

Summary of Responses to Public Consultation on Wiltshire’s Public Transport Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the results of a public consultation exercise to determine views regarding the Council’s proposed new public transport policy.

2. Respondent Population

- 2.1 In total, 1,565 people responded to the survey, the vast majority of whom completed the survey online.
- 2.2 Table 2-1 summarises the breakdown of respondents by type (Question 1). The majority (87%) of respondents were Wiltshire residents. Just under 2% of respondents (29 respondents) were Parish, Town, District or County Councillors. Over 7% of respondents highlighted ‘other’ as their respondent type; very few were specific about the capacity in which they were responding, although a small number indicated that they were resident of neighbouring counties.

Table 2-1: Respondent type

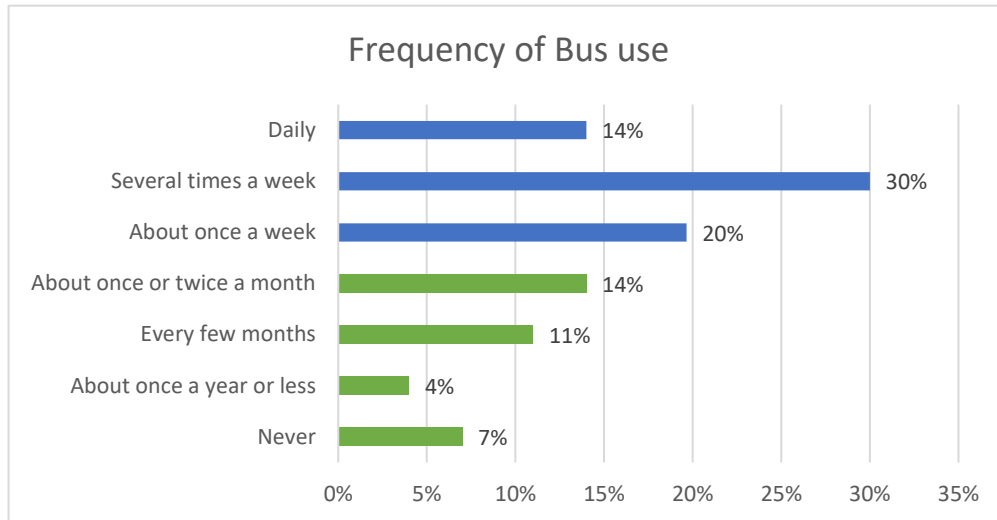
Respondent Role	Number of Respondents	% of respondents
Resident of Wiltshire	1361	86.96%
Visitor to Wiltshire	27	1.73%
District or parish / town councillor	20	1.28%
Wiltshire County councillor	9	0.58%
Member of Wiltshire Council staff	7	0.45%
Representative of another voluntary sector organisation, charity or community group	7	0.45%
Other public transport service operator / employee or volunteer	5	0.32%
Commercial bus operator / employee	3	0.19%
Representative of another public sector organisation	1	0.06%
Other	119	7.60%
Not specified	6	0.38%
Total	1565	

3. Frequency of Bus Use

- 3.1 Respondents were asked how often they used different modes of transport to get about in Wiltshire (Question 3). In relation to bus travel, of the 1471 respondents, 64% (934

respondents) were frequent bus users – i.e. they used the bus at least once a week (blue bars in Figure 3-1). The remaining 36% (537 respondents) used the bus less than once a week including ‘never’ (green bars in Figure 3-1).

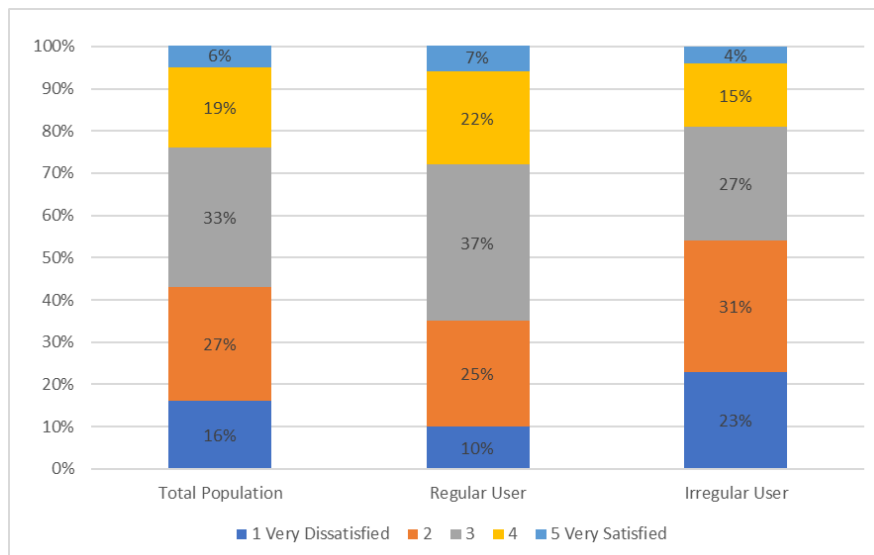
Figure 3-1: Frequency of bus use to get about in Wiltshire



4. Satisfaction with Bus Services in Wiltshire

4.1 Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with bus services provided in Wiltshire from 1 - very dissatisfied to 5 - very satisfied (Question 4). Overall, 25% of respondents rated their satisfaction with services as either 4 or 5, compared to 29% for frequent bus users and 19% for infrequent users (see Figure 4-1). Similarly, infrequent users were more than twice as likely to be very dissatisfied with services (rating services as 1), than frequent users.

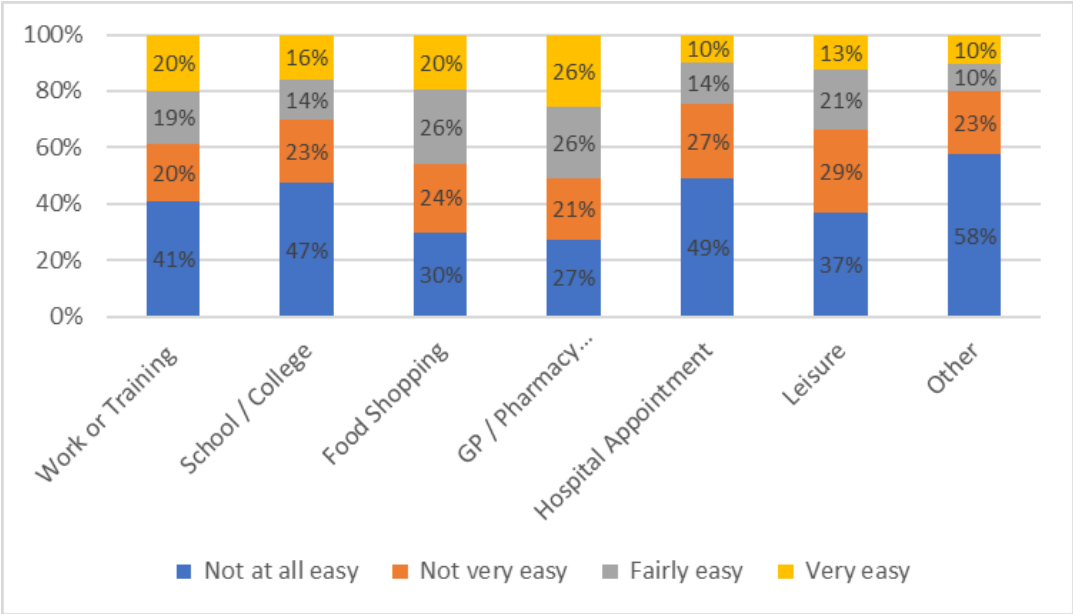
Figure 4-1 – Satisfaction with Current Bus Services Provided



5. Ease of making journeys without access to any bus services

- 5.1 Respondents were asked how easy they would find it to complete particular journeys if they did not have access to any bus services (Question 5).
- 5.2 The journeys which respondents would find 'not at all easy' to make were hospital appointments and school / college journeys (Figure 5-1). 'Other' journeys included a combination of the journey types listed, as well as visiting friends and travelling to other towns.

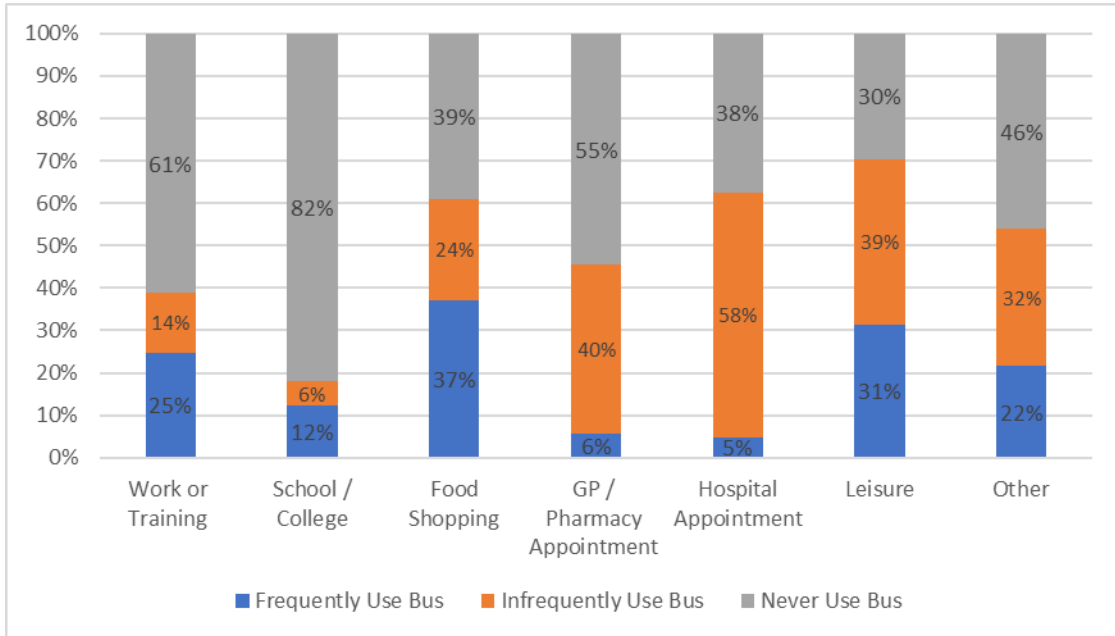
Figure 5-1: Ease of making particular journeys without access to any bus services



6. Frequency of bus use for different types of journey in Wiltshire

- 6.1 Respondents were asked how often they use a bus to make a range of journeys (Question 6). 37% of respondents frequently used the bus to go food shopping, while 31% frequently used the bus to make leisure journeys and 25% frequently used the bus to access work or training (Figure 6-1). 58% of respondents infrequently used the bus to attend hospital appointments (58%), 40% infrequently used the bus to access GP / Pharmacy appointments (40%) and 39% used the bus infrequently to access leisure. The majority of respondents indicated that they never used the bus to access work or training (61%) or a GP / Pharmacy appointment (55%). 82% of respondents never used the bus to access school or college, reflecting the age profile of the respondent population.

Figure 6-1: How often respondents use the bus service for different journey types



7. Support for Policy Measures

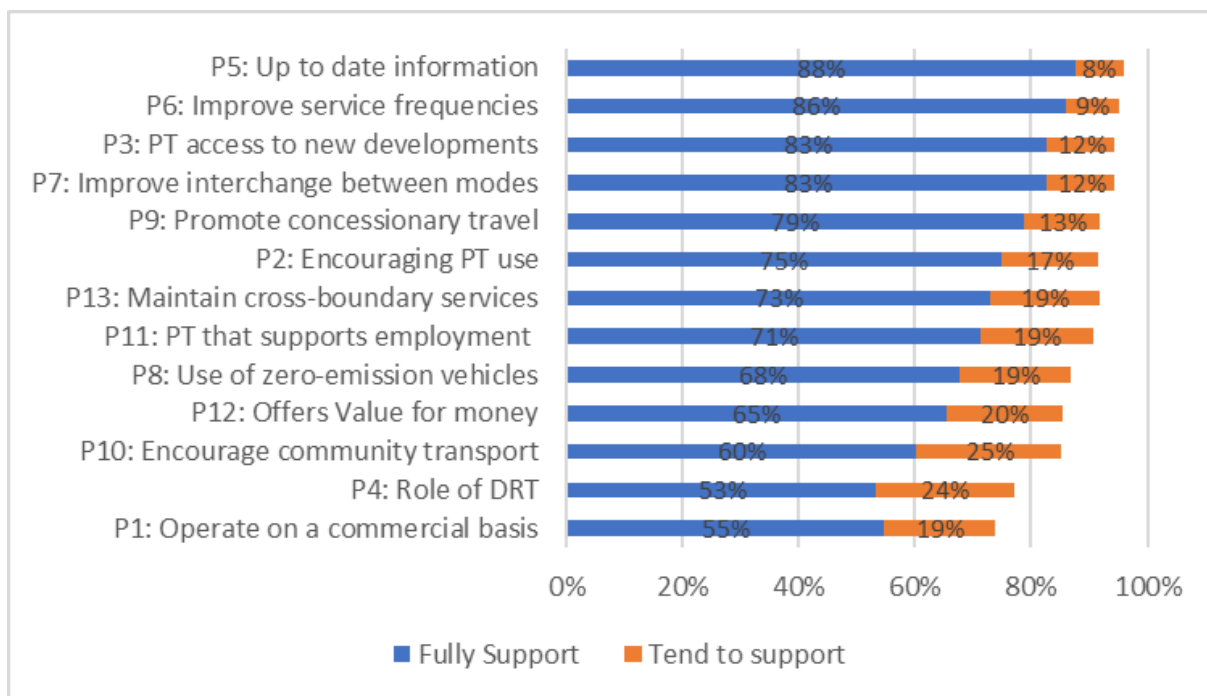
7.1 Table 7-1 summarises the 13 policies which are included within the draft Passenger Transport Policy.

Table 7-1: Policies contained in draft Passenger Transport Policy

Policy No.	Policy detail
P1	The Council will encourage public transport operators to meet the access needs of the county on a commercial basis
P2	The Council will encourage residents and visitors to use public transport whenever possible
P3	The Council will work to ensure that long-term, cost-effective access by public transport is planned in to new developments and financial contributions are secured from developers to support that provision
P4	The Council will consider the role of demand responsive transport services*, financially supporting and promoting them as appropriate to complement mainline public transport services
P5	The Council will work with bus operators to ensure that public transport information is up to date, clear and accurate, and available via a wide range of printed and digital sources
P6	The Council will explore options for implementing high frequency, high quality bus routes in the county
P7	The Council will work to improve interchange between transport modes (such as rail and bus) to increase travel by public transport
P8	The Council will encourage the use of low and zero emission vehicles on commercial public transport services (and move towards low emission vehicles on supported services) to improve air quality across the county
P9	The Council will promote concessionary travel to encourage elderly and disabled customers to access local facilities and services by bus
P10	Where residents are not able to access public transport services the Council will champion independent living among residents by encouraging use of community transport
P11	The Council will prioritise support for public transport which provides access to employment and training, education, essential shopping and healthcare
P12	The Council will ensure that the public transport it supports offers value for money for the county's taxpayers
P13	The Council will ensure that cross-boundary services form an important element of the county's public transport network

7.2 There was broad support for the majority of policies in the Public Transport Policy as shown in Figure 7-1. Respondents were asked to explain their reasoning for not supporting any particular policies. In relation to Policy one - 'The Council will encourage public transport operators to meet the access needs of the county on a commercial basis' - respondents were concerned about the focus on commercial needs and value for money rather than necessity of service or any associated social benefits. In addition, respondents expressed concerns regarding Policy four – 'The Council will consider the role of demand responsive transport services*, financially supporting and promoting them as appropriate to complement mainline public transport services' - as they felt DRT offered poor value for money, had failed in other areas, and was not a viable alternative to car travel.

Figure 7-1: Extent of support for policies within Public Transport Policy

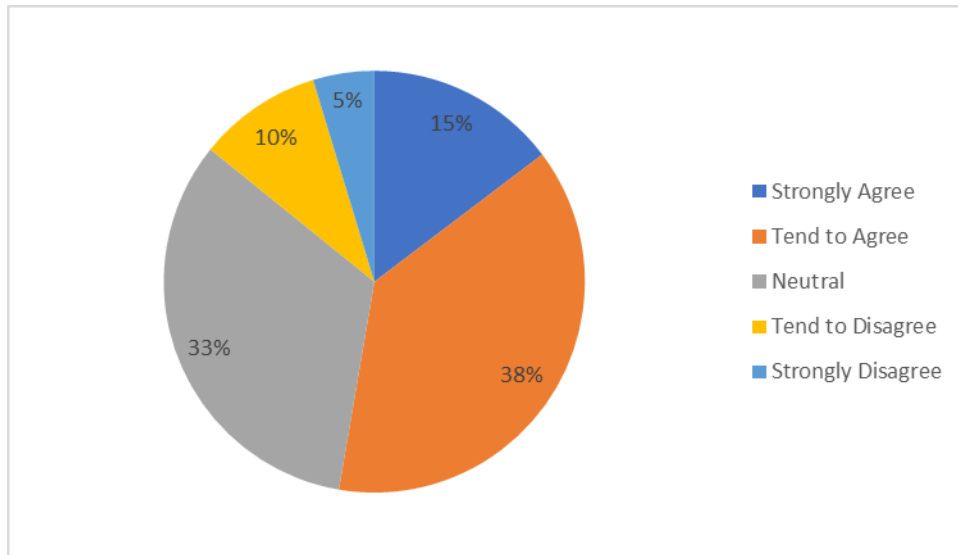


8. Extent of agreement that the Public Transport Policy will provide an efficient bus network that meets user needs for priority journeys

8.1 Just over 50% of respondents to Question 8 agreed that the Public Transport Policy will provide an efficient bus network that meets user needs for priority journeys, although only 15% strongly agreed (Figure 8-1). A slightly higher proportion of frequent bus users (42%) tended to agree with the statement than infrequent users (33%).

8.2 15% of respondents disagreed that the Policy would provide an efficient bus network that meets user needs for priority journeys, whilst a third of respondents remained neutral.

Figure 8-1: Extent of agreement that the Public Transport Policy will provide an efficient bus network that meets user needs for priority journeys



8.3 762 respondents indicated why they responded as they did to Question 8. Appendix 1 summarises the reasoning from those who agreed with the statement, while Appendix 2 summarises the responses from those who disagreed.

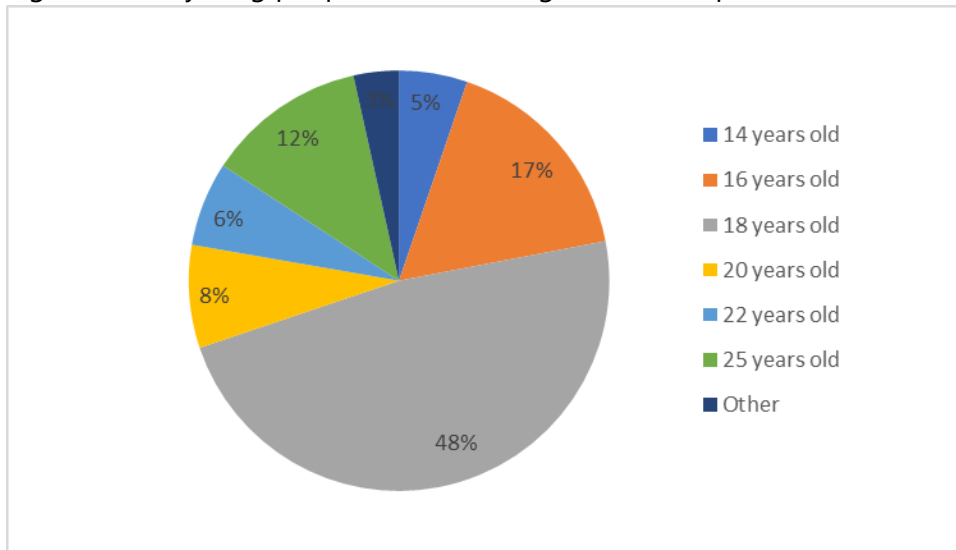
8.4 The most popular reasons amongst respondents who agreed were that the changes look positive; the policy will be great if it is actually implemented; public transport is essential to those without alternative means of travel; and that it is important to encourage public transport use as an alternative to car travel.

8.5 Among those who disagreed, the most popular reasons were that they were not convinced the policy would be delivered/successful based on the state of current bus services; they felt there was a need for greater frequency of services, as well as better coverage of the whole county; and they felt services need to stop being terminated.

9. Travel for Young People

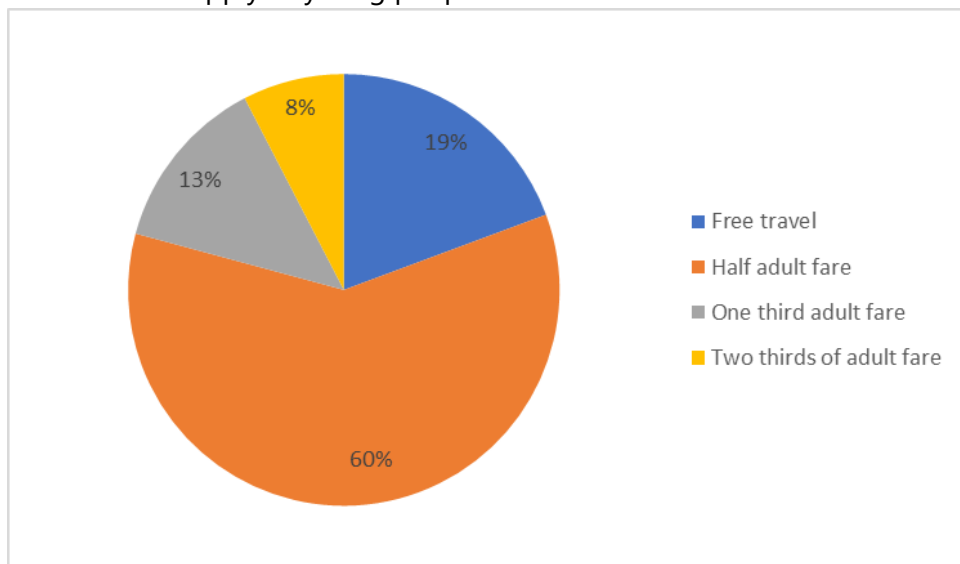
9.1 Almost half of respondents (48%) considered that young people should be eligible for cheaper travel up to the age of 18, while 17% of respondents considered travel should be cheaper up to the age of 16 (Figure 9-1). More than 25% of respondents considered that travel should be cheaper for young people up to the age of 25.

Figure 9-1: Age at which young people should be eligible for cheaper travel



9.2 With regard to the level of discount that should be applied to young people's fares, the majority of respondents (60%) considered it should be half the adult fare, although 19% considered that young people should have free fares (Figure 9-2). Approximately 13% of respondents considered that the discount should be one third of an adult fare, although approximately 8% felt it should be set at two-thirds of an adult fare.

Figure 9-2: Fare levels to apply to young people



10. Other ways to provide value for money

- 10.1 Respondents were asked what else the Council could do to provide value for money public transport services (Question 12). 478 respondents answered this question; a summary of the responses is provided in Appendix 3.
- 10.2 46 ways of providing value for money services were mentioned by multiple respondents. The most popular response, raised by 69 respondents, was to improve service frequencies. There was also widespread support for:
- continuing the current £2 single fare (42 respondents)
 - improving service coverage across the county (39 respondents)
 - improving service reliability (38 respondents)
 - provision of real time information, at bus stops and/or through an app (29 respondents)
 - Availability of through tickets for different operators and modes (21 respondents)
 - Cheaper fares (20 respondents)
 - Improving weekend service frequencies (19 respondents)
 - Improving evening / off-peak frequencies (16 respondents)
 - smaller vehicles (16 respondents)
 - concessionary passes to work before 9:30am (15 respondents)
 - student / young person fares discounts (15 respondents)

11. Any other comments

- 11.1 Respondents were asked if they had any other comments, including on other elements of the Public Transport Policy (Question 13). 382 respondents answered this question; a summary of the responses is provided in Appendix 4. There was some duplication with responses to Question 12, for example, the most common response was to increase bus frequencies, raised by 63 respondents. Other popular responses were:
- Increase rural service frequencies (32 respondents)
 - Improve overall service reliability (26 respondents)
 - Provide more frequent off-peak services (23 respondents)

Appendices

Appendix 1: Reasons for agreeing that the Passenger Transport Policy will provide an efficient bus network that meets user needs for priority journeys

Tend to / Strongly Agree Reasoning	No. of Respondents
Changes look positive	51
Policy will be great if actually implemented	49
Public transport essential to those without alternative means of travel	32
Important to encourage public transport as an alternative to cars	32
Need more frequent services	29
Not convinced, based on state of current bus services	27
Wait until it's actually implemented	24
Environmental benefits	23
Elderly / disabled rely on it	22
Need more reliable services	21
Sceptical that there is money to make necessary changes	21
Buses currently meet my needs	17
Need to improve service coverage	15
Policies don't always achieve intended outcomes	15
Could improve connectivity between rural areas and towns / railway stations	11
Commercial factors not overriding community need	10
Could stop service cutbacks	9
Provides benefit to the community	9
Villages / rural areas still isolated	9
Appears council have given careful consideration to the policy	8
Young people rely on it	8
Would better serve my needs	6
Enables public to use transport more often	6
Policies look good and I use the bus frequently	6
More off-peak services needed	5
Should provide good service and public transport improvements	4
Provides benefit to the community	4
Integrated network needed to genuinely change people behavior	4
Any change is better than current services	4
Don't know what the policy/survey actually is	3
Should lead to improved health / mental health	3
Improved air quality	3
Who decides what is priority	3
Improve real time information	3
Must serve new developments	3
Coverage more important than frequency	3
If it leads to greater connectivity with other modes	3
Current cross border services don't meet my needs	3
Must serve the needs of workers	2
Continued investment in public transport required	2
Policy appears vague and unclear	2
If previously discontinued bus services are reinstated	2
Cost of use appears to be missing from the policy	2
Sceptical of DRT	2

Appendix 2: Reasons for disagreeing that the Passenger Transport Policy will provide an efficient bus network that meets user needs for priority journeys

Tend to / Strongly Disagree Reasoning	No. of Respondents
Not convinced policy will be delivered/successful , based on state of current bus services	31
Need more frequent services	21
Greater service coverage needed	18
Need to stop services being discontinued	16
Sceptical policies will actually be delivered / objectives achieved	14
More off-peak services needed	3
Villages / rural areas still isolated	12
Don't believe it will happen	11
Improve current reliability	8
Don't believe rural needs are being considered	7
Lack confidence in Salisbury Reds	6
Who decides what is priority	6
Have seen questionnaires like this before and nothing changes	6
Sceptical that there is money to make necessary changes	5
Past experience	4
Sceptical that there is political will to make necessary changes	4
Commercial factors not overriding community need	4
Not a viable alternative to car travel	3
WCC has other priorities	3
Wait to actually see it in practice	2
Don't know what the policy/survey actually is	2
Cheaper fares needed	2
Policies don't always achieve intended outcomes	2
Policy will be great if actually implemented	2

Appendix 3: Suggestions for other things the Council could do to provide value for money services

Suggested improvement	No. of Respondents
Greater service frequency	69
Continue £2 single fares	42
Greater service coverage	39
Greater service reliability	38
Real time service information	29
Availability of through tickets for different operators and modes	21
Cheaper fares	20
Greater weekend frequency	19
Greater evening/off-peak frequency	16
Smaller vehicles - double deckers often half empty	16
Concessionary travel free before 9:30am	15
Student / young persons fares discounts	15
Improved bus shelters	13
Improved rural travel	12
Clear / updated timetables	10
Better / cleaner buses	10
Lower fares on non-single journeys	10
Concessionary fares for seniors to be cheap but not free to finance improvement	10
Greater connectivity with other modes	10
App	8
Booking service / DRT in rural areas	7
Bus priority measures	7
Smaller buses on country roads	7
Better / more conveniently located bus stops	6
Fare cap	6
Free children's / school fares	6
Season passes	6
Family day tickets	5
Wheelchair / pushchair accessibility	4
Concessionary travel for carers/NHS staff	4
Weekly tickets	4
Nationalise buses	4
Free services	4
Actively discourage car use	4
Increased school transport	3
Electric vehicles	3
Less changing buses/split journeys	2
Lobby Government for greater public support	2
Cheaper than equivalent train tickets	2
More stable free wifi / charging ports	2
Improved image of bus travel	2
Cheaper off-peak travel	2
Franchising	2
Route overhaul	2
Community engagement about quality of service	2
Armed Forces discount	2

Appendix 4: Any other comments

Other comments	No. of respondents
Increase bus frequencies	63
Increased rural frequency	32
Overall more reliable service	26
More frequent off-peak services	23
Improve the frequency of the D1 service	14
Real time information about bus times	14
Greater consideration of the needs of people in rural areas.	13
Pensioners to be able to use concessionary pass before 9:30am	12
Stop reducing service frequencies	9
Prioritising longer journeys to cover more stops	7
Measures to disincentivise driving	6
Faresaver is inadequate	6
Greater connectivity at major transport hubs	6
Easier accessible bus stops	6
Poor quality of the Salisbury Red	5
Improve the quality of the buses	5
£2 single fare should become permanent	5
Financial support to bus companies	4
More frequent R6 service	4
Buses are a necessity to people who rely on them	4
Better public transport to new developments	4
Ensuring buses are clean and pleasant	4
Council take greater control of bus service provision	4
Newer buses in Swindon	4
Quicker bus journeys	4
Scrap DRT - it doesn't work for elderly or disabled, with nowhere to wait	4
Greater cooperation between counties on bus service provision	4
Introduce park and rides separate from standard services	3
Lack of seating and Castle Street bus stop	3
Shuttle bus between Salisbury station and city centre	3
Remove Fisherton street cycle lane	3
Greater evening bus frequencies in and out of Bath	3
Nationalise the service	3
Service from town centre to Stonehenge for tourists	3
Lack of cycle routes in Royal Wootton Bassett	2
Add a north-south trainline	2
Keep the number 94 bus	2
Poor quality of R4 and R12 services	2
Increase the frequency of the 44	2