

“Option 24/7” - background

- Prepared by Graham Ellis and other team members, 23rd January 2016 for informal briefing of interested community parties
- Please see <http://option247.uk> for more details

Background to public transport

Current system / service / operation

- **commercial buses**
- **part subsidised buses**
- **subsidised buses**
- **community buses**

- **health and social**
- **school**
- **link scheme**
- **works**

- **trains**
- **taxis**
- **Ambulances**

Issues (1)

- **individual routes / operations**
- **poor connections**
- **poor information**
- **complex ticketing / no through ticketing**
- **multiple vehicles on same flow**
- **profit motive can work against service motive**
- **reduced subsidy funding**
- **need for sudden subsidy where commercial service finishes**
- **little impetus to look at new markets**
- **"false" peak just after 09:30**

Issues (2)

- **Individual travellers look narrowly at their own journey**
- **No community bus partnerships / hard to get interest**
- **local authorities squeezed for money**
- **some operators will go bust if subsidies withdrawn**
- **concessionary fares don't pay their own costs**
- **ever increasing expense of running bus fleets**

People use and need buses!

Yet around 7 million journeys a year in Wilts, 2.5 million on subsidised services

Possible Solutions (1)

Cut subsidy / services requiring subsidy

- cuts out real vital journeys
- adds costs to other budgets far in excess of cost of subsidy
- sends some operators to the wall
- removes feeds to commercial routes
- damages towns served (average shop spend from each bus passenger 17.62)
- downward spiral. Halving service quarters journey opportunities.

Possible solutions (2)

Transfer to community Transport

- doesn't save costs in the end
- lack of capacity and drivers
- need for micro-managed operations / adds cost
- reliability, connection, planning issues
- volunteers don't want to handle cash and electronic tickets

Possible Solutions (3)

Operate public bus routes/services under contract

- **joined up thinking; connecting routes; simpler tickets.**
- **duplication removed / services specified to cover social need too**
- **competition at contract level not individual passenger level**
- **operators 'frightened' but could plan ahead if system adopted**
- **Marketing useful / selling whole product not just a route**
- **law changes make this an ever more available option**

The suggestion in Wiltshire

In Wiltshire, we presented the third "Quality Bus" option at pre-consultation.

"Document was formally presented to Ian White on the night of the Chippenham pre-consultation Bus Workshop. A copy was also presented to Horace Prickett that night, and Paul Johnson and [] went through it in detail with him. [] also presented the idea to my table, which included Rob Murphy."

Ian White, head of passenger transport at Wiltshire Council at that time, has since retired.

"We never received a formal response from WC. However, there are references to Quality bus partnerships and contacts on pages 25/26 of the 53 page consultation reference, with regards the views of Bus Users UK."

Wiltshire has a lot RIGHT

The council's consultation reference document and FAQ are excellent documents as they highlight the importance of bus services to people - see our links page for copies. (<http://option247.uk/links.html>)

They also lay out the current finances and details as an excellent presentation of where we're starting from and the scale of the issue

Options offered in consultation

Option 1 - cut funding for all EVENING services

Option 2 - cut funding for all SUNDAY services

Option 3 - cut funding for strategic services / reduce to half frequency

Option 4 - reduce rural daily buses to 2 or 3 a day, withdraw infrequent services

Option 5 - reduce town buses to 2 to 3 a day.

Option 6 - withdraw all subsidy. Spend a little on community and health transport

A seventh option - "cut funding for all WEEKEND and evening services" has been talked about by counsellor Phillip Whitehead (the responsible councillor) on the BBC, but is not included in the formal consultation.

Not offered in the consultation

There are no options offered that look at the replanning of services to meet current and future needs, or for optimising bus routes or significant marketing.

The role of the local authority

- **Under section 63 of the Transport Act 1985, English local authorities outside London have a duty to provide subsidised bus services where there are no commercial services and where they think it appropriate.**
- **A council is entitled to take account of the funding that is available in deciding what, if any, level of service is provided.**

So what can be done?

There IS scope, though, for significant savings to be made through looking at the network as a whole as presented last summer, but not included as an option. This would give an overall more rounded, better service for the future.

We have called this “option 247” because it looks at requirements everywhere, all day, every day as a complete integrated public transport system and not at individual subsidised routes, and competing commercial operations, all looking only within their objectives and not at the wider travel requirements they should be there to serve.

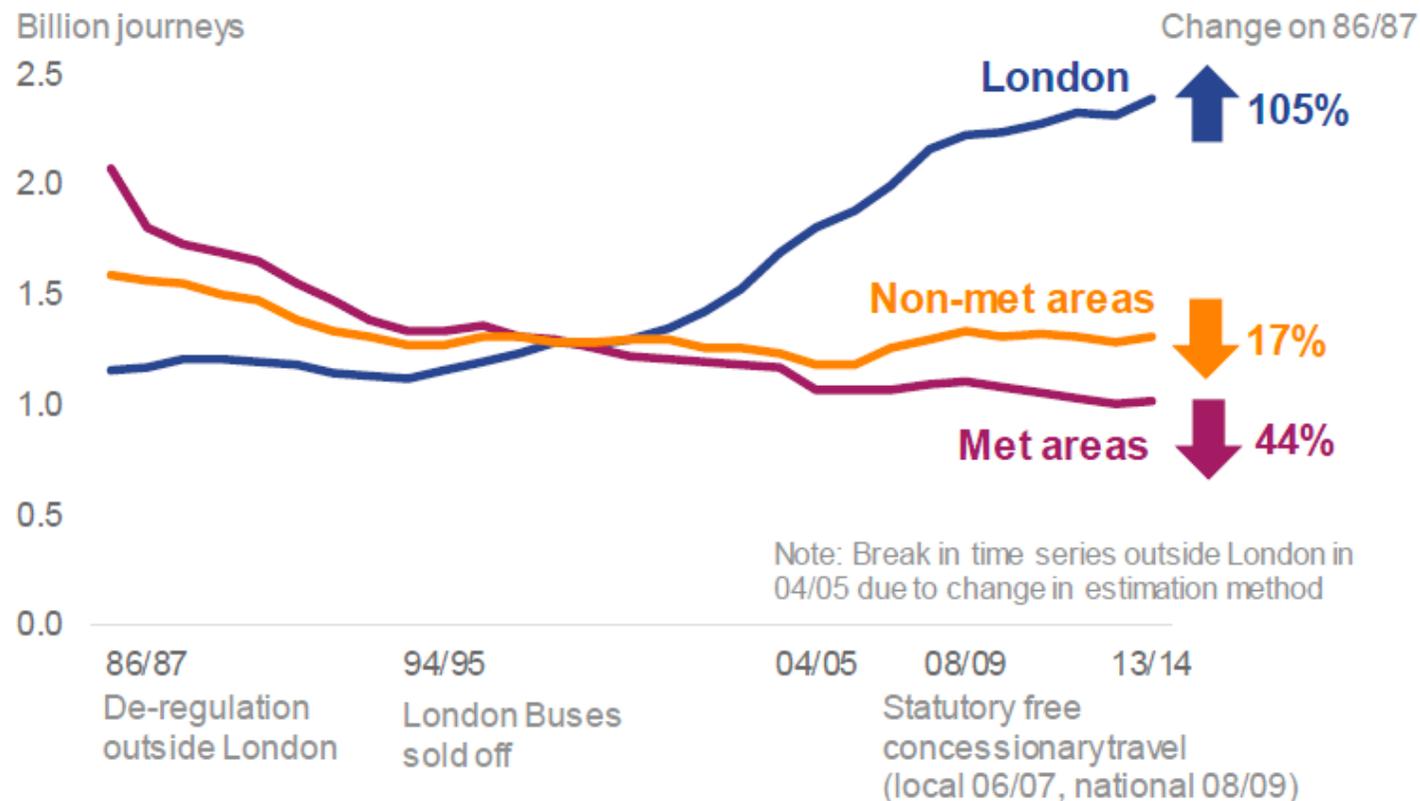
<http://option247.uk>

How this worked for Poole

Bournemouth and Poole "BUS passengers in Poole are jumping on the vehicles in greater numbers than ever before. In 12 months over 2014/15 a total of 10.2 million passengers were carried by buses in the borough, an increase of more than 400,000 journeys on the previous year. Figures show that the number of passenger journeys in Poole has almost doubled since 2004/5 from 5.3 million."

How this worked for London

Number of bus passenger journeys since 1985/86



Moving us forward?

Can we overcome the following?

- **Individual travellers look narrowly at their own journey**
- **No community bus partnerships / hard to get interest**

How do we do it?

How do we go about it?

Based on our prior experience, we can split down the activities we'll be involve in to four stages:

1. Make decision makers aware there's a case to look at (for option 24/7)
2. Get that case thoroughly looked at and evaluates, and agree what's appropriate
3. Work to gain whatever is appropriate
4. Work to retain that appropriate service

Bus users (1)

**Using the
bus to link
to the train?**

Brilliant.

You don't have to cut bus
services to save money.
There is another option.



www.option247.uk



Bus Users (2)

**Using public
transportation
to get to a job?**

That works.

You don't have to cut bus
services to save money.
There is another option.



Bus Users (3)

**Getting the bus into town
to meet my friends and do
some shopping.**

Easy.

You don't have to cut bus services to save money.
There is another option.



www.option247.uk



Bus Users (4)

Public transportation to a game? Perfect match.



You don't have to cut bus services to save money.

There is another option.



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Bus Users (5)

**Patients using the bus to
come to this surgery?**

Well, well, well.

You don't have to cut bus services to save money.
There is another option.



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Where now?

THAT's the £2.6 million question
to be asked at this meeting!