



**West  
Northamptonshire  
Council**

## **Give us your views on the interim bus policy priorities**

### **Overview**

We are developing a new interim bus policy, and we would like your view on the priorities we have identified.

The feedback we receive from this will help us to shape the interim bus policy and feed into the development of a future Local Transport Plan.

### **Background**

West Northamptonshire Council supports several local bus services, works with community transport operators to enable connectivity in rural areas, and supports the Concessionary Scheme that provides free travel for eligible residents.

A short-term local bus policy is being developed as part of a review of current provision. An interim bus policy will enable the Council to maintain support for local bus services and the communities they serve until a new Local Transport Plan is developed and adopted around late 2024, early 2025.

### **Further information**

Buses are the most used form of public transport in England, meeting the needs of old and young, rural and urban communities, and help to support the prosperity of towns and cities. Unfortunately, many bus services have noticed a decline in customers, as well as increased running costs, particularly since the Covid pandemic.

In response to a request from the Department of Transport, we have reviewed the local bus network and how we can best support it to provide key local links. Most local bus services are operated on a commercial basis with the council having little control over them. A small number of services are contracted by the council, but the funding for this is limited. The new bus policy will guide decisions on how we spend this funding to best meet residents and visitors travel needs.

The journey is just starting in West Northamptonshire, with new government funding and staff resources becoming available, and a partnership between the council and local bus operators established to both protect and enhance existing local bus networks, as well as encouraging a step change in provision.

Because most local bus services within West Northamptonshire are operated on a commercial basis without direct financial support, a partnership is essential to bring key

stakeholders and our community together, bringing the best outcomes to bus providers and the customers they serve.

## **Related documentation**

A detailed two part report on existing provision has been produced to inform the new policy and guide implementation, and has been discussed with councillors and our Scrutiny Committee prior to this consultation.

- Bus Network Review commissioned technical report 1 (ModernGov), available at <https://westnorthants.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s13253/Bus%20Network%20Review%20-%20Report%20One.pdf>
- Bus Network Review commissioned technical report 2 (ModernGov), available at <https://westnorthants.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s13254/Bus%20Network%20Review%20-%20Report%20Two.pdf>

## **What are we consulting on?**

We would like views on the three priorities we have identified for the interim bus policy and would like to know if they would be supported. We would also like to hear if you have any other thoughts about local bus services.

We are seeking this feedback from anyone that uses or has an interest about this service, residents, and providers of local transport.

## **How to provide your views**

You can give us your feedback through completion of this form. Alternatively, you can complete an online survey available at <https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com/travel-choices/interim-bus-policy/>

The survey should only take a few minutes to complete.

If you have any queries, comments or would like a copy of the questionnaire in another format can contact us at [BusandRail.NCC@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:BusandRail.NCC@westnorthants.gov.uk)

**This consultation closes at midnight Sunday 12 November 2023.**

## **What happens next?**

Your feedback will be part of a report with other people's feedback, you will not be personally identified.

All responses will be considered and will help to shape decisions by the council on the development of the interim bus policy which will be in place until a Local Transport Plan is developed and adopted.

The findings of the consultation will be published and presented to Council in early 2024.

For information about how consultation and engagement responses are managed, please see the consultation and engagement privacy notice.

For information on how your personal data is managed, please see the Consultation and Engagement privacy notice available at <http://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/service-privacy-notice/consultation-and-engagement-privacy-notice>

## **Give us your views**

### **About you**

Are you responding as: (please select one option)

- A resident in West Northamptonshire
- A visitor to West Northamptonshire
- A local bus provider
- A representative of a community or voluntary group
- A representative of a town or parish council
- A West Northamptonshire Council Councillor
- Other (please detail below)

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Organisation**

Please only complete this part if you are part of an organisation/group, local bus provider, or representative of a town or parish council.

Name of organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your role: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Your views**

We are keen to see if the priorities that we have identified for our interim bus policy would be supported. The priorities are:

- Priority 1: The Council will encourage the commercial operation of local public transport services, through partnership working and infrastructure investment
- Priority 2: Where there are unmet needs and gaps in the commercial bus network provision, the Council will seek solutions through supported local bus services or community transport initiatives, where funding is available and it is consistent with Council policies and priorities
- Priority 3: The Council will fund and administer concessionary travel for elderly and disabled residents in line with national regulations



## About you

As an organisation, we collect specific demographic information from the people who participate in our consultations or complete surveys to build up an accurate understanding of the communities that we serve so that services and policies can be delivered to meet the needs of everybody, and ensure that everybody has an opportunity to have their voice heard.

These questions are completely optional. Please feel free to leave any questions which you do not wish to answer.

Any information you chose to provide will be treated confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation.

Are you:

- Male
- Female
- Other, please state below
- Prefer not to say
- Other, please state: \_\_\_\_\_

How old are you?

- 0 to 9
- 10 to 19
- 20 to 29
- 30 to 49
- 50 to 64
- 65 to 74
- 75+
- Prefer not to say

Do you have a disability?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

If 'Yes', please tick the appropriate box(es) which best describes your disability?

- Mental Health

- Physical Disability
- Hearing Impairment
- Learning Disability
- Sight Impairment
- Other

What is your religion or belief?

- None
- Christian
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh
- Buddhist
- Prefer not to say
- Any other religion (please state): \_\_\_\_\_

How would you describe your ethnic origin?

\_\_\_\_\_

If you are 16 or over which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?

- Bisexual
- Gay Man
- Gay Woman / Lesbian
- Heterosexual
- Prefer not to say
- Other

Is your gender identity the same as the sex you were registered with at birth?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

What would you describe your marital status as?

- Married
- Single
- Civil Partnership
- Co-habiting / Living together
- Widow / Widower
- Other
- Prefer not to say

## **Thank you for taking part in this survey**

Please return this form to:

Interim Bus Policy  
West Northamptonshire Council  
The Guildhall  
St Giles' Square  
Northampton  
NN1 1DE

Alternatively, please scan and email to: [BusandRail.NCC@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:BusandRail.NCC@westnorthants.gov.uk)