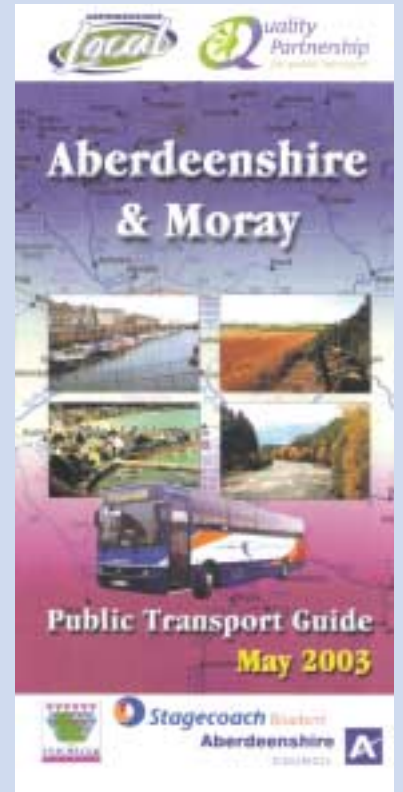


Quality Partnerships & Quality Contracts



**A review of current practices
and future aspirations**



Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers
Working together for better passenger transport



ATCO is the Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers. It is a professional organisation made up of employees of local authorities in a public transport co-ordinating role. All voting members are employed by local authorities from a variety of backgrounds and represent a variety of views. As a professional organisation the views of ATCO members are not those of their constituent authorities but are based on a depth of experience and are thus representative of the whole of the ATCO membership.

ATCO exists to :

- secure the association of persons directly concerned with the formulation and implementation of policies for the securing of public passenger services;
- exchange information and views;
- assist in the formulation of policies and standards; and
- promote appropriate matters of common interest in the various transport fields with the objective of securing a better transport service on a nation-wide basis.

ATCO (Scotland) is one of the nine regional groups within ATCO. At the national level and within Scotland a number of sub-committees exist to develop expertise, examine current issues and provide advice to Members, these include:

- **Buses** (covering bus policy, local transport strategy preparation, service procurement and delivery, public / integrated transport fund projects and policies, park and ride, bus stations, infrastructure etc.)
- **Rail** (including service improvements and subsidy, station re-opening or building new stations, car park provision, disabled access improvements, franchise consultation, general infrastructure, freight policies and strategies etc.)
- **Concessionary Travel**
- **Education Transport** (mainstream and special needs)
- **Community, Health and Social Transport**
- **Information and Ticketing**
- **Best Value**

In addition, our members have expertise in Airports, Ferries, Taxis, Walking and Cycling.

If you would like to receive further information about ATCO (Scotland) then please contact
Lesley Millar, Chair ATCO (Scotland) c/o Angus Council,
Transport Team, Planning and Transport,
St James House, St James Road,
FORFAR DD8 2ZD.

Executive Summary

The Association of Co-ordinating Officers, {ATCO (Scotland)}, with the help and co-operation of the Confederation of Passenger Transport {CPT (Scotland)} have compiled this paper to highlight the success of Local Authorities and Operators in developing and introducing Quality Partnerships within Scotland.

Current Partnership Working

A survey of ATCO members throughout Scotland has shown that while no statutory Quality Partnerships or Quality Contracts are currently in place this does not mean that partnership working is not taking place. To date much has been achieved through ‘informal’ partnership working. The successes include the introduction of :

- **Bus Priority Measures** – bus lanes, signal improvements etc.
- **Park and Ride Facilities** – i.e. Ferrytoll, Ellon, Edinburgh, Perth, Stirling
- **Infrastructure Improvements** – new bus shelters, raised kerbs, improved bus station facilities
- **Low Floor Bus Projects** – provision of low floor buses, bus boarders, enhanced service frequencies
- **Public Transport Service Level Improvements** – enhanced frequencies
- **Public Transport Information** – including timetable information, maps, websites, roadside information and interactive information terminals
- **Real Time Information** – provided on key routes
- **Public Transport Interchange Points** – interchange points with high quality waiting facilities, information, bus boarders etc.
- **Ticketing Arrangements** – voluntary ticketing arrangements
- **Smartcards** – introduction allied to concessionary travel provision and integrated ticketing
- **Demand Responsive Transport**
- **CCTV** – provision both on and off-bus to improve passenger safety

It is evident that the current partnership working on a voluntary basis between local authorities and operators has achieved significant results to date. The improvements delivered have greatly benefited public transport users throughout Scotland.

Local authorities are committed to working in partnership with operators to maximise the benefits that can be achieved. To date the voluntary arrangements have worked well, however local authorities where they determine there is a need, are willing to consider the introduction of formal Quality Partnerships or indeed Quality Contracts in order to achieve improved public transport provision and delivery in their areas. This document gives a comprehensive summary of the partnership working currently in place, aspirations in the pipeline and long-term proposals for formal Quality Partnerships and Quality Contracts.

Background

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2001

Prior to the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001, a significant number of Quality Partnerships had been entered into on a voluntary basis by local authorities / Strathclyde PTA (SPTA) and bus operator(s). These partnerships have resulted in improvements to local bus services and infrastructure.

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2001, saw additional powers being granted to enable the creation of statutory Quality Partnerships and Quality Contracts between local authorities / SPTA and bus operators. These statutory arrangements make the commitments by each party enforceable and give the opportunity to exclude non-conforming operators from particular facilities.

Quality Partnerships

A local transport authority, or two or more such authorities acting jointly, may make a Quality Partnership scheme covering the whole or any part of their area, or combined area, if they are satisfied that the scheme will either:

- improve the quality of local services and facilities provided in the area to which the proposed scheme relates in such a way as to bring material benefits to persons using those services and facilities; or
- reduce or limit traffic congestion, noise or air pollution.

Currently no Quality Partnerships have been signed under the powers of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001 but a significant number of informal or non-statutory partnerships are in place.

Quality Contracts

A local transport authority, or two or more such authorities acting jointly, may make a Quality Contract scheme covering their area, or combined area, if they are satisfied that :

- making the proposed scheme is necessary for the purpose of implementing their relevant general policies in the area to which the joint scheme relates; and
- the proposed scheme will implement those policies in a way which is economic, efficient and effective.

Currently there are no Quality Contracts in place.

Scope Survey/Questionnaire

ATCO (Scotland) undertook a survey of its members to establish:

- what is already in place in terms of signed Quality Partnerships, non-statutory (i.e. pre-dating the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001) and statutory (applying the powers in the 2001 Act);
- plans/proposals/discussions on possible future Quality Partnerships;
- initiatives taken unilaterally by a transport authority or in conjunction with bus operator(s) (e.g. introduction of bus priority measures) which provide Quality Partnership-type benefits but without the signatures of the various parties; and
- plans/proposals/discussions on possible Quality Contracts.

Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT) members also provided additional information on partnership working.

The survey did not aim to identify the reasons why statutory Quality Partnerships or statutory Quality Contracts have not been entered into, but was undertaken to provide an overview of the current situation and possible future aspirations and developments of transport authorities.

The results of the survey are detailed on a 'council by council' basis.

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Aberdeen City



Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, First Aberdeen and Stagecoach Bluebird signed up to a joint voluntary Quality Partnership agreement on 27th April 1998 covering the boundaries of both authorities.

In Aberdeen, the initial kickstart to the Quality Partnership was the TwinTrack agreement between Aberdeen City Council and First Aberdeen. First Aberdeen and the Council jointly funded this agreement (with financial support from the Scottish Executive's Public Transport Fund) which oversaw the introduction of bus priority measures, improved waiting

facilities and Bridge of Don Park and Ride. Bus lanes were installed on major corridors into the City, the bus fleet was upgraded to low floor Euro II vehicles and waiting facilities were improved with new shelters.

The Agreement has grown to include a wide number of initiatives, schemes and programmes. For example,

- Real Time Passenger Information – The City Centre and major transport corridors have had waiting facilities upgraded and real time units installed. The corridor-based schemes have been extremely successful with strong public support and will continue to be rolled out throughout Aberdeen.

Audible Real Time information will also be available at strategic stops throughout the City.

The Real Time system is managed and funded in partnership between Aberdeen City Council and First Aberdeen.

- Bus Shelter upgrades and Raised Kerbs – the Council is committed, through the Partnership, to continually upgrade and improve waiting facilities. A recent contract with Clear Channel UK has seen twenty new bus shelters installed into the City Centre and in 2004 forty-five new shelters will be sited along the major corridors. Raised kerbs will be built at the sites and at the complementary alighting stop where possible.
- Other projects to be completed in 2004 include upgrading the airport bus route infrastructure in conjunction with operators branding services. This work will also involve creating interchange points between crossing services. As part of the Quality Partnership, discussions are taking place over a multi operator ticket for the airport services.
- Bus Priority Enforcement Cameras were installed at strategic locations in September 2003. These have reduced the incidence of bus lane violations and enhanced the reliability of bus services.
- Aberdeen City Council's Accord Card (smart card) was issued to concession cardholders in 2003 and the Council used public transport fund resources together with a Scottish Executive grant to fund TGX (state of the art smart card compatible) ticket machine upgrades for the operators. The Accord Card project is soon to roll out to all Aberdeen residents and will have a positive impact on boarding times and smart ticketing.



Bus priority measures in Aberdeen

A number of rolling initiatives are also in place. These works are largely carried out by the Councils in the Partnership and the operators maintain their commitment to providing high quality accessible vehicles, improved driver training (SVQ's) and contribute to the various Park and Ride services.

- Aberdeen City Public Transport Map (for all operators and services)
- Naming of bus stops (with each stop name matching the destination printed on the bus tickets)
- Raised Kerbs (continually being installed where possible whenever footways are renewed)
- On and Off Street public transport information displays
- Website, SMS texting and other methods of presenting public transport information are being considered as part of a rolling programme of work.

As well as initiatives and “visible measures” the Council and operators have extremely strong working relationships. Regular meetings and open working has aided implementation of a number of projects and resulted in joint thinking when working to resolve day to day problems. For future projects, the co-operation of both First and Stagecoach Bluebird with the Council has been a major factor in the planning phase as well as assisting in securing funding from external bodies.

The current voluntary Partnership is under review and a new set of targets and principles have been devised with local operators. Agreement with operators will be sought in 2004.

Whilst the current and forthcoming partnership agreements are voluntary, the Council will consider statutory Partnerships with operators on a smaller corridor / area basis. Discussions are ongoing with operators on progressing additional smaller partnerships.

There are no plans at present to progress Quality Contracts as the Council feels that the Quality Partnership is successful.

Aberdeenshire



There are no statutory partnerships within Aberdeenshire. However, the Council participates in a voluntary partnership between Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, First Aberdeen and Stagecoach Bluebird, which was introduced on 27 April 1998, with the aim of improving the quality of bus services within north east Scotland.



This existing non-statutory 'Quality Partnership for Public Transport', is currently being revised to include specific quality standards and targets with the option to progress to a statutory partnership in due course.

Whilst there are no statutory partnerships, Aberdeenshire Council has been involved in various quality partnership initiatives. These include:

Improved Public Transport Information

• **Bus Stop Information:**

This quality partnership initiative has, in consultation with Stagecoach Bluebird, resulted in an improved design for 'at-bus stop' information and a rolling programme of bus stop flag replacement. A trial of an improved bus stop design, incorporating a solar powered illuminated timetable display is about to commence. Aberdeenshire Council and Stagecoach Bluebird also have a long-standing agreement whereby they co-fund a local authority member of staff to maintain and update timetable display cases across Aberdeenshire.

• **Aberdeenshire and Moray Public Transport Guide:**

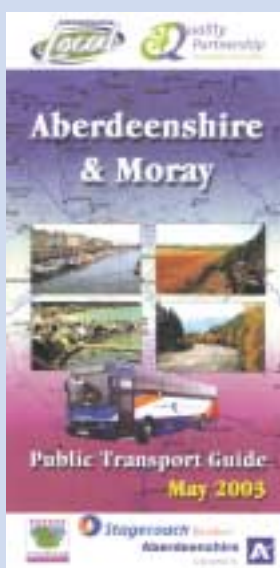
A revised guide was produced in May 2003 in partnership with Stagecoach Bluebird and the Moray Council.

• **'At Bus Stop' Voice Information:**

23 units have been installed at key boarding points to provide service information for the visually impaired, with expansion of the scheme subject to the cost-effectiveness of the original units.

• **Public Transport Web Pages:**

Implemented in March 2002 the public transport web pages within the Council's corporate website, www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk, include the following sections: news; timetables; mapping; school transport; community transport; concessionary travel; fares and ticketing; disability guide; policies; contact details; and, links to other local and national public transport websites.



The Aberdeenshire and Moray Public Transport Guide



Aberdeenshire Public Transport
Web Page

Public Transport Consultation –

In April 2000, Area Bus Forums were set up in each of the six Council administrative areas, comprising community council representatives, bus operators, youth groups, disabled interest groups, senior citizen groups, community transport providers, bus users and local Councillors. Forum meetings, which are held six monthly, also form Stagecoach Bluebird's principal means of local consultation. Linked to the Area Bus Forums, the Council has also established an Aberdeenshire Community Transport Forum as a mechanism for consultation and communication with this increasingly important transport sector.

Low Floor Bus Projects

- **Peterhead Town Service:**

In March 1998, the Council provided bus boarders, additional bus shelters and improved 'on street' information to complement the introduction of low floor buses by Stagecoach Bluebird. Further infrastructure improvements have been made in March 2004 utilising funds allocated by the Scottish Executive to the North East Scotland Transport Partnership (NESTRANS).

- **Westhill - Aberdeen:**

In April 2000, a comprehensive set of quality improvements were implemented on the Westhill - Aberdeen corridor. Complementing Stagecoach Bluebird's allocation of low floor vehicles, enhanced service frequency and improved route penetration, the Council installed bus boarders, additional passenger waiting facilities and improved 'on street' information. Following the success of the initial scheme, bus priority measures on the approach to Westhill are currently being investigated in association with NESTRANS.

- **Fraserburgh Town service:**

Complementing Stagecoach Bluebird's allocation of low floor buses to the town services, the Council has, in March 2004, provided bus boarders, additional bus shelters and additional 'at-bus stop' information displays utilising Scottish Executive regional transport partnership funding.



- **Stonehaven - Aberdeen:**

A quality corridor is currently being implemented between Stonehaven and Aberdeen, including the settlements of Portlethen, Newtonhill, Muchalls and Stonehaven. Stagecoach Bluebird have allocated accessible vehicles to the corridor, whilst the Council are installing bus boarders, improved bus stops, additional passenger shelters and 'on street' information. As part of the project, which is scheduled for completion in 2003, the key boarding and alighting stops in Stonehaven town centre are also to be rationalised and improved to provide a more 'user friendly' interchange facility.

- **Inverurie - Aberdeen:**

A similar quality corridor proposal is currently being developed, in partnership with Stagecoach Bluebird, covering the Inverurie – Aberdeen corridor and serving the settlements of Blackburn and Kintore.

Inter-Urban Park & Ride

- **Ellon (A90)**

An inter-urban Park & Ride service was introduced in November 2000 on the A90 at Ellon, with Scottish Executive Public Transport Fund support. Aberdeenshire Council provided and operate a 250 space secure car park and associated high quality passenger waiting facilities. In the interests of sustainability, the service is fully integrated with the existing local and express bus network providing links to Aberdeen, Aberdeen Airport, Inverurie, Fraserburgh, Peterhead and intermediate destinations. As part of the Quality Partnership initiative, Stagecoach Bluebird have enhanced commercial service frequencies, including the provision of a new express service, whilst the Council has introduced and extended 'Aberdeenshire Local' supported services to/from the facility.

- **Parkhill (A947)**

Aberdeenshire Council, in consultation with local bus operators is currently developing a second Park & Ride facility on the A947 Oldmeldrum - Aberdeen corridor, with a view to service implementation in 2004/05.

- **Banchory (A93)**

The Council is also developing proposals for a third inter-urban Park and Ride service from Banchory, with a planned implementation date of 2005.



*Ellon Park & Ride*

Public Transport Interchange Points

Key locations across the public transport network have been identified as 'Aberdeenshire Interchange' points where facilities are currently being developed by the Council to permit passengers to transfer between services in a safe, easy and direct manner. Facilities will vary from location to location, but will include bus boarders, improved bus stops and high quality shelters, comprehensive conventional service information, interactive information terminals and through ticketing facilities.

Multi-operator Through Ticketing

Aberdeenshire Council is currently promoting a voluntary multi-operator ticketing arrangement under the Transport (Scotland) Act, 2001, in partnership with local commercial and supported service bus operators. The arrangement, which is being marketed under the 'Aberdeenshire Connect' banner, provides for through tickets and travelcards, with pilot schemes introduced at Ellon in January 2002 and Mintlaw in August 2003.

Demand Responsive Transport

As part of a Scottish Executive sponsored initiative, the Council, in consultation with local communities and through a partnership approach with bus operators and community transport groups, is currently developing two demand responsive transport schemes. These pilot schemes, in Donside and Buchan, aim to evaluate the role of real time vehicle scheduling software in maximising vehicle utilisation, improving accessibility and providing more cost-effective rural transport service delivery. Both schemes are scheduled for implementation in Summer 2004.

Angus



There are no statutory partnerships between Angus Council and its local operators but the Council does have a number of non-statutory partnerships and partnership working with its operators. These include:

Provision of Low Floor Wheelchair Accessible Buses, Infrastructure and Ticketing Initiatives

- **Arbroath – Brechin Corridor**

A non-statutory partnership was introduced in April 1999 between G & N Wishart (Travel Dundee) and Angus Council on the Arbroath – Friockheim – Brechin corridor. The operator has provided wheelchair accessible Optare Solo vehicles on this route while the Council has provided infrastructure and publicity enhancements including; vehicle and passenger accessibility improvements at Arbroath Bus Station, new shelters and additional publicity material. A ticketing arrangement is also in place between G & N Wishart and Strathtay Scottish Ltd allowing passengers through ticketing on the Arbroath to Brechin and Arbroath to Forfar corridors.

- **Carnoustie – Dundee**

A non-statutory partnership is in place between Strathtay Scottish Ltd and Angus Council on the 'Tayway' Corridor between Carnoustie and Dundee. Here the Council has provided real-time information and infrastructure improvements while the operator has provided quality wheelchair accessible vehicles with conductors.

Improved Public Transport Information

- **Public Transport Map and Guide**

Angus Council produce an area map showing all bus services operating within the Angus area together with operator details, frequency guide and details of places of interest to visit.

- **Timetable Leaflets**

Angus Council produces comprehensive publicity for all operators' services. These timetable leaflets are readily available at Council offices and outlets throughout Angus. They are also available 'on-bus' on most services throughout Angus.

- **Bus Stop Information Displays**

Angus Council is committed to increasing bus stop information display provision. As part of the preparation of a Public Transport Information Strategy targets for enhanced provision will be set and partnership working with operators considered.



Improved interchange facilities at Arbroath Bus Station, Angus



Strathtay bus on Tayway Corridor

- **Days Out by Bus Leaflets**

A series of Days out by Bus leaflets are produced for all the Angus towns and for Dundee giving ideas for days out by public transport. These publications are aimed at local residents and visitors to the area. They detail journey times, places to visit, admission charges etc.

- **Public Transport Web Site**

A web site (www.angus.gov.uk/transport) was introduced in January 2002. This site includes a public transport news page, timetables for all local bus services operating within Angus, an area map and guide, town plans showing bus routes, days out by bus publications, details on community transport, concessionary travel and school transport. There are also links to Traveline and other public transport web sites.

- **Real Time Information**

Real Time Information, funded from the Public Transport Fund, is in operation on the Carnoustie to Dundee corridor. Subject to funding being available it is hoped that this may be expanded in future to operate within Arbroath and on the Arbroath to Dundee and Forfar to Dundee corridors.

Public Transport Interchange Points

- **Arbroath Bus Station**

Following recent Scottish Executive capital funding, improvements have been made at Arbroath Bus Station to make all the bus bays fully disabled accessible. The improvements also include the installation of CCTV.

- **Forfar Town Centre**

Discussions are on-going with operators for the development of key public transport interchange points in Forfar. These will include improved passenger waiting facilities, information provision and bus boarders to ease access to / from buses for disabled and mobility impaired passengers. Similar interchange facilities will be pursued in other Angus Towns subject to available funding.

The Council is keen to work with operators in the future to introduce Quality Partnerships, whether statutory or non-statutory.

Argyll and Bute



Argyll and Bute have no formal Quality Partnerships in place but do have an informal arrangement with Oban & District Buses following on from the last tender round in which certain guarantees were exchanged on either side with respect to quality of vehicles to be used on certain local services within Oban (both tendered and commercial) and from the local authority side where there was to be improved infrastructure and information provision.

This has since been extended to two routes extending out of Oban where timetable enhancements funded by Rural Transport Grant have been coupled with infrastructure and information improvements and on one of the routes (Oban and Lochgilphead) an improved quality of vehicle.

Clackmannanshire



There are no statutory partnerships between Clackmannanshire Council and its local operators although some initial discussions took place between the operator and the authority (see Stirling section for full details). The Council has however introduced initiatives to improve and control the quality of services. In 1997 low floor fully accessible vehicles were introduced on two council supported services in council colours.



Low Floor Easyboarder Vehicle in Clackmannanshire livery.

Currently the Council is installing the final order of information panels to ensure 100% coverage of all stops in the area. The Council is also working closely with the local operators to place CCTV on all supported service vehicles.

Quality Partnerships either statutory or non-statutory would be considered in the future. Certain corridors have been identified for future discussions between the major operator and the Council. The Council would require additional funding to deliver improvements.

Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar



There are no statutory or non-statutory partnerships between Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar and its local operators. The non-commercial network lends itself to quality control from the council, although it must be achieved in the most efficient and economic way.

Dumfries & Galloway



There are no statutory partnerships between Dumfries and Galloway Council and its local operators. As the bus network in Dumfries and Galloway is only 15% commercial this leaves the Council in control of some 85% of services. Therefore, the Council can influence quality through its conditions of contract.

Provision of Low Floor Accessible Buses and Infrastructure



New low floor vehicle on Heathhall to Dumfries route

An informal partnership has been in operation since 1999, with Stagecoach West Scotland. The company has provided an improved frequency, with two low floor vehicles on the route from Heathhall to Dumfries Town Centre, which then continues to the Hospitals and University site. The Council has improved stop infrastructure on the route, including new shelters, raised kerbing and greater information.

The recent award of Scottish Executive funding through West of Scotland Transport Partnership (WESTRANS) has enabled the Council to establish further formal agreements with three local operators, and to further enhance involvement with Stagecoach, as follows.

- Provided part funding towards provision of two low floor, fully accessible buses on the Dumfries – Edinburgh corridor, operated by MacEwan.
- Six low floor Optare Solo buses, for the Dumfries Town Network, giving full accessibility on routes within the town, operated by Stagecoach.
- Provided part funding of a low floor Optare Solo bus, on the Castle Douglas Town service, operated by Armstrongs Coaches.
- Provided part funding for provision of the low floor bus on the Stranraer to Portpatrick corridor operated by McCulloch Coaches.

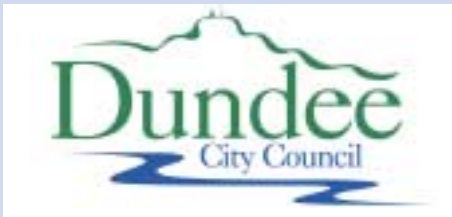


MacEwans Super Access low floor vehicle

Improved Public Transport Information

The Council has always been keen to promote and publicise public transport services within Dumfries and Galloway, and in partnership with local operators provides high quality public transport area guides, leaflets, maps and bus stop information. The Council has launched the new txt2traveline, SMS service to further enable passengers to access information.

Dundee City



While nothing has been signed at the moment Dundee City Council are close to signing up to a statutory quality partnership with Travel Dundee. The partnership, which it is hoped to be signed during financial year 2004/2005 is to cover all their services within the City. The operator will guarantee their commercial network (including evening and weekend services), while continuing to invest heavily in new vehicles and ongoing driver training. Currently Travel Dundee aim to increase the number of lowfloor/wheelchair accessible vehicles in the fleet currently at 80% to 100% by December 2004. A future quality partnership will also be entered into with Strathtay Scottish, this is planned for financial year 2005/2006.



Real Time information Unit, Dundee



Real Time information in Dundee



Artist impression of quality shelters at key interchange points

In return the Council as part of its £8.9m Public Transport Fund funded "Bringing Confidence to Public Transport" and "SmartBus" projects will install Real Time Information, bus priority, quality shelters, VDU displays at key interchange points, infrastructure improvements in the form of raised kerbs/build outs/bus boarders at all bus stops and on-bus CCTV and comprehensive timetable information at all bus stops and interchanges, with Real Time information (from summer 2004) at all bus shelters, via the internet (www.dundeetravelinfo.com) and SMS texting.



Travel Dundee low floor vehicle in Dundee

Further Quality Partnerships are planned which will underpin the introduction of smartcard systems on all local bus services operating within the city's boundaries and will involve all local bus operators. This will support integrated ticketing and improved travel concession scheme journey recording.

Further partnership work is ongoing with both Travel Dundee and Strathtay Scottish in preparing for "Kickstart" route development submissions.

East Lothian



There are no statutory or non-statutory partnerships between East Lothian Council and its local operators, Although draft Quality Partnership agreement templates have been tabled by one of the major operators.

City of Edinburgh



Lothian Buses, First Edinburgh and City of Edinburgh Council signed a partnership in July 1997. This partnership included citywide agreements to work together and with others to develop, fund, implement and, where practicable, enforce measures to improve bus services. This was developed to coincide with the introduction of Greenways. It covers provision of bus priority measures, park and ride, delivery of improvements at Edinburgh Bus Station, improved ticketing, customer care, accident reduction measures, delivery of low-emissions, low floor buses, improved information, access and passenger facilities at bus stops. Delivery of individual elements was not assigned to particular parties, nor was a programme specified.

The Quality Partnership covered such measures as further development of the Greenways and other bus priority schemes, park and ride, introduction of Real Time Information, redevelopment of Edinburgh Bus Station, development of SmartCard and off-bus ticketing, measures to reduce bus road traffic accidents, better shelters and bus stop information. The Quality Partnership also listed as goals the investment in low-floor buses meeting latest emission standards and the enforcement by the Council of emissions legislation. No particular commitment was made to actual levels of funding or to a programme of delivery.

However statutory partnerships may be used in the context of Princes Street, in order to ensure delivery of high-quality, low emission buses that are integrated with future tram provision. The need to minimise dwell time at stops will become a very important issue but there is no adopted policy yet.

City of Edinburgh Council are looking to develop partnerships from late 2004 onwards to ensure the delivery of quality operation in the roll-out of park and ride sites currently under development. At present voluntary partnerships are being explored. Likewise, a quality threshold is likely to be applied to services that will be able to use the new guided section of the West Edinburgh Busway scheme that will open in late 2004.

The Council may develop a non-statutory partnership in respect of the Council's Public Transport Fund funded Quality Bus Corridor if quality standards become an issue. If voluntary arrangements are ineffective, then consideration of a statutory Quality Partnership would be an alternative.

The Council has already implemented several bus priority schemes without recourse to formal partnerships. These include Greenways on four main corridors as well as the London Road/A1 scheme, the A90 (Queensferry Road) scheme and the A702 (Morningside/Bruntsfield) scheme. Real Time Information delivery has also been developed in partnership with Lothian Buses and is due for implementation on the Quality Bus Corridor in 2004/5.



Princes Street, Edinburgh

Falkirk



Falkirk Council

There are no statutory partnerships between Falkirk Council and its local operators. However the Council is looking into the possibility of introducing real time information in conjunction with new ticket machines and SmartCards. This is dependent on how the Executive are to deliver the National Concessionary Travel Scheme.

In July 2003 a new Park and Ride facility was opened at the Falkirk Wheel. The car park and two low floor buses for the service were funded by the Integrated Transport Fund. The Park and Ride facility links the car park with Falkirk every 10 minutes (Monday to Saturday).



Park & Ride at The Falkirk Wheel

Fife



Fife Council have no statutory Quality Partnerships with its local operators. The Council however operates in partnership with Stagecoach in Fife in the Ferrytoll Park & Ride. The Council provides a 500 vehicle car park, CCTV system, waiting room and toilets while Stagecoach provide a frequent bus service to/from Edinburgh and supervisory staff. Since opening in November 2000, utilisation has grown steadily. Ferrytoll has been so successful that work is now in hand to double the number of parking spaces and make other improvements to enhance bus services. It is intended that Stagecoach and Fife Council continue to work together in partnership to develop this facility. It is currently anticipated that the enlarged facility should be commissioned late 2005. Ferrytoll web site - www.ferrytoll.org



Waiting Facilities at Ferrytoll Park & Ride, Fife

Fife Council provide 3 staffed Bus Stations in their area (Dunfermline, Glenrothes & Kirkcaldy). To use them the operators must sign a "Conditions of Use" agreement in return the Council will provide agreed facilities.

The bus station in St Andrews is owned by Stagecoach. The Council has been awarded Public Transport Funding to make improvements to the bus station. To ensure that the public investment is being protected and to ensure that the facility is staffed and maintained to Fife Council standards, a partnership agreement has recently been signed.

Additionally, it is envisaged that a similar agreement will be developed for Leven bus station which is currently unstaffed. Proposals at Leven are at an early consultation stage.

Fife Council was the first Authority in Scotland to publish a Bus Passenger Information Strategy, in line with the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001. Adopted in September 2003, the Council currently has written agreements with operators (covering over 90% of services) who are working towards the targets set out within the Strategy.



Ferrytoll Park & Ride, Fife

Highland



There are no statutory partnerships between Highland Council and its local operators. However the Council has been active in formulating partnerships with local operators over some of the major corridors. They are listed below:

Bus Projects

Inverness & Inner Moray Firth Area

Introduced in March 1998, this partnership between Stagecoach and the Council set out a statement of intent as an “umbrella” under which more specific projects could be developed. Stagecoach’s involvement in this area was on fare levels, ticketing initiatives, limit on timetable changes, improving vehicle standards, providing low floor vehicles and customer care. The local authority agreed under their corridor and action plans to improve traffic management by providing bus priority and bus only routes, bus boarders/raised kerbs, provide pedestrian routes to stops, improve passenger interchanges and shelters. To date the only full-scale implementation has been on the Hilton route in Inverness, though some improvements have been made elsewhere.



Low floor vehicle in Hilton Village, Inverness



Low Floor Projects

The Council has made agreements with the Rapson Group on three routes. The Council funded 10% of the cost of low floor buses, seen as the difference between the cost of low floor and a conventional bus. This policy was adopted on the following routes:

- Inverness-Fort George route in April 1999
- Fort William-Kinlochleven May 1999 (however the vehicle was withdrawn a year later)
- Kyle of Lochalsh-Kyleakin from June 1999. On this route the operator provided a low floor vehicle on the existing tendered timetable which in January 2002 was built into the specification of the new contract.

For the future the Council may consider strengthening and expanding the Stagecoach partnership in the form of a statutory partnership to include the whole of Inverness and including all operators. Discussions have begun on possibilities for bus priorities on the approaches to Inverness city centre, to enhance the benefits from the city centre traffic reduction scheme which is out to consultation.

The Council is aiming to use planning gain from commercial and retail developments to improve the bus infrastructure on routes affected by development, and this may include provision of bus priority measures.

Some Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS) funding is to be channelled towards improving bus accessibility and vehicle provision in partnership with operators, for example on the routes linking Inverness with Dalcross airport and Thurso railway station with Scrabster ferry terminal.

No Quality Contracts are under consideration at present.

Midlothian



There are no statutory partnerships between Midlothian Council and its local operators. A joint Quality Partnership process was gone through with First and Lothian Buses. This failed in 2001 because of operator concerns over Office of Fair Trading (OFT) implications. The 'Bus War' also made further progress difficult. It is intended to revive discussions in the near future. Bus Stop information is currently delivered in partnership with operators, though this is not subject to a formal agreement.

The Council has carried out a Scoping Study into the feasibility of a statutory Quality Contract for Midlothian. This study has concluded that a Quality Contract is not practical for Midlothian. This is due to the high costs of creating Quality Contracts and significant cross boundary issues.

The Moray Council



There is no statutory partnership between The Moray Council and local operators. The Council is however involved in the following Quality Partnership initiatives:

Rural Transport Fund Supported Network

Previously around thirteen different contracts were operated by a variety of operators using a variety of different vehicle types. A new combined contract, operated by Deveron Coaches, provides a low floor wheelchair accessible vehicle operating six days per week and offers travel opportunities for most of Moray’s rural areas. The new Saturday services in particular provide travel opportunities for young people within these rural communities. The package of services operate under the “Network M” logo, highlighting the integrated approach to delivering rural local bus services throughout Moray.



Deveron Coaches low floor vehicle operating under the “Network M” logo.

Initiatives Funded Through Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS)

From our allocation of Scottish Executive funding to Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS) we have just concluded negotiations with Deveron Coaches for the provision of a second new low floor wheelchair accessible vehicle for operating the subsidised six days per week service between Buckie and Keith Railway Station.



Low floor Stagecoach Bluebird vehicles in the Elgin area.

Agreement has also been reached with Stagecoach Bluebird for the provision of a further two low floor vehicles for the operation of commercial services in the Elgin area and CCTV is being provided at Elgin Bus Station.

Orkney



There are no statutory or non-statutory partnerships between Orkney Council and their local operators. However the bus networks are totally contracted and therefore operated as a Quality Contract in all but the terms of the Act.

Perth & Kinross



There are no current statutory partnerships between Perth & Kinross Council and its local operators, however Perth and Kinross Council already have two partnerships in place between themselves and Stagecoach Perth.

Low Floor/Corridor Projects

- The first partnership was agreed in January 1997 on the Perth City circular route between the City Centre - Tulloch - Letham - City Centre. Stagecoach Perth invested in nine new low floor buses for the two services on the route (Services 1 and 2), and provided an enhanced timetable frequency. The local authority improvements included pavement works, new bus shelters and improved roadside publicity.
- In October 2000 a second partnership was agreed for the Scone - Perth City Centre - Perth Hillend corridor (Service 7). Stagecoach Perth invested £0.8m in seven new wheelchair accessible low floor buses, provided selective vehicle detection (SVD) transponders, doubled the service frequency and introduced a zonal fares scheme. The Council in return, following a successful Public Transport Fund bid, invested £0.75m in Bus Priority measures (including bus lanes, pre-signals and SVD at junctions), new bus shelters, roadside information boards and bus boarders. A further investment of £0.5m in bus priority measures on the corridor is on-going.
- Stagecoach Perth utilised innovative market research and marketing techniques to promote the Service 7 improvements, and to date a passenger growth of 70% has been achieved. Stagecoach Perth have viewed the overall package of measures as a 'Kickstart' demonstration initiative.



Stagecoach low floor vehicle at new bus shelter in Mill Street, Perth



Stagecoach Perth's Service 7 in Perth



High quality, high frequency Perth Park & Ride bus service

Park & Ride

Following a Public Transport Fund award in 2001/2002 the Council built a dedicated 250 space Park and Ride facility on the western side of Perth at Broxden adjacent to the A9 and M90. The Council invested in a high quality, high frequency bus service, with Smith and Sons contracted to operate new wheelchair accessible vehicles. This service, which commenced in June 2002, utilises existing bus priority measures. Over 80,000 users were conveyed in the first year of operation.

Illustrating on-going partnership working with Stagecoach Perth, the Council have agreed that, on a trial basis, Megabus, the web based, ticketless, low cost bus service can utilise the Park and Ride site as an interchange point for their Edinburgh and Glasgow services.

Future Partnership Working

Preliminary discussions have been held with Stagecoach Perth on the need for partnership working to address quality improvements on other corridors in Perth, including:

- Perth (North Muirton – Muirton – City Centre): Services 5/6/9/10
- Perth (Craigie – Moncreiffe – City Centre): Services 5/6

The aspiration is to deliver service enhancements similar to those achieved on the first two partnerships.

There is also a recognition by the Council and Strathgry Scottish of the need to work in partnership to review the Perth - Blairgowrie - Dundee corridor (Services 57 and 59) in terms of timetable frequency, vehicle quality and infrastructure provision.

It is possible that the Council may look to introduce formal Quality Contracts on parts of the tendered rural bus network if this can allow for a longer contract length, thus facilitating investment in new vehicles. Progressing to statutory Quality Contracts is dependant on guidance anticipated from the Scottish Executive regarding procurement best practice following the implementation of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.



Beating Congestion - bus priority lane on Glasgow Road, Perth

Stirling



Stirling Council does not currently have any signed Quality Partnerships in place. Several possibilities have been considered. In two cases, a Quality Partnership was judged to be inappropriate and, in a third, a different approach is envisaged. One further case may offer potential for an 'area' Quality Partnership.

Stirling Council believes that a true Quality Partnership, whether non-statutory or statutory, requires each partner to bring substantial investment to a shared project. This approach has guided the conclusions formed in the following cases:

Stirling - Alloa corridor (in partnership with Clackmannanshire Council)

On this corridor, there are two main competing operators, with a few journeys being provided by others. Ideally, a Quality Partnership would have involved all operators on the corridor, but participation of the two main providers would have been sufficient. One of these was a First Group subsidiary, the other being a locally-based independent. Services already operated frequently and both operators were in any case obtaining new vehicles. The council was in any case providing a new roundabout at a congestion point on the route and was planning a section of new roadway, but these were intended to benefit general traffic flow and were not specific public transport initiatives. Following some discussions between the councils and the two operators, it was felt inappropriate to dress this up as a Quality Partnership, particularly as the councils were not in a position to deliver substantial public transport infrastructure improvements.

North-South Corridor

Stirling Council obtained funding from the former Public Transport Fund to implement infrastructure improvements on the main north-south corridor through the city (then town) centre. These improvements were intended to benefit walkers, cyclists and public transport passengers. Due mainly to roadspace constraints, there was little scope for bus lanes, bus priority junctions or other bus priority measures to be provided cost-effectively. Consequently, the corridor is now limited to road junction improvements and limited bus priority measures. Added to this, the principal bus operator was not in a position to make substantial investments in new vehicles or to increase service frequencies. As it was not possible for the potential partners to deliver sufficient to 'make a difference', the Quality Partnership solution was again felt to be inappropriate.



Bus priority measures on north/south corridor.



Award winning Stirling Bus Station

East-West Corridor

Stirling Council is planning a major east-west public transport link, offering a 10-minute service between an eastern and a western park and ride site, serving important intermediate points across the city. Until recently, Stirling's development tended to be northward or southward, giving its built-up area, and thus its bus services, a pronounced north-south orientation. The east-west project is designed to offer good park & ride access from the city's principal approach roads (M9/M80, A91), while at the same time linking new eastern and western developments with the main tourist area and city centre. This corridor is planned to incorporate significant bus-priority measures, including a section of bus-only roadway (already constructed). However, it is likely that this service will be delivered under a council contract, which would make a Quality Partnership unnecessary.

Raploch regeneration

Stirling Council is currently leading a major regeneration project in Raploch, a low-income, low-car ownership area of the city. Demolition of 1950s/60s 'system-build' housing is in progress and fulfilment of an ambitious masterplan will introduce a substantial amount of high-quality new housing and community amenities. Provided that sufficient public transport investment is forthcoming from the Council and principal operator alike, then Raploch offers good potential for an 'area' Quality Partnership. If successful in Raploch, then the concept of an 'area' Quality Partnership may be considered for other parts of Stirling.

In terms of unilateral initiatives, the council has in recent years:

- open an award-winning council owned and operated bus station at Stirling
- constructed the Forthside busway, which the Stirling park & ride service currently uses and which will form part of the East-West link
- incorporated bus-priority measures into several small traffic management projects
- increased the level of information provision at bus stops
- developed a public transport website

It was not felt appropriate in any of these cases to invoke the formal participation of bus operators.

The council currently has no plans or proposals for possible Quality Contracts.



Forthside Busway

Shetland Islands Council



There are no statutory partnerships or contracts between Shetlands Islands Council and local operators. However the Council takes a leading role as it provides all local bus services through tendered contracts which specify routes, fare levels, timetables and vehicles specification. In addition, the Council has taken a leading role in meeting accessibility regulations with all mainline routes being operated by easy access low floor buses.

Scottish Borders



There are no statutory or non statutory partnerships between Scottish Borders Council and its local operators. However the bus network in the Borders Council area is very much weighted towards the contracted service therefore quality can be controlled through the conditions of contract.

It is the Council's intention to discuss with bus operators the possibility of setting up one or more Quality Partnerships in its area. It is hoped that these discussions will be progressed during 2004 after the publication of the report commissioned by the Council into bus services in its area.

Strathclyde Passenger Transport



There are currently no statutory Quality Partnerships within the twelve council's areas that SPT represent. However, there is an over arching Quality Partnership that exists within Glasgow City involving First, Stagecoach and Arriva. This Quality Partnership is focused on delivery and is high level rather than specific in relation to particular deliverables in terms of vehicles, corridors, etc. but it is related to the range of corridor improvements funded from Public Transport Fund funding being carried out in the city area.

Glasgow Airport

A detailed Quality Partnership was also established for services to Glasgow Airport including BAA, operators serving the airport and SPT. The Quality Partnership included

- financial contributions towards the partnerships and developing initiatives
- branding (infrastructure, vehicles and information)
- vehicle quality
- improved information at the airport
- manned information point provided by SPT using the Journey Enquiry System (JESS)
- manned bus stances to assist passengers and regulate vehicle movements

Due to competition issues and policy changes by operators the branding of vehicles has been dropped unilaterally by the operator of the service.

Corridor Improvements

There are a number of other initiatives which include elements of Quality Partnerships in place or developing in the SPT area which have not been formalised but which include activities by SPT, local authorities and operators working in partnership. In each case extensive support from SPT will be given from the introduction of the Integrated Transport Fund funded infrastructure to support the Information Standards recently introduced as well as the full range of professional support and some direct involvement in funding. These include amongst a wide range of others:-



Glasgow and West Dunbartonshire

- Corridor improvements in Glasgow and West Dunbartonshire funded from the Public Transport Fund have included the introduction of new low floor vehicles but these are not tied to the routes legally.
- Financial contributions from parties to fund bus priority and information systems.
- Infrastructure and traffic management improvements on 8 corridors through the city.

Ardrossan - Kilmarnock

- Corridor improvements on Ardrossan - Kilmarnock corridor involving North and East Ayrshire Council and local operators. Improvements have included traffic management issues around secondary schools on the corridor and installation of improved infrastructure and related traffic management in Kilmarnock. There is no commitment to improved services from the local operator.

Paisley Town Centre

- Improvements to Paisley Town Centre.

South Ayrshire

- Corridor improvements in Ayr on Ayr - Prestwick corridor including improved infrastructure bus shelters and raised kerbs and similar improvements on other routes throughout South Ayrshire Council.
- Interchange improvements at various stations throughout South Ayrshire.

Kilmarnock

- Major infrastructure refurbishment and improvements in Kilmarnock town centre.
- Design work and consultations underway for several corridor improvements for local communities.



Corridor Improvements in Ayr



Re-building of East Kilbride Bus Station

East Kilbride

- SPT is exploring the possibility of a statutory Quality Partnership with the co-operation of operators in East Kilbride and is improving the bus station and information and associated infrastructure in the area. Participants include the Roads Authority, Strathclyde Police, the Trunk Roads Authority, developers and bus companies.

The Future

In the future SPT is committed to the promotion of statutory Quality Partnerships where appropriate as part of its application of its bus quality template. Consideration is being given to a number of areas with informal consultation with operators, local authorities and other partners currently in progress. These will involve a wide range of operators of all sizes and experience. SPT has concerns over the effectiveness of non-statutory Quality Partnerships.

There are currently no Quality Contracts within the SPT operating area. In the future, however SPT will apply the concept of statutory Quality Partnerships wherever it is deemed appropriate within the terms of its strategic policy and the bus quality template. In a number of locations Quality Contracts may be more appropriate including areas where SPT is the prime provider of services through subsidy arrangements or where the results of the application of market forces have resulted in a network of poor quality services. SPT are actively considering Quality Contracts in these areas.

West Lothian



West Lothian is very comfortable with progress made by operators on tendered services and feels that there is no necessity to offer Quality Partnerships on these financially supported routes as the contract conditions offer a detailed specification of the Council's requirements.

Considerable progress has been made in improving services and vehicle standards on these routes with examples



Livingston, Almondvale Road

- Bus rail link between Livingston North Station and expanding Kirkton Campus provided by Optare Solos offering low floor easy access
- Introduction of Town Services started in Bathgate, Broxburn and Whitburn
- Obtaining grants to enable operators to upgrade fleets to low floor easy access operation
- Developing new Bus Station in Livingston with no departure charges

On commercial services however there are problems with reliability and quality, especially on First routes between Bathgate, Livingston and Edinburgh. West Lothian Council are examining the options available to achieve a major improvement in service performance and passenger perception.



Publicity for introduction of Low Floor Buses on EM Horsburgh's Routes 274 & 276

West Lothian Council have had preliminary discussions with operators and Scottish Executive officials to see whether Quality Contracts could be pursued in order to force vehicle and reliability standards up. This would offer more control over the network, to use resources more effectively and reduce the number of service changes taking place.



Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers
Working together for better passenger transport

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