

Fairer Scotland Duty

Summary Template

Title of Policy, Strategy, Programme etc.	Implementation of part 3 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 – Consultation on Bus services
Summary of aims and expected outcomes of strategy, proposal, programme or policy	<p>The Scottish Government is working to implement the provisions contained in part 3 (bus services) of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 (“the 2019 Act”) which received Royal Assent on 15 November 2019. The Act is multi-faceted and contains provisions covering the National Transport Strategy, low emission zones, bus services, ticketing arrangements and schemes, travel concession schemes and parking (amongst others).</p> <p>The Act contains a number of provisions which aim to improve the regulatory framework surrounding the provision of bus services by creating a toolkit of options that empower local transport authorities to influence/improve the provision of bus services in their local communities covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Local Authority run bus services- Bus Service Improvement Partnerships (BSIPs)- Local Services Franchises- Information in relation to services <p>Bus patronage in Scotland (and the UK) has been declining since the 1960s with the trend continuing after deregulation and associated privatisation under the Transport Act 1985.</p> <p>By implementing part 3 of the 2019 Act we will deliver on established policy to improve bus services and help arrest the decline in patronage and enhance social cohesion. This is particularly important when set against the challenges posed by the global climate emergency which Scotland has responded to by committing to achieving a just transition to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045.</p> <p>Transport is the single biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Scotland responsible for accelerating climate change, with private cars forming the biggest proportion of contributors within that category.</p>

<p>Summary of evidence</p>	<p>Overall, the implementation of the new powers for local transport authorities is expected to have a positive impact on reducing socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>As a local service, buses work best when services are tailored to meet local needs and circumstances. While the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 attempted to set a framework for the improvement of local bus provision, outcomes have not met expectations. Stakeholder views highlighted that elements of the legislation were unclear or over-burdensome thus limiting their uptake and practical effect.</p> <p>Lack of access to good, affordable transport can trap people into poverty by limiting access to opportunities such as jobs, training or education. One of the four priorities in Scotland's National Transport Strategy (NTS2) is 'Reducing Inequality', reflecting the important role transport has to play in achieving the type of society we want to live in.</p> <p>People in lower income households are more likely to take the bus, with 44% of people with an income of less than £10,000 a year travelling by bus once a week or more compared to 16% of those with an income over £40,000.</p> <p>The 2019 Act addresses this by giving local transport authorities the flexibility to pursue partnership working (through Bus Service Improvement Partnerships - BSIPs), local franchising, or running their own buses – allowing local transport authorities to better respond to local needs.</p> <p>The Act also includes measures to improve the information available to passengers, making bus travel a more attractive option, and provides for information to be supplied to local authorities on when services are deregistered.</p> <p>The use of these powers, however, will be a matter for local transport authorities to consider and implement when taking into account their individual situations and community's needs.</p>
<p>Summary of assessment findings</p>	<p>As explained above, the implementation of the new suite of options (provided by the 2019 Act) through secondary legislation and guidance will deliver improvements by giving local transport authorities greater flexibility and control of their local transport networks with positive impacts for bus users. Once available, the new powers will be for local transport authorities to use according to their particular local transport needs.</p>

Sign off

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