

# NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2006**

**at 1.00 pm**

**in Committee Room B**

**\*PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF TIME\***

MEMBERS: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:

Cambridge, Cook, Cranney, Fenwick, Flintoff, Hall, Lauderdale, J Marshall, Richardson, Rogan and Tumilty

Resident Representatives:

Allan Lloyd, Linda Shields and Steve Gibbon

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

**3. MINUTES**

3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2006 *(to follow)*

**4. RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM**

No Items

**5. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

No Items

**6. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS/BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS**

No Items

**7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

- 7.1 Draft Final Report – Scrutiny Investigation into Hartlepool’s Local Bus Service Provision – *Chair of Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum*

**8. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT**

**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

- i) **Date of Next Meeting - Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2006, commencing at 1.00pm in Committee Room B**

# **NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM MINUTES**

28<sup>th</sup> February 2006

**Present:**

Councillor: Kevin Cranney (In the Chair)

Councillors: John Cambridge, Rob Cook, Bob Flintoff, Gerard Hall, John Marshall, Carl Richardson, Trevor Rogan and Victor Tumilty.

Resident

Reps: Allan Lloyd and Steve Gibbon

Officers: Charlotte Burnham, Scrutiny Manager  
Rebecca Redman, Research Assistant, Scrutiny  
Joan Wilkins, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Also

Present: Doug Elphee, General Manager, Stagecoach Hartlepool  
Paul Livesey, Commercial Manager, Stagecoach Hartlepool  
T l'Anson, Stagecoach Hartlepool (T.G.W.U Representative)

## **59. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor's Sandra Fenwick and John Lauderdale and Resident Representative Linda Shields.

## **60. Declarations of interest by Members**

None.

## **61. Minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2006**

Confirmed.

## **62. Responses from the Council, the Executive to Committees of the Council to Reports of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee**

No items.

### **63. Consideration of Request for Scrutiny Reviews Referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee**

No items.

### **64. Consideration of Progress Reports/Budget and Policy Framework Documents**

No items.

### **65. Scrutiny Investigation into Hartlepool's Bus Service Provision – Evidence from Stagecoach** (Research Assistant (Scrutiny)/Stagecoach Representatives)

Further to minute number 58 of the previous meeting, the Research Assistant (Scrutiny) summarised the process undertaken so far as part of the Forum's ongoing investigation into Hartlepool's Bus Service Provision. Attention was drawn to the involvement of Stagecoach in the process and the invitation accepted by them to provide the Forum with further evidence of a local perspective.

The Chairman welcomed the General Manager and Commercial Manager of Stagecoach Hartlepool who gave a brief presentation outlining:

- The structure of Stagecoach in Hartlepool
- Reliability and punctuality
- Stagecoach services
- Disability access
- Marketing
- Concessionary fares
- How to increase bus use – Through partnerships (Urban Bus Challenge (Services 1 and 37), Extensive marketing
- The future for Stagecoach

To assist Members during the evidence gathering session a number of questions were suggested and outlined in detail in the report. During the course of discussions the following issues were raised:-

- i) **The difference in concessionary fare levels between authorities.**  
It was confirmed that each individual authority was responsible for funding a concessionary fare's scheme and the extent to which it is enhanced is determined at the Authority's discretion. In response to a suggestion that Stagecoach should consider selling passes to regular users for the same price as those provided to school children

attention was drawn to the concessionary fares scheme which was to be introduced from April 2006, in accordance with Government requirements.

- ii) **Were disabled children covered by the Concessionary Fares scheme.** Whilst senior citizens and disabled travellers were covered by the scheme Officers were uncertain if disabled children were included and indicated that clarification would be sought.
- iii) **Monitoring of the Concessionary Fares scheme.** Members were advised that Stagecoach received a total of 88p for every £1 journey (50p from the customer and 38p from the Council). In terms of monitoring all tickets were recorded and figure's reported back to the Council and that records could be easily audited.
- iv) **Transportation to hospitals.** Whilst it was noted that efforts were being made to target transport to Hartlepool, North Tees and James Cook hospitals concerns were reiterated regarding the absence of a service from the town centre to the new surgery on the Headland and the process for the selection/provision of services. The Chairman indicated that the issues raised were being looked into and that indications had already been given that in terms of new builds/developments Stagecoach would be contacted earlier regarding the provision of new services. In relation to Member involvement in discussions with Stagecoach on service provision/removal it was highlighted that this fell within the Portfolio Holders responsibility. It was, however, noted that Members would like to see greater backbencher involvement and improved consultations between the Council, Stagecoach and community representatives. This issue was to be included in the Forums final report.
- v) **The free pass system.** Issues were raised regarding the problems that could be created for bus users should the concessionary fares scheme not permit cross boundary travel across the Tees Valley. Particular concern was expressed for the elderly. Members were advised that the concessionary fares scheme could be enhanced by the Local Authority to include cross boundary travel dependent upon funding. Members were informed however, that the Authority has no legal requirement to extend the scheme. Attention was drawn to the success of the Tyne and Wear system in place and ongoing discussions in the Tees Valley in relation to district only and cross boundary schemes.

The Chairman indicated that this was an issue raised during the course of the Forum's investigation and had been taken on board by Officers.

vi) **Raised kerbs and the traffic calming measure's on Oxford Road.**

In response to concerns regarding parking in bus stops and the affect this had on the ability of buses to utilise costly raised kerbs the Chairman indicated that the issue had been discussed at the Traffic Officers Group. The problems created by the traffic calming measures on Oxford Road had also been discussed.

vii) **Passenger issues:**

- **Complaints.** In response to a complaint regarding the failure to stop of a bus on the Christchurch route Stagecoach representatives indicated that the matter would be looked into. As assurance was also given that all complaints were logged and responded to.
- **Bus Shelter at the rear of Park Road in the vicinity of the new Health Centre.** Members were advised that there was a scheme in place for the movement of the stop and that there was a proposal for the installation of a drop off point at the traffic lights.
- **Request for consideration of the diversion of the number 4 or 6 services along Jameson Road.** It was confirmed that Arriva were not responsible for the provision of a service along this route although they did currently operate a service along Davison Drive. Stagecoach representatives indicated that it would not be economically viable or practical to divert a bus from an existing route along Jameson Road and reiterated the factors preventing this.
- **Removal of service along Masefield.** Concern was expressed regarding two buses travelling down Marlow Road when the service along Masefield Road had been ceased. Attention was drawn to today's service user's requirements for high frequency services. Stagecoach endeavoured to do this and it was highlighted that the provision of a service along Masefield Road was not economically viable and the diverting of buses along roads here and there would not work.
- **Bus services to West Park.** A resident expressed concern regarding the reduction in frequency of buses to West Park and a request was made for the reinstatement of the service along Park Road. Stagecoach representatives indicated that the 516 service was a contracted service and that Stagecoach provided what it was asked to by the Council. It was explained that the service along Park Road had been removed to allow sufficient time for a bus to go down Ryehill Gardens, which was another pressure point in Hartlepool. Stagecoach representatives indicated that they would look into options for the reinstatement of the service along Park Road and report back to the resident in question.

- **How the decision to subsidise bus services was taken.** The Forum was advised that should Stagecoach make the decision that a route was not economically viable the Council would consider if it wished to subsidise it. When the decision was taken to subsidise a service the Council selected a provider through its tendering process.
- viii) **Could the cost of bus travel, rather than increased car ownership, be putting people off using bus services?** Stagecoach representatives were of the opinion that increased car ownership was the major factor in the falling use of buses and felt that the provision of a high quality service would not necessarily result in increased usage. Attention was drawn to Darlington Borough Council's research, which showed that 40% of journeys could not be taken by bus and that the only places where people tended not to use cars was where it was either too expensive or too difficult to do so.
- ix) **Stagecoach profits/losses in Hartlepool.** Stagecoach representatives indicated that Government legislation dictated that providers should be no better or worse off than if no concessionary fare's scheme was in place. Members were advised that Stagecoach did make a profit in Hartlepool however, information in relation to the level of profit made was commercially confidential. Stagecoach representatives indicated that the figure was not large and it was difficult to make the case for further investment in Hartlepool on the basis of current profits made.
- x) **Would the introduction of 20mph speed limits outside schools affect bus services?** Members were assured that speed bumps were to be one of a raft of safety measures to reduce speed outside schools and that consultations were to be carried out in each area prior to their introduction. In relation to buses and traffic calming it was noted that with the use of speed cushions rather than speed humps the axle width of buses would exceed the width of the cushion.
- xi) **Were the costs of providing an economically viable and non-viable service different?** Stagecoach representatives confirmed that there was no difference between the costs of a viable and non-viable service and that the issue related to the revenue income from passengers. Whilst some services were provided as loss leaders, if numbers continued to drop and losses became too heavy there would be no option but to remove services. On some routes i.e. No.5 revenue had not even been sufficient to pay drivers and had left no option but to cease the service.

Following completion of discussions the Chairman highlighted that a variety of issues had been discussed as part of the Forums inquiry and were to be included in the final report. The Stagecoach

representatives present were thanked for their participation and the Forum thanked by Stagecoach for the opportunity to participate in the process.

### **Decision**

The report was noted and the comments taken on board for consideration during formulation of the Forums report.

## **66. Scrutiny Investigation into Hartlepool's Bus Service Provision – Feedback on the Focus Group Session with Members of the Public** (Research Assistant)

The Research Assistant (Scrutiny) reported that as part of the Forums investigation into Hartlepool's Bus Service Provision a Focus Group session was held on the 15<sup>th</sup> February 2006 with members of the public. A summary of the issues discussed during the session was outlined in the report and to further assist those members of the Forum who had been unable to attend the session additional verbal feedback was provided.

Following consideration of the feedback provided, Members attention was drawn to the decision by Cabinet on the 27<sup>th</sup> February (minute no. 196) approving the implementation of an enhanced all day Tees Valley wide concessionary fares scheme for eligible Hartlepool residents. Attention was also drawn to the success of the Forums investigation and Members advised that a copy of the Draft Final Report was to be presented to them at the next meeting for approval prior to its submission to Cabinet.

### **Decision**

Issues raised during the Focus Group session were noted and taken on board for consideration during formulation of the Forums report.

KEVIN CRANNEY

CHAIRMAN



## NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

24 March 2006



**Report of:** Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum

**Subject:** DRAFT FINAL REPORT – SCRUTINY  
INVESTIGATION INTO HARTLEPOOL'S LOCAL  
BUS SERVICE PROVISION

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the draft findings of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum following its investigation into the local bus service provision in Hartlepool.

### 2. SETTING THE SCENE

- 2.1 Over the past 50 years, the need to travel has become greater and more complex as society became organised around the car and facilities became concentrated in larger units serving a larger population. The Government's Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) in 2003 highlighted the key issue as **accessibility**; can people get to key services at reasonable cost, in reasonable time and with reasonable ease?
- 2.2 According to the SEU rising car use has provided greater opportunities for travel, but over a third of households do not have access to a car. For some people there is no public transport, or it doesn't go to the right places or at the right times, or it does not go often enough or reliably enough, or vehicles are not accessible to disabled people. People's travel needs have become increasingly complex, and public transport has not adapted.
- 2.3 In the past Members have indicated that there is a poor perception of the current bus service provision within Hartlepool. Consequently this investigation was selected as a work programme item for the current 2005/2006 municipal year, with a ten month prescribed timescale for its completion.

### 3. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

- 3.1 The overall aim of the scrutiny investigation was to examine the current bus service provision currently operating within Hartlepool.

#### **4. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION**

4.1 The Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny investigation were as outlined below:-

- (a) To gain an understanding of government policy key areas relating to public transport (Local Transport Plan 2001-2006 and relating legislation –Transport Act 1985 and 2000);
- (b) To gain an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders involved in bus service provision in Hartlepool (i.e. commercial operator(s) and the Council);
- (c) To examine the current infrastructure and quality of the bus network within Hartlepool (To include bus stop shelters, traffic management, bus priority measures, signage, interchange points and quality of vehicles);
- (d) To consider whether the current bus service routes within Hartlepool meet a variety of needs in relation to access to employment, education, health care, local shops and services and leisure facilities;
- (e) To consider the availability of information relating to the bus service provision in Hartlepool, in particular the coordination of timetable changes;
- (f) To examine the barriers of using the bus service provision within Hartlepool in particular for people with disabilities;
- (g) To consider the cost of bus travel and the availability of ticket types relating to the bus service provision in Hartlepool;
- (h) To examine the Local Authority's bus subsidies and concessionary fares contributions together with any other related expenditure with regard to the bus service provision within Hartlepool;
- (i) To compare what good practice exists in another Local Authority in relation to bus service provision; and
- (j) To seek the views of a sample of users and potential users of the current bus service provision within Hartlepool.

#### **5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

5.1 The membership of the Scrutiny Forum was as detailed below:-

Councillors Cambridge, Cook, Cranney, Fenwick, Flintoff, Hall, Lauderdale, J Marshall, Richardson, Rogan and Tumilty.

Resident Representatives: Alan Lloyd, Linda Shields and Steve Gibbon.

## **6. METHODS OF INVESTIGATION**

6.1 Members of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum met formally from 19 September 2005 to 24 March 2006 to discuss and receive evidence relating to this investigation. A detailed record of the issues raised during these meetings is available from the Council's Democratic Services.

6.2 A brief summary of the methods of investigation are outlined below:-

- (i) Detailed Officer reports supplemented by verbal evidence;
- (ii) Evidence from the Authority's Elected Mayor and Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder for Culture, Housing and Transportation;
- (iii) Site visit to examine the good practice that exists within a neighbouring Local Authority in relation to their local bus service provision;
- (iv) Site visit facilitated by Stagecoach to experience a selection of bus routes within Hartlepool and to illustrate the current bus infrastructure;
- (v) Evidence received from a representative from the Government Office North East, who also acts as the Secretary to the North East Regional Bus Forum;
- (vi) Evidence received from the town's Member of Parliament;
- (vii) Evidence received from the town's main commercial bus providers; and
- (viii) The views of local residents and bus users.

## **FINDINGS**

### **7. GOVERNMENT POLICY RELATING TO BUS SERVICE PROVISION**

7.1 It was evident to Members, upon receiving the evidence outlined below, that improving the quality and provision of public transport services has been a key governmental priority for many years. Members also learned how Central Government policy had shaped Hartlepool's local transport system.

## Central Government Policy

- 7.2 **The Transport Act 1985** authorised the deregulation of bus services and resulted in a change from Quantity Licensing Contracts to Quality Licensing Contracts. The disposal of the National Bus Company, changes to travel concessions and a Local Authority co-ordination role all resulted from this act. Under this legislation operators could apply for concessionary fares from the relevant Local Authority and provide services on any routes.
- 7.3 **The Transport Act 2000** reinforced the approach to the provision of local bus services based upon partnership between local transport authorities and bus operators. It created various new powers to increase the influence that Local Authorities have over bus service provision with the introduction of Local Transport Plans. Members also learned that the Transport Act 2000 stated that all local authorities must prepare a Bus Strategy.
- 7.4 **New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone (1998)** embodied new modern thinking on integrating transport with other aspects of Government policy.
- 7.5 **Transport 2010: The Ten Year Plan (2000)** highlighted the need for modern, affordable and reliable public transport to enhance quality of life and contribute to a strong economy and a better environment. The report also outlined Government targets to increase the number of passenger journeys on buses in England by 10% by 2010.
- 7.6 The underlying rationale for the target is to tackle social exclusion, to contribute to the Government's wider transport objectives of tackling local road traffic congestion and to reduce vehicle emissions that lead to climate change.
- 7.7 **The Future of Transport: A Network for 2030 (2004)** sets out long term aims/objectives that may be achieved with Government investment and leadership, following an examination of the factors that would potentially shape travel and transport networks over the next 30 years.
- 7.8 This report acknowledges that most Local Authorities are best served by continuing with current partnership arrangements. However, greater scope for local authorities to determine routes, fares, quality standards and frequency of services, in specified circumstances, was encouraged as part of an integrated transport plan.

## Local Transport Policy in Hartlepool

- 7.9 Members were informed that Local Transport Plans were the central building blocks of the Government's integrated transport policy and that Local Authorities were required to produce these plans every five years. The quality of Local Transport Plans was assessed against criteria determined by the Department for Transport.
- 7.10 The first **Local Transport Plan (2001-2006)** was aimed at maintaining a viable bus network and improving the transport infrastructure for the area to enable the easier operation of bus services.

- 7.11 The Forum learned that during the first Local Transport Plan period, there had been a 3% decline, per annum on average, in bus passenger numbers in the Hartlepool area.
- 7.12 Members were informed that the Authority addressed this decline by commissioning the Tees Valley Quality Bus Network Review which identified the problems with the current bus service provision in Hartlepool. The second Local Transport Plan was developed with a consideration of the findings of this review.
- 7.13 The Authority's provisional second **Local Transport Plan (2006-2011)** was submitted to the Government in July 2005 and included draft strategies, transport schemes, implementation programmes and targets. Since that date, the provisional Local Transport Plan was developed further to account for the confirmed allocation of capital funding and to reflect the findings of consultation on the proposed transport improvements.
- 7.14 The Forum were informed that a wide range of transport schemes and initiatives were to be included and that the confirmed allocation of capital funding through the Local Transport Plan for the 2006-2011 period would be as outlined in the table below:-

	<b>2006-2011</b>
Integrated Transport	5,726,000
Structural Maintenance	4,750,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,476,000</b>

- 7.15 In addition to the Authority's Local Transport Plan for 2006-2011, Members were informed that a key component of the Plan was the Hartlepool Bus Strategy, the vision of which is as outlined below:-

*'To develop and maintain an integrated local bus network, ensuring that all residents can access the key services and facilities that they need and benefit from a choice of convenient, safe and attractive bus services, infrastructure and facilities.'*

- 7.16 Members learned that the Authority's Bus Strategy had been developed in partnership with local bus operators and other organisations through the existing voluntary Hartlepool Bus Quality Partnership and in consultation with members of the public.
- 7.17 The Forum was delighted to have been able to contribute to the development of the Authority's second Local Transport Plan and the Bus Strategy as part of this Scrutiny investigation.
- 7.18 Members were advised that the Authority's final Bus Strategy Framework, within the second Local Transport Plan, would be submitted to Government on 31 March 2006.

**8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED IN BUS SERVICE PROVISION IN HARTLEPOOL**

8.1 Based on the evidence presented to the Forum, Members established that there were four stakeholders involved in bus service provision in Hartlepool:-

- (a) Stagecoach who had operated the majority of the bus network in Hartlepool since 1994;
- (b) Arriva/Go Ahead who operated services on a small number of routes throughout Hartlepool;
- (c) Leven Valley who operated services on a small number of routes throughout Hartlepool; and
- (d) The Local Authority who had a number of responsibilities to operators and members of the public in relation to the current bus service provision.

8.2 The Forum found that, as the main commercial provider of bus services in Hartlepool, Stagecoach had various roles and responsibilities. These are summarised below:-

- (a) to deliver services at frequencies specified by the Authority;
- (b) to determine changes in demand by conducting service reviews;
- (c) to ensure that 95% of services are no more than one minute earlier or five minutes later than timetabled, in accordance with regulations given by the Traffic Commissioner, and to conduct punctuality reviews every four weeks;
- (d) to ensure that all vehicles conform to the standards enforced by the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency;
- (e) to ensure that all employees complied with Drivers Hours legislation and had undertaken Customer Care and Disability Awareness Training; and
- (f) to legally provide eight weeks notice of the cancellation of, and changes to, any of their services.

8.3 Members of the Scrutiny Forum were afforded the opportunity to witness such checks and maintenance first hand on their site visit with Stagecoach held on the morning of 13 February 2006.

8.4 The Forum invited Leven Valley and Arriva to submit evidence to this investigation. Both operators kindly declined this offer stating that they have only a relatively small involvement in bus service provision in Hartlepool.

- 8.5 Arriva, however, outlined that they provided services which linked Hartlepool to its wider hinterland and that a travel enquiry office was maintained in the town. Arriva was also a major contributor to the regional travel line information service and a major participant in the new regional real time information system.
- 8.6 Members were also informed, by the Authority's Transportation Section, that the Council played a crucial role in Hartlepool's bus service provision and had the following responsibilities:-
- (a) ensuring bus services were punctual and reliable and that members of the public could access services with ease and comfort;
  - (b) providing and maintaining infrastructure such as bus shelters, bus stop flags, traffic calming measures and enforcing parking restrictions, all of which impact upon the punctuality and reliability of bus services;
  - (c) subsidising bus services that are defined as socially necessary but may not be commercially viable and funding concessionary fares schemes; and
  - (d) coordinating the provision of information relating to local bus services despite no legal obligation to do so, in addition to commercial operators promoting their own services with maps and timetable leaflets.

## **9. CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE AND QUALITY OF BUS NETWORK IN HARTLEPOOL**

- 9.1 In relation to the current infrastructure and quality of the bus network in Hartlepool, Members sought evidence from a variety of witnesses. The comments from each are outlined below:-

### **Evidence from the Authority's Elected Mayor**

- 9.2 As a current bus user himself, Members found that the Authority's Elected Mayor was happy with the current bus service provision. However, there was an acknowledgement that the decline in bus user patronage would be remedied and that the current provision would need to be improved. The development of an integrated transport system and working in partnership was stated as vital to this development.

### **Evidence from the Town's Member of Parliament**

- 9.3 Members were informed by the Town's Member of Parliament that de-regulation was not in Hartlepool's interest and that bus user patronage would only increase if the main commercial operators invested in stock to increase the appeal of busses as a modern and comfortable mode of public transport.

- 9.4 It was suggested to Members that the Authority should utilise the arrangements and tools that the Government currently has in place to develop a sophisticated and modern bus service.
- 9.5 Members were also commended for playing an active role in the construction of the draft Bus Strategy and the second Local Transport Plan and encouraged to ensure that the Authority acknowledges the social, environmental and commercial factors that impact upon bus service provision.

#### **Evidence from Stagecoach- Site Visit**

- 9.6 Members attended a Site Visit on 13 February 2006, facilitated by Stagecoach, to experience a number of bus routes to determine the quality of the current bus service provision in Hartlepool.
- 9.7 The main Stagecoach services are the 1/1A, 3/4, 6, 7/7A, 12 and 36 and the main subsidised services are the 516/517 and 527 together with some early morning, Saturday and Sunday journeys and scholars services.
- 9.8 The Forum learned that 40% of Stagecoach buses in Hartlepool are low floor easy access vehicles, services 1/1A and 36, and every other No. 6, are run completely with easy access buses. The Forum was encouraged to note that the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 stated that by 2015 every bus had to be easy access.
- 9.9 Members were also pleased to hear that twenty Stagecoach buses were fitted with CCTV inside and outside the bus. The cost of implementing CCTV on buses was match funded by the Authority.
- 9.10 Other features on the newer Stagecoach buses include easy grip bright hand poles, wheelchair space and Braille on stop signs/handles for the visually impaired. Examples of these are illustrated below:-
- 9.11 Stagecoach have invested in extensive marketing with route branding on the sides of buses, distributed pocket size leaflets and organised press launches with the Authority's Elected Mayor in attendance. In order to increase bus user patronage Stagecoach have also advertised reduced fares for the first month of bus travel to new bus users and were due to introduce a voucher scheme at the time of this investigation.
- 9.12 The forum were also informed that within the Stagecoach Business Code of Conduct partnership with the Authority is stated as central to delivering bus services that meet local needs.
- 9.13 In relation to the provision and maintenance of infrastructure and bus shelters, Stagecoach informed Members that Adshel were contracted by the Authority. However, Adshel would only provide shelters where there were advertising opportunities.



- 9.14 The Authority's Public Transport Co-ordinator outlined to Members that the contract with Adshel was due to expire shortly allowing the opportunity to re-negotiate a new contract.

**Evidence from the Authority's Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder for Culture, Housing and Transportation**

- 9.15 In relation to the reliability and punctuality of services, the Authority's Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder for Culture, Housing and Transportation informed Members that, in conjunction with the Traffic Commissioner, the Bus Partnership Forum had agreed a concerted push for more punctual bus services through a co-ordinated package of measures.
- 9.16 The Forum heard that the centrepiece of this package is local Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnerships. Operators would share their punctuality data with local authorities and together they would identify trouble spots on routes and then plan and implement remedial action.
- 9.17 Members were pleased to find that the Operators had a strong incentive to take part in the Forum because the Traffic Commissioner, in deciding penalties for poor performance, would give credit for action in hand through these Partnerships. Local Authorities also had a strong incentive to participate due to the targets set for bus punctuality in the second Local Transport Plan.
- 9.18 The Forum also found that the Network Management Duty Guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Transport, under Section 18 of the Traffic Management Act 2004, stated that (Para 63):-

*'Where necessary, LTAs should work with the relevant parties, including Traffic Commissioners and bus operators, in formulating and implementing improvement plans for bus punctuality.'*

(Department for Transport: Bus Partnership Forum, 2005).

- 9.15 It was highlighted to Members that Hartlepool's involvement in the Bus Quality Partnership, in operation since 2000, had allowed a constructive dialogue between the Authority and commercial operators in ensuring that services were punctual and reliable.

**10. BUS ROUTES, BARRIERS AND ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES IN HARTLEPOOL**

- 10.1 The Authority's Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder for Culture, Housing and Transportation further informed Members that the majority of Hartlepool residents did not feel that the current bus service routes met a variety of needs in relation to access to key services and facilities.

- 10.2 A Strategic Accessibility Assessment, carried out by the Authority, indicated that 99% of Hartlepool's residents without access to a car could access Hartlepool Town Centre within 30 minutes by public transport.
- 10.3 However, Members were informed that the assessment did not account for barriers to accessing bus services, nor did it draw attention to the fact that certain areas and groups in society faced difficulties in reaching key services and facilities.
- 10.4 Members were pleased to find that the barriers to using buses for disabled people had been identified at all stages of a journey by the Authority. However, despite widespread improvements through the first Local Transport Plan, including the installation of dropped pedestrian crossings and low floor bus kerbs, Members were concerned to hear that the approach had only been applied to core routes given the volume of bus stops throughout the town.
- 10.5 The Forum also held a Focus Group Session with members of the public on 15 February 2006, which is referred to in greater detail in Section 15 of this report, to gather their views on the current bus service provision. The following issues were raised regarding barriers to using buses for disabled individuals:-
- (a) Height of bus stop flags displaying information on services on that route causing difficulties to disabled users to read it;
  - (b) Number of low level buses concentrated on commercially viable routes;
  - (c) Delivery Vehicles and cars that parked illegally in bus stop bays (those bays with dropped flag stones), causing difficulties on accessing the bus either before or after the designated bus stop bay; and
  - (d) Size and font of timetable information.
- 10.6 Members were pleased to find, however, that the second Local Transport Plan contained an Accessibility Strategy (devised in conjunction with the Hartlepool Bus Strategy) which aimed to deliver improvements on a 'whole route' basis, to remove barriers to physical accessibility and achieve cohesive and readily identifiable benefits.
- 10.7 It was evident that the Hartlepool All Ability Forum had also played an essential role in the development of the second Local Transport Plan by identifying existing transport problems faced by people with mobility impairments and suggesting solutions.
- 10.8 In addition to these developments, the Forum was pleased to find that Stagecoach, as the main commercial provider, now had 21 low liner buses, disabled access ramps and level floors to allow easier access for wheelchair users.

## **11. AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION RELATING TO BUS SERVICE PROVISION**

- 11.1 As outlined earlier within this report, whilst there is no legal requirement to do so, the Authority provides timetable information in the form of transport booklets and bus shelter timetable panels.
- 11.2 Members were informed that following the de-regulation of bus services in 1985, the Council had assumed responsibility for the provision of timetable information for all bus services at all bus stops.
- 11.3 The Authority does however, have a duty under the Transport Act 2000, to ensure this information is successfully coordinated.
- 11.4 Members learned that it is anticipated that Real Time Bus Information displays would be placed at selected bus stops across the Tees Valley in April 2006 and in Hartlepool by summer 2006. An increase in the number of roadside timetable information displays on core bus routes was also planned as part of a bus quality corridor programme within the Authority's Bus Strategy.
- 11.5 The Tees Valley Quality Bus Network Review outlines the value of Real Time Bus Information but states that it is not always necessary. The implications of this review for Hartlepool had yet to be assessed at the time of this investigation.
- 11.6 Members were encouraged to note that ultimately bus service users wanted services to be reliable and that the management of road space and traffic, engaging police and enforcing bus lanes and parking restrictions should enable more punctual services.
- 11.7 Members of the public in attendance at the Focus Group Event, held on 15 February 2006, also commented upon the timetable information being difficult to read due to the font and size of the text and that the bus stop flags were too high to allow individuals to see the services that run on that route. It was acknowledged that this was a particular problem for disabled individuals.

In relation to the provision of timetable information by commercial operators, Members learned that Stagecoach produced a Bus Guide detailing all of their services and those of other companies in Hartlepool. In addition Stagecoach periodically ran marketing campaigns targeting particular services with door to door leaflet drops and advertising in the local press and on street hoardings.

## **12. BUS SUBSIDIES AND CONCESSIONARY FARES**

- 12.1 Under the 1985 Transport Act, the Council must ensure that operators are no better or worse off than they would be if no concessionary fares scheme

existed.

- 12.2 Members heard that the current method for reimbursement to bus operators was based on monthly payments to bus operators for 80% of concessionary journeys made, multiplied by half the average fare. The average fare was based on the total income divided by the number of full paying passengers for a sample of journeys in Hartlepool.
- 12.3 The Forum were informed that Hartlepool Borough Council currently operated a concessionary bus travel scheme in accordance with the statutory minimum requirements of the Transport Act 2000, with the addition of a number of enhancements made at the Council's discretion.
- 12.4 Members were encouraged to note that the statutory minimum requirement was for all Hartlepool residents aged 60 and over and disabled people to travel at half fare on registered off peak local bus services within the Hartlepool area. In addition 'blind' individuals were entitled to travel at full concession.
- 12.5 Members also learned that the Government had set aside an additional £350 million to Local Authorities in 2006/2007 to finance the scheme distributed through the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) formulae with no ring fencing. The Authority's Transportation Section informed Members that the Authority spent an estimated £454,000 during the 2005/06 financial year on concessionary travel.
- 12.6 The Forum were pleased to find that at the meeting of Cabinet on 27 February 2006, it was agreed that an enhanced Tees Valley wide all day concessionary fares scheme would be implemented from 1 April 2006.
- 12.7 Members were also informed that Government Office North East is in the early stages of a possible study into a concessionary fares scheme for the North East region and that further developments relating to this study would be made known to the Authority's Cabinet in due course.
- 12.8 Members also received evidence from Government Office North East in relation to subsidising bus services and found:-
  - (a) that bus companies operated services which were commercially viable;
  - (b) that Council would tender for the provision of additional non viable but socially necessary services on the basis of an agreed contract with the operator;
  - (c) that bus companies were organised on a regional basis;
  - (d) that parent companies expected each region to produce a certain level of profit; and

- (e) that assisting operators to increase patronage on main routes would help them to return the required profit and enable them to explore operating services on less profitable routes without subsidy.
- 12.9 Members were encouraged to note that the current five year contract with the main commercial operator, to subsidise socially necessary services, was due to expire in August 2007.
- 12.10 In addition Members were informed that 95% of the services that the main commercial provider operated in Hartlepool were not subsidized by the Authority.
- 12.11 The Forum learned that in 2005, at the same time as commercial changes were introduced, some subsidised services that Stagecoach operated for Hartlepool Borough Council were withdrawn or reduced in frequency, due to the fact that the Urban Challenge scheme funding had expired.
- 12.12 A matter of serious concern to Stagecoach was the formula used by Hartlepool Borough Council for calculating the annual increase in tender prices for subsidised services. Stagecoach felt that the formula used did not reflect the cost increases faced by bus operators on items such as wages, insurance and diesel fuel.
- 12.13 The General Manager of Stagecoach further commented that an inevitable consequence of such an unfair pricing formula was that when the re-tendering process would next take place, the prices quoted were likely to be higher than anticipated by the Borough Council if its budget was based on its outlay in the last year of current contracts.
- 12.14 During the earlier evidence gathering session with the Town's Member of Parliament, Members were encouraged to note the importance of developing a focused quality partnership with Hartlepool's main commercial operators which would be mutually beneficial and did not rely upon subsidy.

### **13. COST OF TRAVEL AND TICKET TYPES**

- 13.1 Integrated ticketing is a key component of integration between services and between public transport modes. The Transport Act 2000 provides powers to local authorities to create ticketing schemes (Department for Transport: Bus Partnership Forum, 2004).
- 13.2 Further evidence provided by the Authority's Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder for Culture, Housing and Transportation stated that the cost of bus travel had increased over recent years in line with increased costs to the bus operators in relation to fuel and employee salaries. For example, adult fares on Stagecoach services have increased by 60p and weekly reduced fare tickets have increased by £3.80 since 2001.

- 13.3 Members were informed that the various ticket types and fares currently on offer by Stagecoach in Hartlepool were as outlined below:-
- (a) Mega Rider (£7.00 for 7 days travel);
  - (b) Mega Rider Plus (£11.00 for 7 days travel throughout Stockton, Hartlepool and Middlesbrough);
  - (c) Day Tripper (£2.60 for a day's travel);
  - (d) Concessionary (half price travel for the elderly and disabled in Hartlepool and Stockton);
  - (e) Coolrider (£5.20 a week for children); and
  - (f) Children (aged between 5-16 years) were entitled to travel at half the adult fare.
- 13.4 Members were also informed that passengers were able to travel in Hartlepool with single tickets costing from 50p to just over £1.15 at the time of this investigation on Stagecoach buses and that the potential for cross boundary, Tees Valley wide ticketing schemes was currently being explored.

#### **14. BUS SERVICE PROVISION IN A NEIGHBOURING LOCAL AUTHORITY**

- 14.1 Members of the Forum visited Darlington Borough Council on 16 January 2006, to establish what good practice existed within another neighbouring local authority and how Hartlepool's bus service provision could benefit from the adoption of any such practices.
- 14.2 During the delivery of the presentation from Darlington Borough Council's Transportation Section, reference was made to the four key themes that governed their approach to public transport provision as outlined below:-
- (a) Consultation;
  - (b) Research;
  - (c) Communication and Partnership; and
  - (d) Investment.
- 14.3 Based on the information shared with Members, it was found:-
- (a) That Darlington, as a town, had a multi-operator bus service provision;
  - (b) That Darlington Borough Council operated a body entitled the 'Darlington Transport Forum' consisting of a membership of Elected

Members, local bus operators and members of the public to discuss transportation issues on a quarterly basis;

- (c) That communication and partnership with stakeholders and members of the public was vital to developing and maintaining an excellent bus service provision;
- (d) That Darlington was selected as one of three sustainable travel demonstration town's to receive funding from the Department for Transport for a five year 'Town on the Move' Scheme which aimed to develop an integrated transport system;
- (e) That the Authority was exploring/promoting the following initiatives:-
  - (i) SMS timetable messaging;
  - (ii) Email timetable alerts;
  - (iii) Multi journey tickets, all operator network tickets, taxi vouchers and more extensive off bus sales in order to improve boarding times;
  - (iv) Student travel passes;
  - (v) Real Time Bus Information;
  - (vi) CCTV at bus stops and on buses;
  - (vii) Travelline internet journey planner; and
  - (viii) NETIS telephone enquiry service.
- (f) That the Authority had also invested in socially necessary bus services, funded new interiors to buses, raised kerbs at bus stops for easier access and erected new bus stop flags.

## **15. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT- THE VIEWS OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

15.1 In addition to the consultation exercise with members of the public previously undertaken by the Authority's Transportation Section, Members of the Forum were keen to engage with the community regarding the Local Transport Plan and Bus Strategy as part of this investigation.

15.2 Therefore the Forum sought the views of a sample of users and potential users of the bus service provision in Hartlepool, in a Focus Group event held on 15 February 2006 in the Council Chamber (illustrated in the photograph overleaf).

- 15.3 The event was publicised in the local press, on local radio and via the Council's website together with the distribution of leaflets on Stagecoach buses.
- 15.4 Members of the public were given the opportunity to provide their views on the quality of the current bus network, infrastructure and accessibility. The issues raised at the event were as outlined below:-
- (a) Justification as to viable/non viable routes and customer demand impacting upon the services that Stagecoach provided;
  - (b) The increasing frustration with the lack of punctual and reliable bus services, in particular Stagecoach services;
  - (c) If the main commercial provider could divert more frequent services to non viable routes and if this would impact upon the efficiency of services?;
  - (d) The frequency of the No. 6 service;
  - (e) The need for further resources to be made available by the Authority to subsidise non viable bus routes;
  - (f) The exact amount of funding available to the Authority for concessionary fares and the impact this figure would have upon increase in fares by the main commercial provider;
  - (g) The need to address the poor provision/lack of bus shelters and bus stop flags on certain routes, in particular the lack of shelters in Seaton Carew;
  - (h) The concerns about the poor co-ordination of timetable changes, timetable information being difficult to read or placed too high on bus stop flags and the lack of available resources for improvements;
  - (i) The lack of reduced fare schemes for young people aged 16-18 years old to access employment and education;
  - (j) The possibility of utilising the Council's transport facilities were requested to be explored further;
  - (k) The concern expressed at the absence of the following services:-
    - (i) No.5 Service (Headland to West View after 5pm and to Doctors Surgery);
    - (ii) Park Road;
    - (iii) Bishop Cuthbert (as roads have yet to be adopted);
    - (iv) Victoria Harbour (possible funding from developer for services);



- (v) Shuttle service from the Headland and West View into the Town Centre;
  - (vi) School service from Grange Road to High Tunstall;
  - (vii) Service from Morrisons to the Headland;
  - (viii) No direct service from Hartlepool to North Tees Hospital;
  - (ix) Services to both sides of the Marina; and
  - (x) St Luke's Church.
- (l) The need for low liner buses on all routes to ensure easier access to buses for disabled passengers;
  - (m) The need for the provision of an interchange and/or a Town Centre bus station;
  - (n) The need to actively promote transport services such as Ring and Ride and the provision from the voluntary sector;
  - (o) The need to develop and promote incentive schemes to increase bus user patronage;
  - (p) The need to improve the quality and comfort of buses; and
  - (q) To continue to actively promote services with the delivery of marketing and advertising campaigns by Stagecoach, Arriva and Leven Valley.

## **16. CONCLUSIONS**

### **16.1 The Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum concluded:-**

- (a) That improving the quality and provision of bus services is a key governmental priority which had resulted in the requirement of all local authorities to produce a Local Transport Plan and Bus Strategy every five years;
- (b) That the Government had outlined a target increase of 10% in the number of passenger journeys on buses in England by 2010;
- (c) That within Hartlepool there had been a 3% decline in bus user patronage during 1999 and 2005;
- (d) That the Authority commissioned the Tees Valley Quality Bus Network Review to address this decline but have yet to assess how the findings of the review impact upon Hartlepool's bus service provision;

- (e) That all stakeholders have clear roles and responsibilities in relation to the provision and maintenance of bus services in Hartlepool;
- (f) That partnership working between the Authority and commercial operators is vital to the development of an integrated transport system within Hartlepool;
- (g) That a number of the town's bus stop shelters are of a poor standard (as a result of vandalism) and that shelters of a higher quality are only provided via Adshel, a sub contractor of the Authority, on routes that are commercially viable in terms of advertising opportunities;
- (h) That the Hartlepool Bus Quality Partnership and Traffic Liaison Group are clear mechanisms by which the Authority and commercial operators are able to engage in constructive dialogue about changes and developments to Hartlepool's bus service provision;
- (i) That the Authority's Strategic Accessibility Assessment found that 99% of Hartlepool residents could access the town centre within thirty minutes by public transport but did not account for barriers to accessing bus services;
- (j) That the current bus service provision does not meet a variety of needs in relation to access to employment, education, healthcare, local shops and services and leisure facilities;
- (k) That access to education and employment is problematic for people aged 16-18 years old as no reduced fares scheme is currently in place;
- (l) That there are various barriers to accessing bus services for disabled individuals such as the concentration of low liner buses on commercially viable routes, limited provision on buses for wheelchair users, illegal parking causing an obstruction to raised kerb access and timetable displays that are not easily accessible;
- (m) That although the Authority does not have a legal requirement to do so, it has assumed responsibility for the provision of timetable information, despite a lack of resources, which had resulted in the poor coordination is a legal requirement of updating timetables; duty within
- (n) That the town's main commercial operator also provide timetable information in the form of leaflets and booklets;
- (o) That an enhanced Tees Valley wide concessionary fares scheme will commence in April 2006 funded by the Authority;
- (p) That the Authority subsidised 5% of the services that the main commercial provider operated;

- (q) That the cost of bus travel had increased in line with increased costs to commercial operators;
- (r) That in addition to the concessionary fares scheme funded by the Authority, various reduced fare ticketing schemes and free travel vouchers are offered by the main commercial operator to generate an increase in bus user patronage;
- (s) That a lack of bus priority lanes, traffic calming measures, and new developments in the town without a bus service provision, impact upon the levels of traffic congestion and the efficiency of services. In addition to this it was found that traffic congestion has serious environmental consequences;
- (t) That Darlington Borough Council's local bus service provision was very different to that in Hartlepool as it had multiple commercial operators and was in receipt of a significant amount of funding from the Department for Transport as part of the 'Town on the Move' scheme;
- (u) That consultation with members of the public highlighted that the lack of a bus station or interchange significantly impacted upon the decision to travel by bus;
- (v) That it was evident that the Council's transport facilities, Ring and Ride and community transport provision were under utilised within Hartlepool;
- (w) That the cancellation of a number of services resulted from subsidy being withdrawn due to a lack of available funding within the Council's budget;
- (x) That the Authority's current five year contract with the main commercial operator to subsidise socially necessary services is due to expire in August 2007;
- (y) That new developments such as the Victoria Harbour Development and the Bishop Cuthbert housing estate could result in an extension of Hartlepool's bus network and that commercial operators should be involved earlier in the planning negotiations.

## **17. RECOMMENDATIONS**

17.1 The Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum has taken evidence from a wide range of sources to assist in the formulation of a balanced range of recommendations. The Forum's key recommendations to the Cabinet are as outlined below:-

- (a) That work be undertaken by the Authority to improve the infrastructure of the bus network in Hartlepool, with particular reference to:-

- (i) improving the provision of bus stop shelters to ensure better waiting facilities (to also consider lighting and safety issues);
  - (ii) new and innovative means of providing up to date timetable information and ensuring that such information is co-ordinated in a timely manner;
  - (iii) future improvements to the highways within Hartlepool to improve bus punctuality, for example bus priority lanes, where appropriate; and
  - (iv) the compilation of a rolling programme for the implementation of measures to aid easier access to buses for disabled users.
- (b) That the possibility of utilising the Council's current transport provision, Dial a Ride and the voluntary sector provision be explored as an alternative to subsidising individual routes, where appropriate;
- (c) That the town's commercial operators, in partnership with the Authority, be encouraged to invest in marketing and publicity campaigns to improve the image of bus travel and promote concessionary fares in order to increase bus user patronage; and
- (d) That a formalised mechanism be established to engage the Authority, commercial operators and developers in early discussions of future planned developments within Hartlepool, to establish how the bus network may be extended to areas of new development prior to approval of planning applications, such as the Victoria Harbour Development;
- (e) That a mechanism be established to enable the Authority and commercial operators to inform Elected Members and members of the public of the withdrawal of and/or major changes to bus services within Hartlepool;
- (f) That further work be undertaken to extend the Tees Valley wide concessionary fares scheme to enable concessionary travel to County Durham;
- (g) That a reduced fares scheme for 16-18 year olds to enable access to education and employment be explored;
- (h) That increased costs to operators and the Authority's budgetary provision be anticipated in a proactive approach to the renewal of subsidy contracts with the main commercial operator that are due to expire in 2007;
- (i) That the discontinuation of individual services, together with a lack of provision in particular areas of the town, (paragraph 15. 4 refers) be addressed by the Authority in negotiation with commercial operators in order to reinstate or introduce services, where funding allows;

- (j) That the findings of the Tees Valley Quality Bus Network Review and their implications for Hartlepool be addressed; and
- (k) That the Authority submits a progress report on the recommendations contained within this report, within six months, to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum.

## **18. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- 18.1 The Committee is grateful to all those who have presented evidence during the course of our investigation. We would like to place on record our appreciation, in particular of the willingness and co-operation we have received from the below named:-

### Hartlepool Borough Council:

Stuart Drummond - Elected Mayor

Councillor Robbie Payne – Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder for Culture, Housing and Transportation

Ian Parker - Director of Neighbourhood Services

Nick Clennett – Former Head of Technical Services

Mike Blair - Acting Transport and Traffic Manager

Ian Jopling - Transportation Team Leader

John Lewer - Public Transport Co-ordinator

### External Representatives:

Iain Wright, MP for Hartlepool

Penny Marshall – Secretary to North East Regional Bus Forum/Officer of Government Office North East

Doug Elphee – Commercial Manager, Stagecoach North East

Peter Clark, Former Operations Manager, Stagecoach in Hartlepool

Paul Livesey, Operations Manager, Stagecoach in Hartlepool

Tim l'Anson, Secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union / Bus Driver, Stagecoach in Hartlepool

Clive Hopkinson, Transport Manager and colleagues from Darlington Borough Council

Members of the Public (including Resident Representatives)

**COUNCILLOR KEVIN CRANNEY  
CHAIR OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

March 2006

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The following background papers were consulted or referred to in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Making Connections: Final Report on Transport and Social Exclusion – Social Exclusion Unit 2003.
- (ii) Report of the Scrutiny Manager entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Hartlepool's Bus Service Provision – Scoping Report' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 19 August 2005.
- (iii) Presentation of the Director of Neighbourhood Services entitled 'The Role of the Local Authority in providing Bus Services' delivered to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 5 September 2005.
- (iv) Presentation by the Operations Manager for Stagecoach in Hartlepool entitled 'The Provision of Bus Services in Hartlepool - A View from Stagecoach' delivered to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 5 September 2005.
- (v) Report of the Scrutiny Manager and Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Hartlepool's Bus Service Provision – Evidence from the

Authority's Portfolio Holder for Culture, Housing and Transportation' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 14 October 2005.

- (vi) Report of the Scrutiny Manager and Research Assistant entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Hartlepool's Bus Service Provision – Evidence from Government Office North East' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 11 November 2005.
- (vii) Presentation from the representative from Government Office North East/Secretary of the Regional Bus Forum to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 11 November 2005.
- (viii) Presentation from the Authority's Acting Transport and Traffic Manager and Public Transport Co-ordinator entitled 'A General Guide to Public Transport Co-ordination' delivered to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 11 November 2005.
- (ix) Report of the Scrutiny Manager and Research Assistant entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Hartlepool's Bus Service Provision – Evidence from the town's Member of Parliament' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 9 December 2005.
- (x) Report of the Scrutiny Manager and Research Assistant entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Hartlepool's Bus Service Provision – Evidence from the Authority's Elected Mayor' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 9 December 2005.
- (xi) Report of the Scrutiny Manager and Research Assistant entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Hartlepool's Bus Service Provision –Feedback from the Site Visit to Darlington Borough Council held on 16 January 2006' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 17 January 2006.
- (xii) Report of the Transportation Team Leader entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Hartlepool's Bus Service Provision- Hartlepool's Second Local Transport Plan' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 17 February 2006.
- (xiii) Report of the Transportation Team Leader entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Hartlepool's Bus Service Provision- Draft Bus Strategy Framework' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 17 February 2006.
- (xiv) Report of the Scrutiny Manager and Research Assistant entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Hartlepool's Bus Service Provision –Feedback from the Site Visit with Stagecoach held on 13 February 2006' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 17 February 2006.
- (xv) Report of the Research Assistant entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Hartlepool's Bus Service Provision –Evidence from Stagecoach' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 28 February 2006.

- (xvi) Report of the Research Assistant entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Hartlepool's Bus Service Provision –Focus Group Session with members of the public Feedback' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 28 February 2006.