that it was a question of how the public interpreted the information and asked that in future it be made clear for the public what was to happen in practice. Councillor Nimmo Smith replied that nothing had been done differently for this event but that he noted and would take on board the concerns raised.

## **87/15 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda Item. 5)

A petition was submitted by Councillor Fooks asking that the No. 17 bus service be retained.

The following requests to speak had been agreed:

Item 6 – Councillor Hards, Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance

Item 7 – Councillor Brighthouse, Opposition Leader

Item 9 – Councillor Laura Price, Shadow Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

Item 10 - Councillor Laura Price, Shadow Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

Item 11 – Councillor Laura Price, Shadow Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

Mrs Sue Tanner, Rose Hill & Donnington Advice Centre

Item 12 – Councillor Gill Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families

Item 13 – Councillor Gill Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families

Item 14 – Councillor Liz Brighthouse, Chairman of the Performance Scrutiny Committee

Item 18 – Councillor Nick Hards, local councillor for Didcot West.

## **88/15 2015/16 FINANCIAL MONITORING & BUSINESS STRATEGY DELIVERY REPORT - AUGUST 2015**

(Agenda Item. 6)

Cabinet considered a report that focussed on the delivery of the Directorate Business Strategies that were agreed as part of the Service and Resource Planning Process for 2015/16 – 2017/18. Parts 1 and 2 included projections for revenue, reserves and balances as at the end of August 2015. Capital Programme monitoring and update is included at Part 3 and Part 4 set out a change to Fees and Charges.

Councillor Nick Hards, Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance highlighted the difficult financial position particularly for children, education & families and adult social care. He noted that severe measures were likely to be needed such as a recruitment freeze and a stop on non-essential expenditure. He expressed concern that this could result in areas least able to cope being hit.

He was concerned about the demands being placed on staff. He further commented that reductions in administration staff inevitably impacted on all staff, who then had to take on more administration work. He referred to the road building plans within the capital programme, noted the growth plans that could result in thousands more homes being built and suggested that the Leader lobby the Local Enterprise Partnership to support the Council's bids on road building.

Cabinet members responded to the points made with the Leader confirming that he was pushing for the schemes referred to. Councillor Lawrie Stratford Cabinet member for Finance accepted the concerns over staff and Cabinet generally thanked all staff for their continuing efforts in difficult circumstances.

Councillor Stratford introduced the contents of the report and moved the recommendations highlighting the revised Annex 2a set out in the addenda

- RESOLVED:** to:
- (a) note the report;
  - (b) approve the virement requests set out in the revised annex 2a submitted as an addenda;
  - (c) **RECOMMEND** Council to approve:-
    - i. the virement in respect of the unringfenced grant received by the Council relating to the closure of the Independent Living Fund as set out in paragraph 34;
    - ii. the transfer £2m from Public Health reserves to the Children's Homes Capital Project as set out in paragraph 66;
  - (d) approve the bad debt write off as set out in paragraph 59;
  - (e) note the Treasury Management lending list at Annex 4;
  - (f) approve the fees and charges as set out in Part 4 and Annex 7a;
  - (g) approve the updated capital programme in Annex 9 (changes to the Capital Programme set out in Annex 8c);
  - (h) approve the inclusion in the capital programme of :
    - i. £1.3m adult social care capital grant to fund the adult social care management system in the capital programme;
    - ii. £2.4m Disabled Facilities Grant which will be pass ported to District Councils;
    - iii. an increase in budget of £0.4m for Frideswide Square;
    - iv. £5m increase in the Broadband programme reflecting contributions from District Councils and the Local Enterprise Partnership.

## 89/15 DEVOLUTION

(Agenda Item. 7)

Cabinet considered a report setting out the expression of interest for devolution to Oxfordshire that was submitted to government on 4 September.

Councillor Liz Brighouse, Opposition Leader, indicated that the Labour Group was supportive of the proposal in principle but that there were several issues to consider. This included how the bid was to be funded. Councillor Brighouse noted that Greater Manchester had seen a large amount of funding pumped into their bid and she doubted that this level of funding would be available nationally. She referred to issues around skills and employment and that the proposal were quite narrow in this regard and yet there were other relevant aspects such as social care and education. Upskilling needed to look at both valuable social jobs as well as technically skilled jobs and should focus on local development. She highlighted differences between Oxfordshire and Greater Manchester and in particular that on health Oxfordshire were net importers. Real intelligence was needed to inform the shape of the bid.

The Leader introduced the contents of the report stressing that the situation was very fast moving. He paid tribute to the way in which all the Councils in Oxfordshire had come together to make the bid possible. Each Council would now need to take it through their own decision making body. He highlighted that only half of the bids going forward had included health and that this was an exciting prospect. It was important that all councillors were able to make their views known.

During discussion a note of caution was sounded in relation to the 100% retention of the business rate. This had to be financially neutral and there was the possibility that Oxfordshire would receive less given the need to fund poorer areas in the north of the country. Maggie Scott explained that the position was changing and there should be no assumption that funding methods would remain fixed. Other funding mechanisms were being explored.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) note the current position in discussions regarding devolution of powers to Oxfordshire, as set out in this paper; and
- (b) agree that a debate should be held at full council on 3 November on this issue in order to understand all members' views.

## **90/15 TOWNLANDS COMMUNITY HOSPITAL - A NEW MODEL FOR HEALTH AND CARE IN THE HENLEY-ON-THAMES AREA**

(Agenda Item. 8)

Cabinet considered a report outlining the future model of health and care being established in the Henley-on-Thames area, including the plans for the new Townlands Hospital, which was agreed at the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group Governing Body on 24 September 2015.

Councillor Heathcoat introduced the contents of the report and moved the recommendations. During discussion Cabinet was advised that the Clinical Commissioning Group would bear the cost of the beds but that there may be

some impact on the County Council. Potentially this was less than the cost of current care after a hospital stay.

Councillor Nimmo Smith was pleased at the efforts to provide some hospital facilities and hoped that the Townlands Steering Group would remain engaged.

Responding to a question from Councillor Hibbert Biles about whether the beds would be provided by CCG in perpetuity and whether this was included for in the contract Kate Terroni indicated that the intention was for a permanent arrangement. Councillor Heathcoat added that it was not possible to have clarity in perpetuity.

**RESOLVED:** to note the intentions of the Clinical Commissioning Group and the potential implications for the County council.

## **91/15 LEARNING DISABILITY HEALTH PROVISION**

(Agenda Item. 9)

Cabinet considered a report seeking a decision in respect of the current contract for learning disability health services.

Councillor Laura Price, Shadow Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care was grateful that concerns had been taken seriously and the transfer was safe and well managed. She queried the revised target dates and sought detailed information on the transfer of specialist skills, the adjustments in staff numbers, information on numbers of speech therapists and the cost implications of the transfer process. She was concerned that there was a risk that the Council may accrue costs by delay.

Kate Terroni, Deputy Director Joint Commissioning explained the difference in dates and the expected timescales. She commented that they were keen not to lose the specialist skills. Councillor Heathcoat added that they had been keen to take on board people's concerns. Dates were not exact because of the need for flexibility to ensure a safe transfer. It was a complex area and discussions between all parties ensured an understanding of what was needed. There were staffing and financial implications but she believed it would be an exemplar service. Cabinet thanked Kate Terroni for all her efforts in achieving the current position.

Councillor Heathcoat moved the recommendations.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) approve the Learning Disability Strategy for Oxfordshire;
- (b) note the extension of Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust's contract for health services with Oxfordshire County Council

- (c) approve the transfer of the contract for Learning Disability health services to Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group as soon as an acceptable contract has been agreed.

## **92/15 ADULT SOCIAL CARE - WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

(Agenda Item. 10)

Cabinet considered a report seeking approval for the Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy.

Councillor Laura Price, Shadow Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care welcomed the report and commented that she would like the Council to push for national recognition of health care professionals. She highlighted the need for affordable housing to attract and keep workers. She asked that in terms of partnership working officers think innovatively about organisations such as independent unions and to utilise the Local Enterprise Partnership. She also stressed the need to involve care workers.

Councillor Heathcoat, Cabinet member for Adult Social Care responding to the points made indicated that there had been recruitment drives and they were talking to the people doing the jobs.

During discussion Cabinet noted that through the LEP there were a number of apprenticeships. The aim had to be to make it a profession that people wanted to get into.

Councillor Heathcoat introduced the contents of the report and moved the recommendations together with an additional recommendation to present the report to the next full Council meeting.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) endorse the Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy 2015 to 2018;
- (b) commit to implementing the strategy delivery plan;
- (c) request regular progress reports from the Director of Adult Social Care on progress in implementing the strategy and towards achievement of its objectives and targets; and
- (d) agree that the report be presented to full Council.

## **93/15 INFORMATION AND ADVICE - STRATEGY AND PROCUREMENT PLAN**

(Agenda Item. 11)

Cabinet considered a report seeking approval of the information and advice strategy developed in response to the requirements in the Care Act 2014 for

local authorities to provide information and advice relating to care and support issues for adults and carers.

Mrs Sue Tanner, Rose Hill & Donnington Advice Centre, stated that the Centre would lose all its Oxfordshire County Council funding from next March. She detailed the work carried out by the Centre and the difficulty in carrying out that work when the funding was cut. She emphasised that much of the work was preventative, maximising income and minimising debts for local people. The loss of funding could end up costing the Council more in the long term.

Councillor Laura Price, Shadow Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, commended the report which was very clear about the need for the proposals but she expressed concern about the impact on vulnerable people. She felt that the impact of the loss of funding on small providers had not been fully assessed. If there was any doubt about their ability to carry on then greater consideration needed to be given to the proposals. A single large provider could leave the council exposed to risk. She was pleased that a consortium bid would be welcomed.

Councillor Heathcoat, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care in introducing the contents of the report responded to the comments made.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) approve the Information and Advice Strategy; and
- (b) Subject to the approval of the Information and Advice Strategy (above) to approve the plan for the procurement of a specialist advice service for Oxfordshire.

**94/15 NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DELIVERY OF EDUCATION SUPPORT AND ENGAGEMENT WITH SCHOOLS IN OXFORDSHIRE IN RESPONSE TO FUTURE NATIONAL AND LOCAL CHALLENGES**

(Agenda Item. 12)

The growth of school autonomy has triggered a debate about the role of local authorities and the conditions necessary to encourage and sustain a self-improving system. Cabinet considered a report that argued that there is still significant strategic value in retaining in-house school improvement services.

Councillor Gill Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families expressed the Labour Group's support for the recommendations and stressed the importance of keeping experienced and valued members of staff.

In response to a question Cabinet was advised that further reports would be submitted as necessary.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) approve, in principle, the creation of a ring-fenced trading service for Schools and Learning, trading with third parties and to allow for further developmental work and consultation with key stakeholders; and
- (b) endorse the proposal to reconfigure the remaining services into a streamlined and integrated Central School Support Portfolio comprising the remaining non-delegable functions.

**95/15 ACADEMIES PROGRAMME 2015-2020 : STRATEGIC GROUPINGS OF SCHOOLS**

(Agenda Item. 13)

Cabinet had before them a report setting out the current position in the County and strategic implications for the academies programme following the publication of a new programme of legislative change by the new Government.

Councillor Gill Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families was supportive of encouraging collaborative groupings if schools were being forced to change. However she commented that the report was rather loosely worded and sought assurance that the Council would respect the right of schools to remain as maintained and to consider their own future. Councillor Tilley replied that it was about responding to the views of the PM who expects all schools to convert. The County was willing to discuss with any school to find the right solution for that school. She added that the Council had no powers to force any change.

**RESOLVED:** to

- (a) Adopt the principles set out at paragraph 24 of the 'Strategic Implications for Academies Programme' section above.
- (b) Adopt a more assertive policy in identifying appropriate sponsors for schools required to convert to academy status.
- (c) Promote appropriate groupings to form new Multi Academy Trusts and encourage the growth of existing Multi Academy Trusts based in the county.
- (d) Further develop and promote the collaborative company model, both to incorporate more schools in these and to extend the scope of their pooling of resources and responsibility and

- (e) Use collaborative companies as a 'stepping stone' to the formation of Multi Academy Trusts.

## 96/15 CABINET BUSINESS MONITORING REPORT FOR QUARTER 1 - 2015/16

(Agenda Item. 14)

Cabinet considered a report which provided details of performance for quarter one (2015/16) in order to monitor the performance of the Council in key service areas.

Councillor Brighthouse, Chairman of the Performance Scrutiny Committee reported on the discussions held at a meeting of the Performance Scrutiny Committee on 24 September which had focussed on the challenges of meeting cuts already included in the budget. The main focus had been on adult social care with discussion on delayed transfer of care and the workforce strategy. Other matters had included the costs of children placed outside the County and coming into care; the low capital receipt being achieved; the level of income from the Ardley site and the role of school nurses in smoking cessation.

Councillor Rose in moving the recommendation advised that he would be looking into the indicator relating to fire station availability which currently was of little use.

**RESOLVED:** following discussion to note the performance reported in the dashboards.

## 97/15 DELEGATED POWERS

(Agenda Item. 15)

**RESOLVED:** to note the executive decision taken by the Chief Executive under the specific powers and functions delegated to her under the terms of Part 7.2 of the Council's Constitution – Paragraph 6.3(c)(i).

<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Reasons for Urgency</i>
28 July 2015	Provision of Employment Services for people with learning disabilities	Approved an exemption from the full tendering requirements of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules in respect of a 5 month contract (value of £123,000) with	To ensure continuity of service provision while the new service is being procured.

		Mencap, the existing provider, for the provision of employment services for people with learning disabilities	
1 October 2015	Award of a contract for the sale of land to provide supported housing units	Approved an exemption from the pre-qualification stage as required under the Contract Procedure Rule 13 (sale value of land £623,095) for Advance Housing and Support Limited to provide supported housing units.	To enable the development of supported housing which shall be subject to nomination rights which benefit the Council. Advance will also use the Property to build some residential housing. .

### 98/15 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS

(Agenda Item. 16)

The Cabinet considered a list of items for the immediately forthcoming meetings of the Cabinet together with changes and additions set out in the schedule of addenda.

**RESOLVED:** to note the items currently identified for forthcoming meetings.

### 99/15 EXEMPT ITEM

(Agenda Item. 17)

Resolution not needed. Item taken in public although the annexes remain confidential.

### 100/15 AUREUS SCHOOL (GREAT WESTERN PARK SECONDARY), DIDCOT

(Agenda Item. 18)

*The information contained in the annex is exempt in that it falls within the following prescribed category:*

3. *Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and since it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, in that where a tender or bidding process is in progress disclosure would prejudice the position of the authority in the process of the transaction and the Council's standing generally in relation to such transactions in future, to the detriment of the Council's ability properly to discharge its fiduciary and other duties as a public authority*

.....

Cabinet considered a report seeking a delegation to the Chief Finance Officer and Director for Environment & Economy in consultation with the Leader to approve the Stage 2 Full Business Case and the award of the construction contract for an 11-16 co-educational school providing 1,200 places.

Councillor Nick Hards, Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance supported the recommendations and stressed that the school would be needed by September 2017. He asked that local members be kept informed of any problems.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) in the event that the approval of the planning application for the secondary school and the completion of the land transfer has yet to take place, delegate to the Chief Finance Officer and Director for Environment & Economy in consultation with the Leader the authority to approve the Full Business Case; and
- (b) delegate to the Chief Finance Officer and Director for Environment & Economy in consultation with the Leader the authority to award the Design & Build contract.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing

2015

Division(s):

## **CABINET – 10 NOVEMBER 2015**

### **PROPOSALS ON THE FUTURE OF SUBSIDISED BUS SERVICES AND DIAL A RIDE**

**Report by Director of Environment and Economy**

#### **Introduction**

1. On 26<sup>th</sup> May 2015, the Cabinet approved the launch of a full public consultation on proposed changes to subsidised bus services and Dial a Ride.
2. The consultation ran between 19<sup>th</sup> June and 15<sup>th</sup> September. In total, 2656 responses to the consultation questionnaire were received, as well as numerous emails and letters, 13 detailed submissions and 7 petitions. 275 people attended public and specific stakeholder meetings regarding the proposals we put forward.
3. The level of interest in the consultation demonstrates how highly the public values these supported transport services, with many regarding them as a vital part of their local community infrastructure, and finding it difficult to prioritise between different types of services. While people were understandably concerned about reducing these services, there was also an appreciation of the exceptionally hard financial situation the Council finds itself in, and the difficult decisions this requires us to make.
4. This report summarises the views expressed through the consultation with regard to our proposals for the future of subsidised bus services and Dial a Ride. The Cabinet is invited to consider this feedback before it makes its final decision on how to proceed. In addition, a number of important issues raised through the consultation are detailed below, along with our proposed mitigations.

#### **Background**

##### **Supported transport savings**

5. On-going cuts in central government funding mean Oxfordshire County Council has to make approximately £290 million of savings between 2010 and 2018.

On top of those savings, we believe we may need to save a further £50 million. These calculations are based on the Government's broad savings targets across the public sector for the new parliament. We will learn more throughout Autumn and Winter in an incremental way about how the Government will make its savings, how these will impact local government in

general and then how changes will impact on Oxfordshire County Council specifically.

6. As part of our efforts to achieve these significant savings, in February 2015 the Council reduced the overall supported transport budget by a fifth (£6.3 million), and this was incorporated into the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).
7. We have already identified that we can achieve nearly £3.7m of these savings by running services in a more efficient and integrated way. However, this still leaves a further £2.6 million to save in order to achieve our Medium Term Financial Plan, and possibly more depending on the extent of any future budget reductions from Central Government. We've therefore had to look at the supported transport services which we are not required to provide by law – subsidised bus services and Dial a Ride.

### **Consultation proposals**

8. We consulted with the public on two sets of proposals:

#### **a) Subsidised bus services**

- **Option 1:** Withdraw all bus subsidies
- **Option 2:** Reduce funding to subsidised bus services by £2.3m, and adopt the principle of prioritising, where possible, services most likely to be used by the elderly and disabled (i.e. off-peak services).

We stated in the consultation document that the £2.3m savings figure in 'Option 2' may be reduced, depending on the final amount of savings that accrue from the annual review of bus subsidies undertaken in Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire earlier in 2015. Although savings have been made from this review, these have been offset by additional pressures, such as the increased cost of procuring Home to School Transport. Consequently the £2.3m savings figure cannot be reduced.

- #### **b) Dial-a-Ride** - encourage community transport groups across the county to deliver a replacement service, and end direct funding of the service by the Council.

9. The public was asked to comment on these proposals as part of a full 12-week consultation. The original consultation document and questionnaire are included in Annex D.

## The consultation process

10. The consultation on our proposed changes to subsidised bus services and Dial a Ride ran from 19<sup>th</sup> June to 15<sup>th</sup> September.
11. We commissioned Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC) – an independent, not-for-profit organisation committed to representing the needs of rural communities – to act as an independent facilitator and advisor during the consultation. ORCC were also tasked with reviewing and analysing all responses which were received; summarising the breakdown of responses to each of the consultation questions, as well as drawing out common themes and issues which emerged across submissions. This work is captured in a final report produced by ORCC, available in Annex C, which in turn forms the basis of this report to the Cabinet, and our recommendations on how to proceed.
12. The consultation was launched on the County Council and ORCC websites, via social media channels and through direct contact with key stakeholders, such as county and district councillors, town and parish councils, parish transport representatives, bus operators, campaign groups and voluntary and community bodies. Parish transport representatives and parish clerks were also sent a poster highlighting the consultation and encouraging feedback, with a request to place the poster on local parish and community noticeboards. The consultation was also promoted via the NHS South, Central and West Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Information about this consultation was sent to the 1113 CCG stakeholders, their patient participation groups, and the 6 CCG locality Groups. We also sent information out to a number of Oxfordshire's largest employers, Further Education bodies and both its universities. Letters were sent out to all Dial-a-Ride users, where a change to their service and service provider was likely to be affected, to inform them of the consultation and how to have their say. In July posters advertising the consultation were also put up in buses travelling along potentially affected routes to ensure bus users were aware of the consultation. In addition, posters highlighting the public events were placed in all 50 County Council libraries across the County, and following the events new posters encouraging consultation feedback were placed in all the 50 Libraries.
13. The key documents produced by the Council to form the basis of the consultation were the main consultation document and an online questionnaire, which was also distributed widely in hardcopy form. In addition to these main documents, several annexes were made available:
  - **Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA)** – an initial draft assessment of the impact of our proposals
  - **Frequently Asked Questions** – answers to some commonly asked questions about our proposals
  - **The Council's legal duty** – an explanation of the Council's legal duties regarding subsidised bus services
  - **Local Transport Solutions** – details of how the public can submit ideas on how to improve travel in Oxfordshire

- **Full Methodology** – a detailed explanation of the methodology used to prioritise services under option 2
- **Option 1 Services Affected** – a table of all subsidised bus services which would stop receiving a subsidy under this option
- **Option 2 Services Affected** – a table of all subsidised bus services in order of their priority, using the Council's preferred approach of making savings by prioritising off-peak services
- **Option 2 Full Ranking Tables** – full ranking tables for Option 2, including the two alternative time bands considered as part of the analysis.

All of these were made available via the Council's website, and hardcopies were also provided in all of the County's 50 libraries. Further copies were sent to libraries on request due to high demand from responders.

In August, we updated our analysis in order to include the latest changes to bus timetables, and to reflect a recent routine review of bus subsidies. Along with some additional information requested by the public, this updated analysis was posted on the Council's website in the following revised annexes:

- **Option 1 Services Affected (with Subsidy Value and Usage)** – a table of all subsidised bus services which would stop receiving a subsidy under this option, but also including a column for Service Subsidy Cost, and a column with Patronage data (passenger numbers) where it was available<sup>1</sup>, sorted by locality
  - **Option 2 Services Affected (by locality)** – table of all subsidised bus services in order of their priority, using the Council's preferred approach of making savings by prioritising off-peak services, but arranged into one table per locality
14. Both the Council and ORCC provided other feedback channels in order to enable as many people as possible to have their say. This included providing a special Freepost address and an OCC and ORCC email address, with queries continually being responded to by both organisations. ORCC provided phone support to people who asked for help with the consultation, and in total, received and responded to over 200 phone calls. This included posting out hardcopy feedback forms and other supporting documents when requested, and answering questions about particular concerns or queries regarding the consultation.
  15. In addition to online and phone support, ORCC ran and facilitated five public meetings around the county with the Cabinet Member for Environment and senior Council representatives early on in the consultation period (6 – 8th July). These took place at Banbury Town Hall, Didcot Civic Hall, Witney Methodist Church, Abingdon Guildhall and OCC County Hall in Oxford, and provided local communities with an opportunity to hear more about the proposals, ask questions and voice their concerns.

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<sup>1</sup> Passenger numbers were provided where available from the bus operators. Unfortunately this is not always complete and collection methods depend entirely on the operator and technologies used.

16. Two specific stakeholder meetings were held for the voluntary sector and bus operators respectively. Senior representatives from the council also attended a variety of meetings with key stakeholders.
17. ORCC also attended several individual meetings<sup>2</sup> with parishes/towns and community groups on request. These included:
  - The Bartons
  - Oxford 50+ Network
  - Henley area
  - Chipping Norton
  - Thame (information only)
  - Stanton St John (and neighbouring parishes)
  - Milton Under Wychwood
  - Grove

### **Consultation Feedback**

18. The response to the consultation has been high. The large number of survey responses, letters and emails, along with detailed submissions, suggest that the public take transport and access to it very seriously. Across submissions, there was a deep level of concern for local bus services, with many regarding them as a vital part of their community's infrastructure.
19. In total, 2656 responses to the consultation questionnaire (2209 online and 447 hardcopies) were received. In addition, a further 236 emails and letters were received from members of the public, with 7 petitions submitted against the potential removal of a specific route. 13 detailed submissions were received from local councils, individual councillors, user groups and other representatives. 275 people attended the 5 public meetings and 2 specific stakeholder meetings. Following the close of the consultation, 1 additional petition was submitted to cabinet on 20<sup>th</sup> October against the potential removal of a specific route.
20. As part of ORCC's role as an independent facilitator and advisor during the consultation, they were tasked with reviewing and analysing all the consultation responses which were received and detailing their findings in a report to the Council. The ORCC consultation report details the breakdown of responses to each of the consultation questions, summarises the main reasons people gave for their answers, and draws out common themes and issues which emerged across submissions. ORCC's consultation report can be found in Annex C.
21. Drawing on ORCC's report, this section summarises the public's feedback to each of the proposals we put forward and any key issues that were raised.

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<sup>2</sup> It is ORCC's and OCC's understanding that these meetings were subsequently used to inform submitted consultation responses.

## **Proposal 1**

### **Option 1: withdraw all bus subsidies**

22. There was very little support for withdrawing all bus subsidies, with only 2% (34 out of 2055) agreeing with this option in the feedback surveys. No responses received via emails, letters, public meetings or detailed submissions agreed with option 1, and were, on the whole, strongly opposed to it. Given that 73% of survey respondents used subsidised bus services, it's not surprising that there was little appetite to pursue this option.

### **Option 2: reduce subsidised bus services by £2.3million, and prioritise off-peak services where possible**

23. There was substantial support for reducing funding for subsidised bus services by £2.3million, with 41% of respondents preferring this option. This is even more significant considering that 73% of respondents were subsidised bus users themselves. We think this demonstrates that the public appreciates the exceptionally hard financial situation the Council finds itself in, and the difficult decisions that this requires us to make.
24. In addition, there was a strong show of support (47%) for our preferred method of targeting remaining funding towards off-peak services, which tend to be used by older people and people with disabilities. Only one quarter of respondents disagreed with this approach, with 20% describing themselves as neutral.
25. Nonetheless, many people (including neutrals and those in favour of protecting off-peak) raised concerns about reducing peak services, and the impact this would have on young people and commuters in the County, who tend to travel on these services. Many people felt that these services were just as important as off-peak, and also highlighted the potential negative impact on the economy of losing peak services. In light of this, some respondents suggested that we should assess each subsidised service on a case-by-case basis, and consider additional factors such as demand.

### **Neither option 1 nor 2**

The majority of survey responses (53%) – as well as 73% of emails and letters – preferred neither of the two options we put forward to make savings on subsidised bus services. Many of these people cited a range of impacts on local people as their reason for preferring neither option; such as inconvenience, difficulty getting to school, work or appointments, loss of a life-line service and isolation of older people. Many people felt that the Council should look elsewhere for savings, rather than to subsidised bus services.

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to consider this feedback before making its final decision on how to proceed regarding proposal 1.**

## Other general issues

26. In addition to the above, the public raised some general points in relation to our proposal. These are detailed in the table below, along with our responses and, where relevant, recommendations.

Issue	Our response
<p><b>Lack of alternative transport</b> A large amount of respondents (41%) said that they would find it difficult to find alternative transport if subsidised bus services were reduced. This figures correlates with the percentage of respondents (also 41%) who stated they do not own or have access to a car.</p>	<p><b>The Cabinet is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> to allocate (from the efficiency reserve) £500k of one-off, pump-prime funding for groups to bid for in order to set-up community transport initiatives which meet an identified transport need in their area.</b></p> <p>We also propose to refine our methodology so that deprived and rural areas (where car ownership and access to alternative transport is likely to be low) are also prioritised– see below for our full recommendation.</p>
<p><b>Social impacts not properly understood</b> There was some criticism of the methodology we used to rank bus services under option 2. On the whole, people were concerned that we hadn't fully understood the social impacts for people left without a service and asked us to look at a range of additional variables. These were rural isolation, deprivation, lack of access to alternative transport, car ownership, disability, older people, younger people, and tourism.</p>	<p><b>The Cabinet is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> to update the methodology used for ranking bus services under option 2, so that priority is given to rurally isolated and deprived areas</b> (which taken together will identify areas where car ownership and access to alternative transport is likely to be low).</p> <p>These variables would be included in addition to whatever decision the Cabinet takes concerning whether to prioritise peak or off-peak services. The results of adding these variables to the methodology when either peak or off-peak services are prioritised can be seen in the different results tables provided in Annex B. In summary, prioritisation of rural services results in several rural services increasing in priority (reducing risk) and several primarily-urban services decreasing in priority (increasing risk). The analysis of deprived addresses results in a few services being pulled to the top of the list of priority.</p> <p>We do not propose to include the other suggested variables, as on the whole, it</p>

	<p>was found that the majority of these produced results that were closely aligned with those of rural isolation and deprivation, making their inclusion unnecessary.</p> <p>Details of all changes which have been made to the methodology and why are set out in the Updated Methodology paper which can be found in Annex A.</p>
<p><b>Students on subsidised buses</b> As part of the consultation, we proposed to protect subsidised bus routes which are used to take entitled students from home to school, where on the whole it is cheaper for us to do so instead of paying for separate dedicated school transport.</p>	<p><b>The Cabinet is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> to protect such services (even if it decides to withdraw all funding under option 1).</b></p>
<p><b>Cumulative impact on network</b></p> <p>Both communities and operators have highlighted the fact that removing one subsidised bus route could have a negative knock-on effect on other connected nearby routes (either subsidised or commercial) by reducing the number of bus passengers, and therefore making them less viable to run.</p> <p>It was also highlighted that some distinct service numbers used the same bus and driver, forming a single timetable but had been 'scored' as distinct entities.</p>	<p>We recognise this to be an area of concern for bus users, and will ensure that we properly assess the potential consequences of removing subsidised routes on the wider network, if Cabinet asks us to proceed with reducing subsidies. This will involve us having more detailed discussions with bus operators before any changes are implemented.</p> <p>Whilst we recognise that there may be practical benefits to combining routes where they use the same bus and/or driver, this does not necessarily reflect transport need. Rather, it relates to an operational issue around the management of the bus network and configuration of timetables. This can be discussed with operators to attempt to minimise any negative knock-on impacts as much as possible.</p>
<p><b>Ensure all transport providers are treated equally</b> Our original methodology did not apply the same criteria to all transport providers. Community Transport providers were exempted and therefore protected. This meant our methodology was inconsistently applied, and we do not think that this is a</p>	<p><b>The Cabinet is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> to update the methodology used for ranking bus services under option 2, in order to ensure that all providers are treated in the same way, whether they are external providers, OCC fleet or community transport providers.</b></p>

<p>fair approach to have.</p>	<p>As already stated, we are recommending that the Cabinet allocate (from the efficiency reserve) £500k of one-off, pump-prime funding for groups to bid for in order to set-up community transport initiatives which meet an identified transport need in their area.</p>
<p><b>Specific routes</b> Many of the comments left were requests to retain specific bus services.</p>	<p>If the Cabinet decides to retain some funding, we will use these comments from the public on specific routes to inform our negotiations and the re-tendering process with bus operators.</p>
<p><b>Impact on the environment</b> Some people raised concerns about the impact that reducing subsidised bus services might have on the environment, by potentially increasing car usage and thus CO2 emissions.</p>	<p>The environmental impact of the proposed changes is extremely difficult to estimate due to the number of assumptions we need to make about how people will collectively react if bus services are reduced. These include things like people's decision to travel or not, how far they will travel, what mode they would use, whether they would share the mode with others, whether bus services will be taken on commercially if a subsidy is withdrawn, and so on.</p> <p>Taking all these assumptions and uncertainties into account, we estimate that there would be between a 0.01% reduction and 1% increase in total Oxfordshire CO2 emissions (based on Oxfordshire's 2013 emissions of 5.35 million tonnes of CO2).</p> <p>If the Cabinet decides to reduce or withdraw funding for bus services, we will aim to keep the effect at the lower end of this range by encouraging as many community transport alternative schemes as possible.</p>
<p><b>Future housing growth</b> Some detailed submission highlighted the need to take into account planned future housing developments and the increased demand this would bring for public transport.</p>	<p>Services which have been identified as necessary for supporting future demand resulting from new developments are funded using S106 funding. This is funding paid by developers and therefore, as already stated, is exempt from our savings proposals (because the funding is not the Council's to save). This ensures that subsidised bus services necessary to meeting future demand from housing</p>

	developments are protected. However, the Council will continue to review services to ensure that any which are vital to supporting future growth are also prioritised.
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27. The Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA) has been updated further to the consultation feedback and is presented in Annex F.

**Proposal 2 – withdraw direct funding for the Dial a Ride service**

**Feedback**

28. While feedback on this proposal should be taken into account, it is also important to note that 97% of respondents did not use the Dial a Ride service and were unsure what it offered.
29. Views as to whether direct funding should be withdrawn were split across submissions; 15% agreed, 14% disagreed, 29% were neutral, and 42% stated that they did not know.
30. The majority of respondents stated that they would not be able to travel if the Dial a Ride service was withdrawn, and nearly all indicated that they would find it very difficult to find an alternative means of transport.
31. Many respondents wanted an option to be able to pay more towards the Dial a Ride service. It's possible that, if Cabinet choose to withdraw direct support, any similar services offered by community-led schemes will charge users for transport.
32. Respondents were concerned that there aren't enough volunteers available to run community transport replacement services, and that these schemes will struggle to be financially viable.

**Our response**

33. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to cease funding the Dial a Ride service as of April 2016.**
34. As already stated, we are requesting £500K of one-off, pump-prime funding for groups to bid for in order to set-up community transport initiatives which meet an identified transport need in their area. We believe this will significantly help to mitigate the objections raised in the feedback. Fundamentally, the Dial a Ride is financially unsustainable in its current form.

**Your ideas**

35. As part of the consultation, we asked people to come forward with their own ideas for making savings. The ORCC report outlines the ideas which

communities and individuals suggested. While some are not viable, many were interesting and innovative, and we will continue to explore them with the communities concerned. The main ideas suggested, and our responses to each of them, are listed below:

<b>Idea from the public</b>	<b>Our response</b>
<p><b>Donations from concessionary pass holders</b>            Many respondents suggested those with concessionary bus passes who can afford to do so should be asked to pay a donation when they use their bus pass to help make the bus service viable.</p>	<p>Bus operators are not reimbursed the full amount by the Council because of the way the law stipulates that reimbursements should be calculated. We will look into the possibility, and legality, of asking for donations from willing pass holders. However, it would be difficult to set up such a scheme, as it would involve creating a voluntary payment mechanism that sent funds directly to the Council. A more practical solution would be for pass holders to refrain from using their pass and paying full fare to their bus operator if they can afford to and wish to. This would in effect be the same as a voluntary payment scheme, but would avoid the need for a complicated system for receiving donations. If the Cabinet chose to protect peak services, then this would have the effect of reducing usage of concessionary passes (albeit minimally given the size of the subsidised network).</p>
<p><b>Paying for Dial a Ride</b>            Similar suggestions were made regarding the Dial a Ride services. Many respondents would be prepared to pay more towards the service. At present, those registered with Dial a Ride are only required to pay a £5 pa membership fee.</p>	<p>Charging alone would not make the Dial a Ride service affordable for the Council, as we would still have to pay our drivers (unlike many voluntary schemes). As already stated, if the Cabinet decides to encourage community transport alternatives for affected users, it's possible that these replacement services will charge users for transport in order to remain sustainable.</p>
<p><b>Integrate bus network</b>            Many respondents called for bus routes to be changed or combined with other routes, as a means to secure their bus</p>	<p>We already do our utmost to integrate subsidised routes and look for other opportunities for efficiency as part of our regular reviews of the supported</p>

<p>services. Bus providers should be invited to suggest how services that are currently subsidised could be made more profitable.</p>	<p>transport network. On occasion, buses may mirror each other, either because multiple buses are needed to meet demand, or because a subsidised bus intended for a non-commercial area happens to mirror a commercial route for a part of the way. However, we never subsidise routes which unnecessarily duplicate commercial routes where there isn't an identified need. If Cabinet decide to reduce funding but retain some, then we will be engaging with operators and asking them for ideas on how to get the best possible coverage with the funding available. It's important to remember that the Council is not responsible for the bus network as a whole; we only play a role in filling gaps in the commercial network where it's necessary to do so.</p>
<p><b>Increase Council Tax</b> Some respondents suggested increasing Council Tax, if the additional funds could be ring-fenced for subsidised bus services and Dial a Ride services.</p>	<p>The County Council is unable to raise council tax over 1.99 % without a referendum. District and Town councils are able to raise their precepts at their discretion.</p>
<p><b>Area-specific ideas</b> Several area-specific ideas were put forward including: two new community minibus schemes; 1 new bus company idea; and extending existing community transport schemes to cover a wider geographic area</p>	<p>If Cabinet decides to set aside funding to support community transport schemes, we would encourage these proposals and others like them to come forward and bid for funding. Details of a number of community-based schemes which have been proposed during the consultation can be found in ORCC's final report in Annex D.</p>

## Implementation of option 2

36. We suggest implementing option 2 by removing the lowest ranked services as necessary (i.e. lowest priority, highest risk) in order to achieve full financial year 16/17 savings of £2.3m. Contracts would need to be terminated and notice given from as early as the start of December 2015. These removed routes would then cease being provided either 17 weeks after notice is given, or on the fixed date of 4th June 2016, depending on the contract.
37. The routes which were not removed would then remain in place until the end of 2016/17. During that time we would undertake a commissioning exercise

with the remaining budget, aimed at procuring the best possible subsidised bus transport network for Oxfordshire. This exercise would be outcome-based, guided by the Cabinet's preferred approach for prioritising services, but focused on meeting the identified transport needs of communities, rather than specific routes.

Any service changes resulting from this commissioning exercise will be subject to public consultation and final approval by the Cabinet.

38. Furthermore, we would like to explore the option of broadening out this commissioning exercise to include a range of other supported transport services, which could include:
  - Statutory home to school transport
  - Special Educational Needs transport
  - Subsidised buses (prioritised by criteria outlined by cabinet)
  - The Council's current in-house Fleet service
  - Community transport support
39. By including the entirety of our supported transport services and focusing on the network as a whole, it would have the effect of driving efficiency into the network. Suppliers would be able to flex their routing across the entire network.
40. This is an innovative means of commissioning which we would like permission to explore. It is requested that after exploration, the decision to launch a formal commissioning exercise is delegated to the member for transport. If we are able to secure best value for statutory services and the overall network, whilst demonstrating ability to protect vulnerable services, we will return to cabinet to present our intent to award, with any variation to outcomes or financial implications.
41. We may advise retaining certain services within the Council for safeguarding reasons or if it was cheaper for the Council to do so.
42. There are two main issues that could change the list of routes to be retained and withdrawn:

### **1) Contract retendering/re negotiations**

There may be instances where our preference would be to "withdraw" and to "retain" subsidies for separate services that are covered by the same contract.

In these cases it is likely that the contract would have to be modified to include only the parts we wish to retain. As a result the contract cost may increase (or decrease). This might mean that service(s) close to "the line" may be affected (potentially withdrawn).

### **2) Transporting children to school**

As part of the consultation, we proposed to protect subsidised bus routes which are used to take entitled students from home to school, where on the whole it is cheaper for us to do so, instead of paying for separate dedicated school transport. Not only would this allow the council to make more efficient use of its funds, but it would have a positive impact on communities who use the subsidised services.

## **Staff Implications**

43. There are no redundancy implications associated with these proposals. This area of work will be assessed after the Cabinet's decision and as part of the Integrated Transport Hub review, which will take place in the New Year.

## **Financial Implications**

44. Subsidised bus service and Dial a Ride savings will contribute towards the Supported Transport Programme's existing Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) savings of £6.250m by 2017/18.

Ceasing Dial a Ride would save the Council £0.26m.

The following summarises the impact on the MTFP target of either withdrawing all subsidises or reducing them by £2.3m (assuming the Dial a Ride saving is also made):

### Option 1 (withdraw all subsidised buses)

If this option is chosen, then based on current savings forecasts for the overall Supported Transport Programme, the MTFP savings will be exceeded by £1.2m million.

### Option 2 (reduce subsidised bus budget by £2.3m)

If this option is chosen, then based on current savings forecasts for the overall Supported Transport Programme, the programme will fall short of meeting its MTFP savings by £0.180m. This is partly due to increased pressures on the Home to School Transport budget since the start of the programme. Cabinet would need to reduce the subsidised bus budget by £2.480m in order to meet the existing MTFP savings by 2017/18.

## **Summary of recommendations**

### **Delivery of the agreed Medium Term Financial Plan savings**

**In order to deliver the savings required in the MTFP, the Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**

- (a) Consider the consultation feedback regarding subsidised bus services.
- (b) Proceed with reducing bus subsidies by £2.3 million and:
  - 1. Consider the consultation feedback regarding subsidised bus services and decide which services to prioritise – off-peak, peak, or other.
  - 2. Update the methodology used for ranking services in the following ways:
    - i. Include additional criteria which ensure that rurally isolated and deprived areas are also prioritised.
    - ii. Agree to continue to pay for (i.e. protect in the methodology) subsidised bus routes which are used to take entitled students from home to school, where on the whole it is cheaper for us to do so, instead of paying for separate dedicated school transport. (This will vary routes available on a year by year basis as school cohorts change).
    - iii. Ensure a consistent methodology by treating all providers in the same way, whether they are external providers, OCC fleet or community transport providers.

If cabinet approves this request, then approximately two-thirds of the subsidies due to be withdrawn would cease in April 2016, and the remaining third would cease in June 2016. The £2.3m savings under option 2 would be realised in financial year 16/17, assuming notice was served in November / December 2015.

The exact details cannot be finalised at this stage due to variables including whether contract renewal renegotiations are required, which could alter costs.

- (c) Cease funding the Dial a Ride service as of April 2016.

### **Delivery of further savings subject to Council approval**

- (d) The withdrawal of all bus subsidies would deliver the full £3.7m savings if the cabinet makes this decision, subject to full council's approval in February

2016 to further reduce the Supported Transport budget. The full £3.7m savings, would be realised once all contract termination processes have been completed.

If Council approves this request, then the subsidies would cease at the following time:

- 50% of subsidies (59/118 services) require 17 weeks' notice and could terminate on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2016, assuming notice was served on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016.
- 31% of subsidies (37/118 services) require 16 weeks' notice but also require 16 weeks to modify the "Authorised Change Date". This means they would take 32 weeks to terminate. They could therefore terminate on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016, assuming notice to change the "Authorised Change Date" was served on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016, and notice to terminate the contract was served 16 weeks later on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2016.
- 9% of subsidies (11/118 services) require 16 weeks' notice and could terminate on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2016, assuming notice was served on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016. These are services operated by Oxfordshire County Council.
- 9% of subsidies (11/118 services) will expire naturally on or before the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.

Annex E shows which routes fall into each category.

### **Allocation of one-off, pump-prime funding**

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**

- (e) Allocate (from the efficiency reserve) £500k of one-off, pump-prime funding for groups to bid for, in order to set-up community transport initiatives which meet an identified transport need in their area

### **Exploring a new approach to Transport**

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**

- (f) Approve the suggested implementation approach, including the request to explore the option of undertaking a larger scale commissioning exercise which includes a range of supported transport services, in addition to subsidised bus services.

Depending on the cabinet's decision on whether to withdraw all bus subsidies, this commissioning exercise will either include the remainder of the subsidy budget, or exclude it if cabinet decides to withdraw all funding.

**Report by Sue Scane, Director for Environment and Economy**

Contact Officer: Alexandra Bailey, Service Manager – Business Development and Fleet Management

Supporting Documents:

Annex A – Update Methodology and Results  
Annex B – Results  
Annex C – ORCC Report on Public Consultation Responses  
Annex D – Consultation Document  
Annex E - Contract Termination Terms  
Annex F - SCIA

November 2015

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# Annex A – Updated Methodology and Results

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## 1. Introduction

This document outlines the analysis and re-ranking carried out in response to the consultation feedback, and presents the resulting options.

In summary, the options presented are as follows:

- 1) **Consultation Option 1:** withdraw all bus subsidies
- 2) **Consultation Option 2:** reduce subsidised bus services by £2.3million, and prioritise off-peak services where possible
- 3) **Updated Option 2 - Off Peak:** reduce subsidised bus services by £2.3million, and prioritise **off-peak** services where possible. In addition, rural services are prioritised and special exemptions made for deprived areas and school routes

- 4) **Updated Option 2 - Peak:** reduce subsidised bus services by £2.3million, and prioritise **peak** services where possible. In addition, rural services are prioritised and special exemptions made for deprived areas and school routes

## 2. Methodology Consulted On

We followed a strict methodical process to calculate which bus subsidies are 'best value for money', and which are 'worst value'. 'Value for money' is judged upon how many addresses are served by a subsidised bus, where an address has no commercial alternative.

The results provide a ranking of all subsidised bus services. The ranking is based on the cost of each subsidy to the council, compared to how many unique addresses it is enabling the bus network to serve.

This entire process was repeated three times to prioritise services at different times of day (time band), allowing evaluation of potential impacts on different types of bus user.

Option 2 in the consultation document refers to the results of the analysis for the daytime off-peak time band. The alternatives analysed were services running at peak hours during weekdays, and services running in the evening and at the weekend.

Bus timetables are never static, and subsidies undergo routine reviews. The bus subsidy and timetable data analysed was the most up-to-date version available at the time of the analysis.

## 3. Additional Variables Considered

Throughout the Consultation, there were a number of suggestions made and constructive questions posed relating to the methodology used to rank bus services under Option 2. These typically involved suggestions of additional variables that could be used to assess bus subsidies.

In response to these suggestions follow-up analysis was carried out.

This included examination of rural isolation, access to shops, deprivation, disability, older people, younger people, car ownership, and tourism.

On the whole, it was found that the majority of these additional variables produced overlapping results, and they tended to be closely aligned with those of rural isolation and deprivation.

The typical method used to assess these variables was to build on the methodology consulted on by excluding certain addresses from contributing to the score of a subsidised bus within the ranking table. Addresses were included or excluded depending on whether they met the particular criteria of the variable being assessed.

Data sets used included Experian Mosaic Data, the National Land and Property Gazetteer, Lower Super Output Area Boundaries and the Office for National Statistics Rural/Urban Classification, and Ordnance Survey Strategi. Explanations of how these data sets were used can be found in section 6.

## **4. Updated Methodology**

Having deduced that the inclusion of the rural isolation and deprivation variables encompassed many of the other variables and addressed the feedback from the consultation, these were selected to re-rank the bus subsidies.

### **a) Rural Isolation**

The methodology used in the consultation analysis (for Option 2) was adapted to assess whether the geography of rural isolation across Oxfordshire could be used to prioritise bus services.

Firstly, each address in Oxfordshire (from Address Point data) was assessed as to whether it falls into a rural area or not (based on rural LSOA).

If not, the address is removed, because for this criterion we are interested only in rural addresses.

The subsidised bus services were then ranked according to how many rural addresses they uniquely serve. This was carried out in the same way as the original Option 2 methodology (Annex W of the consultation), but this time only for rural addresses.

### **b) Deprivation**

Any bus service that serves a large number of “deprived” addresses was made exempt from withdrawal. Specifically, this is any bus service that uniquely serves more than 25 deprived addresses within the specified time band.

Note that “deprived addresses” includes both rural and urban addresses that are not already served by a commercial bus service.

To achieve this, firstly each address in Oxfordshire (from Address Point data) was assessed as to which Mosaic Lifestyle Type it falls into. See section 5a for full details of the Mosaic dataset.

The Mosaic Grand Index was interrogated to find which Lifestyle Types had a likelihood of being deprived of at least 50% above the national average. This was based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (sourced from The Department for Communities and Local Government).

This defines which Oxfordshire addresses should be considered as "deprived", and which shouldn't.

### **c) Students on Subsidised Buses**

As part of the consultation, we proposed to protect subsidised bus routes which are used to take entitled students from home to school, where on the whole it is cheaper for us to do so instead of paying for separate dedicated school transport.

The result of this is that a handful of services were made exempt from having their subsidies withdrawn. These are highlighted in the results in Annex B.

### **d) Other minor amendments and evaluation outcomes**

#### **i. County Connect**

During the consultation, the service "County Connect" was marked as "At Risk - Under Review". This is because it is a demand-responsive transport service with no fixed timetable, and so could not be subjected to the full analysis.

Based on some investigation and discussions with County Connect (<http://www.county-connect.co.uk/>), an estimate ranking was arrived at: the County Connect would be "Withdrawn" under all Options.

Full details of the estimate calculations can be found in section 5e below.

#### **ii. Swindon Shopper Bus**

The Swindon Shopper Bus is another demand-responsive service with no timetable that could therefore not be subjected to the full analysis. It was marked as "At Risk - Under Review" for the consultation.

Upon review, it was revealed that this service is funded from a separate Oxfordshire County Council budget, and should therefore not be subject to withdrawal as part of this consultation. The service has therefore been removed from the list in Annex B of this paper.

#### **iii. Community Transport**

Under Option 2 of the consultation, community transport operators were treated as exempt from analysis. In other words, they were automatically listed as "Very Low" risk of having their subsidy withdrawn.

This runs counter to the general methodology which is to examine each service individually based on strict objective criteria. In the updated methodology, subsidised community transport services have been included in the analysis and ranked accordingly.

## 5. Technical Details and References

### a) Experian Mosaic Data

Mosaic draws on a wide range of data sources to characterise residents into 15 broad lifestyle groups and 66 more detailed lifestyle types. For each lifestyle type we can glean an insight into their likely needs and motivations.

More details of the dataset, including a full list of the groups, are available here: <http://cld.bz/RUfDTGu>

This data was used to assess a range of factors including deprivation, age, employment, car ownership, etc. Specifically, the Mosaic grand index was used to define whether an address has a high chance of having a particular characteristic, where "high" was defined as 50% greater than the national mean.

It is worth noting that the Mosaic dataset provides a statistical estimate to approximate the characteristics of people who live in a particular place. Real attribute data on individuals or households across Oxfordshire is not collected or held and so an approximation must be used.

### b) National Land and Property Gazetteer

The National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) contains a table of all addresses in the UK. It holds some additional characteristics that were not available in the original Address Point dataset.

A full definition of the NLPG, and the classifications it includes, can be found here: <http://www.iahub.net/docs/1400255321051.pdf>.

Within the NLPG, the Basic Land and Property Unit (BLPU) field enabled the identification across Oxfordshire of facilities including shops, schools and other places of education, medical facilities, banks, and libraries. Within the document linked to above, section 6 contains full information about the BLPU.

### c) Lower Super Output Area Boundaries and Rural/Urban Classification

The Office for National Statistics Lower Super Output Area Boundaries were used as part of the 2011 census. They consist of polygons containing between 400 and 1200 households. A full definition can be found here: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/geography/beginner-s-guide/census/super-output-areas--soas-/index.html>

The Office for National Statistics Rural/Urban Classification 2011 was matched to the LSOA to define whether an address is classified as rural or urban. The full definition of rural and urban can be found here: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/geography/products/area-classifications/2011-rural-urban/index.html>

### d) Ordnance Survey Strategi

This dataset was used to assess Tourism. In summary, the Tourism Layer of the Strategi dataset includes the locations of tourist facilities across Oxfordshire. There

are 226 points across Oxfordshire. The full specification of this dataset can be read here: <http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/docs/user-guides/strategi-user-guide.pdf>

### **e) County Connect Estimate Calculations**

To arrive at an estimated cost index for the County, the following steps were taken (for full details of cost index, please see the consultation full methodology, found in Annex W of the consultation):

- 1) It was established that the County Connect covers 6 key villages (Claydon, Cropredy, Great Bourton, Little Bourton, Wardington, Mixbury)
- 2) These villages collectively were calculated to have approximately 620 addresses within Oxfordshire with no commercial bus stop within 400 metres.
- 3) Based on discussions with County Connect, it was established that the bus typically visits Oxfordshire "once or twice" per day. Overcompensating for this to allow for higher demand, estimates were based on the bus visiting each village twice per day (return journey to each). This is 12 stops per day, 60 per week, 3120 per year.
- 4) The subsidy value is £15,000 per year.
- 5) It is therefore £4.80 cost per stop visit, which gives a cost index of 0.007.

This ranks as "Withdrawn" under all options.

# Annex B - Results

## 1. Introduction

This document should be read in conjunction with Annex A, which describes the updated methodology used to arrive at the results provided in this document.

This document contains the full table of subsidised bus services, along with whether the subsidies would be retained or withdrawn under each of the options.

## 2. Consultation Option 1

All subsidies would be withdrawn under this option.

## 3. Consultation Option 2, Updated Option 2 - Off Peak, and Updated Option 2 - Peak: reduce subsidised bus services by £2.3million

- **Consultation Option 2:** reduce subsidised bus services by £2.3million, and prioritise off-peak services where possible
- **Updated Option 2 - Off Peak:** reduce subsidised bus services by £2.3million, and prioritise **off-peak** services where possible. In addition, rural services are prioritised and special exemptions made for deprived areas and school routes
- **Updated Option 2 - Peak:** reduce subsidised bus services by £2.3million, and prioritise **peak** services where possible. In addition, rural services are prioritised and special exemptions made for deprived areas and school routes

The full table of services is listed below, along with whether the subsidy would be withdrawn or retained under each option. The table is sorted in the original priority order that was consulted on.

Please note: Table based on the current position of the bus subsidy contracts. Subject to change based on variables including whether contract renewal renegotiations are required (which alter costs), ongoing discussions with operators, and the rate of savings required.

Service Number	Operator	Service Description	Risk Level Consulted On	Option 2 (Consulted Priority)	Updated Option 2 (off-peak)	Updated Option 2 (peak)	Subsidy Description
61	Faringdon Community Bus	Faringdon Town Service	Very Low	Retain	Withdrawn	Retained: Serves Deprived Addresses	Fully Subsidised
83	Stanford in the Vale Minibus	Wantage - Faringdon	Very Low	Retain	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
84	Stanford in the Vale Minibus	Wantage - Stanford in the Vale - Goosey	Very Low	Retain	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
V1	Villager Community Bus	Witney : Market Sq - Smiths Estate - Deer Park - Market Sq	Very Low	Retain	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised

Service Number	Operator	Service Description	Risk Level Consulted On	Option 2 (Consulted Priority)	Updated Option 2 (off-peak)	Updated Option 2 (peak)	Subsidy Description
V12	Villager Community Bus	Upper Oddington - Chipping Norton	Very Low	Retain	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
V17	Villager Community Bus	Upper Oddington - Chipping Norton	Very Low	Retain	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Wednesday only, portion of the route between Steeple Aston and Chipping Norton subsidised (both directions)
V19	Villager Community Bus	Icomb - Westcotes - Fifield - Wychwoods - Chipping Norton	Very Low	Retain	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
V24	Villager Community Bus	Upper Oddington - Witney	Very Low	Retain	Retained	Retained	Thursday only, portion of the route between Leafield and Combe (both directions)
V26	Villager Community Bus	Upper Oddington - Chipping Norton - Leafield - Witney	Very Low	Retain	Retained	Withdrawn	Monday, Tuesday, and Friday only, portion of the route between Combe and Crawley (both directions)
V14	Villager Community Bus	West Oxfordshire Routes (V14, V20, V21, V23, V24, V25)	Very Low	Retain	Retained	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised. Each route runs one day per week, one journey in each direction.
V20	Villager Community Bus	West Oxfordshire Routes (V14, V20, V21, V23, V24, V25)	Very Low	Retain	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised. Each route runs one day per week, one journey in each direction.
V21	Villager Community Bus	West Oxfordshire Routes (V14, V20, V21, V23, V24, V25)	Very Low	Retain	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised. Each route runs one day per week, one journey in each direction.
V23	Villager Community Bus	West Oxfordshire Routes (V14, V20, V21, V23, V24, V25)	Very Low	Retain	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised. Each route runs one day per week, one journey in each direction.
V24	Villager Community Bus	West Oxfordshire Routes (V14, V20, V21, V23, V24, V25)	Very Low	Retain	Retained	Retained	Fully Subsidised. Each route runs one day per week, one journey in each direction.
V25	Villager Community Bus	West Oxfordshire Routes (V14, V20, V21, V23, V24, V25)	Very Low	Retain	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised. Each route runs one day per week, one journey in each direction.
40	Carousel Buses	High Wycombe - Thame	Low	Retain	Retained: School Route	Retained: School Route	The service is subsidised almost entirely, just a few certain journeys/times are commercial
41	Thames Travel	North Abingdon Town Service anti-clockwise	Low	Retain	Retained: Serves Deprived Addresses	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
X9	Pulhams Coaches	Witney - Charlbury - Chipping Norton	Low	Retain	Retained	Retained	Fully Subsidised
275	Red Rose Travel	Oxford City Centre - High Wycombe	Low	Retain	Retained	Retained	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)

Service Number	Operator	Service Description	Risk Level Consulted On	Option 2 (Consulted Priority)	Updated Option 2 (off-peak)	Updated Option 2 (peak)	Subsidy Description
38	Thames Travel	Wantage Town service	Low	Retain	Retained: Serves Deprived Addresses	Retained	Fully Subsidised
139	Thames Travel	Wallingford - Henley-on-Thames	Low	Retain	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
19	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Carterton - Witney	Low	Retain	Retained	Retained	Fully Subsidised
134	Go Ride Community Interest Company	Goring - Stokes - Wallingford	Low	Retain	Retained: School Route	Retained: School Route	Fully Subsidised
18	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Clanfield - Oxford	Low	Retain	Retained	Retained	Fully Subsidised
103	Heyfordian Travel	Oxford - Wheatley - Little Milton	Low	Retain	Retained	Retained	Fully Subsidised
269	Johnson's Excelbus	Banbury - Stratford upon Avon	Low	Retain	Retained	Withdrawn	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)
17	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Cuttleslowe - Oxford	Low	Retain	Withdrawn*	Withdrawn*	Fully Subsidised
95	Thames Travel	Didcot - The Moretons - Blewbury - Didcot	Low	Retain	Retained	Retained: Serves Deprived Addresses	Fully Subsidised
B2	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Bodicote - Banbury	Low	Retain	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
43	Thames Travel	North Abingdon Town Service	Low	Retain	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
145	Whites Coaches	Woodcote (Oxon) - Henley-on-Thames	Low	Retain	Retained	Retained	Fully Subsidised
25	Thames Travel	Kidlington/Oxford - Bicester	Low	Retain	Retained	Retained	Fully Subsidised
131	Oxfordshire County Council	Wallingford - East Hagbourne	Low	Retain	Retained	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
213	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Witney : Market Sq - Wood Green - Cogges - Market Sq (circular)	Low	Retain	Retained: Serves Deprived Addresses	Retained: Serves Deprived Addresses	Fully Subsidised
25A	Thames Travel	Oxford - Bicester	Low	Retain	Retained	Retained	Fully Subsidised
104	Heyfordian Travel	Oxford - Cuddesdon	Low	Retain	Withdrawn	Retained	Fully Subsidised
154	Whites Coaches	Henley-on-Thames - Henley-on-Thames	Low	Retain	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
94	Thames Travel	Didcot - Blewbury - Hagbournes - Didcot	Low	Retain	Withdrawn	Retained: Serves Deprived Addresses	Fully Subsidised
214	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Witney : Market Square - Cogges - Wood Green - Market Square	Low	Retain	Retained: Serves Deprived Addresses	Retained: Serves Deprived Addresses	Fully Subsidised
22	Thames Travel	Bicester -Langford - Caversfield - Bicester (circular)	Low	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
270	Johnson's Excelbus	Banbury - Stratford upon Avon	Low	Withdraw	Retained	Retained	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)

Service Number	Operator	Service Description	Risk Level Consulted On	Option 2 (Consulted Priority)	Updated Option 2 (off-peak)	Updated Option 2 (peak)	Subsidy Description
B7	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Grimsbury & Edmunds Road - Banbury	Low	Withdraw	Retained: Serves Deprived Addresses	Retained: Serves Deprived Addresses	Fully Subsidised
151	Whites Coaches	Henley-on-Thames - Henley-on-Thames	Low	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
125	Oxfordshire County Council	Chalgrove - Watlington - Benson - Wallingford	Medium	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
67	Thames Travel	Wantage - Faringdon	Medium	Withdraw	Retained	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
90	Oxfordshire County Council	Banbury - Deddington - Upper Heyford	Medium	Withdraw	Retained	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
42	Thames Travel	North Abingdon Town Service via College	Medium	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
64	Pulhams Coaches	Carterton - Swindon	Medium	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)
123	Vale Travel	Thame Local Service	Medium	Withdraw	Retained: Serves Deprived Addresses	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
67B	Thames Travel	Wantage - Faringdon	Medium	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
8	Stagecoach in Northants	Bicester - Silverstone	Medium	Withdraw	Retained	Retained	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)
23	Thames Travel	Bicester - Langford - Caversfield - Bicester (circular)	Medium	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
67A	Thames Travel	Wantage - Faringdon	Medium	Withdraw	Withdrawn*	Withdrawn*	Fully Subsidised
W10	Go Ride Community Interest Company	Woodstock - Shipton on Cherwell - Kidlington - Woodstock	Medium	Withdraw	Retained	Retained	Fully Subsidised. Part supported by Section 106 funding.
T94	Thames Travel	Oxford - Ambrosden - Bicester	Medium	Withdraw	Retained	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised (Thames Travel operated parts of service 94)
50A	Stagecoach in Warwickshire	Stratford-upon-Avon - Banbury	Medium	Withdraw	Retained	Retained	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)
124	Vale Travel	Thame - Wallington	Medium	Withdraw	Retained	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
63	Thames Travel	Oxford - Cumnor - Southmoor	Medium	Withdraw	Retained	Retained	Fully Subsidised
B10	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Hanwell Fields - Banbury	Medium	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
277	Stagecoach in Warwickshire	Lighthorne Heath - Banbury	Medium	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)
118	Heyfordian Travel	Oxford - Brill (- Bicester)	Medium	Withdraw	Retained	Retained	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)

Service Number	Operator	Service Description	Risk Level Consulted On	Option 2 (Consulted Priority)	Updated Option 2 (off-peak)	Updated Option 2 (peak)	Subsidy Description
A1	Oxfordshire County Council	(Didcot -) Ardington - Wantage - Ardington (- Didcot)	Medium	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
126	Oxfordshire County Council	Wallingford - Chalgrove - Wallingford	Medium	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
37	Heyfordian Travel	Bicester - Hardwick - Finmere	Medium	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
67C	Thames Travel	Wantage - Faringdon	Medium	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
44	Thames Travel	Oxford - Bayworth - Sunningwell - Abingdon	Medium	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
108	Heyfordian Travel	Oxford - Forest Hill - Stanton St. John (- Elsfield)	Medium	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
97	Thames Travel	Wallingford - Didcot	Medium	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
X15	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Abingdon - Witney	Medium	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised. Part supported by Section 106 funding.
M1	Oxfordshire County Council	Watlington - Reading	Medium	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
152	Whites Coaches	Henley-on-Thames - Henley-on-Thames	Medium	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
153	Whites Coaches	Henley-on-Thames - Henley-on-Thames	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
44A	Thames Travel	Oxford - Abingdon	High	Withdraw	Retained: School Route	Retained: School Route	Fully Subsidised
B1	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Easington - Banbury	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
215	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Witney : Market Square - Smiths Estate - Market Square (circular)	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Retained: Serves Deprived Addresses	Fully Subsidised
135	Oxfordshire County Council	Wallingford - Moulsoford - Streatley - Goring	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
24	Thames Travel	Bicester -Launton Road-Bicester (circular)	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
33	Pulhams Coaches	Wychwoods - Fulbrook - Burford	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
W12	Go Ride Community Interest Company	Woodstock - Wootton - Woodstock	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised. Part supported by Section 106 funding.
46	Oxfordshire County Council	Drayton St. Leonard - Abingdon	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised

Service Number	Operator	Service Description	Risk Level Consulted On	Option 2 (Consulted Priority)	Updated Option 2 (off-peak)	Updated Option 2 (peak)	Subsidy Description
H2	Oxfordshire County Council	Sandhills - Headington Quarry - Headington Centre	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
89	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	The Baldons - Cowley	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
121	Vale Travel	Princes Risborough - Watlington	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
K1	Go Ride Community Interest Company	Kidlington Town service	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
86	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Lye Valley - Cowley	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
T2	Thames Travel	Oxford-Science Park-Berinsfield-Abingdon	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Service diversion via Culham Village only (Monday-Saturday)
K2	Go Ride Community Interest Company	Kidlington - Begbroke - Yarnton - Kidlington	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
114	Thames Travel	Wallingford - Abingdon	High	Withdraw	Retained: School Route	Retained: School Route	Fully Subsidised
143	Thames Travel	Reading-Upper Basildon-Whitchurch Hill-Reading	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)
90	Go Ride Community Interest Company	Hungerford - Swindon Bus Station	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)
S4C	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Middle Barton - Deddington	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
43	Oxfordshire County Council	Abingdon Town Centre - Eaton (Oxon)	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
233	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Burford - Woodstock	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn*	Withdrawn*	Service diversion via New Yatt all day, and the first journey of the day in each direction between Witney and Woodstock (Monday-Friday)
120	Vale Travel	Princes Risborough, - Thame	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
504	Oxfordshire County Council	Honton - Horley - Banbury	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
218	Thames Travel	Wytham - Oxford	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
W11	Go Ride Community Interest Company	Woodstock - Bladon - Woodstock	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised. Part supported by Section 106 funding.
85	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Iffley - Cowley	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
H1	Oxfordshire County Council	Old Marston - Headington	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised

Service Number	Operator	Service Description	Risk Level Consulted On	Option 2 (Consulted Priority)	Updated Option 2 (off-peak)	Updated Option 2 (peak)	Subsidy Description
20	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Oxford: Rose Hill - Cowley [- Unipart House]	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
488	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Chipping Norton - Banbury	High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Service diversions via Wigginton and South Newington also last journey from Chipping Norton. Some other early and late journeys paid for with Section 106 money.
280	Arriva the Shires	Aylesbury - Oxford City Centre	Very High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Sundays and Bank Holidays, first journey of the day, and one evening journey (both directions) only.
800	Arriva the Shires	High Wycombe - Reading	Very High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Sunday and Bank holidays, portion of the route between Henley and Dunsden Green only.
C1	Go Ride Community Interest Company	Charlbury - Leafield (Oxon) - Wychwoods	Very High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
K3	Go Ride Community Interest Company	Kidlington - Yarnton - Begbroke - Kidlington	Very High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
81	Heyfordian Travel	Bicester - Fritwell - Souldern - Banbury	Very High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Saturday services
81A	Heyfordian Travel	Bicester - Fritwell - Souldern - Somerton	Very High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Tuesday services
County Connect	Kier	Oxfordshire Service Users. Unscheduled Routes. Claydon, Cropedy & The Bourtons	At Risk*	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Misc
811	Pulhams Coaches	Salford (Oxon) - Cheltenham (Gloucs)	Very High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
X8	Pulhams Coaches	Kingham - Chipping Norton	Very High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Fully Subsidised
50	Stagecoach in Warwickshire	Stratford-upon-Avon - Chipping Norton	Very High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)
11	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Witney - Oxford	Very High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Monday-Friday one evening journey only (both directions)
B5	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Banbury - Neithrop - Banbury	Very High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Evening Services 18:30 onwards
S3	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Chipping Norton - Oxford	Very High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	Sundays and Bank Holidays, part of service between Old Woodstock and Chipping Norton (both directions)
136C	Thames Travel	Wallingford - Cholsey - Wallingford	Very High	Withdraw	Retained: School Route	Retained: School Route	Sundays and Bank Holiday Services Subsidised. Some other parts of the route covered by Section 106 funding.

Service Number	Operator	Service Description	Risk Level Consulted On	Option 2 (Consulted Priority)	Updated Option 2 (off-peak)	Updated Option 2 (peak)	Subsidy Description
T1	Thames Travel	Oxford - Garsington - Watlington	Very High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	First journey of the day, and three afternoon journeys in each direction, portion between Watlington and Garsington only (Monday-Friday)
X1	Thames Travel	OXFORD-DIDCOT-HARWELL CAMPUS-WANTAGE	Very High	Withdraw	Withdrawn	Withdrawn	One morning journey Monday-Friday, Part of the journey that diverts into Ardington Village only
X2	Thames Travel	OXFORD-ABINGDON-MILTON PARK-DIDCOT	Very High	Withdraw	Withdrawn*	Withdrawn*	Some - but not all - morning services between Didcot and Wallingford (generally before 9am) and some - but not all - evening services between Abingdon Stratton Way and Wallingford (generally after 7pm) (both directions, Monday-Saturday).

\*These services have been identified as having future "potential" as a cheaper alternative to private transport for some children who require statutory transport to school. They are being investigated.

# Oxfordshire County Council Supported Transport Consultation

Annex C

## Independent report of the public consultation



Public consultation meeting – Witney July 2015

Prepared by Oxfordshire Rural Community Council for Oxfordshire County Council



September 2015

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# 1. Background

**1.1** Continuing public spending reductions by central government mean that Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) has to make significant savings. It is likely that the £290 million saving target for 2018 will be increased by a further £50 million.

**1.2** In light of this savings target, OCC needs to save more than £6 million on supported transport services. The council has already made savings by running services more efficiently. However that is not enough. Further savings will have to come from reducing the £4 million a year the council pays in bus subsidies and for the countywide Dial-a-Ride service. These services are known as 'non-statutory' transport services.

**1.3** OCC has put forward 2 proposals for making these savings:

- Option 1: withdraw all subsidies from subsidised bus services. Option 2: reduce bus subsidies by £2.3 million and;
- withdraw completely from providing direct funding for the Dial-a-Ride service.

These proposals formed the basis of the supported transport public consultation.

**1.4** OCC provides full or partial subsidies for 118 bus services. This equates to 9% of the county's bus network, meaning that more than 9 out of 10 bus services are run on a fully commercial basis without any public funding.

**1.5** The county wide Dial-a-Ride service, currently run by OCC, offers door to door accessible transport for people unable to use public transport. 439 are registered with the service and 238 people use it regularly.

**1.6** If it is agreed to reduce bus subsidies by £2.3 million, OCC's preferred approach to protect off peak services as these tend to be used by older, disabled and more vulnerable passengers.

**1.7** OCC has used a rigorous methodology to calculate which bus subsidies represent 'best value for money' (including, under option 2, prioritising off-peak services). Based on this OCC has ranked each subsidised bus service from very low risk to very high risk of the subsidy being withdrawn. To ensure fairness, OCC used address mapping taking into account: addresses served by each bus stop (using a 400m access criteria); the cost of the subsidy; access to commercial bus alternatives.

**1.8** OCC is keen to support alternative transport solutions. It will work with existing community transport schemes, parish and town councils and community groups across Oxfordshire to see whether local groups can help if service gaps arise. There is likelihood that one-off pump prime funding will be available to help support new schemes. In addition, OCC are working with bus operators to see if some of the bus services can continue without a subsidy.

In the next section, we describe how the public consultation was undertaken.

## **2. The consultation**

**2.1** From 19 June 2015 to 15 September 2015, OCC carried out an extensive 12 week public consultation on its proposals for subsidised bus services and the Dial-a-Ride service. To support this consultation, OCC commissioned an independent, not for profit organisation, Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC) to act as a facilitator and advisor during the 12 week consultation and to produce a report on the findings.

**2.2** The consultation was launched on OCC and ORCC websites, via social media channels and through direct contact with key stakeholders, such as county and district councillors, town and parish councils, parish transport representatives, bus operators, campaign groups and voluntary and community bodies. Parish transport representatives and parish clerks were also sent a poster highlighting the consultation and encouraging feedback, with a request to place the poster on local parish and community noticeboards. The consultation was also promoted via the NHS South, Central and West Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Information about this consultation was sent to the 1113 CCG stakeholders, their patient participation groups, and the 6 CCG locality Groups. Information was also sent out to a number of Oxfordshire's largest employers, Further Education bodies and the universities. Letters were sent out to all Dial-a-Ride users, where a change to their service and service provider was likely to be affected, to inform them of the consultation and how to have their say. In July posters advertising the consultation were also put up in buses travelling along potentially affected routes to ensure bus users were aware of the consultation. In addition, posters highlighting the public events were placed in all 50 OCC libraries across the county, and, following the events, new posters encouraging consultation feedback were placed in all the OCC libraries too.

**2.3** Key documents to inform the consultation process included: a document setting out proposals and options; a feedback form; information on the methodology underpinning OCC's proposals; a list of the subsidised bus services; usage information; a Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA); and a Frequently Asked Questions document. These were made available on a special portal on the OCC website and hardcopies were provided in all libraries. All information provided online and in the libraries was updated throughout the consultation period.

**2.4** Both OCC and ORCC provided additional channels to enable as many people to have their say. This included:

- providing a special Freepost address and an OCC and ORCC email address
- phone support by ORCC to people who asked for help with the consultation. ORCC received and responded to over 200 phone calls, answering questions about addressing concerns about the consultation.
- In a large number of cases, hardcopy feedback forms and other supporting documents were posted to callers when requested.

**2.5** In addition to the online and phone support, OCC and ORCC organised 5 public meetings around the county and 2 specific stakeholder meetings for the voluntary sector and the bus operators. Senior representatives from the county council also attended a variety of meetings with key stakeholders. ORCC also attended several individual meetings\* with parishes/towns and community groups on request. These included:

- The Bartons
- Oxford 50+ Network
- Henley area
- Chipping Norton
- Thame (information only)
- Stanton St John (and neighbouring parishes)
- Milton Under Wychwood
- Grove

\*It is ORCC's and OCC's understanding that these meetings/information sharing were then used to inform subsequently submitted consultation responses

**2.6** The main proposals, as set out in the consultation document are:

**Proposal 1**

**Option 1 Subsidised buses** – withdraw all bus subsidies

or

**Option 2 Subsidised buses** - reduce funding by half to subsidised bus services - and adopting the principle of prioritising, where possible, services most likely to be used by the elderly and disabled

**Proposal 2**

**Dial-a-Ride** - end direct funding of the Dial-a-Ride service - encouraging community transport groups across the county to deliver a replacement service.

**2.7** The public was asked (a) which of the proposals, if any, would they accept and (b) if they used any of the services under consultation.

**2.8** Overall the breakdown of the responses to the consultation was as follows:

- 275 people attended the 5 public meetings and 2 specific stakeholder meetings
- 2656 responses to the consultation questionnaire (2209 online and 447 hardcopies)
- 236 emails and letters from members of the public
- 7 petitions against the potential cuts to a specific route
- 13 detailed submissions

In the next section, we summarise the main findings from the consultation exercise.

### 3. Executive Summary

**3.1** The response to the consultation has been high. The large number of letters and emails, along with detailed submissions, suggest that the public take transport and access to it very seriously. It is an area of deep concern for many of respondents, whether they live in rural or urban communities.

**3.2** Efforts were made by OCC to ensure the consultation documents were user-friendly and written in plain English, but a number of respondents did say that they found the documents difficult to navigate and understand. This report incorporates information from both complete and incomplete forms and from the many separate emails and letters.

**3.3** Based on the responses received for each survey questions and individual responses, we set out the key findings and trends below.

#### Proposal 1 – option 1: withdraw all bus subsidies

- A very small number of respondents, **2% (34 out 2055)**, agreed with option 1 in the feedback survey.
- No responses received via emails, letters, public meetings and detailed submissions agreed with option 1, and were, on the whole, **strongly opposed to option 1**.

#### Proposal 1 – option 2: reduce subsidised bus service by £2.3million

- Survey feedback forms indicate that **1083 (53%) of the 2055 respondents preferred neither of the two proposals to make savings on subsidised bus services**.
- **856 (41%) of survey respondents preferred proposal 1 option 2, to partially withdraw bus subsidies**, as they regarded this option as ‘the lesser of two evils’.
- **207 (73%) of emails and letters were against potential cuts to their particular bus service and bus services as a whole**. Most responses wanted to see their local bus protected and / or wanted to see the county council **invest in bus services and not make cuts**. Only 3.5% of emails and letters accepted some reduction in services.
- Survey feedback results show that **902 (47%) of the 1921 respondents agreed with the priority of protecting off-peak** transport for older and disabled people. However, an overwhelming proportion left comments stating that the young and working people, who use peak services, are just as important.
- **1216 (74%) of survey respondents use the bus service weekly or daily**.
- The main reasons for people using the bus services are for essential shopping and appointments. 663 (41%) of the 1598 survey respondents cited that they would find alternative transport difficult.

- Many respondents, through surveys, emails, letters and detailed submissions were critical of how the county council developed their methodology and ranking table for bus services and whether they had looked into, and fully valued, the social impacts for people who would be left without access to transport (see Section 7).

**Proposal 2 – withdraw direct funding for the Dial-a-Ride service** (but support not for profit, community transport initiatives)

- Of the 1715 respondents answering the survey question, **211 (15%) agreed with withdrawing direct funding from Dial-a-Ride services and a further 389 (29%) were neutral about the proposal. 194 (14%) of respondents disagreed and felt the service should be protected for the most vulnerable people.** 566 (42%) of respondents cited they did not know, which is unsurprising given the majority (97%) of respondents did not use the service and were unsure what service Dial-a-Ride offered.
- Many respondents wanted an option to be able to **pay more towards the Dial-a-Ride service.**
- Some respondents were concerned about (a) the availability of volunteers and (b) the limitations of many community transport schemes ability to take on a subsidised service and make it financially feasible, particularly in rural areas.

**3.4** OCC asked the public to set out their thoughts on alternative transport solutions for their communities.

#### **Supporting alternative solutions: ideas from the public**

- Many respondents suggested those with concessionary bus passes who can afford to do so should be asked to **pay a donation when they use their bus pass** to help make the bus service viable.
- Similar suggestions were made regarding the **Dial-a-Ride** services. Many **respondents would be prepared to pay more towards the service.** At present, those registered with Dial-a-Ride are only required to pay a £5 pa membership fee.
- Many respondents called for **bus routes to be changed or combined** with other routes, as a means to secure their bus services. Bus providers should be invited to suggest how services that are currently subsidised could be made more profitable.
- Some respondents suggested **increasing Council Tax**, if the additional funds could be ring-fenced for subsidised bus services and Dial a Ride services.
- Several **area-specific ideas** were put forward including: two new community minibus schemes; 1 new bus company idea; and extending existing community transport schemes to cover a wider geographic area.

**3.5** Summing up, there is little appetite to remove subsidies and reduce services. Nor is there agreement over which bus services should be prioritised if subsidy is removed. The public are sending out a strong message that greater effort should be made to maintain most – if not all - routes. If some routes are to lose their subsidy, the public want the county council, bus providers, the voluntary sector and community groups to find alternative ways of maintaining a service. Some respondents' suggestions are summarised above; many have thought about alternative options.

**3.6.** The feasibility of each suggestion will need to be assessed and the most promising developed further. This will need leadership and guidance from the County Council. We recommend the County Council nominates an officer to work with community groups and bus operators to help develop these ideas in more detail. In particular, options for managing a 'voluntary payment scheme' – suggested by many respondents –will need careful consideration.

The 3 case studies below give a flavour of some specific proposals that were raised during the public consultation.

Case study 1:

### **Swindon Dial-a-Ride aims to expand**

The current West Oxon Dial-a-Ride service operates Monday to Friday within West Oxfordshire and to Oxford City and Kidlington as required. It has a lower membership than other districts - eighty-five members, mainly female, with an average age of 80+.

**Swindon Dial-a-Ride**, a not for profit organisation, are looking to offer the same level of service operating on Monday to Friday service (excluding Bank Holidays), using one wheelchair accessible minibus. The hours of operation would be with first pickup at 09.30 am and last pickup at 16.30 pm.

To ensure **sustainability** of the service the Swindon Dial-a-Ride would promote the new service to increase the number of users. And they would be keen to include more lucrative work in Oxfordshire to complement the new service.

Case study 2:

### **Rural based eco-bus company**

An entrepreneur based in the Bartons has drafted a business case to initiate a new social enterprise called Our Bus Company. The new rural owned bus company aims to run electric midi-buses (small and narrow buses appropriate for rural roads) and would maximise the use of apps and online support, so that bus users can pre-book stops, if needed. This operation, should start-up funding be secured, could replace and extend bus routes to Oxford and Banbury for the Bartons, Glympton, Wootton, Sandford St Martins and Duns Tew.

Case study 3:

### **New Cholsey community minibus**

Parishes in South Oxfordshire are seeking a community transport solution to run a community minibus service for the parishes of Cholsey, North & South Moreton, Mouslford, Little and Long Wittenham and the Astons. It could also be extended to serve Benson and Wallingford.

Funding is needed for the purchase of a wheelchair accessible vehicle. The vehicle would also be adapted to transport seated wheel-chair passengers. There are several second hand models on the market at a cost of approximately £15,000. In addition a good pool of volunteer drivers (and possibly paid drivers at a later stage) will need to be recruited along with experienced volunteers to administer the scheme.

The scheme would make an important contribution to people living in these parishes enabling them to live a full and active life within their own community.

## 4. Analysis: feedback forms

### Part 1: Methodology and Key Findings

#### Methodology

This section provides an analysis of the feedback forms. In total, 2,656 feedback forms were received, both online (2,209) and on paper (447).

The results for each question are presented in this section. Numerical results are presented graphically. The questions that called for open text responses have been coded to extrapolate key themes from the many and varied comments received.

The following should be noted:

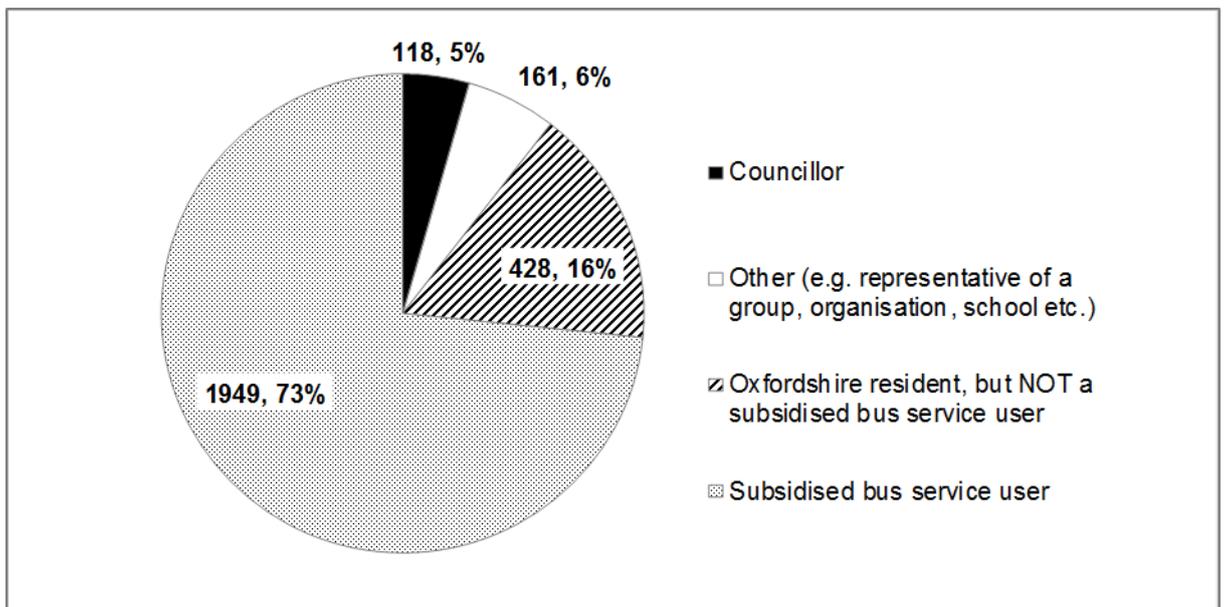
- Respondents did not always complete the whole form so the totals reported for individual questions are not the same as the total number of respondents. Also, some responses represented the views of groups or organisations so it is not possible to assess the representativeness of respondents.

#### Respondent profile

The survey questions 17 to 22 asked for personal details from each respondent. The information below provides an overall picture of the respondent profile.

- 73% of the responses came from subsidised bus users.

Chart 4.1: Responses to the question “Which of the following best describes you?”



- Most respondents provided responses online (2,209, 83%), and some (447, 16%) sent in paper forms using the Freepost address.
- Responses came from all age-groups, with 5% below the age of 24, 44% between 25 and 65, and 51% aged over 65.

Chart 4.2: age categories of respondents

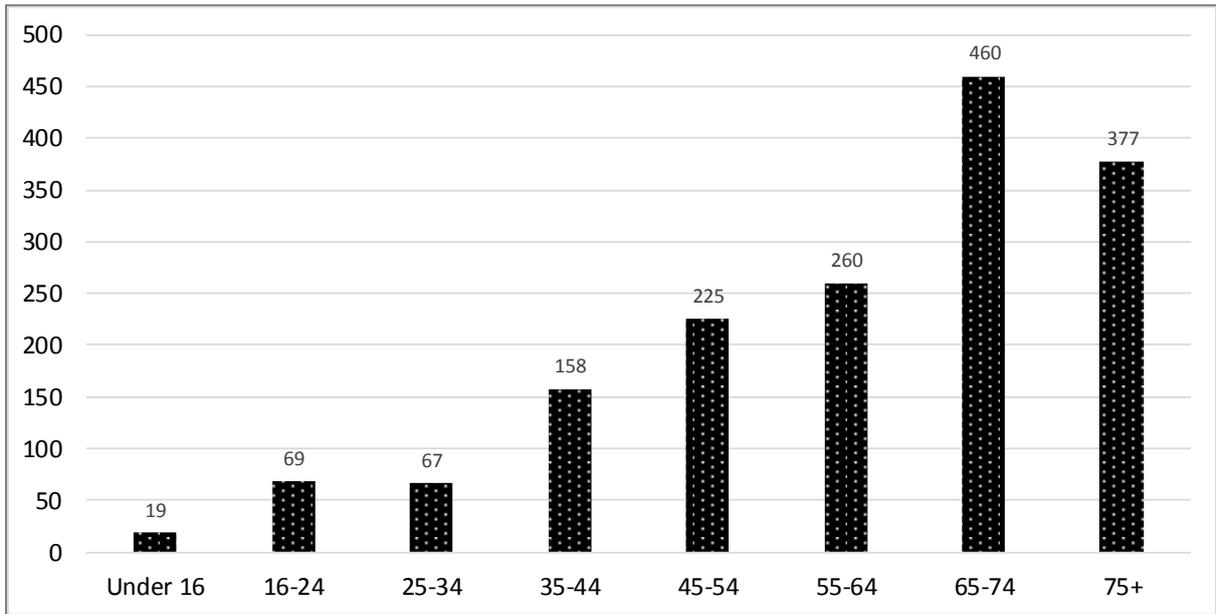
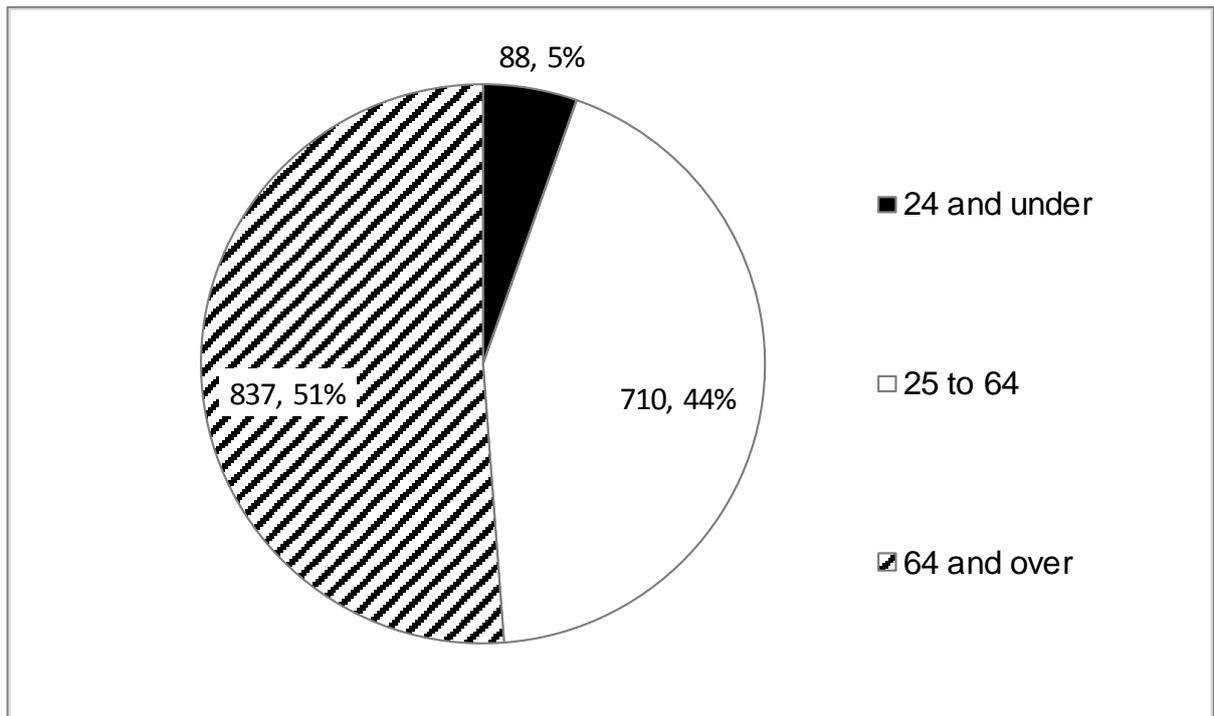
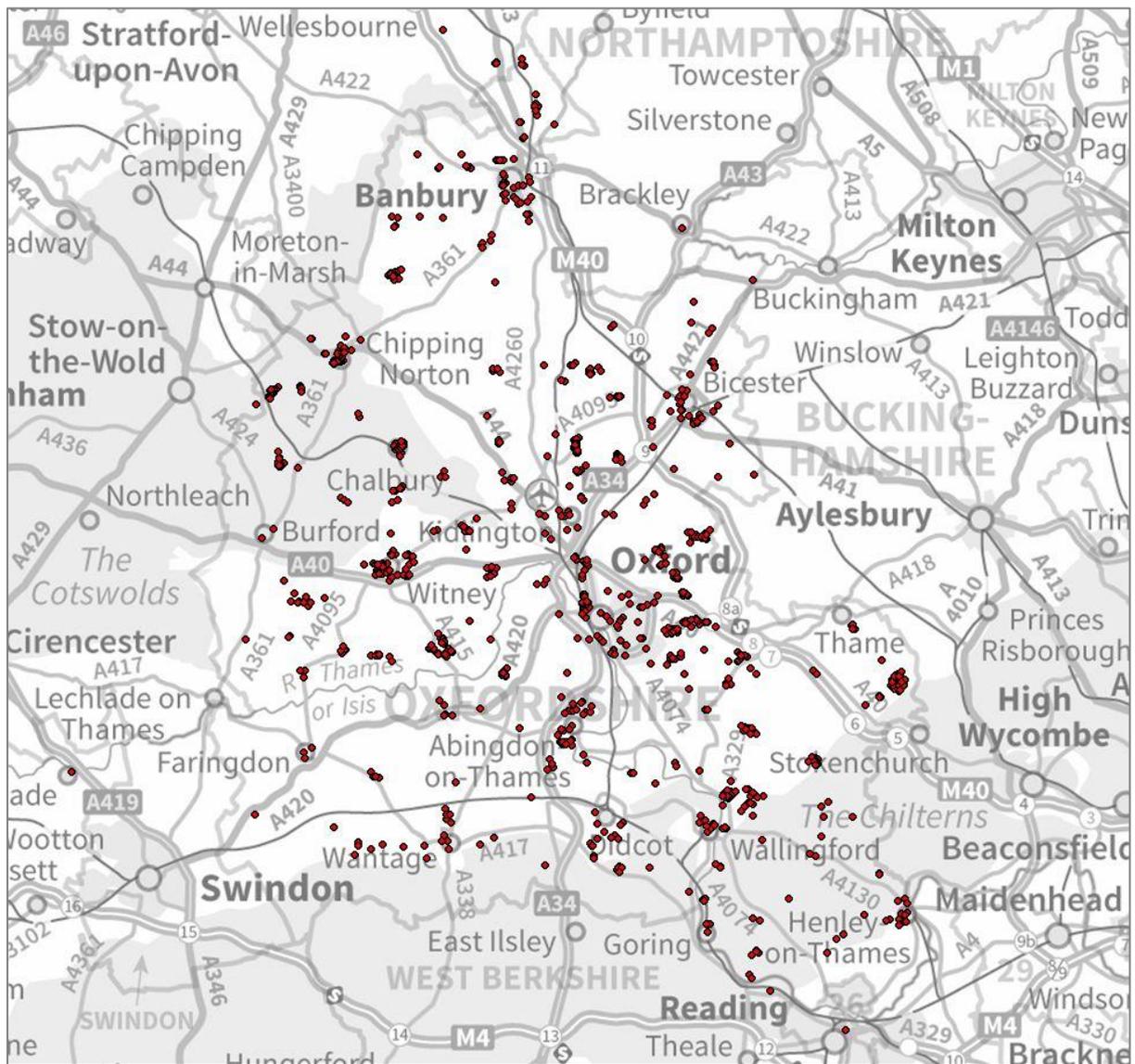


Chart 4.3: Proportions of respondents in major age groups



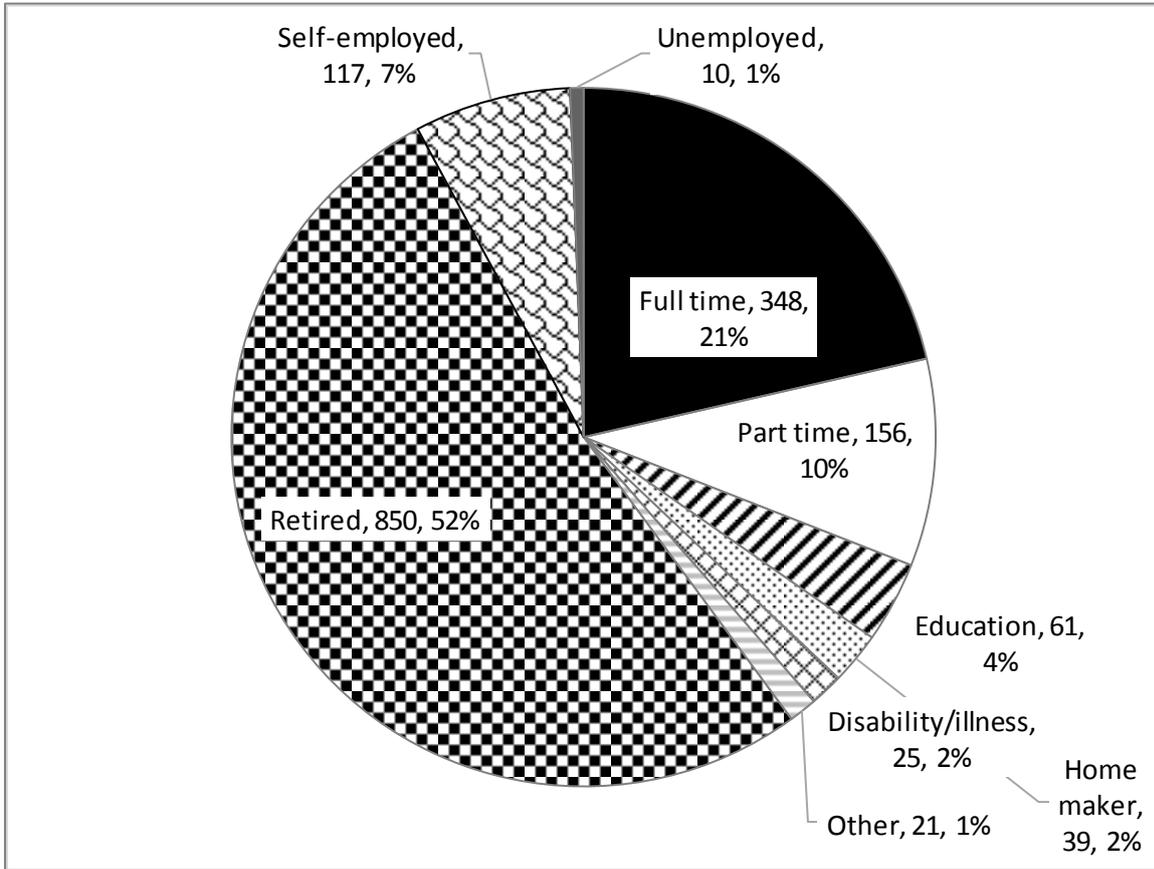
- As Chart 4.4 illustrates, respondents were from all over the county.

Chart 4.4: Post codes of respondents



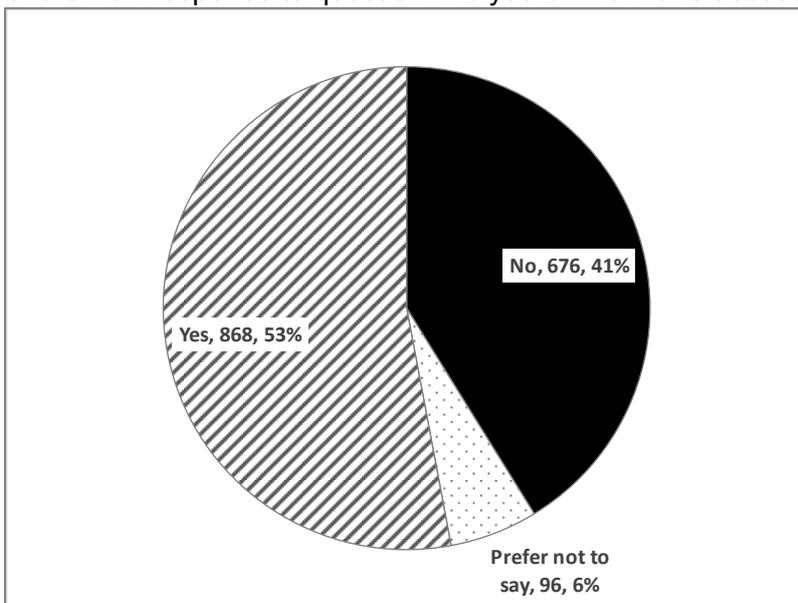
- Just over half the respondents are retired, and 38% are employed full time, part time or self-employed.

Chart 4.5: Employment status



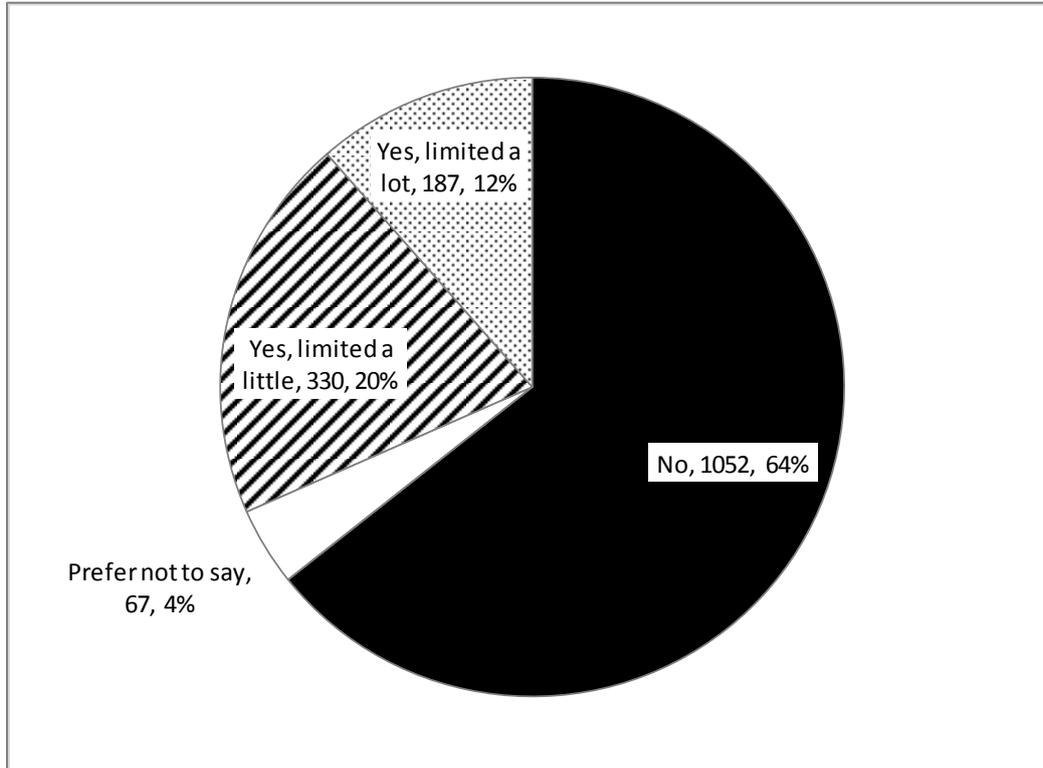
- Just over half of respondents have access to a car

Chart 4.6: Response to question “Do you own or have access to a car?”



- Most respondents do not have mobility problems, but one third reported that they are limited either a little or a lot by health and disability issues.

Chart 4.7: response to question “Are your day to day activities limited because of a health problem or disability...?”



## Key Findings

### Summary of main themes raised in the feedback forms

- 1587 respondents cited their most frequent bus service as tabled under Q2. However, over half (56%) of respondents answering Q1 used more than one subsidised bus service.
- 1216 (74%) of respondents who answered Q3 use the bus service every week. 576 (35%) respondents using the buses weekly or daily were over 65. 333 (20%) respondents using the bus weekly or daily were aged between 25 and 64 years old, and 73 (4.5%) respondents using the buses frequently were aged under 24.
- The main reasons for people using the bus services are for essential shopping and appointments. 663 (41%) of the 1598 respondents cited that they would find alternative transport difficult.
- Just over half (53%) of the 1640 respondents stated they owned or had access to a car and 676 (41%) respondents stated they do not own or have access to a car.

- **1083 (53%) of the 2055 respondents preferred neither of the two proposals to make savings on subsidised bus services. 856 (41%) of respondents preferred proposal 1 option 2, to partially withdraw bus subsidies and 34 (2%) of respondents preferred option 1, to withdraw all subsidies.**
- Overall, respondents regarded their local bus service as an important part of the community infrastructure, and should be protected, not reduced or withdrawn.
- **902 (47%) of the 1921 respondents agreed with the priority of protecting off-peak transport for older and disabled people.** However, an overwhelming proportion left comments stating that the young and working people, who use peak services, are just as important.
- Many respondents were critical of how the county council developed the ranking table for bus services and questioned whether they had looked into the implications for vulnerable people without transport.
- All 49 of Dial a Ride users who responded to the consultation stated that they would find it very difficult to find alternative transport solutions.
- Of the 1715 respondents, 211 (15%) agreed with withdrawing direct funding from Dial a Ride services and a further 389 (29%) were neutral about the proposal. 194 (14%) of respondents disagreed and felt the service should be protected for the most vulnerable people. 566 (42%) of respondents cited they did not know, which is unsurprising given the majority (97%) of respondents did not use the service and were unsure what service Dial a Ride offered.

## Part 2: Analysis of individual questions

The feedback form comprised 24 questions. Fifteen questions were about the consultation proposals and nine questions were about the respondents. The results of each question are summarised below.<sup>1</sup>

### Q1 What subsidised bus services do you use?

Respondents were asked to list one or more subsidised bus service/s that they use. 1,501 respondents answered this question and just over half of these (56%) listed more than one bus route. 69 respondents who answered this question mentioned bus routes that were not on the subsidised bus list. Several respondents commented that they were unable to access the list of subsidised bus services. The list was in Annex X of the consultation documents available online and in hard copy from libraries and from ORCC. The ORCC helpline responded to over 200 phone calls and sent consultation documents by post to those that requested them (over 250).

### Q2 Please state the Oxfordshire County Council subsidised bus service number you use most frequently

Respondents were invited to name the bus service that they use most frequently. A slightly higher number of respondents filled in this question (1,587). 9 responses were not legible, and 51 referred to services that are not subsidised.

In Table 4.8, each subsidised bus service is ranked by the number of respondents who stated that this is the service they use most frequently. The list should not be taken as showing the importance of each bus service to the community but as a reflection of the stated bus usage by the respondents.

Table 4.8: Subsidised services that are used most frequently by respondents

Service Number	Service Description	Option 2 Risk (from Annex Y)	Number stating this is the route they use most frequently
103/104	Oxford - Wheatley - Little Milton	Low	113
103/104	Oxford - Cuddesdon	Low	
108/118	Oxford - Forest Hill - Stanton St. John (- Elsfield)	Medium	104
108/118	Oxford - Brill (- Bicester)	Medium	
25A	Oxford - Bicester	At Risk (Under Review)	97
139	Wallingford - Henley-on-Thames	Medium	81
18	Clanfield - Oxford	Low	77
40	High Wycombe - Thame	Very High	75
25	Kidlington/Oxford - Bicester	Medium	70
T1	Oxford - Garsington - Watlington	Very High	62
X9	Witney - Charlbury - Chipping Norton	Low	58
X8	Kingham - Chipping Norton	High	57
17	Cotteslowe - Oxford	Low	48

<sup>1</sup> All charts are in black and white for visual accessibility and ease of printing. The charts are from numbers responding to each question, which does not always equal the total number of respondents.

Service Number	Service Description	Option 2 Risk (from Annex Y)	Number stating this is the route they use most frequently
488	Chipping Norton - Banbury	Very High	46
19	Carterton - Witney	Low	42
S3	Chipping Norton - Oxford	Very High	42
X15	Abingdon - Witney	Medium	35
94/95	Didcot - Blewbury - Hagbournes - Didcot	Medium	32
94/95	Didcot - The Moretons - Blewbury - Didcot	Medium	
277	Lighthorne Heath - Banbury	Medium	32
X2	OXFORD-ABINGDON-MILTON PARK-DIDCOT	Very High	26
22/23	Bicester -Langford - Caversfield - Bicester (circular)	Medium	25
22/23	Bicester -Langford - Caversfield - Bicester (circular)	Medium	
218	Wytham - Oxford	High	22
215	Witney : Market Square - Smiths Estate - Market Square (circular)	High	21
213/214	Witney : Market Sq - Wood Green - Cogges - Market Sq (circular)	Low	20
213/214	Witney : Market Square - Cogges - Wood Green - Market Square	Low	
143	Reading-Upper Basildon-Whitchurch Hill-Reading	High	19
8	Bicester - Silverstone	Medium	17
11	Witney - Oxford	Very High	17
63	Oxford - Cumnor - Southmoor	Medium	16
134	Goring - Stokes - Wallingford	Low	13
233	Burford - Woodstock	High	13
269/270	Banbury - Stratford upon Avon	Low	12
269/270	Banbury - Stratford upon Avon	Low	
41	North Abingdon Town Service anti-clockwise	Low	11
B7	Grimsbury & Edmunds Road - Banbury	Low	11
H2	Sandhills - Headington Quarry - Headington Centre	High	11
280	Aylesbury - Oxford City Centre	Very High	10
B1	Easington - Banbury	Medium	10
67	Wantage - Faringdon	Low	9
50A	Stratford-upon-Avon - Banbury	Medium	9
66	Faringdon - Oxford	Very Low	8
145	Woodcote (Oxon) - Henley-on-Thames	Low	7
C1	Charlbury - Leafield (Oxon) - Wychwoods	Very High	7
X1	OXFORD-DIDCOT-HARWELL CAMPUS-WANTAGE	Very High	7
42/43	North Abingdon Town Service via College	Low	6
42/43	North Abingdon Town Service	At Risk (Under Review)	
42/43	Abingdon Town Centre - Eaton (Oxon)	High	
154	Henley-on-Thames - Henley-on-Thames	Low	6
B2	Bodicote - Banbury	Low	6
K1/K2	Kidlington Town service	High	6
K1/K2	Kidlington - Begbroke - Yarnton - Kidlington	High	

<b>Service Number</b>	<b>Service Description</b>	<b>Option 2 Risk (from Annex Y)</b>	<b>Number stating this is the route they use most frequently</b>
S4	Banbury - Oxford	Very Low	6
T94	Oxford - Ambrosden - Bicester	Medium	6
X10	Wychwoods - Fulbrook - Burford	Very High	6
123	Thame Local Service	Medium	5
20	Oxford: Rose Hill - Cowley [- Unipart House]	High	5
44	Oxford - Bayworth - Sunningwell - Abingdon	Medium	5
A1	(Didcot -) Ardington - Wantage - Ardington (- Didcot)	Low	5
S4C	Middle Barton - Deddington	High	5
124/125	Thame - Wallington	Medium	5
124/125	Chalgrove - Watlington - Benson - Wallingford	Very High	4
38	Wantage Town service	Low	4
86	Lye Valley - Cowley	High	4
97	Wallingford - Didcot	High	4
B10	Hanwell Fields - Banbury	Low	4
64	Carterton - Swindon	Medium	3
152	Henley-on-Thames - Henley-on-Thames	High	3
67A	Wantage - Faringdon	Medium	3
W12	Woodstock - Wootton - Woodstock	High	3
83	Wantage - Faringdon	Very Low	2
89	The Baldons - Cowley	High	2
90	Banbury - Deddington - Upper Heyford	Medium	2
120	Princes Risborough, - Thame	Very High	2
275	Oxford City Centre - High Wycombe	Low	2
811	Salford (Oxon) - Cheltenham (Gloucs)	Very High	2
67C	Wantage - Faringdon	At Risk (Under Review)	2
B5	Banbury - Neithrop - Banbury	Very High	2
T2	Oxford-Science Park-Berinsfield-Abingdon	High	2
W10	Woodstock - Shipton on Cherwell - Kidlington - Woodstock	Medium	2
37	Bicester - Hardwick - Finmere	Medium	1
81	Bicester - Fritwell - Souldern - Banbury	Very High	1
90	Hungerford - Swindon Bus Station	High	1
98	Great Western Park - Didcot - Great Western Park	Very Low	1
114	Wallingford - Abingdon	Very High	1
126	Wallingford - Chalgrove - Wallingford	Very High	1
135	Wallingford - Moulsoford - Streatley - Goring	Very High	1
800	High Wycombe - Reading	Very High	1
67B	Wantage - Faringdon	Medium	1
V19	Icomb - Westcotes - Fifield - Wychwoods - Chipping Norton	Very Low	1
V24/V26	Upper Oddington - Witney	Very Low	1
V24/V26	Upper Oddington - Chipping Norton - Leafield - Witney	Very Low	
24	Bicester -Launton Road-Bicester (circular)	At Risk (Under Review)	0

<b>Service Number</b>	<b>Service Description</b>	<b>Option 2 Risk (from Annex Y)</b>	<b>Number stating this is the route they use most frequently</b>
46	Drayton St. Leonard - Abingdon	Medium	0
50	Stratford-upon-Avon - Chipping Norton	Very High	0
61	Faringdon Town Service	Very Low	0
84	Wantage - Stanford in the Vale - Goosey	Very Low	0
85	Iffley - Cowley	High	0
121	Princes Risborough - Watlington	High	0
131	Wallingford - East Hagbourne	Very High	0
131	Henley-on-Thames - Henley-on-Thames	Low	0
153	Henley-on-Thames - Henley-on-Thames	High	0
504	Horton - Horley - Banbury	High	0
136A	Wallingford - Cholsey - Wallingford	Very Low	0
136C	Wallingford - Cholsey - Wallingford	Very High	0
44A	Oxford - Abingdon	At Risk (Under Review)	0
81A	Bicester - Fritwell - Souldern - Somerton	Very High	0
County Connect	Oxfordshire Service Users. Unscheduled Routes. Claydon, Cropedy & The Bourtons	At Risk (Under Review)	0
H1	Old Marston - Headington	High	0
K3	Kidlington - Yarnton - Begbroke - Kidlington	Very High	0
M1	Watlington - Reading	High	0
Swindon Shopper Bus	Oxfordshire Service Users. Unscheduled Routes. Longcot, Shrivenham, Watchfield, Bourton and Ashbury in Vale of White Horse	At Risk (Under Review)	0
V1	Witney : Market Sq - Smiths Estate - Deer Park - Market Sq	Very Low	0
V12	Upper Oddington - Chipping Norton	Very Low	0
V17	Upper Oddington - Chipping Norton	Very Low	0
W11	Woodstock - Bladon - Woodstock	High	0
West Oxfordshire Routes	West Oxfordshire Routes (V14, V20, V21, V23, V24, V25)	Very Low	0

Technical note: Some respondents gave 2 service numbers that they use equally and consider to be the same service. Where these services were of equal risk the service numbers have been combined as shown in the table above so there is no double counting.

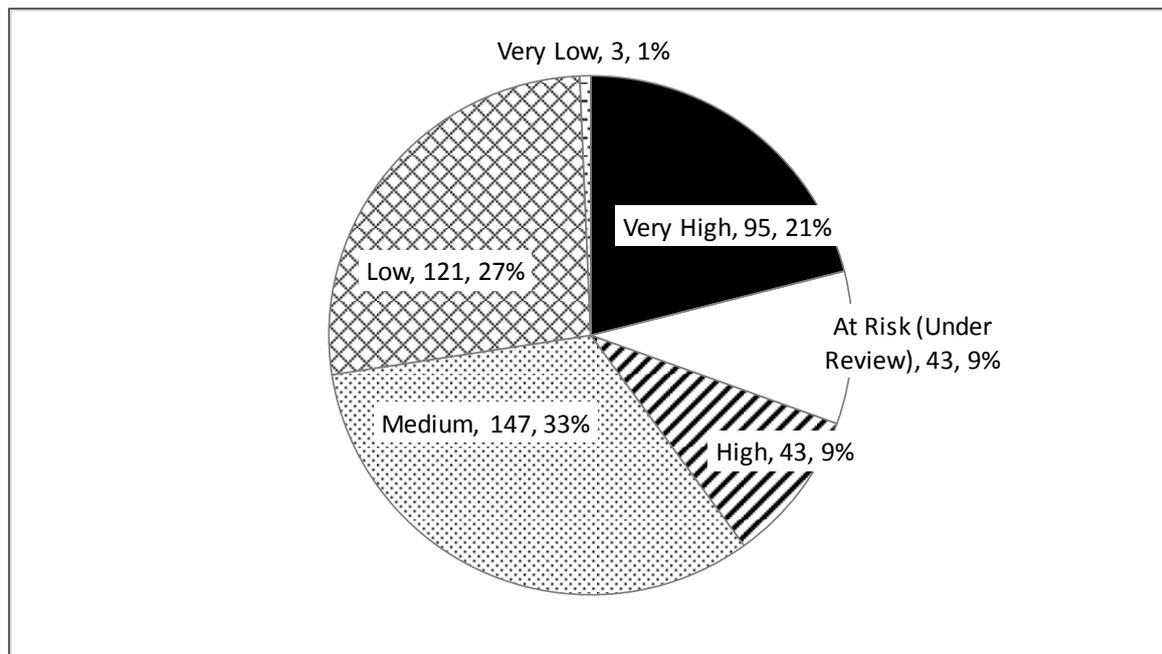
1,248 people answered the question “Do you make use of the concessionary bus pass scheme, which provides free off-peak travel? 742 (60%) responded that they hold an older person’s bus pass, and 36 (3%) hold a disabled persons’ bus pass. The other respondents do not hold a bus pass or prefer not to say.

Chart Table 4.10 Chart 4.11 and Table 4.12 show bus pass holders by the risk category of the bus they most frequently use.

Table 4.10

Risk category of bus used most frequently	No	Prefer not to say	Yes, I hold a disabled persons' bus pass	Yes, I hold an older persons' bus pass	Total
Very High	95	3	5	143	246
At Risk (Under Review)	43	3	1	31	78
High	43	2	2	102	149
Medium	147	4	13	218	382
Low	121	4	14	240	379
Very Low	3	2	1	8	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>742</b>	<b>1248</b>

Chart 4.11: Risk categories of the buses most frequently used by those holding an older persons bus pass



**Q3 Thinking about the subsidised bus service you use most frequently, how often do you travel by this service?**

Of the 1,633 respondents who answered Q3, the majority (1,216, 74%) use the bus services at least every week, and in many cases several times a week or daily.

Chart 4.12: How often respondents travel on the bus service that they use most frequently

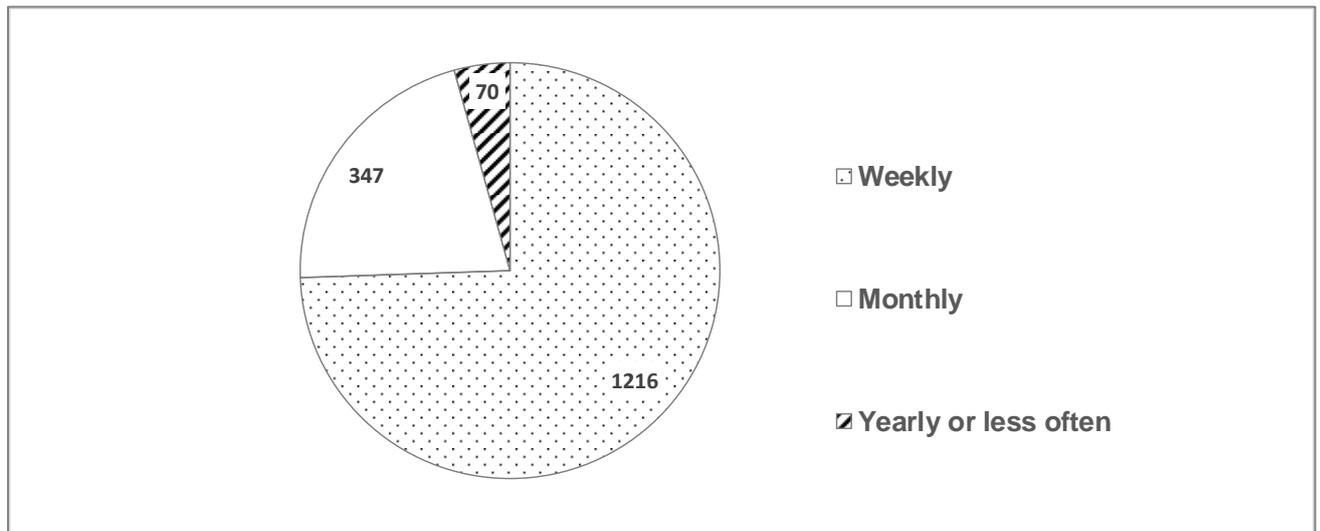


Table 4.13: Frequency of use by all frequency categories used in the feedback form

Q3 frequency of use categories	Respondents	%
Every day	230	14%
Three or more times a week	524	33%
Once or twice a week	462	27%
Less than once a week but more than twice a month	211	13%
Twice a month	136	8%
Once or twice a year	65	4%
Less often	5	0%
Total	1,633	100%

Table 4.14 shows that higher numbers of respondents aged over 65 reported weekly or more frequent use of their bus service. Significant numbers of respondents with access to a car also use the bus (Table 4.15).

Table 4.14: Frequency of use by age

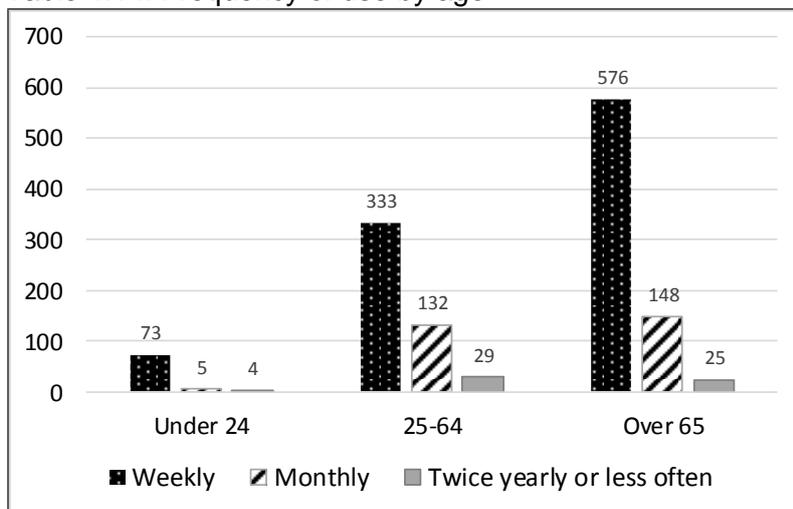
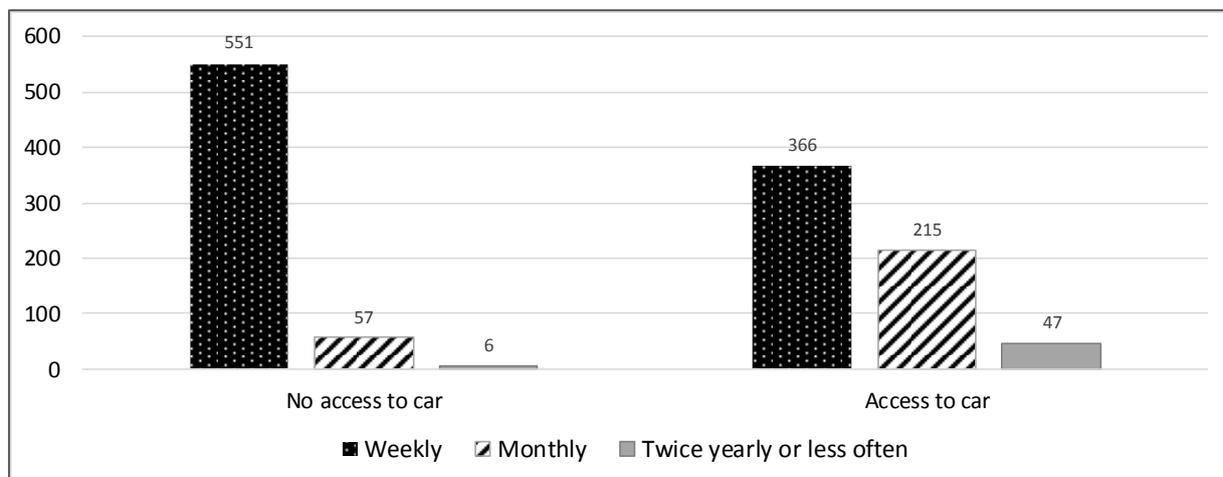


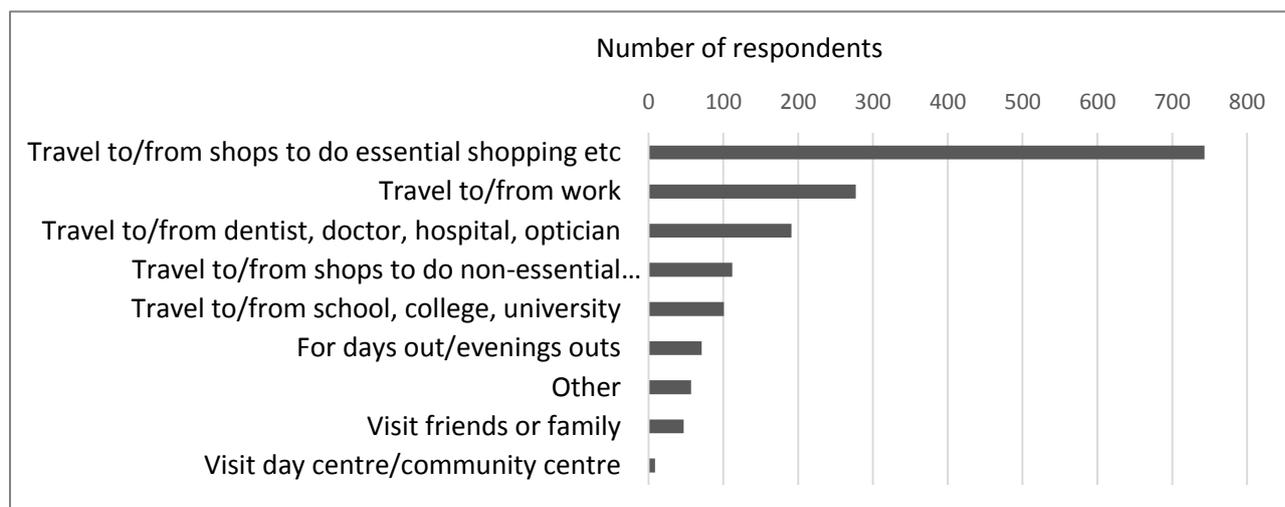
Table 4.15: Frequency of bus usage by access to a car



**Q4a What is the main reason for using this service?**

Trips for essential shopping and appointments is the most frequently stated reason for using the bus service (743 respondents, which is 46% of those who responded to this question).

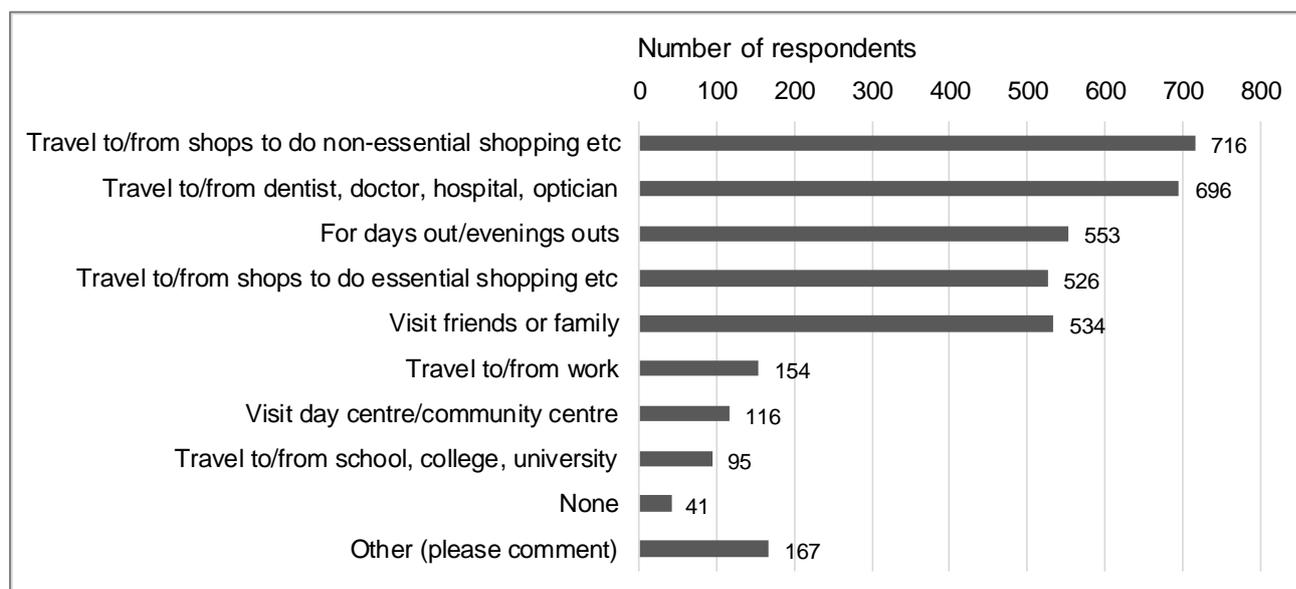
Chart 4.16: Main reason for using the bus service



**Q4b Please highlight any other reasons why you make use of this bus service.**

1,461 respondents had additional reasons why they use the bus service and 1,298 of these gave multiple additional reasons, showing a wide range of uses. Non-essential shopping (716, 49% of those responding to this question) and travel to medical appointments (696, 48%) were the most frequently stated additional reasons for using the bus.

Chart 4.17: Additional reasons for using the bus service



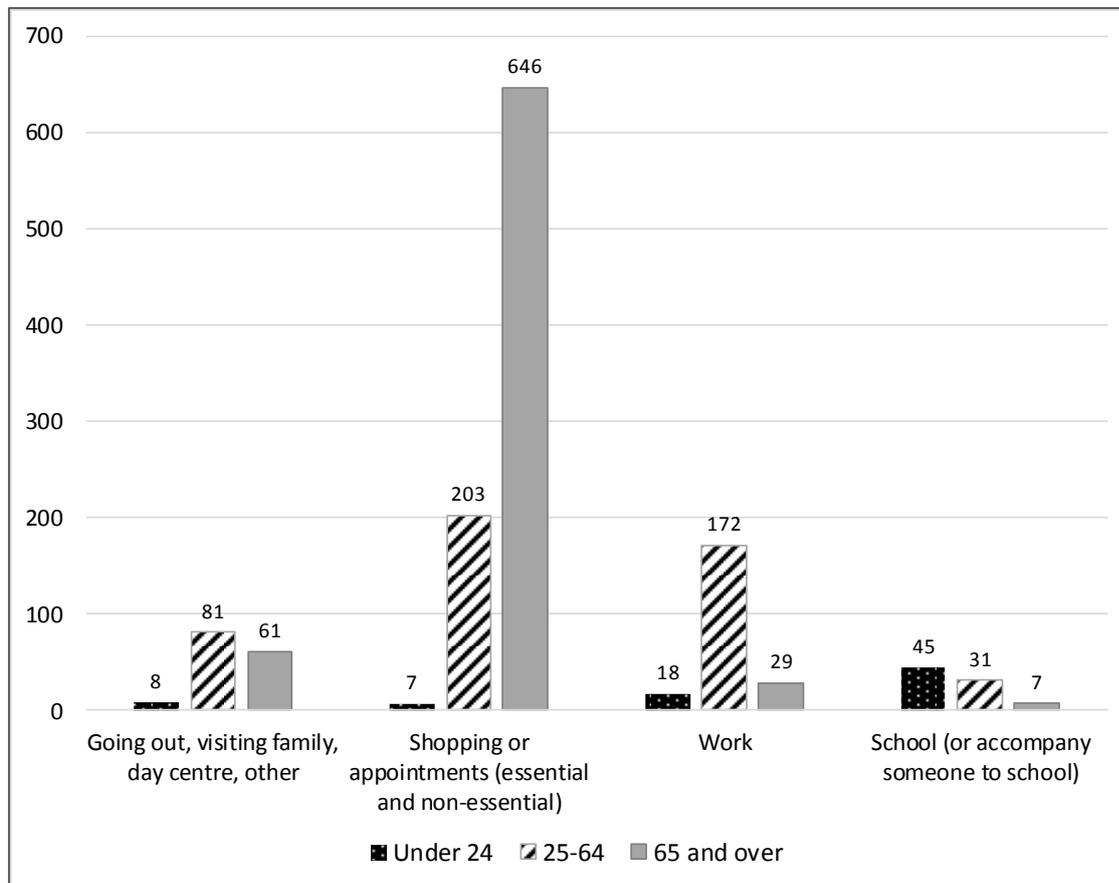
The comments given for “other” reasons showed that many people use the bus to access a wide range of facilities from their church, to museums, hospitals, schools, parks, and leisure facilities (76 comments). Another comment was that the subsidised buses provide links to the wider rail and bus networks for reaching other places in the county and nationally (44 comments). Others commented that the bus was necessary to access voluntary or paid work (11), or for caring responsibilities (13). Choosing an environmentally friendly mode of travel was another reason cited by a few respondents (5).

Chart 4.18: Other reasons for using the bus service

Other reasons (from comments)	Total
Access to rail/bus networks	44
Access to sports, faith, educational, medical, cultural or commercial facilities	76
Access to voluntary or paid work	11
Caring responsibilities	13
Environmentally friendly travel	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>149</b>

Chart 4.19 below shows that older people, in particular, need to use their bus service for essential food shopping, banking and appointments and that many people across working age categories use their bus service to travel to work.

Chart 4.19: Use of bus service by age group

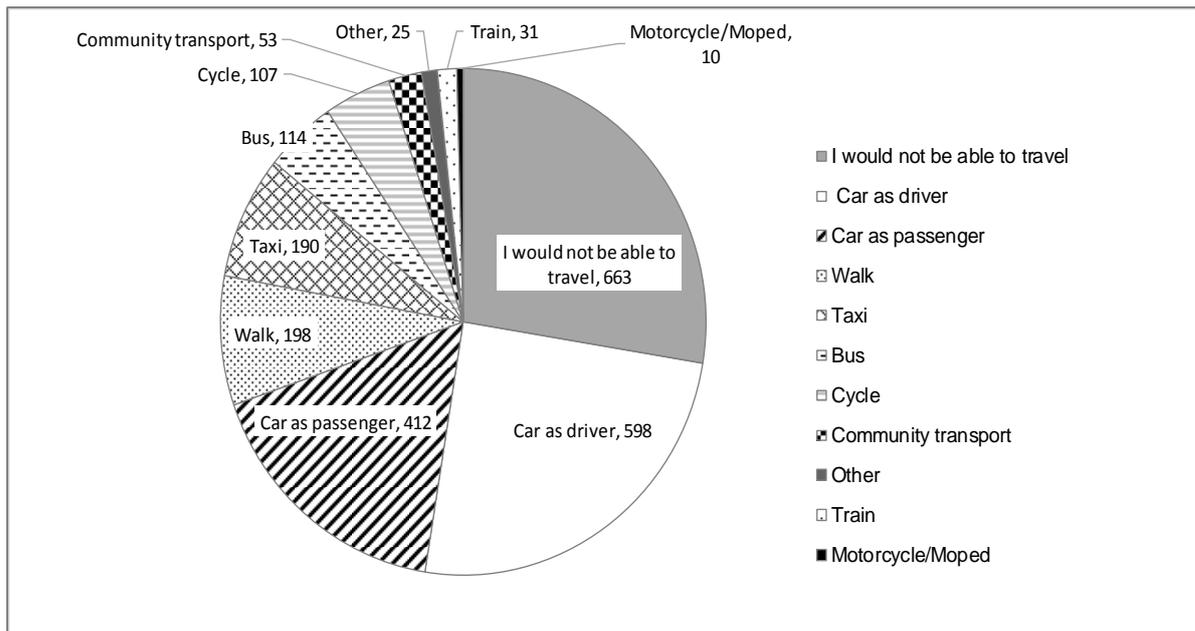


**Q5 If the bus service/stop you use was withdrawn, how would you travel?**

1,598 respondents answered this question, noting how likely or unlikely they would be to use alternative forms of transport if their subsidised services were to be withdrawn. 6 respondents did not fill out the table but added a comment (1,604 respondents in total). The majority (88%) of these respondents ticked more than one alternative mode of transport.

The largest proportion of respondents (663, 41% of the respondents who answered this question) stated that they would be very likely or fairly likely to be unable to travel. The next most common response was from people who reported that they would be likely to drive a car (598, 37%).

Chart 4.20: Likely alternative modes of travel



Combining those who would drive a car with those who would get a lift in a car, in total 896 respondents (56%) would be either very likely or fairly likely to use a car as their alternative mode of transport if their subsidised bus service was withdrawn – note that this takes into account the fact that some respondents ticked both categories.

Later in the feedback form, 25% of respondents answering this question (676) stated that they do not have access to or own a car/vehicle and 33% said they do have access to a car (868). Chart 4.21 shows the responses to Q17 on access to a car

Chart 4.21

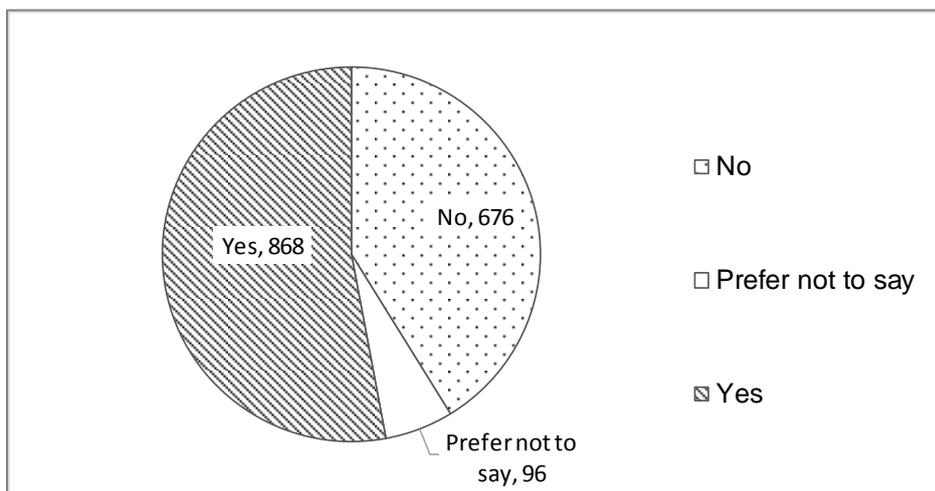
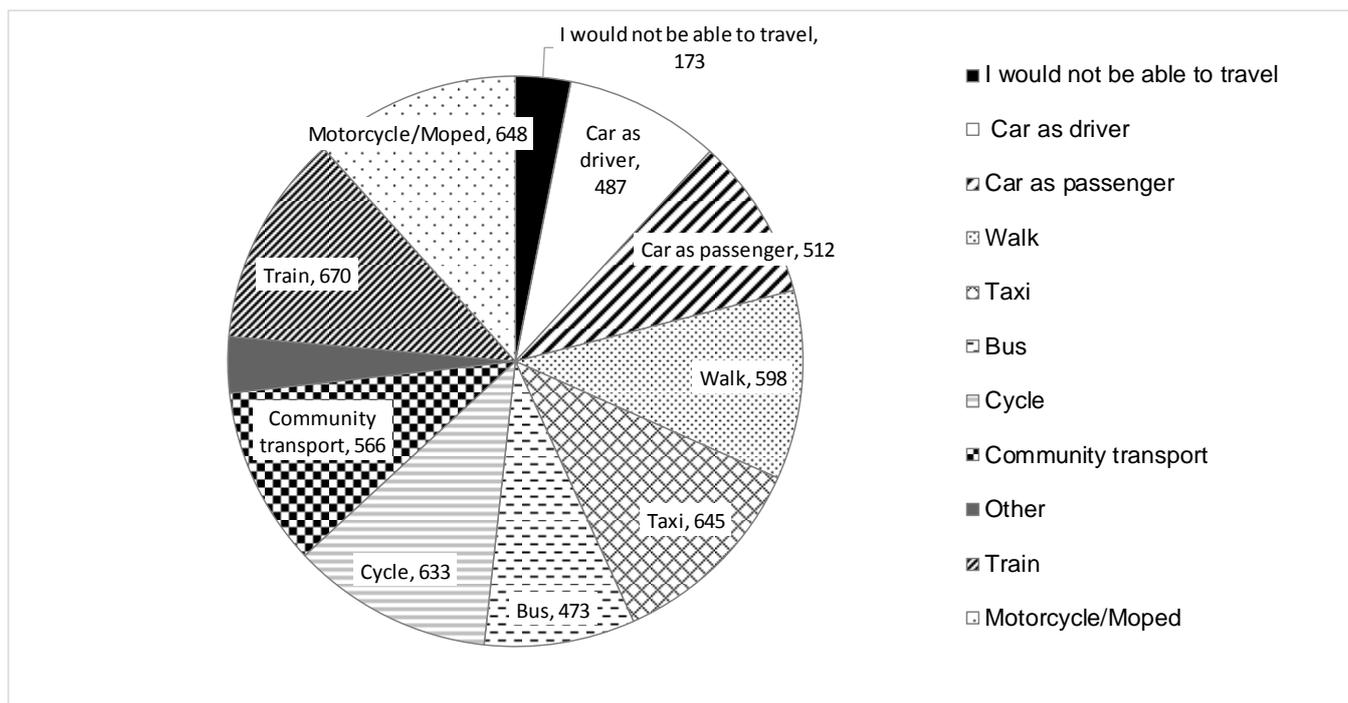


Chart 4.22: Unlikely alternative modes of travel



Many respondents to this question would be unlikely or very unlikely to use a taxi or there is no local service (645, 40%), walk (598, 37%), cycle (633, 39%) or use a motorcycle or moped (648, 40%). 640 respondents (40%) would be unlikely or very unlikely either to use a car either as driver or as a passenger – note that this takes into account the fact that some respondents ticked both categories.

670 respondents (42%) would either be unlikely to use the train or there is no local train service, and 473 (29%) would either be unlikely to use an alternative bus service or there is no other local bus service.<sup>2</sup>

Cross-tabulations were used to assess the alternative modes of transport that would be likely or unlikely for respondents in different age-groups. More of the older respondents 64 to 75+ would be likely not be able to travel, 64-74 year olds would be likely to use a car, and more older people are “not at all likely” to walk than the other age-groups.<sup>3</sup> The cross-tabulation of alternative modes of transport against access to a car shows that many more of those without a car report that they would be unable to travel if their bus service were withdrawn. Nearly half of those who do have access to a car report that they are “very likely” or “fairly likely” to drive.

**Q6 Which of the County Council’s two proposals for achieving savings from subsidised bus services do you prefer?**

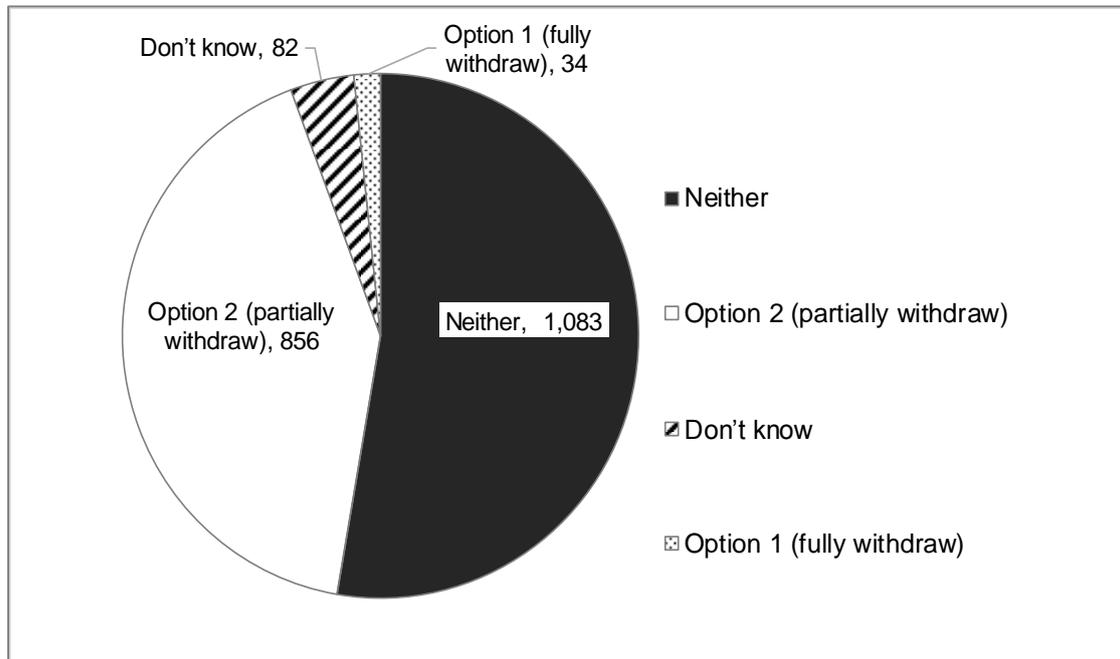
77% of respondents (2,055) answered this question. The most frequent preferred option was “Neither” 1,083 respondents which is 53% of those who answered this question. Most of those who chose an option preferred Option 2 (to partially withdraw subsidies from the

<sup>2</sup> Note, the 477 hard copy responses did not have “bus” as an option in this question on the feedback form, but bus was included as an option on the online form.

<sup>3</sup> The detailed cross-tabulation results by age-group against degrees of likelihood of using different modes of transport are reported as the small numbers at that level of detail mean the results are not statistically significant.

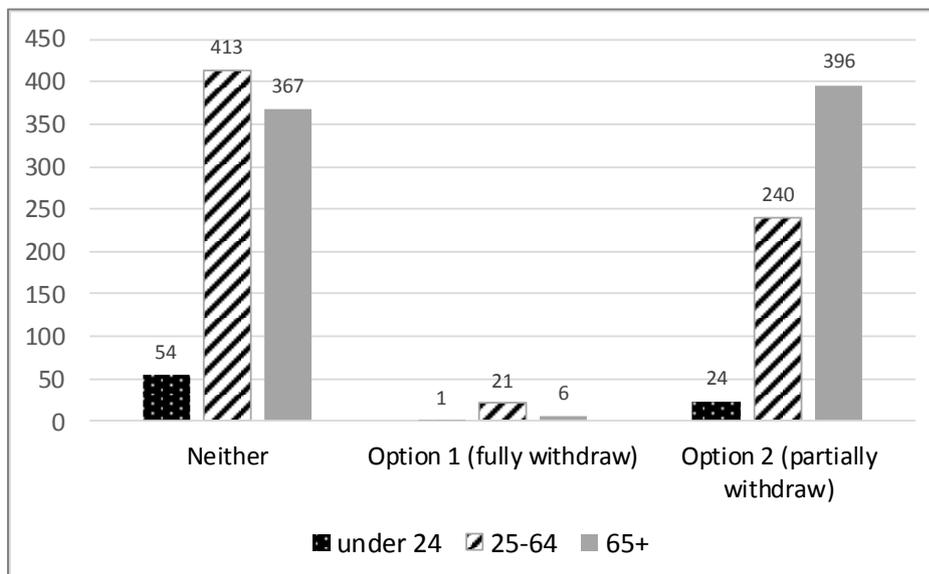
subsidised bus services), 856 respondents or 42%. 34 respondents (2%) selected Option 1 as their preferred option, and 82 (4%) selected “Don’t know”.

Chart 4.23, the preferred approach for achieving savings from subsidised bus services.



The age break-down of respondents shows a slight majority of people aged 25-64 selecting “Neither” (413, 50% of respondents selecting “Neither”) and more people aged 65 and older selecting Option 2 (partial withdrawal) (396, 47%) than other age-groups.<sup>4</sup>

Chart 4.24 Age profile of respondents choosing each option



<sup>4</sup> Option 1 is included in the chart for completeness but the number of respondents is too small (34) to draw any conclusions.

Respondents were asked for the reasons behind their choices. 1,244 respondents commented in this section.

Of the 1,083 respondents who chose “Neither”:

- The largest group (480, 44% of those choosing “Neither”) cited impacts on local people from inconvenience, to the difficulty of getting to school, work or appointments, to loss of a life-line and isolation of elderly people.
- Others (94 respondents, 9%) cited concerns over adverse social, community or environmental impacts.
- The next largest groups of respondents (76, 7%) stated that there should be no cuts to subsidies, the council should find another way such as raising taxes, finding efficiency savings elsewhere, advertising on buses, or getting commercial operators to subsidise bus routes.
- Other comments by respondents selecting “Neither” were requests to retain specific services or services for particularly vulnerable groups such as the elderly and disabled (3%).
- Some respondents who chose “Neither” commented that if cuts absolutely must be made, then they would accept that Option 2 is preferable (fewer than 1%).
- Similar numbers (1%) were bus pass holders willing to pay partial fares in order to retain subsidised services that are vital to them.

The numbers selecting Option 1 (full withdrawal) were small (34 in total) and 17 comments were made that related to:

- Allowing the market to work
- The necessity for cuts.

Of the 856 respondents selecting Option 2 (partial withdrawal):

- The largest group commented that a reduced service was preferable to none at all, in some cases assuming that partial withdrawal would be applied equally across all services (244, 29% those choosing “Option 2”).
- Many comments were requests to retain specific services or services for particularly vulnerable groups such as the elderly and disabled (209, 24%).
- Others emphasised that they chose Option 2 only as a last resort if there was no way to avoid cuts to subsidies (4%).
- Again a small number of respondents (1%) were bus pass holders willing to pay partial fares in order to retain subsidised services that are vital to them.
- A similar number (1%) offered suggestions to avoid cutting the subsidies.

Chart 4.25 shows the age profile of respondents for the main categories of comments.

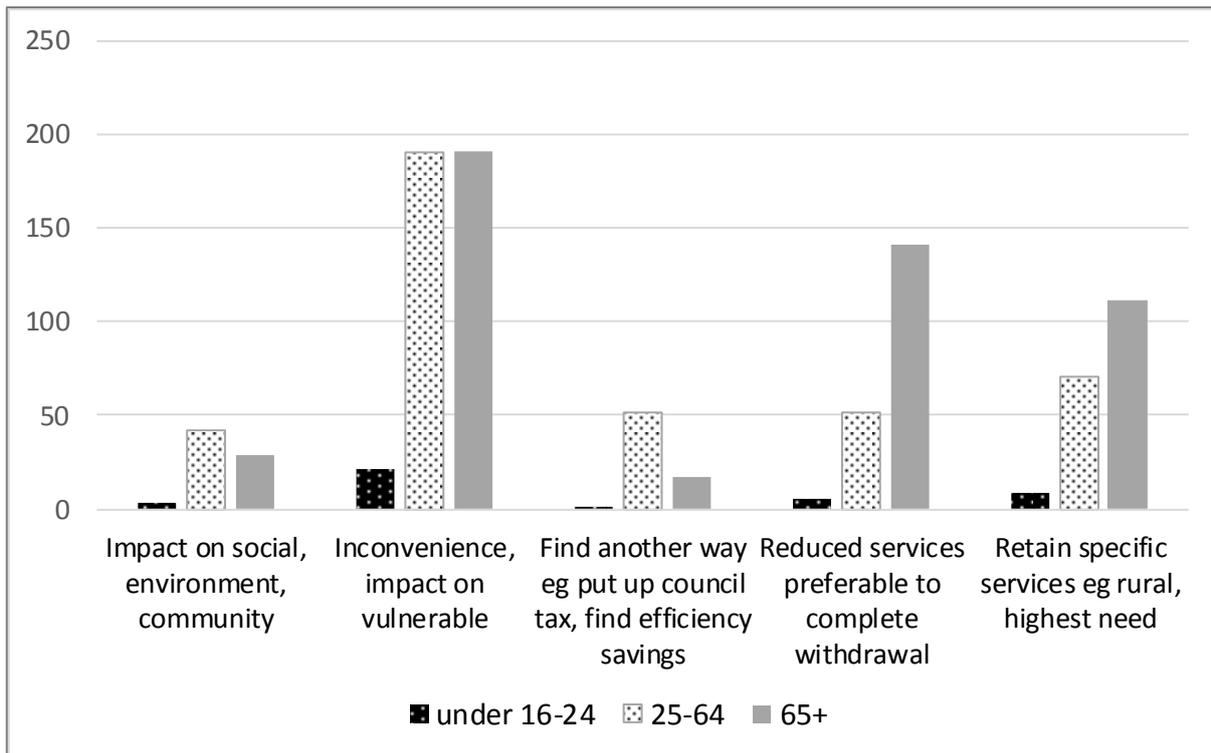
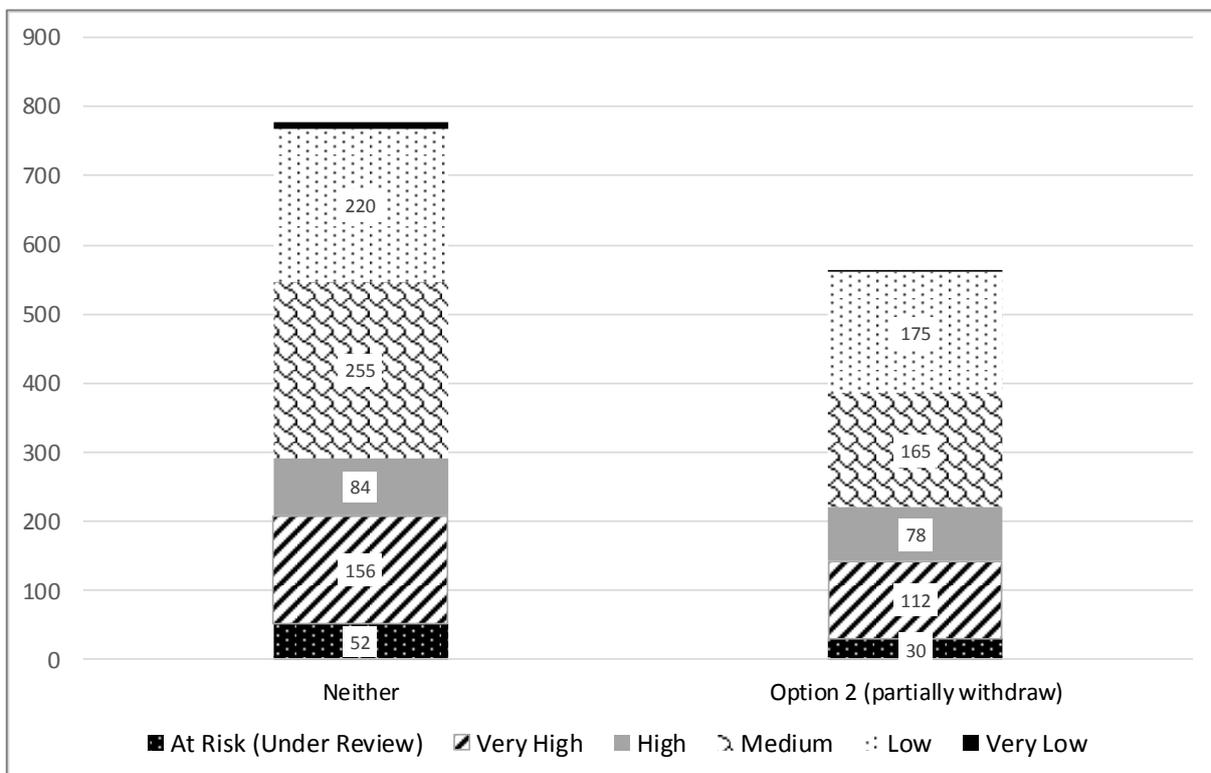
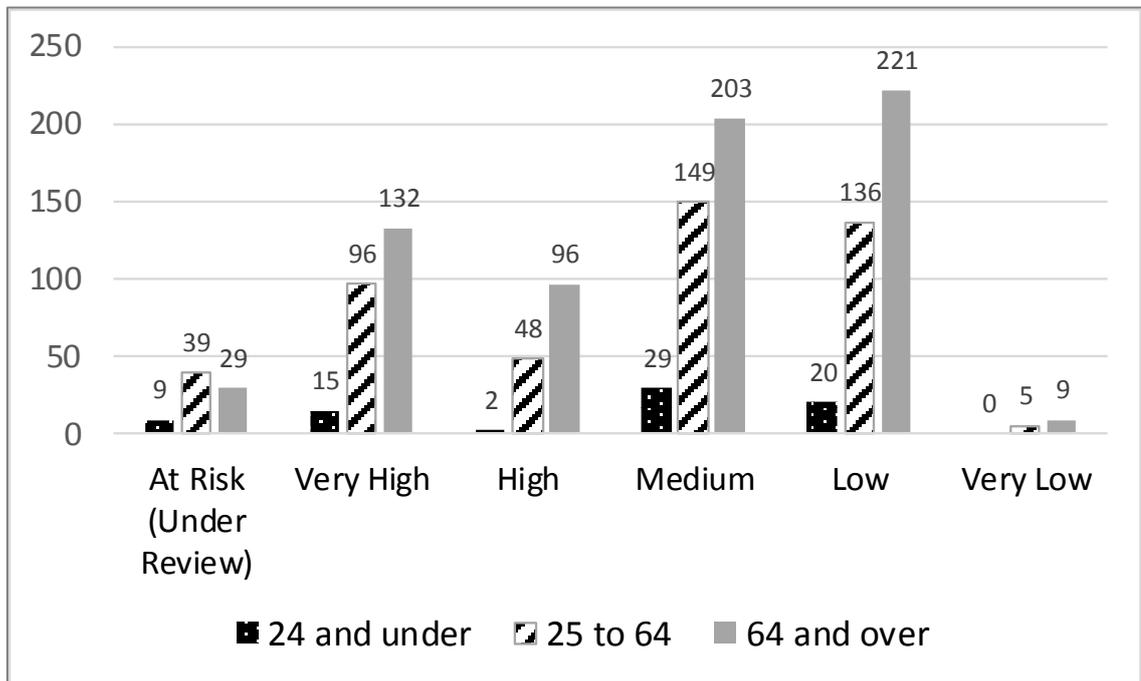


Chart 4.26 shows the numbers of respondents choosing “Neither” or “Option 2” by category of risk for the bus service that they use most frequently



Option 1 numbers are too small (6) to show in this cross tabulation.

Chart 4.27 shows the age-group of respondents by category of risk for the bus service that they use most frequently



**Q7 What are your views on our preferred approach for Option 2 of prioritising subsidised bus services which are most likely to be used by older people and people with disabilities, who have free bus passes which allow them to travel off-peak?**

1,921 respondents answered this question. Just under half of these (47%) agree with Oxfordshire County Council's preferred approach and another 20% are neutral (Chart 4.28). One quarter of respondents disagree with the approach. More people aged over 65 agree with the Council's preferred approach to implementing Option 2 than any other age-group (chart 4.29).

Chart 4:28: Responses to the Council's preferred approach for implementing Option 2

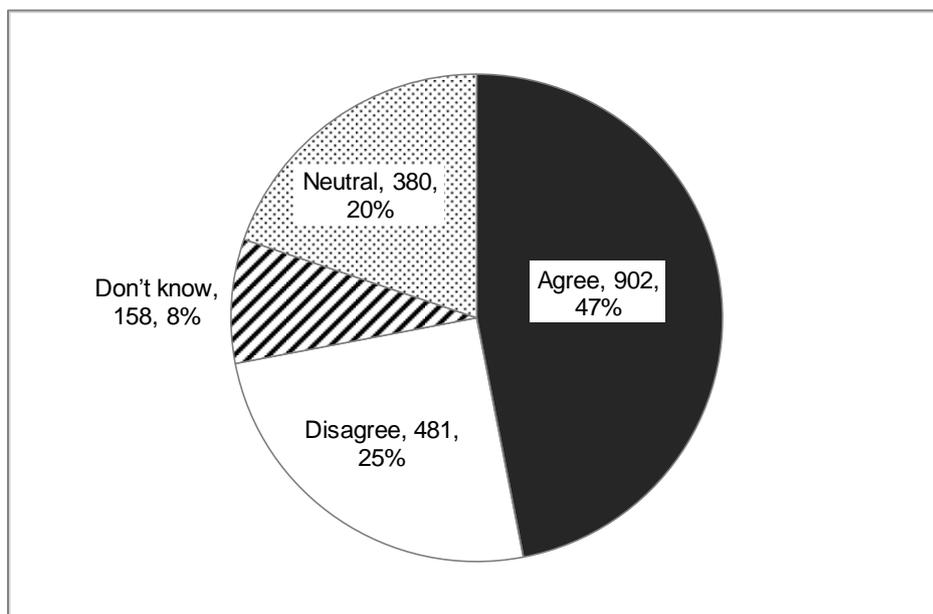
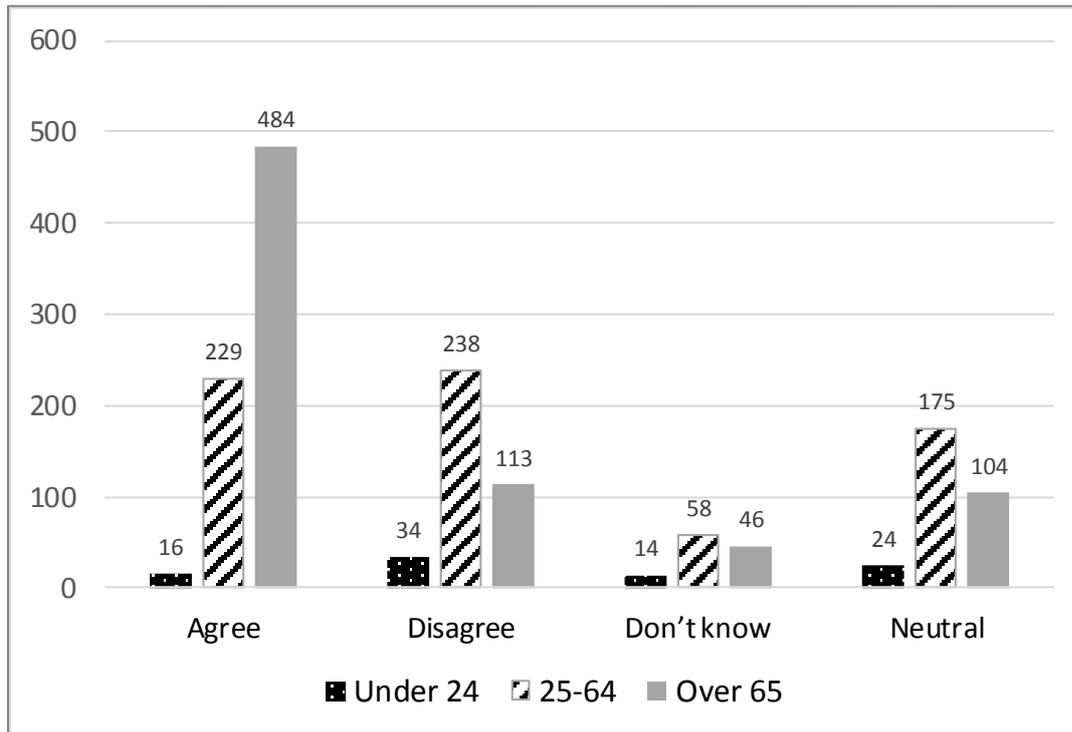


Chart 4.29: Responses to the Council's preferred approach by age-group



Respondents were asked for comments on whether they agree, are neutral, disagree or don't know with question 7. Out of the 1,921 who responded to the main part of question 7, 978 added comments. 46 of these comments were "no", "n/a", "-", or "see above", leaving 932 substantive comments.

Of those who commented, 397 (47%) chose "Agree". Their comments, categorised into key themes, were:

- The largest group (180, 19% of all who commented) stated that although they agree with the approach, they have concerns about the impacts on vulnerable people generally, effects on rural areas, and in particular the impacts on the elderly, disabled, and those without a car.
- A further 90 comments (10%) stated support of the preferred approach without concerns.
- Others (54 respondents, 6%) made comments about their dependence on specific bus routes, concerns about their main service, or offered ideas about how these services could be reduced but still retained.
- The next largest group of respondents (30, 3%), although they ticked "Agree" with the proposals, in their comments stated that the council should not cut subsidies for bus services but find another way such as finding efficiency savings elsewhere.
- There were also concerns over the impacts on things related to the economy (23, 2%), including bus services for those need to commute to jobs, or get to school or college, and concerns about future services in areas where housing is expanding.

- Other comments by respondents selecting “Agree” were :
  - Some felt that priorities should be set based on the needs of the whole community (11 comments), not just the elderly or disabled
  - A very few noted concerns about the impacts on the environment and traffic congestion (4); and
  - A few commented on the analysis used to reach the preferred option (4 negative, 1 positive)

Of those who chose “Disagree” 332 added comments (36%). Their comments, categorised into key themes, were:

- The largest set of comments (94, 10% of all who commented) were concerns over the impacts on things related to the economy, including bus services for those who need to commute to jobs, or get to school or college, and concerns about future services in areas where housing is expanding.
- The next largest group of respondents (68, 7%) stated that the council should not cut subsidies for bus services but find another way such as finding efficiency savings elsewhere
- The next main set of concerns (47, 5%) was about the impacts on vulnerable people generally, effects on rural areas, and in particular the impacts on the elderly, disabled, and those without a car.
- The same number (47, 5%) commented that priorities should be set based on the needs of the whole community (11 comments), not just the elderly or disabled
- There were also comments about specific bus routes (33 comments), concerns about the analysis used to reach the preferred option (15 comments), concerns about the impacts on the environment generally or traffic congestion (10), and some (4) who were unclear, had insufficient information or were not happy with the consultation process
- Some comments (10) were in favour of removing subsidies, seeing the necessity of cuts, and letting the market work.
- A few others (7) generally supported the preferred approach, although they ticked “disagree”, because they wanted to add specific caveats for example “It is the better of the 2 options, but there must be buses every day of the week”.

Of those who chose “Neutral” 163 added comments (17%). Their comments, categorised into key themes, were:

- The largest set of comments (49, 5% of all who commented) were concerns over the impacts on things related to the economy, including bus services for those who need to commute to jobs, or get to school or college, and concerns about future services in areas where housing is expanding.
- The next main set of concerns (31, 3%) was about the impacts on vulnerable people generally, effects on rural areas, and in particular the impacts on the elderly, disabled, and those without a car.
- The next largest group of respondents (30, 3%) stated that the council should not cut subsidies for bus services but find another way such as finding efficiency savings elsewhere
- Others (19) generally supported the preferred approach, although they ticked “neutral”.
- Others (14, 5%) commented that priorities should be set based on the needs of the whole community (11 comments), not just the elderly or disabled
- Some commented on a specific bus route (6) and some had concerns about the impacts on the environment (4)

- A few commented on the analysis used to reach the preferred option (3 negative); lack of information (5), or were not happy with the consultation process (2)

The comments of those who chose “don’t know” (40 comments) are in small numbers so are not summarised by theme.

Table 4.30

<b>Question 7 comments: key themes</b>	<b>Number of comments</b>
Impacts on vulnerable, rural areas, elderly, disabled, those without a car	263
Impacts on access to jobs, school, areas where housing is expanding, the economy	177
Find ways to support this service or alternatives	137
Support the preferred approach	116
Comments about a specific bus route	96
Priorities should be set based on the needs of the whole community	75
Comments about the analysis	24
Impacts on the environment	15
Unclear or unsure, insufficient information	12
Remove subsidies, let the market work	10
Not happy with the process used	6
Analysis is well done	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>932</b>

**Q8 If you disagree, do you prefer one of the alternative approaches for prioritising subsidised bus services we set out in the consultation documents or do you have an alternative suggestion of your own?**

As part of Q8, respondents who disagreed with the Council’s preferred approach were asked whether they agreed with one of the alternative approaches for prioritising subsidised bus services which were set out in the consultation document. 1,090 respondents answered this question. Of these 316 (29%) said “Yes” and 771 (71%) said “No”. 495 respondents included comments expanding on their answer. 75 of these comments were “no”, “n/a”, “-“, or “see above” leaving 420 substantive comments which are summarised

Of those who commented, 245 (58%) chose “Yes”. Their comments, categorised into key themes, were:

- The largest group (206, 49% of all who commented) stated that the council should not cut subsidies for bus services but find another way such as finding efficiency savings elsewhere.
- A further 22 comments (5%) were made on stated dependence on specific bus routes, concerns about their main service, or offered ideas about how these services could be reduced but still retained.
- A few (7, 2%) commented on the analysis used to reach the preferred option
- And a few (6, 1%) commented on concerns about the impacts on vulnerable people generally, effects on rural areas, and in particular the impacts on the elderly, disabled, and those without a car.

Of those who chose “No” 175 (42%) added comments. Their comments, categorised into key themes, were:

- The largest group (107, 25% of all who commented) stated that the council should not cut subsidies for bus services but find another way such as finding efficiency savings elsewhere.
- The next main set of concerns (27, 6%) was about the impacts on vulnerable people generally, effects on rural areas, and in particular the impacts on the elderly, disabled, and those without a car.
- A further 25 comments (6%) were made on stated dependence on specific bus routes, concerns about their main service, or offered ideas about how these services could be reduced but still retained.
- A few (10, 2%) commented on the analysis used to reach the preferred option.

Table 4.31

<b>Question 8 comments: Key themes</b>	<b>Number of comments</b>
Find ways to support this service or alternatives	383
Comments about a specific bus route	56
Impacts on vulnerable, rural areas, elderly disabled, children, those without a car	29
Comments about the analysis	20
Impacts on vulnerable, rural areas, elderly disabled, children, those without a car	8
Unclear or unsure, insufficient information	6
Not happy with the process used	3
Remove subsidies, let the market work	3
Community alternatives are unrealistic, cannot work for everyone	1
Not happy with the consultation process used	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>510</b>

### **Q9 Please give your views on the impacts identified. Have we missed anything?**

OCC asked respondents to look at the Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA) and give their views on the impacts identified. This was an open question and 681 people commented. 134 of these comments were “no”, “n/a”, “-”, or “see above” leaving 547 substantive comments which are summarised

Their comments, categorised into key themes, were:

- The largest set of comments (155, 28% of all who commented) was about the impacts on vulnerable people generally, effects on rural areas, and in particular the impacts on the elderly, disabled, and those without a car.
- The next main set of concerns (87, 16%) were made on stated dependence on specific bus routes, concerns about their main service
- The next largest group of respondents (74, 14%) commented on the analysis used to reach the preferred options.
- 59 (11%) of respondents stated their concerns over impacts on jobs, access to school, areas where housing is expected to increase and the economy.
- 45 (8%) or respondents commented that the council should not cut subsidies for bus services but find another way such as finding efficiency savings elsewhere.

- Others (40, 7%) commented that there was unclear or insufficient information available or they were unsure about what to think.
- Some commented (32, 6%) that they agreed with the consultation and the analysis used.

Table 4.32

<b>Question 9 comments: Key themes</b>	<b>Number of comments</b>
Impacts on vulnerable, rural areas, elderly, disabled, those without a car	155
Comments about a specific bus route	87
Comments about the analysis	74
Impacts on access to jobs, school, areas where housing is expanding, the economy	59
Find ways to support this service or alternatives	45
Unclear or unsure, insufficient information	40
Analysis is well done	32
Impacts on environment	28
Not happy with the process used	17
Community alternatives are unrealistic, cannot work for everyone	6
Preferred approach to Option 2 is acceptable	3
Remove subsidies, let the market work	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>547</b>

#### **Q10 Do you have any other comments on the proposed service changes options for subsidised bus services set out in the consultation document?**

OCC asked respondents for further comments on the proposed changes. 712 respondents made comments, of which 148 were “no”, “n/a”, “-”, or “see above” leaving 564 substantive comments which are summarised

Their comments, categorised into key themes, were:

- The largest group (197, 35% of all who commented) stated that the council should not cut subsidies for bus services but find another way such as finding efficiency savings elsewhere.
- Next largest set of comments (155, 28%) stated dependence on specific bus routes, concerns about their main service, or offered ideas about how these services could be reduced but still retained.
- 90 (16%) respondents comments were based on their concerns about the impacts on vulnerable people generally, effects on rural areas, and in particular the impacts on the elderly, disabled, and those without a car.
- 40 (7%) of respondents stated their concerns over impacts on jobs, access to school, areas where housing is expected to increase and the economy.

Table 4.33

<b>Question 10 comments: Key themes</b>	<b>Number of comments</b>
Find ways to support this service or alternatives	197
Comments about a specific bus route	155
Impacts on vulnerable, rural areas, elderly, disabled, those without a car	90
Impacts on access to jobs, school, areas where housing is expanding, the economy	40
Not happy with the process used	23
Impacts on the environment	21
Comments about the analysis	19
Unclear or unsure, insufficient information	8
Community alternatives are unrealistic, cannot work for everyone	4
Remove subsidies, let the market work	3
Analysis is well done	2
Support preferred approach	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>564</b>

### Dial a Ride Service - survey questions and analysis<sup>5</sup>

#### Q11a Do you use Dial a Ride?

There were 1,878 responses to the question "Do you use Dial A Ride?) and only 49 of these are Dial-A-Ride users, 5 of whom use Oxford Aspire's Dial-A-Ride service.

Table 4.34

Do you use Dial A Ride?	Numbers of respondents
Yes	44
Yes, the Oxford Aspire Dial a Ride service	5
No	1,829

ORCC offered telephone support to all Dial a Ride users to complete the consultation and ten contacted ORCC. Their views have been included in the analysis below. Three answered on behalf of Dial a Ride users.

#### Q11b How often do you travel using Dial a Ride service? And Q12a What is the main reason that you use the Dial a Ride service? Q12b Please select one main reason, and then highlight any other reasons why you use the Dial a Ride service.

The few respondents who answered this section of the feedback form are quite frequent users or were responding on behalf of those who are. 37 respondents answered the

<sup>5</sup> The numbers responding to the Dial A Ride section are very small so the responses cannot be taken to representative of the wider population of around 238 users of Dial A Ride.

question “How often do you travel using Dial a Ride service?” 24 of these use the service once or twice a week. The remaining respondents use it less often than this.

The main reasons given for using the Dial A Ride service are for weekly (i.e. large) supermarket shopping (6), to get to appointments such as the GP (1) and for interaction to avoid isolation (1). 16 respondents gave additional reasons for using Dial A Ride. The other reasons given were:

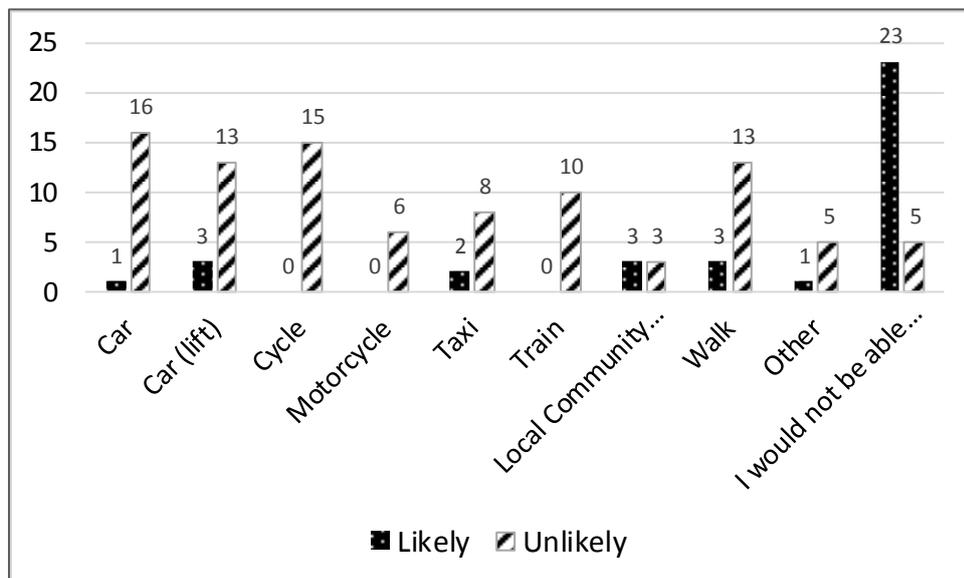
- for attending appointments e.g. dentist, chiropodist, hairdresser (5)
- for trips e.g. market days (7),
- to visit friends and family (7),
- or for days out (4).
- An added comment was use of Dial A Ride for social groups and support.

5 respondents use Dial A ride for two or more of these reasons.

**Q13 Thinking about the main reason you use Dial a Ride. If the Dial a Ride service was unavailable, how would you travel?**

38 respondents answered Q13. 23 respondents stated that they would not be able to travel and nearly all indicated that they would find it very difficult to find an alternative means of transport.

Chart 4.35

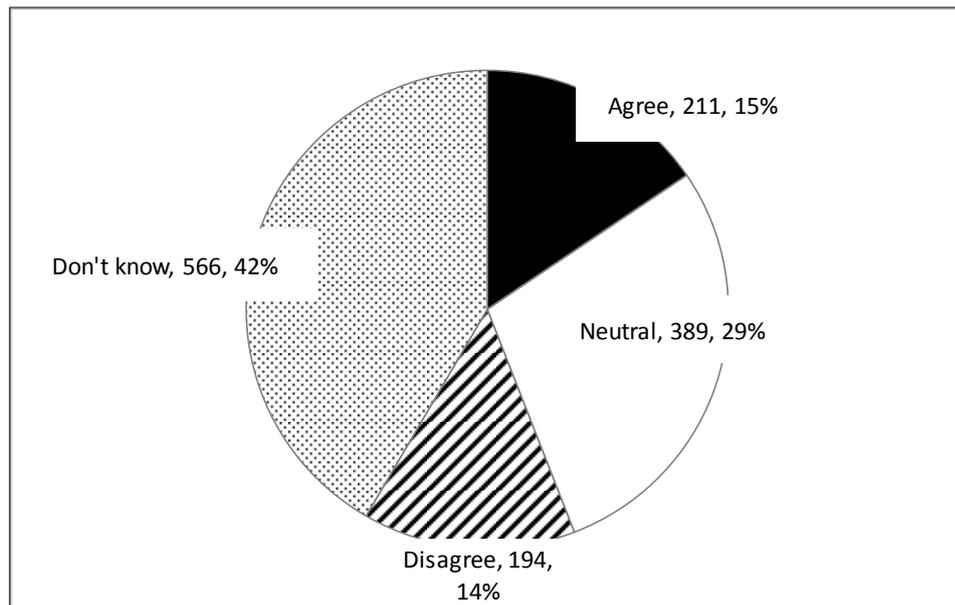


**Q14 What do you think of our proposal for Dial-a-Ride? To work with community transport groups across the county to try and develop schemes which can meet similar needs to those which Dial-a-Ride currently serves and to stop funding Dial-a-Ride.**

1,715 respondents answered Q14 on the proposals to withdraw the current dial a ride service, but to work with other community transport schemes to take on some or all of the service using pump prime funding.

15% agreed with withdrawing direct funding from Dial a Ride services a further 29% were neutral about the proposal. 14% disagreed and 42% responded don't know. As part of Q14 respondents were asked for their views, a text box below lists the key themes made.

Chart 4.36



Of the 1,715 respondents, 390 respondents made comments. 38 of these comments were “no”, “n/a”, “-”, or “see above” leaving 352 substantive comments which are summarised.

Their comments, categorised into key themes, were:

- The largest group (102, 29% of all who commented) stated that the council should not cut subsidies for bus services but find another way such as finding efficiency savings elsewhere.
- The next largest set of comments (92, 26%) agreed with the county council's alternative proposal.
- 70 (20%) of respondents felt unclear or unsure what Dial a Ride was as a service and did not feel they could comment further.
- 55 (16%) of the respondents commented on their concerns about the feasibility of community alternatives and the pressures of recruiting more volunteers.
- 15 (4%) of respondents stated that community transport schemes need support to do more, if they can do more.

Table 4.37

<b>Question 14 comments: Key themes</b>	<b>Number of comments</b>
Find ways to support this service or alternatives	102
Agree with dial a ride alternative	92
Unclear or unsure, insufficient information	70
Community alternatives are unrealistic, cannot work for everyone	55
Support community transport schemes	15
Not happy with the process used	9
Comments about a specific bus route	4
Impacts on vulnerable, rural areas, elderly, disabled , children, those without a car	3
Comments about access to the consultation and analysis	1
Mobility issues (people unable to walk 400 yards)	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>

**Q15 Please give your views on the impacts identified. Have we missed anything?  
And Q16 Do you have any other comments on the proposal for Dial a Ride as set out in the consultation document?**

In question 15, respondents were asked to look at the Service and Community Impact Study (SCIA) and give their views on the impacts identified under the Dial a Ride proposal. There were 299 responses, but many (150) were “no” “n/a” “ditto” or “see above” so have been included in the analysis of earlier questions. The 149 comments received under question 15 are presented together in the table below, with specific comments under each question summarised later in the section.

In question 16, Oxfordshire Count Council asked respondents for any further comments on the proposed changes to the Dial a Ride services. There were 303 responses, but many (217) were “no” “n/a” “ditto” or “see above” so have been included in the analysis of earlier questions. The 86 comments received under question 16 fell within similar categories and are presented together in the table below, with specific comments under each question summarised later in the section.

Table 4.38

Category of comment	Number of comments Q15	Number of comments Q16
Analysis is well-done	7	3
Community alternatives are unrealistic, cannot work for everyone	12	10
Find ways to support this service or alternatives	6	40
Mobility issues (people unable to walk 400 yards)	12	2
Not happy with the process used	8	7
Comments about a specific bus route	4	1
Unclear or unsure, insufficient information	38	5
Comments about the analysis	15	0
Impacts on vulnerable, rural areas, elderly disabled, children, those without a car	47	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>86</b>

## 5. Analysis: public meetings, emails and letters

5.1 This section sets out responses mentioned in emails, letters and the public meetings.

- A total of 236 **emails and letters** were received.
  - 184 private individuals
  - 40 town and parish councils (including Parish Transport Representatives)
  - 5 community organisations
  - 2 County councillors (Cllr Anne Purse and Cllr Keiron Mallon)
  - 2 bus providers
  - 2 bus users groups
  - 1 City councillor (Cllr Ed Turner)
- **275 people** attended the 5 public meetings
- The length and breadth of each response varied from a single sentence to 6 pages.
- A small number of responses were repeated by individuals and parish councils as proof of providing local views. Where justified, these have counted as one response.
- **7 petitions** were received in support of retaining services on the following routes:

B1	49 signatories
B2 and B1	35
A1	52
17	400 (by 17.9.15)
'Wychwood Villages' buses	80
277	121
Abingdon Town Service (41, 42 and 43)	25
A letter was received referring to a petition regarding the K1 and K2 buses. However, no actual petition had been received by the close of consultation.	

- A usage survey was also submitted by a user of the H1/ H2 route. The individual travelled on 18 individual journeys from 17.8 until 8.9.15. 127 individuals with some degree of walking difficulty and/ or a visual impairment were recorded as having travelled on these 18 occasions (avg. of 7 per journey).

**5.2** The following table highlights the **themes** that arose from analysis of emails and letters (236) and also comments (60) made in the recorded public meetings (296 in total). 515 total comments have been recorded.

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Summary of/ example comments</b>	<b>No. of references</b>
<p><b>Protect bus services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A lifeline</li> <li>- Provides social value</li> <li>- Impact on vulnerable people</li> <li>- Vital to elderly</li> <li>- Important to young people</li> <li>- Contrary to Local Authority and national government plans</li> <li>- Valuable community service</li> <li>- A necessity for getting to hospital; appointments; shopping</li> <li>- Reduce the ability to volunteer (esp. elderly)</li> </ul>	<p>The reasons given were in relation to the removal or reduction in bus subsidies on a particular route/s.</p>	<p>217 of 296 <b>73%</b></p>
<p><b>Seek creative solutions to maintain services</b></p>	<p>Conversations over individual bus services should take place to discuss combining routes, changing routes or extending and enhancing routes, rather than withdrawing them altogether. This was particularly highlighted in the Abingdon North (41,42 and 43 service), which included a petition to both keep the service and include a stop by Tesco's; and in Southmoor / Cumnor, which sought to see changes to the 63 service</p>	<p>49 of 296 <b>16.5%</b></p>
<p><b>Peak and off-peak should be viewed equally</b></p>	<p>Many respondents felt that young people and working people would be penalised as they commonly use peak services</p>	<p>46 of 296 <b>15.5%</b></p>
<p><b>Increase in car use and emissions</b></p>	<p>The options were felt to be contrary to Local Authority and national government plans (carbon reduction targets etc.)</p>	<p>44 of 296 <b>15%</b></p>
<p><b>Willingness to pay more for fares</b></p>	<p>Look into how communities and the County Council can better support bus services and dial a ride. The most common suggestion was for people to pay half fares or full fares, if they can afford to, rather than use their concessionary pass. This 'paying a fare' was also mentioned for</p>	<p>31 of 296 <b>10.5%</b></p>

	Dial a Ride services	
<b>Plans do not take account of effect on economic growth/ productivity and tourism</b>	2 businesses in Hampton Gay & Poyle and Benson along with RAF Benson, highlighted the difficulty faced for many of their employees getting to work should the bus services be withdrawn	27 of 296 <b>9%</b>
<b>County Council methodology underpinning proposals</b>	There were multiple criticisms; lack of patronage data (who is using a particular service and why); options flawed; options too broad; methodology for prioritising services	19 of 296 <b>6.5%</b>
<b>Specific rural impact</b>	Reducing services in rural areas would increase isolation and reduce the sustainability of villages	18 of 296 <b>6%</b>
<b>consultation process</b>	The consultation process was not user-friendly; had inadequate publicity; should have prioritised hard copy responses to the survey and not be so focused on online responses. Also, more than 6 public meetings should have been held	14 of 296 <b>5%</b>
<b>More account needs to be taken of planned housing growth</b>	Bus demand will increase with new housing	14 of 296 <b>5%</b>
<b>Concern about the Dial-a-Ride service proposals</b>	DAR was seen as a lifeline and of important social value to vulnerable users	12 of 296 <b>4%</b>
<b>Service reductions preferable to removal of all subsidies</b>	Minimisation rather than full removal of subsidies was preferable. Services should be prioritised for the elderly and vulnerable	10 of 296 <b>3.5%</b>
<b>Investigate Community Transport solutions</b>	While some support was expressed by a few respondents it was qualified by concern over financial sustainability of CT schemes and concern over availability of volunteers to run a scheme	8 of 296 <b>3%</b>
<b>Willingness to pay more for Dial-a-Ride</b>	<i>See above</i>	6 of 296 <b>2%</b>

**5.3** 151 respondents (letter and email) wished to comment on specific services (251 in total). A table of all subsidised bus services has been drawn up based on the number of responses (each response per group or individual was counted as 1 mention). **As in section 4, the table cannot suggest that the bus service with the highest number of mentions can be considered more important than the bus services with little or no responses received.**

Service Number	Service Description	Option 2 Risk – may change check with OCC	Frequently used service by number of respondents
103	Oxford - Wheatley - Little Milton	Low	15 (6%)
104	Oxford - Cuddesdon	Low	15
25	Kidlington/Oxford - Bicester	Medium	14 (5.5%)
108	Oxford - Forest Hill - Stanton St. John (- Elsfield)	Medium	14
118	Oxford - Brill (- Bicester)	Medium	13 (5%)
17	Cuttleslowe - Oxford	Low	11 (4.5%)
25A	Oxford - Bicester	At Risk (Under Review <sup>2</sup> )	10 (4%)
139	Wallingford - Henley-on-Thames	Medium	9 (3.5%)
134	Goring - Stokes - Wallingford	Low	8 (3%)
40	High Wycombe - Thame	Very High	8
19	Carterton - Witney	Low	8
67	Wantage - Faringdon	Low	7 (2.5%)
18	Clanfield - Oxford	Low	6 (2%)
488	Chipping Norton - Banbury	Very High	6
63	Oxford - Cumnor - Southmoor	Medium	4 (1.5%)
280	Aylesbury - Oxford City Centre	Very High	4
213	Witney : Market Sq - Wood Green - Cogges - Market Sq (circular)	Low	3 (1%)
214	Witney : Market Square - Cogges - Wood Green - Market Square	Low	3
11	Witney - Oxford	Very High	3
S4	Banbury - Oxford	Very Low	3
X9	Witney - Charlbury - Chipping Norton	Low	3
67B	Wantage - Faringdon	Medium	3
215	Witney : Market Square - Smiths Estate - Market Square (circular)	High	3
W11	Woodstock - Bladon - Woodstock	High	3
X8	Kingham - Chipping Norton	High	3
S3	Chipping Norton - Oxford	Very High	3
B1	Easington - Banbury	High	3
B2	Bodicote - Banbury	Low	3
T1	Oxford - Garsington - Watlington	Very High	3
X15	Abingdon - Witney	Medium	3
121	Princes Risborough -	High	3

	Watlington		
277	Lighthorne Heath - Banbury	Medium	3
42	North Abingdon Town Service via College	Low	2 (<1%)
43	North Abingdon Town Service	At Risk (Under Review <sup>5</sup> )	2
41	North Abingdon Town Service anti-clockwise	Low	2
269	Banbury - Stratford upon Avon	Low	2
270	Banbury - Stratford upon Avon	Low	2
67C	Wantage - Faringdon	Medium	2
H2	Sandhills - Headington Quarry - Headington Centre	High	2
W12	Woodstock - Wootton - Woodstock	High	2
A1	(Didcot -) Ardington - Wantage - Ardington (- Didcot)	Medium	2
38	Wantage Town service	Low	2
H1	Old Marston - Headington	High	1
125	Chalgrove - Watlington - Benson - Wallingford	Very High	1
K2	Kidlington - Begbroke - Yarnton - Kidlington	High	1
K1	Kidlington Town service	High	1
154	Henley-on-Thames - Henley-on-Thames	Low	1
66	Faringdon - Oxford	Very Low	1
83	Wantage - Faringdon	Very Low	1
W10	Woodstock - Shipton on Cherwell - Kidlington - Woodstock	Medium	1
143	Reading-Upper Basildon-Whitchurch Hill-Reading	High	1
233	Burford - Woodstock	High	1
121	Princes Risborough - Watlington	High	1
X10	Wychwoods - Fulbrook - Burford	Very High	1
120	Princes Risborough, - Thame	Very High	1
811	Salford (Oxon) - Cheltenham (Gloucs)	Very High	1
135	Wallingford - Moulsoford - Streatley - Goring	Very High	1
K3	Kidlington - Yarnton - Begbroke - Kidlington	Very High	1
504	Honton - Horley - Banbury	High	1
20	Oxford: Rose Hill -Cowley [ Unipart House]	High	1
120	Princes Risborough - Thame	High	1
X2	Oxford – Abingdon Milton Park - Didcot	Very High	1
124	Thame - Wallington	Medium	1
85	Iffley - Cowley	High	1
90	Banbury - Deddington -	Medium	1

	Upper Heyford		
C1	Charlbury - Leafield (Oxon) - Wychwoods	Very High	1
136c	Wallingford - Cholsey - Wallingford	Very High	1
114	Wallingford - Abingdon	High	1
X1	Oxford- Didcot Harwell Campus - Wantage	Very High	1
94	Didcot - Blewbury - Hagbournes - Didcot	Low	1
95	Didcot - The Moretons - Blewbury - Didcot	Low	1
63	Oxford - Cumnor - Southmoor	Medium	1
275	Oxford City Centre - High Wycombe	Low	1

**5.4** 73% of 297 respondents to (email, letter and public meetings) were against potential cuts to their particular service and bus services as a whole. Most made a multi-faceted, locally-specific case for the retention of their service *as is*, with only 3.5% thinking service reductions were preferable to the removal of all subsidies. This is in marked contrast to the feedback survey, where 42% (856) of respondents agreed with Option 2 - to reduce the subsidies for buses by £2.3million.

**5.5** In summary, comments made via emails, letters and public meetings provided contrasting feedback to that reflected in the analysis of the feedback questionnaire. Respondents were far more likely to disagree with the proposals entirely.

**5.6** On the whole, comments made suggest that people feel that cutting services is short-sighted and that many communities and individuals are at risk of becoming isolated, with no obvious means to access essential services and / or work.

**5.7** Community transport, as a solution to removing subsidy for Dial-a-Ride, was mentioned occasionally in emails and letters but more often in public meetings and key stakeholder meetings. Concern was raised about the capacity of volunteer-based community transport schemes to be able to manage Dial a Ride services. There was also some concern over relying on pump prime funding and the difficulty of successfully running a viable Dial a Ride service without continuing support.

## 6. Analysis: detailed submissions

**6.1** This section provides a high level analysis of each of the detailed submissions. Each has been summarised and an overall summary of the key themes produced. We have defined 'detailed submissions' as communications that are longer than emails and letters and go into greater depth about several or most aspects of the topic.

- **13 detailed submissions**
  - Rail Future
  - Go Ride
  - Oxford City Council
  - South and Vale District Council
  - West Oxfordshire District Council
  - 1 Oxford City Councillor
  - 3 Oxfordshire County Councillors
  - Age UK Oxfordshire
  - Oxfordshire Rural Community Council
  - Witney parish Transport Representative
  - Oxford Bus Users Group
  
- Submissions varied from **1 page to 46 pages**.

**6.2** The following table collates responses from detailed submissions regarding the County Council proposals.

Theme	Summary of comments	No. of references
<b>Protection of bus services</b>	Every response that made direct reference to Option 1 was opposed (often strongly) to the removal of all subsidies	<b>8</b>
<b>Service reductions preferable to removal of all subsidies</b>	Minimisation rather than full removal of subsidies was preferable. However, there was general recognition that the impacts of any cuts on elderly and vulnerable residents should, in particular, should be mitigated	<b>7</b>
<b>Concern about the Dial-a-Ride service proposals</b>	In general, Dial-a-Ride was seen as a service that is important to some of the most vulnerable people in Oxfordshire. The sustainability of the Dial-a-Ride service in Oxford was a concern for the City Council. Age UK noted that when Dial-a-Ride was cut back in Cherwell older people found it 'much more difficult to get to shops, to see family to keep medical appointments...'. In addition to Age UK's views, Cherwell District Council made a	<b>6</b>

	<p>further point via email to OCC, where they highlighted the high level of DAR users and comparatively lower number of voluntary car schemes in the district, as a consequence of the current enhanced OCC Dial-a-Ride service which is funded by CDC. CDC were concerned that this could lead to a disproportionate negative impact on the district if the service is ceased, and that any available pump-prime funding should be awarded to schemes on the basis of need. This would mean areas which are most affected are given higher priority.</p> <p>West Oxfordshire District Council questioned the ability of voluntary sector to 'step in and replace the proposed withdrawal of Dial-a-Ride.'</p>	
<b>County Council methodology underpinning proposals</b>	<p>There were criticisms regarding the methodology. Some examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Better analysis needed of who uses the different bus services and an approach that better considers the economic impact (Oxford City Council)</li> <li>- Concern about the methodology of assessing and prioritising bus services (South and Vale and West Oxfordshire District Councils)</li> <li>- Wider definition needed of vulnerability (Bus Users Oxford)</li> <li>- Criticism over methodology used form identifying routes at risk (Go Ride)</li> </ul>	<b>5</b>
<b>Seek creative solutions to maintain services</b>	<p>Respondents had several suggestions. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Services currently provided by more than one vehicle be considered first for a reduction in frequency (Go Ride)</li> <li>- Start concessionary fares at 9.30 rather than 9 am (PTR representative)</li> <li>- Make better use of Section 106 funding (PTR representative)</li> <li>- Ensure connectivity with rail stations (Rail Future)</li> <li>- Improve the logistics of providing the Dial-a-Ride service by coordinating with VCS groups (OCC Councillor)</li> </ul>	<b>4</b>

<b>Specific rural impact</b>	It was felt that reduction or removal of services in rural areas would cause significant impact (South and Vale District Councillor, West Oxfordshire District Council) and that public transport was a necessity for certain residents (OCC Councillor).	<b>4</b>
<b>Peak and off-peak services</b>	There were conflicting views: Go Ride felt that the prioritisation of off-peak services was preferable while Oxford City Council 'urge the balance with peak hour, more commuter-focused services is considered more carefully'. ORCC also had concerns about an on/ off peak balance when withdrawing subsidies from bus routes.	<b>3</b>
<b>More account needs to be taken of planned housing growth</b>	Both Oxford City and South and Vale wished to see more account taken of future housing growth (SEP has committed to 100,000 new homes by 2030) and the impacts that this will have on demand for public transport	<b>2</b>
<b>Investigate Community Transport solutions</b>	Regarding Dial-a-Ride, ORCC suggested that OCC should conduct a trial to test whether alternative providers can offer a viable service, whilst CT schemes should be 'better incentivised to manage Dial-a-Ride-type schemes. ORCC also stated that existing CT schemes were supported to achieve sustainability while Age UK welcomed the 'intention to enable and facilitate more CT schemes.'	<b>2</b>
<b>Criticism of consultation process</b>	The consultation process was deemed to have had inadequate publicity and was not adequately conspicuous online (Bus Users Oxford). The PTR representative felt the consultation was too online-focused	<b>2</b>
<b>Plans do not take account of effect on economic growth/ productivity and tourism</b>	This point was emphasised by Oxford City Council: 'the potential to support economic growth is dependent on a balance between supply factors including employment space, housing availability and adequate, efficient infrastructure, including transport links'. The concern was also expressed that reduced levels of	<b>2</b>

	affordable transport 'is likely to result in staff recruitment and retention problems, congestion costs and these will impact on productivity.' The importance of public transport accessibility to future economic, environmental and social sustainability of settlements was also noted by South and Vale.	
<b>Increase car use and emissions</b>	Oxford City Council noted that a £2.3 million cut in subsidies could result in more vehicle commuters and more congestion.	<b>1</b>

**6.3** The following summaries are taken from the key themes and concerns for each detailed submission.

Submission from **Witney Town Transport Representative** (46 pages)

*The first part of the letter by the Town Transport Representative focuses on general views and ideas regarding the consultation and is included here. The second half focuses on Witney buses alone and this fed into Section 5.*

The first 7 pages of the submission focuses on general comments about ways in which the county council could save money or make efficient changes in the way it runs or supports services; 24 points were made and these are amalgamated where possible:

- 'OCC pooled the transport budget together into Supported Transport and rid themselves of knowledge and experience of subsidised bus services. Will this mean that OCC will no longer support the free resource of Parish and Town Transport Representatives? If so, this is short sighted and means that OCC lack long term vision. It is hoped that OCC will ensure that the new Transport Hub will regain their knowledge and understanding of subsidised bus services and that OCC really are keen to have conversations with the public'.
- 'In terms of savings, OCC should draw up minimum levels of services of all council activities and operate more efficiently, rather than cutting vital services, such as subsidised bus services'.
- 'OCC should scrap all use of expensive consultants, scrap the RealTime information, which is of barely any use and scrap premium route networks. OCC should concentrate on supporting the 'have nots' rather than the 'haves'.
- 'OCC should make better use of Section 106 development funds. Ask the people in the affected community what they want first, so they can say transport if that is the priority'.
- 'Properly assess the real impacts across all of the council activities if you withdraw services and people become isolated'
- 'Concessionary fares should start at 9.30 am rather than 9 am, to save money that can be used to improve or protect current services. Charge for each journey made on Dial a Ride rather than withdraw it. People, where possible, will pay to keep the service'.

- 'If option 2 went ahead, then the ranking list should be reviewed as it is, arguably, incorrectly prioritised. Be sure to work with communities and bus operators to ensure you protect the right services and look at each bus service merits. Be open to changing or combining routes to improve the bus network and the reduced money that you have (*Note: the representative sent in proposed timetables for the Witney area*)'
- 'Hand over control of bus infrastructure fully to parish and town councils who are capable of sourcing bus shelters'.
- 'Do not discriminate against the many non-internet/computer users and make more hard copies of the consultation available. It is too online focused'

Submission from **Bus Users Oxford** (3 pages)

Bus Users Oxford (BUO) is a local bus users group, and act as the voice for bus passengers in Oxfordshire. BUO sent a number of submissions to OCC regarding the proposal to reduce or withdraw subsidised bus services.

A number of complaints about the consultation process were put forward, as BUO felt that publicity regarding the consultation was poor, the number of public meetings was too low and not enough people in Oxfordshire were able to attend them. They also felt that the consultation was heavily online based and prevented many people from sending their responses in, something that BUO attempted to mitigate this by providing alternative consultation posters and hard copy surveys to a number of their contacts.

BUO was critical of OCC's preferred option to protect off-peak services, and stated that they wanted to see OCC weigh peak and off-peak services as both important services to the people that use them. BUO request that OCC revise the criteria for deciding which routes to save and minimise the cuts to the services as much as possible. BUO were strongly against OCC withdrawing all bus subsidises.

Submission from **West Oxfordshire District Council** (4 pages)

The response centred on importance of an effective transport network to maintaining 'sustainable local communities', given the particular characteristics of the District, including; its rural nature; the increasing older age profile; and commuting patterns. The role of transport in supporting a 'fragile economic' recovery was also emphasised, as was its role in supporting tourism.

The Council stated that 'total cessation of all subsidies to rural areas would be disastrous for many residents. The County Council should do everything in its power to support and protect bus services to rural areas.'

The Council also made comment on the consultation material, finding it 'difficult to assess the value and viability of specific services.' The lack of timetable information and limited patronage data were criticised.

Specific comment was made on a number of District services and the Council questioned

whether voluntary provision could replace the proposed withdrawal of Dial-a-Ride.

The Council also noted that it would 'welcome the opportunity to discuss the approach that Oxfordshire County agrees at an appropriate time in the process.'

Submission from **Oxfordshire Rural Community Council** (1 page)

ORCC understand the pressure that OCC are under to make savings. If Option 2 is chosen, ORCC would argue that rural areas will need higher levels of support to find alternative transport solutions owing to the low population densities, which inevitably affect levels of demand across a wider geographic area.

ORCC agrees that prioritising vulnerable older and disabled people by protecting off-peak bus services is important. But this should not be at the expense of peak bus services used by younger people to get to work or education. ORCC therefore believes that decisions on withdrawing subsidies from some bus services should be made on a case by case basis with more emphasis placed on changing routes and identifying viable alternative options for managing or paying for the service.

Regarding dial a ride services, ORCC believe that some of the most vulnerable people in Oxfordshire are reliant on a door to door transport service. Our concern is that OCC wish to withdraw funding without having conducted a proper trial to test if their preferred alternative providers can offer a viable service. ORCC would like to see community transport schemes better incentivised to manage Dial a ride-type services. Similarly, we would like to see existing community transport schemes receive advice and guidance on how to grow and sustain themselves over the longer term.

ORCC identified a number of communities and groups who wanted to pay more towards subsidised bus services. We think they will need specialist help to decide if this approach is feasible and then to develop it and make it work locally.

Lastly, ORCC were keen to hear more about the OCC Transport Hub and the role it will play in the new supported transport services. Information on the Transport Hub should be made available to the public as soon as possible.

Submission from **Rail Future**, Thames Valley Branch (2 pages)

*Railfuture is a national voluntary organisation which campaigns for improved rail services and the promotion of the contribution rail can make to sustainable transport.*

Railfuture expressed its concern regarding the consultation on subsidised bus services and their importance for people accessing rail stations such as Kingham and Charlbury.

Not all rail passengers have cars and are therefore reliant on connecting bus services.

The organisation was mostly concerned with the increased need to access train stations, with the expanding housing development (Chipping Norton is expecting a further 850 houses). Buses, such as the 233, X8 and the S3 (on Sundays) are very important for people accessing the train stations, when car use is not a favoured or actual option.

They noted that examples in accessing train stations, should subsidised bus services be reduced or withdrawn, is a countywide issue, and needs to be taken very seriously.

Submission from **South and Vale District Councils** (4 pages)

South and Vale emphasised the specific rural impact of the proposals:

As 'predominantly rural district... the councils had a strong objection that reduction or loss of bus services could cause real hardship for many residents in southern Oxfordshire who rely on bus services for access to health services, employment and education. The councils are not therefore supportive of the County Council withdrawing subsidies completely.

The importance of public transport to council policy was also noted:

'In formal planning policy for both districts, public transport accessibility has been taken into account as part of our assessment of sustainability for development sites... Planning policy therefore reflects the importance of public transport accessibility.'

The County Council's methodology for its proposals was scrutinised:

'There is a concern that the assessment and prioritisation for subsidised bus services undertaken by the County Council appears to be based mainly on the absolute number of addresses within proximity to bus stops, and the cost of supporting services. This means that ranking of services does not appear to fully take into consideration wider settlement sustainability issues, or indeed whether bus services from these settlements provide access to a main centre with a wider range of services such as shops, medical facilities or employment.'

South and Vale were also concerned about the impact of the plans with regard to future growth:

'National Planning Policy in the NPPF requires that planning authorities actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling. There is also a need to protect sites and routes which could be critical in widening transport choice. Both councils have prepared local plans which do this. To reduce or remove bus services would have a serious detrimental impact on the planning of future growth across southern Oxfordshire.

And:

'South and Vale are also concerned that the assessment does not take account of planned growth, which could impact on future bus patronage and hence any subsidy required.'

Submission from **Oxford City Council** (6 pages)

In summary, the City Council urged the County Council not to cut all subsidised services: 'This would be a backward step for the sustainability of our county, and contrary to the "Connecting Oxfordshire Vision". Given the obvious financial realities, where cuts to subsidies must be made, these should be undertaken in a way that carefully considers and minimises the impact on public transport links along major commuter routes, to balance both social and economic impact. This analysis should consider the situation now and in the future and take account of planned growth in certain settlements and business locations.'

Housing growth was also a key concern:

'Where significant housing growth is taking place in certain settlements, we would like to understand if consideration of a managed, phased route from subsidy to sustainability for some services, in dialogue with providers, has been fully considered.'

In terms of methodology, 'The City Council would like to see a more robust and sophisticated analysis of who uses the different bus services and an approach to prioritising services which better considers the economic impact. It would also recommend additional dialogue with bus service providers to reduce subsidies in a way that moves services towards commercial sustainability.'

While strongly against Option 1, 'if these cuts are to be made the City Council would urge the County Council to agree Option 2 in order to minimise this impact. Yet, there is a caveat. We urge the balance with peak hour, more commuter focused services is considered more carefully, and in unison with the services for elderly and disabled. Where possible, these peak services should not subject to blunt cuts. Where there is potential to move towards viability for such services, other options should be considered, such as tapered subsidy reductions.'

The City Council also stressed the potential impact on economic activity:

'Businesses in Oxford, such as BMW, Unipart and Centrica and key sectors such the education and health, are concerned about recruitment and retention of staff and being able to employ staff with the appropriate levels of skills. This is primarily due to high housing costs in the city. Reduced levels of affordable transport in and out of the city is likely to result in on staff recruitment and retention problems, congestion costs and these will impact on productivity.'

The City Council was also concerned about the sustainability of the Dial-a-Ride arrangement in Oxford. It was also 'willing to supplement the Dial-A-Ride service where need is proven and it can provide good value for money, and meets otherwise unmet travel demand.'

Submission from an **Oxford City Councillor**

*The comments from this submission on specific services have been included in section 5, above.*

The Councillor would like to see reductions in subsidised transport kept to a minimum. In prioritising services appropriate weight should be given to services for the elderly and disabled, but also serving areas of deprivation. Usage figures should also be taken into

account and used to renegotiate contracts with operators, where possible.

Submission from an **Oxfordshire County Council councillor**

*The comments from this submission on specific services have been included in section 5, above.*

The councillor recognises the financial situation of the County Council but is strongly opposed to Option 1.

Option 2:1 (fund services that most likely to be used by older and disabled people) is the least worst option and would protect those most vulnerable in our society. Without it they will be forced into social isolation, living far from retail, leisure, social and health services.

The Councillor is opposed to the Dial-a-Ride option with the following caveats: whilst the uptake of this service has diminished it could still have a part to play. If such a service was to be supported it should be aimed at those with special physical, mental or mobility problems

Submission from an **Oxfordshire County Council Councillor**

*The comments from this submission on specific services have been included in section 5, above.*

The councillor's comments mainly focused on specific services. She also made more general points about the necessity of public transport in her rural division to allow people to access employment and services, such as shopping and medical facilities. In addition, she pointed out that people had indicated they would be willing to pay a full fare as an alternative to losing the service altogether.

Submission from an **Oxfordshire County Council Councillor**

This submission focussed in particular on the specific rural impact of the transport proposals. In his division, he feels it essential that all villages have at least one service per day to Banbury. He also emphasised the 'invaluable' nature of the Dial-a-Ride service to elderly residents and those who cannot use regular services.

Submission from **Age UK Oxfordshire** (2 pages)

Age UK stressed that transport is the issue that older people most commonly raise in discussions about maintaining independence and quality of life.

Age UK welcomed the intention to enable and facilitate more community transport schemes but strenuously urge the Council to re-consider its proposal to end direct funding of Dial-a-Ride.

The point was also made that the impact of any cuts would be felt most keenly in rural areas

where transport is already limited. The negative impacts of cutting Dial a Ride in rural West Oxfordshire was emphasised.

In addition, Age UK was concerned that the proposals would increase dependency and lead to reduced mobility and less active lifestyles and thus poorer health and greater social isolation.

Submission from **Go Ride** (10 pages)

*Comments on specific services have been included in section 5, above.*

Go Ride CIC is a not for profit company dedicated to cut carbon emissions and increase social inclusion through the provision of public transport in Great Britain. Go Ride operates 9 routes in Oxfordshire.

Go Rides thought it regrettable that the County Council is considering this action but that it comes as little surprise given the priorities of the County Council and HM government more generally.

Option 2 was the preferred option of Go Ride and of the 3 sub-options retaining off-peak bus services was preferable.

Go Ride also believed that those services which are currently provided with more than one vehicle could be considered first for a reduction in frequency by reducing the number of vehicles used. Go Ride was critical of the Council's approach to identifying routes at risk as not giving sufficient room for consideration of amalgamating resources to provide two or more routes where they currently provide 1. Withdrawal of entire routes would leave communities isolated and it would be better to reduce frequencies on routes, where practical.

Go Ride took issue with the County Council statement that 'more than 9/10 services run without any public subsidy', pointing out that of the 224 bus services on the County website 104 are subsidised, or 46%.

**6.4** The detailed submissions covered multiple themes and have been summarised above. The main concerns focused on Option 1, where there was majority opposition (in those submissions which referred to it) to Option 1- removal of all subsidies. Option 2 was 'preferred' but with strong concern expressed about minimising impact on the elderly and vulnerable and some disagreement regarding the prioritisation of peak services. There was also widespread concern regarding the Dial-a-Ride proposals and the potential impact on the most vulnerable of Oxfordshire's residents.

## **7. Issues raised with the County Council's analysis**

**7.1 Priority for peak travel users.** 902 (47%) of the 1921 respondents answering Q7 agreed with OCC's priority of protecting off-peak transport for older and disabled people. However, many of the respondents leaving comments for Q7 - stated that the young and working people, who use peak services, are just as important. This may suggest a general view that it is wrong to prioritise one user group over another or it may reflect the relative importance of each route for particular groups. Some respondents suggest OCC should take each subsidised service on a case by case basis and make a judgement about priorities according to demand.

**7.2 Deprivation and vulnerable people.** Many respondents were critical of how the county council developed the ranking table for bus services and questioned whether they had looked into the implications for vulnerable people without transport.

**7.3 Rural isolation.** Some felt that rural isolation was not given sufficient weight in the analysis. Many respondents relied on their bus service as a means to get to work or access key services and did not want to see people being isolated in the village if off-peak or peak services were withdrawn. Respondents felt that the consequences of withdrawing bus subsidies would isolate individuals that are reliant on bus service. Re Q10, many of the respondents' comments focused on 'thinking out of the box' to find ways to maintain subsidised bus services.

**7.4 Patronage and subsidy details.** More analysis is needed of levels of patronage and subsidy for each route to understand better the realism of suggested options for supporting them. A significant number of respondents commented on how subsidised bus services could be supported in different ways. The main suggestion involved asking people with concessionary bus passes and who can afford to pay to make a contribution towards their fare. If this is to be taken forward, more information is needed on patronage and subsidy.

**7.5 Environment and congestion.** A number of respondents felt that these issues were given too little weighting in the analysis. Reducing bus services will increase congestion and damage to the environment

**7.6 Tourism.** A small number of respondents commented that tourism would suffer if visitors were not able to travel easily by bus to rural locations.

## 8. Analysis: new ideas

**8.1** In August 2015, the County Council invited communities to submit innovative ideas on local transport solutions should their subsidised bus and / or Dial a Ride service be withdrawn. ORCC also made contact with parish/town councils and the voluntary sector to encourage fresh thinking on this issue. A start has been made in Oxford city where the Dial a ride service is to be run by Aspire, a well-regarded local charity.

**8.2** It is hoped that the County Council will agree funding to incentivise new and viable propositions. Pump prime funding is by definition temporary and therefore propositions have to be supported by robust business cases setting out how they will operate once the funding has ended. Local community groups will require advice and guidance to prepare these.

**8.3** Throughout the 12 week consultation, many people offered general and area specific ideas, during the public meetings, in the feedback forms and through letters and emails. We have highlighted 3 of these as case studies in the executive summary. They include:

- an existing Dial a Ride organisation preparing to expand their services into another district and take on a home to school contract;
- a minibus scheme in Cholsey; and
- a draft business proposal to initiate a new eco midi bus service to take on existing bus routes in Cherwell.

**8.4** The ideas suggested most frequently are set out below. They were put forward by individuals and community groups, organisations, and parish/town councils. With regards to the payment proposal, there are a small number of respondents against paying for a service they feel should be free. These ideas therefore do not represent a consensus. However, over half of all respondents, for example, said they would pay more towards a service in order to sustain it.

### General Ideas

- **Voluntary payments.** Respondents, including holders of concessionary bus passes said that they would be willing to pay a donation or half fare in addition to using their passes in order to sustain a subsidised service.
- The same suggestion of paying for each journey was made in connection with the

Dial a Ride service.

- Many respondents wanted to see each subsidised bus service mapped out, to see if **changing or combining routes and times** would be an efficient and cost saving alternative to withdrawing services. This suggestion came from Witney, Southmoor, Appleton with Eaton and Stanton St John respondents.
- Several respondents wanted to see **Council Tax** increased and additional income ring-fenced for subsidised bus services and Dial a Ride. Two respondents suggested that a **Congestion Charge** could be introduced in Oxford City, and the funds raised could be ring-fenced to improve public transport.

#### Area or service-specific ideas

- Benson Traffic Advisory Committee wants to support the continuation of Service 139. They are working with other parishes on route, speaking with Thames Travel, & RAF Benson.
- A key individual in the Bartons has drafted a business case to initiate a new bus company to run electric midi-bus (small and narrow buses appropriate for rural roads). This operation, should start-up funding be found, would extend routes to Oxford and Banbury.
- Henley Handybus, an established community minibus scheme in Henley, are offering to help the small number of individuals in Nettlebed who use the existing Dial a Ride service, to take them shopping every other Tuesday. This will work within their schedule.
- Chipping Norton is speaking with Kingham and Churchill to see if there is interest in setting up a community minibus, should the X8 service be withdrawn.
- A respondent in Steeple Aston suggested that the large community transport schemes in Cherwell could collaborate with the district council to seek a means to provide Dial a Ride services.
- Cutteslowe, Wytham and Wolvercote (CWW) minibus scheme is in discussion on how they can expand their service both for specific bus routes and Dial a Ride type services.

**8.5** It is encouraging that many respondents have thought about alternative transport solutions. **The feasibility of each will need to be explored. The County Council should nominate an officer to work with community groups and bus operators to help develop these ideas in more detail.** In particular, options for managing a 'voluntary payment scheme' will need to be worked up and discussed.

## **Appendices**

A1 Public consultation meeting notes

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## **Proposed changes to subsidised bus services and to the Dial-a-Ride service in Oxfordshire**

### **Public consultation document**

#### **Overview**

Oxfordshire County Council would like your views on its service change proposals for subsidised bus services and Dial-a-Ride.

The council needs to save more than £6 million on supported transport services. We can save money by running existing services more efficiently, however that is not enough. Savings will also have to come from reducing the current £4 million a year the council pays in bus subsidies and to run the Dial-a-Ride service.

Currently Oxfordshire County Council subsidises over 100 bus services in Oxfordshire, which makes up around 9% of the bus network. This means that more than nine out of ten services run without any public subsidy.

The proposals in this consultation will affect some bus users and all Dial-a-Ride users. Read the consultation document and complete the [online feedback form](#) to register your views.

Find out if a bus service on a route you use may be affected using the online map [here](#) or download the full table of routes listed in Annex X (at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation)).

## **Why is the council making savings?**

Ongoing cuts in central government funding mean Oxfordshire County Council has to make savings.

We are currently in the process of making approximately £290 million of savings. Those savings began in 2010 and run until 2018. On top of those savings, we believe we may need to save a further £60 million. These calculations are based on the Government's broad savings targets across the public sector for the new parliament.

We have already made £204 million in savings since 2010 and are continuing to work hard to hold down costs and find new ways of working as the money we get from the government is reduced, whilst demand for our services increases.

We will learn more specifics about how much local government in general and Oxfordshire County Council in particular will need to save following the Chancellor's July budget, the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review and the local government settlement in late 2015.

### **Supported Transport Savings**

As part of our budget setting process in February 2015, councillors reduced the overall supported transport budget by a fifth (£6.3 million). At this meeting the minimum amount of savings required from non-statutory service change proposals was set at £2.6 million.

As far as possible, we are trying to make savings in supported transport by running services more efficiently. We have identified that we can achieve nearly £3.7 million in savings by bringing together all the supported transport services we operate and fund. However, this is not enough.

Oxfordshire County Council needs to find a minimum of £2.6 million in additional savings and this means looking at supported transport services which we are not required to provide by law. This will inevitably impact some people in the county. Proposals to achieve these non-statutory savings of at least £2.6 million from the supported transport budget are set out in this consultation.

# **Part 1: Proposals for subsidised bus services**

## **What are subsidised bus services?**

Oxfordshire County Council invites bus companies to bid for contracts to operate subsidised bus services on routes that are not served commercially. Currently we fund over 100 bus services in Oxfordshire, which makes up around 9% of the bus network. This means that more than nine out of ten services run without any public subsidy and are unaffected by the proposals in the consultation.

When a bus subsidy is provided, it can be for a number of different reasons:

- To provide an entire service
- To add extra stops on an existing service
- To add extra times or days on an existing service

Not all bus subsidies are provided by the council. Some are paid for by private developers as part of an agreement with the council to help support the local bus network when a new housing development is built. These are known as Section 106 or S106 agreements. As this funding is not the council's, services subsidised using only S106 funding are not included in the scope of this consultation. We have listed which services are S106 funded in the results table in Annex Y.

Excluding S106 funding, the council spends £3.7m per year on subsidising bus services that are not provided commercially.

To minimise the impact of these proposals, we are already working with bus companies to see whether they would be able to continue operating some bus services without a subsidy. We are also working with the 62 'community transport' volunteer schemes that deliver transport services across Oxfordshire, encouraging them to fill potential service gaps that may arise as a result of these proposed changes.

## **What is the council's legal duty on bus subsidies?**

A detailed explanation of the council's legal duties regarding subsidised bus services can be found in **Annex V** (see [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation)).

### **In summary the council's legal duty on subsidised buses is to:**

- 1) Identify public transport requirements which would not otherwise be met
- 2) Once identified, secure appropriate services. As part of this process, councils may take into account the funds that are available to them. The council is not obliged to subsidise services.

We are also required by law to:

- have regard to the transport needs of members of the public who are elderly or disabled;
- cooperate with other authorities exercising/performing the same function;
- cooperate with other local authorities regarding school and social care transport, so as to ensure best value for money for these services when taken as a whole;
- have regard to the interests of the public and of providers of public passenger transport services.

## **Current bus funding**

Bus operators currently receive £4.1 million per year to run services on routes that they may not run if no subsidy was available. With S106 income (property developer contributions) subtracted, taxpayers spend £3.7 million a year to run or part run uneconomical bus services.

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## **Consultation options**

Oxfordshire County Council's decision-making Cabinet has asked for the consultation to explore two proposed options and these are explained below.

### **Option 1: withdraw all bus subsidies**

This proposal will affect 100 bus services across Oxfordshire, approximately 9% of the Oxfordshire bus network. The changes to each subsidised bus service will vary and in some cases this could simply mean one or two stops are removed and in other cases a greater impact would be felt.

Find out if and how a bus service on a route you use may be affected by using the online map [here](#) or download the full table of routes here (please see Annex X at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation)).

If this option is agreed, the proposed changes would come into effect as existing contracts with commercial bus operators' end. All bus subsidies under this option would be fully withdrawn by the end of this financial year. This Option would save the Council approximately £3.7 million.

### **Option 2: reduce bus subsidies by £2.3 million** (as demanded by current savings targets)

This proposal would affect only a proportion of the 100 bus services across Oxfordshire supported in some way by a council bus subsidy.

Again, changes to each subsidised bus service will vary and in some cases this could simply mean one or two stops are removed and in other cases a greater impact would be felt. Overall, the impact of this proposal would be less than in option 1.

Find out if and how a bus service on a route you use may be affected by using the online map [here](#) or download the full table of routes here (please see Annex Y at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation)).

If this option is agreed, the proposed changes would come into effect as existing contracts with commercial bus operators' end. All bus subsidies under this option would be fully withdrawn by the end of this financial year.

Although the required saving in 'Option 2' is £2.3m, this figure may be reduced depending on the final amount of savings that accrue from the annual review of bus subsidies undertaken earlier in 2015. Annual reviews of bus subsidies take place every year in all parts of the country and have done since bus services were de-regulated in the mid-1980s. They take place irrespective of the general financial backdrop.

If this proposal was adopted, we would continue to review bus subsidies on subsidised bus services as is currently the case, and it is likely that we need to look again at the funding for bus subsidies in the future.

### **'Option 2' – The three potential approaches for reducing subsidies**

In developing this service change proposal we needed to consider principles that would guide future bus subsidies prioritisation. We considered three different ways we could prioritise bus services and reduce funding, and these are:

#### **1. Fund services that are most likely to be used by older and disabled people**

If a decision is made by the Cabinet to choose Option 2 (to reduce bus subsidies by £2.3m) the council's preferred proposal is to use any remaining subsidised bus budget to fund services that are most likely to be used by older and disabled people with free bus passes to travel off-peak. We are proposing this approach because it:

**Provides a safety net** - While all our subsidies support bus services which are important to the communities they serve, the council's first duty is to protect our most vulnerable public transport users. This is part of our overall corporate commitment to provide a 'safety net' of support and resources for our most vulnerable residents.

**Makes your money go further** - Off-peak services are less likely to be run commercially by operators, given the relatively low number of people that use them.

However, they are also often cheaper to subsidise than other services, as they run at times when operators have spare vehicles available.

**Protects more services** - Prioritising off-peak services protects more services than some of the other options we've considered in the two alternative approaches below. This is because their lower costs mean that more services/service enhancements can be retained with the same amount of funding (see below for more details).

**We therefore propose to adopt the principle of, as far as possible, protecting the off-peak services which tend to be used by older people and people with disabilities when reducing bus subsidies by £2.3m.**

**2. Prioritise bus services running at 'peak' hours during weekdays (06:30-09:30 in the morning, and 16:00-19:00 in the evening)**

In contrast to off peak services, peak hour services are usually far more expensive in terms of their total contract cost because their provision often requires purchase of additional vehicles by operators. In addition, peak hour services are more likely to become commercialised in the event that a subsidy is removed (although this is by no means guaranteed) because they run at times and along routes which are often extremely popular and well used by local residents.

**3. Prioritise bus services running in the evening and at the weekend (which are commonly used by people to access leisure activities)**

Services running in the evening and at the weekend are commonly used by people to access leisure or social activities. It is proposed that these are withdrawn in order to prioritise resources to pay for services to allow vulnerable people to travel to vital facilities such as shops and healthcare on weekdays.

## **How would these proposed service changes in options 1 and 2 affect my bus route?**

### **Option 1: withdraw all bus subsidies**

**Annex X** provides a table of all subsidised bus services which would stop receiving a subsidy under this option. It also shows which services are only partially subsidised, and which parts of the route the subsidy is provided for so that people can see exactly which part of their route is affected by the option.

If we withdraw all bus subsidies, it does not necessarily mean that all subsidised routes, stops or times will automatically cease being provided (although inevitably there will be an impact).

We will work with bus operators to encourage them to continue providing subsidised services on a purely commercial basis i.e. without receiving any public funding.

We will also work with the community transport sector in Oxfordshire to help them to meet gaps in the commercial transport network, including providing them with funding to get schemes going (further details provided below).

### **Option 2: reduce bus subsidies by £2.3 million by prioritising off-peak services**

**Annex Y** provides a table of all subsidised bus services in order of their priority, using the councils preferred approach of making savings by prioritising off-peak services along with our additional criteria (see details on alternative principles below). It also shows which bus services are only partially subsidised, and which parts of the route the subsidy is provided for so that people can see exactly which part of their journey is affected by the proposal.

This table helps people to see which bus services we will prioritise when it comes to spending any remaining budget and negotiating with bus companies. It's not, however, a definitive list of which bus services will and won't be subsidised in the future under this option. The true impact of reducing our subsidies in this way will not be fully known until we've had detailed conversations with bus operators about what they can continue providing with the remaining funds available.

Through negotiations with bus operators we will aim to get the best possible deal for Oxfordshire with the money we have left. In some instances, getting the best deal for Oxfordshire might involve making changes to higher priority services as well, e.g. by reducing their frequency, so that the money saved can be used to maintain coverage elsewhere.

**Annex Z** provides a more detailed version of the same table, including full results of the analysis.

Throughout and following changes to subsidised bus routes we propose to assess any unexpected impact on commercial routes which cannot be predicted at this stage, in order to monitor for potential adverse impacts.

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### **Minimising the impact – bus operators**

To minimise the impact of these proposals, we are already working with bus companies to see whether they would be able to continue operating some bus services without a subsidy.

In addition, if there is an economic case to continue subsidising a service that is integral to a busy home to school route - we will likely continue to subsidise that service during the relevant time periods.

### **Minimising the impact - supporting community transport**

We are also engaging with the 62 'community transport' voluntary sector schemes who deliver transport services across Oxfordshire to support and encourage them to address potential service gaps if they are in a position to do so.

In particular, where bus operators are unable to run services commercially we will look to the community transport sector to set-up schemes that address any unmet transport needs resulting from reduced funding.

We will be offering one-off pump-prime funding to the sector to help dial-a-ride schemes get off the ground. We also have a whole package of support which we can offer to groups within the sector including start up grants. We are already working with rural organisations to support groups wishing to increase their capacity and we are planning to lead a community transport public awareness campaign to encourage understanding of and support for this important sector.

## **Part 2: Proposals to change Dial-a-Ride**

### **Who uses the Dial a Ride service?**

Dial-a-Ride is the other 'non-statutory' supported transport service the council currently provides. It is a door-to-door service for those who have poor mobility and are unable to use, or do not have access to conventional public transport.

The drivers of the vehicles are trained to help passengers with poor mobility. The service, currently operated by our Integrated Transport Service between 9am to 5pm, has to be booked in advance and cannot be used for medical appointments.

Currently 238 people across Oxfordshire use the Dial-a-Ride as a regularly scheduled service. The majority of these service users hold concessionary bus passes, and of those who are able to walk, just fewer than 75% are within 400m walking distance of a bus stop.

Many of the Dial-a-Ride users classed as 'walkers' would be able to travel using public transport if necessary, and historically Dial-a-Ride eligibility criteria haven't been applied or enforced.

Dial- a-Ride users pay an annual subscription fee of £5. This contrasts with people going to council day centres, who have to pay £5 per journey. In light of this inconsistency, as well as the fact that the service uses specialist transport resources which arguably would be better allocated towards higher need Special Educational Need (SEN) users travelling to school, we think a new approach is needed.

### **Our proposal**

Oxfordshire County Council will no longer be able to afford to fund Dial-a-Ride as a council provided service from the end of this financial year. However we will work with voluntary groups to encourage voluntary sector involvement in running Dial-a-Ride services (with initial start-up support from the council).

Our proposal is to work with community transport groups across the county to try and develop schemes which can meet similar needs to those which Dial-a-Ride currently serves.

In Oxford, Aspire, an award-winning charity and social enterprise was earlier this year given a start-up grant to deliver Dial-a-Ride in the city. Oxfordshire County Council supported the organisation to get the service up and running to ensure a smooth and seamless transition for customers, with a view to Aspire making it a sustainable long-term service in the future.

We will look to extend this arrangement to other parts of the county. The funding we will offer to a Voluntary and Community Sector organisation to start delivering a local Dial-a-Ride service will be one off 'pump prime' funding to set up or to extend an existing scheme.

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## Have your say

Understanding your views, opinions and preferences is key to our decision making process.

Read the consultation document and supporting information and **please complete the online form at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation)**. The deadline for your response is 14<sup>th</sup> September 2015. If you require a hard copy of the consultation document please contact the council by telephone on 01865 328113 or email [Supported.Transport@Oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Supported.Transport@Oxfordshire.gov.uk).

**Come to a public meeting to hear more about our proposals and tell us what you think. Meetings are open to everyone and are being held on:**

- Mon 6 July in Banbury Town Hall, Banbury - 10.30am-12.00pm
- Mon 6 July in Didcot Civic Hall, Didcot - 16.00pm-17.30pm
- Tues 7 July in Witney Methodist Church, Witney - 10.30am-12.00pm
- Weds 8 July in Abingdon Guildhall, Abingdon - 16.00pm-17.30pm
- Weds 8 July in OCC County Hall, Oxford - 19.00pm-20.30pm

All public meetings will be independently facilitated by the [Oxfordshire Rural Community Council \(ORCC\)](#). The ORCC are an important advisor to the Council and a long-time supporter and advisor to existing community transport schemes.

Oxfordshire County Council have asked that the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC), a not for profit, community development organisation are the independent facilitator during the consultation. If you need support in commenting on the county council's proposals or are interested in attending one of our events, please get in touch with the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council on 01865 883488 or email [orcc@oxonrcc.org.uk](mailto:orcc@oxonrcc.org.uk).

## **Supporting information**

We have produced some frequently asked questions about subsidised buses and the Dial-a-Ride service to accompany this consultation. We have also undertaken a draft Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA) to understand how the changes we have proposed will affect different groups of people in the community. The SCIA will be reviewed following the proposed consultation. Supporting information and the draft SCIA is available on the county council's website [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation)

## **What happens next?**

All consultation responses received by the closing date will be collated and analysed. The results of the consultation will be reported to Cabinet following the end of this consultation period.

Councillors will weigh the views expressed in the consultation against a wide number of other factors when making decisions including statutory requirements, government guidance, cost, risk, demography and other issues captured as part of the council's service and community impact assessment process. In light of all the evidence presented to them, Cabinet will decide whether or not to take the proposed changes forward.

## Understanding our Methodology

The following section provides a short summary of the approach taken when prioritising bus subsidies under 'Option 2'. Full details of this methodology can be found in Annex W at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation)

We followed a strict methodical process to calculate which bus subsidies are 'best value for money', and which are 'worst value'. 'Value for money' is judged upon how many addresses are served by a subsidised bus, where an address has no commercial alternative.

The results provide a ranking of all subsidised bus services. The ranking is based on the cost of each subsidy to the council, compared to how many unique addresses it is enabling the bus network to serve.

This entire process was repeated three times to prioritise services at different times of day (time band), allowing evaluation of potential impacts on different types of bus user.

Option 2 in this document refers to the results of the analysis for the daytime off-peak time band. The alternatives analysed were services running at peak hours during weekdays, and services running in the evening and at the weekend.

Bus timetables are never static, and subsidies undergo routine reviews. The bus subsidy and timetable data analysed was the most up-to-date version available at the time of the analysis.

### Understanding the results tables

By ranking the bus services, each service can be given a Risk Category, ranging from 'very low' to 'very high'. This signifies how the council will prioritise any future bus subsidy budget. The results are presented in **Annex Y** and **Annex Z**.

Full information and column definitions can be found within the annexes themselves, but a brief summary has been provided below.

## **Annex Y – ‘Option 2’ Services Affected**

**Annex Y** gives a simple table of results for ‘Option 2’.

The Operator, Service Number, and Service Description columns identify the bus service. The risk column indicates how services will be prioritised. The Subsidy Description column explains which part of the service the subsidy supports, and hence which part is potentially at risk. Parts of the service that are not subsidised are operated commercially.

## **Annex Z – ‘Option 2’ Full Ranking Tables**

**Annex Z** gives a detailed table of **results for each of the three time bands**.

As well as the columns from the simple table described above, it introduces some more detailed columns.

- The Contract Type indicates how the service is subsidised.
- The Address Score shows the number of addresses served by each service during the specified time band.
- The Exemption Reason gives details of any services that are listed as Exempt from the analysis.
- The Cost Per Stop Visit is an indicator of subsidy cost. It is described in the full methodology.
- The Cost Index is the index from which the services are ranked. The lower the number, the better value for money the service is deemed to be, and hence the lower the risk.

## **Consultation response form**

- Please go to [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation) to complete your consultation response online. Alternatively please find a copy that can be printed out and posted back to us below. Please read each question carefully and tick a box which most closely matches your personal opinion or complete the text boxes provided. The closing date to return your questionnaire is **14<sup>th</sup> September 2015**. All the opinions you express and any information you give will be treated confidentially.

## **Questionnaire for the consultation on subsidised buses and Dial-a-Ride**

Oxfordshire County Council is consulting on proposed changes to subsidised bus services and to the Dial a Ride service in Oxfordshire. Copies of the consultation documents are available online at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation)

The minimum amount of the overall savings needed from our proposals has been agreed as part of the council's budget setting process in February 2015. Following from this budget settlement in February, the Council are increasingly aware that we may need to find further savings as a consequence of new central government budget reductions. Any further reductions will determine what bus subsidies will eventually have to be reduced by or whether they will need to be withdrawn altogether.

**Now we would like to hear your views about services change proposals for:**

### **Subsidised buses**

- **Option 1:** withdraw all bus subsidies
- **Option 2:** reduce bus subsidies by £2.3m (as required under current savings' targets).

### **Dial-a-Ride**

- Work with community transport groups across the county to try and develop schemes which can meet similar needs to those which Dial-a-Ride currently serves and to stop funding Dial-a-Ride.

**Outlined on the following pages are:**

- questions about your use of these services
- details of the proposal for your comment

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# Section 1: Use of subsidised bus services

The following section asks you questions about your use of the buses that are currently subsidised by Oxfordshire County Council.

Find out if and how a bus service on a route you use may be affected by using the online map [here](#) or download the full table of routes here (see Annex X at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation)).

## Which of the following best describes you?

(Please tick ✓ one box only)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Subsidised bus service user	Continue
<input type="checkbox"/>	Oxfordshire resident, but NOT a subsidised bus service user	Go to Section 2
<input type="checkbox"/>	Councillor	Go to Section 2
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (e.g. representative of a group, organisation, school etc.)	Go to Section 2

**Q1. Please list ALL the subsidised bus service numbers (from those given in annex X at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation)) that you currently use and say where you travel to and from.**

**Please note if the services you use are NOT on this list then they are operated commercially without a subsidy from Oxfordshire County Council.**

**Q2. Please state the Oxfordshire County Council subsidised bus service number you use most frequently.**

**Q3. Thinking about the subsidised bus service you use most frequently, how often do you travel by this service?**

(Please tick ✓ one box only)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Every day
<input type="checkbox"/>	Three or more times a week
<input type="checkbox"/>	Once or twice a week
<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than once a week but more than twice a month
<input type="checkbox"/>	Twice a month
<input type="checkbox"/>	Once or twice a year
<input type="checkbox"/>	Less often

**Q4. What are the main reasons that you use this service? Please select one main reason, and then highlight any other reasons why you make use of the bus service.**

	<b>Q4a. Main reason ✓ one box</b>	<b>Q4b. Other reason ✓ all that apply</b>
Travel to/from work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travel to/from school, college, university (include accompanying children)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travel to/from dentist, doctor, hospital, optician (include accompanying someone else)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travel to/from shops to do essential shopping or jobs/appointments (e.g. food shopping, banking etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travel to/from shops to do non-essential shopping or jobs/appointments (e.g. clothes shopping, visit hairdressers etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visit friends or family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visit day centre/community centre activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
For days out/evenings outs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q5. If the bus service/stop you use was withdrawn, how would you travel?**

(For each row, please tick ✓ one box only)

	Very likely	Fairly likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely	No local service	Don't know
Car as driver	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Car as passenger/get a lift	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cycle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Motorcycle/Moped	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taxi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Train	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use local community transport scheme	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Walk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would not be able to travel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

-----

## Section 2: Proposals for subsidised bus services

### **Option 1: withdraw all bus subsidies**

This proposal will affect 100 bus services across Oxfordshire, approximately 9% of the Oxfordshire bus network. The changes to each subsidised bus service will vary and in some cases this could simply mean one or two stops are removed and in other cases a greater impact would be felt.

Find out if and how a bus service on a route you use may be affected by using the online map [here](#) or download the full table of routes here (see Annex X at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation)).

If this option is agreed:

- The proposed changes would be come into effect as existing contracts with commercial bus operators' end.
- All bus subsidies would be fully withdrawn by the end of this financial year (April 2016).
- This option would save the council approximately £3.7 million (above the demands of the current savings targets).

### **Option 2: reduce bus subsidies by £2.3m** (as demanded by current savings targets)

This proposal would affect only a proportion of the 100 bus services across Oxfordshire supported in some way by a council bus subsidy.

Again, changes to each subsidised bus service will vary and in some cases this could simply mean one or two stops are removed and in other cases a greater impact would be felt. Overall, the impact of this proposal would be less than in option 1.

Find out if and how a bus service on a route you use may be affected by using the online map [here](#) or download the full table of routes here (see Annex Y at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation)).

If this option is agreed, the proposed changes would be come into effect as existing contracts with commercial bus operators' end. All effected bus subsidies would be fully withdrawn by the end of this financial year (April 2016).

If this proposal was adopted, we would continue to review bus subsidies on subsidised bus services as is currently the case, and it is likely that we need to look again at the funding for bus subsidies in the future.

**Q6. Which of the two proposals for achieving savings from subsidised bus services do you prefer?**

(Please tick ✓ one box only)

Option 1  
(fully withdraw)

Option 2  
(partially  
withdraw)

Neither

Don't know

Reasons:

**Q7. What are your views for on our preferred approach for option 2 of prioritising subsidised bus services which are most likely to be used by older people and people with disabilities, who have free bus passes which allow them to travel off-peak?**

**Full details of this approach and the alternatives approaches we looked at are set out in the consultation document.**

(Please tick ✓ one box only)

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Don't know

Reasons:

**Q8. If you disagree, do you prefer one of the alternative approaches for prioritising subsidised bus services we set out in the consultation document or do you have an alternative suggestion of your own?**

Yes

No

Comments:

We have undertaken an assessment of the impact on individuals and groups of the proposals for subsidised bus services. These are outlined in the Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA) which is available on the county council website ([www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation)) and in libraries should you wish to read it.

**Q9. Please give your views on the impacts identified. Have we missed anything?**

Comments:

**Q10. Do you have any other comments on the proposed service changes options for subsidised bus services set out in the consultation document?**

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### Section 3: Dial a Ride

The following section asks you questions about Dial-a-Ride.

Please note - this consultation is only relevant to Dial-a-Ride users outside of Oxford City. Oxford City Dial-a-Ride is already being run by a voluntary sector organisation called Aspire and so will not be effected by any decisions that come out of this consultation.

#### Q11a. Do you use Dial a Ride?

(Please tick ✓ one box only)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	Go to Q11b
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes - the Oxford Aspire Dial a Ride service	Go to Q14
<input type="checkbox"/>	No	Go to Q14

#### Q11b. How often do you travel using the Dial-a-Ride service?

(Please tick ✓ one box only)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Every day
<input type="checkbox"/>	Three or more times a week
<input type="checkbox"/>	Once or twice a week
<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than once a week but more than twice a month
<input type="checkbox"/>	Twice a month
<input type="checkbox"/>	Once or twice a year
<input type="checkbox"/>	Less often

**Q12. What are the main reasons that you use the Dial-a-Ride service?**

Please select one main reason, and then highlight any other reasons you use the Dial-a-Ride service.

	<b>Q12a. Main reason</b> ✓ one box	<b>Q12b. Other reason</b> ✓ all that apply
For attending appointments e.g. dentist, chiropodist, hairdresser but not hospital appointments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
For trips e.g. market days	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To visit friends and family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
For days out	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Please specify _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q13. Thinking about the main reason you use Dial-a-Ride. If the Dial-a-Ride service was unavailable, how would you travel?**

(For each row, please tick ✓ one box only)

	Very likely	Fairly likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely	No local service	Don't know
Car as driver	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Car as passenger/get a lift	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cycle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Motorcycle/Moped	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taxi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Train	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use local community transport scheme	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Walk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would not be able to travel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q14. What do you think of our proposal for Dial-a-Ride?**

**To work with community transport groups across the county to try and develop schemes which can meet similar needs to those which Dial-a-Ride currently serves and to stop funding Dial-a-Ride.**

**Full details about the proposal are set out in the consultation document.**

(Please tick ✓ one box only)

- Agree       Neutral       Disagree       Don't know

Reasons:

We have undertaken an assessment of the impact on individuals and groups of the proposal for Dial-a-Ride. These are outlined in the Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA) which is available on the county council website ([www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stconsultation)) and in libraries should you wish to read it.

**Q15. Please give your views on the impacts identified. Have we missed anything?**

**Q16. Do you have any other comments on the proposal for Dial-a-Ride as set out in the consultation document?**

## Section 4: About You

It would be helpful to know a bit about you so we can check whether views differ across the communities we serve.

Please note that this section is optional and you don't have to complete these questions if you don't want to. If you would prefer not to answer any of these questions, please tick the 'prefer not to say' box so that we are aware of your choice.

Any information provided is governed by the Data Protection Act 1998 and will be treated as strictly confidential.

If you are responding as a councillor or representative of a group, school or organisation, please go to Q23 at the end of this section.

### Q17. What is your age?

(Please tick ✓ one box only)

Under 16	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	Prefer not to say
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Q18. What is your postcode?

This information helps us to understand the impact of these proposals on different areas of the county.

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### Q19. Which of the following best describes your current work status?

(Please tick ✓ one box only)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Employee in full-time job (30 hours or more per week)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Employee in part-time job (less than 30 hours per week)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Self-employed/freelance – full or part time
<input type="checkbox"/>	On a government sponsored training scheme
<input type="checkbox"/>	Unemployed and available for work
<input type="checkbox"/>	Full-time education at school, college or university
<input type="checkbox"/>	Looking after family or home
<input type="checkbox"/>	Retired
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not required to work due to a disability or illness
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify) _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say

**Q20. Do you own and/or have access to a car?**

(Please tick ✓ one box only)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say

**Q21. Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months? (Include problems related to old age).**

(Please tick ✓ ONE box only)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, limited a lot
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, limited a little
<input type="checkbox"/>	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say

**Q22. Do you make use of the concessionary bus pass scheme, which provides free off-peak travel?**

(Please tick ✓ ONE box only)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, I hold an older persons' bus pass
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, I hold a disabled persons' bus pass
<input type="checkbox"/>	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say

**Q23. If you are responding as a councillor or a representative of a group or organisation please provide details below.**

(Please tick ✓ ONE box only)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Councillor (please specify the area/areas you represent ) _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Representative of an educational establishment (please specify which) _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Representative of a group or organisation (please specify which) _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify) _____

**Q24. As a stakeholder responding to this consultation, please indicate if you would be happy for your full response to be published by the county council as part of consultation report and/or shared if a request is received by the county council.**

If either case, personal contact details will not be released.

(Please tick ✓ all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes - I am happy for my full response to be published as part of the council report
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes - I am happy for my full response to be shared if a request is received by the county council
<input type="checkbox"/>	No, neither

**Thank you for completing this questionnaire.**

**Please send your response to:**

**Supported transport consultation**

**FREEPOST OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**(No further address details required)**

# Annex E – Contract Termination Terms

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The following table details the bus subsidy contract termination terms.

In summary, there are four main types of contract:

- Contracts that can be terminated with 17 weeks' notice, given at any time.
- Contracts that can be terminated with 16 weeks' notice, which can only be given on an "Authorised Change Date" ("the first Sunday following the late Spring bank holiday Monday and the first Sunday in December in any year, or such other day or days in substitution therefor as may be notified to the Contractor by the Council not less than 16 weeks prior to any date affected by such substitution". For more details please see the note at the end of this document\*)
- Contracts that will naturally expire within the next twelve months (or can be extended or re-tendered if required).
- Contracts operated by Oxfordshire County Council which require 16 weeks' notice to be served at any time.

The table is sorted in service number order.

<b>Service Number</b>	<b>Operator</b>	<b>Contract Termination Terms</b>	<b>Service Description</b>	<b>Subsidy Description</b>
8	Stagecoach in Northants	Expires naturally on 31st March 2016 (could be extended or re-procured)	Bicester - Silverstone	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)
11	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	17 weeks' notice, any time	Witney - Oxford	Monday-Friday one evening journey only (both directions)
17	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Cuttleslowe - Oxford	Fully Subsidised
18	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	17 weeks' notice, any time	Clanfield - Oxford	Fully Subsidised
19	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	17 weeks' notice, any time	Carterton - Witney	Fully Subsidised
20	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Oxford: Rose Hill - Cowley [- Unipart House]	Fully Subsidised

<b>Service Number</b>	<b>Operator</b>	<b>Contract Termination Terms</b>	<b>Service Description</b>	<b>Subsidy Description</b>
22	Thames Travel	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Bicester -Langford - Caversfield - Bicester (circular)	Fully Subsidised
23	Thames Travel	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Bicester -Langford - Caversfield - Bicester (circular)	Fully Subsidised
24	Thames Travel	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Bicester -Launton Road-Bicester (circular)	Fully Subsidised
25	Thames Travel	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Kidlington/Oxford - Bicester	Fully Subsidised
25A	Thames Travel	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Oxford - Bicester	Fully Subsidised
33	Pulhams Coaches	17 weeks' notice, any time	Wychwoods - Fulbrook - Burford	Fully Subsidised
37	Heyfordian Travel	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Bicester - Hardwick - Finmere	Fully Subsidised
38	Thames Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	Wantage Town service	Fully Subsidised
40	Carousel Buses	17 weeks' notice, any time	High Wycombe - Thame	The service is subsidised almost entirely, just a few certain journeys/times are commercial
41	Thames Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	North Abingdon Town Service anti-clockwise	Fully Subsidised
42	Thames Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	North Abingdon Town Service via College	Fully Subsidised

<b>Service Number</b>	<b>Operator</b>	<b>Contract Termination Terms</b>	<b>Service Description</b>	<b>Subsidy Description</b>
43	Oxfordshire County Council	16 weeks' notice, any time (contract operated by Oxfordshire County Council)	Abingdon Town Centre - Eaton (Oxon)	Fully Subsidised
43	Thames Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	North Abingdon Town Service	Fully Subsidised
44	Thames Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	Oxford - Bayworth - Sunningwell - Abingdon	Fully Subsidised
44A	Thames Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	Oxford - Abingdon	Fully Subsidised
46	Oxfordshire County Council	16 weeks' notice, any time (contract operated by Oxfordshire County Council)	Drayton St. Leonard - Abingdon	Fully Subsidised
50	Stagecoach in Warwickshire	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Stratford-upon-Avon - Chipping Norton	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)
50A	Stagecoach in Warwickshire	Expires naturally on 31st March 2016 (could be extended or re-procured)	Stratford-upon-Avon - Banbury	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)
61	Faringdon Community Bus	17 weeks' notice, any time	Faringdon Town Service	Fully Subsidised
63	Thames Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	Oxford - Cumnor - Southmoor	Fully Subsidised
64	Pulhams Coaches	17 weeks' notice, any time	Carterton - Swindon	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)
67	Thames Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	Wantage - Faringdon	Fully Subsidised
67A	Thames Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	Wantage - Faringdon	Fully Subsidised
67B	Thames Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	Wantage - Faringdon	Fully Subsidised
67C	Thames Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	Wantage - Faringdon	Fully Subsidised
81	Heyfordian Travel	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Bicester - Fritwell - Souldern - Banbury	Saturday services

<b>Service Number</b>	<b>Operator</b>	<b>Contract Termination Terms</b>	<b>Service Description</b>	<b>Subsidy Description</b>
81A	Heyfordian Travel	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Bicester - Fritwell - Souldern - Somerton	Tuesday services
83	Stanford in the Vale Minibus	17 weeks' notice, any time	Wantage - Faringdon	Fully Subsidised
84	Stanford in the Vale Minibus	17 weeks' notice, any time	Wantage - Stanford in the Vale - Goosey	Fully Subsidised
85	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Iffley - Cowley	Fully Subsidised
86	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Lye Valley - Cowley	Fully Subsidised
89	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	The Baldons - Cowley	Fully Subsidised
90	Oxfordshire County Council	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Banbury - Deddington - Upper Heyford	Fully Subsidised
90	Go Ride Community Interest Company	Expires naturally on 31st March 2016 (could be extended or re-procured)	Hungerford - Swindon Bus Station	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)
94	Thames Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	Didcot - Blewbury - Hagbournes - Didcot	Fully Subsidised
95	Thames Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	Didcot - The Moretons - Blewbury - Didcot	Fully Subsidised
97	Thames Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	Wallingford - Didcot	Fully Subsidised
103	Heyfordian Travel	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Oxford - Wheatley - Little Milton	Fully Subsidised

<b>Service Number</b>	<b>Operator</b>	<b>Contract Termination Terms</b>	<b>Service Description</b>	<b>Subsidy Description</b>
104	Heyfordian Travel	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Oxford - Cuddesdon	Fully Subsidised
108	Heyfordian Travel	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Oxford - Forest Hill - Stanton St. John (- Elsfield)	Fully Subsidised
114	Thames Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	Wallingford - Abingdon	Fully Subsidised
118	Heyfordian Travel	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Oxford - Brill (- Bicester)	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)
120	Vale Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	Princes Risborough, - Thame	Fully Subsidised
121	Vale Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	Princes Risborough - Watlington	Fully Subsidised
123	Vale Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	Thame Local Service	Fully Subsidised
124	Vale Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	Thame - Wallington	Fully Subsidised
125	Oxfordshire County Council	16 weeks' notice, any time (contract operated by Oxfordshire County Council)	Chalgrove - Watlington - Benson - Wallingford	Fully Subsidised
126	Oxfordshire County Council	16 weeks' notice, any time (contract operated by Oxfordshire County Council)	Wallingford - Chalgrove - Wallingford	Fully Subsidised
131	Oxfordshire County Council	16 weeks' notice, any time (contract operated by Oxfordshire County Council)	Wallingford - East Hagbourne	Fully Subsidised
134	Go Ride Community Interest Company	Expires Naturally on 31st December 2015 (could be extended or re-procured)	Goring - Stokes - Wallingford	Fully Subsidised

<b>Service Number</b>	<b>Operator</b>	<b>Contract Termination Terms</b>	<b>Service Description</b>	<b>Subsidy Description</b>
135	Oxfordshire County Council	16 weeks' notice, any time (contract operated by Oxfordshire County Council)	Wallingford - Moulsoford - Streatley - Goring	Fully Subsidised
136C	Thames Travel	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Wallingford - Cholsey - Wallingford	Sundays and Bank Holiday Services Subsidised. Some other parts of the route covered by Section 106 funding.
139	Thames Travel	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Wallingford - Henley-on-Thames	Fully Subsidised
143	Thames Travel	Expires naturally on 31st March 2016 (could be extended or re-procured)	Reading-Upper Basildon-Whitchurch Hill-Reading	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)
145	Whites Coaches	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Woodcote (Oxon) - Henley-on-Thames	Fully Subsidised
151	Whites Coaches	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Henley-on-Thames - Henley-on-Thames	Fully Subsidised
152	Whites Coaches	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Henley-on-Thames - Henley-on-Thames	Fully Subsidised
153	Whites Coaches	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Henley-on-Thames - Henley-on-Thames	Fully Subsidised
154	Whites Coaches	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Henley-on-Thames - Henley-on-Thames	Fully Subsidised
213	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	17 weeks' notice, any time	Witney : Market Sq - Wood Green - Cogges - Market Sq (circular)	Fully Subsidised

<b>Service Number</b>	<b>Operator</b>	<b>Contract Termination Terms</b>	<b>Service Description</b>	<b>Subsidy Description</b>
214	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	17 weeks' notice, any time	Witney : Market Square - Cogges - Wood Green - Market Square	Fully Subsidised
215	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	17 weeks' notice, any time	Witney : Market Square - Smiths Estate - Market Square (circular)	Fully Subsidised
218	Thames Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	Wytham - Oxford	Fully Subsidised
233	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	17 weeks' notice, any time	Burford - Woodstock	Service diversion via New Yatt all day, and the first journey of the day in each direction between Witney and Woodstock (Monday-Friday)
269	Johnson's Excelbus	Expires naturally on 31st March 2016 (could be extended or re-procured)	Banbury - Stratford upon Avon	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)
270	Johnson's Excelbus	Expires naturally on 31st March 2016 (could be extended or re-procured)	Banbury - Stratford upon Avon	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)
275	Red Rose Travel	Expires naturally on 31st March 2016 (could be extended or re-procured)	Oxford City Centre - High Wycombe	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)
277	Stagecoach in Warwickshire	Expires naturally on 31st March 2016 (could be extended or re-procured)	Lighthorne Heath - Banbury	Oxfordshire part of the route only (shared with neighbouring council)
280	Arriva the Shires	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Aylesbury - Oxford City Centre	Sundays and Bank Holidays, first journey of the day, and one evening journey (both directions) only.
488	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	17 weeks' notice, any time	Chipping Norton - Banbury	Service diversions via Wigginton and South Newington also last journey from Chipping Norton. Some other early and late journeys paid for with Section 106 money.
504	Oxfordshire County Council	16 weeks' notice, any time (contract operated by Oxfordshire County Council)	Honton - Horley - Banbury	Fully Subsidised

<b>Service Number</b>	<b>Operator</b>	<b>Contract Termination Terms</b>	<b>Service Description</b>	<b>Subsidy Description</b>
800	Arriva the Shires	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	High Wycombe - Reading	Sunday and Bank holidays, portion of the route between Henley and Dunsden Green only.
811	Pulhams Coaches	17 weeks' notice, any time	Salford (Oxon) - Cheltenham (Gloucs)	Fully Subsidised
A1	Oxfordshire County Council	16 weeks' notice, any time (contract operated by Oxfordshire County Council)	(Didcot - Ardington - Wantage - Ardington (- Didcot)	Fully Subsidised
B1	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Easington - Banbury	Fully Subsidised
B10	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Hanwell Fields - Banbury	Fully Subsidised
B2	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Bodicote - Banbury	Fully Subsidised
B5	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Banbury - Neithrop - Banbury	Evening Services 18:30 onwards
B7	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Grimsbury & Edmunds Road - Banbury	Fully Subsidised
C1	Go Ride Community Interest Company	17 weeks' notice, any time	Charlbury - Leafield (Oxon) - Wychwoods	Fully Subsidised
County Connect	Kier	Expires naturally on 31st March 2016 (could be extended or re-procured)	Oxfordshire Service Users. Unscheduled Routes. Claydon, Cropedy & The Bourtons	Misc

<b>Service Number</b>	<b>Operator</b>	<b>Contract Termination Terms</b>	<b>Service Description</b>	<b>Subsidy Description</b>
H1	Oxfordshire County Council	16 weeks' notice, any time (contract operated by Oxfordshire County Council)	Old Marston - Headington	Fully Subsidised
H2	Oxfordshire County Council	16 weeks' notice, any time (contract operated by Oxfordshire County Council)	Sandhills - Headington Quarry - Headington Centre	Fully Subsidised
K1	Go Ride Community Interest Company	17 weeks' notice, any time	Kidlington Town service	Fully Subsidised
K2	Go Ride Community Interest Company	17 weeks' notice, any time	Kidlington - Begbroke - Yarnton - Kidlington	Fully Subsidised
K3	Go Ride Community Interest Company	17 weeks' notice, any time	Kidlington - Yarnton - Begbroke - Kidlington	Fully Subsidised
M1	Oxfordshire County Council	16 weeks' notice, any time (contract operated by Oxfordshire County Council)	Watlington - Reading	Fully Subsidised
S3	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Chipping Norton - Oxford	Sundays and Bank Holidays, part of service between Old Woodstock and Chipping Norton (both directions)
S4C	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	Expires naturally on 13th February 2016 (could be extended or re-procured)	Middle Barton - Deddington	Fully Subsidised
T1	Thames Travel	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Oxford - Garsington - Watlington	First journey of the day, and three afternoon journeys in each direction, portion between Watlington and Garsington only (Monday-Friday)
T2	Thames Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	Oxford-Science Park-Berinsfield-Abingdon	Service diversion via Culham Village only (Monday-Saturday)

<b>Service Number</b>	<b>Operator</b>	<b>Contract Termination Terms</b>	<b>Service Description</b>	<b>Subsidy Description</b>
T94	Thames Travel	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	Oxford - Ambrosden - Bicester	Fully Subsidised (Thames Travel operated parts of service 94)
V1	Villager Community Bus	17 weeks' notice, any time	Witney : Market Sq - Smiths Estate - Deer Park - Market Sq	Fully Subsidised
V12	Villager Community Bus	17 weeks' notice, any time	Upper Oddington - Chipping Norton	Fully Subsidised
V14	Villager Community Bus	17 weeks' notice, any time	West Oxfordshire Routes (V14, V20, V21, V23, V24, V25)	Fully Subsidised. Each route runs one day per week, one journey in each direction.
V17	Villager Community Bus	17 weeks' notice, any time	Upper Oddington - Chipping Norton	Wednesday only, portion of the route between Steeple Aston and Chipping Norton subsidised (both directions)
V19	Villager Community Bus	17 weeks' notice, any time	Icomb - Westcotes - Fifield - Wychwoods - Chipping Norton	Fully Subsidised
V20	Villager Community Bus	17 weeks' notice, any time	West Oxfordshire Routes (V14, V20, V21, V23, V24, V25)	Fully Subsidised. Each route runs one day per week, one journey in each direction.
V21	Villager Community Bus	17 weeks' notice, any time	West Oxfordshire Routes (V14, V20, V21, V23, V24, V25)	Fully Subsidised. Each route runs one day per week, one journey in each direction.
V23	Villager Community Bus	17 weeks' notice, any time	West Oxfordshire Routes (V14, V20, V21, V23, V24, V25)	Fully Subsidised. Each route runs one day per week, one journey in each direction.
V24	Villager Community Bus	17 weeks' notice, any time	Upper Oddington - Witney	Thursday only, portion of the route between Leafield and Combe (both directions)
V24	Villager Community Bus	17 weeks' notice, any time	West Oxfordshire Routes (V14, V20, V21, V23, V24, V25)	Fully Subsidised. Each route runs one day per week, one journey in each direction.
V25	Villager Community Bus	17 weeks' notice, any time	West Oxfordshire Routes (V14, V20, V21, V23, V24, V25)	Fully Subsidised. Each route runs one day per week, one journey in each direction.

<b>Service Number</b>	<b>Operator</b>	<b>Contract Termination Terms</b>	<b>Service Description</b>	<b>Subsidy Description</b>
V26	Villager Community Bus	17 weeks' notice, any time	Upper Oddington - Chipping Norton - Leafield - Witney	Monday, Tuesday, and Friday only, portion of the route between Combe and Crawley (both directions)
W10	Go Ride Community Interest Company	17 weeks' notice, any time	Woodstock - Shipton on Cherwell - Kidlington - Woodstock	Fully Subsidised. Part supported by Section 106 funding.
W11	Go Ride Community Interest Company	17 weeks' notice, any time	Woodstock - Bladon - Woodstock	Fully Subsidised. Part supported by Section 106 funding.
W12	Go Ride Community Interest Company	17 weeks' notice, any time	Woodstock - Wootton - Woodstock	Fully Subsidised. Part supported by Section 106 funding.
X1	Thames Travel	17 weeks' notice, any time	OXFORD-DIDCOT-HARWELL CAMPUS-WANTAGE	One morning journey Monday-Friday, Part of the journey that diverts into Ardington Village only
X15	Stagecoach Oxfordshire	17 weeks' notice, any time	Abingdon - Witney	Fully Subsidised. Part supported by Section 106 funding.
X2	Thames Travel	16 weeks' notice, can only be terminated on an "Authorised Change Date"*	OXFORD-ABINGDON-MILTON PARK-DIDCOT	Some - but not all - morning services between Didcot and Wallingford (generally before 9am) and some - but not all - evening services between Abingdon Stratton Way and Wallingford (generally after 7pm) (both directions, Monday-Saturday).
X8	Pulhams Coaches	17 weeks' notice, any time	Kingham - Chipping Norton	Fully Subsidised
X9	Pulhams Coaches	17 weeks' notice, any time	Witney - Charlbury - Chipping Norton	Fully Subsidised

\*There are currently two "Authorised Change Dates" each year. These are "the first Sunday following the late Spring bank holiday Monday and the first Sunday in December". In order to change an "Authorised Change Date", 16 weeks' notice must be given. This effectively means that a contract can be terminated on one of the two dates above, or with around 32 weeks' notice at any time (16 weeks' notice to change the "Authorised Change Date", plus an additional 16 weeks' notice).

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**Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA)**

**Directorate and Service Area: Environment and Economy, The Transport Hub**

**What is being assessed: Proposed changes to subsidised bus services and to the Dial a Ride service in Oxfordshire**

**Responsible owner / senior officer: Sue Scane, Director for Environment and Economy**

**Date of assessment: October 2015**

**Summary of judgement:**

The proposal to reduce or withdraw bus subsidies and cease funding the Dial a Ride service will have an impact across Oxfordshire, but risks particularly affecting rural communities, young people, older people and people with disabilities.

We aim to mitigate against this by working with bus operators to try and keep as many subsidised bus services as possible running. We are recommending that the Cabinet allocate (from the efficiency reserve) £500k of one-off, pump-prime funding for groups to bid for, in order to set-up community transport initiatives which meet an identified transport need in their area. In addition we intend to launch a marketing and direct engagement campaign to raise awareness and support the growth of community transport across Oxfordshire, and increase the number of volunteers and new schemes within the sector.

Our evidence-based approach to reducing bus subsidies ensures that people who have no commercial bus alternative are our highest priority when targeting our remaining budget. Following feedback from the public, we are also recommending that the Cabinet include additional criteria that would further protect rurally isolated and deprived communities, if option 2 were pursued.

Further details on specific risks and mitigations are provided below.

**Detail of Assessment:**

**Purpose of assessment:**

This assessment has been undertaken in order to understand the impact of proposals to reduce or withdraw all funding for subsidised bus services, and cease funding the Dial-a-Ride service, on different groups of people in Oxfordshire. The assessment considers how these changes may affect the people of Oxfordshire – with particular emphasis on groups with the protected characteristics listed below – and how this can be mitigated against.

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 (“the 2010 Act”) imposes a duty on the Council to give due regard to three needs in exercising its functions. This proposal is such a function. The three needs are:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic, and those who do not.

Complying with section 149 may involve treating some people more favourably than others, but only to the extent that that does not amount to conduct which is otherwise unlawful under the new Act.

The need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard to the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages which are connected to a relevant protected characteristic and which are suffered by persons who share that characteristic,
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and which are different from the needs other people, and
- encourage those who share a relevant characteristic to take part in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such people is disproportionately low.
- take steps to meet the needs of disabled people which are different from the needs of people who are not disabled and include steps to take account of a person’s disabilities.

The need to foster good relations between different groups involves having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

These protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership

## **Context / Background:**

On-going cuts in central government funding mean Oxfordshire County Council has to make approximately £290 million of savings between 2010 and 2018.

On top of those savings, we believe we may need to save a further £50 million. These calculations are based on the Government's broad savings targets across the public sector for the new parliament. We will learn more throughout Autumn and Winter in an incremental way about how the Government will make its savings, how these will impact local government in general and then how changes will impact on Oxfordshire County Council specifically.

As part of our efforts to achieve these significant savings, in February 2015, the Council reduced the overall supported transport budget by a fifth (£6.3 million).

We have already identified that we can achieve nearly £3.7m of these savings by running services in a more efficient and integrated way. However, this still leaves a further £2.6 million to save, and possibly more depending on the extent of any future budget reductions from Central Government. We've therefore had to look at the supported transport services which we are not required to provide by law – subsidised bus services and Dial a Ride. If these services are reduced or withdrawn then this will inevitably impact some people in the county.

On 26<sup>th</sup> May 2015, the Cabinet approved the launch of a full public consultation on proposed changes to subsidised bus services and Dial a Ride. The consultation ran between 19<sup>th</sup> June and 15<sup>th</sup> September.

## **Proposals:**

Having taken into account the public's feedback through the consultation, our final recommendations to the Cabinet are as follows:

### **Delivery of the agreed Medium Term Financial Plan savings**

**In order to deliver the savings required in the MTFP, the Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**

1. Consider the consultation feedback regarding subsidised bus services.
2. Proceed with reducing bus subsidies by £2.3 million and:
  - a. Consider the consultation feedback regarding subsidised bus services and decide which services to prioritise – off-peak, peak, or other.
  - b. Update the methodology used for ranking services in the following ways:
    - i. Include additional criteria which ensure that rurally isolated and deprived areas are also prioritised.
    - ii. Agree to continue to pay for (i.e. protect in the methodology) subsidised bus routes which are used to take entitled students from home to school, where on the whole it

is cheaper for us to do so, instead of paying for separate dedicated school transport. (This will vary routes available on a year by year basis as school cohorts change).

iii. Ensure a consistent methodology by treating all providers in the same way, whether they are external providers, OCC fleet or community transport providers.

The impact on subsidised bus services of option 2, if either off-peak or peak services are prioritised, is provided in results tables in Annex B. These tables also show the impact on the results of accepting our recommended changes to the methodology used for ranking bus services, when compared with the previous results we originally consulted on.

3. Cease funding the Dial a Ride service as of April 2016.

If cabinet approves this request, then approximately two-thirds of the subsidies due to be withdrawn would cease in April 2016, and the remaining third would cease in June 2016. The £2.3m savings under option 2 would be realised in financial year 16/17, assuming notice was served in November / December 2015.

The exact details cannot be finalised at this stage due to variables including whether contract renewal renegotiations are required, which could alter costs.

#### **Delivery of further savings subject to Council approval**

4. The withdrawal of all bus subsidies would deliver the full £3.7m savings if the cabinet makes this decision, subject to full council's approval in February 2016 to further reduce the Supported Transport budget.

If Council approves this request, then routes would cease throughout 2016, from April onwards.

#### **Allocation of one-off, pump-prime funding**

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**

5. Allocate (from the efficiency reserve) £500k of one-off, pump-prime funding for groups to bid for, in order to set-up community transport initiatives which meet an identified transport need in their area

#### **Exploring a new approach to Transport**

**The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**

6. Approve the suggested implementation approach, including the request to explore the option of undertaking a larger scale commissioning exercise which includes a range of supported transport services, in addition to subsidised bus services.

Depending on the cabinet's decision on whether to withdraw all bus subsidies, this commissioning exercise will either include the remainder of the subsidy budget, or exclude it if cabinet decides to withdraw all funding.

## **Evidence / Intelligence:**

In total, 2656 responses to the consultation questionnaire were received, as well as numerous emails and letters, 13 detailed submissions and 7 petitions. 275 people attended public and specific stakeholder meetings regarding the proposals we put forward.

As part of ORCC's role as an independent facilitator and advisor during the consultation, they were tasked with reviewing and analysing all the consultation responses which were received and detailing their findings in a report to the Council. The ORCC consultation report details the breakdown of responses to each of the consultation questions, summarises the main reasons people gave for their answers, and draws out common themes and issues which emerged across submissions. ORCC's consultation report can be found in Annex C.

The key findings in ORCC's report are summarised in the final consultation report to the Cabinet, which forms the basis of our recommendations.

### **Proposal 1 – subsidised bus services**

We deliberately pursued an evidence-based approach when developing our proposal to reduce bus subsidies by £2.3m (option 2); following a strict methodical process to calculate which bus subsidies are best value for money, and which are worst value. Feedback from the public has led to a number of recommended changes to this methodology, including adding certain criteria that would prioritise rurally isolated and deprived areas. Details of how and why we have updated the methodology can be found in Annex A, with the results of these changes available in Annex B.

### **Proposal 2 - Dial a Ride**

We know that currently 238 people across Oxfordshire use Dial-a-Ride as a regularly scheduled service. We have reviewed these people (by district) and found that, overall, 215 of them are able to walk. Of these, 160 are within 400 metres walking distance of a bus stop and the majority have concessionary bus passes that allow them free travel at off-peak times.

## **Alternatives considered / rejected:**

### **Subsidised bus services**

When originally developing our proposal to prioritise off-peak services, we also considered different ways we could prioritise services and reduce funding. We considered two other approaches:

- Prioritising services running at 'peak' hours during weekdays (06:30-09:30 in the morning, and 16:00-19:00 in the evening).
- Prioritising services running in the evening and at the weekend, which are commonly used by people to access leisure activities.

When launching the consultation, we provided a table of results which showed how services would be prioritised if we adopted these different approaches.

As we stated at the time, we decided against following these different approaches for a number of reasons:

- While all our subsidies support services which are of value and significance to the communities they serve, the council's first duty is to protect our most vulnerable public transport users. This is part of our overall corporate commitment to provide a 'safety net' of support and resources for our most vulnerable residents.
- Off-peak services are less likely to ever be taken up on a commercial basis by operators, given the relatively low number of people that use them. They are also often cheaper to subsidise than other services, as they run at times when operators have spare vehicles available. This means that prioritising off-peak services leads to more services / service enhancements being protected.
- In contrast to off-peak services, peak hour services are usually far more expensive in terms of their total contract cost because running a peak route often requires a bus company to purchase an additional vehicle.

ORCC's consultation report shows that there was a strong show of support (47%) for our preferred method of targeting remaining funding towards off-peak services, which tend to be used by older people and people with disabilities. Only one quarter of respondents disagreed with this approach, with 20% describing themselves as neutral.

Nonetheless, many people (including neutrals and those in favour of protecting off-peak) raised concerns about reducing peak services, and the impact this would have on young people and commuters in the County, who tend to travel on these services. Many people felt that these services were just as important as off-peak, and also highlighted the potential negative impact on the economy of losing peak services. In light of this, some respondents suggested that we should assess each subsidised service on a case-by-case basis, and consider additional factors such as demand.

Given this lack of consensus, we are not making a recommendation to the Cabinet regarding which type of services to prioritise, but are instead inviting them to consider and weigh up the feedback received.

### **Dial-a-Ride**

We considered maintaining the service as it is. However, we decided to reject this option for a number of reasons:

- We need to find big savings and unfortunately this means looking at services which we aren't required to provide by law.
- Dial a ride users pay an annual subscription fee of £5. This contrasts with people going to Council day centres, who have to pay £5 per journey, and we think this inconsistency is unfair.
- The service uses specialist transport resources which arguably would be better allocated towards higher need SEN (special educational needs) users travelling to school.

- We've already had success setting up an alternative voluntary scheme in the City, and so think this is an option worth pursuing across the rest of the County.

## Impact Assessment:

### Proposal 1 - Subsidised bus services

#### Option 1: withdraw all bus subsidies

**Annex B** provides a table of all subsidised bus services in Oxfordshire – all of which would stop receiving a subsidy under this option. It also shows which services are only partially subsidised, and which parts of the route the subsidy is provided for so that people can see exactly which part of their route is affected by the option.

#### Option 2: reduce bus subsidies by £2.3m

**Annex B** provides a table which sets out the results of reducing funding by £2.3m when taking the following three different approaches:

- **Consultation Option 2:** reduce subsidised bus services by £2.3million, and prioritise off-peak services where possible (the option we consulted on)
- **Updated Option 2 - Off Peak:** reduce subsidised bus services by £2.3million, and prioritise **off-peak** services where possible. In addition, rural services are prioritised and special exemptions made for deprived areas and school routes (additional criteria raised during through consultation)
- **Updated Option 2 - Peak:** reduce subsidised bus services by £2.3million, and prioritise **peak** services where possible. In addition, rural services are prioritised and special exemptions made for deprived areas and school routes (additional criteria raised during through consultation)

There may be instances where our preference would be to "withdraw" and to "retain" subsidies for separate services that are covered by the same contract.

In these cases it is likely that the contract would have to be modified to include only the parts we wish to retain. As a result the contract cost may increase (or decrease). This might mean that service(s) close to "the line" may be affected (potentially withdrawn).

The routes which were not removed would then remain in place until the end of 2016/17. During that time we would undertake a commissioning exercise with the remaining budget, aimed at procuring the best possible subsidised bus transport network for Oxfordshire. This exercise would be outcome-based, guided by the Cabinet's preferred approach for prioritising services, but focused on meeting the identified transport needs of communities, rather than specific routes.

Either option will have an impact on those communities which currently use subsidised bus services. These tend to be rural communities and, in general, those most affected would be people without a public transport alternative or a car. In the

'Impact on Individuals and Communities' section we have assessed the impact of these proposals on four community groups with protected characteristics which we think are potentially particularly at risk: rural communities, young people, older people and people with disabilities.

### Overall mitigation

Under either option we will work with bus operators to try and keep as many services as possible running. We are recommending that the Cabinet allocate (from the efficiency reserve) £500k of one-off, pump-prime funding for groups to bid for, in order to set-up community transport initiatives which meet an identified transport need in their area. In addition we intend to launch a marketing and direct engagement campaign to raise awareness and support the growth of community transport across Oxfordshire, and increase the number of volunteers and new schemes within the sector. Details of a number of community-based schemes which have been proposed during the consultation can be found in ORCC's final report in Annex D.

### **Proposal 2 - Dial-a-Ride**

If our proposal is agreed, we will cease funding for the Dial-a-Ride service as of April 2016 and current users will have to find alternative methods of transport. In the 'Impact on Individuals and Communities' section we have assessed the impact of this proposal on three community groups with protected characteristics which we think are potentially most at risk: rural communities, older people, and people with disabilities.

### Overall mitigation

We are recommending that the Cabinet allocate (from the efficiency reserve) £500k of one-off, pump-prime funding for groups to bid for, in order to set-up community transport initiatives which meet an identified transport need in their area.

We have already been successful in securing a community transport service in Oxford City and will be offering a package of support, including one-off pump-prime funding if made available, to help get new schemes up and running in other parts of the County.

## **Impact on Individuals and Communities:**

### **Subsidised bus services**

#### Rural communities

The majority of subsidised bus services are run in the County's more rural areas. This is because bus subsidies are provided for services which are uneconomical for bus companies to provide on their own, and these tend to fall in rural areas where there are less people, and therefore less prospective passengers than necessary to make a service profitable.

Specific mitigations:

Our methodology for ranking subsidised bus services under option 2 aims to prioritise those services which serve addresses without any commercial bus alternatives, thereby favouring those rural communities most at risk of isolation.

In addition, in light of feedback from the public, we are recommending that the Cabinet update the methodology used for ranking services under option 2 so that rurally isolated communities are further prioritised.

#### Older people and people with disabilities

We know that some older people and people with disabilities rely on public transport to help them stay independent, particularly if they are no longer able to use a car. There is therefore a risk that reducing or withdrawing subsidised bus services will make it harder for some of the County's older people or people with disabilities to stay active and get out and about.

Specific mitigations:

As already stated, our methodology for ranking subsidised bus services under option 2 aims to prioritise those services which serve addresses without any commercial bus alternatives.

In addition, the Cabinet can mitigate the impact on these groups further by choosing to prioritise off-peak services, which tend to be used by older people and people with disabilities, who have concessionary bus passes that allow them free travel on such services.

#### Young people accessing employment

There's a risk that young people currently reliant on a subsidised service – and who are less likely to have the means to own a car – will be hindered in their ability to access employment or training opportunities.

Specific mitigations:

As already stated, our methodology for ranking subsidised bus services under option 2 aims to prioritise those services which serve addresses without any commercial bus alternatives, thereby favouring those communities, including young people, most at risk of isolation.

In addition, in light of feedback from the public, we are recommending that the Cabinet update the methodology used for ranking services under option 2 so that deprived communities (where access to a car is likely to be low) are protected.

We have recently launched a community sector 'Wheels-to-Work' pilot scheme, to provide young people with a means to travel independently to their employment, education or training. Initially the scheme will be run as a pilot in the Vale district in 2015/16, but if proven sustainable it could be extended to the rest of the County in the future.

Under all options we are recommending that cabinet allocate £500k of one-off, pump-prime funding for groups to bid for, in order to set-up community transport initiatives. The allocation of funding and the community transport advertising

campaign will target areas most in need, including the groups we have identified with protective characteristics.

#### Other protected characteristics

We have not identified any other groups with protected characteristics which would be disproportionately affected by these proposals.

#### **Dial-a-Ride**

##### Rural communities

While Dial-a-Ride is a countywide service, those users who live in rural areas are less likely to have a transport alternative if the service is ceased.

Specific mitigation:

We are recommending that the Cabinet allocate (from the efficiency reserve) £500k of one-off, pump-prime funding for groups to bid for, in order to set-up community transport initiatives which meet an identified transport need in their area.

##### Older people and people with disabilities

The service is used by older people and people with disabilities, who predominantly use it to go shopping.

Specific mitigation:

We've looked at those people currently using the service, and have found that 160 of 238 are able to walk and live within 400 metres of a bus stop. We also know that the majority of these people hold a concessionary bus pass that allows them free travel on Oxfordshire's buses during off-peak times.

Therefore, if the Cabinet chooses to retain some subsidised bus services and prioritise off-peak, this will help to mitigate the impact of ceasing to fund Dial a Ride.

Under all options we are recommending that cabinet allocate £500k of one-off, pump-prime funding for groups to bid for, in order to set-up community transport initiatives. The allocation of funding and the community transport advertising campaign will target areas most in need, including the groups we have identified with protective characteristics.

##### Other protected characteristics

We have not identified any other groups with protected characteristics which would be disproportionately affected by this proposal.

<b>Impact on Staff:</b>
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There are no redundancy implications associated with these proposals. This area of work will be assessed after the Cabinet's decision and as part of the Integrated Transport Hub review, which will take place in the New Year.

### **Impact on other Council services:**

None.

### **Impact on providers:**

#### **Bus companies**

If either option is pursued then bus companies will face a reduction or total withdrawal of the money they receive from the Council.

We are in conversation with Oxfordshire's bus operators about these proposals and will continue to keep them abreast of and actively engage them regarding any developments.

Operators have highlighted the fact that removing one subsidised bus route could have a negative knock-on effect on other connected nearby routes (either subsidised or commercial) by reducing the number of bus passengers, and therefore making them less viable to run.

It was also highlighted that that some distinct service numbers use the same bus and driver, forming a single timetable but have been 'scored' as distinct entities in our methodology.

While we recognise that there may be practical benefits to combining routes where they use the same bus and/or driver, this does not necessarily reflect transport need. Rather, it relates to an operational issue around the management of the bus network and configuration of timetables. This can be discussed with operators to attempt to minimise any negative knock-on impacts as much as possible.

We recognise this to be an area of concern for bus users, and will ensure that we properly assess the potential consequences of removing subsidised routes on the wider network, if Cabinet asks us to proceed with reducing subsidies. This will involve us having more detailed discussions with bus operators before any changes are implemented.

#### **Community transport providers**

If our proposals are approved then it's likely that there will be an increased pressure on the community transport sector to provide more journeys.

We are offering a package of support to help existing and new schemes with this potential increase in demand, and are recommending that the Cabinet allocate (from the efficiency reserve) £500k of one-off, pump-prime funding for groups to bid for, in order to set-up community transport initiatives which meet an identified transport need in their area.

**Action plan:**

<b>Action</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>
Continued engagement with bus operators regarding impact of proposals and possible mitigations	On-going	Alexandra Bailey, Service Manager for Supported Transport , OCC
Continued engagement with community transport providers regarding impact of proposals and possible mitigations	On-going	Oxfordshire Rural Community Council and Josephine Elliott. Supported Transport Programme Manager, OCC
Engagement with users of subsidised bus services and Dial-a-Ride to understand impact of proposals and possible mitigations, through public meetings, focus groups and other outreach work	Completed – findings available in Annex C	Oxfordshire Rural Community Council
Assess consultation responses and consider whether any community groups with protected characteristics are disproportionately affected by the proposals	Completed – detailed in this SCIA	Oxfordshire Rural Community Council and Josephine Elliott. Supported Transport Programme Manager, OCC
Update SCIA throughout consultation process as and when relevant feedback is provided	Completed	Josephine Elliott, Supported Transport Programme Manager, OCC

**Monitoring and review:**

**Person responsible for assessment: Alexandra Bailey, Supported Transport Service Manager, OCC**

Version	Date	Notes (eg Initial draft, amended following consultation)
V1.0	June 2015	First draft
V2.0	October 2015	Final version - updated following closure of the consultation
V3.0	October 2015	Paper updated following legal input

Final Version	October 28 2015	Updated following further legal input
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Division(s): NA

## CABINET – 10 November 2015

### Treasury Management Mid-term review 2015/16

#### Report by Chief Finance Officer

#### Introduction

1. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA's) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (Revised) 2011 recommends that members are informed of Treasury Management activities at least twice a year. This report ensures this authority is embracing Best Practice in accordance with CIPFA's recommendations.
2. The following annexes are attached
  - Annex 1 Lending List Changes
  - Annex 2 Debt Financing 2015/16
  - Annex 3 PWLB Debt Maturing
  - Annex 4 Prudential Indicator Monitoring
  - Annex 5 Arlingclose Quarter 2 Benchmarking

#### Strategy 2015/16

3. The approved Treasury Management Strategy for 2015/16 was based on an average base rate forecast of 0.625%.
4. The Strategy for borrowing continued to provide the option to fund new or replacement borrowing up to the value of 25% of the portfolio through internal borrowing.
5. The Strategy included the continued use of pooled fund vehicles with variable net asset value.

#### External Context – Provided by Arlingclose

6. As the year began, economic data was largely overshadowed by events in Greece. Markets' attention centred on the never-ending Greek issue, which stumbled from turmoil to crisis, running the serious risk of a disorderly exit from the Euro. The country's politicians and the representatives of the 'Troika' of its creditors - the European Commission (EC), the European Central Bank (ECB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – barely saw eye to eye. Greece failed to make a scheduled repayment to the IMF on 30th June, in itself not a default until the IMF's Managing Director declares it so. Prime Minister Tsipras blindsided Greece's creditors by calling a referendum on 5th July on reform proposals which by then were off the table anyway. The European Central Bank froze liquidity assistance provided to Greek banks and capital controls within the country severely restricted individuals' and corporates' access to cash.

7. On 12th July, following a weekend European Union Summit, it was announced that the terms for a third bailout of Greece had been reached. The deal amounting to €86 billion was agreed under the terms that Greece would see tax increases, pension reforms and privatisations; the very reforms Tsipras had vowed to resist. This U-turn saw a revolt within the ruling Syriza party and on 27th August, Alexis Tsipras resigned from his post as Prime Minister of Greece after just eight months in office by calling a snap election, held on 20th September. This gamble paid off as Tsipras led his party to victory once again, although a coalition with the Independent Greeks was needed for a slim parliamentary majority. That government must now continue with the unenviable task of guiding Greece through the continuing economic crisis – the Greek saga is far from over.
8. The summer also saw attention shift towards China as the Shanghai composite index (representing China's main stock market), which had risen a staggering 50%+ since the beginning of 2015, dropped by 43% in less than three months with a reported \$3.2 trillion loss to investors, on the back of concerns over growth and after regulators clamped down on margin lending activity in an effort to stop investors borrowing to invest and feeding the stock market bubble. Chinese authorities intensified their intervention in the markets by halting trading in many stocks in an attempt to maintain market confidence. They surprised global markets in August as the People's Bank of China changed the way the yuan is fixed each day against the US dollar and allowed an aggressive devaluation of the currency. This sent jitters through Asian, European and US markets impacting currencies, equities, commodities, oil and metals. On 24th August, Chinese stocks suffered their steepest one-day fall on record, driving down other equity markets around the world and soon becoming known as another 'Black Monday'. Chinese stocks have recovered marginally since and are trading around the same level as the start of the year. Concerns remain about slowing growth and potential deflationary effects.
9. **UK Economy:** The economy has remained resilient over the last six months. Although economic growth slowed in Q1 2015 to 0.4%, year/year growth to March 2015 was a relatively healthy 2.7%. Q2 2015 GDP growth bounced back and was confirmed at 0.7%, with year/year growth showing slight signs of slowing, decreasing to 2.4%. GDP has now increased for ten consecutive quarters, breaking a pattern of slow and erratic growth from 2009. The annual rate for consumer price inflation (CPI) briefly turned negative in April, falling to -0.1%, before fluctuating between 0.0% and 0.1% over the next few months. In the August Quarterly Inflation Report, the Bank of England projected that GDP growth will continue around its average rate since 2013. The Bank of England's projections for inflation remained largely unchanged from the May report with them expecting inflation to gradually increase to around 2% over the next 18 months and then remain there in the near future. Further improvement in the labour market saw the ILO unemployment rate for the three months to July fall to 5.5%. In the September report, average earnings excluding bonuses for the three months to July rose 2.9% year/year.
10. The outcome of the UK general election, largely fought over the parties' approach to dealing with the consequences of the structural deficit and the pace of its removal, saw some very big shifts in the political landscape and put the key issue of the UK's relationship with the EU at the heart of future politics.
11. The US economy slowed to 0.6% in Q1 2015 due to bad weather, spending cuts by energy firms and the effects of a strong dollar. However, Q2 GDP showed a large improvement at a twice-revised 3.9% (annualised). This was largely due to a broad recovery in corporate investment alongside a stronger performance from consumer and government spending and

construction and exports. With the Fed's decision on US interest rate dependent upon data, GDP is clearly supportive. However it is not as simple as that and the Fed are keen to see inflation rise alongside its headline economic growth and also its labour markets. The Committee decided not to act at its September meeting as many had been anticipating but have signalled rates rising before the end of the year.

12. **Market reaction:** Equity markets initially reacted positively to the pickup in the expectations of global economic conditions, but were tempered by the breakdown of creditor negotiations in Greece. China led stock market turmoil around the globe in August, with the FTSE 100 falling by around 8% overnight on 'Black Monday'. Indices have not recovered to their previous levels but some improvement has been seen. Government bond markets were quite volatile with yields rising (i.e. prices falling) initially as the risks of deflation seemingly abated. Thereafter yields fell on the outcome of the UK general election and assisted by reappraisal of deflationary factors, before rising again. Concerns around China saw bond yields dropping again through August and September. Bond markets were also distorted by the size of the European Central Bank's QE programme, so large that it created illiquidity in the very markets in which it needed to acquire these bonds, notably German government bonds (bunds) where yields were in negative territory.

## Treasury Management Activity

### Debt Financing

13. Oxfordshire County Council's debt financing to date for 2015/16 is analysed in Annex 2.
14. The Council's cumulative total external debt has decreased from £399.38m on 1 April 2015 to £394.38m by 30 September 2015, a net decrease of £5m. No new debt financing has been arranged during the year. The total forecast external debt as at 31 March 2016, after repayment of loans maturing during the year, is £393.38m. The forecast debt financing position for 31 March 2016 is shown in Annex 2.
15. At 30 September 2015, the authority had 66 PWLB<sup>1</sup> loans totalling £344.38m and 10 LOBO<sup>2</sup> loans totalling £50m. The combined weighted average interest rate for external debt as at 30 September 2015 was 4.50%.

### Maturing Debt

16. The Council repaid £5m of maturing PWLB loans during the first half of the year. The details are set out in Annex 3.

### Debt Restructuring

17. There has been no restructuring of Long Term Debt during the year to date.

<sup>1</sup> PWLB (Public Works Loans Board) is a Government agency operating within the United Kingdom Debt Management Office and is responsible for lending money to Local Authorities.

<sup>2</sup> LOBO (Lender's Option/Borrower's Option) Loans are long-term loans which include a re-pricing option for the bank at predetermined intervals.

## Investment Strategy

18. The security and liquidity of cash was prioritised above the requirement to maximise returns. The Council continued to adopt a cautious approach to lending to financial institutions and continuously monitored credit quality information relating to counterparties.
19. During the first half of the financial year short term fixed deposits of up to 12 months have been placed with banks and building societies. Deposits over twelve months have been made with other local authorities, the primary purpose of which was to provide diversification away from bank and building society deposits.
20. The Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy for 2015/16 included the use of external fund managers and pooled funds to diversify the investment portfolio through the use of different investment instruments, investment in different markets, and exposure to a range of counterparties. It is expected that these funds should outperform the Council's in-house investment performance over a rolling three year period. The strategy permitted up to 50% of the total portfolio to be invested with external fund managers and pooled funds (excluding Money Market Funds).
21. The performance of the pooled funds will continue to be monitored by the Treasury Management Strategy Team (TMST) throughout the year against respective benchmarks and the in-house portfolio. The TMST will keep pooled funds under review, including ensuring appropriate diversification and the consideration of alternative investment and fund structures, to manage overall portfolio risk.

## The Council's Lending List

22. The Council's in-house cash balances were deposited with institutions that meet the Council's approved credit rating criteria. The approved Lending List was updated during the period to incorporate additional counterparties. Changes were reported to Cabinet on a bi-monthly basis. Annex 1 shows the amendments incorporated into the Lending List during the first half of 2015/16, in accordance with the approved credit rating criteria.
23. All three credit ratings agencies have reviewed their ratings in the first six months of the year to reflect the loss of government support for most financial institutions and the potential for varying loss given default as a result of new bail-in regimes in many countries. Despite reductions in government support many institutions have seen upgrades due to an improvement in their underlying strength and an assessment that that the level of loss given default is low.
24. Fitch reviewed the credit ratings of multiple institutions in May. Most UK banks had their support rating revised from 1 (denoting an extremely high probability of support) to 5 (denoting external support cannot be relied upon). Despite this, Lloyds Banking Group received a one notch upgrade.
25. Moody's concluded its review in June and upgraded the long-term ratings of Close Brothers, Standard Chartered Bank, Goldman Sachs International, HSBC, Coventry Building Society, Nationwide Building Society, Svenska Handelsbanken and Landesbank Hessen-Thuringen.

26. Standard & Poor's (S&P) reviewed UK and German banks in June downgrading Barclays' long-term rating to A- from A. S&P has also revised the outlook of the UK as a whole to negative from stable, citing concerns around a planned referendum on EU membership and its effect on the economy.
27. At the end of July, the council's treasury advisors Arlingclose advised an extension of recommended durations for unsecured investments in certain UK and European institutions following improvements in the global economic situation and the receding threat of another Eurozone crisis. A similar extension was advised for some non-European banks in September, with the Danish Danske Bank also being included as a new recommended counterparty.
28. In the six months to 30 September 2015 there were no instances of breaches in policy in relation to the Council's Lending List. Any breaches in policy will be reported to Cabinet as part of the bi-monthly financial monitoring.

### **Investment Performance**

29. Security of capital has remained the Authority's main investment objective. This has been maintained by following the Authority's counterparty policy as set out in its Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy for 2015/16.
30. The average daily balance of temporary surplus cash invested in-house in the six months to 30 September was £331.75m. The Council achieved an average in-house return for that period of 0.76%, exceeding the budgeted rate of 0.70% set in the strategy. This has produced gross interest receivable of £1.25m.
31. Temporary surplus cash includes; developer contributions; council reserves and balances; trust fund balances; and various other funds to which the Council pays interest at each financial year end, based on the average three month London Interbank Bid (LIBID) rate.
32. The Council uses the three month inter-bank sterling bid rate as its benchmark to measure its own in-house investment performance. During the first half of 2015/16 the average three month inter-bank sterling rate was 0.45%. The Council's average in-house return of 0.76% exceeded the benchmark by 0.31%. The Council operates a number of call accounts and instant access Money Market Funds to deposit short-term cash surpluses. The average balance held on overnight deposit in money market funds or call accounts in the 6 months to 30 September was £57.5m or 17.3% of the total in house portfolio.

### **External Fund Managers and Pooled Funds**

33. The Council continued to use pooled funds with variable net asset value. Weighted by value pooled fund investments produced an overall annualised return of 0.74% for the period. These investments are held with a long-term view and performance is assessed accordingly.
34. Gross distributions from pooled funds have totalled £0.14m in the six months to 30 September. This brings total income, including gross interest receivable to £1.39m for the period.

35. In September 2015 the TMST approved the decision to sell approximately one quarter of the Council's £20m initial investment in the Threadneedle Strategic Bond Fund, due to a decrease in the size of the fund. The sale resulted in a realisable gain of £0.26m, which represents an annualised return of 3.29% since the initial investment.
36. Having reviewed further investment options the TMST approved the decision to invest a further £5m in the CCLA Local Authorities' Property Fund in September 2015.

### **Prudential Indicators for Treasury Management**

37. The position as at 30 September 2015 for the Prudential Indicators is shown in Annex 4.

### **External Performance Indicators and Statistics**

38. The County Council is a member of the CIPFA Treasury and Debt Management benchmarking club and receives annual reports comparing returns and interest payable against other authorities. The benchmarking results for 2014/15 showed that Oxfordshire County Council had achieved an average investment return of 1.15% compared with an average of 0.77% for their comparative group of 40 members.
39. The average interest rate paid for all debt during 2014/15 was 4.54%, with an average of 4.23% for the comparative group of 40 members. It should be noted that all of Oxfordshire County Council's debt is long-term, whereas the averages for the comparators include short-term debt which has a lower interest rate and so reduces the averages. Oxfordshire County Council had a higher than average proportion of its debt portfolio in PWLB loans at 87% compared to 74% for the all member group. Oxfordshire County Council had 13% of its debt in LOBO loans at 31 March 2015 compared with an average of 17% for the comparative group.
40. Arlingclose also benchmark the Council's investment performance against its other clients on a quarterly basis. The results of the quarter 2 benchmarking to 30 September 2015 are included in annex 5.
41. The benchmarking results show that the Council was achieving higher than average interest on deposits at 30 September 2015, when compared with a group of 121 other local authorities. This has been achieved by placing deposits over a longer than average duration with institutions that are of higher than average credit quality.
42. Oxfordshire had a higher than average allocation to external funds, fixed and local authority deposits when compared with other local authorities in the benchmarking exercise. Oxfordshire also had a notably lower than average exposure to money market funds, call accounts and certificates of deposit.

### **Training**

43. Individuals within the Treasury Management Team continued to keep up to date with the latest developments and have attended a number of external workshops and conferences.

## **Financial and Legal Implications**

44. Interest payable and receivable in relation to Treasury Management activities are only two parts of the overall Strategic Measures budget.
45. The 2015/16 budget for interest receivable is £2.06m. The forecast outturn for interest receivable and returns on investments is £2.72m, giving net forecast excess income of £0.66m. The increased forecast is due to a combination of higher average cash balances and higher average interest rates than originally forecast. In addition to stronger distributions from pooled funds than originally forecast.
46. Interest payable is currently forecast to be in line with the budgeted figure of £18.2m.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

47. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the report, and to RECOMMEND Council to note the Council's Mid-Term Treasury Management Review 2015/16.**

LORNA BAXTER  
Chief Finance Officer

Contact officer: Lewis Gosling – Financial Manager (Treasury Management)  
Contact number: 01865 323988

November 2015

**Lending List Changes during 2015/16****Counterparties added/reinstated**

<b>Counterparty</b>	<b>Lending Limit</b>	<b>Maximum Maturity</b>
Santander 95 day notice a/c	£15m	6 mths
Bank of Scotland	£15m	9 mths
Barclays current a/c	£15m	100 days
Barclays 100 day notice a/c	£15m	100 days
Danske Bank	£15m	100 days

**Counterparties suspended**

<b>Counterparty</b>
Goldman Sachs International Bank

**Lending limits & Maturity limits increased**

<b>Counterparty</b>	<b>Lending Limit</b>	<b>Maximum Maturity</b>
Close Brothers Ltd	£15m	6 mths*
Coventry Building Society	£15m	6 mths*
Nationwide Building Society	£15m	6 mths*
Santander UK PLC	£15m	6 mths*
Landesbank Hessen-Thuringen	£20m	6 mths*
Lloyds Bank Plc	£25m	9 mths*
HSBC Bank Plc	£25m	364 days*
Rabobank Group	£25m	364 days*
Svenska Handelsbanken	£25m	364 days*
Bank of Montreal	£25m	364 days*
Bank of Nova Scotia	£25m	364 days*
Canadian Imperial bank of Commerce	£25m	364 days*
Royal Bank of Canada	£25m	364 days*
Toronto-Dominion Bank	£25m	364 days*

\*Indicates limit changed.

**Lending limits & Maturity limits decreased**

No Counterparty limits have been decreased between 1 April 2015 and 30 September 2015.

## OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL DEBT FINANCING 2015/16

<u>Debt Profile</u>		£m
1. PWLB	87%	349.38
2. Money Market LOBO loans	17%	<u>50.00</u>
3. Sub-total External Debt		399.38
4. Internal Balances	0%	<u>-27.31</u>
<b>5. Actual Debt at 31 March 2015</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>372.07</b>
6. Government Supported Borrowing		0.00
7. Unsupported Borrowing		12.55
8. Borrowing in Advance		0.00
9. Minimum Revenue Provision		<u>-15.60</u>
<b>10. Forecast Debt at 31 March 2016</b>		<b>369.02</b>
<u>Maturing Debt</u>		
11. PWLB loans maturing during the year		-6.00
12. PWLB loans repaid prematurely in the course of debt restructuring		<u>0.00</u>
<b>13. Total Maturing Debt</b>		<b>-6.00</b>
<u>New External Borrowing</u>		
14. PWLB Normal		0.00
15. PWLB loans raised in the course of debt restructuring		0.00
16. Money Market LOBO loans		<u>0.00</u>
<b>17. Total New External Borrowing</b>		<b>0.00</b>
<u>Debt Profile Year End</u>		
18. PWLB	87%	343.38
19. Money Market LOBO loans	13%	<u>50.00</u>
20. Sub-total External Debt		393.38
21. Internal Balances	0%	<u>-24.36</u>
<b>22. Forecast Debt at 31 March 2016</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>369.02</b>

## Line

- 1 – 5 This is a breakdown of the Council's debt at the beginning of the financial year (1 April 2015). The PWLB is a government agency operating within the Debt Management Office. LOBO (Lender's Option/ Borrower's Option) loans are long-term loans, with a maturity of up to 60 years, which includes a re-pricing option for the bank at predetermined time intervals. Internal balances include provisions, reserves, revenue balances, capital receipts unapplied, and excess of creditors over debtors.
- 6 'Government Supported Borrowing' is the amount that the Council can borrow in any one year to finance the capital programme. This is determined by Central Government, and in theory supported through the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) system.
- 7 'Unsupported Borrowing' reflects Prudential Borrowing taken by the authority whereby the associated borrowing costs are met by savings in the revenue budget.
- 8 'Borrowing in Advance' is the amount the Council borrowed in advance to fund future capital finance costs.
- 9 The amount of debt to be repaid from revenue. The sum to be repaid annually is laid down in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, which stipulates that the repayments must equate to at least 4% of the debt outstanding at 1 April each year.
- 10 The Council's forecast total debt by the end of the financial year, after taking into account new borrowing, debt repayment and movement in funding by internal balances.
- 11 The Council's normal maturing PWLB debt.
- 12 PWLB debt repaid early during the year.
- 13 Total debt repayable during the year.
- 14 The normal PWLB borrowing undertaken by the Council during 2015/16.
- 15 New PWLB loans to replace debt repaid early.
- 16 The Money Market borrowing undertaken by the Council during 2015/16
- 17 The total external borrowing undertaken.
- 18-22 The Council's forecast debt profile at the end of the year.

**Long-Term Debt Maturing 2015/16****Public Works Loan Board: Loans Matured during first half of 2015/16**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Amount £m</b>	<b>Rate %</b>
30/04/2015	4.000	9.75%
13/07/2015	0.500	2.35%
31/07/2015	0.500	2.35%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5.000</b>	

**Public Works Loan Board: Loans Due to Mature during second half of 2015/16**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Amount £m</b>	<b>Rate %</b>
13/01/2016	0.500	2.35%
29/01/2016	0.500	2.35%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.000</b>	

**Prudential Indicators Monitoring at 30 September 2015****Authorised and Operational Limit for External Debt**

Authorised limit for External Debt	£490,000,000
Operational Limit for External Debt	£480,000,000
Capital Financing Requirement for year	£406,298,000

	<b>Actual 30/09/2015</b>	<b>Forecast 31/03/2016</b>
Borrowing	£394,382,618	£393,382,618
Other Long-Term Liabilities	£40,000,000	£40,000,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£434,382,618</b>	<b>£433,382,618</b>

**Fixed Interest Rate Exposure**

Fixed Interest Net Borrowing limit	150.00%
Actual at 30 September 2015	153.63%

**Variable Interest Rate Exposure**

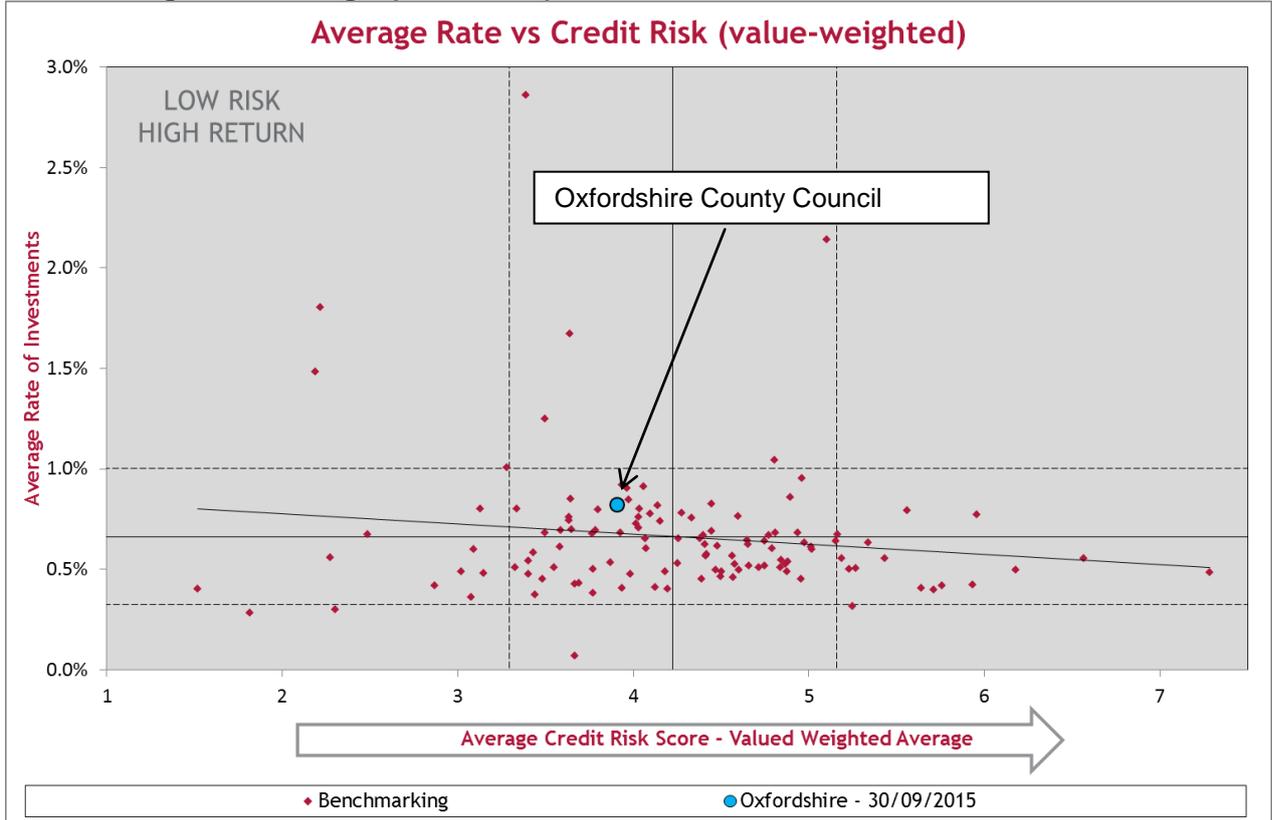
Variable Interest Net Borrowing limit	25.00%
Actual at 30 September 2015	-62.74%

**Sums Invested over 365 days**

Total sums invested for more than 364 days limit	£150,000,000
Actual sums invested for more than 364 days	£ 59,000,000

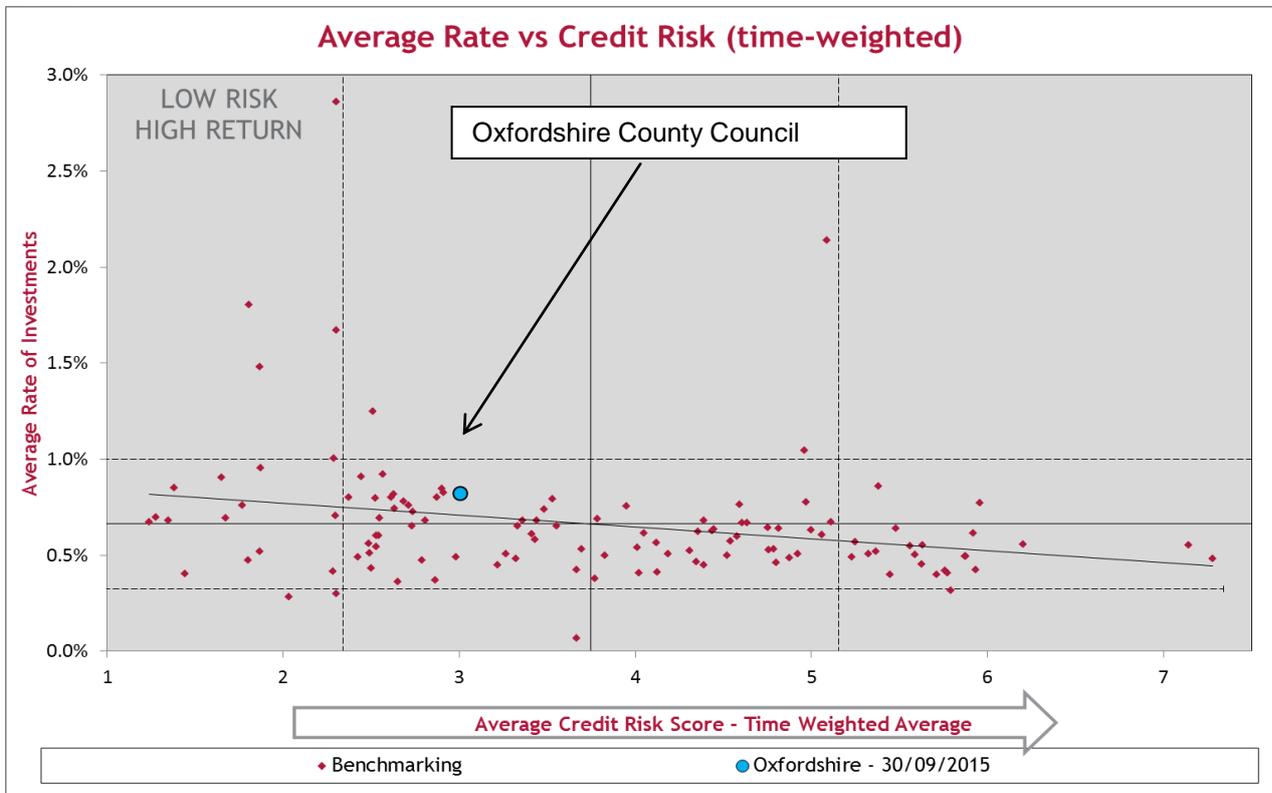
**Maturity Structure of Borrowing**

	<b>Limit %</b>	<b>Actual %</b>
Under 12 months	0 - 20	7.86
12 – 24 months	0 - 25	2.28
24 months – 5 years	0 - 35	17.50
5 years to 10 years	5 - 40	11.66
10 years +	50 - 95	60.70



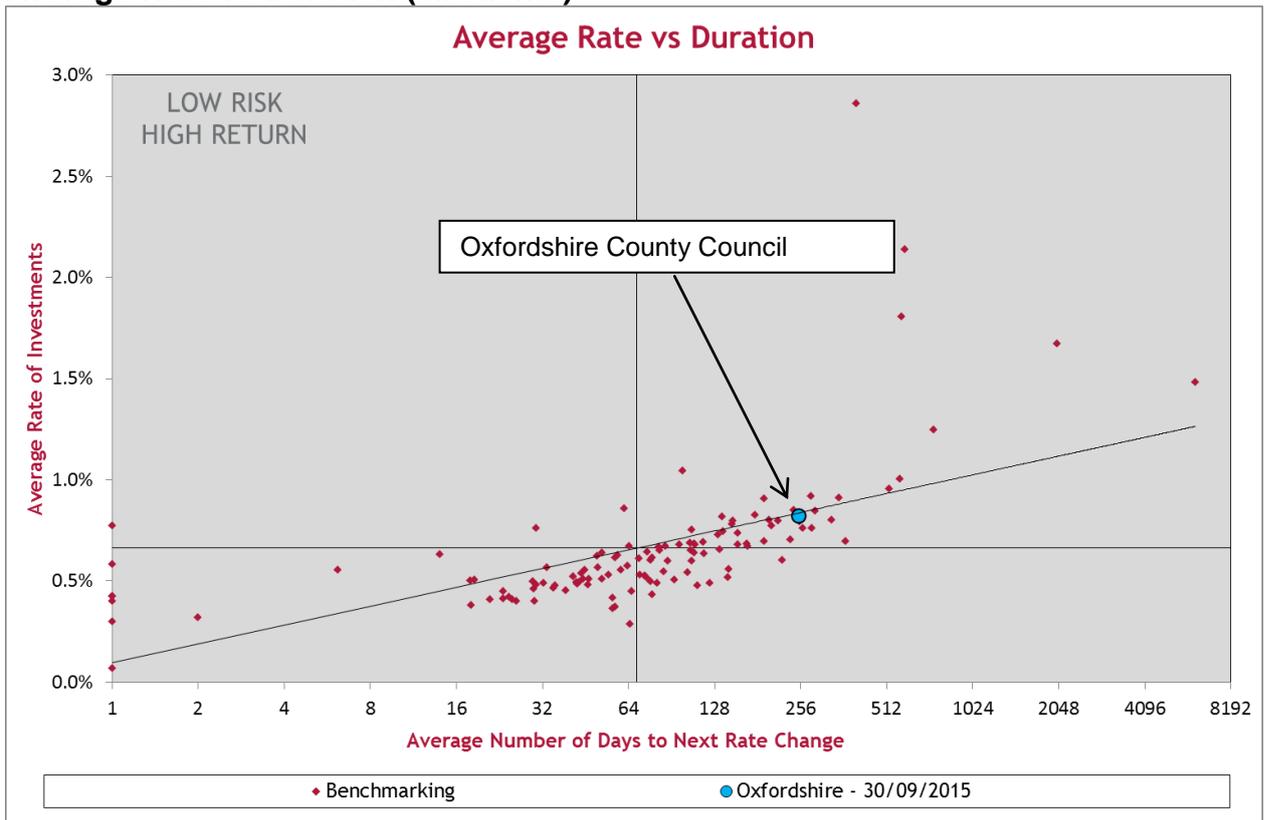
This graph shows that, at 30 September 2015, Oxfordshire achieved a higher than average return for lower than average credit risk, weighted by deposit size.

**Time weighted Average (all clients)**



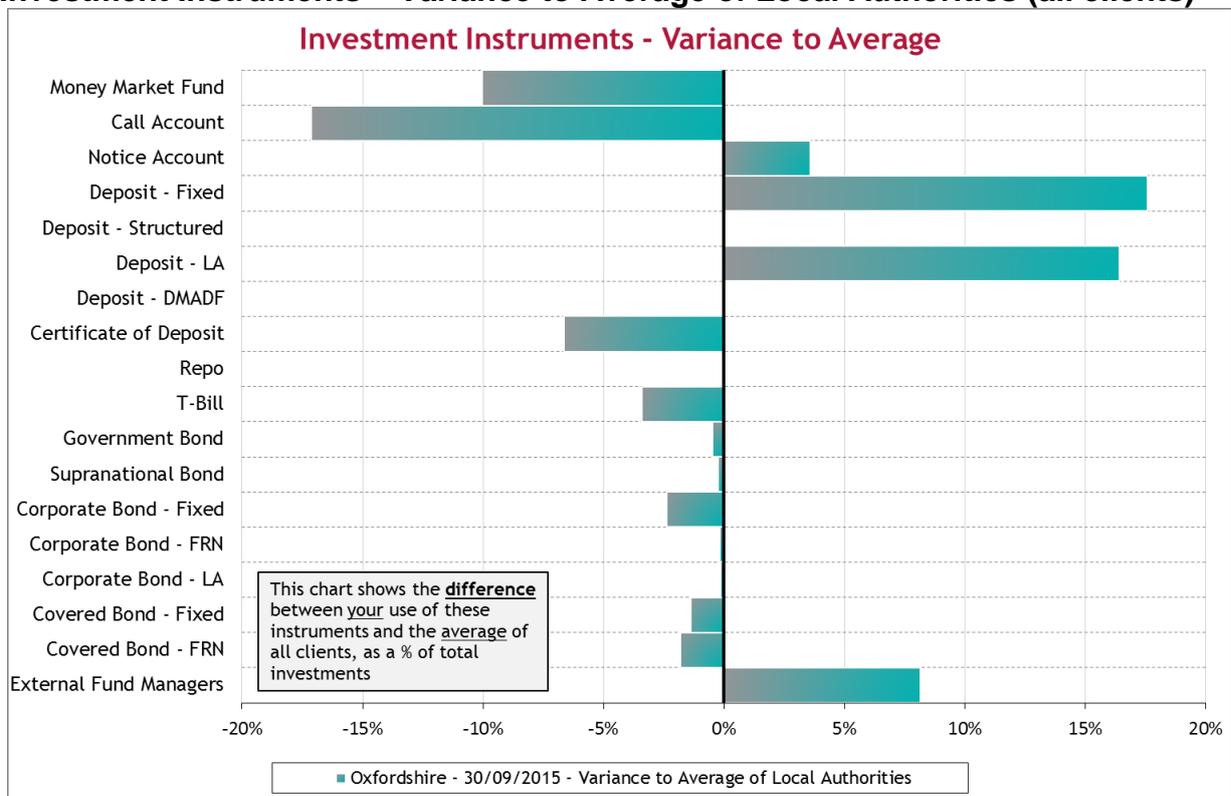
This graph shows that, at 30 September 2015, Oxfordshire achieved higher than average return for lower than average credit risk, weighted by duration.

### Average Rate vs Duration (all clients)



This graph shows that, at 30 September 2015, Oxfordshire achieved a higher than average return by placing deposits for longer than average duration.

### Investment Instruments – Variance to Average of Local Authorities (all clients)



This graph shows that, at September 2015, Oxfordshire had notably higher than average allocation to external funds, fixed and local authority deposits when compared with other local authorities. Oxfordshire also had notably lower exposures to money market funds, call accounts and certificates of deposit.

## CABINET – 10 NOVEMBER 2015

### STAFFING REPORT – QUARTER 2 2015/16

**Report by Chief HR Officer**

#### **Introduction**

1. This report provides an update on staffing numbers and related activity for the period 1 July 2015 to 30 September 2015. Progress will be tracked throughout the year on the movement of staffing numbers from those reported at 31 March 2015 as we continue to deliver our required budget savings. We also continue to track reductions since 1 April 2010 to reflect the impact on staffing numbers as we progress with our Business Strategy.

#### **Current numbers**

2. The staffing number (FTE) as at 30 September 2015 was 3569.68 employed in post. These figures exclude the school bloc. We continue to monitor the balance between full time and part time workers to ensure that the best interests of the Council and the taxpayer are served. The numbers as at 30 September 2015 were as follows - Full time 2556 and Part time 1849. This equates to the total of 3569.68 FTE employed in post.
3. The changes in staffing numbers since 31 March 2015 are shown in the table below. A breakdown of movements by directorate for this financial year is provided at Annex 1.

	FTE Employed
Reported Figures at 31 March 2015 – Non-Schools	3865.68
Changes – actual	-296.00
Reported Figures at 30 September 2015 – Non-Schools	3569.68

## **Quarter 2 Update**

4. We remain committed to redeploying displaced staff wherever possible. This is getting more difficult as staffing numbers reduce across the Council and there was only one redeployment this quarter.
5. An HR approval process is in place to ensure rigorous challenge takes place before any new post is created/existing vacancy is filled by recruitment. In addition, managers are being asked to consider alternatives to recruitment and make the best use of the resources they already have where the work has to continue.
6. We recognise that operational services are critical and cannot be left without any cover. Prudent use of agency staff is therefore deployed to ensure continuity of service. In common with all employers, the council deploys agency staff as cover for instances of maternity leave, illness and short-term gaps in recruitment when a permanent member of staff has left the council and their permanent replacement is not due to arrive until sometime after.
7. The cost of agency staff this quarter was reported as £2,353,641 which is a significant increase to the previous quarter. This is the first quarter expenditure has been processed through the Integrated Business Centre with Hampshire. The coding structure through Hampshire does not allow for any further breakdown of spend. This, together with some incorrect coding by service areas has resulted in an artificially high figure. This is being investigated via our HR Business Partners with a view to securing a more accurate picture of agency spend in the future.
8. We will continue to track progress on staff number movements during the year ahead. The overall reduction in FTE employed in Quarter 2 is 4.4%. This means that we have seen a reduction of 32.44% in FTE employed since 31 March 2010 (1,714 posts)

## **Accountability**

10. Staffing numbers continue to be monitored rigorously. All new posts are reviewed by the Deputy Directors.

## **Recommendation**

11. The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the report.

STEVE MUNN  
Chief HR Officer

Contact Officer: Sue James, HR Officer, 01865 815465.  
October 2015

<b>DIRECTORATE</b>	<b>FTE Employed at 30 September 2015</b>	<b>Changes in FTE Employed since 31 March 2015</b>	<b>Cost of Agency Staff * £</b>
<b>CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b>	#REF!	#REF!	975,731
<b>PUBLIC HEALTH</b>	#REF!	#REF!	8,905
<b>SOCIAL &amp; COMMUNITY SERVICES</b>	#REF!	#REF!	658,505
<b>COMMUNITY SAFETY</b>	#REF!	#REF!	0
<b>ENVIRONMENT &amp; ECONOMY</b>	#REF!	#REF!	229,267
<b>OXFORDSHIRE CUSTOMER SERVICES</b> (excluding Cultural Services)	#REF!	#REF!	278,368
<b>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE</b>	#REF!	#REF!	202,865
<b>CULTURAL SERVICES</b>	#REF!	#REF!	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	#REF!	#REF!	2,353,641

Please note: Where employees are absent eg on maternity leave or long term sick and have been temporarily replaced, both the absent employee and the temporary employee will have been counted.

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Division(s): N/A

## CABINET – 10 NOVEMBER 2015

### FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS

#### Items identified from the Forward Plan for Forthcoming Decision

Topic/Decision

Portfolio/Ref

#### Cabinet, 15 December 2015

- **Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) Strategy**  
To seek approval of the HWRC strategy. Cabinet,  
Environment  
2015/105
- **2015/16 Financial Monitoring & Business Strategy  
Report - October 2015**  
Financial report on revenue and capital spending against budget  
allocations, including virements between budget heads. Cabinet, Finance  
2015/066
- **Service & Resource Planning Report - 2016/17 -  
December 2015**  
To provide an update on the service and resource planning  
process for 2016/17. Cabinet, Finance  
2015/067

#### Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families, 14 December 2015

- **Proposed Expansion of Christopher Rawlins CE (VA)  
Primary School, Adderbury**  
Whether to support the proposal to expand Christopher Rawlins  
CE (VA) Primary School in Adderbury by 0.5 forms of entry. Cabinet Member  
for Children,  
Education &  
Families,  
2015/069

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