

## **GARIOCH AREA BUS FORUM**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING ON THURSDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2016**

#### **KEMNAY VILLAGE HALL, KEMNAY**

##### **In Attendance**

##### **Councillor F. Hood (Aberdeenshire Council) (Chair)**

Councillor M. Ford (Aberdeenshire Council)  
Councillor N. Cullinane (Aberdeenshire Council)  
Councillor S. Lonchay (Aberdeenshire Council)  
Sue Wainman (Kemnay Community Council)  
Sheila Gray (Kintore Community Council)  
Ann Marston (Kintore Community Council)  
George Glennie (Echt and Skene Community Council)  
Raymond Swaffield (Westhill and Elrick Community Council)  
Pam Young (Newmachar Community Council)  
Ian Young (Newmachar Community Council)  
Fiona Duncan (Newmachar Community Council)  
Fiona Bick (Echt and Skene Community Council)  
Alan Edwards (Westhill Resident and Bus User)  
Sabrina Carter (Westhill Resident and Bus User)  
Aileen Swaffield (Westhill Resident and Bus User)  
Evie Gray (Monymusk Resident and Bus User)  
Anne Brown (Monymusk Resident and Bus User)  
Alice Downie (Kemnay Resident and Bus User)  
Robert Park (Kemnay Resident and Bus User)  
John McLauchlan (Kintore Resident and Bus User)  
Mary Kelman (Bus User)  
Irene Clark (Bus User)  
Stella Park (Kemnay Resident and Bus User)  
Doreen Abel (Bus User)  
Nancy McEwan (Bus User)  
Donald Somerville (Bus User)  
Heather Reid (Bus User)  
Fiona Reid (Bus User)  
Sandra Coutts (Bus User)  
Gina Ford (Occasional Bus User)  
Doug Bain (Bain Coaches)  
Graeme Leslie (Operations Director, Stagecoach North Scotland)  
William Mainus (Commercial Manager, Stagecoach North Scotland)  
Neil Stewart (Principal Officer, Aberdeenshire Council)  
Susan Watt (Senior Transport Officer, Aberdeenshire Council)  
Claire Marshall (Transport Officer, Aberdeenshire Council)

##### **Apologies**

Councillor I. Walker (Aberdeenshire Council)  
Tracey Skene (Inverurie Community Council)  
Mary Murray (Bennachie Community Council)  
Ian Kerr (Insch Bus Users Group)  
Kamila Lemanczyk (Bus User)

**1. Welcome and Introduction**

Councillor Hood welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were given.

**2. Minutes of Meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016**

The minutes were approved.

**3. Matters arising from the Minutes**

Neil Stewart provided the following update on behalf of Aberdeenshire Council:

- 3.1 In response to the query regarding ownership of the concrete bus shelter located on High Street (Insch), he confirmed that colleagues have been unable to establish this. However on a positive note, a new bus shelter has been installed on the opposite side of the road, along with a number of additional stops within the village.
- 3.2 Regarding reliability issues on the Inverurie Town Service (Service 22), resulting in the service failing to keep to schedule, despite various re-timings in recent years, the frequency was reduced to hourly on 15 August 2016 and this has resulted in a much more reliable service. An hourly service is also considered to be in line with demand (13 passengers per journey).
- 3.3 In response to the request for the provision of two bus shelters at Newmill, he confirmed that a site investigation will be held in the coming weeks and, if approved, they will be installed, subject to the necessary funds being available.
- 3.4 In response to the claim that the electronic screen in the bus shelter located on Oldmeldrum Road (Newmachar) does not show the correct times, he confirmed that there is poor communication coverage at this location, but this is being investigated by a site engineer. He reported that the communication situation is improving throughout Aberdeenshire and hopefully this can be rectified quickly.

Graeme Leslie provided the following update on behalf of Stagecoach Bluebird:

- 3.5 In response to the request for a composite timetable leaflet covering the Insch area, he confirmed that this is currently being put together.  
  
Councillor Lonchay confirmed that Insch Community Council has received a draft leaflet and is delighted with the result.
- 3.6 In response to the query as to why Service 16 (Westhill Town Service) receives a subsidy of £78,000 per annum, given that there is very limited passenger demand, he confirmed that the service has now been withdrawn and these areas within the town are now served by Service X18 (Aberdeen – Elrick / Alford).
- 3.7 In response to the request for Hillside Drive and the Broadshade development in Westhill to be served, he confirmed that these area are now served by Service X18 (Aberdeen – Elrick / Alford), providing a direct link to/from Aberdeen.
- 3.8 In response to the request for Service X18 (Aberdeen – Elrick / Alford) to include an additional return journey from Echt to Aberdeen, he confirmed that this has been ruled out.

- 3.9 In response to the request for an additional later evening journey on Service X18 from Aberdeen to Alford via Sauchen, he confirmed that this has also been ruled out as it is not commercially viable.
- 3.10 In response to the repeated concerns regarding connections not being maintained at Kemnay with Service 421 (Inverurie – Kemnay – Alford), in particular during the p.m. peak, he confirmed that buses are frequently delayed within Aberdeen due to the volume of traffic, but he agreed to look into the matter.
- 3.11 In response to the request for the 1415 hours ex Aberdeen – Kemnay (Monday to Friday) to be extended to Monymusk, he confirmed that there was insufficient time within the current timetable to extend the service.
- 3.12 In response to the claim regarding frequent non-operation and late running of journeys and the unsatisfactory response received from Stagecoach, he asked whether an appropriate response had now been received.

The complainant claimed that no response had been received apart from an acknowledgement letter dated 9<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

Councillor Hood asked Graeme Leslie to provide a response to the complainant within 7 days of the meeting.

It transpired after the meeting that a response had been sent to the complainant on 16<sup>th</sup> September.

- 3.13 In response to the request for the unregistered “positional” journeys operating between Inverurie and Inch depot to be registered for use by the public, he confirmed that these journeys operate at similar times as the other registered trips, so it would not be beneficial to register these additional journeys.
- 3.14 In response to the claim that a driver of Service 37 (Aberdeen – Inverurie) operated via an incorrect route on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March, he confirmed that following investigations through GPS and Real-Time records, he could not find any evidence of this.
- 3.15 In response to the claim that the driver of the late running 1720 hours ex Aberdeen - Inverurie (Saturday 12 March) operated via Foresterhill Road (Cornhill Shopping Centre instead of Ashgrove Road West) to North Anderson Drive (Aberdeen), he confirmed that following investigations through GPS and Real-Time records, he could not find any evidence of this.
- 3.16 In response to the request for Service 41 (Inch – Inverurie) to be extended to serve Denwell Road (Inch), once Inveramsay Bridge has re-opened, he confirmed that monitoring of the service has shown that the reliability issues have been addressed and any further re-routing may be detrimental.

Councillor Lonchay advised that the Inch bus users are content with the existing “clock-face” timetable with buses leaving at 10 past each hour.

- 3.17 In response to the request for the 0912 hours ex Inch – Inverurie (Monday to Friday) to be extended to commence from High Street (Inch) at Beechcroft Gardens, he confirmed that this would be considered at the next service review.

- 3.18 In response to the request for a distinctive timetable leaflet to be produced for Service 41 (Insch – Inverurie), he confirmed that the Company has been in discussions with the Insch Bus Users group and a timetable is currently being put together.
- 3.19. In response to the query as to whether Stagecoach Bluebird will divert buses to serve the proposed Park and Ride site on the A96 and also whether the company will introduce additional services between the site and various parts of Aberdeen City, he confirmed that they were still awaiting a final completion date and would re-route the appropriate services.

#### **4. Stagecoach Bluebird Update**

Graeme Leslie provided the following update:

- 4.1 A new app has just been launched for smartphones called “Stagecoach Bus”, which shows timetables and Real-Time bus information. It is available on both Android and Apple and there are plans to add mobile ticketing to the app in early 2017.
- 4.2 Service X17 (Aberdeen – Westhill)

Following a review, journey re-timings were introduced in April 2016 and August 2016, to address reliability issues on the corridor. However, buses are continuing to experience the same issues due to traffic congestion. He advised that the service is being monitored and further changes will be introduced early next year following public consultation.

#### **5. Aberdeenshire Council Update**

Neil Stewart provided the following update:

- 5.1 The following issues were raised by Councillor I. Walker and Councillor R. McKail, following complaints from passengers.

Service X17 (Aberdeen – Westhill/Elrick)

- i. Reliability issues and frequent non operation of journeys.
- ii. Allocation of coaches to the service, including those normally seen on the Buchan corridor, resulting in some passengers with walking difficulties being unable to board.
- iii. Buses not using the allocated stance at Union Square Bus Station, resulting in passengers missing their bus.
- iv. Buses scheduled to operate the next scheduled journey are sometimes re-numbered and removed from the stance and no replacement vehicle is provided, resulting in passengers waiting an hour for the next scheduled departure.
- v. Claim regarding non running of the 1753 hours and 1808 hours ex Westhill - Aberdeen from Westhill Interchange on 13 September 2016.

Service X18 (Aberdeen – Elrick – Alford)

- i. Destination screens at the front of vehicles and screens at Union Square bus station showing Elrick as the final destination instead of Alford, resulting in confusion for passengers and at times buses being missed.

- ii. Too many different routes on the corridor, with journeys serving Echt, Alford, Kingswells or Westhill, causing confusion to passengers.

Graeme Leslie confirmed that low floor vehicles are normally allocated to the Aberdeen to Westhill corridor, however if buses are running late or if there is a breakdown, different types of vehicles can be allocated to the corridor to ensure the service continues to operate.

He also confirmed that all the specific complaints would be investigated and the comments taken into consideration in the next service review. He advised that there is a Customer Advisor based at Union Square Bus Station between 0900 hours and 1800 hours, Monday to Friday, and he should be able to assist passengers with stance allocations, etc.

## 5.2 Bus Passenger Satisfaction Survey

Neil Stewart advised that the annual survey of bus users in Aberdeenshire was undertaken in spring 2016, comprising of 600 on-street surveys, of which 50 were undertaken on each of the six principal corridors (Kincardine & Mearns (A90 south/A92), Deeside (A93), Donside (A944), North (A96), Banff Coastal (A98) and Buchan (A90 north)), as well as 300 surveys carried out at Union Square Bus Station.

He confirmed that the main finding of this year's survey is that the overall positive satisfaction levels have decreased from 91% last year to 80% this year, with an 11% shift downwards to the neutral (neither satisfied nor dissatisfied) category. Satisfaction levels in Aberdeenshire are still higher than Transport Scotland and are higher than the average benchmark in 13 of the 17 categories in the Passenger Focus Survey on English rural county authorities.

Due to the drop in satisfaction the decision was taken to do a corridor by corridor analysis on categories of declining satisfaction.

A sheet summarising the survey was distributed at the start of the meeting. Should anyone wish to see a copy of the full Bus Passenger Satisfaction Survey report, please contact Susan Watt ([susan.m.watt@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:susan.m.watt@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)).

## 5.3 Benchmarking Survey 2015

The Association of Transport Coordinating Officers (ATCO) undertook a benchmarking survey across passenger transport authorities in Great Britain in 2015, with responses being received from 23 of the 32 Scottish Councils (Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) covers 11 of the 23 authorities).

- Regarding Local Bus Service Support, Aberdeenshire spent more than the average across Scotland (£12.87 per head versus £9.94 per head). However, Aberdeenshire spends less per head than other predominantly rural Scottish authorities such as Dumfries and Galloway (+44%), Perth and Kinross (+19%), Angus (+16%) and Argyll and Bute (+46%).
- Aberdeenshire spends more (£3.30 per head) on Demand Responsive Transport than Scotland's average (£1.55 per head), with only Fife (£4.82 per head) and Highland (£3.49 per head) spending more.

- Expenditure on bus stops and passenger facilities comes in at £1.40 per head in Aberdeenshire, topped only by Angus (£1.50 per head) in comparison to the average across Scotland (£0.67).
- Again, only Angus spent more per 1000 head of population than Aberdeenshire on public transport information (£1.35 versus £0.79), with Scotland's average coming in at £0.34.
- Aberdeenshire had the highest percentage of bus stops with raised boarding kerbs at 63%, compared to Scotland's average of 27%.
- Only Argyll & Bute had more bus shelters per 1000 head of population (3.43) than Aberdeenshire (2.95), while Scotland's average was recorded as 2.64.
- Aberdeenshire had information displays at 83% of its bus stops, considerably more than the average across Scotland (67%). Only Angus (85%), Clackmannanshire (88%) and Stirling (95%) of the predominantly rural authorities had a higher percentage.
- Last year, Aberdeenshire displayed "Real-Time" departures at 4.55% of bus stops, with the average across Scotland being 6.31%. However, Angus was the only predominantly rural authority with more than Aberdeenshire at 5.83%. Passengers can also access this information via barcodes at all bus stops with information displays (i.e. 83%).

A sheet summarising the survey was passed around at the start of the meeting. Should anyone wish to see a copy of the full Benchmarking Survey 2015 report, please contact Susan Watt ([susan.m.watt@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:susan.m.watt@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)).

#### 5.4 Smart Grasshopper

Neil Stewart confirmed that Scotland's first multi-operator travel scheme using 'smart ticketing' technology, for services across the North-east was officially launched the previous week, allowing passengers to use one card across the services of different operators. Customers can store the Smart Grasshopper ticket electronically and simply tap their card on the ticket machine when boarding the bus.

It was raised from the floor that the scheme will not provide accurate data as GrassHOPPER tickets will only log the zone that people travel to, rather than the specific stops.

William Mainus acknowledged this, but explained that there is a sophisticated system which can map where people travel to within each zone.

### 6. **Bus Service Requests/Development**

- 6.1 The request for the Broadshade/Berryhill and Hillside developments to be served by 'through' services to/from Aberdeen has been fulfilled by Stagecoach Bluebird with the re-routing of Service X18 (Aberdeen – Westhill/Alford) with effect from 15 August 2016.
- 6.2 The request for an hourly service between Aberdeen and Kemnay (Service 420/Service X20) on Saturdays and Sundays has been ruled out by Stagecoach as it is not commercially viable.

## **7. Public Transport Infrastructure / Information**

- 7.1 Query as to why Real Time display screens at bus shelters frequently show the arrival time of the next bus, counting down in minutes, but then it disappears from the screen, following which the actual bus does not appear.

Graeme Leslie explained that if the tracking device stops receiving a signal, or a driver is not logged on correctly, or there is a vehicle breakdown, then the journey will be displayed but then drop off the screen. He confirmed that Stagecoach Bluebird is working with Aberdeenshire Council to rectify issues with the system. He also confirmed that the information screens have been replaced at Union Station Bus Station and are connected to the Real-Time system.

Councillor Hood asked that the Real-Time issues be rectified quickly.

## **8. Service X17 (Aberdeen – Westhill)**

- 8.1 Claim regarding insufficient seating capacity provided on the corridor from Aberdeen due to passengers boarding and alighting within the City, in particular during the p.m. peak, resulting in passengers being left stranded along the route (e.g. on Albyn Place and Queens Road).

Councillor Hood queried whether ticket information could provide details of where passengers board and alight within Aberdeen.

William Mainus confirmed that this information is available but added that the Company is legally obliged to carry City passengers and this contributes to the commercial viability of the service.

- 8.2 Claim regarding non operation or late running of journeys on the corridor throughout the day, sometimes resulting in 2 or 3 buses arriving at the same time.

William Mainus confirmed that there are reliability issues on the corridor, due to traffic congestion. He re-affirmed that the service will be reviewed, with changes implemented early next year following public consultation.

- 8.3 Query as to whether there will be sufficient seating capacity on the corridor, in particular during peak periods, in view of First Aberdeen's proposal to withdraw Service 11 (Northfield – City Centre – Kingswells) and Service X40 (Dubford – City Centre – Kingswells) from Kingswells Park and Ride and Kingswells.

William Mainus confirmed that the situation is being monitored by Stagecoach.

## **9. Service 37 (Aberdeen - Inverurie)**

- 9.1 Claim regarding frequent late running and non-operation of the service, and coupled drivers operating the incorrect route in Kintore.

Graeme Leslie confirmed that additional time has been built in to address reliability problems and that the specific routes area printed on the drivers' running boards.

Councillor Hood reminded everyone of the importance of noting the specific dates and times of the journeys and reporting issues to Stagecoach as soon as possible after their occurrence.

- 9.2 Claim regarding frequent non-operation of the 1720 hours ex Aberdeen, with particular reference to 10 September 2016.

Graeme Leslie confirmed this would be investigated.

- 9.3 Query as to why other types of vehicles are sometimes allocated to the corridor, including the coaches normally operating on the Buchan corridor. It was highlighted that those with walking difficulties, or mothers with prams, can't access the "Buchan Express" vehicles due to the steps.

Graeme Leslie confirmed that a fleet of 17 new buses were introduced on the Buchan corridor in 2014 and these vehicles are sometimes allocated to other routes to cover breakdowns or late running. He explained that low floor buses should be the norm.

- 9.4 Claim regarding non running of the 1125 hours ex Inverurie – Aberdeen, on Saturday 10 September 2016 and the next scheduled bus at 1145 hours did not have sufficient seating capacity, resulting in several people standing.

Graeme Leslie confirmed that this would be investigated.

- 9.5 Claim regarding insufficient seating capacity provided on Service 37 from Aberdeen, due to passengers boarding and alighting within the City, resulting in passengers being left stranded along the route (e.g. at Holburn Street and Aberdeen Royal Infirmary).

- 9.6 Claim that some drivers are not properly route trained, with particular reference to operation to/from Midmill, resulting in passengers showing the driver where to go or the stop being missed out.

Graeme Leslie confirmed that drivers receive comprehensive route training before they are allowed to drive alone. He requested that dates and dates be provided.

- 9.7 Complaint regarding a wheelchair passenger experiencing difficulty boarding the bus at Inverurie around 1130 hours on Saturday 4 June 2016, claiming that the driver pulled away, leaving her at the bus stop. This was coupled with a query regarding the company's procedures for assisting passengers with mobility impairments.

Graeme Leslie confirmed that he was aware of this specific incident and an appropriate response was sent to the complainant with the driver being subject to the Company's disciplinary procedures.

He also confirmed that all drivers receive ongoing training each year in areas such as Disability Awareness. He advised that passengers contact Stagecoach Bluebird, providing a date and time, if they have a complaint relating to any matter of customer care.

## **10. Service X20/420 (Aberdeen - Kemnay/Alford)**

- 10.1 Repeated claim regarding frequent non operation and late running of journeys, resulting in passengers arriving late at their destinations or being left stranded at bus stops. It was further claimed that the response from Stagecoach Bluebird did not address the complaint satisfactorily.



Graeme Leslie confirmed that the service, like those already mentioned, experiences reliability issues due to traffic congestion within Aberdeen.

William Mainus agreed to speak to the complainant after the meeting.

- 10.2 Claim regarding frequent late running of the 1645 hours ex Aberdeen – Kemnay, (Service 420) coupled with a request for the journey to be extended to Alford.

Graeme Leslie confirmed that the late running would be investigated, but it would be unlikely that the journey could be extended due to timetable scheduling.

- 10.3 Claim regarding frequent non-operation of the 1215 hours ex Aberdeen – Alford via Midmill (Service X20), in particular on 21 and 22 September 2016.

Graeme Leslie confirmed that this would be investigated.

- 10.4 Request for additional journeys between Aberdeen – Monymusk to bridge the gap between 1515 hours and 2015 hours ex Aberdeen (Monday to Friday).

Graeme Leslie confirmed that this would be investigated as part of the next review but re-iterated that any additional resources would not be commercially viable.

- 10.5 Claim regarding some drivers not utilising their allocated stance at Union Square Bus Station, resulting in passengers missing their bus. Particular reference was made to the 1415 hours ex Aberdeen – Kemnay.

Graeme Leslie advised that additional stances are required to accommodate the volume of buses entering the bus station, particularly at peak times. He advised that drivers and/or the Customer Advisor should inform passengers of stance changes and that specific complaints in this regard will be investigated.

- 10.6 Request for additional journeys to be extended to serve Monymusk due to the service frequently operating late, resulting in connections with Service 421 (Inverurie – Kemnay – Alford) being missed at Kemnay.

Graeme Leslie confirmed that this would be considered in the aforementioned review.

## **11. Service 421 (Inverurie - Alford)**

- 11.1 Request to re-instate the evening service between Inverurie and Kemnay, in particular on Saturdays.

Neil Stewart confirmed that the evening service was withdrawn due to extremely limited passenger demand.

This was contradicted from 'the floor' with regard to Saturdays.

In view of this, he agreed to consider re-instating a Saturday journey at around 2100 hours ex Inverurie, on a trial basis until the end of the financial year, depending on the cost of provision.

- 11.2 Query as to why some journeys are routed via Blairdaff and Burnhervie, as demand is limited to/from these areas.

Neil Stewart confirmed that, whilst he is aware that demand is limited, the bus is re-routed to avoid competing with Bains' Coaches commercial Service 240 (Oldmeldrum – Inverurie – Kemnay) which operates via B993.

- 11.3 Query as to why some journeys are routed via Aquithie.

Neil Stewart confirmed that there is passenger demand to/from that stretch of road.

This was disputed from the floor.

- 11.4 Claim that the 1215 hours ex Aberdeen – Alford broke down on 22 September 2016 and passengers were requested to vacate the bus.

William Mainus confirmed that this would be investigated and advised that passengers should only be requested to leave the vehicle when the situation is deemed as potentially unsafe or a replacement bus has arrived.

He added that the driver will inform the controller of the circumstances and either an engineer will be sent out to rectify any mechanical fault(s), or a replacement vehicle will be dispatched if the service is as infrequent as the one in question. If neither option is successful/possible the company will reimburse taxi fares to any points along the scheduled route.

- 11.5 Query as to whether a passenger can be recompensed for their taxi fare if they miss their connection between Service X20 and Service 421 due to late running of the former service.

Graeme Leslie confirmed that these journeys are not advertised as connecting and therefore would not qualify for the provision of a taxi.

Neil Stewart confirmed that the 1715 hours ex Inverurie should wait at Kemnay for up to ten minutes to meet the 1645 ex Aberdeen – Kemnay (Service 420) and that he would discuss the matter of connections with Stagecoach.

## **12. Other Matters**

- 12.1 Councillor Lonchay confirmed that residents in the Inch, Oyne and Pitcaple areas are generally very happy with bus service provision.

- 12.2 Query as to why the return fare from Kemnay to Midmill is considerably more expensive than a return fare from Kemnay to Inverurie, despite covering similar distances.

Neil Stewart confirmed that the Council supported Service 421 (Inverurie – Kemnay – Alford) operates along a similar route to Bains' Coaches commercial Service 240 (Oldmeldrum – Inverurie – Kemnay) and it is Council practice to set fares on its contracts at the same level as those on commercial services operating along the same route.

- 12.3 Query regarding Stagecoach Bluebird's procedure following receipt of a complaint.

Graeme Leslie confirmed that a full response should be provided within 14 days following an initial automated e-mail acknowledgement.

**13. Date of Next Meeting**

Councillor Hood advised that the next meeting of the Area Bus Forum will be held in Westhill in March 2017.

## **SATISFACTION SURVEY OF ABERDEENSHIRE BUS PASSENGERS 2016**

### **GARIOCH AREA BUS FORUM**

600 on street surveys, of which 50 were undertaken on each of the six principal corridors (Kincardine & Mearns (A90 south/A92), Deeside (A93), Donside (A944), North (A96), Banff Coastal (A947/A98), Buchan (A90 north); and 300 were carried out at Union Square bus station.

Overall positive satisfaction decreased from 91% to 80%, with an 11% shift downwards to the neutral (neither satisfied nor dissatisfied) category.

Satisfaction levels still higher than Transport Scotland in 5 of the 6 categories used in the national survey and higher than the average for benchmark English rural county authorities in 13 of the 17 categories in the Passenger Focus survey.

We decided to do a corridor by corridor analysis focussing on categories where satisfaction levels decreased and/or were lower than Scotland and/or the average across English rural counties. Positive satisfaction levels as follows:

- Overall service: 80% Aberdeenshire; 68% North (A96); 84% Banff Coastal (A947); 96% Donside (A944) (highest); 64% Deeside (lowest)
- Length of time waited for a bus: 73% Aberdeenshire; 58% North (A96), 58% Banff Coastal (A947); 90% Donside (A944) (highest); 56% Deeside (lowest)
- Value for money of bus fares: 68% Aberdeenshire; 80% North (A96); 76% Donside (A944); 85% Buchan (highest); 44% Banff Coastal (A947)(lowest)
- Finding out about routes and times of buses: 71% Aberdeenshire; 90% North (A96); 92% Banff Coastal (A947); 96% Donside (A944) and Buchan (highest); 50% Union Square (lowest)
- Information on buses: 69% Aberdeenshire; 92% Banff Coastal (A947); 100% Donside (A944) (highest); 54% North (A96) and Deeside (lowest)
- Condition of buses: 79% Aberdeenshire; 60% Banff Coastal (A947); 90% Donside (A944) (highest); 54% North (A96) (lowest)
- Vehicle accessibility: 77% Aberdeenshire; 76% North (A96); 90% Banff Coastal (A947); 53% Buchan (lowest); 94%; Donside (A944) (highest)
- Smoothness of ride: 86% Aberdeenshire; 86% North (A96); 96% Donside (A944); 78% Banff Coastal (A947); 98% Buchan (highest); 66% Deeside (lowest)

## **BENCHMARKING SURVEY 2015**

The Association of Transport Coordinating Officers (ATCO) undertook a benchmarking survey across passenger transport authorities in Great Britain in 2015, with responses being received from 23 of the 32 Scottish Councils (Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) covers 11 of the 23 authorities).

- Local Bus Service Support: Whilst Aberdeenshire (£12.87 per head) spent more than the average across Scotland (£9.94), it spends less per head than other predominantly rural Scottish authorities such as Dumfries and Galloway (+44%); Perth and Kinross (+19%), Angus (+16%); and Argyll and Bute (+46%).
- Demand Responsive Transport: Aberdeenshire (£3.30 per head); Scotland (£1.55 per head); In Scotland, only Fife (£4.82) and Highland (£3.49) spent more per head.
- Expenditure on bus stops and passenger facilities: only Angus (£1.50) spent more per head than Aberdeenshire (£1.40). Scotland (£0.67)
- Expenditure on public transport information: only Angus (£1.35) spent more per 1000 head of population than Aberdeenshire (£0.79). Scotland (£0.34)
- Aberdeenshire had the highest percentage of bus stops with raised boarding kerbs (63%). Scotland (27%)
- Only Argyll and Bute (3.43) had more bus shelters per 1000 head of population than Aberdeenshire (2.95). Scotland (2.64)
- Aberdeenshire had information displays at considerably more of its bus stops (83%) than the average across Scotland (67%). Only Angus (85%), Clackmannanshire (88%) and Stirling (95%) of the predominantly rural authorities had a higher percentage.
- Last year, Aberdeenshire displayed “real time” departures at 4.55% of bus stops, with the average across Scotland being 6.31%, but Angus (5.83%) was the only pre-dominantly rural authority with more than Aberdeenshire. Passengers can also access this information via barcodes at all bus stops with information displays (i.e. 83%)