

The management and development of London's bus network: Research commissioned by London Councils

London's bus network underpins the capital's transport system. It enables residents and visitors to access work, shopping, education and recreation facilities; and it provides links to and with other transport modes. Buses are convenient to use, and as a network provide comprehensive coverage. Whilst the services provided are the envy of many other towns and cities, there may be room for improvement to meet changing needs.

London Councils has commissioned JMP to help identify, understand and record issues that the London boroughs may have regarding the bus network in their areas. The aim of our work is to determine what concerns regarding the bus network are shared among boroughs/sub regions and whether there are additional issues relevant to particular boroughs or sub regions in order to arrive at a shared understanding of the key issues with London's bus network.

The scope of our research covers all aspects of the planning and provision of the bus network, including policy, guidelines, fares, service specifications and operational issues of route, frequency and times. It will focus on those matters that are important to users and potential users of buses.

In order to fully explore these issues, we will engage with boroughs through a series of workshops and individual discussions. It has been suggested by London Councils that these workshops could either form part of a regular sub-regional transport forum, or be separate events based around membership of the five sub regional transport forums. The workshops would provide an opportunity for JMP to discuss with borough representatives the issues and priorities relating to bus travel in their areas. It is intended that from these discussions a comprehensive list of issues at a region, sub-region and borough levels will be formulated.

Ahead of these discussions it would be helpful if you consider some of the issues in relation to your borough and sub region. The following questions might help prompt your thoughts. However, please do not feel limited by the questions; any matters relating to bus provision will be of interest.

1. How is the bus network viewed in your area? To what extent do services meet the needs of your residents? How satisfied are people with it (evidence based) and is this reflected by usage trends? Does the network take account of the needs of users and non-users?
2. To what extent does the bus network respond to, and support, your borough's key policies and objectives? What are your priorities for bus services?
3. What opportunities do you have to shape bus services and to influence overall strategy for the bus network?
4. Is the consultation process sufficient to allow all interested parties to have a say in bus service changes? Does the balance of relationships between TfL, boroughs, operators and users need to alter; if so, how?

5. Are changes needed to the Bus Service Planning Guidance? Should additional factors be taken into account, such as air quality and environment, road space considerations and synergy with rail? To what extent does the formulaic approach to determining service specifications help or hinder the meeting of local needs?
6. What aspects of services should be given further consideration? These might include the complexity of the network; particular aspects of services (routes, points served, times, frequencies); types of services (orbital, limited stop); balance of service convenience and travel time; etc.

If you wish to discuss any matter relating to this study, do contact our project leads as follows:

Peter Hardy (Project Director)

Tel: 0121 230 6046

Mob: 07977 268250

Email: peter.hardy@jmp.co.uk

Lee White (Project Manager)

Tel: 0121 230 1429

Email: lee.white@jmp.co.uk