

Appendix 1 - Scottish Borders Bus Network Review – Summary of Recommendations



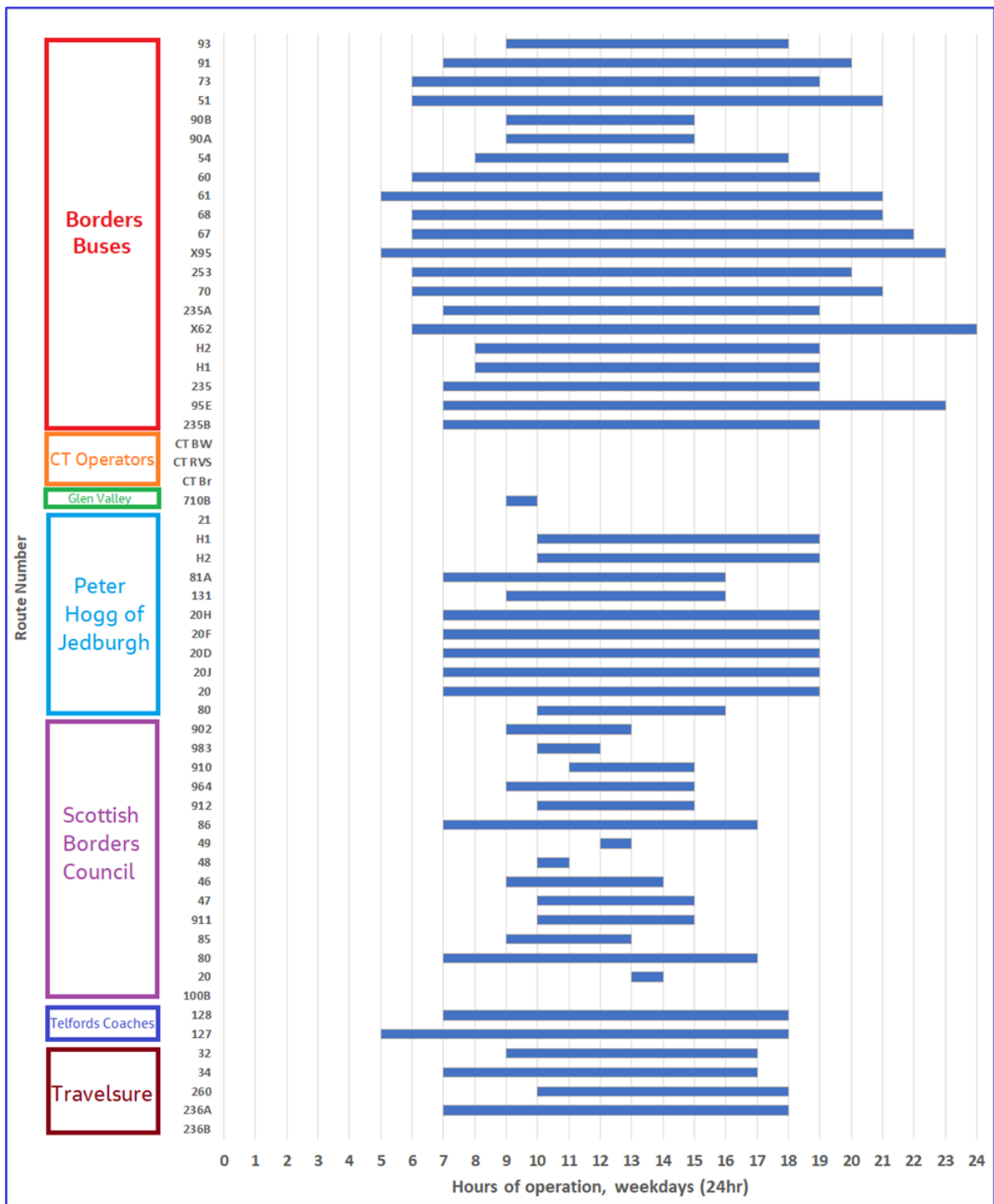
Scottish Borders
Bus Network Review

Appendix 2 – SWOT Analysis of Current Bus Network

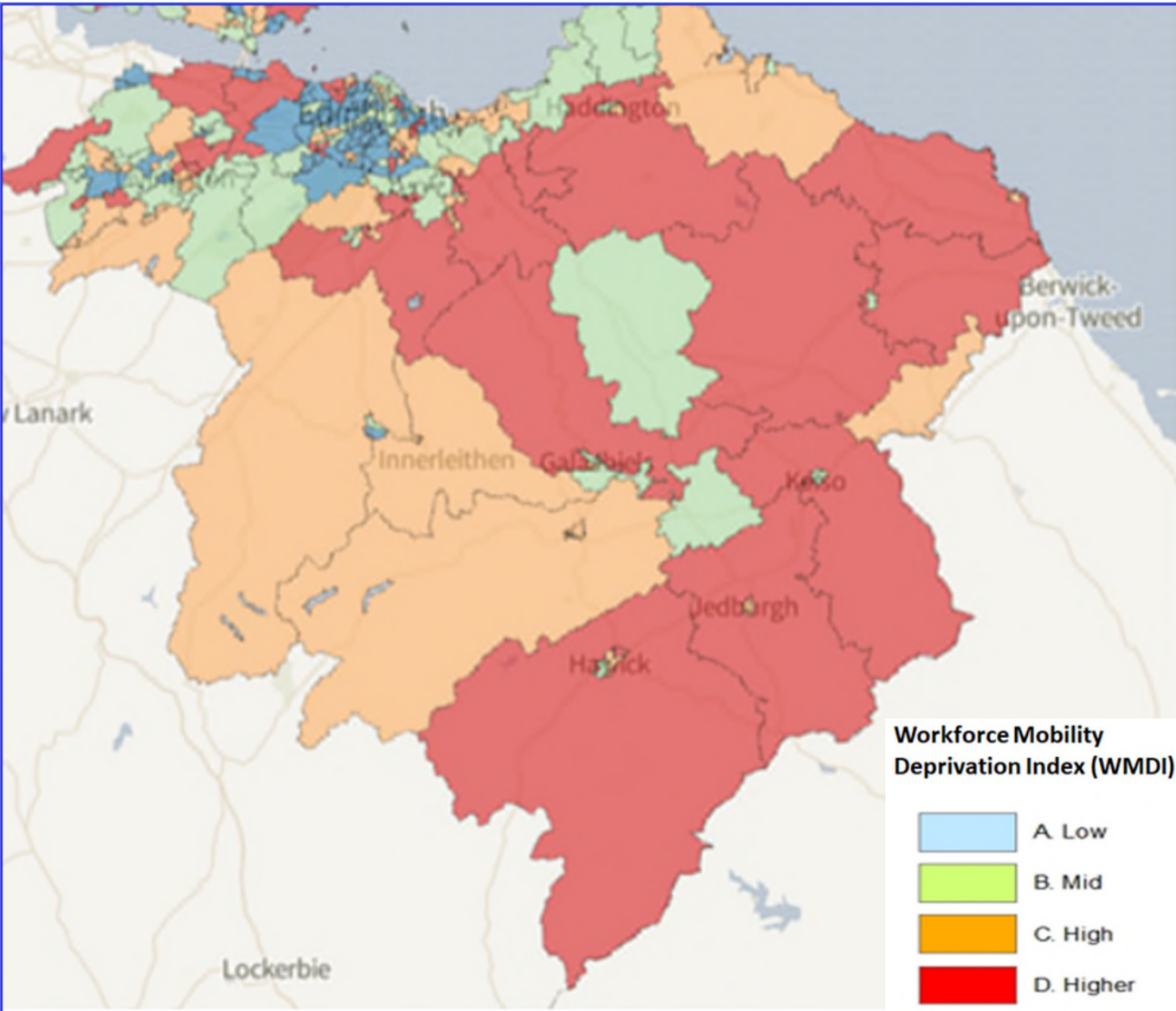
| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Buses are essential for many people to access employment, services and other key social needs, and well-liked by many of its users ▪ The bus network provides significant social, economic and environmental benefits (quantified in Section Error! Reference source not found.) ▪ The extant bus network connects all main settlements of the Borders with at least reasonable weekday daytime frequency, as well as providing town services within the main settlements ▪ Scheduled bus services are complemented by a broad range of more specialist provision, including demand-responsive and community transport services ▪ Many people are eligible for free bus travel ▪ The Borders has a major operator (Borders Buses) who is willing to invest in bus services in the region and innovates (e.g. Borders Buses app, Pingo, bikes on buses) ▪ There is some good infrastructure supporting bus services (notably including Galashiels interchange) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The settlement pattern of the Borders makes it challenging to serve by public transport, as there are no dominant demand corridors ▪ Journey patterns are highly dispersed, meaning it is difficult for bus to serve a high proportion of them, and bus is used for only a relatively small proportion of journeys ▪ Many residents of the Borders do not have good access by bus to employment, services, healthcare or other key needs, for reasons including buses not operating on appropriate routes or at appropriate times, and not being able to access a nearby bus stop ▪ Most bus services are not commercially viable, and rely on on-going public revenue funding which is scarce ▪ The network is highly dependent on concessionary users, which may distort demand from fare-paying passengers ▪ Few bus services operate early or late in the day, or in some of the rural areas away from main routes ▪ Bus service reliability is perceived by many users to be a regular problem ▪ There is limited competition for contracts between operators, which is likely to increase costs to SBC ▪ There is no consistency of specialist transport provision (different areas have different provision) and it is proving challenging for the CT sector to maintain its operations ▪ Demand for bus use in the Borders was significantly impacted by Covid, and the long-term patronage effects remain uncertain ▪ For those people that have access to one, there are few disincentives for using car for journeys in the Borders ▪ SBC is probably investing less per person in its bus network than is typical amongst other comparable Scottish authorities |

| Opportunities | Constraints |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An effective and attractive bus network is supported by a broad range of national, regional and local policies ▪ Growth in use of the bus network could help more people in the Borders access jobs, education, healthcare and other key needs using a sustainable transport mode, benefiting the region's economy, social inclusion and carbon emissions ▪ Most journeys in the Borders are local, and there is potential for the bus network to serve more of them ▪ More journeys by bus could be encouraged and enabled, using options including improving access to bus stops and increasing awareness of services ▪ Full uptake of the Under-22 concessionary pass should promote bus use by more people ▪ Rebuilding of demand back closer to pre-Covid levels, especially for older/disabled concessionary passengers ▪ Joint working with partners outside the bus industry (e.g. NHS Borders, Borders College) to share vehicle assets and encourage use of bus could enable improved efficiencies ▪ Better integration of school transport services with the main scheduled network may also be able to improve efficiencies ▪ Make use of the opportunities that new data sources, especially employee travel pattern data and movement data tracked by mobile phones, provide to understand demand for transport in the region | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SBC funding for bus services is being reduced at a time of significant cost pressures on operators, so there is a high risk of service withdrawals ▪ Withdrawal of Scottish Government NSG+ funding places a further cost pressure on operators ▪ The ageing population of the Borders is likely to increase demand for more specialist transport provision ▪ Usage of bus services is influenced by many external factors, including car ownership and use, and there are presently few incentives not to use car for journeys in the Borders for those people that have access to one ▪ There is a lack of partnership working ethos between relevant organisations (SBC, operators, employers, communities, etc) ▪ The challenges that the bus industry is facing to recover patronage from the effects of Covid ▪ Increased cost of living reduces demand for travel |

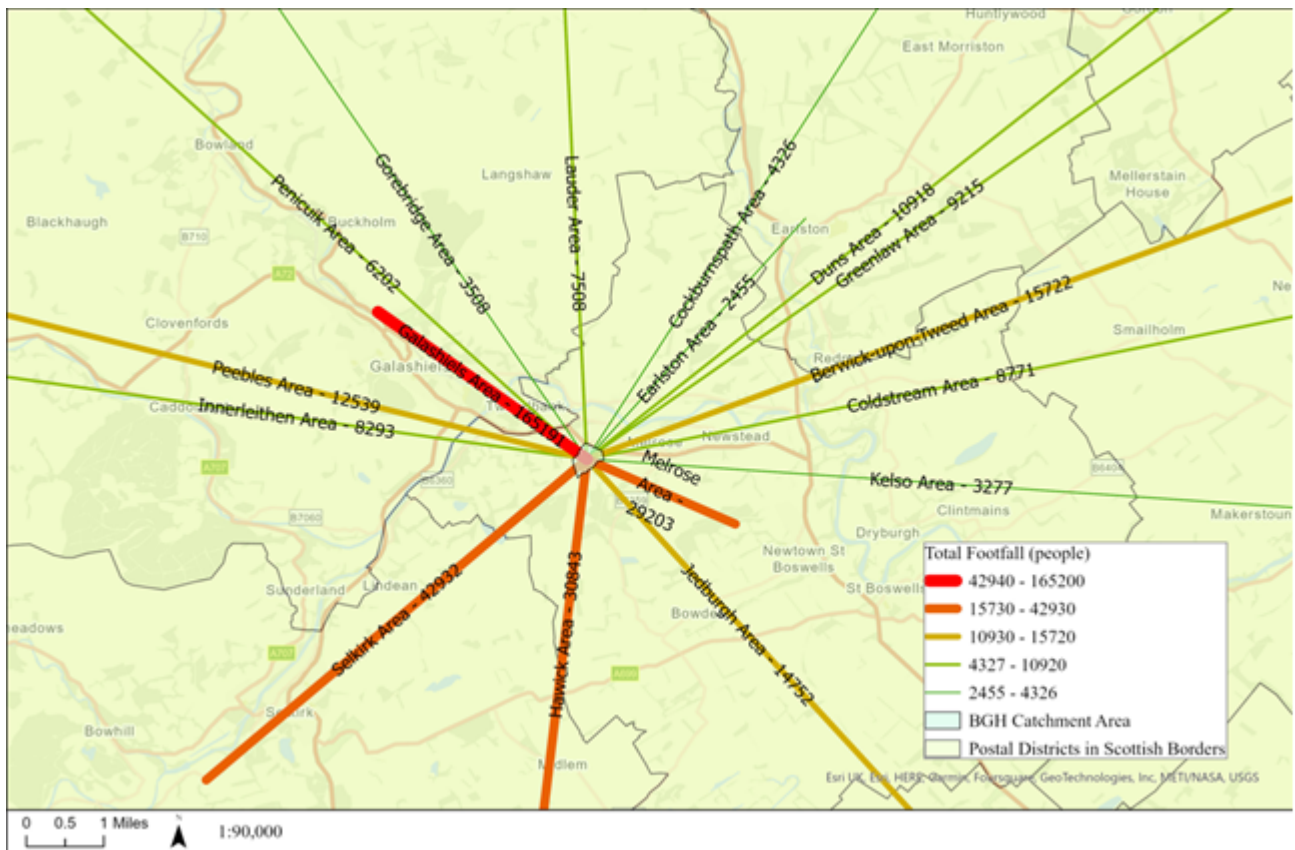
Appendix 3 – Current Bus Network – Hours of Operation



Appendix 4 - Workforce Mobility Deprivation Index



Appendix 5 – Mobile Phone Data Example – Borders General Hospital 2022



Appendix 6 – Individual Stakeholder Feedback

In total 1,103 surveys responses received were from individuals, see below:

- 81% were 'current bus users within the Scottish Borders region'.
- 38% typically travel by bus several times a month
- 31% who travel by bus once a month or less
- 24% travel by bus several times a week
- 7% travel by bus daily
- 95% indicated typically using timetabled bus services
- 5% use door-to-door bus services.
- 32% indicated the bus was the most convenient travel option
- 30% indicated they had no alternative transport option
- 33% use bus for leisure and recreation
- 24% use bus for shopping
- 20% use bus for appointments

Appendix 7 – Community Engagement Feedback - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Challenges

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|---|--|
| <p>PINGO demand-responsive service Innovations such as Wi-Fi, USB charging and Bike on Bus Under 22 concessionary pass has allowed many young people to keep using buses for study and work A positive customer service ethos and community feel of bus operators Galashiels Transport Interchange Investment in Borders Buses vehicle quality Real Time information infrastructure improvements</p> | <p>Lack of evening service Timetables that change on Fridays to accommodate school times Confusing timetables and passenger information, especially at stops Quality of some service vehicles Quality of stop infrastructure, with insufficient shelters and poor lighting Journey times to main population centres Cost of fares, especially for families or groups of people travelling together Frequency and reliability of some services Damage to vehicles caused by poor road conditions Links to GP's and BGH</p> |
| Opportunities | Threats |
| <p>Expansion of PINGO or similar services into other parts of the Scottish Borders. Better integration of PINGO and Community Transport with Scheduled bus services. Better integration of bus and train timetables interoperability of ticketing. Optimising timetables to enable more people to travel to work by bus. Improve timetable presentation and passenger information. Increase provision of card / contactless payment. Register school services. Using bus services to transport school pupils to/from Borders College. Future partnership working with Borders College, BGH and other employers. Continued access to demand data through the Workforce Mobility Project to continually review data and network performance. PowerBi data analysis for service data that has been set up by the Workforce Mobility Project.</p> | <p>Setting up interoperable ticket system which is easy to use and is accepted by operators as fair and equitable. Availability of drivers. High cost of fuel. Ultra-low emission vehicles not considered practical in rural areas like the Borders. Driver recruitment issues across all operators affecting the ability to deliver service provision. Getting patronage back up to pre-covid levels. Under 22 free bus travel scheme reduces income for bus operators and services. Reducing Government subsidy. Reducing Council budgets and savings requirements. Increasing cost of living. Community Transport coordination and performance management to review value for money and service to the communities. Community Transport driver recruitment. Demographics of the Borders. Road network.</p> |

Appendix 8 – Procurement Approach

- The procurement will be delivered through an 'Open' tender process, enabling any operator in the UK market to submit a bid for the available contracts in the Scottish Borders.
- Each route will be procured as a separate contract, to allow smaller operators to compete for all available routes.
- There will be the option for bidders to propose multiple route discounts if they are successfully at winning 2 or more service route contracts ('Multi Lot' discount); and
- The proposed contract length will be 5 years, with up to three single year additions, variations of which to be agreed between PTU and the operator if the operators are performing in accordance with the contract and specification. The length of the contract is important if Scottish Borders Council want to enable operators to invest in fleet development to help transition to a Net-Zero future. Also, the commitment for longer contracts provides greater operational certainty for operators and could attract more operators to the region.
- The Workforce Mobility project has commissioned the TAS Partnership to undertake the following activities to support the Council's procurement process:
 - Create new Conditions of Contract for all of the proposed services in the Bus Network Review, which included fixed route and demand responsive solutions, building on industry best practice from around the UK;
 - Create a new set of network timetables that reflect the recommendations of the Bus Network review that will form part of the new contracts specifications.
 - Create a new operational specification for every route and service to be procured.
 - Create a set of data standards that the operators must comply with to enable the Passenger Transport team to continually review route performance in a proactive manner, utilising the PowerBi automated analysis that has been set up.
 - Create a set of Key Performance Indicators that operators must adhere to that allow the future performance monitoring of the services and some linked to contractual actions to stimulate performance.
 - Draft the technical procurement questions for the procurement process.
 - Support Scottish Borders Council with the tender queries, tender assessment, and award process; and
 - Finalise the contracts and specifications following the procurement exercise, prior to award.

Appendix 9 – Bus Network Review – Additional Recommendations

The Scottish Borders Bus Network Review – Summary of Recommendations is provided in **Appendix 1** and provided further detail on the highlights identified in this report. There are a number of additional recommendations for the Passenger Transport Team to consider in the medium to long term, but below is a list of considerations for Scottish Borders Council to consider as part of this report:

- a) Develop and maintain a data-driven approach to understanding the performance of, and potential to make improvements to, the network, with sufficient capacity and expertise within SBC's Passenger Transport Team to deliver this;
- b) SBC should continue to access and utilise demand data from the county's workforce and mobile phones (as supplied by the Workforce Mobility Project) for continued network performance analysis and decision making.
- c) Seek to enhance SBC's long-term investment of revenue funding for bus services, recognising that cost pressures are likely to lead to a reduction of what can be delivered per pound invested in future years, resulting in a reduction in economic activity for the region;
- d) SBC should seek to improve bus stop infrastructure at busier stops (for bus boardings) where extant provision is relatively poor. It should analyse data on bus boardings and work with operators and community representatives to identify which stops are most worthy of improvement such as the installation of real time information screens which will enhance the information available to the public with regards to bus times. The Council has already obtained external funding to deliver real time information screens at a number of stops across the region. It should test the market for whether there are worthwhile opportunities for revenue raising from advertising on bus shelters.
- e) It is recommended that SBC invests to improve walking/wheeling routes between bus stops and key destinations in locations where road crossings are a concern, or where there is a significant community which does not currently have a safe route. It should analyse available data on gaps between communities and bus stops, then work with operators and community representatives to identify which stops are most worthy of improvement. It is also recommended that SBC pilot the provision of cycle parking infrastructure at some bus stops which meet the criteria set out in the Bus Network Review report.
- f) Utilise the demand data collected to identify and deliver Active Travel infrastructure to improve rural, remote rural access to the sustainable transport network; and
- g) Identify and support the development of bike on bus solutions to increase the reach of 'first mile / last mile' accessibility to the fixed route networks.
- h) SBC should work to develop detailed proposals and identify funding to deliver improvements to bus-bus interchange locations.
- i) Monitor the effectiveness of the Smarter Choices, Smarter Places (SCSP) funded evening bus service pilot, and work to expand to other services if proven successful;

- j) SBC should invest in the marketing and promotion of bus services as there is direct correlation with increased patronage and income (up to 15% patronage growth, equating to up to £175k of increase income to operators). Sharing costs with those operators that would benefit from the increased use, with focus given to:
- i. Raising awareness of new/amended services;
 - ii. Promoting bus use to people that have had a significant change in their journey needs;
 - iii. Promoting use of services that are marginally commercial;
 - iv. Encouraging previous users 'back to bus'.
 - v. Increasing the awareness of the comfort of modern bus fleet;
 - vi. Work with business to promote services and align shift timings with service provision.
- k) Promote the use of bus services for leisure purposes;
- l) SBC should seek to work in partnership with operators to improve two-way information flow to help SBC manage the bus network and jointly identify opportunities for service or network enhancements. Making best use of available data would be dependent on increased capacity within SBC's Passenger Transport team.
- m) Support any operator that is seeking to adopt a more sustainable bus fleet.
- n) Support the growth of the community transport sector where this can be demonstrated to deliver cost-effective and reliable transport particularly for people unable to make use of scheduled services; and
- o) SBC should amend its policies in order to register more extant school transport services to enable carriage of members of the public. Discussions should be held with operators to determine the most effective routes for any such change, based on issues including capacity on the school service and potential for operating cost savings on other routes. SBC should consider option of putting out tenders for both a registered public service and a school transport only service to help evaluate costs and benefits.

Appendix 10 – Risks & Mitigation

Risks associated with delivering the Recommendations

| Risk | Mitigation |
|--|--|
| The cost of delivering the new network exceeds the existing budget. | <p>New procurement approach which aims to deliver best value, increase competition, and provide flexibility for operators.</p> <p>The recommended bus network aims to grow patronage and therefore associated income, which should offset contract costs.</p> <p>If tender returns exceed the existing budget a further report will be brought back to Council for consideration before award.</p> |
| Negative customer feedback | <p>The changes to the bus network are based on a detailed review, which has taken account of multiple threads of data including existing travel patterns, customer and stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>Communication will be delivered prior to the introduction of any service changes including officer attendance at Area Partnership Meetings.</p> |
| Lack of competition for new contracts. | <p>New procurement approach which aims to deliver best value, increase competition, and provide flexibility for operators.</p> <p>Marketing to be undertaken to raise awareness of the procurement exercise.</p> |
| The procurement takes longer than expected and exceeds the current contract extensions. | It is proposed to extend the current contracts for a sufficient period to allow the new procurement process to be completed. |
| Operators do not agree to contract extension for current services to enable time to procure the new bus network. | Officers will engage with bus operators regarding the continuity of service. |
| That expected growth in patronage is lower than expected leading to less income from fares. | <p>The introduction of a marketing budget to promote the services, which estimates a 10 to 15% increase in patronage.</p> <p>Timetables and frequency of operations can be amended to reduce cost and reflect passenger trends.</p> |
| Council approves changes to the bus network without a marketing budget. | Officers will work with the communications team to promote within current resource availability. However, this will be limited and will likely impact the estimated growth in patronage and associated income. |

Risks associated with NOT delivering recommendations

| Risk | Mitigation |
|---|---|
| The cost of maintaining the existing network exceeds the existing budget making it more likely we will need to reduce the Bus Network to deliver savings, thus increasing the likelihood of social isolation. | <p>Council increases the bus subsidy budget to cover additional costs.</p> <p>Continue to reduce the current service provision in order to deliver within budget, as has been the case for the last 10 years plus.</p> <p>Deliver the recommended changes to the network as outlined in this report, which aims to grow patronage and associated income.</p> <p>Negotiate with the operators regards the opportunity to take on some elements of the network on a commercial basis.</p> |
| Reduced benefit to the Borders economy. | <p>Work with partners to market the opportunities of the current bus network.</p> <p>Deliver the recommended changes to the network as outlined in this report, which aims to grow patronage and associated income.</p> |
| Bus operators continue to hand back contracts due increased costs of operation and or there is a lack of interest when we procure existing services. | <p>Regular meetings with existing bus operators.</p> <p>Deliver the recommended changes to the network as outlined in this report, which aims to grow patronage and associated income.</p> |
| Continued reduction in service provision / bus network does meet needs of service users. | Deliver the recommended changes to the network as outlined in this report, which aims to grow patronage and associated income. |
| Continued reliance on single occupancy car journey and associated carbon emissions | Deliver the recommended changes to the network as outlined in this report, which aims to grow patronage and associated income. |
| Continued decline in passenger growth and associated income. | Deliver the recommended changes to the network as outlined in this report, which aims to grow patronage and associated income. |
| Continued negative customer feedback as bus network does not meet customer needs. | Deliver the recommended changes to the network as outlined in this report, which aims to grow patronage and associated income. |
| Social isolation in more rural communities continues to be an issue. | Deliver the recommended changes to the network as outlined in this report, which help to reduce social isolation. |
| Lack of competition for contract renewals. | <p>New procurement approach which aims to deliver best value, increase competition, and provide flexibility for operators.</p> <p>Marketing to be undertaken to raise awareness of the procurement exercise.</p> |
| The procurement takes longer than expected and exceeds the current contract extensions. | It is proposed to extend the current contracts for a sufficient period to allow the new procurement process to be completed. |

Appendix 11 – Stage 1 – Integrated impact Assessment - Scoping and Assessing for Relevance



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Appendix 12 - Stage 2 – Integrated impact Assessment - Scoping and Assessing for Relevance



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Appendix 13 – UN Sustainable Development Goals Assessment

| UN Sustainable Development Goal | Impact |
|--|--|
| 1 – End poverty in all its forms everywhere | Positive - The BNR will help re-shape services to better match demand across the region to try and grow patronage and support communities. |
| 3 - Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages | Positive - The objective the BNR is to deliver bus services that will better match demand across the region to support communities accessing services, employment, education, and leisure. |
| 4 - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all potential | Positive - The bus network review has been undertaken with stakeholders including Borders College and it is anticipated that by implementing the recommendations that links to education will be improved. This will make it easier for young people to attend Borders College for further education. |
| 7 - Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all | Positive - The BNR identifies a number of recommendations that will improve transport links across the region, including links into active travel. It is anticipated that by implementing the changes the number of single occupancy journeys will reduce and consequently the associated carbon emissions. There are also opportunities to introduce alternative fuel vehicles. |
| 8 - Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all | Positive - It is anticipated that the recommendations from the BNR will deliver bus services that will better match demand across the region to support communities accessing services, employment, education and leisure. The recommendations have been built on employee travel/shift time data supplied by local business to support sustainable access to help grow employee opportunities. There are also opportunities to grow the tourism economy through closer working with partners. |
| 10 - Reduce inequalities within and among countries | Positive - The BNR will deliver bus services that will better match demand across the region to support communities accessing services, employment, education and leisure. |
| 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe resilient and sustainable | Positive - The BNR will deliver bus services that will better match demand across the region to support communities accessing services, employment, education and leisure, whilst also mitigating against the impacts of climate change. |
| 13 - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts | Positive - The BNR identifies a number of recommendations that will improve transport links across the region, including links into active travel. It is anticipated that by implementing the changes the number of single occupancy journeys will reduce and consequently the associated carbon emissions. There are also opportunities to introduce alternative fuel vehicles. |
| 16 - Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable | Positive - The BNR identifies a number of recommendations that will better match demand across the region to support communities accessing services, employment, education and |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</p> | <p>leisure. Residents of the Scottish Borders were surveyed and communities meetings held to support the information gathering and shape the priorities for the new bus network.</p> |
| <p>17 - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development</p> | <p>Positive - The BNR identifies a number of recommendations that will better match demand across the region to support communities accessing services, employment, education and leisure. The proposed new services will be delivered in partnership with private operators and communities. Data has been and will continue to be gathered to help monitor progress and implement necessary service changes.</p> |

Appendix 14 – Bus Network Review – Taking Climate Action

Carbon emissions from the operation of scheduled passenger bus services in the region are estimated to be 3.3 million tons per annum.

Typical carbon emissions from the Scottish bus fleet are estimated by DEFRA to be six times that of cars for each km travelled, and a bus will need to have an average load of around 12 passengers to have a lower carbon impact per km than would be incurred by the same number of people travelling by car.

Industry standard data suggests that 49% of bus passengers would otherwise travel by car or taxi if the bus was not available¹. There were around 760,000 passenger journeys by bus in the Borders in 2021, so this suggests that around 370,000 car journeys ($= 760,000 \times 0.49$) were saved.

The average car journey in Scotland is reported to be 14.5km long², so around 5.4 million ($= 370,000 \times 14.5$) car km are saved by using buses per annum, giving a carbon benefit of around 610,000 tons per annum ($= 5,400,000 \times 0.113$).

This simplistic approach suggests that there is a net carbon disbenefit from transport arising from the operation of buses in the Borders. It overlooks the potential for the bus network to carry many more passengers with negligible additional carbon emissions (because there is spare capacity on most buses). The potential for bus to attract more demand from car is limited by a range of factors, most particularly the ready ability to use car for most journeys.

¹ WebTAG data book A5.4.6, considering the national weighted mean and discarding rail and light rail as alternatives, as not being relevant choices for most journeys in the Borders.

² Scottish Transport Statistics, 2021

Appendix 15 – Rural Proofing Assessment



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