



MILTON KEYNES
COUNCIL

**Milton Keynes Local Transport Plan
2006-07 to 2010-11**

Milton Keynes Bus Strategy

December 2008

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This Bus Strategy covers the period of the second Local Transport Plan from 2006/07 to 2010/11. It is a separate requirement of the Transport Act 2000 that a Strategy is produced. However the Council brings together its strategic policies and plans over the whole range of transport provision through the Local Transport Plan, the Bus Strategy, the Bus Information Strategy and the Rail Strategy (both still to be written). In addition to the relatively short term of the current LTP period, the Bus Strategy aims to present a clear foundation for the medium and longer term.

1.2 The key elements of the Bus Strategy are:

- To develop a network of fast, frequent, high quality cross-city core routes
- To support this network with services that provide good access to estates and rural areas but which may be less frequent
- To support this vision with strong investment in the network to provide bus priority and real-time information
- To recognise the particular needs of those with mobility difficulties by providing an enhanced community transport service
- To ensure information and publicity is clear and helpful
- To develop strong and effective partnership and user group arrangements
- To develop other council strategies, such as the provision and management of parking, so that they support the vision of a high quality, commercially viable bus service accessible to all

1.3 This is to be achieved working within the challenges presented by:

- The view that Milton Keynes is a car dominated city
- The significant growth that Milton Keynes will experience both within the Local Transport Plan and Local Plan period to 2011 and through the Core Strategy, which sets the spatial planning framework up to 2026.
- The perception that bus services in Milton Keynes are unreliable and of poor quality
- The fact that no single organisation is responsible for all the factors that determine the quality of bus services (although there have been important changes in the last 5 years to the legislative framework within which bus services are provided, the principles of the deregulated approach in the Transport Act 1985 remain)

1.4 The Milton Keynes Bus Strategy therefore aims to increase transport choice by developing the bus network, its facilities and infrastructure, in a partnership between the Council, the bus operators and other stakeholders, to meet the needs of both existing bus users and to encourage modal shift from the private car.

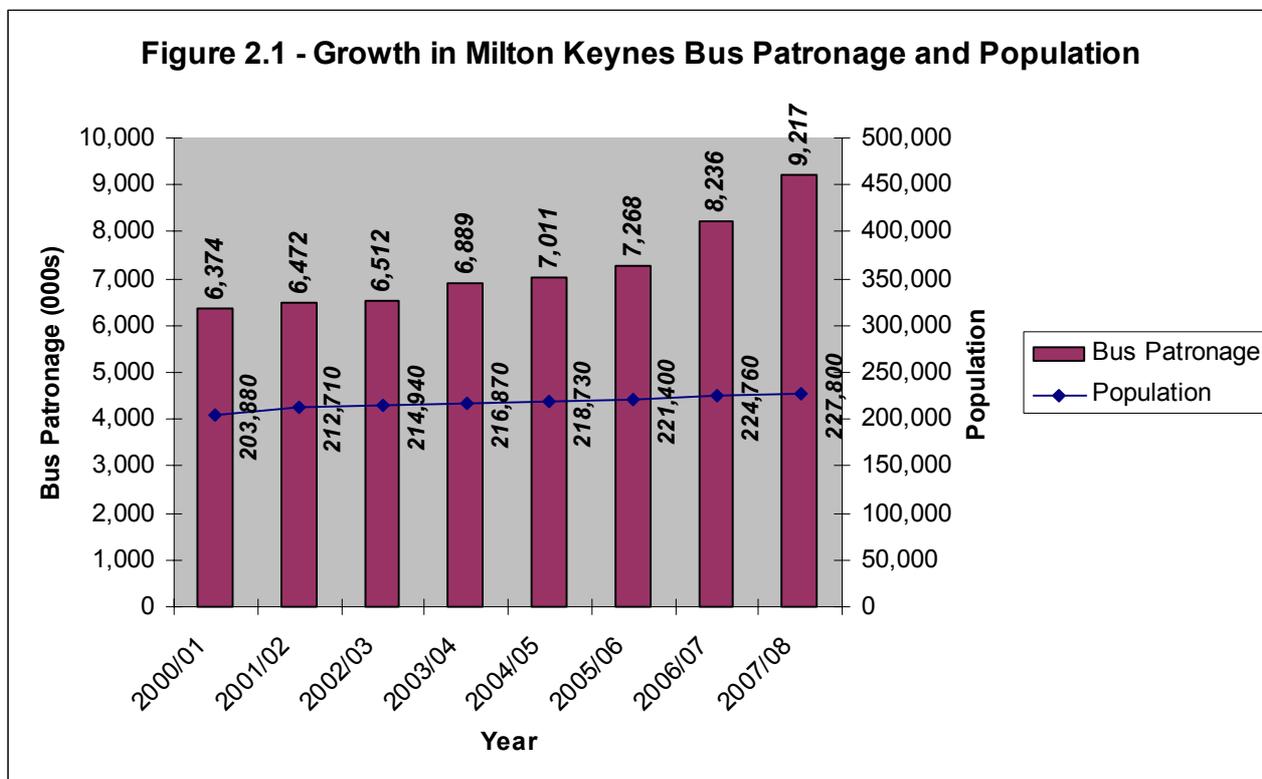
2 INTRODUCTION

Context and Background

- 2.1 This Bus Strategy covers the period of the second Local Transport Plan from 2006/07 to 2010/11. It is a separate requirement of the Transport Act 2000 (section 110) that a Strategy is produced. However the Council brings together its strategic policies and plans over the whole range of transport provision through the Local Transport Plan, the Bus Information Strategy and the Rail Strategy (both still to be written).
- 2.2 This Bus Strategy, the second for Milton Keynes, is of primary importance in ensuring the vision of improved accessibility for all sections of the community, as identified in the council's Community Plan and in its accessibility strategy submitted as part of the LTP2, and supports the wider transport strategy articulated in the Local Transport Plan. In writing this strategy reference has been made to the Guidelines on Preparing Bus Strategies produced by the Department for Transport (DfT) 2004, together with examples of best practice from other authorities in the UK.
- 2.3 This Bus Strategy draws upon detailed technical studies and other reports that provide analysis and an evidence base to ensure that the strategy is relevant, deliverable and affordable. These studies include:
- Public Transport Long Term Vision Stage 1 Report (PTLTV1 - published 2003) and Stage 2 Report (PTLTV2 - unpublished)
 - Bus Strategy Review Group, Final Report - 2003
 - Bus Strategy Position Statement - 2003
 - Bus Information Strategy - 2003
 - Community Transport Review - 2005
 - Voluntary Quality Bus Partnership with MK Metro - 2007
 - The Milton Keynes Accessibility Strategy - 2006
 - MK Metro Bus Strategy 2006-2011
 - Local Transport Plan 2006-07 to 2010-11
 - The Transport Strategy Review
 - Report of the Milton Keynes Citizens' Advisory Group on Transport (the CAGoT Report)
- 2.4 Although the Department for Transport (DfT) is likely to meet its target of achieving 12% growth in bus and light rail use in England by 2011, this is because bus usage is increasing in London and the provision of free concessionary travel for disabled and older people. Outside London, bus use is generally continuing to fall and it is unlikely that the growth target will be achieved in every region.

Bus Patronage in Milton Keynes

2.5 Milton Keynes is an exception to the declining trend, with, as Figure 2.1 shows, bus patronage increasing by nearly 40% in the six years to 2007/08 - way ahead of the government's target for 2011.



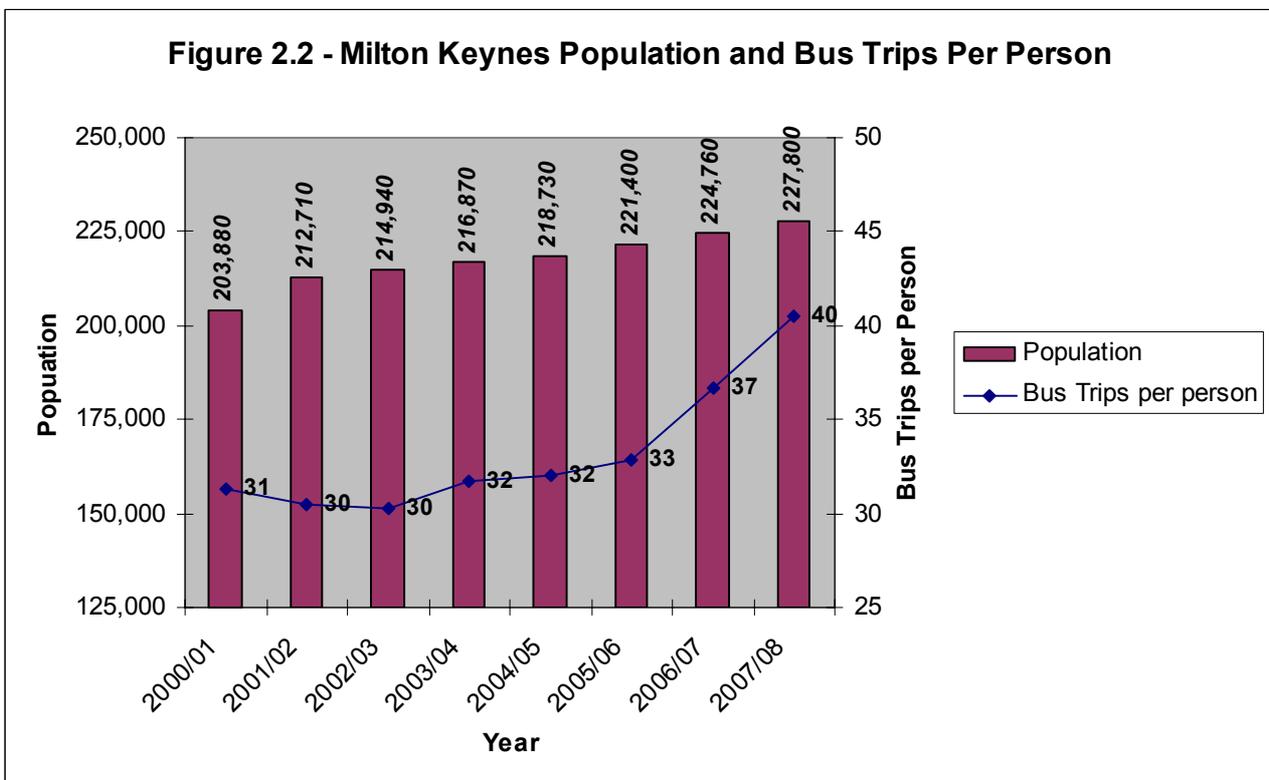
2.6 The bus patronage figures shown here are those reported as the Councils submission for NI177 Total Bus Patronage (previously BVPI102) - this is the total number of bus trips originating in Milton Keynes in the financial year shown. Originating trips mean that a trip from Milton Keynes to Bedford would be included, but a trip from Bedford to Milton Keynes would not. The council is required to collect this data which is based on returns made by the bus operators.

2.7 There are a number of possible reasons for this growth:

- Introduction of free off-peak travel within the borough for the elderly and disabled in April 2006, with the extension to free off peak travel anywhere within England from April 2008. There is evidence of increased number of free bus trips as result and also anecdotal evidence of some shift to bus from other modes as a result of this.
- Improved marketing - MK Metro point to growth in patronage on the core routes (1, 4, 5 and 8) following the door to door distribution of their "key routes" card.
- Ongoing investment by the bus companies in new buses - increasing numbers of DDA compliant low floor buses are now in service, which makes travel easier for most groups of people, not just those who are disabled.

- Investment by the bus companies in improved service frequencies which makes the services more attractive.
- Falling real cost of bus fares - although MK Metro increased fares this year, this was the first increase for two years.
- Population growth
- Modal shift

It is likely that the first four of the above seven points are more significant than the last three (because while population has increased by 6% since 2002/03, bus patronage is up by 39.7%). Figure 2.2 relates bus patronage to the population by showing that the number of bus trips per person has increased to around 40.



2.8 The Transport Strategy Review gives further detail on peak period mode share, using the information from the 2001 census shown in Table 2.1 below. While this shows that the mode shares for Milton Keynes are not very different to South East England as a whole, this does not mean that Milton Keynes cannot do better. In other regional centres such as Reading and Southampton, for example, about 12% of the resident employees travel to work by bus, and in Oxford 16% travel to work by bus, 15% cycle to work and a further 15% walk¹.

¹ Source: 2001 Census as reported in the Transport Strategy Review

**Table 2.1: Mode Shares for Journey to Work
(Milton Keynes Residents - 2001 Census)**

Predominant Mode	Average Household	Highest Car-Owning Households	Lowest Car-Owning Households	Average for South East England
Driving car or van	67,986 (62.9%)	68.5%	55.6%	59.4%
Passenger in car or van	8,732 (8.1%)	6.0%	9.8%	5.7%
Implied vehicle occupancy	1.13	1.09	1.18	1.10
Bus	5,118 (4.7%)	2.7%	6.6%	4.1%
Rail	4,060 (3.8%)	4.3%	3.6%	5.9%
Taxi	871 (0.8%)	0.4%	1.3%	0.4%
Walk	7,405 (6.9%)	4.6%	10.6%	9.9%
Cycle	3,265 (3.0%)	2.4%	3.8%	3.1%
Other (incl. motorcycle)	1,385 (1.2%)	1.3%	1.3%	1.6%
Working at or from home	9,253 (8.6%)	9.8%	7.4%	9.9%

- 2.9 The National Audit Office and the Audit Commission report, 'Delivery Chain Analysis for Bus Services in England' (Dec 2005) identifies the steps that can be taken by the government and local authorities to improve bus services and to attract more people onto buses. The recommendations of this report have been considered in forming this strategy.
- 2.10 There are many examples of good practice within the UK, including Brighton (where in 2005, bus patronage in was 147 journeys per head), Cambridge, Nottingham, Oxford and Reading (139 journeys per head in 2005) where bus use has been increasing. This has happened not only because of measures like bus priority, but also management of road space and parking, simplicity in the use of the bus network and, critically, a cultural change whereby people increasingly choose to use buses as a normal part of their daily lives. In addition, the density of development in these older towns is generally much greater that that in Milton Keynes. London too has seen a massive increase in bus use, but the legislative framework that has helped to achieve this is not expected to be available in Milton Keynes in the foreseeable

future. Many European cities also have excellent and well-patronised public transport systems. One key that makes these systems a success is the ability of users to respond to a network, regardless of operator or mode of public transport.

The Challenges of Growth, Demographic Change, Public Perception and Legislation

2.11 Growth:

The importance of achieving greater bus use is both compounded and facilitated by the significant growth in both households and employment that the borough will experience over coming years, within the LTP and Local Plan period to 2011, the Core Strategy which sets the spatial planning framework up to 2026. This growth will impose additional stresses upon the transport network but will also present funding opportunities and a chance to restructure the city, in part to improve sustainability.

2.12 Milton Keynes is widely viewed as a car dominated city but within the next ten years or so, further expansion of the highway network to accommodate traffic growth will start to become impractical and unaffordable.

2.13 A significant increase in bus patronage is therefore a fundamental element of the transport strategy for growth. The Transport Strategy Review suggests that a minimum increase in total bus patronage of 5% per annum is required, with journey to work mode share for bus journeys increasing from the 4.3% shown in Table 2.1 above to nearly 10% by 2031. Growth provides opportunities to develop a public transport culture within new developments, aided by new infrastructure that is supportive of bus services offering good accessibility and reliability. Properly planned developments can also enhance the public transport accessibility of the existing population thus extending transport choice.

2.14 The Bus Strategy sets targets for increased public transport use that will require development of all aspects of bus travel including information, payment methods, bus stops, infrastructure and the quality of buses. Partnership with stakeholders, bus operators, and joint working with cross boundary authorities will help deliver these targets and achieve best value in the investment of public funds.

2.15 The key aim of the Bus Strategy is to increase the contribution of buses to the travel market in Milton Keynes, particularly by attracting trips that would otherwise be made using a car. The focus of the council's policy is to improve mobility while reducing dependence on the car. Other important objectives such as reducing social exclusion and improving accessibility to employment and social opportunities will also be addressed by improving bus services.

2.16 The relationship between other transport modes and buses is recognised within this document and in particular the direct relationship between parking policy and bus

use. Future reviews of parking policy should take full account of the council's commitment to improving transport choice and in particular encouraging bus use.

2.17 Public Perception:

Bus services in Milton Keynes must be improved significantly if they are to achieve these objectives. Public attitude surveys in Milton Keynes in recent years have consistently highlighted dissatisfaction with bus services and information on bus services. If not addressed, this will seriously erode the credibility of the strategy's intention of attracting car users onto buses. There is however, a contradiction between this dissatisfaction and the fact that bus patronage has been increasing in recent years.

2.18 The council will require confidence in the commitment and ability of bus operators to deliver sustained improvements to bus service quality if we are to agree to introducing measures such as bus priorities and other highway changes that are essential to achieving improvements in bus service quality.

2.19 Demographic changes:

Demographic changes within the structure of society have changed the nature of the demand for travel. An increasingly higher proportion of the population enjoys an active and prolonged retirement having spent their lives used to a high degree of mobility. Young people are increasingly brought up with the aspiration for early car purchase and thereafter its use becomes the most chosen or exclusive travel mode. Making bus services attractive to these sectors is a major challenge nationally, and one that is accepted locally.

2.20 The Legislative Framework:

One of the key challenges is that no single organisation is responsible for all the factors that determine the quality of bus services. Although there have been important changes in the last 5 years to the legislative framework within which bus services are provided, the principles of the deregulated approach in the Transport Act 1985 remain. Operators are free to register services which can be run without public revenue support (ie commercially) and the Council has to consider the needs not met by this network and arrange any additional services it deems to be required.

2.21 While bus operators deliver services and are in the front line when dealing with passengers, critical aspects of the service provided are the responsibility of the local authority. The council, as highway authority, can influence the extent to which buses are delayed by other traffic - sometimes simple things like requiring buses to use lay-bys will delay bus journeys, and also sets on-street parking charges. In some cases responsibility is split, for example, both the local authority and bus operator can deliver publicity. Eligibility for concessionary travel is set down in statute and is subject to amendment from time to time by the government. The government also sets targets, for example for the numbers of people expected to use buses.

Significant capital investment in transport comes via government funding (eg through the Local Transport Plan) and there is also the expectation that the private sector delivering Milton Keynes growth will contribute to improving bus services. This highlights the essential requirement for partnership working in delivering the Bus Strategy.

- 2.22 The DfT report “Towards a Sustainable Transport System”² emphasises the need to consider the whole journey in order to achieve growth in bus use - all aspects of the bus journey must be considered. These include, amongst others, ease of access in boarding buses, provision of clear information about bus services, journey time, quality of experience at the bus stop and on the bus, ease and simplicity of interchange and the payment system. The interdependability and predictability of all these factors is crucial. Improvements in some aspects if implemented in isolation will be ineffective because of failures elsewhere.
- 2.23 Encouraging bus use as an alternative to the car is also critical from the stance of helping to reduce transport’s impact on climate change and reducing local air pollution. The national target is to reduce CO2 emissions by 80% by 2050. Cleaner technology for powering buses will also help to promote bus travel as more ecologically sound.

Strategy Aims

- 2.24 This document sets out a strategy for developing bus services in Milton Keynes primarily during the second Local Transport Plan period 2006/07 – 2010/11, but also setting in context how this strategy seeks to achieve a vision set for Milton Keynes in 2026, the end of the Core Strategy period. It is part of the wider transport strategy that seeks to develop travel choice, ensuring that bus travel is not the mode of last resort, but one that is more viable for a greater proportion of people who live, shop, work, attend school, college and seek recreational activity in the borough. In promoting this strategy our vision for the bus is to: -

Develop a network of bus services that provide a viable alternative to the private car for all residents by offering reliable and regular good quality services.

- 2.25 The aims of the Bus Strategy relate to the role of the bus in delivering Local Transport Plan objectives within the context of the Milton Keynes Community Strategy and the Core Strategy. They are specific to improving the bus service to ensure it is a viable alternative to the car and they are aimed directly at the targets set out in the Local Transport Plan. Six principle aims have been adopted which support the bus vision: -

² Cm 7226 Towards a Sustainable Transport System, published October 2007

- Achieve reliable bus journey times
- Provide appropriate good quality information
- Provide an easily understood network
- Minimise journey times
- Ensure an accessible network
- Provide a product of good quality

History of the Milton Keynes Bus Strategy

- 2.26 The first Milton Keynes Bus Strategy was adopted in February 2003 as a requirement of the Transport Act 2000, acting as a companion document to the first Local Transport Plan. The strategy was used to raise debate amongst stakeholders, support the development of the Milton Keynes Local Plan and set the context for work on a Long Term Public Transport Vision for the borough.
- 2.27 This strategy replaces the 2003 strategy - details of the progress the council has made in delivering the actions proposed in the 2003 strategy are set out in **Appendix E**. Some elements of the 2003 action plan are still appropriate; for example the specific recommendations about service improvement remain valid. This document also implements recommendation 44 of the 2003 strategy, by 'setting a clear, long term vision'. Chapter 10 of this document sets out an Action Plan to implement the new Bus Strategy.

Consultation and Review Process

- 2.28 Work on this Bus Strategy commenced in 2007 and a draft dated May 2007 has been considered by Environment Policy Development Committee, the Bus & Transport Strategy Review Group, Milton Keynes Transport Partnership and MK Metro, the major bus operator in Milton Keynes. In July 2008 it was decided that a wider consultation should be carried out, in parallel with the CMK Parking Strategy and the Transport Strategy Review. This also fulfilled the consultation requirements set out in the Transport Act 2000.
- 2.29 Because of the lapse of time since the preparation of the May 2007 version an updated draft was prepared for the consultation which took place between 17 September and 12 November 2008. A leaflet on the consultation was distributed through libraries and on the Central Milton Keynes "development" boards in the centre:mk and at Milton Keynes Central Station. Copies of the leaflet and the Strategy were sent to the relevant neighbouring local transport authorities, bus operators in the area, Bus Users UK (representing the users of bus services), all Milton Keynes Borough Councillors and Parish Councils as well as a number of other local stakeholders. The leaflet and strategy were made available through the Council's web site.

- 2.30 A total of 452 comments were received from 71 individuals or organisations. A short summary of all the comments received, which highlights the main themes, is set out in **Appendix C**. A full list of all the comments, together with the response and any action taken to amend the Bus Strategy is set out in **Appendix D** of the attached Strategy
- 2.31 During the consultation period on the Bus Strategy, the Report of the Milton Keynes Citizens' Advisory Group on Transport (the CAGoT Report) was published. Three of the 57 recommendations made in the CAGoT directly relate to the Bus Strategy and these are considered further in Chapters 5, 6 and 8. The CAGoT report recognises the need for modal shift and the need for more funding for bus services (although the direct comparison with London, included in the CAGoT report, is not entirely appropriate, as the regulatory and funding regime is completely different to that applicable in most of the UK, it is true that the bus network in Milton Keynes could be expanded if more funding was available).
- 2.32 Under current legislation, the Bus Strategy should be reviewed in order that a new Strategy is adopted at the same time as the next Local Transport Plan. According to current DfT guidance, "consultation on the Bus Strategy should ideally take place in parallel with consultation on the LTP as a whole" and "since a bus strategy is part of the LTP, it must have the same lifespan as the LTP to which it relates, and must be updated whenever the LTP is updated in a way that affects buses/bus policy". The council intends that this strategy will be reviewed, updated (and if necessary replaced) by July 2011 to form part of the next LTP (LTP3).

Existing Situation

- 2.33 The new city of Milton Keynes was designed with freedom of movement by car as a primary objective. The availability of significant highway capacity with roundabouts at junctions combined with the Central Milton Keynes (CMK) layout of grid roads and plentiful parking supports car movements, very much in line with the vision of the original planners. Whilst complimentary walk and cycle links were also constructed as part of the new city their routes are less direct and therefore at a disadvantage in offering an alternative to car travel because of the distances involved, and the routes available, due to the low density of development in much of the area.
- 2.34 The principal highway network, the grid roads, is generally remote from the residential areas. In most cases, the residential streets within the grid squares were not designed for buses but these roads have to be used in order to bring bus services close to the population. This makes it difficult to provide fast, frequent and attractive services with stops often poorly related to housing and employment and journey times cannot compete with those by car. In addition, the bus stops along the grid roads are often poorly overlooked making them feel less safe. There are some

examples where bus stops are close and effective (at Fullers Slade and Great Linford) but these are the exceptions.

- 2.35 Travel within Milton Keynes is more dispersed than in many other British cities and there is a multitude of cross-city movements. The dispersed nature of Milton Keynes (especially employment centres) has advantages that local traffic is not concentrated on one destination only but is spread throughout the network, thus not contributing to concentrated traffic congestion. However this means that Milton Keynes is not so easily served by conventional bus services and can result in longer routes than necessary therefore limiting the ability of the bus to compete with car journeys.
- 2.36 The council subsidises bus services that would not otherwise be provided commercially. Generally this is to extend services into the early morning, evening and weekends, and into rural areas. Rural areas are less well provided for than urban areas although nearly all settlements do have regular services. However rural services tend to be no better than hourly with long journey times as bus services divert through towns and villages.
- 2.37 The existing network of bus services in Milton Keynes is shown at **Map 1** and **Map 2**. A breakdown of the bus services into broad categories is shown at **Appendix A**.

Accessibility

- 2.38 Bus travel is the main alternative mode for those who do not have access to a car either as a driver or passenger. It provides access to employment, education, health services and food shops as set out in the Government's Social Exclusion Unit report of 2003 'Making the Connections'.
- 2.39 Although Milton Keynes has a high level of car use there are significant groups of people who do not have access to a car either because they are too young to drive, have a disability or are not able to afford to run a car. In addition there are a growing number of people who do not use a car by choice. The lack of access to a car is particularly marked in wards with a high index of deprivation - for example in Netherfield 43% of households have no car while in Beanhill it is 40%³.
- 2.40 The Milton Keynes Accessibility Strategy, submitted as part of LTP2, analysed the availability of public transport and speed of public transport access to key facilities. This shows that generally access is good but there are areas for improvement. Despite this, only one completely new bus service was suggested - the provision of a direct link from Newport Pagnell via Coachway to Milton Keynes General Hospital. The Milton Keynes Local Area Agreement (LAA) submitted to Government in 2008 includes a target for increasing percentage of households which can access the

³ Source: 2001 Census as reported in the Accessibility Strategy.

nearest hospital within 30 minutes by public transport from 65% (2005/06) to 85% in 2010/11.

The Need to Influence Travel Behaviour and Manage Demand

2.41 Milton Keynes has grown with an acceptance of car travel as the most dominant and obvious travel mode. However the accessibility car travel has historically provided will be diminished in future. The studies referred to on Paragraph 2.3, including the Transport Strategy Review initiated in 2006, identify several key factors which highlight the need for change to encourage the use of modes other than the car:

- Current levels of car use cannot be accommodated in future within the levels of population or employment growth envisaged. This growth would require the provision of road and parking capacity, which is not achievable or sustainable.
- The plans for the expansion of Central Milton Keynes cannot be realised without reducing the mode share of the car.
- Expanding Milton Keynes on the basis of unrestrained car-dependency would be counter to national, regional and local policy and funding on the scale required would not be available.
- The inability to maintain ease of movement on the roads, as traffic levels rise, would lead to increasing costs for commerce and industry through delays and uncertain journey times.
- Additional congestion, pollution, road danger and social exclusion would ultimately lead to a lower quality of life in Milton Keynes.

2.42 The pricing of car use and bus use is treated differently. The majority of the Milton Keynes population is expected to pay a commercial rate for bus travel that takes full account of the operating cost of the bus network. By contrast parking charges do not reflect the value of the land on which the car park is placed, or the environmental cost of the car journey. This direct inequality is compounded by perceptions of travel cost. The cost of car use is made up of payments that do not relate to individual journeys (eg fuel and insurance costs), while bus use is often related directly to the journey, unless prepaid tickets are used. This results in a perception that bus travel is more expensive than car travel whilst for many journeys the contrary is true.

2.43 Within Central Milton Keynes there is easy access to well placed parking that supports the retail, business and leisure centres. This was initially all free but a car park management strategy has been implemented based upon a sliding scale of charges, with those parking spaces directly adjacent to the retail centre charged at a premium rate, with free or lower priced spaces available around the edge of the CMK shopping centre. Within this regime, free spaces are allocated to car sharers and parking permits provided for residents of the city centre. The council reviews its CMK parking charging policy every two years.

- 2.44 The cost of travel and availability of, and ease of access to, parking spaces has a clear role in influencing future demand alongside management of highway space as demand increases. If a wider, commercially viable, bus network is to be provided and sustained there will need to be an equalisation of the cost balance between car and bus journeys, as well as the continuation of policies to ensure that bus services have access to the heart of the city that is as good as, if not better than, the private car.
- 2.45 The existing Parking Strategy, approved in 2003, is currently under review, taking full account of the Bus Strategy and the relationship between managing the demand for car travel and encouraging transport alternatives.

3 THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES AFFORDED BY GROWTH

Milton Keynes Growth

- 3.1 The future of Milton Keynes is being determined by the proposals for new housing and related development. Over the period 2006-2026, The South East Plan (Secretary of State's Proposed Changes July 2008) calls for an additional 49,950 dwellings in the MK Growth Area. While the exact timing of the development may change, the Government's proposals nevertheless present a significant challenge in planning for future transport provision. By 2031 the population of Milton Keynes could be around 300,000⁴, an increase of about 50%, making Milton Keynes the tenth largest city in the UK.
- 3.2 The growth of the city, with a greater number of people living and working in the area, offers considerable opportunities to improve the viability of bus services. It will also exert considerable pressure upon the existing transport network. Our strategy is based upon extending transport choice through the improvement of alternative non-car options, particularly the bus. While significant investment in improving the capacity of the road network is programmed this alone will not meet all the additional demand (see also Paragraph 2.12).

Medium Term Growth to 2011, Long Term Growth to 2031

- 3.3 The current Local Plan for Milton Keynes, which runs to 2011, identifies the main expansion areas on the eastern (EEA) and western (WEA) flanks and a smaller area to the north (NEA) of the existing city, with infilling of established local areas. In this period it is envisaged that 23,080⁵ additional dwellings will be provided.
- 3.4 The EEA and WEA represent considerable potential for bus use provided that the layout and design focuses on transport nodes and buses are an integral feature of the sites. The Milton Keynes Local Plan endorses this requirement and the design of these areas will be different from the existing built form of the city. Residential development will be significantly denser with buildings much closer to the highway boundary. Bus priority integrated within the developments, and not provided as an afterthought, will be delivered by building around 'city streets' that will include a dedicated bus lane. A proposed cross-section is shown below:

⁴ Source: Milton Keynes Intelligence Observatory: Milton Keynes Borough - Past Population and Projections to 2031

⁵ Source: Milton Keynes Local Plan 2001-2011, adopted 21 December 2005, Table H2 (A)



- 3.5 This change in direction is necessary to allow buses to effectively penetrate the development and to be close enough to the population to operate on a commercial basis in the long term. This should result in the new residents having more transport choice and being less dependant on the car than those within the existing built form of the city.
- 3.6 The direction of growth beyond the existing Local Plan period up to 2026 is currently being considered through analysis and consultation. The Core Strategy is due for adoption in the spring of 2009, as part of the Local Development Framework. There has also been an independent report published looking at possible new development areas south east and south west of Milton Keynes. The South East Plan had progressed to the “Proposed Changes” stage in July 2008.
- 3.7 There is also the potential to deliver the housing growth required through increasing the density of development (densification) of the existing grid squares. This would offer several advantages to public transport including: -
- Supporting the viability of core public transport services by adding demand
 - High quality urban design can integrate development with public transport
 - Land requirements are reduced (for both buildings and parking) and distances travelled to key facilities are minimised

- Sustainability objectives are addressed by the provision of high quality alternatives to the car
- 3.8 Higher numbers of people living closer to good bus routes must be encouraged if services are to be more viable, it will also increase the number of people who will have a choice of transport in the future. This option needs to be explored further in support of developing and delivering the Bus Strategy with additional thought given to development sites that are adjacent to established stops and where rapid journey times to Central Milton Keynes are achievable.

The Role of Development in Sustainable Accessibility

- 3.9 The impact of development on the transport infrastructure of Milton Keynes will be assessed and managed in a manner consistent with achieving sustainability through transport choice. In order to ensure this, the council will produce a Transport Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This will apply to developments within the Borough where the council acts as the planning authority, except those in Central Milton Keynes where a separate SPD has already been adopted, and those in the Urban Development Area (UDA - see paragraph 3.15). This will set out what is required from developers and give a full justification of the requirement.
- 3.10 The planning obligations contained within the Transport SPD will:
- Apply to all development types over the threshold size quoted
 - Set out the contribution required, per-dwelling or per-square-metre, for each development type
 - Indicate what the money pays for
- 3.11 The Transport SPD recognises the importance of establishing a public transport culture at the outset of occupation of new development. Good quality bus services that are fast and frequent, supported by appropriate infrastructure and information will be accessible as soon as possible after first occupation. The further introduction of bus services will be closely linked to the phasing of the development. The presence of the necessary infrastructure and adoption of the land as highway together with phasing of bus services as occupation of the development increases will be agreed and written into agreements with the developer, made under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Under this provision, bus services are expected to require subsidy (pump-priming) until they become commercially viable. While five years is the usual length of such an agreement, longer periods may be appropriate for larger developments.
- 3.12 Bus services to new developments may have significant benefits to existing residents as increased frequency of existing bus services may be justified and the additional patronage could reduce the need for subsidised services.

- 3.13 Travel plans will be required for new developments to demonstrate they meet requirements for access by non-car modes. Plans will be required for both commercial and non-commercial developments and their success will be monitored. Travel Plans will be supported by travel packs given to the occupiers of new developments, which will include information on, bus services, season tickets, cycle vouchers, a Redway map, and car pools/car share information. Free access to buses and cycle loan/hire, car pool may also be part of the package.
- 3.14 The Transport SPD will have clear requirements that meet the needs of the council as well as delivering strategic objectives set out in the key documents such as the LTP and Community Strategy. The agreed tariff will be ring fenced to ensure implementation of key infrastructure requirements. It will be matched with public sector funds in a way that maximises the value of public sector investment in pursuit of local, regional and national objectives of reducing reliance upon the car and ensuring continued accessibility to support economic growth.
- 3.15 The Transport SPD does not apply to developments in the Urban Development Area (UDA - which includes the EEA, WEA and NEA), where the planning authority is the Milton Keynes Partnership (MKP), or to Central Milton Keynes. In the UDA areas, the section 106 agreement legislation has been used as the basis of the collection of a single "tariff" per house to cover all the infrastructure provision and improvements. For the EEA and WEA a tariff of £18,500 is in place of which £1,000 per house is calculated to contribute to bus service improvements. This are paid into a larger pot so that a holistic approach can be taken to ensure comprehensive facilities are provided for the areas, rather than possibly disjointed provision. Through this funding arrangement, money will be available to support the 'early years' services to the expansion areas before they become commercially viable. In addition, there will be funding for promotion, marketing and travel planning to support the new bus service. The council as transport authority will introduce these tendered bus service operations as part of the integrated citywide network.
- 3.16 The Transport SPD will be reviewed in the future together with other developer contributions SPD/SPG.
- 3.17 The minimum standards for bus services in new developments are set out in Chapter 7 of the Milton Keynes Local Plan⁶. Policy T5 states that Development proposals must be designed to meet the needs of public transport operators and users. In particular:
- Road layouts must include direct, convenient and safe bus routes
 - Bus priority measures must be implemented, where appropriate

⁶ Milton Keynes Local Plan 2001-2011, adopted 21 December 2005

- All houses and most other development must be no more than 400m from a bus stop
- Bus stops must have suitable shelters, good pedestrian access and be open to public supervision
- Specific consideration must be given to the provision of public transport services in planning new development

The preamble to Policy T5 also includes a statement on the frequency of bus services that should be provided for new developments: This is a minimum of three buses per hour between 7am-7pm Monday - Saturday, 2 buses per hour between 10 am - 6pm on Sunday and an hourly service at other times.

- 3.18 While most of the preceding paragraphs deal with Milton Keynes Council policies in this area, there are likely to be significant developments outside the Milton Keynes Borough boundary, for example in Aylesbury Vale District. Developments on the scale currently proposed at Salden Chase and the Marston Vale eco-town will have a significant effect on the transport network, within Milton Keynes and beyond its administrative boundaries. The provision of bus and other transport services in these areas will require joint working with the appropriate neighbouring local transport authorities, and the neighbouring local planning authorities.
- 3.19 At a sub regional level, the MKSM Strategic Transport Board has been developing a Modal Shift Strategy which gives particular emphasis to the need to develop a high quality interurban network that is consistent across the region, including integration with a more extensive Park & Ride network. The actions contained in this Strategy will assist in the delivery of the MKSM Modal Shift Strategy.

4 VISION, OBJECTIVES, AIMS, TARGETS AND MONITORING

Vision

- 4.1 The Community Strategy outlines the council's vision for the sustainable growth of Milton Keynes in the next 30 years. It details how we can reinvent our city spaces, improve public services and infrastructure and work closely with our communities to ensure we get things right.
- 4.2 The Community Strategy will guide the long-term growth plan and the Core Strategy in presenting what the city will look like in terms of land use and design. The Community Strategy informs corporate policy and identifies four main action areas that cut across conventional policy areas. Action Area Two concerns *Delivering the Best Services* and states:

Getting About Easily

A transport system that provides the community with access to the things they want is one of the most important aspects in the planning of Milton Keynes for the next 30 years. Concerns about public transport and accessibility stood out above all others in public consultations. We will improve transport provision and foster urban growth in a way that improves accessibility for all sections of our community, promotes economic development and good quality of life. It's appropriate for us to take a strategic lead in looking at how to accelerate improvements in accessibility and to seek innovative solutions to improve the balance between the use of the private car and other transport modes.

- 4.3 The Sustainable Integrated Transport Strategy (SITS) published in 1999 is the transport strategy underpinning LTP2. The SITS vision is: -

We aim to open up Milton Keynes by making it a place where everyone can afford to move around conveniently, where economic, social and cultural life can flourish, whilst damage to our environment is minimised.

- 4.4 The SITS strategy is:-

To bring about a significant shift from the car to other ways of travelling, such as walking, cycling and public transport.

The importance of encouraging modal shift is at the heart of both the Community Strategy and SITS. The Local Transport Plan addresses this transport challenge.

LTP Objectives

4.5 This Bus Strategy identifies ways in which the broad objectives of the LTP can be realised. LTP2 objectives are:

- Improving accessibility to schools, shops, jobs and healthcare;
- Improving safety
- Reducing congestion
- Improving air quality
- Improving maintenance
- Improving the quality of life
- Encouraging sustainable growth
- Encouraging modal shift.

Aims of the Bus Strategy

4.6 The aims of this bus strategy, as set out in paragraphs 2.19 and 2.20, are:

- Achieve reliable bus journey times
- Provide appropriate good quality information
- Provide an easily understood network
- Minimise journey times
- Ensure an accessible network
- Provide a product of good quality

Delivery of the Bus Strategy Aims

4.7 Delivery of improvements in each of the areas noted above are not only important in themselves in encouraging bus use but also help to win 'hearts and minds'. There is much about using buses that creates a mystery for people, often leaving them feeling inadequate: - where does the bus stop? Which is my stop? What time does it leave? How do I pay? How much does it cost? Will the bus actually turn up and be on time? The bus 'offer' needs to be presented in a way that makes it an attractive alternative to the car. Delivering the aims set out above will contribute to this crucial change of attitude. The following paragraphs give more detail about how these aims can be achieved:

Bus Service Reliability

- 4.8 Most surveys of bus users and potential users cite unsatisfactory reliability and regularity as the most significant reason for not using bus services. Even when services are reliable, they are often perceived as not being so. The reliability of car journeys is often not seen as a major issue despite the fact that car journeys are often subject to greater vagaries and are no more reliable than bus services.
- 4.9 The council intends to enter a Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnership (BPIP) initially with MK Metro. This will set out a formal framework for improving bus service punctuality with targets set for improvements. This can be achieved by actions taken by both the council and bus operator to making measurable improvements. The government's paper 'Putting Passengers First' (Dec 2006) indicates that in future local councils may be held to account for poor reliability of bus services, not just the bus operator.
- 4.10 Buses can be reliable if given effective priority and segregation from other traffic. Where comprehensive bus priority is given, journey times can be reduced and reliability improved. Bus timetables highlight reliability by giving a benchmark against which to judge arrival and departure. The adoption of regular services (for example every ten minutes), and/or where passengers are informed by real time information, can alter perceptions of reliability and reduce stress.
- 4.11 Bus priority will speed journeys wherever congestion is present or anticipated. Priority can take a number of forms including:-
- Priority at traffic signals to ensure buses pass through junctions within a controlled time period. The introduction of the RTPI system will provide benefits in this area (see Paragraphs 5.15 - 5.18).
 - Bus Lanes - these can be dedicated carriageway, possibly reallocation of existing carriageway or widening of the carriageway to accommodate bus lanes.
 - The relocation of bus stops from lay-bys to on-carriageway. Significant cumulative route delays can result from buses having to exit from lay-bys onto congested roads.
 - The time taken to board buses can be unpredictable and impose significant delay. The use of off bus ticketing can help reduce delay - significant benefits have been seen in London where off bus ticketing is compulsory in the central area.

Information

- 4.12 Lack of information is a major barrier for potential users; even where it is available it can often be difficult to understand. The key to bus information provision is to ensure that it is clear and put in the right place. Information should be provided:

- At **Bus Stops** - ideally in real time to confirm and give comfort to passengers once they have made a commitment to travel by bus.
- **Direct to the User** - via leaflets and booklets available from outlets such as libraries etc, or by direct mail, and at roadside displays.
- At **Key Locations** - for example shopping centres and business parks. Where people congregate information on public transport travel options should be readily visible and available.
- By **Phone** - Information is available via the national Traveline number; the government initiative supported by the council and local bus operators, as well as potentially by text message (see below).
- On the **Internet** - timetables are available on the national Traveline and the council's websites, including a bus route finder.
- **Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI)** is expected to go live during 2008 and will provide real time information at selected bus stops, on the website and via SMS text messaging (see Paragraphs 5.15 - 5.18). The latter, already available in a number of locations in the UK, directly associates buses with rapidly evolving technology.

4.13 A separate but related Bus Information Strategy was adopted in 2003 and is due for review in 2008. This will take forward the issues outlined above via a partnership with the bus operators and an annual marketing and promotion plan. In 2007 the council started to significantly upgrade information at bus stops.

Clarity and Simplicity

4.14 Bus use can appear over complicated so making the bus network easy to understand for both users and potential users is critical. This strategy aims to help achieve an uncomplicated network through comprehensive information and encouraging stability in the network, rather than frequent changes. The council will work in partnership with bus operators to achieve improvements to service. This will include simplification of services where appropriate, including action to bring evening and Sunday routes into line with those running during Monday to Saturday daytime. To reduce the number of changes, there is agreement on the principle of having, as far as possible, no more than four major timetable changes a year.

Reduced Journey Times

4.15 The existing bus network often involves circuitous routes borne partly out of the residential structure of Milton Keynes. Where appropriate, the council will encourage more direct bus services to be provided.

Accessibility

- 4.16 It is important to ensure that all those living within Milton Keynes have the option of travelling by bus for the majority of their journeys. This requires a coherent network of services consistent with the wider Milton Keynes accessibility strategy that sees walk and cycle access to interchange points and bus stops as key for both the journey to the bus and onward to final destination.

Quality

- 4.17 Work started on the Milton Keynes Quality Bus Initiative (QBI) in late 1999, with a programme of infrastructure improvements on route 5 and this has also been rolled out on route 4, the northern part of route 7 and part of route 8. It should be noted that the QBI process is not yet complete.

- 4.18 The provision of quality bus services, with attention to detail and a focus upon user needs will ensure that bus users are able to undertake their journeys in comfort and with minimum stress. Quality needs to be evident in all aspects of service provision including infrastructure, vehicles, and payment systems (and information as covered in the previous section):

- ***Vehicles***

New buses have been required by law to be “low floor” since 2000, and all buses used on local bus services must comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995/2005 (DDA) from 1 January 2016 (single deckers) or 1 January 2017 (double deckers).

There has been significant investment by bus companies in vehicles and service enhancements which have improved the quality of their commercial bus services. Recent examples include improvements made by Stagecoach (their X5 service has doubled in frequency from hourly to half hourly while brand new buses have been provided for the X4) and MK Metro (with new buses for routes 4/4A and 5).

The council will encourage the early introduction of DDA compliant buses; and the use of vehicles which go beyond the currently accepted DDA compliant standard by including other enhancements to provide an improved passenger environment. These enhancements might include: The use of enhanced environmentally friendly (EEV) technology to reduce emissions; air-conditioning; in service cleaning (ie the vehicles swept out during the day while in service); leather upholstery; 2 + 1 highback seating; free wireless internet access; improved legroom; improved lighting; tinted windows. These improvements will be achieved through changes in the specification of buses required on contracted bus services, and by partnership working with the commercial bus operators.

- ***Infrastructure*** - MKP have successfully bid for funding for bus infrastructure improvements with the result that new bus shelters and level access bus stops

have been installed along the quality bus routes referred to above. In addition funding for infrastructure improvements is also made available through the Local Transport Plan settlement, and by the use of section 106 funds from development. The council and its partners will endeavour to take advantage of bidding opportunities (eg GAF/CIF), and the LTP capital programme to deliver infrastructure improvements to improve bus reliability and service quality (including bus priority); and to improve passenger facilities, by providing level access bus stops and shelters to improve the waiting environment.

- **Payment Systems** - the fact that off bus ticketing can speed up bus journeys has already been noted. The potential development of ticketing and payment systems is dealt with in more detail in Chapter 5.

4.19 The Quality Bus Partnership established with MK Metro in 2007 will be the primary delivery mechanism through which capital investment and revenue expenditure relating to the development of the bus network is agreed. The partners intended to set out an annual action plan, progress reports will also be submitted annually.

Targets and Monitoring

4.20 Targets set in order to help measure whether objectives in improving bus services are being met are set out in Table 4.1. The targets will be monitored and reported through Local Transport Plan Delivery Reports.

Table 4.1: Bus Related Targets, including LTP and LAA Targets

	Target	Definition	Base Year	Base Value	2006/07	2010/11	Monitoring
LTP and LAA	To increase bus patronage	BVPI 102/ NI 177- Total Bus Patronage	2003/04 (LTP) 2007/08 (LAA)	6.9m (LTP) 9.256m (LAA)	8.3m**	11.0m	Operator data
LTP	To improve bus punctuality over all routes	Proportion of buses departing 1 min early to 5 mins late (NI178)	2002/03	84%	69%**	90%	MKC survey data

Table 4.1: Bus Related Targets, including LTP and LAA Targets *continued*

	Target	Definition	Base Year	Base Value	2006/07	2010/11	Monitoring
LTP	To improve bus punctuality on QBI routes	Proportion of buses departing 1 minute early to five minutes late	2003/04	77%	64%**	95%	MKC survey data
LTP	To increase bus patronage on contracted bus services by 23%	MKC3 - Number of Passengers carried on contracted services	2004/05	869,000	1.3m**	1.1m	MKC surveys and bus operator data
LTP	To improve satisfaction with local bus service information	BVPI 103 – Satisfaction with Local Public Transport Information	2003/04	34%	43%	70%	Annual survey
-	To improve satisfaction with local bus services	BVPI 104 – Satisfaction with Local Bus Services	2003/04	38%	42%**	70%	Annual survey
LTP and LAA	Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling	NI175 - Increasing percentage of households which can access the nearest hospital within 30 minutes by public transport from 65% to 85% in 2010/11.	2005/06	65%	70%	85%	
LTP	Community transport patronage	MKC1 - Number of Passengers Carried	2004/05	58,235	60,462	87,350	Operator data

** - Actual figures

5 DEVELOPING THE NETWORK - GENERAL

CAGoT Recommendations

5.1 The CAGoT report, referred to in Paragraph 2.31 includes recommendations that:

- “a full bus service [should be provided] for Milton Keynes that would be subsidised and should be innovative, e.g. Dial-a-Bus, small buses for the estates and for worker transportation, accurate and accessible real time information provision utilising various media including IT”
- “it is imperative to introduce better buses on all routes (not just the preferred routes) and improved and cheaper services”

The issues raised in these recommendations are developed further in this Chapter and in Chapter 6. The quality of vehicles is covered in Paragraph 4.18 while the issue of whether or not services could be cheaper as a result of action by Milton Keynes Council is covered in Paragraph 8.3.

Commercial Bus Services

5.2 As noted in Paragraph 2.20 although there have been important changes in the last 5 years to the legislative framework within which bus services are provided, the principles of the deregulated approach in the Transport Act 1985 remain.

5.3 The operation of bus services in Milton Keynes, as in most parts of the UK outside London, is regulated by the Transport Act 1985 with some changes subsequently introduced by the Transport Act 2000. The 1985 Act deregulated and privatised the bus industry. This means that it is the private sector bus operators (licensed by the Traffic Commissioner) that determine the level of most services provided in the borough, including the route, timetables, frequency, fares and type of bus used. Bus operators are required to give councils 56 days notice of any new, cancelled or changed services but are not required to get agreement from the council. Fares can be varied subject to giving 7 days notice to the council. Approximately 90 per cent of bus journeys in the borough are made on commercial journeys.

5.4 The legislative framework in which buses operate may change if the Local Transport Bill passes into law but this is most likely to reinforce the current arrangements in Milton Keynes that seek a partnership approach to improving bus services, although with more emphasis on ensuring the council plays its part in helping to deliver better bus services (see also Paragraphs 9.3 and 9.4).

Contracted Bus Services

5.5 Approximately 10 per cent of passenger journeys are on contracted routes over which the council does have control as the council has a duty to consider whether

there are gaps in the commercial bus network and if it thinks appropriate, fill in those gaps to meet unmet social need. Such contracted journeys should not compete with commercial bus services. The council currently spends approximately £2 million per annum on such contracted services in order to fill unmet social need. At the present time, most of the revenue budget for subsidised services comes from parking revenue but other sources include Rural Bus Subsidy Grant and developer contributions.

5.6 There are three main categories of contracted bus service and within the budget available and within the policy parameters for value for money (see below), the council will continue to subsidise services to meet these needs:

- Extending services beyond the normal commercial working hours, including Sunday operation, in order to provide access to and from service employment in particular, and to improve access to and from commuter train services.
- Evening and late night services, to improve access to and from commuter train services, and to cater for those going out for the evening who have no alternative transport choices. There are also safety issues in people congregating to wait for transport late at night as well as issues about getting home safely.
- Services into the rural area where the council will continue to work with the neighbouring authorities to maintain and improve those cross boundary services that form the major provision in the area.

5.7 A particular area of concern is the need to further improve service frequencies in the early morning and early to mid evening to give better connections into commuter train services (at both Milton Keynes Central and Bletchley) and into interurban services such as Stagecoach X5. At Milton Keynes Central, many commuters catch trains at about 7am and return at about 7pm. This issue applies both to services within the urban area, as well as to services into the rural area. Improved early evening services will also assist those working flexible hours and making leisure journeys within the city. Within the budget available and through partnership working with the bus operators, the council will endeavour to bring forward improvements to services to meet these needs.

5.8 The council's existing "value for money" policy, which has been in place since the mid 1990's when Buckinghamshire County Council was the transport authority for the Milton Keynes area, is to subsidise services up to a maximum of £2.50 per head per journey. However this policy is flexible and does not reflect particular needs or benefits and as result has been waived for a number of services. The council is intending to review this policy during 2008.

Publicity, Promotion, Bus Stops and Shelters

- 5.9 Given that bus services are provided by a number of competing operators, the council resolved some years ago to provide publicity for bus services. This includes printed timetable information (Travel Guides and Maps), roadside publicity and information on the web. Revenue expenditure on these items, approximately £150,000 per year, is proposed to continue.
- 5.10 Publicity needs to be improved in order to encourage the use of bus services and give people confidence in using them. As already noted in Paragraphs 4.12 and 4.13, it is intended to form a closer working relationship with the bus companies to deliver improved marketing and publicity of bus services in Milton Keynes through an annual marketing and promotion plan as a the main way of implementing the Bus Information Strategy. This will encompass a review of the council's printed timetable information, roadside publicity and information on the web.
- 5.11 In addition, significant investment of up to £75,000 has been made since 2007/08 to upgrade timetable and other bus information at bus stops and shelters, initially on the QBI routes (services 4, 5, 8 and the northern section of route 7). This will continue for the subsequent two years to complete the roll-out of the quality bus routes.
- 5.12 One aspect of improving information is the delivery of information over the counter. While bus timetable information is available from a number of outlets, including libraries and the Civic Offices, ticket sales are not possible in these locations. A working arrangement with MK Metro has been in place since May 2008 within the Heritage and Cultural Showcase, Discover Milton Keynes located in the centre:mk. MK Metro provide a member of staff in return for a Central Milton Keynes venue for selling bus tickets and providing bus information. This has the potential to expand to become a major bus/transport information point but there are ongoing funding issues. The Council will continue to work with partners (eg LLC, centre:mk, MK Metro) to raise the profile of the Discover Milton Keynes shop as an outlet for public transport information.
- 5.13 Paragraph 4.18 refers to the installation of new bus shelters and level access stops along the QBI routes. Investment in this infrastructure has been concentrated where patronage is greatest but the council will endeavour to ensure, by its investment, that all bus stops and waiting facilities will be compatible with low floor buses by the end of 2015. Subject to the availability of funding the ultimate aim, is to see each stop equipped as follows:
- Level access kerb
 - Bus stop pole, flag and timetable case, with the name of the location being displayed at the stop.
 - Bus shelters in key locations including RTPI display where appropriate

As indicated in Paragraph 4.19, the Quality Bus Partnership established with MK Metro in 2007 will be the primary delivery mechanism through which improvements of this nature will be delivered.

- 5.14 Bus shelter maintenance is carried out by Adspace 2000 under a contract which runs until 2016. This contract gives Adspace exclusive rights to all “six-sheet” advertising on bus shelters and in other locations across the borough in return for maintenance of the shelters.

Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI)

- 5.15 The council, in conjunction with English Partnerships and MK Metro, is working towards the introduction of a Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) system during 2009. Most of the buses run by MK Metro from their Milton Keynes depot will be fitted with the RTPI equipment, while data for most of their routes will be included on the system.

- 5.16 The RTPI system is expected to bring the following benefits:

- Improved publicity, with around 55 displays at selected stops across the borough, principally on the QBI routes (services 4, 5, 8 and the northern section of route 7) giving actual times of arrival. There will also be bigger displays at eight other key locations (eg inside the centre:mk building and the Rail Station Building).
- Bus information in real time on the web and via SMS mobile phone text message.
- Improved bus priority at traffic signals at selected junctions: The RTP system will include a facility that can distinguish between late running and on time/early buses and give priority where required.
- Improvements in bus service reliability and punctuality.

- 5.17 There are weaknesses with the RTPI system: At present only MK Metro buses will be equipped which means that key cross boundary services, such as Stagecoach’s X4, X5 and Arriva’s 100, will not be shown on the displays, while evening and weekend subsidised journeys run by other operators will also not be shown.

- 5.18 The council will work with the bus operators and other partners to extend the RTPI system by adding extra displays at bus stops and in other locations (eg workplaces, rail stations, the hospitals etc) and by improving the route coverage.

Fares and Ticketing

- 5.19 There have been considerable advances in the development of ticketing and ticketing machines in recent years. The major bus operator is aware that its ticket machines need to be replaced, but it is a substantial investment.
- 5.20 Developments in smart-card technology, mean that greater investment is required to deliver its compliant ticket machines fitted with smart-card readers which would allow accurate reading of concessionary fare passes. The council will work with bus operators to speed up the introduction of its compliant ticket machines fitted with smart-card readers.
- 5.21 The fact that off bus ticketing can speed up bus journeys has already been noted and there are a number of ways that this could be delivered:
- via retail outlets - such as the Discover MK shop already mentioned, or through Paypoint or Payzone terminals. Outlets could also be located at major local employers such as the University and Hospital.
 - on-street machines - examples are already in use in London, Edinburgh and Norwich amongst others. These might be located in employment sites as well in key bus stop locations.
 - internet purchase - this could be similar to the internet purchase of train tickets, where the ticket is posted out to the customer (Stagecoach use this method for monthly or longer period season tickets), or the e-tickets used by Megabus and the airlines where the authority to travel is emailed to the customer.
 - mobile phone downloads (with a number of trials being carried out in various parts of the country).
 - purchase of season tickets through salary sacrifice schemes with employers.

The council will work with bus operators and employers to develop off-bus ticketing mechanisms.

- 5.22 A greater range of multi-journey tickets may also be appropriate. These might include:
- The day and weekly tickets already available in Milton Keynes.
 - Transfer tickets allowing a cross city single journey for one payment where the day ticket may not be appropriate.
 - Multi-trip tickets allowing for a number of single trips (eg ten) at a discounted rate.
 - Multi-operator tickets (similar to the Northampton Buzz Card) where one ticket is valid on the services of all operators in a defined area.

- Bus/rail through tickets - PlusBus, which gives unlimited bus travel for a range of periods from daily to annual, is already available in the Milton Keynes area but it is not widely promoted and is only available to purchase at stations. There are also through rail tickets available onto Stagecoach X5 for journeys towards Buckingham.

The council will work with bus operators to develop a greater range of multi-journey tickets, including multi-operator tickets.

The council will work with bus and rail operators to improve the promotion of PlusBus bus/rail tickets.

Travel Planning

- 5.23 Paragraph 3.13 refers to the fact that travel plans will be required for new commercial and non-commercial developments to demonstrate they meet requirements for access by non-car modes.
- 5.24 The council is beginning to work with existing employers on the development of travel plans and other means of raising awareness of sustainable travel alternatives. There are also school travel plans and there is potential for personal travel plans, the latter have been used with some success in a number of towns across the country.
- 5.25 Further developments of this process, particularly through the work with employers might result in the delivery of bespoke, or more tailored, bus services to business parks and specific employment sites, as well delivery salary sacrifice purchase of season tickets.
- 5.26 Work has also started recently on a Station Travel Plan for Milton Keynes, one of 24 stations selected nationwide to take part in a government pilot scheme. This is aimed at encouraging rail users to use environmentally friendly forms of transport when travelling to and from stations and is intended to be in place by March 2009. The Station Travel Plan will also form part of a wider strategy to improve access to Station Square.

Park and Ride

- 5.27 There has been a national debate as to whether Park and Ride contributes to, or reduces the use of the car, but the conclusion has been that on balance it does have a valuable role to play, endorsed by the Government's Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport
- 5.28 The council supports one Park and Ride scheme at the present time. The site is currently being improved as part of works at the Coachway and nearby junctions, and this work is due for completion in 2009. This will provide much improved facilities, improved security and 360 park and ride parking spaces and in the future it

may be possible to increase the number of spaces. Until its recent closure, the site was served by a part commercial/part subsidised local bus service rather than a dedicated link.

- 5.29 The council is also working to establish facilities as part of the Denbigh Stadium development. Two further sites are identified in the Transport SPD previously referred to (at Stony Stratford/Old Stratford (possibly a combined facility with Northamptonshire County Council) and to the West). Other locations have also been suggested but do not, at the present time, have a policy backing. The Core Strategy will deal with the location of the Strategic Development areas which may offer the potential for park and ride sites but identification of the optimum locations will come through a separate park and ride strategy, to be written during 2009.
- 5.30 The separate park and ride strategy referred to above will include identification of the optimum locations to be served by high quality facilities in order to help ensure success. In addition, consideration will be given to the appropriate size of sites - the TAS study⁷ suggests that Park and Ride is seen as being viable at around the 500-650 space level, but if there are other uses on the site, (eg Coachway), more spaces would be required. The availability and cost of parking in Central Milton Keynes will also be a key factor in determining whether park and ride can succeed.

Coachway and Coach Travel

- 5.31 Although the Coachway at Junction 14 of the M1 is primarily for long distance coach travel, it does form a key part of the overall public transport offer for Milton Keynes. Because of its location, the borough benefits from a significant number of coach links to many parts of the country which would not be available if the services were required to come into CMK. There is also some interchange between coach services and also with local bus and interurban services.
- 5.32 The Coachway is one of the gateways into Milton Keynes and gives many people from across the country and beyond their first and often only impression of Milton Keynes. It was long recognised that the Coachway was unsatisfactory and in need of upgrading. Work is currently underway to improve road access and the road layout within and around the Coachway. The Coachway facilities are also being upgraded in partnership with National Express and English Partnerships, this work being due for completion in 2009.
- 5.33 The council also needs to work more closely with the operators of the centre:mk shopping centre to ensure that adequate coach parking facilities for visiting coaches are provided and maintained.

⁷ TAS Consultancy Report Park & Ride Great Britain

The Need for Bus Depots

5.34 In order to facilitate growth in bus patronage there will need to be an increase in the number of buses operating on the network, which raises the issue of where they will be stored and maintained. It will be necessary to have more sites available for bus depots in the borough but at present there is a lack of sites within the borough that are appropriate. The council will seek to identify appropriate sites for bus depots and pursue their designation through the planning process. This is likely to be the Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) or a subsequent Managing Development DPD.

6 DEVELOPING THE NETWORK - URBAN

The Long Term Public Transport Vision - Route Hierarchy

- 6.1 In the past few years the council has sought to gain a better understanding of the potential for increasing bus use in the borough. Two stages of the Public Transport Long Term Vision were commissioned from separate consultancies. Stage 1 (PTLTV1) set out the parameters and framework that would be necessary if public transport was to be effective in supporting growth. Part of the remit of PTLTV1 was to recommend the most appropriate type of public transport for Milton Keynes for the future. Stage 2 (PTLTV2) looked at the proposal in more detail, analysed accessibility and suggested a possible network. These studies set goals for improved bus services and suggested ways of achieving these. The first tangible element of this has been the start of implementation of the Central Milton Keynes Public Transport Improvement Project.
- 6.2 PTLTV2 built upon Stage 1 in seeking to take the vision forward. It suggested a hierarchical, three level, approach to bus services in the borough but the report was not formally accepted or published by the Council. The council recognises, however, that the three level approach outlined in the document merely reflects what already in happens in practice in most urban bus networks, where there are top tier high frequency services on core routes (level 1), backed up by services of lower frequency (level 2/3). It is therefore appropriate for the Bus Strategy to reflect this principle.
- 6.3 A definition of the three levels is set out below:
- **Level 1 - Core Routes** will connect key destinations and offer the highest level of provision and quality. These top tier routes should be capable of being operated commercially on a 'turn up and go' basis with a target of a 10-15 minute frequency. This will maximise interchange opportunities for those journeys that require a change of bus. Given the target frequency times and the supporting bus priority measures, these routes could be thought of as 'bus rapid transit'.
 - **Level 2 - Intermediate Routes** would offer an intermediate level of service away from the core routes operated on a relatively frequent daytime basis (a target frequency of every 20-30 minutes will apply). While it is expected that these services can be provided on a commercial basis, there may be a need for some financial support particularly for early mornings, evenings and weekends.
 - **Level 3 - Feeder Routes** are likely to be hourly or less frequent and are more likely to require some financial support particularly for early mornings, evenings and weekends.

Table 6.1 below gives some detail on the expected attributes of services at each level while Table 10.1 sets out the proposed timescale for determination of the services in each level.

Table 6.1 - expected attributes of services at each level

		Level 1 - Core Routes	Level 2 - Intermediate Routes	Level 3 - Feeder Routes
Information				
1.	Information available via web site, phone and at stops	Y	Y	Y
2.	Static information available at other key locations, e.g. workplaces, Central Milton Keynes shops, rail stations, hospitals etc	Y	Y	Y
3.	RTPI at selected stops and other key locations (see Paragraphs 5.15 - 5.18)	Y	Y (if operated by MK Metro)	Y (if operated by MK Metro, and stops on level 1 or 2 routes)
Buses				
4.	Buses fitted with tracking equipment	Y		
5.	Higher standard vehicles (see Para 4.18)	Y	N	N
6.	Low Floor Buses	Y	By 2016 (see Para 4.18)	
Infrastructure				
7.	Level access kerbs at bus stops	Y	By 2016 (see Para 4.18)	
8.	A bus stop marker with static information	Y	Y	Y
9.	Shelters at key locations	Y	Y	N
10.	Enforcement of clearway orders at stops and approaches to stops will be provided	Y	Y	N
11.	Priority measures will be introduced where practical, including the reallocation of road space and priorities at junctions	Y	Y	N
12.	Walk distances to stops will be minimised and be at least comparable to walking distances from parking spaces at key destinations like shopping centres. Walking routes will be appropriately lit and designed to maximise personal security	Y	Y	N

Table 6.1 - expected attributes of services at each level *continued*

Service				
13.	Commercial operation	Y	Y	Unlikely
14.	Target Frequency (Mon-Sat Daytime 0600-2000)	10 mins	20-30 mins	60 mins
15.	Target Frequency (Mon-Sat Evening from 2000-2400) (Sunday evening from 1700-2300)	30 mins	30-60 mins	60 mins
16.	Target Frequency (Sunday shopping hours 0830-1700)	15-20 mins	30 mins	60 mins
17.	Off bus ticketing on-street and at retail outlets (see Para 4.19)	Y	Y	N

- 6.4 The two LTPTV reports included maps showing an indicative route network that took little account of the then existing bus services. **Map 3** indicates the current understanding of the services that forms the core (level 1) urban network, including the East-West bus service linking the Expansion Areas, as well those routes that would be in level 2 or 3. This a “work in progress” - within the current legislative framework, the council will work in partnership with the bus operators to identify and deliver the core route network (which we hope to see operated commercially), with the intention that it ultimately covers more of Milton Keynes than the routes indicated on Map 3.
- 6.5 Paragraph 2.34 acknowledges that the current mix of running on grid roads and estate roads makes the services less attractive (slower) than they would otherwise be. However this pattern of operation is delivering increased bus patronage. There might, as patronage increases, be the opportunity for a mix of fast and slow buses along the same general corridor, and this might be a natural development of the three level approach detailed above. Adopting a “grid-roads” policy at this stage is not something that the bus operators’ support, and it could not be imposed on them within the current legislative framework. Such a policy would also reduce the overall accessibility of the bus network.
- 6.6 In addition to the indicative route networks included in LTPTV1 and LTPTV2, one specific addition to the bus network was identified in the Accessibility Strategy. Newport Pagnell was identified as the largest settlement where bus access time to the nearest hospital is greater than 30 minutes and where there is the greatest potential for reducing travel time and this could be achieved by the provision of a direct link from Newport Pagnell via Coachway to Milton Keynes General Hospital.
- 6.7 Paragraph 5.1, referring to the CAGoT Report, suggests that “Dial-a-Bus” services might be appropriate in Milton Keynes. There have been a few examples in recent years of urban Dial-a-Bus services (locally in Bedford and in Corby, further afield in

Dutch, French and German suburban style towns). The UK experience seems to indicate that it is difficult to provide such services on a commercial basis and there are issues with passenger resistance. The potential for such a service in Milton Keynes would need further investigation, perhaps by consideration of a pilot scheme on one estate.

Central Milton Keynes

- 6.8 **Central Milton Keynes** is the major employment centre in Milton Keynes Borough with nearly 20% of all the jobs⁸, as well as being a key destination shopping and leisure trips. It therefore has the largest concentration of bus services and will continue to do so in the future.
- 6.9 It is proposed to continue the strategy whereby most cross city bus services run along Midsummer Boulevard in CMK allowing interchange in the centre (Midsummer Boulevard/Lower Ninth Street) and at the rail station, the full length of Midsummer Boulevard between the Central Rail Station and the Food Centre (except Midsummer Place) will continue to be the public transport spine. This fits in with the objective of improving interchange with the core routes converging on Midsummer Boulevard. The previously stated aim that these core routes should operate every 10 minutes will reduce the time needed to interchange to other services to complete a journey across town, for example to the Hospital. This is also critical as buses work best on radial routes rather than on orbital routes (it would prove prohibitive to try to link orbital routes with all key dispersed destinations).
- 6.10 The concentration of services along Midsummer Boulevard does mean that development along most of Silbury and Avebury Boulevards does not have direct access to buses, although all parts are within 400 metres of bus stops on Midsummer Boulevard. It would not make sense to split the core services to run along all three of the city centre boulevards - this would not be supported by the bus operators, and it could not be imposed on them within the current legislative framework. Such an action would also reduce the overall accessibility of the bus network (by reducing its simplicity and clarity). As development progresses along Silbury and Avebury Boulevards, and in Campbell Park, it may be appropriate to review the level of service required. In the short to medium term, better use could be made of services that already use Silbury and Avebury Boulevards and consideration will be given to the placing of stops on these roads. It might also be possible to consider extending services that terminate in Central Milton Keynes to provide links to these areas, although this would require revenue support.

⁸ Source: Milton Keynes Intelligence Observatory

- 6.11 In the recent past there have been proposals for a circular service around Central Milton Keynes as well as high-frequency shuttle services from Milton Keynes Central Station to Campbell Park. Additional services of this nature would be expensive to provide and may not necessarily add value to the bus network. In the former case it might be more useful, for example, to improve pedestrian routes to Midsummer Boulevard; while the latter could be achieved by better marketing and promotion of the existing high frequency of service along Midsummer Boulevard, perhaps including promotional or special fares.
- 6.12 On the issue of radial vs orbital routes, it is generally accepted that the biggest flows are on the radial routes to and from the town or city centre. This is why, in Milton Keynes as in most other towns and cities, the most frequent commercial services run to and from the city centre. In Milton Keynes, there are a few services that fulfil an “orbital” function (eg the 15/16 Westcroft-Bletchley and 43 Newport Pagnell - Wolverton) but these are not commercially viable. The experience of orbital services elsewhere, for example in Leicester and Norwich, is inconclusive but in a Milton Keynes context it would be prohibitively expensive to try to link orbital routes with all key dispersed destinations.
- 6.13 The **Central Milton Keynes Public Transport Improvement Project** was put together as the first stage of raising the quality of bus services in Milton Keynes to meet future demands for travel. The project is based upon technical analysis and a comprehensive consultation which was concluded in the summer of 2005. This focused on a number of bus infrastructure improvements in Central Milton Keynes and across Milton Keynes including:
- Junction alterations, including conversion of some roundabouts in strategic locations to traffic signal control;
 - Bus lanes;
 - Significant investment in level access kerbs and shelters on QBI routes;
 - Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI);
 - New public transport interchange arrangements - the provision of the ‘super stops’ detailed below.

Some of these improvements have been delivered through GAF funding but others are dependent on the outcome of funding bids currently being considered by DfT.

Transport Interchanges in Milton Keynes

- 6.14 Generally people prefer to make direct journeys to and from their destination. The radial nature of the Milton Keynes bus network means that a change of bus may be necessary to complete a cross-town journey. The interchange is the place where people need to change buses or mode (eg to rail) in order to complete their journey.

- 6.15 The ease of interchange affects the ease with which users can access facilities. Good interchange between buses gives people a greater opportunity to travel to more destinations by bus. Bus services work best where they provide radial journeys: interchange works well where these services are frequent and meet up at common points meaning that waiting time for connecting services is minimised and facilities are good. Improving the interchange experience is therefore particularly crucial to improving bus travel - provision of good facilities can increase use of bus services through improved security, better information and co-ordination of services.
- 6.16 **Central Milton Keynes** is the location of two of the main transport interchanges:
- 6.17 While the existing bus interchange at **Midsummer Boulevard/Lower Ninth Street** may be described as adequate, the waiting facilities are limited and information is not easy to understand, particularly for new users. The council is seeking funding bring forward improvements in this area with the intention that CMK is served by a series of 'super stops', consisting of four stopping points in each direction at each of the four sites: The Point (Midsummer Boulevard/Lower Ninth Street); near the current food centre; and two other sites along Midsummer Boulevard (West). There will be highway alterations at the four locations to provide a "sawtooth" bus stopping arrangement. The "superstops" will include new shelters to improve the experience of waiting for a bus with better information provision, including Real Time Passenger Information; raised kerbs for level access onto low-floor buses; seating areas.
- 6.18 It is also proposed to develop a multi-modal interchange at **Milton Keynes Central Rail Station** within the existing area of Station Square (ie not on the old Bus Station site). This will include facilities to allow bus operators to manage and regulate services including layover bays, a staff mess room, allow for crew changes, toilet facilities, RTPI control room, CCTV, ticket sales etc. Passenger facilities will include new shelters to improve the experience of waiting for a bus with better information provision, including Real Time Passenger Information; raised kerbs for level access onto low-floor buses; seating areas. It is expected that this will be in place by 2010.
- 6.19 Careful thought will have to be given to the stopping arrangements for bus services during the period when the schemes outlined in Paragraphs 6.17 and 6.18 are delivered to ensure that disruption to passengers, and the potential impact on overall bus patronage, is kept to a minimum.
- 6.20 In addition to the public transport interchanges referred to in the preceding paragraphs, there are two other main public transport interchanges in Milton Keynes:
- **Coachway/Park & Ride** - this provides an interchange between coach and bus services and also acts as an interchange for those transferring from car to coach services and to bus services into CMK. As already note, improvements to these facilities should be completed during 2009

- **Bletchley Bus Station** - improvements are dependent on the progress of development schemes in the areas

6.21 There is an intention to improve bus/rail interchanges at Wolverton and Bletchley stations (the latter as part of the Bletchley Link 2 scheme), subject to the availability of funding. In addition, improved bus services will lead to a requirement for improved facilities for buses and bus users at Kingston Centre, Westcroft Centre, Stony Stratford town centre and Wolverton town centre.

6.22 Table 10.1 sets out the proposed timescale for bringing forward these improvements.

7 DEVELOPING THE NETWORK - RURAL

- 7.1 Milton Keynes Borough does not just include the new city - there is a sizeable part of the borough which is outside the “designated” area. For the purposes of this bus strategy, Newport Pagnell, Wavendon and Woburn Sands, although outside the designated area, have been considered as “urban” parishes, on the basis that they are served by the city network (the planning hierarchy identifies the most sustainable rural settlements as being Newport Pagnell, Woburn Sands and Olney). In 2008, the estimated population of the rural area was 17,910 (8% of the total for the borough as a whole). **Appendix B** lists the rural parishes and highlights the current services.
- 7.2 Most of the settlements in the rural area of Milton Keynes Borough have regular services, indeed a majority have bus services to more than one of the surrounding larger towns. By virtue of the size of the authority, and its location, nearly three quarters of the rural parishes are on services that cross the council’s boundary into a neighbouring local transport authority. Despite these positive points, the rural areas are less well provided for than the urban area of Milton Keynes and most services run on a subsidised basis. In addition journey times are extended by the need to follow circuitous routes, both to pick up rural settlements (eg Ravenstone) and to improve access to parts of the urban area (eg Milton Keynes Village on service 17).
- 7.3 The shape of the urban area relative to the overall boundary of the council means that the rural area can be divided into four separate areas as follows:
- South: Bow Brickhill and Little Brickhill parishes
 - West: Calverton parish
 - North of Wolverton but west of the M1 (Castlethorpe, Hanslope and Haversham)
 - The north and west area (east of the M1)
- 7.4 The councils strategy for developing bus services in the rural areas will, as far as possible be based on retaining, in conjunction with the neighbouring authorities, the existing services 1, 1B, 1C, 17/17A/17B and 33 which form the main “spines” of the rural bus services. Consideration will be given to increasing frequencies on these spines to a minimum hourly frequency and to the provision of faster peak time journeys from the north of the borough (Olney/Lavendon) to Central Milton Keynes.
- 7.5 For those parishes, or parts of parishes, not on these spine routes (or, in the case of Wavendon and Woburn Sands, not well served by the city network) consideration will be given to replacing the existing limited services (42 and 80) with facilities provided by the MK PlusBus community transport service, if these would offer better value for money.

- 7.6 It may be appropriate to consider other solutions but it is often the case that the “radical and innovative” solutions (eg demand responsive services such as the Hanslope Harrier) require substantial funding and do not ultimately represent good value for money.
- 7.7 Bus services in the rural area will also benefit from the proposed improvements outlined in other sections of this strategy.

8 CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL, COMMUNITY TRANSPORT, HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT

Concessionary Travel

- 8.1 It is compulsory for the council to offer free travel on all local bus services within the borough for all those aged 60 and over, and for some disabled persons, at anytime apart from before 0930 on Monday to Friday. The pass permitting such travel must be issued free of charge. Since April 2008 free bus has been available for travel anywhere across England (apart from before 0930 on Monday to Friday). The council will continue to offer more than the minimum concession by offering 35 pence flat fares for this group of people (if resident in Milton Keynes) for travel before 0930 on Monday to Friday, within Milton Keynes, and at any time on local rail services.
- 8.2 In addition, the council is keen to promote the use of bus travel by younger people. To help achieve this, the council will positively promote the concessionary flat fare of 35 pence for any journey within the borough with no time restriction for those in full time education up to the age of 19.
- 8.3 Expenditure on all concessions is budgeted at approximately £2.5 million per year. Although often seen as a subsidy to bus operators, concessionary fares reimbursement is a subsidy to the user, with the aim of reducing social exclusion. The council reimburses bus operators for participating in the concessionary fares scheme, but in doing so takes account of generated demand, that is, extra journeys that have been made as a result of free or discounted travel. Reimbursements to bus operators must leave them no better or worse off as a result of providing concessionary travel.
- 8.4 Apart from the above and with a few other limited exceptions, the council is not permitted to subsidise fares for the general public.

Community Transport

- 8.5 The council has been, and will continue to invest in level access at bus stops and expects bus companies to invest in level access buses to encourage more older and disabled people to use bus services. However, it is recognised that some people find it difficult or impossible to use mainstream bus services. To meet their needs, community transport provides door-to-door and group travel services. Community transport is regarded as part of the overall bus service offer.
- 8.6 Following a Commission for Social Care Inspection report (Inspection of Social Care Services for Disabled People – September 2004) that was critical of community transport, the council commissioned a thorough review of the service. The review made a series of recommendations:

- Revised 'many to many' service, with additional resources, marketed as a door-to-door service;
 - Group Travel;
 - Improvements to quality and accessibility of taxi services; and
 - 'Passengers' voice to ensure consultation and constant feedback.
- 8.7 The CSCI recommendations were implemented in a package of changes introduced within the existing budget of approximately £810,000 per year and in June 2006 a new Community Transport service, known as 'MK PlusBus' was launched. This is operated by a company jointly owned by the ECT Group and Age Concern who are able to combine this with other transport they provide through the Neighbourhood Services Directorate to carry users to destinations such as lunch clubs.
- 8.8 The two primary outcomes of the new service being introduced were a significant improvement in the quantity (a 30-50% increase) of passenger trips, and in the quality of service offered as well as a more forward looking, integrated and coherent approach to accessible transport in the city.
- 8.9 During 2006 the Taxicard scheme, a new venture for the borough was also introduced as an integral part of community transport, for some journeys that cannot be catered for by the main Community Transport service. It is open to all users of Community Transport. Any taxi company can participate so long as their drivers undertake specific training, particularly focussing on customer care and the needs of disabled and older people.
- 8.10 With these new arrangements in place work is being carried out to identifying synergies with school transport, particularly for those with Special Educational Needs; and to identify synergies between Community Transport and the transport requirements of the local NHS and Primary Care Trusts.
- 8.11 In addition, the Community Transport service may be able to meet the transport and accessibility needs of those in rural areas where it is difficult to justify conventional bus services.

Home to School Transport

- 8.12 The council secures transport for mainstream schoolchildren who are statutorily entitled to free travel to school where the defined area school is more than 3 miles from the child's home. Approximately £3.5 million is spent on Home to School Transport funded through the council's Learning and Development Directorate. Free travel is also provided for those attending the one Catholic secondary school in the borough. Where space is available on a school contract, discretionary seats may be sold to pupils attending the same school who are not entitled to free travel. The

council also provides transport for statutorily entitled special educational needs children (SEN).

- 8.13 Where possible, synergies with mainstream public transport are explored to ensure that contracted local bus services are used to meet the needs of school pupils. However the scope for such integration is extremely limited because most contracted local bus services operate outside the school day. Where possible, school pupils are encouraged to use commercial bus services, although this may often require pupils to change buses on their way to/from school. Where possible, even those entitled to free transport are provided with passes to travel on local bus services rather than on extra school transport.
- 8.14 While the 1985 Transport Act requires the council to integrate local bus services, education transport and social services transport as far as possible, the council cannot require bus companies to divert commercial bus services. The council encourages bus companies to serve schools with its local bus network, but usually school bus journeys require specific links from certain neighbourhoods to schools that bear no relationship to the commercial bus network.
- 8.15 For those not entitled to free travel, usually because they live within three miles of their local area defined school, the council offers discounted concessionary travel to all in full time education up to the age of 19. The perception that bus fares are high is a factor that discourages pupils from staying on at school and in truancy. The council's discounted fares help to tackle this issue. The availability of reduced fares is being more widely promoted to schools and schoolchildren. This policy fits in well with duties under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- 8.16 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 places new duties on the council. These include an overarching duty to assess travel needs and promote sustainable travel and the extension of rights to free transport for low-income groups. The Council is developing a Sustainable School Travel Policy to fulfil the duty to promote sustainable travel.
- 8.17 The council is planning to carry out a review of home to school transport, including the way it is procured and to identify if there are synergies with other transport the council provides.

Parking Policy

- 8.18 The relationship between encouraging public transport usage and parking availability and charging is referred to in Paragraph 2.16. In Central Milton Keynes there are over 21,000 parking spaces available to the public out of a total over 25,000 public and private spaces. Over 12,000 of these public spaces are subject to Pay and

Display. However there are also residents and employee permit schemes in operation in Central Milton Keynes, which all encourage car use.

- 8.19 Within the older district centres, the council operates 29 off-street car parks with approximately 3,000 parking spaces. With the exception of 4 car parks which have time limits imposed, there are no restrictions and all off-street car parks in the older district centres are free to users. There is also an element of on-street parking in the older district centres which is also free to users. Parking provision in district centres is reviewed on a cyclical basis.
- 8.20 The relationship between parking policy and transport mode choice is clear. The achievement of ambitious targets for bus patronage will not be achieved without a parking policy that addresses both supply and price. The availability of parking at a destination is one of the most significant determinants in whether people choose to drive to their destination. Milton Keynes has a substantial supply of public parking available either free or at significantly cheaper levels than is typically found in competing towns.
- 8.21 Although the number of public parking spaces in Central Milton Keynes is planned to increase as the city develops, the ratio of parking spaces to, for example, metres of shopping floor space, will reduce.
- 8.22 The existing Central Milton Keynes Parking Strategy was approved in 2003 and is currently under review, taking full account of the Bus Strategy and the relationship between managing the demand for car travel and encouraging transport alternatives.

9 PARTNERSHIPS FOR DELIVERY

Operator Partnership

- 9.1 Most bus services within the Borough are run by MK Metro (from February 2006 owned by Arriva plc, an international transport group). There are a number of other operators primarily providing medium/long distance services and subsidised services (see **Appendix A**). MK Metro has been positive in seeking to expand the bus market by introducing new buses and working with the council in improving services.
- 9.2 The relationship between bus operator, the council and those responsible for delivering the growth of Milton Keynes, such as Milton Keynes Partnership, will be key to ensuring that the objectives of this strategy are met.
- 9.3 Under the Transport Act 2000 there are three forms of relationship allowed between bus operators and local authorities with varying levels of control and commitment: -
- a) The Transport Act 1985 permits bus operators to decide when and where to run bus services, to set fare levels and provide the type of bus. Under this Act, which applies throughout the UK (except in London), the only intervention permitted for the council is to buy in additional services to meet unmet social need (typically early morning, evening and weekend services when there would otherwise be no commercial service). The council is also obliged to offer concessionary travel to defined groups of people and has the power to offer this to certain other specified groups.
 - b) The Transport Act 2000 introduced Statutory Quality Bus Partnerships, which allow councils to specify the types of bus that can use specific facilities like bus priority measures introduced under the partnership to help improve bus services. Such partnerships cannot exclude other buses from using facilities already in place, nor can they specify timetables, frequencies or fares. There are about five SQBP in place in the UK.
 - c) The Transport Act 2000 also introduced statutory Quality Bus Contracts. These can only be introduced with the consent of the Secretary of State for Transport; the authority must be able to show that its LTP and Bus Strategy objectives can only be achieved by such a contract; all other measures to achieve the objectives having proved unsuccessful. Under this scenario, councils can tender out some or all bus operations in its area, rather like franchising. It permits the council to set timetables, frequencies and fares. No authority has yet applied for such a contract although larger conurbations are actively considering applying.

- 9.4 The council does not, at the present time, propose to move away from the arrangements identified in (a) above. It believes that partnership working is the best way of providing the conditions for improving bus use.
- 9.5 As already noted in Paragraph 4.19, a voluntary Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) was established with MK Metro in 2007, which, while along the same lines as a Statutory QBP, is not legally enforceable. The voluntary QBP recognises that the council, Milton Keynes Partnership and MK Metro share the common objectives of:
- Creating and promoting a bus network in Milton Keynes that is a viable and attractive alternative to car use
 - Increasing the use of local bus services by choice, so helping to support a sustainable transport system that contributes to maintaining Milton Keynes as a regional centre fit for the 21st Century, enhances the quality of life for Milton Keynes residents and makes it an attractive destination for visitors
 - Ensuring public transport in Milton Keynes is developed to support and match expansion and regeneration for the area, attracting new investment, employment, education and social opportunities
- 9.6 The council and MK Metro recognise these objectives require high quality and reliable bus services that can best be delivered through partnership working with a commitment to coordinated investment and complementary initiatives.
- 9.7 Within the partnership, MK Metro will provide appropriate vehicles, customer care and attractive services whilst the local authority will secure improved promotion and capital investment through whatever means are available and to develop infrastructure. It will also continue to provide revenue support for socially necessary services and support services in the early stages of operation that should become commercial over time.
- 9.8 The partnership is managed through regular meetings with MK Metro, and will be the subject of periodic review. The partners intend to set out an annual action plan; progress reports will also be submitted annually. There are, in addition, other regular meetings with MK Metro to discuss:
- The strategic direction of the council (including encouraging MK Metro's active input into development plans and transport related investments)
 - Operational matters, for example action that could be taken to meet particular unmet need commercially and to consider likely future timetable changes.
- 9.9 The Partnership has already delivered a number of successes - the significant growth in bus patronage is referred to Chapter 2 but there has also been investment in new buses, improved infrastructure and better promotion.

9.10 This emphasis on partnership fits well with the government's proposals for a modernised national framework for bus services set out in 'Putting Passengers First'. That document sets out plans to make it easier for councils and bus companies to work together to deliver bus services that better meet the needs of passengers and potential passengers. A draft Local Transport Bill was published during Spring 2007 with a view to passing into law towards the end of 2008. If the measures suggested in the consultation paper are followed through to statute, there will be more accountability placed on the council for ensuring it plays its part in providing the right environment for ensuring better bus services are delivered.

9.11 Other operators will be able to join the Milton Keynes QBP as appropriate.

Stakeholder Partnerships

9.12 The delivery of the bus strategy involves a coordination of effort drawn from both government and non-government bodies. A Joint Transport Delivery Team (JTDT) for transport between the council and Milton Keynes Partnership was established early in 2005. This is responsible for ensuring the delivery of growth related transport schemes including, for example, bus priority schemes and early years supported bus services.

9.13 The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) has a Transport Partnership group. This comprises:

- **The Executive Board** which meets monthly and is responsible for informing strategic direction and policy development on transport matters. Specific task groups seek to provide solutions to a range of issues identified by the Executive. The existing task groups cover Cycling, Highways, Parking, Sustainable Transport, and Stations.
- **The Stakeholder Group** is a consultative body comprising transport decision makers from businesses, developers, transport providers, statutory and local representative bodies that provides key input into transport decision making including, for example, the LTP and Supplementary Planning Documents.

User Groups

9.14 Involvement of bus users is recognised as of key importance in developing the bus network. At present users are represented through the transport partnership, but it is proposed to set up regular formal meetings with bus users in conjunction with Bus Users UK and the major bus operators. A user group has already been set up to represent the users of the council's community transport service, in partnership with the community transport service provider.

9.15 The council is working with the Youth Forum and through the Milton Keynes 'Children and Young People Matter' Strategy in order to work positively with young people.

Neighbouring Authorities

9.16 The council through its wider transport strategy will continue to work with neighbouring local transport authorities (the county councils of Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire), and neighbouring local planning authorities recognising that transport networks take no account of administrative boundaries.

10 ACTIONS TO DELIVER THE BUS STRATEGY

10.1 The purpose of this chapter is to review the actions required to deliver the bus strategy. The table below shows the actions proposed together with the relevant paragraph references and the likely timescale for delivery.

10.2 The actions have been grouped as follows:

- Strategy Reviews
- Development & Growth Issues
- Partnerships
- Services (including Park & Ride and Community Transport)
- Infrastructure and Vehicles (including RTPI and Funding Bids)
- Marketing and Promotion, Fares and Ticketing
- Milton Keynes Council Revenue Spending

10.3 Three categories of timescale have been indicated:

- “by 2010/11” means that this action should be completed within the LTP2 period
- “ongoing” means that this action is current, and will continue beyond the end of the LTP2 period in 2010/11
- “post LTP2” means that this action will be completed/delivered after the end of the LTP2 period

Table 10.1 - Actions to deliver the bus strategy

	Action and related Paragraphs	Timescale
Strategy Reviews		
1	Paragraphs 2.1 and 4.13: Adopt Bus Information Strategy.	by Mar 2010
2	Paragraph 2.1: Adopt Rail Strategy.	by Mar 2010
3	Paragraph 2.32: Review Bus Strategy by July 2011 to form part of LTP3.	by Mar 2011
4	Paragraphs 3.9-3.16: Adopt Transport SPD.	by Mar 2009
5	Paragraph 5.8: Carry out review of Bus Subsidy spending to establish new (or confirm existing) “value for money” criteria.	by Mar 2009
6	Paragraph 5.29 and 5.30: Adopt Park & Ride Strategy, including identification of the optimum locations for sites in addition to those noted in Paragraph 5.29.	by June 2009
7	Paragraph 8.21: Adopt Parking Strategy.	by Mar 2009
8	Paragraph 8.16: Adopt Sustainable School Travel Strategy.	by 2010/11
9	Paragraph 8.17: Carry out review of home to school transport.	by 2010/11

Development & Growth Issues

10	Paragraphs 3.3-3.8: The council will continue to ensure that the layout of new developments incorporates innovative design reinforcing the role of buses as an alternative to car use in a way that is fully integrated with the development.	ongoing
11	Paragraphs 3.7-3.8: Explore further the possibilities for increasing the density of development of the existing grid squares.	ongoing
12	Paragraphs 3.10-3.14: The council will continue to ensure that the planning process supports improved accessibility and improved bus services with contributions to facilities that will encourage greater bus use through s106 agreements negotiated in line with the Transport SPD.	ongoing
13	Paragraphs 3.11, 3.17 and 3.18: The council will work with its partners, (including neighbouring local transport authorities, and the neighbouring local planning authorities where appropriate) through MKP and the JTDT to ensure that appropriate bus services are provided at an early stage in new developments so that the option of using the bus is well established for new residents.	ongoing

Partnerships

14	Paragraph 4.9: Establish a Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnership (BPIP) initially with MK Metro.	by Mar 2009
15	Paragraph 4.19, 9.5 and 9.10: Continue with the established Quality Bus Partnership with MK Metro, including identification of annual action plan and submission of annual progress reports.	ongoing
16	Paragraph 9.11: Identify scope for other operators to join the established Quality Bus Partnership.	by June 2009
17	Paragraph 9.8: The council will continue regular meetings with the main bus operator, MK Metro, to discuss the strategic direction of the council, including encouraging their active input into development plans and transport related investments.	ongoing
18	Paragraph 9.8: The council will continue regular meetings with the main bus operator, MK Metro, to discuss operational matters, (eg action that could be taken to meet particular unmet need commercially and to consider likely future timetable changes).	ongoing
19	Paragraph 9.14: Establish regular formal meetings with bus users in conjunction with Bus Users UK and the major bus operators.	by June 2009
20	Paragraphs 7.2, 7.4 and 9.16: Develop the existing relationships with neighbouring authorities with a view to providing consistency in transport strategy in the region.	Ongoing

Services (including Park & Ride and Community Transport)

21	Paragraph 4.14: Introduce simplified evening and Sunday network with routes in line with those running during Monday to Saturday daytime.	by Mar 2010
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MILTON KEYNES BUS STRATEGY (DECEMBER 2008)

22	Paragraph 4.14: Continue policy of having, as far as possible, no more than four major timetable changes a year.	ongoing
23	Paragraph 4.15: Encourage the provision of more direct (ie less circuitous) routes where appropriate.	ongoing
24	Paragraph 6.6: Investigate possibilities and funding requirement for delivery of a direct link from Newport Pagnell via Coachway to Milton Keynes General Hospital.	by Oct 2009
25	Paragraph 5.5 and 5.6: Continue to subsidise services to meet the needs identified in Paragraph 5.5.	ongoing
26	Paragraph 5.6, 7.2 and 7.4: Continue to work with the neighbouring local transport authorities to maintain those cross boundary services that form the major provision in the rural areas of the Borough.	ongoing
27	Paragraph 5.7: Investigate possibilities and funding requirement for increasing frequencies in the early morning and early to mid-evening to give better connections into commuter train services.	by Oct 2009
28	Paragraph 5.25: Identify opportunities for bespoke bus services, with third party funding, to employment sites through the travel plan process	ongoing
29	Paragraph 5.28: Deliver new Park & Ride site and service at Coachway/J14	by Dec 2009
30	Paragraph 5.29: Deliver new Park & Ride site and service as part of the Denbigh Stadium development.	by 2010/11
31	Paragraph 5.29: Deliver new Park & Ride sites and services as identified in the Transport SPD (at Stony Stratford/Old Stratford (possibly a combined facility with Northamptonshire County Council) and to the West).	ongoing
32	Paragraph 6.4: Work in partnership with the major bus operators to identify and deliver the core (level 1) urban network, as well those routes that would be in level 2 or 3.	by 2010/11 ongoing
33	Paragraph 6.10: Investigate possibilities for making better use of services that already use Silbury and Avebury Boulevards, including the placing of new stops on these roads.	by Oct 2009
34	Paragraph 6.10: Investigate possibilities and funding requirement for extending services that terminate in Central Milton Keynes to provide links to Silbury and Avebury Boulevards.	by Oct 2009
35	Paragraph 7.5: Identify locations/journeys where CT may be able to meet transport and accessibility needs in the rural areas (where conventional bus services are difficult to justify, and if CT would offer better value for money)	by 2010/11 ongoing
36	Paragraph 7.4: Investigate possibilities and funding requirement for increasing frequencies on the rural spines (existing services 1, 1B, 1C, 17/17A/17B and 33) to a minimum hourly frequency.	by 2010/11 ongoing
37	Paragraph 7.4: Investigate possibilities and funding requirement for the provision of faster peak time journeys from the north of the borough (Olney/Lavendon) to Central Milton Keynes.	by Mar 2010

MILTON KEYNES BUS STRATEGY (DECEMBER 2008)

38	Paragraph 8.10: Identify synergies between CT and school transport, particularly for those with Special Educational Needs	by 2010/11
39	Para 8.10: Identify synergies between CT and the transport requirements of the local NHS and Primary Care Trusts.	by 2010/11

Infrastructure and Vehicles (including RTPI and Funding Bids)

40	Paragraphs 4.11, 4.12, 5.15-5.18: Deliver RTPI system	by Jun 2009
41	Paragraph 4.17, 5.11 and 5.13: Continue roll out of QBI infrastructure improvements to complete routes 4, 5, 8 and the northern part of route 7.	by 2010/11
42	Paragraph 5.13: Continue investment to ensure that by 1 January 2016 all bus stops and waiting facilities will be compatible with low floor buses.	post LTP2
43	Paragraph 4.18: By partnership working encourage the early introduction of DDA compliant buses on commercial services.	post LTP2
44	Paragraph 4.18: By partnership working with operators, encourage the use of vehicles which go beyond the currently accepted DDA compliant standard.	ongoing
45	Para 4.18: Change the specification of contracted bus services to achieve the early introduction of DDA compliant buses.	by 2012/13
46	Paragraph 4.18: Continue investment in infrastructure improvements to assist buses and improve passenger facilities, by taking advantage of bidding opportunities (eg GAF/CIF), and LTP Capital Programme, to obtain funding.	ongoing
47	Paragraph 5.18: The council will work with the bus operators and other partners to extend the RTPI system with additional displays at bus stops and in other locations (eg workplaces, rail stations, the hospitals etc) and to improve the route coverage.	ongoing
48	Paragraph 5.32 & 6.20: Deliver upgrade of Coachway facilities.	by Dec 2009
49	Paragraph 6.17: Secure funding and deliver interchange improvements ("super stops) at Midsummer Boulevard/Lower Ninth Street and the three other identified locations in CMK.	by 2010/11
50	Paragraph 6.18: Deliver a multi-modal interchange at Milton Keynes Central Rail Station.	by 2010/11
51	Paragraph 6.20: Secure funding and deliver interchange improvements at Bletchley Bus Station.	ongoing
52	Paragraph 6.21: Secure funding and deliver improved bus/rail interchange at Bletchley and Wolverton stations.	post LTP2
53	Paragraph 6.21: Secure funding and deliver improved facilities for buses and bus users at Kingston Centre, Westcroft Centre, Stony Stratford town centre and Wolverton town centre.	ongoing post LTP2

Marketing and Promotion, Fares and Ticketing

54	Paragraphs 4.13 and 5.10: Deliver annual marketing and promotion plan to implement Bus Information Strategy, including review of the council's printed timetable information, roadside publicity and information on the web.	by Mar 2009 ongoing
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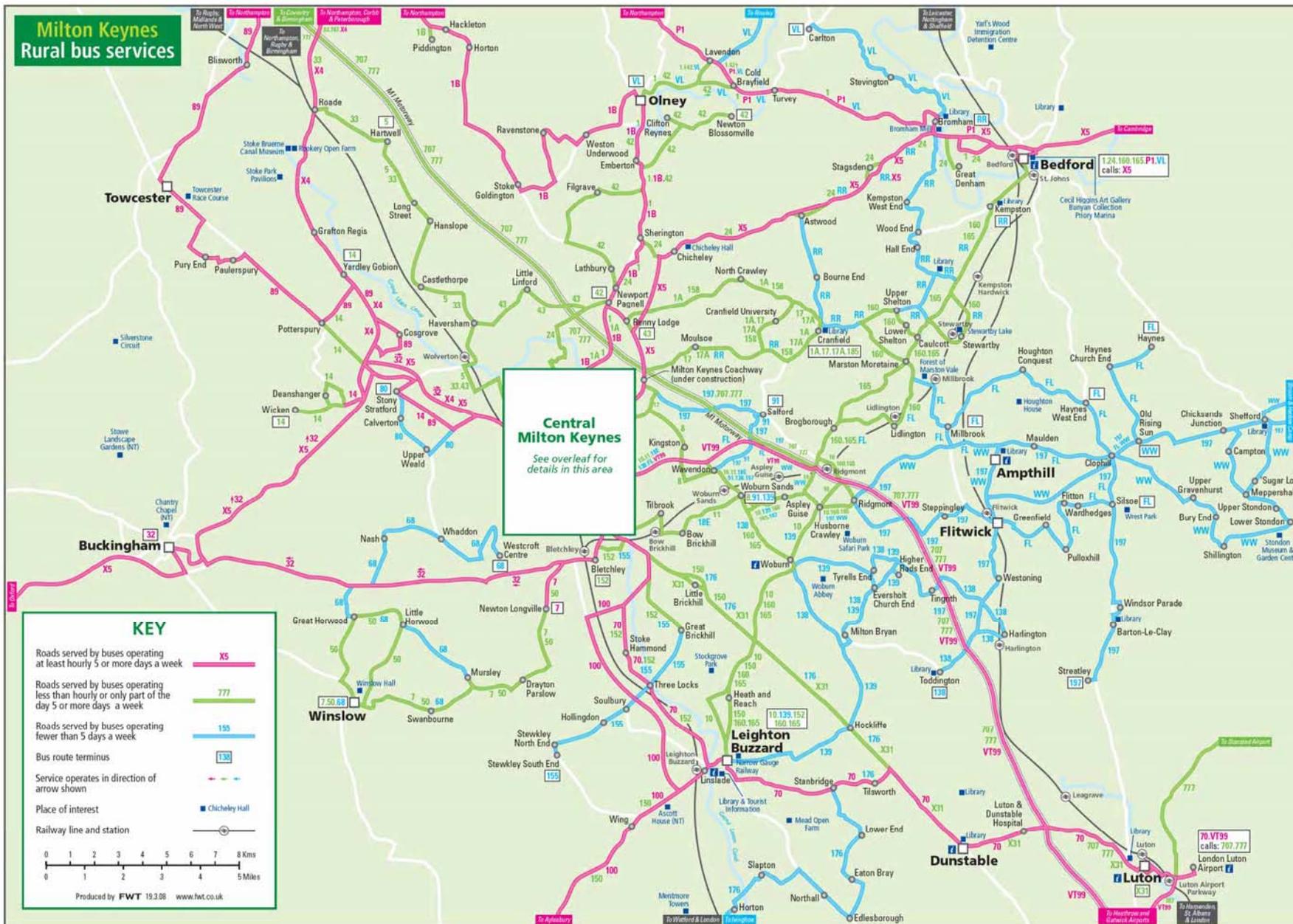
MILTON KEYNES BUS STRATEGY (DECEMBER 2008)

55	Paragraph 5.12: Continue to work with partners to the raise the profile of the Discover Milton Keynes shop as an outlet for public transport information.	ongoing
56	Paragraph 5.13: Continue work through the QBP to deliver the “roadside publicity package”, including named stops and improved timetable displays.	ongoing
57	Paragraph 5.19: Continue to provide publicity for bus services including printed timetable information, roadside publicity and information on the web.	ongoing
58	Paragraph 5.20: The council will work with bus operators to speed up the introduction of ITSO compliant ticket machines fitted with smart-card readers.	by 2010/11
59	Paragraph 5.21: The council will work with bus operators and employers to develop off-bus ticketing mechanisms, via retail outlets, on-street machines, internet and mobile phone, and salary sacrifice schemes.	by 2010/11 post LTP2
60	Paragraph 5.22: The council will work with bus operators to investigate the requirement for, and to develop a greater range of multi-journey tickets.	by Dec 2009
61	Paragraph 5.22: The council will work with bus operators to investigate the requirement for, and to develop, a multi-operator ticket.	by Dec 2009
62	Paragraph 5.22: The council will work with bus and rail operators to improve the promotion of PlusBus bus/rail tickets.	Ongoing
63	Paragraph 6.11: The council will work with bus and rail operators, and other partners, to improve the promotion of the existing high-frequency bus services linking Milton Keynes Central Station to Campbell Park.	by 2010/11 ongoing
64	Paragraph 8.1: Continue statutory Concessionary Fares scheme.	ongoing
65	Paragraph 8.2: positively promote the concessionary flat fare of 35p for any journey within the borough with no time restriction for those in full time education up to the age of 19.	ongoing

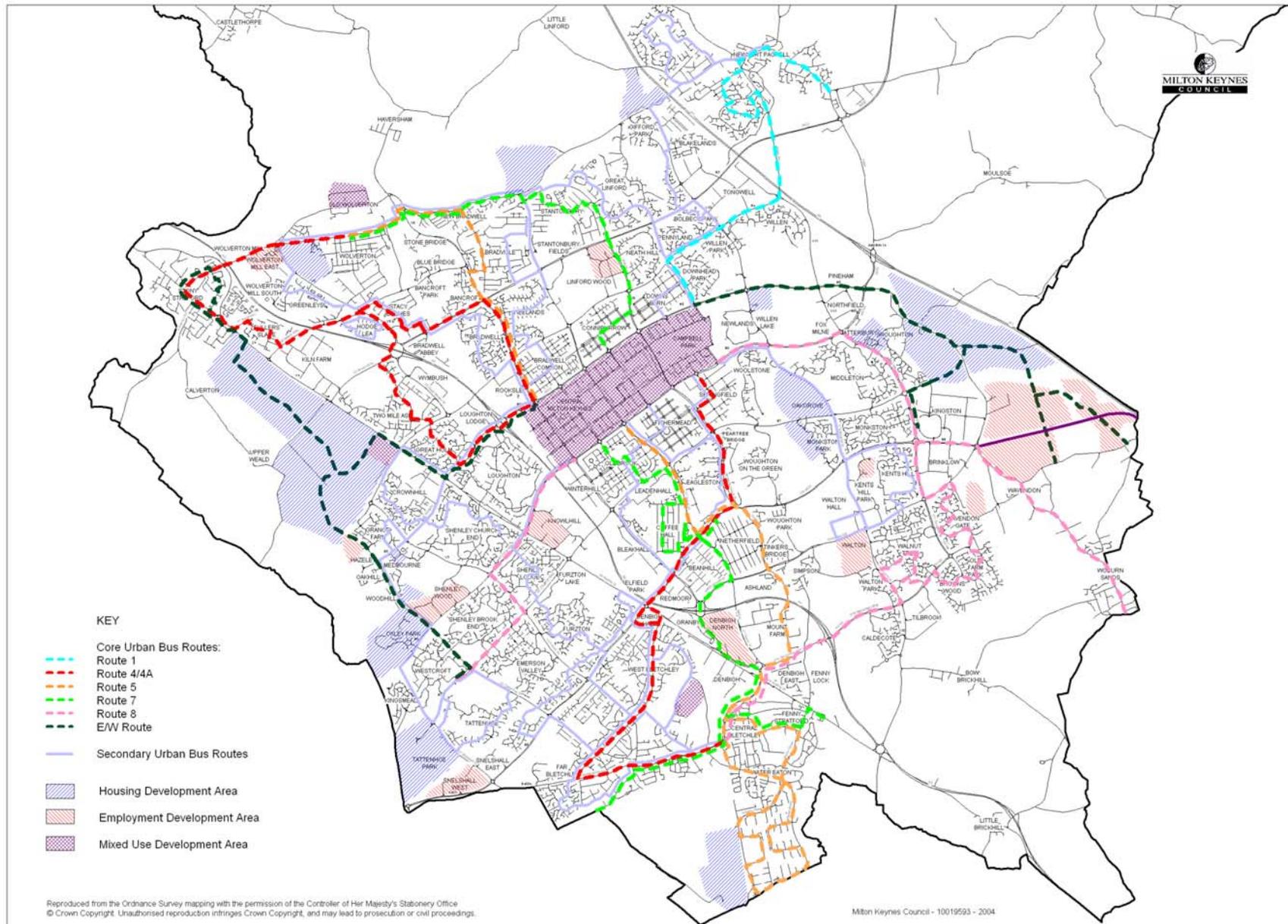
Milton Keynes Council Revenue Spending

66	<p>Public Transport: Revenue expenditure of the order of £5.5 million, largely funded from parking revenue, will continue to be used each year to support bus services as required. The main areas of expenditure are (per year):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o contracted local bus services - £2 million o bus promotion and publicity - £150,000 o concessionary travel - £2.5 million o community transport - £810,000 	ongoing
67	<p>Home to School Transport: Revenue expenditure of approximately £3.5 million per year.</p>	ongoing

Map 2 - existing bus services in Milton Keynes (Rural)



Map 3 - Core (level 1) and Secondary (level 2 or 3) bus services and principal development areas
 (This is indicative only and is not intended to show all current bus services in Milton Keynes)



APPENDIX A - Bus Services in Milton Keynes (November 2008)

Service	Operator		Days	Comment/Notes
City Services				
1/1B/1C	MK/RR/ZS	CMK - Newport Pagnell	D	a
2/2E	MK/ZS/RR	Wolverton (2E) - CMK - Newport Pagnell	D	b
2A	MK/ZS	Wolverton - CMK	M-S	D
3E	MK/ZS/RR	Wolverton - CMK - Shenley Church End - Westcroft	D	Mon-Sat evg/ Sundays (e)
4/4A/4E	MK	Wolverton - Stony Stratford - CMK - Bletchley	D	c
5/5E	MK	Wolverton - CMK - Bletchley - Lakes Estate	D	c
6/6A	MK/RL	Bletchley - CMK - Bradville	M-S	d
7/7A/7E	MK	Wolverton - CMK - Oldbrook - Hospital - Bletchley	M-S	A
8/8E	MK	Westcroft - CMK - Kingston - Bletchley/Woburn Sands	D	g
9/9A	MK	Newport Pagnell - CMK - Bletchley	M-S	d
11	MK	CMK - Monkston - Woburn Sands - Bletchley	M-S	e
13	MK	Stony Stratford - CMK - Lakes Estate	M-S	early morning journeys on 5 & 7 (e)
15	MK	Bletchley - Tattenhoe - Westcroft	M-S	off peak only (e)
16	MK	Bletchley - Emerson Valley - Westcroft	M-S	e
18	MK	CMK - Woughton on the Green - Bletchley	M-S	e
18E	MK	CMK - Kingston - Woburn Sands - Bletchley	D	Mon-Sat evg/ Sundays (e)
20/21	MK/GP	Westcroft - CMK - Walnut Tree (20)	M-S	f
22/22A	MK	Kents Hill - CMK - Tattenhoe	M-S	e
26E	MK/ZS	Bletchley - CMK - Open University - Kingston	D	Mon-Sat evg/ Sundays (e)
29/39	MK	Bletchley - Whaddon Way - Hospital - Oldbrook - Central Milton Keynes	M-S	d
30/31	MK	Bletchley - Stony Stratford - Newport Pagnell	M-F	peaks only (e)
43	MK	Newport Pagnell - Haversham - Wolverton - Blue Bridge	M-F	e
200	MK	CMK - Northfield	D	e
Interurban Services				
32	MK	Buckingham - CMK - Bletchley - Buckingham	M-S	
33	MK	CMK - Wolverton - Hanslope - Roade - Northampton	M-S	i
70	AV	CMK - Bletchley - Leighton Buzzard - Dunstable - Luton - Luton Airport	M-S	
89	SC	CMK - Towcester - Northampton	M-S	h
100	AV	CMK - Wing - Aylesbury	M-S	
150	AV	CMK - Bletchley - Leighton Buzzard - Aylesbury	D	
160/165	SC	Bedford - Marston Moretaine - Woburn Sands - Leighton Buzzard	M-S	
Pluto P1	SC	Bedford - Bromham - Lavendon - Northampton	D	
VT99	SC	CMK - Kingston - Luton - Luton Airport	D	
X4	SC	CMK - Northampton - Wellingborough - Kettering - Corby - Peterborough	D	
X5	SC	Oxford - Bicester - Buckingham - CMK - Bedford - St Neots - Cambridge	D	
X31	CB	CMK - Bletchley - Dunstable - Luton	M-S	j

APPENDIX A - Bus Services in Milton Keynes (November 2008)

Service	Operator		Days	Comment/Notes
Rural Services				
1/1C	MK/RR	CMK - Newport Pagnell - Olney - Lavendon - Bedford	D	a
1B	MK	CMK - Newport Pagnell - Olney - Northampton	M-S	a
10/10A	GP	CMK - Woburn Sands - Woburn - Leighton Buzzard	M-S	k
14	MK	CMK - Stony Stratford - Deanshanger	M-S	a
17	ZS	CMK - Kingston - Cranfield	M-S	e
17A/17B	MK/ZS	CMK - Newport Pagnell - Cranfield	M-S	b
42	MK	Newport Pagnell or Lavendon - Olney - Newton Blossomville	M-F	e
50	LT	CMK - Winslow - The Horwoods	M-S	off peak only (l)
Shopping/School Services				
68	WI	Winslow - Little Horwood - Westcroft	Th	Shopping trip
80	MK	Stony Stratford - CMK	TF	Shopping trip (e)
91	LC	Salford - Wavendon - Woburn Sands	T	Shopping trip
138	LC	Toddington - Woburn Sands - CMK	T	Shopping trip
139	LC	Woburn Sands - Woburn - Leighton Buzzard	T	Shopping trip
152	RK	Newton Longville - Westcroft - Whaddon - Buckingham	M	Shopping trip
162	??	Bletchley - Leighton Buzzard - Edlesborough	M-S	Shopping trips (l)
197	GP	Streatley - Flitwick - Woburn Sands - Wavendon	S	Shopping trip
610	AV	Woburn Sands - Woburn - Leighton Buzzard - Cedars School	Sch	
639	MK	Hanslope - Haversham - Great Holm - Woughton Campus	Sch	
Flittabus FL2	FL	Haynes - Marston Moretaine - CMK	2T	Shopping trip
Flittabus FL3	FL	Haynes - Clophill - Ampthill - CMK	3T	Shopping trip
Flittabus FL4	FL	Silsoe - Flitwick - Marston Moretaine - CMK	4T	Shopping trip
Road Runner	RR	Kempston - Marston Moretaine - CMK	1+3T	Shopping trip
Road Runner	RR	Kempston - Bromham - Cranfield - CMK	2+4T	Shopping trip
Villager	VB	Lavendon - Olney - CMK	T	Shopping trip
Villager	VB	Lavendon - Northampton	W	Shopping trip
Villager	VB	Sharnbrook - Odell - Lavendon - Olney	Th	Shopping trip
Villager	VB	Carlton - Stevington - Turvey - Lavendon - Olney	Th	Shopping trip
Whitbread	WW	Stondon - Henlow Camp - Clifton - Broom - CMK	5T	Shopping trip
Whitbread	WW	Shefford - Meppershall - Stondon - Shillington - CMK	3T	Shopping trip

APPENDIX A - Bus Services in Milton Keynes (November 2008)

Notes:

- a - partly subsidised by Milton Keynes Council: Monday to Saturday evenings and Sundays* (all day)
- b - partly subsidised by Milton Keynes Council: Monday to Friday evenings, Saturdays (all day) and Sundays* (all day)
- c - partly subsidised by Milton Keynes Council: Monday to Sunday evenings
- d - partly subsidised by Milton Keynes Council: Saturdays (all day)
- e - wholly subsidised by Milton Keynes Council
- f - partly subsidised by Milton Keynes Council
- g - service to Woburn Sands is developer funded
- h - wholly or partly subsidised by Northamptonshire CC
- i - wholly or partly subsidised by Milton Keynes Council and Northamptonshire CC
- j - diversion via Little Brickhill is subsidised by Milton Keynes Council
- k - wholly or partly subsidised by Bedfordshire CC
- l - wholly or partly subsidised by Buckinghamshire CC

*- if a Sunday service operates

Bus Operators:

?? -

AV - Arriva The Shires

CB - Centrebus

FL - Flittabus

GP - Grant Palmer

LC - Litchfield Car Services

LT - Langston & Tasker

MK - MK Metro

RK - Red Kite

RL - Red Line

RR - Red Rose

SC - Stagecoach

VB - Villager

WI - Winslow & District

Community Bus

WW - Whitbread Wanderbus

ZS - Z & S

**APPENDIX B Milton Keynes Rural Parishes and Current Bus Services
(November 2008)**

Parish	Pop (2008 est)	Current Bus Services:	Bedford	Central Milton Keynes	Dunstable	Luton	Northampton	Bletchley	Newport Pagnell	Olney	Sunday Service
Astwood	180	1C	a	a					a		N
Bow Brickhill	580	11, 18, 18E		b				b			Y
Calverton	150	80		d							N
Castlethorpe	1,030	33		a			a				Y*
Chicheley	120	1C	a	a					a		N
Clifton Reynes	170	42							c	c	N
Cold Brayfield	80	1, P1	a	b			a		a	a	Y
Emberton	630	1, 1B, 42	e	a			a		a	a	Y
Gayhurst	130	NO SERVICE									N
Hanslope	2,270	33		a			a				Y*
Hardmead	80	1C	a	a					a		N
Haversham/Lt Linford	950	33, 43		a			a		b		Y*
Lathbury	150	42							b	b	N
Lavendon	1,190	1, 42, P1	a	a			a		a	a	Y
Little Brickhill	400	X31		a	a	a		a			N
Moulsoe	320	17, 17A		a							N
Newton Blossomville	200	42							b	b	N
North Crawley	710	17B		a					a		N
Olney	6,360	1, 1B, 42	a	a			a		a		Y
Ravenstone	210	1B		a			a		a		N
Sherington	960	1, 1B, 1C	a	a			a		a		N
Stoke Goldington	580	1B		a			a		a		N
Tyringham & Filgrave	180	42							b	b	N
Warrington	50	P1	a				a				Y
Weston Underwood	230	1B		a			a		a		N

**APPENDIX B Milton Keynes Rural Parishes and Current Bus Services
(November 2008)**

Notes:

* = to CMK only

a = Monday to Saturday - timings for journey to work and shopping

b = Monday to Saturday shopping only

c = Monday to Friday shopping only

d = Tuesday and Friday shopping only

e = Sundays only

APPENDIX C - Consultation Responses: Short Summary

Many of the comments received were about the operational details of specific services rather than more strategic comments on the direction of the Bus Strategy. Correspondence from those whose comments were solely of an operational nature has been dealt with by the Passenger Transport Operations team.

The table below sets out a summary of the more strategic comments received. A full list, together with the Council's response and an indication of which parts of the Bus Strategy that have been changed as a result of these comments is shown at **Appendix D**.

The comments have been grouped together by main subject:

Services (102 Comments):

○ Rural issues	15
○ Issue of Grid roads vs estates	14
○ Improve connections to rail services esp for commuters	8
○ Improve link to Coachway	7
○ Bus journey times are too long	5
○ Improve evening and early morning services (urban)	5
○ Core routes do not cover all of MK	4
○ Issue of radial vs orbital routes	5
○ Improve links to employment areas	3
○ Concern that some frequencies are to be reduced	2
○ Improve inter-urban links	2
○ Orbital bus service required	2
○ Poor links to the OU	2
○ Poor services	2
○ Services have lagged behind development	2
○ Why no buses along Stony Stratford High Street?	2
○ Other	22

Promotion and RTPI (44 comments)

○ Improve information	11
○ Introduce RTPI	12
○ Image of bus travel needs to change	4
○ Improve information on delays	4
○ Improve bus information at Bletchley Stn	2
○ Roadside publicity should be improved	2
○ Other	9

CMK Specific Issues (15 comments)

○ Recent development in CMK (eg MidsummerPlace) is anti-bus	4
○ Bus services on Avebury/Silbury Blvds are poor	4
○ Buses need good access to the heart of the city	3
○ New Sainsbury's has poor bus access	2
○ Introduce a city centre loop service	2

Fares & Ticketing (27 Comments)

○ Develop off bus ticketing	7
○ Develop integrated ticketing	7

- Fares are too expensive 4
- Extend concessionary fares to other groups (eg carers, young people) 3
- Introduce Free travel in CMK 2
- Other 4

Reliability (19 Comments)

- These highlight the fact that reliability is vital and cover the need to resolve the problem of early running

Vehicles (19 comments)

- Improve quality of vehicles 12
- Other 7

Stops & Shelters (18 comments)

- Improve shelters, and provide more 6
- Bus stops in laybys 4
- Other 8

Customer Care (11 Comments)

- Need for operators to improve customer care 8
- Issues of anti-social behaviour on buses. 3

Interchanges (11 Comments)

- These cover the need to improve interchanges and terminals, and the need to consider the aesthetic impact of changes eg at Station Square 11

Park & Ride (8 comments)

- These cover the need to develop Park & Ride services and a Park & Ride Strategy

Other (19 comments)

- Consider Light Rail/Trolley Buses 4
- MKC should lobby for re-regulation 4
- Travel Plans 4
- Bus User Group 3
- Bus priority 2
- Poor facilities for tourist coaches 1
- Community Transport 1

Strategy - comment/correction (106 comments)

- This includes requests for clarification, text corrections, disagreements with statements in the strategy, identification of points that need more explanation

Strategy - direction (85 comments)

- This includes suggestions that the strategy is not ambitious enough and that it should relate more closely to other strategies and planning policy documents, also comments disagreeing with current planning policy in relation to city streets etc.

APPENDIX D - Consultation Responses

Many of the comments received were about the operational details of specific services rather than more strategic comments on the direction of the Bus Strategy. Correspondence from those whose comments were solely of an operational nature has been dealt with by the Passenger Transport Operations team.

The table below sets out a summary of the more strategic comments received, together with the Council's response and an indication of which parts of the Bus Strategy that have been changed as a result of these comments.

No.	Representations	Council Reponse
Respondent MKC-1 (Cllr Philip Ayles, Castlethorpe Parish Council)		
1.	Reliability. There are constant complaints about buses not keeping to the timetables or just not showing up. The importance of reliability in the rural parishes cannot be overstated; it is a strategic issue for the villages. In the main city area with frequent services, a bus not arriving means a short delay until the next service. For important appointments, an earlier bus can be taken. In the rural areas, the impact on customers of a failed service is an order of magnitude higher than in the urban areas where another bus will come along shortly. In the rural areas, a bus not arriving has extremely severe consequences and it is impractical to get a bus an hour and a half earlier. However, the Council pleads impotence on the question of reliability...	We accept that reliability is a key issue and to secure improvements in this area, the Council intends to establish a Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnership with MK Metro (see paragraphs 4.9 and Action Number 14). This recognises the fact that no single organisation is responsible for all the factors that determine the quality and reliability of bus services.
2.	...It is essential that the Council gains some control over the service provider, MK Metro, through a proper contract which imposes penalty claw-backs of subsidies in the event of non-provision of service.	It is only possible to establish a contract where a service is subsidised. The existing Conditions of Contract for Local Bus Services do include penalty clauses (see also 13 below).
3.	The last return service from the City is at 1730. This is unsuitable for most workers in the City Centre, for commuters from CMK railway station and for residents wishing to use public transport to access evening entertainment.	The Council accepts the need to improve evening bus services across the borough, to improve links to employment sites and to improve connections at Milton Keynes Central Station but, this will have to be subject to the availability of funding (see paragraphs 5.6 and 5.7 and Action Numbers 25 and 27). [Additional text added - see paragraph 5.7]
4.	The lack of a through service to the hospital discriminates against older residents who may not have access to a car. It means older, ill people standing waiting for a connection.	Journeys from Hanslope/Castlethorpe to the hospital are possible by connection in CMK - it is not possible to provide through journeys from every potential origin.
5.	A lesser point is that the turnaround time at Wolverton is unhelpful with the time between an arriving bus and its return either being 45 minutes (too short) or 2 hours 15 minutes (too long).	See point (10) below, which, if delivered, might improve this situation.
6.	A large number of respondents to the Castlethorpe Parish Plan survey have requested a bus service to Stony Stratford, a traditional local centre.	Journeys from Hanslope/Castlethorpe to Stony Stratford are possible by connection in Wolverton - it is not possible to provide through journeys from every potential origin to every potential destination.

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7.	MK Council could consider the reduction of some of the through services to Northampton. While some residents use this, the greater demand is for services to Milton Keynes.	Service 33 is partly subsidised by both Milton Keynes Council and Northamptonshire County Council - any change to the timetable would have to be a joint decision by both authorities and the bus operator.
8.	Much has been made of providing 'real-time information' to passengers in Milton Keynes - naturally excluding the rural areas. It might be considered a better use of money to provide a good basic service rather than improved information that smacks of gimmickry.	The Council believes that the introduction of the real time system will bring benefits to bus services across the whole borough. Provision of "at-stop" displays will be concentrated where bus patronage is greatest (ie in the urban area).
9.	The "subsidy allowance" should be reviewed especially for services to rural parishes. This has not been reviewed for several years and in any case discriminates against rural residents.	There is no "subsidy allowance" as such - there is a value for money criteria which is applied flexibly and is currently under review (see paragraph 5.8 and Action Number 5).
10.	[The current poor rural bus services result in] social deprivation for the young, the older, ill and less well off people in our village. It is unjust and intolerable and must be remedied in the new transport strategy	The Council recognises that rural bus services need to be improved and intends to investigate the possibilities and funding requirement for increasing frequencies on the main rural services (existing services 1, 1B, 1C, 17/17A/17B and 33) to a minimum hourly frequency (see paragraph 7.4 and Action Number 36).
11.	The Bus Strategy [has] one page related to Rural Bus services out of the total of 66 and one phrase in the one sentence that offers a possible improvement to our services; "Consideration will be given to increasing frequencies on these spines to a minimum hourly frequency ..." - this [is not] an adequate improvement to our situation; we need services for commuters and in the evening, through services to the hospital and there is a wish by residents for a connection to Stony Stratford.	See points (3), (4), (5), (6) and (9) above - any improvements will have to be subject to the availability of funding.
12.	Breakdowns should be categorised in importance by the time between services and, where there is a large gap, services should be withdrawn elsewhere to provide the rural service.	This is a matter for the bus operator - the Council is not able to dictate how the bus operators deal with these issues.
13.	There should be a system of incentives and sanctions with the provider to ensure they provide a basic service - and all we get in the village is a basic service. Contractors should be providing a report to the council on their quality of service so that there is a report of x% service failures per route, y% service within 10 minutes of schedule. Perhaps also a figure of number of days impacted by more than one service failure per route. Penalties should not be linked to just the one route - any penalty should accrue to the maximum value of the subsidy value for all routes. There should be incentives as well - extra payments if they exceed say a 97% service level on a subsidised route.	The existing Conditions of Contract for Local Bus Services do include penalty clauses. The review of bus subsidy spending will also consider the potential for changing the Conditions of Contract in relation to penalty and incentive payments (see paragraph 5.8 and Action Number 5 on page 41).

Respondent MKC-2 (Cllr John Bint, MKC)

14.	The concept of bus patronage is not defined - is this total passenger journeys, or the number of people who may have used a bus during the year? The growth is not explained within the context of the growing population of Milton Keynes: how much of the increase is simply because Milton Keynes has grown over the period shown?	See revised/new paragraphs 2.6 and 2.7 The relationship of bus patronage to age, demographic and employment statistics is not described because this information is not available.
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	The relationship to the age, demographic and employment statistics is not described: perhaps some part of the claimed increase in bus usage is because of Milton Keynes's increasing levels of unemployment over the last couple of years.	
15.	A graph of the changing percentage of people using a bus, and the changing amount of bus journeys as a percentage of total journeys, would have been helpful. If the omission of this helpful information is accidental, it raises questions about the authors. If it's deliberate, it raises different questions.	See new paragraph 2.8 converting annual bus patronage into a figure of average number of bus trips per person based on the population of MK. There is no information on the "percentage of people using a bus" and no information available on the "total number of journeys" other than that available in the 2001 census in relation to journeys to work.
16.	There is no discussion of how national trends of generally falling bus usage in cities of this size might apply to our situation.	The key point is that increased bus patronage is the most desirable outcome. If bus patronage is rising in MK it should be possible to increase bus patronage everywhere else.
17.	There is no discussion of the reported increase in people choosing to use a bus when they have a car available to them. Clearly this trend needs to be encouraged, which in part will involve finding out what changes (if any) are needed to encourage the same behaviour from people not yet using buses by choice.	This information is not available - while there is anecdotal evidence of modal shift, it is not quantifiable. In the absence of comprehensive survey data, experience from MK and elsewhere suggests that improvements of the sort proposed in the Bus Strategy contribute to increasing bus patronage and encouraging modal shift.
18.	[There is no] mention of the deliberate and explicit policy decision that MK would be (and has been) created with widely dispersed retail, employment and leisure destinations. As a result of this, it often requires a multi-destination journey to fully meet a family's shopping and recreation needs, with a small amount of time at each of many places, and the itinerary constantly being modified depending on the outcome at each previous point. Every family's needs are different. This kind of highly personalised, multi-point, modifiable itinerary is completely unsuited to large vehicles and a timetabled service.	Paragraph 2.35 notes that "Travel within Milton Keynes is more dispersed than in many other British cities and has a multitude of cross-city movements. This dispersed nature of trips is not so easily served by conventional bus services and can result in longer routes than necessary therefore limiting the ability to compete with car journeys". The issue of "demand responsive" services is covered in new paragraph 6.7.
19.	There is no discussion about whether users would prefer faster services along grid-roads that are marginally less convenient to catch, or slower services that are more convenient to catch because they wend their way through estates.	The strategy acknowledges (Paragraph 2.34) that the mix of running on grid roads and estate roads makes the services less attractive (slower) than they would otherwise be. However this pattern of operation is delivering increased bus patronage. There might, as patronage increases, be the opportunity for a mix of fast and slow buses along the same general corridor, and this might be a natural development of the three level approach (see new paragraphs 6.5) In addition, we have to work within the current legislative framework which means that we are unable to impose a "grid-roads" only policy on the bus operators; also such a move would reduce the overall accessibility of the bus network.
20.	One obvious group of potential bus passengers is the group of people who currently drive to the railway station, incurring car-parking fees and vehicle running costs for a vehicle that sits idle all day, every day. There is no mention of these people and what kind of services might attract their patronage.	New paragraph 5.7 and Action 27 have been added dealing with the need to improve connections for rail commuters.

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Respondent MKC-3 (Neil Sainsbury, Principal Urban Designer, MKC)

21.	<p>In order to achieve the first key element (para 1.2) <i>to develop a network of fast, frequent, high quality cross city core routes</i>, from an urban design point of view, I am very interested in the opportunity new growth via increased densities along core routes affords. Densities in MK are currently far too low to sustain and provide this above key element. This issue of increased densities has fortunately been picked up on particularly via para 3.7 and 3.8 and is extremely relevant to achieving the first key element.</p> <p>New development within existing estates is politically sensitive so how seriously will this get looked at?</p> <p>Is the Council willing to concede that some form of densification along core routes is required in order to achieve the above key element?</p>	See paragraphs 3.7 and 3.8, this issue is also covered in the Local Plan.
22.	Para 1.3 - An additional challenge is: Low density city with dispersed nature of destinations	Noted - this point is picked up in Paragraph 2.35
23.	Para 2.28 - it should be added that bus stops along grid roads are often poorly overlooked making them feel less safe.	Included in revised Paragraph 2.34.
24.	Para 6.3 - Are the core routes intended to stop along the way to CMK - I am particularly referring to the East-West route?	Map 3 indicates the current core routes - it is expected that these will continue to serve all stops on the line of route. In the case of East-West Bus the few intermediate stops between the expansion areas and CMK will not be served because to do so would abstract from other commercial bus services.
25.	Pg 42 Para 10 - it could be added that to ensure innovative design takes place a key design feature is that pedestrian routes to bus stops (particularly where the latter occur on grid roads) are as direct and attractive as possible and are always overlooked by adjacent development so they feel safe as possible	This point is partly covered in Paragraph 4.16
26.	Pg 42 Para 11 - I would be curious to know who is taking this forward in an 'ongoing' role under the 'Timescale' heading	Noted - this needs to feed into the Council's planning policy.

Respondent MKC-4 (Chris Jarman, Passenger Transport Development Officer, MKC)

27.	<p>Table 6.1 should detail aspirations for evening and weekend service levels: I would suggest that the following could be suitable for the core routes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start time 0600 Mon-Sat, 0830 on a Sunday possibly. • Finish time midnight. • Ten minute during daytime as an aspiration. In reality this could be only in the peak with 15mins outside. • Half hourly between 2100 and midnight M-Sat 	Noted - included in revised Table 6.1
28.	<p>Park & Ride (Para 5.14 - 5.17):</p> <p>There no specific figures on the size of sites given in the Bus Strategy. It might be an idea to include something like this:</p>	Noted - the section on Park & Ride has been revised - see paragraphs 5.27 - 5.30

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	<p>Experts suggest that Park and Ride is seen as being viable at around the 500-650 space level, but if there are other uses on the site, (eg Coachway), more spaces would be required.</p>	
<p>Respondent MKC-5 (Bob Wilson, Development Plans Manager, MKC)</p>		
<p>29.</p>	<p>General Comments: The draft Bus Strategy comprehensively deals with the relevant issues and is well written with clear analysis, objectives, evaluation and recommendations. The principal objectives of the Bus Strategy - especially that to encourage a modal shift from car to bus use - are fully supported. It is accepted that the current local services need improvement and it is important to bring existing users with this strategy as well as encourage more users in the future. The report has many ambitious objectives, some which may not be possible to achieve with limited resources and within the time frame proposed. It is, nevertheless, good to continue to address modal shift and the more ambitious the objectives the better the likelihood of success. A good report which deserves support.</p>	<p>Positive comment.</p>
<p>30.</p>	<p>Para 1.3 - this should include a reference to the Core Strategy on the second bullet</p>	<p>See revised paragraph 1.3</p>
<p>31.</p>	<p>Para 2.6 - refers to the NAO/AC report 'Delivery Chain Analysis for Bus Services in England', this could be picked up again in para 2.14 if the report offers ways of overcoming poor reliability with bus services.</p>	<p>Noted, however para 2.9 already includes the statement "recommendations of this report have been considered in forming this strategy".</p>
<p>32.</p>	<p>Para 2.7 - It would be useful to add a reference to density of development as a contributing factor in supporting a bus service and draw out the differences between urban densities in the named towns and cities and those found in Milton Keynes.</p>	<p>See revised paragraph 2.10.</p>
<p>33.</p>	<p>The poor quality of service needs emphasising, do we have our own data? Perceptions are real and we should not hide from the fact that the service underperforms from what is required. Buses are unreliable and do not present a pleasant experience on all routes. We must get this right above all other considerations. There is no point trying to roll out more services if the ones we have are poor. When admitting the failings we should point to the successes to highlight all is not bad.</p>	<p>This issue is dealt with in Para 2.17</p>
<p>34.</p>	<p>Para 2.8 - in the first sentence replace 'the longer term growth period to 2031' with 'the Core Strategy which sets the spatial planning framework up to 2026'.</p>	<p>See revised paragraph 2.11.</p>
<p>35.</p>	<p>Para 2.9 - this should be expanded; we should say why it is impractical and unaffordable. (I sent a report to David Lawson on the SA of grid roads v city streets which maybe helpful?) (Once again, I think density is also a material issue and needs to be referred to).</p>	<p>This issue is covered in more detail in the Transport Strategy Review.</p>
<p>36.</p>	<p>Para 2.10 - makes reference to a "significant" increase in bus patronage. It would be good to say what significant actually means – 25%, 50% or ? (Table 4.1 on</p>	<p>See revised paragraph 2.13</p>

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	Page 23 shows an increase from 8m to 11m passengers over 5 years – an increase of nearly 40% or about 7.5% per year)	
37.	Para 2.20 - Ed Milliband the new Minister has just increased this to 80% (16 th October 2008)	See revised paragraph 2.23
38.	I am not sure if, and where, reference could be made to the work of the MKSM Modal Shift Strategy and how this may fit into the Council's Bus Strategy? There has been a lot of good and relevant research undertaken by the MKSM Modal Shift Strategy Team. This maybe most appropriate in para 3.1?	See new paragraph 3.19
39.	Para 2.21 - should have the date 2031 qualified to explain the Core Strategy runs to 2026.	See revised paragraph 2.24
40.	Para 2.22 should have "and the Core Strategy" added at the end of the first sentence.	See revised paragraph 2.25
41.	Para 2.27 - the last sentence would be improved by adding ' , the routes available and' after 'to car travel because of the distances involved'.	See revised paragraph 2.33
42.	Para 2.28 - the dispersed nature of Milton Keynes (especially employment centres) has advantages that local traffic is not concentrated on one destination only but spread throughout the network, thus does not contribute to concentrated traffic congestion. Good for the car, but probably not good for public transport, unless the employment centres are easily accessible by public transport routes.	See revised paragraph 2.35
43.	Para 2.32 could do with a reference to the source of this data: is it the Census or Social Atlas?	Noted - the source of this data is the 2001 census, as reported in the Accessibility Strategy.
44.	Paras 2.36/2.37 Assuming that CMK parking charges subsidise the bus service, should this not be explained? Also, if there is a significant reduction in parking revenue then the bus service subsidy will also be reduced.	See revised paragraph 5.5
45.	Para 3.1 should have the source of the figures quoted. It would be useful to have the South East Plan mentioned here as this will replace the MKSM figures.	See revised paragraph 3.1
46.	Para 3.3 - this figure should refer to table H2 (A) of the Local Plan, which totals 23,080.	See revised paragraph 3.3
47.	Para 3.6 needs updating - the earliest date for the Core Strategy is now spring 2009 and as mentioned earlier its end date is 2026 not 2031. The final sentence should be replaced with' The South East Plan had progressed to the 'Proposed Changes' stage in July 2008.	See revised paragraph 3.6
48.	Para 3.7 - there should be a strong emphasis about the fact that higher numbers of people living closer to good bus routes must be encouraged to make services more viable and increase the number of people who will have a choice of transport in the future. (This is the critical issue: higher density enables an improved bus service. The only problem is that our high density areas are on the periphery of the city, which makes public transport to the city centre problematic. A review of the policy to increase densities in grid squares and closer to the city centre is required to	See revised paragraph 3.8

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	contribute to encouraging modal shift.)	
49.	Para 3.8 could do with a reference to a plan as this will really help the Core Strategy as we need to show where change will happen.	Noted, however only one relevant location has been identified. Map 3 already shows the core routes.
50.	Para 3.10 - first bullet point needs correction: the SPD only applies to development over the threshold size quoted.	See revised paragraph 3.10
51.	After para 3.15 add another para: '3.16 - The Transport SPD will be reviewed in the future together with other developer contributions SPD/SPG'.	See new paragraph 3.16
52.	Para 4.2 should include the Core Strategy after the growth plan.	See revised paragraph 4.2
53.	Do we record complaints or have our own data to confirm that reliability is a critical factor?	Complaints are recorded - the majority are about unreliability of operation.
54.	Para 4.7. The Aims seem to be comprehensive and are supported	Positive comment.
55.	Para 4.10 should have the following added after Buses can be reliable if given...'amongst other things e.g. bus quality, investment and maintenance'.	These "quality issues" are covered in 4.18.
56.	Para 4.17 would be clearer if a map or diagram could be shown to illustrate these routes clearly. The map at the back of the document is only readable in colour but it would help if additional maps or diagrams clarified the QBI and the text should explain if this is complete	See revised paragraphs 4.17, 5.11, 5.13 and action no 37
57.	On page 22 at the top, does security and safety feature in DDA? If not we should add the need to ensure services are as this was a problem in some of the Nottingham bus services	Security and safety are not part of the DDA although we accept that it is an important issue.
58.	Table 4.1 - under BVPI 104 do we record missing buses? If not can we modify or use the info for NI 178?	BVPI 104 does not record missing buses but it is taken into account in the recording NI 178.
59.	Para 5.16 - continue with 'The Core Strategy' will deal with the strategic development areas and this can offer the potential for park and ride, but these are best proposed through the Park and Ride Strategy.	See revised paragraph 5.29
60.	Para 5.21 - end with sentence that says this is likely to be the Allocations DPD or a subsequent Managing Development DPD.	See revised paragraph 5.34
61.	Para 6.4 should end with reference to 'Actions' at end of document where the timing of this decision about level 2 or 3 is explained.	See revised paragraph 6.3
62.	Para 6.11 should end with reference to 'Actions' at end of document where the timing of the delivery is explained.	See revised paragraph 6.22
63.	Para 7.1 should tie in with the planning hierarchy which identifies the most sustainable rural settlements: N Pagnell, W Sands and Olney.	See revised paragraph 7.1

Respondent MKC-6 (Wavendon Parish Council)

64.	Generally, the Bus Strategy is detailed and well written. It sets out information and intentions with which there is little to dispute. Our concern is the overall direction of this strategy. The key elements of a successful Bus Strategy (i.e. one that encourages bus travel) must be to have routes that are convenient and travel that is cheap. The first two stated aims (para 1.2) are compatible with such a strategy i.e.:-	The Strategy aims to build on the existing approach, which is delivering patronage growth.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop a network of fast, frequent, high quality cross-city core routes To support this network with services that provides good access to estates and rural areas. <p>The other stated elements are important, but tactical rather than strategic, and cost is not mentioned.</p>	
65.	A comparison with the car, (the alternative and very convenient form of transport), indicates a maximum cost target of circa 16 per mile, plus the parking charge (i.e. more in line with the current “concessionary” travel rates). The “all in” pricing model referred to in para 2.35 is not really appropriate for what is a marginal cost pricing decision for a car user.	This paragraph is referring to the fact, in most cases, car users do not appreciate the full cost of their journey, nor do they take it into account.
66.	In passing, it is nonsense to suggest that, in Milton Keynes, “car journeys are often subject to greater vagaries and are no more reliable than bus services” (para 4.8).	This paragraph is not referring to Milton Keynes specifically but rather to the general point that car travel is often not as predictable as at first thought.
67.	It is recognised that “Milton Keynes has a substantial supply of public parking available either free or at significantly cheaper levels than is typically found in competing towns” (para 8.19). The stated aim “to increase the relationship between managing the demand for car travel and encouraging transport alternatives” indicates an integrated transport strategy. However, in practice, it is far too easy to increase parking fees in the hope that this will discourage car travel (as seems to be envisaged in para 2.37), without using this revenue to reduce bus charges to deliver greater use of public transport. In 1981 Ken Livingstone, introduced the 'Fares Fair' initiative in London ... Fares Fair's was a roaring success almost immediately. Millions of Londoners chose to leave their cars at home and passengers flocked to the tubes and the buses. This is an example that Milton Keynes should consider in the context of its own transport strategy.	While it is possible to use revenue from parking charges to improve public transport services and facilities, it is not possible for this revenue to be used to subsidise reduced fares. (The council is only able to offer concessionary fares to certain groups as defined in the 1985 Transport Act, it is not able to offer a general fares subsidy).
68.	It is not clear what is meant by “growth will impose additional stresses upon the transport network but will also present funding opportunities and a chance to restructure the city , in part to improve sustainability” (para 2.8). If this means ditching the grid road system and “increasing the density of development (densification) of the existing grid squares” (para 3.7), then it cannot be supported. There are already examples (Monkston, in particular) where the aim to limit parking and build smaller streets to restrict car use has simply lead to parked car induced gridlock. This is an excellent example of how the “stick” has been employed liberally to beat car users, but the “carrot” of better public transport has not been effectively delivered. A good road network promotes public transport equally as well as private car use.	This approach is part of the planning policies already adopted in relation to the growth and development of Milton Keynes. It should be noted that the residential parking provided for the developments in Monkston Park does not meet the current minimum standards (on one site the parking spaces are only 60% of the amount that should have been provided).
69.	It is entirely appropriate that bus priority should be integrated within developments, and not provided as an afterthought. However, delivering buildings around ‘city streets’ with buildings much closer to the highway boundary in significantly denser developments is not appropriate on the flanks of Milton	This approach is part of the planning policies already adopted in relation to the growth and development of Milton Keynes.

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	Keynes. It is counter intuitive to have higher density housing on the outskirts of the town than nearer the centre.	
70.	As Wavendon and Woburn Sands areas continue to grow then local Bus Services must continue to be maintained and increased when required.	There is no intention to reduce the level of services.

Respondent MKC-7 (Cllrs Debbie Brock and Peter Geary, MKC)

71.	Thank you for giving us the opportunity to respond to the bus strategy on behalf of the residents of the Olney ward and hope this brings about real improvements in bus services in the Olney ward as well as across the whole of Milton Keynes.	Positive comment.
72.	Rural areas by their very nature are fragmented and isolated settlements therefore the solution to providing a reliable public transport system will be very different to the built up urban areas. In many ways the thinking will need to be radical and innovative to address the needs of these communities in an efficient and cost effective way.	Noted, although the Strategy is based on improving the existing main rural services (existing services 1, 1A, 1B, 17/17A, 24 and 33) to a minimum hourly frequency (see paragraphs 7.5 and Action Number 32). Unfortunately, it is usually the case that the "radical and innovative" solutions (eg demand responsive services such as the Hanslope Harrier) usually require substantial funding and do not ultimately represent good value for money. There has to be recognition of the fact that buses cannot meet every need (see revised paragraphs 7.5 and 7.6).
73.	Reliability is fundamental to any public transport system especially where the frequency of service is infrequent. To many times we have both received communications from residents who have waited for a bus that didn't turn up, not been allowed on the bus because it was full or been caught when a bus had broken down. If people are using a bus to get to work, this has to be 100% reliable. If the bus doesn't turn up once or twice that person will find another way to get to work, the same is true for important appointments. It only takes a few experiences or being told of such and the bus will not be trusted and hence the service will not be able to deliver its aims.	See 1 above.
74.	Capacity is a similar issue at certain times with buses full and not allowing new people on. If the bus is full it is as bad as it not turning up especially when it is at peak times. If this is the case then capacity should be monitored and more capacity supplied at the peak times.	Agreed. The issue of providing increased capacity on peak journeys from the Olney area is one that is being pursued with the bus operator. As the Strategy indicates, the Council intends to investigate further the possibilities for providing faster peak time journeys from the north of the borough (Olney/Lavendon) to Central Milton Keynes see paragraphs 7.4 and Action Number 36 - this would also have the effect of increasing capacity but will be subject to the availability of funding.
75.	If a bus breaks down another should be sent immediately to continue the service. Bus services should never be cancelled without notice.	Noted, however in the case of breakdowns, the Council is not able to dictate how the bus operators deal with these issues.
76.	The customers who are likely to use a certain service should also be profiled. 6 th form students in Olney need to travel to Newport Pagnell to school. The school transport system will not take them and they are too young to drive, if they have a car and the finances to do so, but the bus service does not offer a service at the time needed hence many are taken to school in a car with the associated	Noted - there are, however, discretionary seats available on school contract vehicles, and the situation may not have been helped by the school deciding to alter their hours without fully considering all the implications

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	environmental problems.	
77.	<p>The Olney Ward by its location is between 3 main centres of population and is equidistant from them. Many people will not want to access only Milton Keynes but also Bedford, Northampton and Wellingborough. The service to Bedford was cut in recent years from hourly to 2 hourly making it significantly less suitable for commuting. While it is accepted that these services are often not in the sole control of Milton Keynes staff, efficient cross authority working is needed to ensure that a viable service is provided.</p>	<p>The Strategy acknowledges the need for Milton Keynes Council to continue to work with the neighbouring authorities to maintain and improve those cross boundary services that form the major provision in the area.</p> <p>In the case of the service from Olney to Bedford, the route change of the Northampton - Bedford service, so that it no longer served Olney, was a commercial decision taken by Stagecoach to speed up the through service. This has resulted in increased passenger numbers on the revised service, which has benefited residents of Lavendon who now get faster buses to both destinations. Milton Keynes Council and Bedfordshire County Council subsidise the service that now remains to Bedford and, as previously noted, our aspiration is for the provision of an hourly service, but this will be subject to the availability of funding.</p> <p>The loss of the service to Wellingborough was also a commercial decision taken by Stagecoach as the result of falling passenger numbers on the direct service to London. Neither Milton Keynes Council nor Northamptonshire County Council were able to justify provision of a service on a subsidised basis at that time</p>
78.	<p>Olney and other rural areas have faced expansion over the last number of years and the bus service has not kept track with this and hence services have become more stretched. This needs to be addressed and when population rises are expected or experienced in the future the service needs to automatically react to this.</p>	<p>The mechanism for funding bus services to new developments is outlined in Chapter 3.</p>

Respondent MKC-8 (MKC Leisure Learning and Culture)

79.	<p>Movement of People:</p> <p>Leisure, Learning and Culture (LLC) is about providing cultural services from a number of key venues and facilities across the city to which people want to reach via public transport. This is a considerable number of people moving around for cultural purposes.</p> <p>Very often it is stated by the public that it is very difficult to reach those venues or that the journey times and changes put people off. LLC would like to encourage public transport use and believes that it could greatly help in a 'mindset change' from car-dependency, but requires coordinated approach and assistance from Highways.</p> <p>We would encourage profiling cultural venues as part of the destination venues available with public transport to alters people's perceptions of the latter and over dependency on the car. This could be done by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Renaming bus stops after destination venues and using them for marketing purposes ▪ Reviewing maps and colour schemes to provide attractive designs and use of 	<p>The point made regarding information and the lack of awareness of the bus network, in relation to cultural venues, is a key one. We recognise that the marketing and publicity of bus services in Milton Keynes needs to be improved. The specific points made about bus stops names, maps and other issues will be fed into the group considering the Marketing and Promotion plan (see paragraphs 4.12, 4.13, 5.13 and 5.8 and Action Nos 54, 56, 57).</p>
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	<p>images</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use of cultural images on public transport vehicles ▪ Applying good design principles to bus shelters and similar fabric 	
80.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Working with LLC to provide services for key major events to encourage people to Park and Ride (e.g. Heritage Open Days bus routes – see www.mkheritageopendays.com for example) ▪ Looking at venues needs in regard to transport and seasonality and opening timings (cultural patterns) 	In terms of working with LLC to provide services for key major events to encourage people to Park and Ride, a key point here is the need for advance information on such events, and sources of funding so that appropriate services can be arranged.
81.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advertising libraries as a primary source of information about transport through leaflets and access to public access computers (and of course, ensuring that all libraries are supplied with relevant information) ▪ Considering having an live screen timetable showing bus and train times at relevant libraries (as they do in Brighton) 	Libraries are a key outlet for public transport information. There are no plans at the present time to place real time displays in libraries, although this is something that might be considered for future expansion of the system.
82.	<p>Terminus and Gateway areas:</p> <p>LLC welcomes the improvements being made/sought in improving the Terminus and Gateway areas to Milton Keynes and establishing Park and Ride stations in those places. As a general rule great care should be taken to preserve where needed architectural heritage, and the Public Art Unit should be consulted and involved in significant changes to public realm, especially as their access to S106 will enhance projects. Consideration should also be given to the ‘sense of arrival’ that people will receive once that change has been made at the Gateway. As this is most likely to be in CMK, a joined up system of signage and information should be a priority at the CMK terminus, whether this is at Station Square or on Midsummer Boulevard near the current bus stop termini. At the very least signage should include CMK Library, Theatre and Gallery, Discover Milton Keynes and the Council offices.</p> <p>Particular emphasis is given to the following (list of detailed points on a number of locations).</p>	The points made here will be considered further as plans for these schemes are developed.
83.	<p>Discover Milton Keynes Shop</p> <p>A working arrangement with Arriva/MK Metro has been in place since May 2008 within the CMK Heritage and Cultural Showcase, Discover Milton Keynes, that sees Arriva providing a member of staff (to meet lone working requirements) in return for a CMK venue for selling bus tickets and providing bus information.</p> <p>LLC feels that Discover Milton Keynes has potential to expand to become a major bus/transport information point, but requires resources from public transport funds given that heritage funding is extremely small and in Council terms low(er) priority. It is recommended that exploration is made with LLC and Arriva to enhance the transport information available from this central venue in return for greater resource – potentially resulting in a move to a larger and more advantageous unit.</p>	Noted - See new paragraph 5.12 and Action No 55.

Respondent MKC-9 (Central Milton Keynes Town Council)

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84.	CMKTC are very disappointed in the Bus Strategy which falls into the trap of emphasising the bus operator imperatives at the expense of the passengers convenience. If you are to increase patronage the quality of the experience of a passenger must be enhanced e.g. it is necessary to consider a 'total system' from the point where the passenger leaves his residence or place of work and begins the journey. This means the links to the bus stops should be direct, well lit and convenient for him. Straight paths not overshadowed by undergrowth...	The Strategy acknowledges that "walk and cycle access to interchange points and bus stops as key for both the journey to the bus and onward to final destination" (see paragraph 4.16) and in Table 6.1.
85.	and a modern, well lit shelter with real time information.	A real time information system will be introduced in Milton Keynes early in 2009 - there is more detail on this in chapter 5 of the strategy (Paragraphs 5.15 - 5.18 and Action no 47). Provision of "at-stop" displays will be concentrated on key locations.
86.	Buses need to be modern, comfortable and ...	Noted - this is one aspect of raising the overall quality of vehicles (see paragraph 4.18 and Action Number 44).
87.	... driven with care and courtesy, the drivers trained in customer care. This can be seen in successful cities such as Brighton, Oxford and Cambridge.	These are matters for the bus operator - the Council is not able to dictate how the bus operators train their staff, although a key part of the Quality Bus Partnership (see Chapter 9) is that MK Metro improve their customer care training.
88.	These criteria require the co-ordination of the maintenance of landscape, footpaths, redways, shelters, underpasses as well as the maintenance of the bus service.	Unfortunately the Bus Strategy is able to address these wider maintenance issues give here.
89.	Through the provision of a 'total system' you can keep the bus system using the grid roads and out of the estates, enabling them to be prompt and the journeys shorter by providing clear access to the bus stops on the grid roads through the concept of the 'total system'.	See 19 above.
90.	Again, make use of the Park & Ride which will be better environmentally with less bus fumes and fewer cars on the roads.	Noted - It is intended to provide an improved link from the Railway Station via Central Milton Keynes to the new Park & Ride site when it opens next year. Availability and cost of parking in CMK is also a key factor in determining whether park and ride can succeed.
91.	The Centre has always envisioned that a circular service would provide for internal journeys from the Station along Silbury and Avebury Boulevards and extended to provide for the Park and Ride service from Junction 14 Coachway.	See new paragraph 6.11 - there are no plans to introduce a city centre loop service.
92.	We are disappointed that no provision has been made to stop buses in Silbury Boulevard to offer access to Council Offices, the Library, residents and businesses in any of its length so unlike any proper city where one would expect to catch a bus along the prime streets. It is usual when seeing a bus travelling in a town's prime street that there would be a bus stop. The largest Sainsbury's in Europe has no bus stop similarly there is no provision along the north side on Silbury Boulevard for John Lewis.	As stated in Paragraph 6.9 "It is proposed to continue the strategy whereby most cross city bus services run along Midsummer Boulevard in CMK allowing interchange in the centre". It would not make sense to split services to run along all three of the city centre boulevards, and it is not something the Council can force the bus operators to do (see new paragraphs 6.10 and 6.11). Bus stops have been provided in Avebury Boulevard for those buses that pass close to Sainsbury's.
93.	Station Square needs to be given the same consideration for the passengers interchanging between different modes by an integrated system which is simple and clearly laid out with a pedestrian emphasis where the pedestrian is central	The details of the Station Square scheme are still being considered, however the elimination of the "present chaotic conflicts" will be a central aim of the proposals.

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	within the Square by extending the present concourse out into the square and separating taxis, cars and buses around the central concourse enabling the unhindered flow of traffic and eliminating the present chaotic conflicts. The extended concourse will be a glazed pavilion provided with a mezzanine café with stunning views over Station Square thus capable of providing a memorable experience with a safer meeting and greeting area.	
94.	All of the above is irrelevant if bus reliability is not paramount and is to blame for the low patronage of any service.	See 1 above.

Respondent MKC-10 (Campbell Park PC)

95.	Campbell Park Parish Council agrees in principle with the strategy but asks that the following points be taken into consideration:	Positive comment.
96.	Routes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment areas should be easily accessible particularly from low car ownership areas – Fishermead, Springfield, Netherfield; 	Noted, however it is not possible to provide through journeys from every potential origin to every potential destination
97.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bus service to the new Sainsbury; 	Bus journeys from Campbell Park to the new Sainsbury's are possible by changing to service 7 in CMK - it is not possible to provide through journeys from every potential origin to every potential destination
98.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More buses to the Hospital; 	Bus journeys from Campbell Park to the new Hospital are possible by changing in CMK - it is not possible to provide through journeys from every potential origin to every potential destination
99.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The results of a Parish Appraisal carried out last year by this Parish showed that 62% of our residents wanted a wider choice of destinations; 	Noted - but need more information on what this means.
100.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With the relocation of the Eaglestone Health Centre to Ashland there is a need for more routes to this destination. 	Bus journeys from Campbell Park to Ashland are possible by changing in CMK - it is not possible to provide through journeys from every potential origin to every potential destination
101.	Routes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Services need to be integrated to get to a multiplicity of destinations perhaps by means of a fixed interval service along grid roads, East-West and North-South, co-ordinated to connect at key intersections. 	The radial nature of the current bus service network means that the most popular destination (Central Milton Keynes) can be reached by most residents without a change of bus, something that would not be possible if the buses only ran on the grid roads with interchange points at junctions.
102.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Through ticketing on journeys involving two routes or more 	Noted - see new paragraph 5.22 and Action No 60
103.	Timing/Frequency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bus service should enable people to get to work by 8.30 /9am; ▪ Bus time table should be integrated with the Rail time table so that buses connect with major commuter trains; 	See 20 above
104.	Fares The results of a Parish Appraisal carried out last year by this Parish showed that 20% of our residents thought the fares were too expensive.	Noted - although work done by MKC officers suggests that fares in Milton Keynes are generally below average. The £1.10 minimum fare that appears high for short for journeys.
105.	Frequency of information - Real time passenger information needed.	See 85 above.
106.	Community Transport Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Service should be free; 	Membership is free. Consultation with users has not shown that the cost of journeys is a deterrent to users.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More flexibility in booking ▪ More flexibility in timing 	More flexibility could be offered but this would result in a less efficient operation requiring additional funding and other resources.
107.	School Buses - The results of a Parish Appraisal carried out last year by this Parish showed that there is support in the Parish for the introduction of school buses.	Noted - but would be grateful for information on what this means. The council has developed a Sustainable School Transport Strategy to address the issues around School Transport.

Respondent MKC-11 (Shenley Brook End & Tattenhoe PC)

108.	<p>Bus Strategy</p> <p>We note that the strategy covers mainly the period of the second LTP and has been published halfway through this period. Consequently, many of the actions listed in Table 10.1 have target dates towards the end of the LTP or indeed beyond its life. Many of these we consider are essential to the modal shift required by the strategy including a Park & Ride Strategy (6), improved interchanges outside CMK (48 & 49) and off-bus ticketing (52). We appreciate that the strategy will continue beyond the current LTP but it is disappointing to see that issues identified in 2003 are still unresolved.</p>	Positive comment.
109.	We agree with the principle aims that have been adopted (para 2.22) but, assuming these are listed in priority, we consider that these should be changed to reflect the targets needed for a viable alternative to the car. Minimising journey times and making the network accessible are essential in our opinion and neither will be obtained under this strategy. It has long been recognised that the majority of trips within the borough involve trips outside CMK, yet all major bus routes currently travel through the centre and this policy will be continued and strengthened.	See 19 above, also the radial nature of the current bus service network means that the most popular destination (Central Milton Keynes) can be reached by most residents without a change of bus (see new paragraph 6.12)
110.	Paras 2.34 - 2.38 explore the need to influence travel behaviour and manage demand but concentrate on the use of cars and ignore the basic need to make bus travel attractive to greater numbers. There can be little attraction to a resident expected to travel into CMK and out again, with an interchange, to reach a destination that is within a few minutes' drive by car. Equally, cost is a factor in accessibility and the cost of such a trip is higher than the car alternative. Para 2.35 suggests that car costs are not fully assessed in journey costs, but this ignores the fact that insurance and tax must be paid on a vehicle, even if it sits at home. Having paid this, the individual has only the cost of fuel and parking to compare against the cost of bus travel, offset by convenience and savings in time. Long, expensive bus journeys are a disincentive ...	The overall aim of the strategy is to "make bus travel attractive to greater numbers". See 109 above on the radial routes issue.
111.	... and more emphasis needs to be placed on providing services that go where they are wanted. A full network, utilising the grid roads would be more likely to attract passengers than the current radial system which takes them to places they have no need or wish to pass through.	Noted and see 19 above.
112.	The expansion of Milton Keynes (para 3.3 - 3.8) may represent potential for bus use and increase the numbers using public transport but it must also be realised	Noted, however the principles outlined in these paragraphs already form part of the local plan, also the desire to have "bus routes which include

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	that this will not address current problems unless this potential also creates bus routes which include existing areas and expand the opportunity for existing residents to access fast, regular services. The suggestion of increased density of development along existing grid roads will effectively reduce these to city streets, an idea opposed by the majority of residents, and the idea of such development would require further consultation.	existing areas” may conflict with the aspirations outlined in points 110 and 111.
113.	Service reliability is a major factor and many of the proposals for this are welcome and achievable. We would be opposed, however, to the proposal of buses stopping on the carriageway, rather than in lay-bys. Leaving aside the question of cost of reversing current policy, with the removal of existing lay-by stops and replacement with new stops (including access routes), buses stopping on grid roads for five minutes or longer to pick up passengers will create massive congestion, especially on the single carriageway grid roads. This will inevitably lead to frustration and the possibility of dangerous overtaking manoeuvres, with a likelihood of increased accident rates and severity.	Noted - this does not propose that all laybys are removed, it merely notes that getting out of a layby is one cause of delay. Buses are not generally at stops for “five minutes or longer”.
114.	Priority at traffic signals and increasing the number of bus lanes would be more advantageous, although the latter would entail some measure of widening on many existing routes.	Bus priority measures will be implemented where appropriate.
115.	Off bus ticketing would be of substantial assistance and we feel that this should be investigated as a priority. The consequences of decisions must also be carefully thought through – removing speed ramps on estate roads, for example, will not only allow buses to move more quickly but may lead to increased traffic speeds in inappropriate locations.	Noted - see paragraphs 5.19 - 5.22 for more detail on fares and ticketing issues.
116.	The lack of a coherent Park & Ride strategy is a major weakness in the efforts to reduce travel by car within the borough. In-coming commuters form a sizable part of the number parking daily in CMK, where they receive very advantageous, discounted parking. Diverting more of these to Park & Ride would reduce congestion on the grid roads and increase bus usage. If changes to parking arrangements are to form part of the strategy, this should be a target group, but this can only be done if a strategy is fixed and suitable locations identified at multiple locations, not just the Coachway.	Noted - Para 5.29 and 5.30 and Action No 6 refer to the need to prepare and adopt a park & ride strategy.
117.	More thought also needs to be given to connection with regional and national services to ensure that buses reach transport nodes at appropriate times. The first No8 bus, for example, arrives at a connection shortly after the regional X5 service departs and does not run from the west flank at times to meet train departures before 7am. Quality bus services organised around commuter periods would help in persuading people to change transport modes.	See 20 above.
118.	The last bus on No8 service departs MK for Westcroft at 7.30pm, which precludes using buses for an evening event. We are sure there are many other examples of this nature.	See 3 above.
119.	Lastly, we would suggest that monitoring must be more proactive than suggested	This section refers to monitoring for LTP purposes but we recognise the

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	in para 4.20, as the time lag and distance from events is too great. Many of the proposed changes and targets are qualitative and can only be judged by direct observation by officers or by nominated groups or individuals who can report quickly on reliability, cleanliness, attitude of drivers and other indicators of a true quality service.	need for more detailed monitoring.
120.	In conclusion, we feel that this document is a useful base for development of a coherent, workable bus service for Milton Keynes but it needs further work to be done in a far shorter time span than has been suggested to date.	Table 10.1 now includes tighter timescales for some actions.

Respondent MKC-12 (Lavendon PC)

121.	Para 2.17 - Legislative Framework: Given the possible growth in the South Eastern area of Milton Keynes and across the M1 motorway into the rural areas, more thought should be given to a better passenger transport infrastructure.	This issue is picked up chapter 3.
122.	Para 2.29 - Existing Situation: Currently, the service provided to Lavendon from Bedford to Central Milton Keynes is found to be adequate and certainly on paper looks as though the north east rural area is well provided for. Unfortunately, in real terms the service is unreliable and at peak times, inadequate, not just to Lavendon but to other villages en route to Central Milton Keynes. In order to increase patronage of the rural areas these issues need to be resolved.	See 10 above, and also, as the Strategy indicates, the Council intends to investigate further the possibilities for providing faster peak time journeys from the north of the borough (Olney/Lavendon) to Central Milton Keynes see paragraphs 7.5 and Action Number 33.
123.	With regard to direct routes and particularly to Milton Keynes Hospital. Although journey times would almost inevitably be longer by bus than by car, most users would accept this transport as a good alternative if it were more reliable and more regular.	See 10 above.
124.	Para 4.8 - Bus Service Reliability: A bus not arriving when expected has a very damaging effect on patronage in rural communities. A bus arriving at stops, already full and unable to take any more passengers or even bypassing the stops has very much the same effect.	See 1 above.
125.	Para 4.18 - Quality: A better quality of vehicles would be very much appreciated by most rural users, given that they would spend on average at least 40 minutes on a straight forward journey to Central Milton Keynes and over an hour on a journey to the Milton Keynes Hospital.	The Strategy acknowledges the need to raise the overall quality of vehicles (see paragraph 4.18 and Action Numbers 43 - 45)
126.	Para 4.18 - Payment Systems: Currently passengers would be most upset to pay in advance for a service that did not materialise.	Payment in advance is widely used for rail and other travel with no guarantees that services will run.
127.	Para 5.14 Park and Ride: Park and Ride provided a valuable means of transport for people living in the rural areas of Milton Keynes, particularly served by an irregular bus service, and also to outside visitors with no knowledge of navigation around Milton Keynes. The Coachway site was patronised Monday to Friday by not only shoppers but employees of companies based in Milton Keynes, obviously having a positive effect on the parking situation in some areas of Central Milton Keynes.	It is expected that Park & Ride at Coachway will be available from late-2009.
128.	Para 6.5 - Developing the Network - Urban: A link to Newport Pagnell and	See paragraph 6.6 and action no 24.

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	Coachway would be seen as a positive for rural users and much improving travel times.	
129.	Para 6.5 General: A more frequent service to Newport Pagnell from the rural villages would be seen as a definite improvement and thus enabling users access to workplaces, healthcare and out of town shopping areas.	See 122 above.
130.	Although MK Metro and Stagecoach services are displayed, publicity and promotion of the more periodic services would be encouraged (eg 42 and The Villager).	This point will be fed into the group considering the Marketing and Promotion plan (see Bus Strategy paragraphs 4.13 and 5.8 and Action No 50).
131.	Bus User Forums are considered to be a good method of collecting data and valuable information. Unfortunately for rural residents who rely solely on public transport, these forums have more recently been held in areas not easily reached.	Noted, however it is likely that most user groups would take place in Central Milton Keynes which is most easily accessible destination.

Respondent MKC-13 (John Harper)

132.	Page 6 – Figure 2.1 - Consider putting in 2000/01 patronage as a proxy for the Government's 2000 base year.	See revised Figure 1
133.	Page 8 – 2.18 – The point that more funding from parking revenue than the LTP should be made.	See revised paragraphs 2.21 and 5.5
134.	Page 8 – 2.19 - Need to mention that “Towards a Sustainable Transport System” highlights the need to cover the ‘end-to-end’ journey	See revised paragraph 2.22
135.	Page 10 - 2.26 - Where are the ‘objectives for public transport’ identified?	See revised paragraphs 2.28 - 2.32
136.	Page 11 – 2.33 – See paras. 5.52-5.56 of Accessibility Strategy which identifies a bundle of public transport improvements.	See revised paragraph 2.40
137.	Page 18 – 4.6 – No detail on the aim to ‘Ensure services are regular’.	See revised paragraphs 2.25 and 4.6
138.	Page 23 – Table 4.4 - ‘Satisfaction with local bus service information’ is not a LTP target.	See revised Table 4.4
139.	Page 23 – Table 4.4 - Add the LTP Community Transport target.	See revised Table 4.4
140.	Page 23 – Table 4.4 - Update actual figures to 2007/08.	See revised Table 4.4
141.	Page 23 – Table 4.4 - Add LTP to LAA for accessibility target.	See revised Table 4.4
142.	Page 28 – 6.1 – The remit of PTLTV1 was to recommend the most appropriate type of public transport for MK for the future.	See paragraph 6.1
143.	Page 30 – 6.5 – ‘one specific new service was identified’	See paragraph 6.6
144.	Page 37 – 8.19 – Just to point out that we do not have any adopted mode share targets.	See revised paragraph 8.19 (although there are mode share targets in the TSR)

Respondent MKC-14 (Aylesbury Vale DC)

145.	<p><u>Consultation</u> AVDC wishes to register its strong concern that, as far as is known, the Council was not consulted on the current Draft Bus Strategy. We became aware of the draft document and of the consultation only by chance. In the Introduction, Para 2.25 states that “Before adoption by the council, this</p>	None of the neighbouring Local Planning Authorities were consulted individually, although neighbouring Local Transport Authorities were consulted as required by the Transport Act 2000.
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	document will be circulated to key stakeholders....". AVDC would have expected to have been consulted as a key stakeholder or certainly as a neighbouring Local Planning Authority.	
146.	Para 3.6 of the Draft Strategy refers to the South East Plan, but it does not mention the change to the draft Plan proposed by the Secretary of State, whereby, as part of the growth of Milton Keynes, there would be a development, including 5,390 dwellings, immediately beyond the Borough boundary in Aylesbury Vale District. A development of the scale proposed will inevitably have a significant effect on the transport network, within Milton Keynes and beyond its administrative boundaries. There will be implications for the network of bus services, as well as for the highway and rail networks. This change to the South East Plan proposed by the Secretary of State is particular reason why AVDC should have been consulted	See point 47 above. See also new paragraph 3.18 and new Action No 13.
147.	Paras 3.9 and 3.15 acknowledge that the Council's proposed Transport SPD will not apply to developments in the Urban Development Area because the Milton Keynes Partnership is the planning authority for that area. The paragraphs fail to acknowledge that the proposed urban extension to the south-west of Milton Keynes would also be outside the scope of Milton Keynes Council's proposed Transport SPD. AVDC would be the local planning authority in respect of that development.	Paras 3.9 states that the "SPD will apply to developments <u>within</u> the Borough where the council acts as the planning authority". There is no suggestion that it would apply outside the Borough.
148.	Table 10.1 – Actions to deliver the bus strategy includes: "The council will continue to ensure that the planning process supports improved accessibility and improved bus services.....through s106 agreements negotiated in line with the Transport SPD" (Action 12). Again, this fails to acknowledge that the SPD will not apply to the development proposed within Aylesbury Vale District, or to some other developments that are proposed to contribute to the growth of the new City.	See point 147 above, and also new paragraph 3.18 and new Action No 13.
149.	Para 9.14 of the Draft Strategy states: "The council through its wider transport strategy will continue to work with neighbouring authorities recognising that transport networks take no account of administrative boundaries." In the Introduction, Para 2.11 states that "Partnership with stakeholders, bus operators, and joint working with cross boundary authorities will help deliver these targets.....". More specifically in relation to bus services, Para 5.4 refers to the continuation of "work with neighbouring authorities to maintain and improve cross boundary services" and Para 7.4 states that "The councils strategy for developing bus services in the rural areas will..... be based on retaining, in conjunction with neighbouring authorities, the existing services".	For the delivery of bus services it is the Local Transport Authorities that have a greater role, and it is the LTAs to which these statements refer, although we recognise that AVDC (and others) will have an input in relation to growth areas outside the Milton Keynes boundary. See also new paragraph 3.18 and new Action No 13.
150.	Para 9.2 acknowledges the crucial importance of the relationship between "bus operator, the council and those responsible for delivering the growth of Milton Keynes, such as Milton Keynes Partnership". Moreover, Para 1.4 of the Executive Summary acknowledges the need for partnership working to achieve the aim of the Bus Strategy to increase transport choice. AVDC will be	See comment 149 above about relationship with LTA's and 145 above concerning consultation. The leaflet was intended as an introduction to the full Bus Strategy and was put together with advice from the Communications Team. Its content is

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<p>responsible for the element of the growth that the Secretary of State has proposed should be provided in its District and it is therefore important that AVDC, and Buckinghamshire County Council as the corresponding transport authority, should be involved in the partnership working.</p> <p>Those, and many similar references in the Draft Strategy suggest existing co-operative working with neighbouring transport authorities and with other local authorities and acknowledge the importance of such relationships. They also record an intention to continue such arrangements.</p> <p>Table 10.1 – Actions to deliver the bus strategy includes: “Develop the existing relationships with neighbouring authorities with a view to providing consistency in transport strategy in the region” (Action 20) and “Continue to work with the neighbouring authorities to maintain those cross boundary services that form the major provision in the rural areas of the Borough” (Action 26).</p> <p>Nevertheless, despite all the seemingly supportive comments, neither AVDC nor, as far as is known, Buckinghamshire County Council were consulted on the over-arching Draft Bus Strategy</p> <p>(The Consultation leaflet regarding the Bus Strategy states that the Council will work with bus operators, Milton Keynes Partnership and bus user groups. It makes no reference at all to working with adjoining local authorities.)</p>	<p>based on the “Executive Summary” of the Bus Strategy (page 4) which is developed further in the remainder of the Strategy.</p> <p>See also new paragraph 3.18 and new Action No 13.</p>
<p>151. Moreover, Paras 9.10 and 9.11 of the Draft Strategy refer to formal partnerships that are concerned with the delivery of growth insofar as transport schemes are involved. As far as we are aware, neither Buckinghamshire County Council nor AVDC has a representative on the Joint Transport Delivery Team.</p>	<p>The Joint Transport Delivery Team (JTDT) is a working group with membership representing MKC, MKP, the Highways Agency and the Government Office for the South East.</p>
<p>152. <u>Developing the Network – Rural</u></p> <p>This Section deals with the development of the bus network outside the new city, but confines its consideration to the part of Milton Keynes Borough that lies outside the “designated” area. It fails to give any specific consideration to areas beyond the Borough boundary. Consideration of the development of the network should include relevant areas beyond the borough boundary, particularly since the South East Plan, as proposed to be amended, will propose major development outside the borough, as part of the growth of the new city.</p> <p>It is important that in developing the bus strategy Milton Keynes is not treated as an island. In terms of the transport network - the public transport as well as the highway network - Milton Keynes is not insulated from the surrounding area. What happens on one side of its boundary inevitably has an effect on the network on the other side; the administrative boundaries are arbitrary. The bus network, and indeed the whole public transport network, that needs to be considered should cover a larger area than Milton Keynes Borough alone; the linkages between the Borough and areas beyond its boundaries, including the proposed urban extension to the south-west, need to be taken into account as part of the network.</p>	<p>Milton Keynes Council can only produce a bus strategy for its area, in the same way that Bucks CC can only produce a bus strategy for its area.</p> <p>The strategy does refer to cross boundary interurban services (see para 5.6) and the need to work with neighbouring LTAs.</p>

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153.	Para 7.1 describes Appendix B as listing the rural parishes and highlighting the current services. Although the basis for the selection of destinations shown in the Appendix is not clear, it would appear that Aylesbury, Oxford and Cambridge should possibly also be shown, together with the 100 service (an hourly express route between Milton Keynes and Aylesbury) and the X5 service (running every half-hour and linking Oxford and Cambridge via Milton Keynes). (Appendix A records the X5 and 100 as Interurban Services and Paras 4.18 and 5.12 include references to the services.)	The list of places shown in appendix B is clearly indicated as Milton Keynes Rural Parishes. Aylesbury, Oxford and Cambridge are not within the rural area of Milton Keynes Borough. It is not intended as a list of services and services 100 and X5 do not stop in Milton Keynes other than in the urban area.
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Respondent MKC-15 (Phil Caves, Engineer Highways Development Control)

154.	I think there should be a section that sets out what our shelter replacement strategy is, e.g. a new shelter every 5 years. This section could also set out the maintenance strategy.	There is no “shelter replacement strategy” and the council has a contract with Adspace which covers maintenance. It will be appropriate to review the provision of shelters when that contract expires in 2015/16. See also new paragraphs 5.13 and 5.14.
155.	Also, is there a section on walk distances to bus stops i.e. as per the policy in the Local Plan? Although this is aimed at new development areas, have checks been made to see which current areas fall short of 400m – and are we going to address this with new routes? There was obviously some work done on this for the council’s accessibility strategy included within the LTP.	The Accessibility Strategy covered this work, see also new paragraph 3.17.
156.	Is there a minimum standard we expect at a bus stop? For example I note that the strategy states all bus stops to be low floor bus compatible, but can all stops expect a timetable and or route list?	See new paragraphs 5.13 and 5.14 for coverage of this point.

Respondent MKC-16 (Emma Hosking for Milton Keynes Youth Cabinet)

157.	My name is Emma Hosking and together with Roz Mascarenhas supports the Milton Keynes Youth Cabinet. I understand that we are conducting the consultation on Transport in Milton Keynes. This is an issue that YCAB are very interested in and would like to make the following comments on the system. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is too expensive for young people 	Work done by MKC officers suggests that fares in Milton Keynes are generally below average. It is the £1.10 minimum fare that appears high for short for journeys - see also response to 162 below.
158.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus drivers are sometimes rude and inconsiderate to young people 	See 87 above.
159.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people often feel unsafe on the buses 	See 12 above.
160.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is difficult to travel around the city and some routes means that you have to go into the centre of MK before heading out to their destination 	It is not possible to provide through journeys from every potential origin to every potential destination - the radial nature of the current bus service network means that the most popular destination (Central Milton Keynes) can be reached by most residents without a change of bus, and this pattern of service is delivering patronage growth.
161.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buses turning up late 	See 1 above.
162.	YCAB have been very taken by an initiative conducted by West Sussex County Council in which they have created a three in one card. The card offers young people aged 5-19 cheap bus fares 24/7, discounts in shops and attractions and proof of age. The card is very popular within West Sussex and has been	Noted - however the council is only able to offer concessionary fares to certain groups as defined in the 1985 Transport Act, it is not able to offer a general fares subsidy.

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supported by citizencard. MK YCAB would like to recreate this card scheme in Milton Keynes as they feel it would work really well.	
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Respondent B-1 (Mike Lambden, Head of Corporate Affairs, National Express)

163.	National Express believes passionately that partnership is the way forward. Bus operators cannot deliver good services on their own as they do not control the infrastructure on which the buses operate. In fact most operators are frustrated that they are doing their bit but councils are reluctant to commit to the real measures that are necessary to make bus services operate more reliably.	Noted - a key element of the strategy is to “develop strong and effective partnership and user group arrangements” and this is detailed in Chapter 9.
164.	Mention is made in the document about the London model. This is much quoted but is worth considering in another way. A 1300% increase in costs has delivered about 45% passenger growth. Birmingham, for example, has just as good a bus service which has minimal subsidy and lower fares.	Noted - there is no expectation that a London level of funding will be available in Milton Keynes.
165.	I have noted your comments about perceptions of the bus service quality. Is this based on existing bus users or the public in general? Research generally shows that existing bus users have a much higher opinion of the quality than non users. Without doubt what everyone wants is greater reliability which bus companies on their own cannot deliver.	This is based on the surveys which feed into the Councils Best Value Performance Indicators (see Table 4.1).
166.	Our local bus research has also shown that people regard items such as leather seats as the lowest of their priorities. They are what I would call a ‘nice to have’ rather than something which really encourages people to use a bus service. Equally we have found that bus fares are not a major issue in urban areas although this changes in rural areas.	Noted - leather seats are just one aspect of raising the overall quality of bus services (see paragraph 4.18 and Action Nos 43 - 45).
167.	Bus services are always perceived as an environmentally good form of transport, but this only applies if there are enough people using them. Trying to cater for all travel needs with bus services is probably not sustainable in the longer term - bus is best at dealing with mass movements.	Noted - we accept that buses will not meet every need.
168.	We regard it as important that Coachway is well linked with all parts of the Milton Keynes area and the wider area in order to minimise the amount of car traffic to and from the location. We already work with Stagecoach in offering through fares onto their X5 service and would like to further develop this with other operators once the new Coachway is fully established. The new Park and Ride service will also play an important role in getting people to and from the city centre as a connection with the coach services.	Noted - although it would not be possible to provide through services to Coachway from every potential origin. It is intended to provide an improved link from the Railway Station via Central Milton Keynes to the new Coachway when it opens next year.
169.	We are not particularly qualified to comment on the parking strategy. However we can say that in most cities where Park and Ride has been successful part of this is down to parking charges for the city centres and availability of car parking spaces. It is a question of getting the balance right on the “carrot and stick”.	Noted - the strategy recognises the direct relationship between parking policy and bus use (see paragraphs 2.16, 2.41 - 2.44).

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Respondent B-2 (Brian Drury, Commercial Director, Arriva The Shires/MK Metro)

170.	I believe the document is well written and addresses the issues being faced in relation to the provision of bus services in Milton Keynes in a sensible and realistic way offering solutions which are challenging but achievable and hopefully acceptable to stakeholders and politicians.	Positive comment.
171.	I would like to see even more focus on the partnership approach taken by Milton Keynes Council and MK Metro, and the successes that this has [already delivered] and will continue to deliver through the lifetime of the strategy.	The QBP is covered in Paragraphs 4.19 and 9.4-9.8. The principal success (increased bus patronage) is covered at para 2.5-2.7, other successes (infrastructure and new vehicles) are covered at para 4.18. See also new paragraph 9.9.
172.	I believe that it is vital that the document stresses the importance of keeping buses in the heart of the city and [the need] for improving customer facilities through city centre super stops and the provision of interchange facilities at the railway station that will also allow the smooth operation of bus services such as driver change over etc.	These issues are covered are covered in revised paragraphs 2.44, 6.8, 6.9, 6.10, 6.17 and 6.18
173.	It would be good also to set out what would happen in an interim period while the two projects are being delivered if only to say that during such time buses will still need access to the city centre and facilities in the location of the railway station.	Noted - see new paragraph 6.19
174.	I did not notice any reference to the development of ticketing and ticketing machines in the document. In the future we may wish to look at how we handle concessionary fares and how we develop new ticketing methods such as mobile phones or smart cards. It would be useful to include such a section in the document.	Noted - see new paragraphs 5.19 - 5.22 and Action Nos 58 - 62.
175.	Paragraph 1.2 - Key Elements change "To support this network with services that provide good access to estates and rural areas but which will be less frequent" to "... but which may be less frequent"	See revised paragraph 1.2
176.	Paragraphs 2.34-2.38 - it must be stressed that buses need good access to the heart of the city and good interchange facilities at the railway station.	See 172 above.
177.	Paragraph 4.6 - Aims "Ensure services are regular": not sure what this means - could it be worded better?	See revised paragraphs 2.25 and 4.6
178.	Paragraph 4.11 - reference to bus lanes - does it need to reflect what has actually happened with bus lanes this year?	No, the paragraph does not refer to specific bus lanes.
179.	Paragraph 4.12 - change "Lack of information is a major detractor for potential users" to "... major barrier for ..."	See revised paragraph 4.12
180.	Paragraph 4.14 - change "To reduce the number of changes, there is agreement on the principle of having no more than four timetable changes a year" to "...on the principle of aiming to have no ..."	See revised paragraph 4.14 and Action no 22
181.	Paragraph 5.10 - this section needs to acknowledge MK Metro's involvement.	See revised paragraph 5.15
182.	Paragraph 9.1 should mention the network wide QBP signed a few years ago.	The QBP is covered in Paragraphs 4.19 and 9.4-9.9.

Respondent B-3 (The National Energy Foundation)

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183.	We are pleased to see that MK Council plan to increase the bus service frequency. We feel that this has lagged behind the construction of new estates. Will the subsidy paid by MK Council increase? How will the bus company increase the services ahead of increased passenger loading?	The mechanism for funding bus services to new estates is outlined in Chapter 3.
184.	We recommend that information on the routes taken by buses is improved. For example, at most bus stops it is unclear which estates the bus will travel through or how long the journey will take.	See 130 above.
185.	Greater use of transponders to deliver real-time location information for the expected arrival times at bus stops (as is widely used in London and elsewhere) would increase the confidence of bus users. If this could also be displayed on a live website, it could encourage office workers to use buses by limiting the downtime waiting at bus stops.	See 85 above. A web site is part of the plan for real time.
186.	There are several instances where it is unclear which side of the road to catch a bus from. For example, a bus from the hospital to the city centre can be caught from either side of the road. A bus turning area on the hospital site (or the north edge of Netherfield local centre) could obviate this problem.	There are no plans in the short term for a bus turning area on the hospital site. Better publicity might help so this point will be fed into the group considering the Marketing and Promotion plan (see Bus Strategy paragraphs 4.13 and 5.8 and Action No 50). (see 184)
187.	We would like to see bus routes linking the city centre with business parks (such as Knowlhill, Winterhill and Bleak Hall). This should be achieved through partnership with the companies on these sites.	The council is beginning to work with employers on the development of travel plans and other means of raising awareness of alternatives to the private car, although at present the effort is being concentrated in the urban part of the borough. The provision of bus services might follow from this work - see new paragraphs 5.23 - 5.26

Respondent B-4 (Destination Milton Keynes)

188.	Public transport information and visitor information need to be dovetailed together. There is an opportunity when visitors look at the DMK website to tell them about public transport, what is available, how easy it is to use, etc. with links to timetables.	See 130 above.
189.	One of the largest source of enquiries DMK receives concerns bus timetables locally and nationally. We have been advised by Arriva to refer all enquiries to Traveline. However, frequently the caller requires more local knowledge, e.g. how far is it to walk from 'X' bus stop to 'Y' street	See 130 above.
190.	If young people are to be encouraged to use buses they must be made more "trendy". "When is a bus not a bus? When it's an MK bus!" Embracing the bus as it is now will make MK like any other town and requires creativity and imagination if it is to fulfil the objectives of the transport strategy and differentiate the town from others.	This is part of the reason for the Strategy.
191.	Consideration needs to be given as to which market sectors use public transport and whether or not they are compatible.	See response to 19 above.

Respondent B-5 (Central Milton Keynes Partnership) - only comments directly related to the Bus Strategy are included here

192.	Financial Analysis. The recent CAGoT report highlights underfunding compared	Direct comparison with London is not entirely appropriate, as the regulatory
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	to other towns for public transport, for example, London is at the top of the scale where over £600m a year is currently spent supporting additional bus services. Pro-rata to its population this would equate to spending around £20m a year in MK compared to the present £2.5m.	and funding regime is completely different to that applicable in most of the UK. It is true that the bus network in Milton Keynes could be expanded if more funding was available but an increase to the London level would not be affordable.
193.	Relevant to all three strategies is the need for clear wayfinding and signing of the city centre to ensure optimal use of the parking stock, by both visitors and locals and increased use of public and other modes of transport with users able to confidently, efficiently and safely navigate the city.	See 130 above.

Respondent B-6 (Jamie Wheway, ITP)

194.	Full text reproduced below but key point of comment was that DRT services might be a more practical solution for Milton Keynes.	See new paragraph 6.7 covering issue of "Dial-a-Bus" services.
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Respondent B-7 (Milton Keynes Business Leaders Partnership Limited) - only comments directly related to the Bus Strategy are included here

195.	We see little in the proposals to inspire confidence that improved bus services alone can provide an adequate public transport response to the challenges presented by rapid population growth and the pressure this will impose on the road network and on parking provision. Milton Keynes needs and deserves a radical new mass transport system which would relieve pressure on road-based transport and enable bus services, car use and other "modal shift" patterns to co-exist sustainably. We also remain to be convinced that the local bus service, until now always a Cinderella among Milton Keynes' public services, can achieve the hoped-for improvements at a satisfactory pace.	The Strategy aims to build on the existing approach, which is delivering patronage growth.
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Respondent B-8 (Turley Associates on behalf of the joint owners of thecentre:mk Shopping Building)

196.	<p>We write on behalf of the joint owners of thecentre:mk Shopping Building, Prudential and The British Telecom Pension Scheme in respect of the Council's Bus Strategy Draft, September 2008.</p> <p>We note that the objective of the Draft Bus Strategy is to increase public transport choice through the development of the bus network to meet the needs of both existing bus users and encourage a modal shift from the private car. The key elements of the Bus Strategy are [as stated in the strategy]</p> <p>In relation to Central Milton Keynes, we note that the Bus Strategy aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the location of two main interchanges- at Midsummer Boulevard and the Central Rail Station; and • Continue the strategy where most cross-city bus services run along Midsummer Boulevard allowing interchange in the centre. The Council has applied for funding for 'super stops' which would mean four stopping points at the 'super stop' in each direction. <p>Given the above aims, and as custodians of thecentre:mk Shopping Building, our client fully supports a robust Bus Strategy for Milton Keynes. The Bus Strategy</p>	<p>The Strategy's links to the Transport Strategy Review have been strengthened.</p> <p>By developing and improving the bus services in Milton Keynes, the strategy will contribute to meeting the aspirations of the thecentre:mk.</p>
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	<p>should however, reflect the aspirations of adopted and emerging planning policy at both national, regional and local level to facilitate the planned expansion of Milton Keynes in terms of housing growth and the level of anticipated retail capacity identified for CMK in the emerging revision to the Retail Capacity Study, which aims to maintain and enhance CMK's role as a major regional shopping centre.</p> <p>We therefore consider that the draft strategy should take into account the contents of the emerging Transport and Car parking strategies to ensure a holistic approach to transport planning for Milton Keynes is taken in respect of the aforementioned aims.</p>	
197.	<p>Given this context, we consider that key stakeholders should be involved in the process, particularly at ownership level to ensure that there is a proper balance between the reduction in the use of the private car (as advocated by the emerging Car Parking strategy), raising car parking charges and the provision of new multi-storey car parking. Moreover, it should be recognised, that for thecentre:mk Shopping Building and CMK to fulfil its regional shopping centre status, sufficient car parking must be made available to cater for not only the indigenous population of MK, but also customers from outside MK that visit the centre every year.</p>	<p>These issues are addressed in the CMK Parking Strategy.</p>
198.	<p>To this end, and in respect of increasing public transport usage, it is considered that this cannot take place until sufficient investment is made in ensuring that the requisite infrastructure is in place to support a shift away from the private car. In addition, the aforementioned strategies should make clear the levels of funding required, the phasing of such funding, and the anticipated source of such funding, especially in respect of the planned 'super stops' and 'interchanges'. Furthermore, key stakeholders should be involved in discussions as to the location, size, design of these structures, in particular, where they are proposed adjacent to key assets, such as the centre:mk Shopping Building. This will ensure an integrated and inclusive approach that caters for the needs of those living, working and visiting CMK.</p> <p>We trust the above considerations will be taken into account when reviewing the Bus Strategy. If you have any queries or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at this office.</p>	<p>The points made here will be considered further as plans for these schemes are developed.</p>

Respondent B-9 (Alan Francis for Milton Keynes Green Party) [does not include comments on appendix C]

199.	<p>General</p> <p>We welcome the MK Bus Strategy as far as it goes but it is not ambitious enough. It will not achieve the desired and necessary modal shift and will not achieve the necessary reductions in CO2 emissions from the transport sector. Bus usage per capita needs to treble and MK population is planned to increase by about two thirds. The combination of required modal shift and population growth mean that bus usage in MK needs to increase by a factor of at least 5, ie 400%. The strategy should set out ways in which this can be achieved.</p>	<p>The Strategy aims to build on the existing approach, which is delivering patronage growth.</p> <p>See new/revised paragraphs 2.5 - 2.10 which expand on the issues around the growth in patronage.</p>
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	<p>The TSR notes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bus use in MK is much less than that in similar sized towns in the SE. The TSR should advocate MK reaching at least the same level as these other towns. If MK is to be a Sustainable Community then the proportion of travel by bus should be above average, not way below it. ▪ Bus patronage in MK increased by 11% between 2001/2 and 2005/6. However the population increased by about 8% over that period so the increase per capita was only about 3%, ie less than 1% per annum. 	
200.	About half the residents of MK do not have access to a car either at all times or at any time. They are therefore dependent upon public transport. Better public transport helps with social equity.	Developing and improving the bus services in Milton Keynes as the strategy intends will benefit all sectors of the community.
201.	Bus services outside London were deregulated by the Transport Act 1985. This has led to a decline in bus use outside London. Bus services within London are still regulated and usage has increased. MKC should lobby government for bus services in MK to be re-regulated so that the council can ensure that the appropriate bus services are provided within MK.	Noted, however the council stance on this point is indicated in para 9.4
202.	Para 2.5 - This notes that bus patronage has increased by 40% between 2001/2 and 2007/8. This welcome but it is not all due to modal shift. At least 10% is due to population growth in MK and some more is due to free/reduced travel for pensioners being introduced during the period.	See new/revised paragraphs 2.5 - 2.10 which expand on the issues around the growth in patronage.
203.	Para 2.7 The figures for bus usage in comparable SE towns should be included, as in table 2 [omitted here].	See new/revised paragraphs 2.5 - 2.10 which expand on the issues around the growth in patronage.
204.	Para 2.22 should include another 2 aims: - increase bus modal share to the UK average within 5 years and exceed it longer term - reduce transport impact on climate change	MKC does not have a mode share target. Reducing the impact of transport on climate change is not solely a Bus Strategy issue.
205.	Para 2.35 agree that bus and car parking are currently charged differently. There should be a policy to level the playing field.	These issues are addressed in the CMK Parking Strategy.
206.	Section 2 should have something about reducing transport impact on climate change.	See paragraph 2.23.
207.	Para 3.1 - MKP uses a figure of 350,000, why does this strategy only use 300,000 for 2031 population?	The data used in the Bus Strategy comes Milton Keynes Observatory data which in 2031 shows a projected population of 305,556.
208.	Why does section 3 not refer to the Transport Strategy Review which includes recommendations for increased bus use both in absolute and per capita terms?	See new/revised paragraphs 2.8 and 2.13
209.	Para 4.8 - The high speeds on grid roads make it difficult for buses to pull out from bus stop laybys and estate roads and to turn right into estates. This delays buses causing longer journey times and contributing to unreliability. Grid road speed limits should be reduced from 60/70 mph to 50 mph to improve safety, improve bus reliability and reduce pollution and CO2 emissions.	The bus strategy does not address the issue of grid road speed limits.
210.	Para 4.20 - targets in table 4.1 for 2011 need to be much higher – see above	These are the targets set in the LTP. MKC does not have a mode share

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	comment We note that the row “to increase bus modal share” that was in the 2006 draft has been omitted. To aid transparency and monitoring it should be reinstated.	target.
211.	Para 5.7 - This section should include support for travel planning, particularly for travel to work, to school and to stations and for personal travel plans.	See new/revised paragraphs 5.23 - 5.26
212.	Para 6.1 - It notes that the 2 LTPTV studies recommended a package of measures. LTPTV1 stated that the whole package had to be implemented to be effective, not just cherry-picking. However the council has indeed cherry picked.	See revised paragraph 6.4 - within the current legislative framework, the council will work in partnership with the bus operators to identify and deliver the core route network.
213.	<p>Para 6.2 - There are many different types of bus user with different requirements. These fall into two main groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some want a fast frequent service and are willing to walk some distance to catch those buses, eg to edge of grid square. ▪ Others want a service stopping very close to their home/destination and are not so concerned with journey time or frequency. <p>Currently many bus routes in MK try to satisfy both of these demands but fall between two stools and satisfy neither. While bus pax numbers are low this is inevitable. However as bus pax numbers rise different services can be introduced in the same corridor to satisfy these two different markets - there could be an express bus on the grid roads and a local bus which meanders through the estates. The strategy should address this issue.</p>	See 19 above.
214.	Para 6.3 - We fear that the indicative 8 core routes miss out or do not serve well a lot of key places. There may need to be more than 8 core routes to properly serve MK. All residential and employment areas should have bus services. Currently some employment areas, such as Old Wolverton and Knowlhill, do not have bus services. They should	See revised paragraph 6.4 and new/revised paragraphs 5.23 - 5.26
215.	<p>Para 8.19</p> <p>The TSR notes that MK has more car parking in its town centre than in similar sized towns in the SE and the cost of that car parking is either free or much less. The figures from the TSR, show that MK has about 4 times as much car parking as in similar sized towns in the SE and that the cost in MK for those with annual season tickets is less than a quarter of that in similar sized towns in the SE. We believe that the fact that MK has about one third of the bus usage than in similar sized towns in the SE is due to the fact that MK has 4 times as much parking at a quarter of the cost.</p> <p>Obviously if bus usage is to be increased then the surfeit and cheapness of car parking has to be addressed.</p> <p>There should be no free car parking spaces. These distort people’s travel expectations. People assume that because there are some free spaces they will be able to park in one. Consequently they drive to CMK. Even if there are no free</p>	These issues are addressed in the CMK Parking Strategy.

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	<p>spaces left and they have to pay they have already taken the decision about travel mode. If people know from the outset that they would have to pay to park in CMK they may make different travel choices.</p> <p>All day car parking charges should be increased to at least the level of a day pass for the buses (currently £3.20, but less if purchased weekly, monthly or annually). Thus for anyone living within MK it would always be cheaper to travel to work in CMK by bus than by car.</p> <p>Car parking charges of the order of just £1 per day (ie £225 per year) are so low that they do not even cover the cost of the provision of the space. This is typically at least £500 per year per space. The council is effectively subsidising those who drive into CMK and park there all day. Those who travel in by bus receive no subsidy, having to pay a commercial fare. It is absurd to subsidise car use but not bus use when both council and government policy is to encourage people to travel by bus rather than car.</p>	
216.	Para 9.3 Bus services outside London were deregulated by the Transport Act 1985. This has led to a decline in bus use outside London. However bus services within London are still regulated and useage has increased. MKC should lobby government for bus services in MK to be re-regulated so that the council can ensure that the appropriate bus services are provided within MK.	See 201
217.	Para 9.5 The most important factors for passengers are routes, frequency, fares first/last bus times. These should be included in a voluntary QBP.	See 201
218.	Para 9.11 The MKTP also has groups covering Stations and Cycling.	See revised paragraph 9.13
219.	Table 10.1 - There are no paras 9.21, 9.15, 9.16. Many others refer to incorrect para numbers.	See amended Table 10.1
220.	<p>There should be more investment in improving public transport in MK. We would propose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An orbital bus services around the periphery of the city to allow some orbital journeys to be made without travelling into CMK and out again 	On the issue of radial vs orbital routes, it is generally accepted that the biggest flows are on the radial routes to and from the town or city centre. This is why, in Milton Keynes as in most other towns and cities, the most frequent commercial services run to and from the city centre. In Milton Keynes, there are a few services that fulfil an "orbital" function (eg the 15/16 Westcroft-Bletchley and 43 Newport Pagnell - Wolverton) but these are not commercially viable (see new paragraph 6.12). Experience elsewhere of orbital bus services is not conclusive.
221.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Free bus travel within CMK: MK Metro currently charge £1.10 for journeys within CMK, a significant disincentive to PT use. Some US cities now offer free bus travel in downtown areas to discourage people from driving into and within the shopping/business districts. 	See 162 above.
222.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bus services on Silbury and Avebury blvds, possibly a loop around CMK. 	See 92 above. There are no plans to introduce a city centre loop service.
223.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More frequent early morning and evening bus services. The day-time 	See 20 above.

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	frequency should start by 7.00am and be maintained until at least 8.00pm, with those timings at CMK....	
224.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... Many rail commuters catch trains from MK Central about 7am and return at about 7pm. To reduce car use and car parking they should be able to get to and from the station by bus. Many shops now stay open well beyond 5.30pm and more people work flexible hours in offices. PT should accommodate these lifestyle changes. 	See 20 above.
225.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All buses that run on MSB should be routed through Midsummer Place. They can be segregated vertically from pedestrians and emissions can be kept away from pedestrians by means of the buses running through a tube, either above or below ground level. 	Provision of a tunnel under, or tube above, Midsummer Place would not be cost effective
226.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first MK Bus strategy proposed a number of bus interchange hubs, outside CMK, at places such as the Hospital and Stantonbury Campus. These should be built and bus routes altered to serve them. 	There are no plans in the short term for bus interchanges in these locations. At the hospital, better publicity might help so this point will be fed into the group considering the Marketing and Promotion plan (see Bus Strategy paragraphs 4.13 and 5.8 and Action No 50). (see 184)
227.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus services in MK should have transfer tickets. Many journeys require a change from one route to another, usually in CMK. A second ticket has to be bought. It should be possible to buy one through ticket from origin to destination. In many cities in other countries this is done by means of a transfer ticket. This should be introduced in MK. The day ticket does allow multiple trips/changes but may not suit all journeys. 	See new paragraph 5.22 and Action no 60
228.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There should be a more frequent service between CMK and Coachway and it should run at all times that long distance coaches are calling at Coachway. 	See 168 and 222 above.
229.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed redesign of Station Square to separate buses and cars should be completed in 2009. 	The timescale for this development is dependent on a number of factors.
230.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration should be given to a light rail/tram network for MK in the longer term. The grid road reserves and the wide boulevards in CMK mean that construction costs in MK would be considerably lower than in conventional towns. A decision about light rail needs to be taken before any decision about building closer to grid roads as part of increasing density within the city. 	There are no plans to introduce a light rail system.

Respondent B-10 (Professor Stephen Potter, Open University)

231.	Full text reproduced below but key point of comment was that DRT services might be a more practical solution for Milton Keynes.	See new paragraph 6.7
232.		
233.		

Respondent B-11 (Sara Mills, Theatre District) - only comments directly related to the Bus Strategy are included here

234.	The current alternatives to driving are non-existent. The reality of catching a bus from one of the MK estates, never mind further afield, would mean instead of a 10 minute journey in the car you would probably have to wait 20 mins for a bus then travel for an hour to reach your destination. If you were to try and walk from one	This is not the case - alternatives do exist and are used by commuters to Milton Keynes (by both bus and train).
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	of the estates, especially those slightly further away from the centre you would be looking at probably 1.5 – 2 hours walking. Which would you prefer to do?	
235.	From the Theatre District's point of view we predominately focus on the night time visitor and it is vital for those travelling in to enjoy MK after 7pm that they can park close by, ensure the parking area is well lit, safe and secure and is also free after 6pm. We actually lose out to many other surrounding towns with our lack of alternative realistic and suitably priced transport options to support evening visitors, so it is vital we do not lose our parking, and if anything, enhance the visitor's experience further with exceptional facilities, signposting and a safe town centre	See 3 above.

Respondent B-12 (Milton Keynes Partnership) - only comments directly related to the Bus Strategy are included here

236.	The Bus Strategy could benefit from a review of the effectiveness of the bus service provision to existing business / residential areas in CMK and how it is proposed that future services will support proposed growth areas in CMK and Campbell Park e.g. Silbury and Avebury Boulevards. The assumption is that Midsummer Boulevard will continue to provide the 'spine' routing of bus service provision; however, this will need to be reviewed as development progresses and new floorspace is occupied along Silbury and Avebury Boulevards especially as links to Campbell Park (sic).	See 92 above. There are no plans to introduce a city centre loop service.
237.	The strategy needs to also indicate how other proposed growth areas of Milton Keynes are to be serviced.	The mechanisms for funding bus services to new estates are outlined in Chapter 3.
238.	Bus strategy Table 10.1 details appropriate actions to deliver the bus strategy. These would benefit from more specific dates for their delivery and reporting processes	See amended Table
239.	The Bus Strategy could make reference to the current developing Regeneration Strategy and how the various areas will be serviced and linked via bus service provision. For example the 15 Super Output Areas identified in the Regeneration Strategy require public transport services which enable residents to access employment, especially shift and part time jobs, in key locations such as the hospital, Brinklow/Kingston, Bletchley, Wolverton and CMK.	See 3 above.
240.	The Bus Strategy should provide stronger emphasis on the need for promotion and marketing of travel planning to support the new bus service provision to the expansion areas. It could also give indications of how this might work and be managed. A reference to the prioritised transport programme (MKP Business Plan) to support such work would be helpful.	See new paragraphs 5.23 - 5.26

Respondent B-13 (Dorian Holloway, OU)

241.	The Open University has over 4,000 staff on site at the Walton Hall Campus in Milton Keynes. We have a Travel Plan that is reviewed regularly and includes support for bus provision. The University currently provides financial support for	Our understanding is that services 12 and 25 were provided on the basis of
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	<p>two public bus routes; the No 12 and the No 25. However MK Metro have given notice they are withdrawing these services with effect from 28 November 2008. In addition, we run our own peak time shuttle bus to and from Central Milton Keynes Station (restricted to University staff and visitors only) to promote travel choices.</p> <p>Our comments are as follows:-</p>	<p>a contract between the OU and MK Metro.</p>
242.	<p>There is an obvious absence of a core urban bus route in the South East Corner of the City including Walton Hall but also the Kents Hill, Walnut Tree, Wavendon Gate, Old Farm Park, Browns Wood and Caldecotte areas.</p> <p>If these areas are to be served only by secondary urban bus routes then the Strategy must include a commitment not to downgrade the services or support for the secondary routes in order to promote the core routes.</p>	<p>See revised paragraph 6.4.</p>
243.	<p>The Strategy should include regular review of the core routes including a willingness to scrap them and seek alternatives if a core route proves unsuccessful.</p>	<p>The intention would be that the cores routes will be sustainable in the long term.</p>
244.	<p>The Strategy is flawed in highlighting the weakness of the current service provision as being public 'perception'. Your own strategy reports consistent dissatisfaction with bus services. This is factual, tangible evidence indeed backed up by our own experience as a major employer trying, with our own resources, to engage with the bus companies and to promote wider bus use. We feel it does the strategy a great disservice to dismiss this tangible evidence as merely perception. In order to move forward it requires an acceptance that the current provision, at times, operates at an unacceptable standard.</p>	<p>The fact that the existing pattern of operation is delivering increased bus patronage does suggest a degree of satisfaction with the bus services in Milton Keynes.</p>
245.	<p>The operator partnership section of the Strategy, whilst a worthwhile aspiration, will require a considerable commitment from the bus operators to raising customer service standards. In our experience, feedback to the bus operating companies on service standards is not generally welcomed by them. Much of it receives neither an acknowledgement let alone a response and dealing with them is generally a thankless and frustrating process. The partnership with the operators will not work unless there is a genuine commitment on the part of the bus operators to initiate a change in attitude towards customer service. At present, in our experience, they are either unresponsive or defensive rather than welcoming feedback as an opportunity to improve their business practices and ultimately their own profitability.</p>	<p>The council is not able to dictate how the bus operators respond to comments or queries or train their staff, although a key part of the Quality Bus Partnership (see Chapter 9) is that MK Metro improve their customer care training.</p>
246.	<p>The Strategy aim to improve the availability of bus service information is welcomed. In our view the single largest item that will improve this provision will be a comprehensive real time system rolled out across the City and not just restricted to the identified core routes. In addition to displays at the stops the availability of real time bus information accessible over the web would be a huge benefit to large employers such as ourselves in assisting bus promotion schemes. This would permit our employees, at a glance, to see if their particular bus was</p>	<p>See 185 above.</p>

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	running to time or not. We believe this will also help reduce the dissatisfaction with the current bus service standards as users will start to rely upon the real time information and less on the published timetable.	
247.	We note with interest the Strategy provisions relating to accessibility. Again this requires a commitment from the bus companies. As part of our Disability Equality Strategy we asked the bus companies to provide information on the percentage of accessible buses within their fleets. We never received the courtesy of a reply. Again this ties in with our earlier comments relating to Customer Service attitudes.	The council is not able to dictate how the bus operators respond to comments or queries or train their staff, although a key part of the Quality Bus Partnership (see Chapter 9) is that MK Metro improve their customer care training. Para 4.18 indicates the targets that have to be achieved for DDA compliance.
248.	Under bus service reliability we wondered if the bus punctuality improvement partnership could include a requirement for some form of single time measurement system. We have found, on occasion, that when we report user complaints from our own staff the bus operators on board time recording system does not always match the service times reported to us by our staff.	While a "single time measurement system" would resolve these issues, it is not something that would be easily achievable.
249.	Could the bus improvement partnership include scope for a single ticketing system? So tickets could be purchased, possibly off bus, that were available for use across all the bus operators and possibly include tie ins with rail ticketing so combined bus and rail saver schemes could be available.	Combined bus/rail ticketing is available through PlusBus, although only for purchase at stations. See also revised Paragraph 5.22 and Action Nos 60 - 62
250.	Payments systems - local major employers such as the University, Milton Keynes Hospital etc could be approached as part of the payment system section of the strategy to encourage inclusion of off-bus ticketing facilities at the employer's location. The Open University would be receptive to an approach to include ticket machines on our Campus or indeed sell off bus tickets via our catering outlets.	See revised Para 5.21 and Action Nos 59.
251.	Could the proposed direct link from Newport Pagnell via the Coachway to Milton Keynes General Hospital include being routed via the Open University? MK Metro have withdrawn from provision of the No 25 Newport Pagnell - Open University service from 28 November 2008 and the strategy should consider routing any new service via the University	This is something that will be considered as plans for this service are developed.
252.	Could the Strategy include either funding towards or the provision of services to replace the No 12 (Stony Stratford - Open University) and/or the No 25 (Newport Pagnell - Open University) services, both are due to cease on 28 November 2008 following MK Metro's decision to withdraw from the routes.	Services 12 and 25 are not services that would have been provided by the Council on a subsidised basis under existing policy, or under any new policies that might arise following the adoption of the new Bus Strategy, unless external funding was available such as that from the Open University, as alternative services exist by changing bus in Central Milton Keynes. The provision of bespoke bus services might follow from the travel planning process (see also 187 above)
253.	In summary, whilst the draft Bus Strategy has a number of merits it is largely reliant on the performance of the bus operators. Without a genuine commitment from the bus operators to drive up customer service standards then the other aspirations within the draft Strategy will be undermined by the dissatisfaction arising from actually using the services. In our judgement, the single largest impact the Strategy can deliver quickly will be the widespread provision of real time information and that is where we believe	The Strategy aims to build on the existing approach, which is delivering patronage growth. On the issue of real time information see 185 above.

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	you should direct your immediate efforts.	
Respondent P-1 [name omitted]		
254.	Park and ride services do not stop people using cars, they only limit where the car is taken	They do however reduce the number of car journeys into the city centre but the availability and cost of parking in CMK will be a key factor in determining whether park and ride can succeed.
255.	Concern that some frequencies are to be reduced - to encourage modal shift, bus services must be regular and comfortable.	This is a misunderstanding of the second of the "Key Elements" (see paragraph 1.2). The reference to services "that provide good access to estates and rural areas but that are less frequent" is not intended to mean that existing service levels in these areas would be reduced, compared to those in operation now. The strategy puts these into the context of a hierarchy of services (as detailed in Chapter 6) where these bus services would support other more frequent services which form the core network
256.	Bus services should run on the grid roads, not through the estates. This would reduce journey times and save fuel.	See 19 above.
Respondent P-2 [name omitted]		
257.	More frequent evening buses, with better connections to trains at Bletchley.	See 20 above.
258.	Improved bus information is required at Bletchley railway station to (1) point potential passengers to the bus stops (2) give information on services and times.	See 130 above.
259.	Move Bletchley bus station to the Sherwood Drive entrance to the rail station. There is room (and facilities for the drivers) and part of the existing bus station could be sold for redevelopment.	The future of Bletchley Bus Station is dependent on the progress of development schemes in the areas (see paragraph 6.20 Action No 51)
Respondent P-3 [name omitted]		
260.	Bus services should run on the grid roads, not through the estates. This would reduce journey times and make the services more attractive. Also the routes would be easy to understand: The buses could be numbered according to their roads, e.g. the bus running along H2 would be called H2 or along V4 it would be V4. Anywhere in MK could be reached with just two buses and the routes would be faster and more comfortable. Community transport caters for those with disabilities so running through the estates is not necessary.	See 19 above. The radial nature of the current bus service network means that the most popular destination (Central Milton Keynes) can be reached by most residents without a change of bus, something that would not be possible if the buses only ran on the grid roads with interchange points at junctions.
261.	The buses need to be more comfortable with greater leg room. To compete with private transport standards have to be improved.	See 86 above.
Respondent P-4 [name omitted]		
262.	Does not think that "services that provide good access to estates and rural areas but that are less frequent is at all a good idea". If people are to be encouraged to use our cars less and use public transport more, to have less frequent services is surely not the way to do it. People say all the time about how bad the service is time keeping, frequency etc and surely this should be improved not made worse.	See 255 above.

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Respondent P-5 [name omitted]

263.	Changes to bus times so that buses depart Milton Keynes Central Station in line with popular/fast commuter trains.	See 20 above.
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Respondent P-6 [name omitted]

264.	Punctuality is poor.	See 1 above.
265.	To provide up to date information on delays, there should be a manned free-phone number for the public to call, and bus drivers should have mobile phones.	This is a matter for the bus operator - the Council is not able to dictate how the bus operators deal with these issues. The Real Time system will assist in providing some information on delays but provision of "at-stop" displays will be concentrated on key locations.
266.	Employers (eg Hanslope Park) "should be heavily encouraged to co-operate in encouraging use of bus services".	See 187 above.

Respondent P-7 [name omitted]

267.	More frequent evening buses, with better links to employment sites.	See 2 above.
268.	More frequent evening buses, with better connections with trains at Milton Keynes Central Station.	See 20 above.
269.	Issues of anti-social behaviour on buses.	See 12 above.
270.	"Buses are for losers" - the image of bus travel needs to change.	This is part of the reason for the Strategy.

Respondent P-8 [name omitted]

271.	Bus service publicity could be dramatically improved with the publication of a tube-style map.	See 130 above.
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Respondent P-9 [name omitted]

272.	Can you please explain why bus companies in Milton Keynes feel the need to go all though every estate. Why can't they just stop on the main roads, there is usually a main road not too far away. This works very well in London, why not here.	See 19 above
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Respondent P-10 [name omitted]

273.	The on-line route planner is excellent. However, few people are even aware of its existence. Why not persuade the local free newspapers to include useful links in their pages and stick this one at the top of the list?	See 130 above.
274.	Timetables in the bus shelters do not always match the actual time timetables. Accurate and clear time tables are the absolute must.	See 130 above. Specific locations where this occurs should be reported to the Council so that corrections can be made.
275.	Buses only have their number on the front of a bus. If you are new in an area, it is helpful to notice buses as then leave as well as when they arrive so you can learn which buses frequent your area, so why not put the number on the rear of the bus.	This is a matter for the bus operator - the Council is not able to dictate how the bus operators deal with these issues. However newer buses do have the number at the rear but this will only occur as the bus operators invest in new vehicles.
276.	Buses do not always show their destinations which is confusing. I believe this is a	This is a matter for the bus operator - the Council is not able to dictate how

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	short coming of the drivers who forget to alter the destination turning round. Why not make this automatic?	the bus operators deal with this issue, other than on contracted services although MK Metro have recently invested in more electronic displays.
277.	Bus stops should have real time indications of imminent arrivals. This is now used in many other towns.	See 85 above.
278.	Drivers should be polite. Often they are surly and even bad tempered. Drivers should not be in such a rush. The rides often compete well with some of the rides at Alton Towers.	See 87 above.
279.	Drivers should not have to take money. Why not put ticket machines in the buses. When you purchase your ticket, you then validate it in much the same way as just about all other European transport systems. This would solve point 278 above since the driver would not need to interact with the public. Also means there is no cash available for prospective muggers. Why not make it possible to buy tickets before getting on to a bus - say at local newspaper shops and local centres.	The council will work with bus operators to develop off-bus ticketing mechanisms, via retail outlets, on-street machines, internet and mobile phone, and to speed up the introduction of ITSO compliant ticket machines fitted with smart-card readers (see revised paragraphs 5.20 and 5.21 and Action Nos 58 - 62).

Respondent P-11 [name omitted]

280.	My husband is registered disabled and has thought about applying for the bus pass which he is entitled to. This is all very well but as his carer and the fact that he cannot go out on his own does not really help us as I still have to pay the full fare for journeys. It would be helpful if people with disabilities and who need constant care that the carers be included in being able to obtain this pass too.	There is no requirement in law for the Council to offer concessionary fares for carers of disabled residents, and at the present time there are no plans to do so.
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Respondent P-12 [name omitted]

281.	Many of the buses arriving at Milton Keynes Central station are displaying bits of paper with route numbers on. This has been a practice by MK Metro for along time, I do not feel this is expectable and why doesn't the council inspector take this up with the bus company.	See 276 above.
282.	I also feel the bus stops themselves could be more striking.	See 130 above.
283.	Recently there was an exhibition in Birmingham about Trolleybuses. It would be nice to see trolleybuses on the cross city core routes.	There are no plans at the present time to move to alternatives to conventional buses.

Respondent P-13 [name omitted]

284.	Hello, thanks for the opportunity to be consulted on the bus strategy. I have struggled with this rambling 66 page monstrosity. It is a mixture of strategy, aims, desires, objectives, statements of fact, unsubstantiated personal views, and prescribed solutions. Not much in the way of strategic solution options. It is poorly written, full of split infinitives, superfluous verbosity, and absurd convoluted sentences. I wonder how many people have had a go at writing it, each seems to have added extra words or phrases!	The Strategy aims to build on the existing approach, which is delivering patronage growth.
285.	You don't use the same words in the leaflet and the big document. [There follows a point by point comment on the contents of the leaflet]	The leaflet was intended as an introduction to the full Bus Strategy and was put together with advice from the Communications Team. Its content is

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		based on the "Executive Summary" of the Bus Strategy (page 4) which is developed further in the remainder of the Strategy
286.	I found these objectives which are great! [There follows a point by point comment on the aims included at Paragraph 2.24] ... but no mention of " <i>commercially viable bus service accessible to all!</i> "	While not stated at 2.24, this would be the result of the aims listed.
287.	Paragraph 2.33 - This is untrue, yes there is a set of leisure red ways, but frequently the redway network is more direct than roads, in most cases running parallel with or under the roads. It is usually quicker to cycle by the redway than drive a car. There are a few exceptions - some mad people have decided to paint bicycles on the city centre traffic light junctions and make the city centre underpasses cycle free and even filled-in some underpasses!	Paragraph 2.27 - while it is possibly true that it is usually quicker to cycle than to drive, it is the second half of the paragraph that is important - distances are greater due to the generally low density of development.
288.	Paragraph 4.18 (first sub-paragraph) Is this some sort of pledge? I thought the council has just made all the bus stops higher? Do you know that for good many years buses have been able to kneel down	Paragraph 5.13 - this is not a pledge, because implementation will depend on the availability of funding. Not all the bus stops have raised kerbs yet, there are several important locations where this work is still required (in CMK and at Bletchley bus station amongst others). While some buses can "kneel" the best way of making use of the "easy access" capability is in conjunction with a raised kerb.
289.	Paragraph 7.5 - What atrocious English!	
290.	Paragraph 6.8 - So, this cannot be altered? It does have the largest number of existing routes terminating here, but it is not a key destination for employment, only between the hours of 7am-9am and 5pm-8pm. Shopping takes place between the hours of 9am and 8pm and is less time critical, leisure peak hours are midnight-3am.	Central Milton Keynes is the major employment centre in Milton Keynes Borough with nearly 20% of all the jobs. This does make it a key destination for employment journeys. It is also the largest shopping centre. We recognise that links to other employment areas need to be improved (see paragraphs 5.4 and 5.5 and 6.8)
291.	Paragraph 6.9 - This is not a strategy, this is the current situation (of most cross city bus services running along Midsummer Boulevard in CMK).	While it is the current situation that most cross city bus services run along Midsummer Boulevard, the intention of Paragraph 6.9 is to state that it is intended to maintain this situation.
292.	Paragraph 6.9 - On the aim of improving interchange with the core routes converging on Midsummer Boulevard: This is absurd; the longest and slowest part of the journey is the trip from the fringe of the city area to the so-called interchange. MK seems to have several interchanges, all inappropriate - either riddled with speed humps or cobbles or tight corners. If you want a public transport spine, then make it a drive through, car free, hump free, corridor.	We agree that Midsummer Boulevard, as the public transport spine, should ideally be "a drive through, car free, hump free, corridor", and we want to see changes that will improve the situation. Other paragraphs acknowledge that improvements are required in other locations.
293.	Paragraph 6.9: Who says that buses work best on radial rather than on orbital routes?	See 220 above.
294.	The most effective way to operate a service is in a loop. There should be a city centre loop service which runs around the boulevards to the station and to the Coachway with a frequency matching the arrival and departure of trains and coaches.	It is intended to provide an improved link from the Railway Station via Central Milton Keynes to the new Coachway when it opens next year but there are no plans to introduce a city centre loop service.
295.	Paragraph 6.12 states that it is also proposed to develop a multi-modal interchange at Milton Keynes Central Rail Station: Why do buses go to the	Paragraph 6.18 is not referring to a redevelopment of the old bus station but to the proposed scheme for Station Square. There is no intention to

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	Station? MK must rid itself of this concept of a "big bus depot". It is completely pointless but it does look nice to have all the buses in a row. It is nice for the drivers to have a canteen, but people just don't want to be in a draughty urine soaked dirty wind tunnel. Drivers can have their dinner at home. The bus should pass by the station every 10 minutes and go round its loop. Good grief not again, were you here before Chicago's? Oh yes it was a bus depot!	make more use of the bus station (see revised paragraph 6.18)
296.	Paragraph 6.14 refers to the need for improved facilities for buses and bus users at Stony Stratford town centre: <i>The buses only seem to go to the Old Bus Station, because they always have. There are no services to the North of the town. Why not around through the town in a loop? There is no bus stop at the Old Stratford end of town. The town is full of old people.</i>	There have been attempts to divert services 14 and 89 along the High Street in Stony Stratford but it has not been possible, so far, to achieve this because of issues with car parking along Church Street, Silver Street and Horsefair Green.

Respondent P-14 [name omitted]

297.	I have read the leaflet issued about transport in MK. I don't know why anyone thinks public transport here is anything but poor MK is definitely car-focused - the central shopping area is highly pedestrian unfriendly in terms of vast parking lots and fast roads you have to cross to reach the mall.	The Strategy recognises that Milton Keynes is car focused, and, by the improvements outlined in it, we are trying to reduce that focus by providing an alternative to the car.
298.	I don't think there is anything very modern or urban about the public transport system here. The way the town continues to be constructed seems still to stick to the grid road system, with housing very spread out and the pedestrian sidewalks far from the roads. It's about time there was a radical rethink about this and best of all some action	The Strategy acknowledges that new developments need to be more public transport focussed (see Chapter 3).
299.	Plus Sainsbury's has now moved away from the other shops and the only way to reach it is by car - I cannot see anyone walking to/from there with any quantity of shopping. And no buses stop near it. Whose brilliant idea was this? I prefer to do all my shopping on Thursday night and without a car I would find it impossible to do food and other shopping in CMK.	The new Sainsbury's is served by bus, service 7, with the nearest stops being on Avebury Boulevard. We accept, however, that for a large "shop" a car would be required but that is a wider issue and not just one for Milton Keynes.
300.	I work at the OU - there is one direct bus to and from it daily from where I live (Wolverton). It has been withdrawn, along with the direct bus from Newport Pagnell to OU, and no replacement is yet forthcoming. As the OU is a major employer this seems pretty shabby to me and not very environmentally conscious.	The direct bus services to the OU were funded by the Open University - not by the Council. It is up to the OU to decide if they wish to continue that funding. It would not be possible to provide frequent through journeys from every potential origin.
301.	It is hard to get from OU to hospital by bus - a tiny distance.	Service 20 links the OU and the hospital although it is infrequent.
302.	There is a bus from Wolverton to Newport Pagnell which takes nearly an hour to travel ?5km	There is a more direct service from Wolverton to Newport Pagnell (service 42) which takes about 15 minutes but it is very poorly used, suggesting that there is little demand for a direct service.
303.	Also many of the buses seem to be barely roadworthy and some are real rattletraps. A lot of the older buses are very uncomfortable to ride on.	The maintenance of buses is governed by very strict standards administered by the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) which provides a range of licensing, testing and enforcement services with the aim of improving the roadworthiness standards of vehicles and ensuring the compliance of operators and drivers.

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		The Strategy acknowledges the need to raise the overall quality of vehicles (see paragraph 4.18 and Action Numbers 43 - 45)
304.	To get to the Coachway at J14 (or even the temporary one) requires careful planning - there are few direct buses; they pack up around 10pm. Consequently many people have to use expensive taxis or ask friends for lifts. X5 are sometimes not on schedule. Any European visitor arriving here would be horrified about the non- links between Coachway and centre, train station and centre/anywhere else	There are up to nine buses per hour from Central Milton Keynes to the temporary Coachway - it would not be possible to provide through journeys from every potential origin. It is intended to provide an improved link from the Railway Station via Central Milton Keynes to the new Coachway when it opens next year.
305.	To travel to Coachway (temporary or not) I usually err on the side of caution and allow 45 minutes to get to CMK from Wolverton - some of the routes are very slow and visit a lot of estates on the way (No 4 in particular). They seem to be scheduled to leave Wolverton at around the same time then there can be a big gap. Getting back can be even worse	See 19 above (grid roads vs estates).
306.	Does anyone on MK council or employees of it actually travel by bus here? I do have a car and will use buses when I can but mostly on the weekend as currently it is very time consuming to travel to work any other way. I don't always work 9-5, and I think most people spend enough time in work without having to spend hours getting there and back.	Yes, there are MKC employees that regularly travel by bus. We acknowledge that the buses will not be suitable for all journeys. The Bus Strategy is not anti-car but has the overall aim of improving the provision of bus services in Milton Keynes.
307.	There is almost no information at the central train station about buses - no office or person to ask. The electronic board in the station is not very useful.	We are aware that information about buses at the Railway Station needs to be improved and we are trying to achieve this, in the areas to which we have access, by working with the bus operators and other partners. The electronic board referred to only shows those services that appear in the national rail timetable (X5 and the VT99 to Luton Airport). It is hoped that there will eventually be a stand alone display for bus services as part of the Milton Keynes Real Time project - see also 130 above.

Respondent P-15 [name omitted]

308.	Milton Keynes was built as the town of the car. Modern trends for greener travel should not necessarily be incompatible with that. The fact is that many businesses have decided to create employment in Milton Keynes, specifically because access by car for their staff and clients is easier than other older town, where pressure on parking is making it increasingly difficult to recruit staff and clients to get at our services. It is a proven fact that when public transport is modern, comfortable, accessible, and easy-to-use, it gets used. One need only look at the mass transport systems in the European towns and cities, where buses and tram timetables are easy to understand and run reliably to the places that people wish to go to, to see that this is so. Abroad, public transport is used for the following variety of things: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • going to work/school • delivering the post 	The Strategy aims to build on the existing approach, which is delivering patronage growth.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • getting home after entertainment • shopping • sightseeing 	
309.	<p>There is absolutely no reason why a new town like Milton Keynes should not have similar good public transport to attract townsfolk away from cars. It just needs to run:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • early enough in the morning until late enough at night • be punctual • allow the occasional visitor to understand easily, where it goes from to and how often 	<p>The Strategy aims to bring about improvements in these areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paragraphs 5.4 and 5.5 and Action No 25 ▪ Paragraph 4.9 and Action No 14 ▪ Paragraphs 4.13 and 5.10 and Action No 54
310.	<p>To that end, I would make the following suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus timetables and rates are not often understood. Casual visitors, will not use buses if they do not know where they go to and from and how regularly. 	<p>The Strategy aims to bring about improvements in the marketing and promotion of bus services in Milton Keynes (Paragraphs 4.13 and 5.10 and Action No 54).</p>
311.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yet everyone now carries a mobile phone. If when at a bus stop, why cannot information about the buses which go from that stop and when the next ones are due, be sent free to that user's phone if they request it? A simple innovation like this might cause significant extra use. An experiment would indicate what additional take-up there would be for bus usage. The technology is already deployed in many places (WiFi nodes in buildings and Wimax, transmitters could be put on buses themselves). • I would suggest that single innovation would be far more effective in increasing use of public transport within the town, than raising parking fees, or any flirtation with new mass transport systems such as trams or light railway systems. • There is no need to discriminate against the car. Cars are expensive and if public transport is cheaper, reliably convenient and comfortable then people will use it. 	<p>Bus information by text is already available - each bus stop has been allocated a seven letter code which the user can text to 84268. Unfortunately (a) the service is not free, there is a charge of 25p plus the normal text sending charge and (b) in Milton Keynes it is not widely publicised, although codes are included in some of the roadside timetable displays. This is will be fed into the group considering the Marketing and Promotion plan.</p>

Respondent P-16 [name omitted]

312.	<p>Having read the consultation it strikes me that there has been little discussion re: creating more bus services so that bus users do not have to go all the way to the city in order to get to areas that may be slightly east or west of their own. By this I mean there are a lot of bus services running across the north - south divide but not east - west. I often have to walk very long distances to get to other locations, or decide not to travel at all a) because it would take too long to travel into the city and back out again, or b) the most direct bus route does not have space for push chairs and the buses run irregularly. Having come from a city [London] where I can catch a bus in whatever direction I choose I find this highly irritating.</p>	<p>See 293 above.</p> <p>In London the entire bus network is subsidised at a cost of around £600 million. If an equivalent sum was spent in Milton Keynes, it would be £20 million, eight times the amount that is currently available for bus subsidy.</p>
313.	<p>On another note - it might be an idea to run a campaign to encourage people who use buses to be more courteous to each other, eg parents being encouraged to</p>	<p>See 12 above. However, this idea will be fed into the group considering the Marketing and Promotion plan (Paragraphs 4.13 and 5.10 and Action</p>

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<p>position their buggies horizontally instead of vertically in front of the disabled seats to allow more children on the bus; offering seats to elderly and disabled people instead of seating able bodied children on seats that are needed by those aforementioned; asking people to turn their headphones / mobile phones down when playing music.</p>	<p>No 54)</p>
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Respondent P-17 [name omitted]

<p>314. Speaking as a resident of Shenley Church End and a frequent car user, I suggest the following: Each village should be connected directly to a central hub (station/main shopping zone) – these services should be the core ones as most car journeys that could be offset to bus that are used for commuting/ travelling and city centre shopping</p>	<p>A key part of the Strategy is the development of the core radial routes feeding into CMK - as you correctly point out, this should provide an alternative to the majority of car journeys.</p>
<p>315. The station and main shopping zone should be connected by ideally electric bus e.g. trolley bus (tram being too expensive)</p>	<p>There is already a frequent bus service between the railway station and the main shopping zone - rather than add something else, marketing and promotion of the existing bus links need to be significantly improved.</p>
<p>316. Investigate the use of a tunnel under the new shopping zone where it interrupts Midsummer for these services</p>	<p>Provision of a tunnel under Midsummer Place would not be cost effective.</p>
<p>317. Inter village services should be secondary priority to the spider services (see 1 above)</p>	<p>This is the effect of the “Core Routes” concept.</p>

Respondent P-18 [name omitted]

<p>318. Promotion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the information is not easily available ▪ better information required in bus shelters, including maps and timetables ▪ higher frequencies could lead to simpler publicity ▪ use a similar template for the redway map and the bus map 	<p>We recognise that there are issues in this area - the Strategy aims to bring about improvements in the marketing and promotion of bus services in Milton Keynes (Paragraphs 4.13 and 5.10 and Action No 54). The specific points raised will be fed into the group considering the Marketing and Promotion plan.</p>
<p>319. Poor services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ to Woughton-on-the-Green - what about school times? ▪ lack of evening services (after 6/7pm bus service is non-existent) 	<p>The service to Woughton-on-the-Green is subsidised by the Council and it is not possible, at the present time, to justify a more frequent service. It is untrue to say that evening bus services are non-existent, however, the Council accepts the need to improve evening bus services across the borough but this will have to be subject to the availability of funding (see paragraphs 5.4 and 5.5 and Action Numbers 25).</p>
<p>320. Bus fares in Milton Keynes are very high:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ need to improve ticketing system and range of discounts ▪ could Oyster card be extended to MK? 	<p>See 279 above. Oyster cards cannot be used in Milton Keynes, and as the Oyster card scheme is not ITSO compliant, it is unlikely that this will be possible.</p>

Respondent P-19 [name omitted]

<p>321. Poor services - Unreliability of operation</p>	<p>See 1 above.</p>
<p>322. Poor services - Poor service frequency</p>	<p>Improving service frequencies is part of the strategy, through the development of the core routes.</p>
<p>323. Lack of real time information at stops</p>	<p>See 85 above.</p>

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324.	Quality of buses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poor ride quality ▪ Lack of adequate destination information 	See 303 above.
325.	Ticket machines that do not work	See 320 above, also MK Metro know that their ticket machines need to be replaced, but it is a substantial investment.
326.	Bus Shelters - Some shelters are very basic.	The Strategy aims to bring about improvements to bus infrastructure but this is subject to the availability of funding (Paragraphs 4.17, 5.11 and 5.13 and Action No 42).
327.	Better information required in bus shelters, including timetables for both directions.	See 318 above.

Respondent P-20 [name omitted]

328.	I have read the document on-line. If there is a real determination to get people out of their cars and on to buses then there needs to be an increase not only on direct routes but in the frequency of buses from some areas. Olney has a 2 hourly service to Bedford and this can mean hanging around prior to an appointment or after one. Also, if you go to the station in Bedford by bus then you cannot get a bus back after 6.45 pm.	See 3 and 10 above
329.	Going to MK rail station takes about an hour. In the end it is just easier to take the car even if your preference is to go by bus.	The Strategy acknowledges that journey times are extended by the need to follow circuitous routes, both to pick up rural settlements (eg Ravenstone) and to improve access to parts of the urban area (eg Milton Keynes Village on service 17). There is a specific action to consider the provision of faster peak time journeys from the north of the borough (Olney/Lavendon) to Central Milton Keynes. (See paragraphs 7.4 and Action Number 37).
330.	We also lost our direct bus to London when the same service could have continued but perhaps with, in that case, a reduced frequency. Consequently, we now have to drive to Bedford or CMK for the train.	The through service to London was withdrawn by Stagecoach due to reducing demand, partly as the result of improved train services.
331.	I hope that every area in Milton Keynes will have a public meeting to enable residents to contribute to future planning.	Representations can be made via your parish council or Borough Councillor, although we recognise that community engagement needs to be improved. This will be one aspect of the bus user group (see paragraph 9.14 and Action no 19)

Respondent P-21 [name omitted]

332.	I would like to make a comment on the public transport system in Milton Keynes, as we all know the city was designed and built for the car user which makes it very difficult to create a good public transport system, in the circumstances I feel the council and the new bus operators have done a reasonable job in creating the bus network. The improvements to the number 4 and 5 service have made a tremendous difference in providing quality buses running to a frequent timetable and the public	Positive comment.
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	have responded. The cross city number 8 service is also a good service with quality buses providing a good link between the new population areas of Westcroft and the city to Kingston which are well used.	
333.	On other routes the main problem are the buses themselves, it will not encourage people to travel on a bus if they do not know the type of bus that is coming next, a lot of people travel with a buggy or a pram plus many disabled people, how can you encourage people to travel on a bus over 20 years old or one with a bar in the middle of the entrance and the exit, ridiculous.	The Strategy acknowledges the need to raise the overall quality of vehicles (see paragraph 4.18 and Action Numbers 43 - 45)
334.	I get on this bus outside the Great Linford Primary school, a busy stop on this route, yet there is no bus shelter to protect passengers from the Wind and the Rain, this is disgusting how can you expect more people to travel on the route when you cannot even provide a bus shelter.	See 326 above.
335.	On the question of shelter from the elements single bus shelters are not good enough at both city centre stops, they should all be covered and connected to the entrances to the shopping centre, people do not like getting soaked after getting off or getting on a bus after or before shopping in a modern indoor shopping centre.	See 326 above.
336.	I feel there should be better direction signs at the Railway Station for people to see at eye level where the buses are going and ...	See 307 above. This issue will be fed into the group considering the Marketing and Promotion plan (see paragraphs 4.13 and 5.8 and Action No 50).
337.	... it should be Free Of Charge from the station to the shopping Centre, also all Bus Shelters should be covered from one end to the other and linking to the station entrance.	See response to comment 162 above
338.	It has to be accepted that a large section of the population would never dream of getting on a bus even if it was Free of Charge, this detracts from there being a better bus service but is a fact of life. The improvements I have suggested are not major but will contribute to a much better service for the people that use the buses and will attract more of the floating population.	The Strategy aims to build on the existing approach, which is delivering patronage growth.

Respondent P-24 (Bedford Area Bus Users Society)

339.	I am writing ... to offer some ideas on the most needed improvements to the Milton Keynes bus network. Our remit is limited to those services of importance for journeys to/from Bedford Borough or Mid Bedfordshire. [There follows a list of detailed suggestions for improving interurban services around Milton Keynes, which would have to be delivered by joint working with all the neighbouring authorities]	Noted - the strategy refers to the need to work with neighbouring authorities to maintain and develop cross boundary services (see Paragraph 5.6, 72 and 7.4 Action no 26)
340.	Our group has had representations from residents of Lavendon who attend a doctor's surgery in Harrold about the need for a regular service [detailed suggestion follows].	There are links from Lavendon to Olney where there is a surgery. It is not possible to provide through journeys from every potential origin to every potential destination.
341.	Prior to the redevelopment of Coachway, Stagecoach X5 was plagued by peak	The current roadworks in that area are intended to relieve this congestion

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<p>time delays in the vicinity of M1 J14. The current roadworks in that area are no doubt intended to relieve this congestion, but I have grave doubts whether this will in fact happen, particularly for westbound buses approaching Coachway on the A509 during the morning peak. Will Milton Keynes Council monitor the situation and take corrective action if major delays occur when the new Coachway opens?</p>	<p>but the situation will be kept under review.</p>
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Respondent P-25 [name omitted]

<p>342. I would like to see a bus that comes through Stony Stratford [High Street]. People living at the by pass end of the town have no bus service without at least a 10 minute walk - many elderly people are unable to walk this far.</p>	<p>See Comment 296.</p>
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Respondent P-26 [name omitted]

<p>343. My comments on the bus strategy are set out below. I write as a resident of Milton Keynes for 25 years and a non-car user throughout that period. Most of my comments on bus and pedestrian facilities are based on personal experience and observation. I have tried to relate my comments to the most appropriate paragraph but in some cases they address issues raised in more than one paragraph.</p>	<p>Positive comment</p>
<p>344. 2.12 Attracting trips that would otherwise be made using a car It is unlikely that the local bus service will ever be sufficiently comprehensive to offer a door to door service for the majority of journeys. Therefore, good pedestrian facilities need to be developed ... as for shorter journeys walking can be a better alternative than the bus. In some parts of the city the existing network of footpaths and redways is excellent but in some of the newest developments pedestrian facilities are being neglected and existing facilities are even being destroyed.</p>	<p>We acknowledge that buses will not meet every need.</p>
<p>345. 2.16 Encourage Young People to Use Buses In European cities today (and in the UK many decades ago) it is common to see small groups of supervised primary school age children travelling on service buses during the school day. Local schools should be encouraged to include such outings in the curriculum. Not only does this teach children how the bus service works, it is also an opportunity to teach appropriate behaviour on the bus.</p>	<p>The council has developed a Sustainable School Transport Strategy to address the issues around School Transport.</p>
<p>346. 2.19 Bus Stops After years of unsuitable bus shelters, including some that were clearly primarily for advertising and offered negligible shelter, the current generation of shelters are a welcome improvement. Bus stop information has also improved although the computerised listings do include errors and omissions especially at busy stops.</p>	<p>See 130 above. Specific locations where this occurs should be reported to the Council so that corrections can be made.</p>
<p>347. For bus routes that run through the estates there are few shelters but perhaps consideration could be given to mounting timetables/information displays on lamp</p>	<p>See 130 above.</p>

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	<p>posts. It is also the case that some passengers are not aware that an alternative route may offer a better service for the cost of a short walk. It would therefore be useful if roadside displays could give an indication of the presence of neighbouring routes and stops.</p>	
348.	<p>2.27 Redways The indirect nature of some of the redways is a shortcoming but on the other hand the original design of the city with generous provision of underpasses and bridges offers considerable benefits to the pedestrian. The time spent crossing busy roads in some traditional cities should not be underestimated.</p>	Not strictly a bus strategy issue.
349.	<p>2.28 Grid Roads (comments may also be relevant to 4.15) It is important to be clear that a road network design that works well for cars is not automatically disadvantageous for pedestrians and public transport. Yes, the grid roads are a little remote from the residential areas but this reduces noise, pollution and road accidents and is appreciated by many residents. In fact free flowing grid roads allow faster bus services. The fact that buses and bus drivers are not tied up in the jams that characterise the radial road systems of many other cities is a considerable advantage. Unfortunately, in recent years, there has been a tendency to focus on the drawbacks of the grid road system for public transport and to ignore its benefits. For most residents, the nearest grid road is not an excessive distance from home. For most, the benefits of a faster, frequent bus service along the grid road are likely to outweigh the costs of a longer walk to the bus stop. Prior to 1986 the bus network did operate over the grid road system and did not enter the estates. My recollection of deregulation in 1986 is that the bus operator at that time believed that it was feasible to operate a fast (faster than the established grid road services), high frequency minibus service through the estates. In reality the timetable was completely unworkable and abandoned within a few months. Longer journey times and much reduced frequencies were introduced but the estate routes were retained. I have no stats but observed that bus loadings were noticeably down after a few months of estate running. So the evidence from those early days seemed to be that services along the grid roads worked better and were popular despite the less convenient bus stops.</p>	See 19 above.
350.	<p>2.34 The plans for the expansion of Central Milton Keynes cannot be realised without reducing the mode share of the car. It is very apparent to a bus user that while the political climate has become more positive towards public transport and pedestrians in recent years, it is the <i>recent</i> developments in Central Milton Keynes that have been the most bus and pedestrian unfriendly. The development of Midsummer Place blocked Midsummer Boulevard and added</p>	<p>The Strategy acknowledges the need for new developments to be more "bus friendly". Bus stops have been provided in Avebury Boulevard for those buses that pass close to Sainsbury's.</p>

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	<p>a lengthy and permanent diversion to nearly every city bus route. The extra 5 minute journey time is likely to have been a significant factor in deterring any switch from car to bus as well as reducing bus vehicle and bus driver productivity and so undermining bus viability.</p> <p>More recently, the re-location of Sainsbury's has ensured that there is no mainstream supermarket in the shopping centre. The new store is not located on the main bus routes. The adjacent pedestrian underpasses have been permanently closed to make way for the development including an underground car park. The surrounding area is windswept and unattractive. In short the new store seems great for car users but inaccessible for everyone else.</p>	
351.	<p>3.7 Densification (comments may also be relevant to 3.4 & 3.5)</p> <p>The green spaces, low density housing, parkland, redways, horse trails etc. are very much at the heart of why people like living in Milton Keynes. To suggest that they should be sacrificed to improve the viability of the bus network is about as sensible as suggesting that the council adopt policies to promote poverty because poorer communities are more likely to use bus services.</p>	If bus services in Milton Keynes are to be viable, the density of development does need to be increased.
352.	<p>3.13 Travel plans for new developments.</p> <p>If such plans could have averted the disastrous new Sainsbury's development (see comment re 2.34) then they are a very good idea. If such plans were already in use then they clearly failed and an analysis of what went wrong is required.</p>	Travel plans in this context refer to plans developed with employers which attempt to encourage the use of sustainable travel modes by their employees. The siting of the new Sainsbury's is not a failure of the travel plan process.
353.	<p>4.8 Reliability</p> <p>Early running still occurs on some city bus routes and is completely unacceptable. If a bus departs early before the passenger arrives at the bus stop then, from the passenger's point of view, the bus did not run.</p> <p>The strategy needs to tackle the early running problem if car users are to be persuaded to switch to the bus.</p>	See 1 above.
354.	<p>4.11 Off-Bus Ticketing</p> <p>A contactless smartcard system within the borough could bring about significant improvements to reliability and journey times. As in London, smartcards could be used for both season tickets and stored value. Stored value cards could be sold widely through convenience stores.</p> <p>As is the practice abroad, stored value cards could either be thrown away after use or recharged at recharge-points in supermarkets and stations. A flat fare with a daily and weekly price cap would allow the stored value card to substitute for day and weekly tickets. Off bus ticketing need not be compulsory provided that on-bus fares include a hefty premium (e.g. 100% and no child discounts).</p>	See 279 above.
355.	<p>4.18 Quality bus services - vehicles.</p> <p>The temptation to brand vehicles operating on quality routes with all-over contra- vision liveries should be avoided. Although such liveries may make a striking impression on non-bus users they unfortunately contribute to a negative on-board experience. These vehicles often seem unduly dark on the inside, views from the</p>	Route branding undertaken to date does not include all-over contra-vision. This point will be fed into the group considering the Marketing and Promotion plan (see Bus Strategy paragraphs 4.13 and 5.10 and Action No 54).

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	bus are restricted and identifying the correct stop while travelling on an unfamiliar route becomes more difficult.	
356.	<p>Publicity and Promotion</p> <p>In recent years comprehensive bus information has been made available on the web and the quality & frequency of printed material has improved. However, some failings remain which could be corrected at little cost if the commitment was there - some examples of the existing shortcomings are given below [detailed examples omitted]</p> <p>It is clear that these issues can only be addressed by the council and operator working together. I suggest the council appoint a Bus Promotion Tsar to be jointly funded by the council and MK Metro but based at MK Metro and with a direct input to MK Metro procedures and driver training.</p>	These points (including the detailed examples) will be fed into the group considering the Marketing and Promotion plan (see Bus Strategy paragraphs 4.13 and 5.10 and Action No 54).

Respondent P-27 [name omitted]

357.	<p>Achieving growth in bus use/aims of strategy (paras 2.19 and 2.22)</p> <p>I agree absolutely that addressing all these aspects is important and that improvement in only a few aspects will be ineffective if the others aren't dealt with as well.</p>	The Strategy aims to build on the existing approach, which is delivering patronage growth.
358.	<p>Accessibility and the need to influence travel behaviour (paras 2.31-2.38):</p> <p>There is no doubt that improving bus services for those who don't own a car is a worthwhile objective.</p> <p>I agree that the perceptions of the cost of using a car are not the same as the actual costs. For a short trip to the shops the perceived cost of using the car is zero (unless it's the one day in the week/month when you need to put petrol in it). The only cost you notice is the cost of parking it. However, I find myself disagreeing that cost plays a major part in the decision about whether to use the bus or car. Being of a certain age I have a bus pass, but have only used it twice, because the experience of using a bus is so inconvenient compared with the car. Unless the whole range of positive values associated with the owning and use of a car are fully understood, policies designed to wean people off cars will not succeed.</p> <p>I am committed to the need to reduce carbon emissions so am fully aware of the need to promote public transport. Hence the need to address all the issues in para 2.22 (and others), referred to above, is paramount.</p>	We recognise that there are other factors in addition to cost which play a part in the decision about whether to use the bus or car.
359.	<p>City Streets (para 3.4)</p> <p>I am not convinced that the design of these will be satisfactory. They may be helpful to the bus user, but this may be at the expense of the inconvenience/danger to the more environmentally-friendly bicycle user (and pedestrian).</p>	The principles outlined in these paragraphs already form part of the local plan.
360.	<p>Delivery of the bus strategy aims (para 4.7)</p> <p>This paragraph addresses an important aspect. When you are an occasional bus</p>	The intention is that improved marketing and promotion, and vehicle quality

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	<p>user you do not feel you know what's expected of you. I hate to have to admit this, but being "middle-class" I feel I am entering someone else's world and that I am a stranger and almost unwelcome! I don't have the same experience on trains (which admittedly for the novice are even harder to know how to use!) But I suppose because trains are more expensive to use they do attract a wider range of clientele, whereas buses on the whole do not attract the middle classes, so you feel out of place. This is less true in London, or on the continent.</p>	<p>will reduce this anxiety.</p>
361.	<p>Bus reliability (paras 4.8-4.11) You are deluding yourselves if you think that car journeys are subject to the same level of uncertainty as bus journeys. Car journey times in MK at any time other than the rush hour are outstandingly consistent. Another factor that affects reliability of buses (and indeed the whole bus "experience") is the management and motivation of drivers. In much the same way as with car accidents, where driver error is blamed, the solution of better training is offered. But most car drivers and bus drivers know perfectly well how to drive; the issue that causes accidents (or bad bus driving) is frequently behaviour, temperament, and perhaps fatigue. For bus drivers this may be accentuated if the drivers are managed badly – given unreasonable targets, lack of appropriate breaks, or if they are poorly motivated, etc.</p>	<p>This paragraph is not referring to Milton Keynes specifically but rather to the general point that car travel is often not as predictable as at first thought.</p>
362.	<p>I agree with the idea of payments being made for tickets before the passengers get on. This not only causes less delay but also reduces stress for driver and passenger alike – no issues of not having the right change, etc. (mentioned again in para 4.18)</p>	<p>See new paragraphs 5.19 - 5.22 and Action Nos 58 - 62 which expand on this point.</p>
363.	<p>Re-locating bus stops on to the road instead of in lay-bys may well be good for improving bus reliability, but can be a hindrance to cyclists (a recent example being in Whaddon Way, where two bus-stops are now situated opposite one another, effectively blocking the road altogether if two buses stop at the same time).</p>	<p>Noted - this does not propose that all laybys are removed, it merely notes that getting out of a layby is one cause of delay.</p>
364.	<p>Journey times (para 4.15) Design of routes can certainly make a difference to journey times. But the major problem for those considering taking the bus instead of driving their cars, is that the bus journey has several components to it – the walk to the bus, the wait for the bus, the journey itself, and the walk the other end. If the purpose of the journey is to go to a timed event (eg to catch a train, go to the theatre, an appointment, or a meeting, then there is a fifth component which is the gap between when you arrive and when the timed event starts. Improving bus frequency and bus reliability can reduce the length of the 2nd and 5th of these components.</p>	<p>The Strategy aims to deal with the whole journey but as, stated here, improving bus frequency and bus reliability will contribute to an overall improvement in journey quality.</p>
365.	<p>Quality (para 4.18) I agree with all the points made in this section.</p>	<p>Positive comment.</p>
366.	<p>I agree with the point in para 6.6 about people wanting to avoid the need to</p>	

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<p>change buses (referring to my comment about para 4.15 a journey involving two buses has two extra stages in it, making 6 or 7 stages.) The proposed improvement of the interchange at CMK Rail station (para 6.12) is to be welcomed. Improving Bletchley Bus station would also be a great idea – it is a horrible dump (and, yes, I had to say it – it isn't middle class enough!)</p>	<p>Positive comment. The future of Bletchley Bus Station is dependent on the progress of development schemes in the areas (see paragraph 6.20 Action No 51)</p>
<p>367. I agree we should improve buses for the sake of those without cars, and also to attempt to convert as many car journeys as possible to journeys by more environmentally friendly means. The bus improvements identified in this strategy document will go some way towards achieving these aims. The chief obstacle to achieving a significant switch from cars to buses is that the car does such an incredibly good job of facilitating nearly every journey one could possibly want to make. It provides a comfortable environment (protects you from the weather), takes you door-to-door, at the time you want to travel, carries a huge amount of shopping and other stuff – far more than you can transport by bus, bicycle, etc. and - terribly important, this - it is personal /private space, not public space – you can personalize it and make it feel like an extension of your home. It puts you in control, rather than making you subject yourself to someone else's rules, habits, etc. As someone concerned for the environment I have tried to discipline myself to using the car less, by making fewer journeys, but combining several things into one journey (if the weather is fine and I don't have much to carry, and I have the time, I'll use my bicycle). The point is, however, that for a journey that involves multiple locations, it is even less likely that the bus will provide a viable alternative. Here the design of the city is a factor – the difficulty at present is that the places one needs to get to are distributed all over the place, as opposed to being concentrated in one area, as would be the case in a conventional town. I wondered how I would react if we started having to pay £1 per mile to drive the car into CMK. I am pretty sure I would still use the car, rather than the bus, but I would reduce the frequency of journey.</p>	<p>We acknowledge that buses will not be able to replace every car journey, or to meet every need.</p>

Respondent P-28 [name omitted]

<p>368. I live in Cambridge, but I quite often use the X5 to or through Milton Keynes, and I occasionally use other services in the area. However I know little about the detailed urban structure of Milton Keynes and will not be making any comments about the issues that relate to it. I believe that bus strategies need to be worked out on a much more specific basis than is usually the case. Bus users need, and deserve, the level of commitment which stems from knowing that the Council intends to maintain the level of service on the routes they depend on, or to develop new routes that would enhance their mobility.</p>	<p>The Strategy aims to build on the existing approach, which is delivering patronage growth. There is a balance to be struck between making a Bus Strategy too specific or too general.</p>
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	Let me now go through some of the elements of a bus strategy and detail some ideas for some of the routes to which they pertain.	
369.	Bus priorities. One issue to which I would like to draw attention is the number of places where buses have to make U turns because the turning movements that would be needed to shorten the route can't be made. [detailed examples relating to X5 omitted].	Bus priority measures will be implemented where appropriate.
370.	Prior to the redevelopment of Coachway, Stagecoach X5 was plagued by peak time delays in the vicinity of M1 J14. The current roadworks in that area are no doubt intended to relieve this congestion, but I have grave doubts whether this will in fact happen, particularly for westbound buses approaching Coachway on the A509 during the morning peak. Will Milton Keynes Council monitor the situation and take corrective action if major delays occur when the new Coachway opens?	The current roadworks in that area are intended to relieve this congestion but the situation will be kept under review.
371.	I believe that the X5 in particular would benefit from a real time system which, when buses are delayed, could let them know how long they can expect to have to wait. The length of the route means that it is particularly vulnerable to timekeeping problems, while splitting the route up to mitigate these problems would cause great inconvenience to many passengers.	Extension of RTPI to X5 will be difficult because it passes through a number of authorities which use differing RTPI systems. In the longer term, the intention is that RTPI systems will "talk" to each other.
372.	Create an outer orbital route [detailed suggestion omitted]	See 220 above.
373.	Also, how about a shared taxi service connecting on and off early morning and late night trains (at Milton Keynes Central station) and coaches (at the new Coachway) ?	See 20 above.
374.	Improve regional and interurban links. [There follows a list of detailed suggestions for improving interurban services around Milton Keynes, which would have to be delivered by joint working with all the neighbouring authorities]	See 339 above.
375.	Could the VT99 divert via the new Coachway?	This suggestion will be put to Stagecoach.
376.	I support the Milton Keynes Council aspiration for a rail service between Cambridge and Oxford; but meanwhile it would be helpful if through ticketing was provided for journeys using the X5 just as if a rail link already existed. [detailed suggestion omitted].	There is already limited through ticketing available towards Buckingham, but wider through ticketing is not something that Milton Keynes Council could deliver

Respondent P-29 [name omitted] [Comments relating to bus strategy only]

377.	All buses must not take 40/50 minutes to get from communities to CMK (by visiting estates all the way in). Every other bus should fast track into the city from outlying communities.	See 19 above.
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Respondent P-31 [name omitted]

378.	As a non-car-owning resident of Wolverton, I fully support the SITS strategy (para 4.4) of bringing about for Milton Keynes "a significant shift from the car to other ways of travelling, such as walking, cycling and public transport." I welcome the proposals outlined in this strategy, and urge MK Council to be bold and embrace	Positive comment.
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	the changes suggested. I would like to focus on three areas dealt with in the consultation.	
379.	<p>Off bus ticketing</p> <p>Para 4.11 points out that "The use of off bus ticketing can help reduce delay - significant benefits have been seen in London where off bus ticketing is compulsory in the central area."</p> <p>I lived in South London before, during and after the introduction of Oyster ticketing. As a user I saw the huge uptake of the new system by passengers - and not only where it was compulsory. Oyster tickets entail more than buying a ticket before boarding; the following 'BusMK ticket' scenario is extrapolated from my experience in London [detailed comment omitted].</p> <p>This kind of ticketing requires a substantial infrastructure of readers, communications equipment and robust software, as well as the full cooperation of bus operators. However I strongly urge MK Council to give it serious consideration. It would increase the efficiency and attractiveness of bus travel in Milton Keynes enormously.</p>	See 279 above.
380.	<p>Multi-modal interchange at MK Central Rail Station</p> <p>MK rail functions as a major gateway to for visitors, as well as a crucial interchange for residents, including commuters. Its facilities should therefore reflect its importance. I therefore fully support the proposals in para 6.12. However in addition, I would urge that the proposed facilities incorporate substantial covered (i.e. with both roof and walls) pedestrian access between station concourse, taxi ranks, bus stops and drop-off points, in effect making the bus interchange a physical extension of the station. This would make the entire experience of leaving the train and dispersing into Milton Keynes much more attractive, particularly in inclement weather. Please avoid absurd gaps in weatherproofing such as that between the old and new parts of the central Milton Keynes shopping complex!</p>	The points made here will be considered further as plans for these schemes are developed.
381.	<p>Coachway/the centre:MK/MKrail link</p> <p>As para 5.18 points out, the Coachway is 'a key part of the overall public transport offer for Milton Keynes'. As such it should be 'keyed into' the entire MK transport system.</p> <p>I suggest there should be a shuttle bus link running, say, every 7 minutes, 6.30 to 23.30, to and from the Coachway and the Central Rail Station, via MK city centre. This would cater for passengers between any of these three points: interchange between Coachway and Rail, business and leisure use between Rail or Coachway and Centre. Being frequent, the vehicles could be smaller than regular buses (20/30 seaters), but with extra facilities for travellers' luggage, shopping, etc. This route would not fall into any of the route levels defined in para 6.3, but would be a high-quality stand-alone service, which could be marketed as such.</p>	It is intended to provide an improved link from the Railway Station via Central Milton Keynes to the new Coachway when it opens next year (although not of the frequency suggested here).

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Respondent P-32 [name omitted] [Comments relating to bus strategy only]

382.	Hello, I work in Central Milton Keynes and currently purchase a permit to park in the Centre. If public transport was faster and more direct I would definitely chose it as an alternative to coming into work. When I have taken the bus into CMK from Bletchley it takes about 30mins to cover a 10min journey in my car...	See 19 above.
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Respondent P-33 [name omitted]

383.	I consider that the Eastern and Western expansion areas will effectively be poorly served with buses as currently planned. The routes proposed - currently called "Quality Bus routes" in the planning of both the EEA and WEA, Tattenhoe Park and Kingsmead will have buses travelling at 20mph over roads which will have multiple raised full road width pavements as hurdles to cross as they pass through those areas. This will slow the bus journey as well as making the journey uncomfortable. The objective of a quality bus route should be convenient and affordable yet reliable and timely. The existing route design is not what I would call a quality bus route nor will it endear customers to the services on offer.	The principles outlined in these paragraphs already form part of the local plan.
384.	I recommend that the Bus Strategy review is taken along with the other recent reviews and looked at as a part of the whole. How can we provide an adequate bus service as I find it odd that no one seems to agree "Just what is" a "quality bus service for MK"	The Strategy aims to build on the existing approach, which is delivering patronage growth.
385.	I believe the bus service should first address the needs of those without cars in then address the need to offer a viable alternative to car use for many journeys.	Developing and improving the bus services in Milton Keynes as the strategy intends will benefit all sectors of the community.

Respondent P-34 [name omitted]

386.	I believe that until there is a fast bus service from A to B people will not get out of their cars	See 19 above.
387.	Buses do not necessarily have to be frequent as long as they are reliable and available at required times (to get to work, to get home from work, to get to the shops, to get home when the cinema, theatre finishes).	See 1 above.
388.	Cost is not the most important factor – speed and reliability come first.	The Strategy acknowledges that there a range of factors involved in the choice between bus travel and car use.
389.	Different sorts of journeys require different solutions:	See 19 above.
390.	Going shopping – direct buses from every estate to the shopping centre (along the grid roads plus some bus lanes.)	See 19 above.
391.	Going to work – NOT EVERYONE WORKS IN CMK! Need buses to a central point from every estate (somewhere other than CMK) and then link buses to every industrial estate – times depending on shifts (need	It is not possible to provide through journeys from every potential origin to every potential destination - the radial nature of the current bus service network means that the most popular destination (Central Milton Keynes)

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	research).	can be reached by most residents without a change of bus, and this pattern of service is delivering patronage growth.
392.	<p>Buses to other towns (Buckingham, Aylesbury, Leighton Buzzard, Bedford, Northampton). These should start from a point (not necessarily CMK) where there should be a large park & ride car park inc taxis. People returning from these places do not want to wait for a connection – they want to get home. It would be impossible to provide a connecting quick bus service to every estate.</p> <p>Buses to further destinations (Oxford, Cambridge, Birmingham, London, Nottingham) – these should be from the Coachway with a large Park & Ride car park</p> <p>Buses from the villages (Deanshanger, Potterspury, Woburn) – these should be treated like MK estates – or see below Park & Ride.</p>	For the interurban services the most popular destination is Central Milton Keynes. There might be scope for running such services via a Park & Ride site in future.
393.	Develop more City edge Park & Ride car parks eg at Old Stratford, Fenny Stratford etc	The section on Park & Ride has been revised - see paragraphs 5.27 - 5.30
394.	Such a fast moving service needs to be initially FREE for at least 2-3 years until people realise that it is a viable quick reliable service – once people start to use the buses and find it works they will be prepared to pay. ie initially MKC will be subsidising empty buses – with the right advertising and PR - people will give it a go and buses will fill up.	See response to comment 162 above

Respondent P-35 [name omitted]

395.	<p>Milton Keynes Bus Strategy Consultation</p> <p>The focus on a Bus Strategy rather than a Public transport Strategy has resulted a set of proposals which are limited in their scope. Buses are not the only mode of public transport. An exploration of these and how they could be incorporated into the City's infrastructure would have led to a more imaginative set of proposals.</p>	Noted, however the council is required by law to produce a Bus Strategy.
396.	<p>Key elements</p> <p>These are a set of vague statements that give no real picture of the service, which the citizens of Milton Keynes can expect to be available to them. The elements certainly give no guarantee that all citizens will have access to frequent, reliable and fast services.</p>	<p>The Key Elements are intended as an introduction to the full Bus Strategy and are developed further in the remainder of the Strategy.</p> <p>It would not be possible to “guarantee that all citizens will have access to frequent, reliable and fast services”.</p>
397.	Many people are time poor. Consequently, they will not be persuaded on to public transport by journey times, which are significantly longer than those undertaken in their cars.	The Strategy acknowledges that there a range of factors involved in the choice between bus travel and car use.
398.	<p>“To develop other council strategies, such as the provision and management of parking, so that they support the vision of a high quality, commercially viable bus service accessible to all”.</p> <p>This would give the Council permission to use whatever sticks, it perceived as fit, to force people on to public transport. Commercial viability and accessibility are not the most important carrots for persuading people on to public transport. These are frequent, reliable, fast journey time services, characteristics which the</p>	<p>We recognise that buses will not every need, or be able to replace every car journey.</p> <p>The Strategy acknowledges that there a range of factors involved in the choice between bus travel and car use.</p> <p>It would not be possible to “guarantee that all citizens will have access to</p>

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	strategy's proposals give no indication will be available to all of Milton Keynes' citizens.	frequent, reliable and fast services".
399.	Challenges Views and perceptions do not provide a sound basis for strategic planning. Effective strategies are based on well researched evidence.	The Strategy aims to build on the existing approach, which is delivering patronage growth.
400.	We will be working with These proposals display a paucity of vision. In the places that offer a good public transport system to their citizens, the local authority has looked beyond partnership with commercial operators and set up a subsidised local transport authority. The political will on the part of Milton Keynes Council to be honest with the populace about the cost of this would gain support, if it were evident that the Council also had the desire to create a public transport system to fit Milton Keynes. What will not gain support is a strategy that requires Milton Keynes to be altered to fit its public transport system.	There are no places in the UK outside London with a "subsidised local transport authority" - the current legislative framework is detailed in Chapter 2.

Respondent P-36 [name omitted]

401.	We both agree with the key elements of the bus strategy - being residents of Shenley Brook End we are very aware of the poor service in the evenings and weekends. At these times taking a bus is not an option if it was we would use the car a lot less. The service should be run for public need and not for profit.	See 3 above.
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Respondent P-37 [name omitted]

402.	I use the buses occasionally and would use them a great deal more if I could thoroughly <u>rely</u> on them. That means buses arriving at their stop on time <u>and not leaving it before</u> the scheduled time (even if there are no passengers to pick up). Bus drivers need to be as conscientious about timetables as train operators. We would be justly upset if, for instance, a 1337 train were to leave the station at 1335 – many people would miss their journeys – yet I have often seen local buses leaving or driving past bus stops before their programmed time. In these circumstances we cannot rely on the bus service to deliver us for an appointment or to connect with a train. If timing is critical we have to use a car or a taxi. It is of negative value for a customer to be approaching a bus stop in good time to catch a bus, only to see it disappearing earlier than scheduled. When I was a youngster, growing up in a northern town where few people had cars, we could virtually set our watches by the arrivals and departures of the buses at the nearby bus stop. We could plan journeys with confidence. Sadly that is not the case in Milton Keynes at present. I believe a change of culture is needed among drivers and managers to respect completely the integrity of timetables. If or when that happens, more people will use the bus service.	See 1 above.
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Respondent P-38 [name omitted]

403.	Larger buses on busier routes	See 86 above.
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404.	A More accessible timetable book	See 130 above.
405.	A ticket/information office at Bletchley bus station	See 259 above
406.	Better information when there are disruptions/severe delays	See 265 above.
407.	Poor response by the bus operator to formal complaints	These are matters for the bus operator - the Council is not able to dictate how the bus operators deal with complaints, although a key part of the Quality Bus Partnership (see Chapter 9) is that MK Metro improve their customer care training.

Respondent P-39 [name omitted]

408.	Problems with early running	See 1 above.
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Respondent P-41 [name omitted]

409.	Milton Keynes is a young town with many firsts and with a green policy outlook. So why do the council allow Arriva to contaminate our environment with their old buses, break the 3 minute law on engine running especially at Bletchley Bus Station where they are left running for up to 20 minutes (in Cambridge they would be fined or refused entry to the centre for that violation). Arriva have had to buy 7 new buses for the Aylesbury - Oxford run as the old buses will no longer be allowed in due to emissions. Two of these old buses have been seen in MK recently.	There is no "3 minute law on engine running". The Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) (Fixed Penalty) (England) Regulations 2002 empowers local authorities to issue fixed penalty notices to users of vehicles who contravene these regulations. Regulations 12 to 14 confer power to stop the running of an engine of a stationary vehicle. These powers are not currently used in Milton Keynes.
410.	Ticket machines don't work	See 279 above, also MK Metro know that their ticket machines need to be replaced, but it is a substantial investment.
411.	Buses break down daily...	See 303 above.
412.	...and the timetable is a waste of paper. On the 5 route I have waited for over an hour on several occasions and half an hour is a regular event.	See 1 above.
413.	It looks as if Arriva are treating MK Metro as a loss company.	MKC cannot comment on this point.
414.	A bus has a shelf life of about 10 years and most of ours are well past that. Also they are not fit for the job as most of them have steps and central dividers so pushchairs, people with shopping trolleys or oversize people can't use them.	See 86 above.
415.	Isn't it about time we got environmentally friendly buses and possibly some bendy buses with the front half rigged out for pushchairs and trolleys and the back for normal passengers especially on the 5 route? They work in London, York, Birmingham & Manchester so MK should not be a problem.	See 86 above, however the bus stop infrastructure in Milton Keynes is not suitable for articulated buses.
416.	I have worked most of my life with HGVs & PSVs one way or another and know the concerns of drivers especially Coach drivers. According to them MK is a joke and a danger to their passengers. When they pull into the coach park (if they can get in) people are wandering about getting on and off coaches while other coaches are	This issue is referred to in Para 5.33 "The council also needs to work more closely with the operators of the centre:mk shopping centre to ensure that adequate coach parking facilities for visiting coaches are provided and maintained".

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	shunting around or trying to get in or out. An accident waiting to happen. The coach park holds 15 coaches but I have seen 32 in there parked on the redway and up the centre. They are not allowed to park in the Xscape parking area unless they are booked in and when they are security still don't like it. Coaches parked at CMK Bus station, Bletchley Bus station and on Fishermead is a common sight. Drivers arriving in MK have no immediate facilities and if they don't know where to go or cant get there in time have to use the bushes around the coach park.	
417.	<p>I have seen people waiting at the coach park for National Express Coaches also a Euro Express Coach (National Express European Division) dropping off people and waiting for other passengers to board but there weren't any there. He was expecting eight. After explaining to the German driver (whose English was not good) where the Coachway was his remark was this is stupid he has never had this trouble anywhere else in England or Europe. They all bring Express Coaches into the town centres, I have to agree with him.</p> <p>Most other towns bring National Express Coaches into the town centre such as Bedford, Luton, Northampton, Cambridge, Watford and Leicester so they are accessible to the people so why is MK's stuck out at junction 14 where there is no public transport between 23-26 pm and 08-14 am, not good for a 24 hour town or for access.</p> <p>I left my house 1.5 hours early to catch a National Express waited over 1 hour for a 5 then waited for a 200 and missed my coach by 7 minutes. The trip was planed using Metro's timetable. If the coach had been at the coach park I would have caught it. I will not be using the Coachway at Newport Pagnell again as I can't trust Metro to get me there in time.</p> <p>The Newport site could be used as a Lorry Park to get lorries off our estates,the Coach Park could be modified for all coaches and lost car parking could be regained at the old Garden Centre site.</p>	The decision to move National Express services out of CMK was taken by National Express and was opposed by the council at that time. There are no plans to change the current arrangements.

Respondent P-42 [name omitted]

418.	Light Rail would be better on key routes for a progressive city	There are no plans to introduce a light rail system.
419.	<p>Need for fast direct services with new bus lanes on grid roads on land reserved for trams:</p> <p>Some routes are too circuitous eg No 6 dives off around Campbell Park (better service by P+R service?)</p>	See 19 above.
420.	Are all buses using most direct routes to/from MKC Station?	See above.
421.	Estate services - need quieter buses of size suited to roads and humps need addressing. Delays occur when crossing grid roads and potential hazard?	See 86 above.
422.	Why was road closed to buses at Argos CMK making buses divert?	This was the result of a planning decision made at that time.
423.	Real time info vital at stops.	See 85 above.
424.	Reliability very important	See 1 above.

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425.	Customer care attitude of some drivers is poor	See 87 above.
426.	Terminals like Bletchley need improving to modern standards.	See 259 above.
427.	MKC Rail Station block road service is unsuitable for buses -discomfort	We accept that the block-paving at Station Square unsuitable for buses.
428.	Shelters need seats, to be clean and graffiti removed next day	The Bus Strategy aims to bring about improvements to bus infrastructure but this is subject to the availability of funding (Paragraphs 4.17, 5.11 and 5.13 and Action No 42).
429.	P+R needs to be used - Bowl service empty much of time.	There is no "Bowl Service" at the present time.
430.	Senior Citizen Rail Card could be offered	Not sure what this means.
431.	Free fares to senior citizens shows increased use, I wonder what impact would be of experimental extension to other groups, -would car use drop dramatically?	The extension of free travel to other groups would have an impact on bus patronage, but the council is only able to offer concessionary fares to certain groups as defined in the 1985 Transport Act, it is not able to offer a general fares subsidy.

Respondent P-43 [name omitted]

432.	The Draft Bus Strategy is set against a background of several connecting, but independently determined, strategies each of which must present their own blend of challenges; the draft is to be commended as a valuable step towards the elusive "Final Draft" at the threshold of implementation that strikes a delicate balance between over-simplification and over-complexity. I am an occasional local and rural bus user by choice, who also has the option to make journeys by car, bicycle and by foot. The routes I use are mostly 18 and 17 for which there is a stop on Newport Road about 500 metres from my house but when there are no services I sometimes walk about half a mile to a stop in Marlborough Street to use other services. My destinations can take me in either direction for all services. I sometimes interchange at MK Shopping Centre, Kingston Centre, the Hospital, Bletchley Bus Station and MK Railway Station.	The Strategy aims to build on the existing approach, which is delivering patronage growth.
433.	I welcome the partnership approach and am keen to hear more about the proposed bus user group; I see this group as essential to the development of services that are sensitive to different types of user needs, for example, according to mobility or family groups of mums and toddlers in pushchairs. I am concerned that Bus Users UK lack local insight when it comes to representing MK bus users.	The intention would be that any bus user group would be locally based with Bus Users UK providing support. This approach works quite well in Northampton and a number of other surrounding towns.
434.	Journey planning poses some challenges: timetables are very useful while for my closest and other regularly used stops but I find a copy of the stop service time listings the most convenient way of deciding where I should pick up a service that gets me to or towards my ultimate destination.	The Strategy recognises that publicity and promotion need to be improved and it is intended that this will be carried out via a partnership with the bus operators and an annual marketing and promotion plan.
435.	Punctuality is a constant source of uncertainty, sometimes cancellations as well. The clocks on the ticket machines can be fast or slow and can contribute	See points 1 and 85 above.

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	to services running both early and late. Given that I often need to transfer to another service at one of several possible interchanges I finish up needing to allow a considerable amount of leeway to ensure on time arrival at my final destination. Some interchanges are so spread out e.g. The Point and the Hospital that it is impossible to be flexible in picking the soonest arriving service when more than one is available. I note that some of these problems will be eased on the core routes when real time information displays become available.	
436.	I am concerned that the speed limits on the grid roads put bus users at a distinct disadvantage because drivers in general pay little or no heed to the Highway Codes guidance to give way for buses. This means that at stops, junctions and obstructions buses are delayed until a gap in the traffic flow is sufficient for them to get going again.	The bus strategy does not address the issue of grid road speed limits.
437.	It seems to me that the recent upward trend in bus usage will result in the present 2010/11 target being comfortably exceeded. Given the recent economic developments some further increases in demand may well arise.	Positive comment

Respondent P-44 (Anon)

438.	<p>I was pleased to see in your key elements the provision of real-time information, and to ensure that information is clear and helpful.</p> <p>I use the local bus services whenever possible, and find them usually good. However, few things are more likely to dissuade potential passenger than a lack of information. What is more dispiriting than waiting at a bus stop for a bus that does not arrive. Who has not asked themselves - is it worth waiting another five - ten - fifteen minutes? Any reasonable person realises that there will be delays and cancellations. Vehicles break down, drivers are taken sick, traffic events - accidents etc- cause delay. Knowing whether the or not the expected bus will arrive would help.</p> <p>Given available technology, surely this information can be provided. I am not a lover of mobile phones, but would it not be possible to have a number which could be used to report the position of a particular service? This would be of great benefit in rural areas, where services are, of necessity, infrequent</p>	<p>See 85 above on RTPI.</p> <p>It is intended that this information will eventually be available through the text message service which is already available (each bus stop has been allocated a seven letter code which the user can text to 84268). The service is not free (there is a charge of 25p plus the normal text sending charge) and in Milton Keynes it is not widely publicised, although codes are included in some of the roadside timetable displays.</p>
439.	On a separate issue, I should like to see a more frequent service from here to Bedford during the day. This was once hourly, but now has been halved.	See 10 above

Respondent P-45 [name omitted]

440.	Problems with early running	See 1 above.
441.	Poor shelters in Clay Hill	See 326 above.

Respondent P-46 [name omitted] (Summary of handwritten letter)

442.	It is not explained why all three strategies need to be adopted at the December Cabinet meeting.	This decision was made by the Cabinet members.
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MILTON KEYNES BUS STRATEGY (DECEMBER 2008)

443.	Para 2.18 - motorists in MK do not usually let buses pull out of laybys.	The bus strategy does not address the issue of the behaviour of car drivers
444.	Para 3.11 - information on services should be available BEFORE first occupation.	Agreed, unfortunately it seems to be very difficult to achieve this.
445.	Para 4.11 - the MK Metro weekly ticket has reduced boarding times - it is unfortunate that other operators cannot also issue them.	See revised paragraph 5.22 and Action No 61.
446.	Para 4.16 - local routes in Wolverton, Stony Stratford, Bletchley and Olney should be considered to reduce car trips in the old town centres. This might remove the need for diversions such as the 1 via Green Park and Aspreys thus speeding up journey time on the through service.	If implemented it would reduce overall accessibility for the residents of these estates. See also 19 above.
447.	Para 4.18 - the introduction of DDA compliant buses to meet the deadline might be dependent on the availability of manufacturing capacity.	
448.	Para 5.15 - Park & Ride should be considered to reduce the need for parking spaces in the central area.	The section on Park & Ride has been revised - see paragraphs 5.27 - 5.30
449.	Para 5.17 - Park & Ride should be promoted as an add on to rail season tickets, or bus season tickets for journeys to the Hospital etc.	Combined bus/rail ticketing is available through PlusBus, but only for purchase at stations (See also revised paragraph 5.22 and Action No 62.
450.	Para 7.5 - could the MKCT PlusBus be used for peak hour journeys connecting the more outlying villages to connect to specific trains?	Noted - this will be part of the investigation detailed at para 7.5 and action no 35
451.	Para 9.12 - Bedford Area Bus Users Society may be a model for a similar local group in the Milton Keynes Area.	The intention would be that any bus user group would be locally based with Bus Users UK providing support.
452.	Section 10 appears to be a wish list for as and when funds become available.	This section is intended as a summary of the actions included throughout the Strategy.

Respondent B-14 (Milton Keynes Forum)

453.	<p>The Milton Keynes Transport Strategy Review (TSR) sets out a long term vision of the requirements for the development of an overarching transport strategy for Milton Keynes (MK) to support the planned massive growth of Central Milton Keynes (CMK) and of MK as a whole, over the next 30 years. The review proposes an initial set of integrated 'targets' representing what might be broadly achievable long-term.</p> <p>Key to the achievement of the targets in the TSR is a long term Public Transport Strategy (not simply a Bus Strategy) capable of delivering a seismic shift in modal choice from car to public transport. As stated in earlier Council studies, a successful public transport strategy <i>"is crucially dependant on the supply and management of parking in CMK"</i> (PTLTV Study chapter 8). However, the underlying Bus and CMK Parking Strategies have not reached a point that the requirements of a long term overarching transport strategy demand.</p>	See comment 395: The council is required by law to produce a Bus Strategy, rather than a public transport strategy.
454.	<p>In contrast to the long term nature of the TSR, both the Bus Strategy and the CMK Parking Strategy are very much short term strategies and in particular we are disappointed by the Parking Strategy, which is incomplete and unacceptable. Both strategies need to be rewritten to present a longer term view and to explain what the strategies are designed to achieve in relation to the integrated targets established in the TSR.</p>	On the issue of timescale, the DfT guidance on Bus Strategies suggests that "since a bus strategy is part of the LTP, it must have the same lifespan as the LTP to which it relates, and must be updated whenever the LTP is updated in a way that affects buses/bus policy". While we accept that the timescale of this Bus Strategy will be short there are particular circumstances that have led to this position.

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<p>As long as there is oil buses will remain the workhorse of city transport systems, and Milton Keynes will need to rely solely on buses for at least the next 10 years. But sometime in the future, if Milton Keynes is to grow as planned the busiest routes, perhaps just one at first will need to be adapted to a more advanced form of transport. Bearing in mind that the gestation period for introducing advanced public transport is at least 10 years, the need to commence planning for that eventuality, should feature prominently in the Public Transport Strategy.</p>	<p>The requirement for a wider bus or public transport strategy that looks further ahead than the limited timescale of the LTP periods is an issue that will be addressed with the developments that follow from the Transport Strategy Review.</p>
<p>455. In its earlier response to the TSR the Forum draws attention to a serious miscalculation, which has led to an over-estimate of future parking availability for commuters and a severe under-estimate of the scale of public transport provision needed to enable people to travel to work in CMK. Even without this miscalculation, the TSR is clear that the implications of the planned growth over the next 30 years will require that, in the future, the bulk of journeys to work from in and around Milton Keynes, will increasingly need to be made using public transport, and that this has considerable impact and implications for the Bus Strategy. The main plank of the Bus Strategy is the use of large buses supported by enhanced infrastructure facilities. In CMK the strategy is to create a major public transport interchange in Station Square and the creation of a series of bus superstops/interchange points at regular intervals along Midsummer Boulevard. The planning assumption behind this strategy is the creation of 10 bus bays at each location to cater for 144 bus movements in the peak hour. Such an arrangement has a maximum capacity to bring in around 9,000 workers into CMK. When CMK is fully developed the number of workers is expected double from its present 25,000 to 50,000. Of these 50,000 workers around 30,000 will need to arrive by public transport. Hence, this being the case, the use of Midsummer Boulevard can be no more than a medium term (interim) solution: apart from important public realm considerations, there is simply insufficient space along Midsummer Boulevard to locate the more than 30 bus bays needed at each interchange location, if a solely bus based solution were to be adopted to meet the requirements consequential of the planned future expansion of Milton Keynes and CMK in particular.</p>	<p>As indicated, one assumption about the growth in bus services is that the Station Square interchange may well have to cater for over 144 departures per hour. In translating this figure to locations on Midsummer Boulevard it is incorrect to assume that the “bus superstops/interchange points” will all need to be of similar size and capacity. It is likely that, as is the case at present, the potential superstops at Abbey House, CBX and the Food Centre will be to a smaller scale than that required at the Point, as the latter location is used more as a terminal point than the former.</p> <p>The increasing requirement for kerb space for buses is an issue that is common to most towns and cities and one of the solutions may be that space has to be made for a layover area to allow buses to wait for time in one location before proceeding to the starting point of the journey.</p>
<p>456. The Council's approved CMK Development Framework anticipated this scenario and proposed that buses be moved to Silbury and Avebury Boulevards, where the 2 boulevards combined would have sufficient capacity for public transport (initially conventional buses) necessary for the longer term. Ultimately, to satisfy expansion over the later third of the 30 year expansion programme, the Development Framework explained that an advanced form of people mover would need to be introduced along the Midsummer Boulevard spine to supplement to role of the buses in CMK, the workhorse of any transport system. The salient point for the Council to consider is whether financial investment in the</p>	<p>See comment 92 (revised paragraphs 6.9 and new paragraphs 6.10 and 6.11) While the present concentration of services along Midsummer Boulevard means that development along most of Silbury and Avebury Boulevards does not have direct access to buses (although all parts are within 400 metres of bus stops), it would not make sense to split the core services to run along all three of the city centre boulevards - this would not be supported by the bus operators, and it could not be imposed on them within the current legislative framework. Such an action would also reduce the overall</p>

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<p>considerable bus infrastructure required, should be along Midsummer Boulevard with the likelihood that it may at best only barely satisfy the medium term and hence will need to be removed and replaced with equivalent bus infrastructure on both Silbury and Avebury Boulevards at considerable expense. The proposal to develop Station Square into a major public transport interchange presents a different problem to solve, since Station Square will not satisfactorily accommodate 30 bus stops.</p> <p>The Development Framework recognises that an innovative, distinctive, far better transport system is required to deliver the expansion of CMK and provides an illustration of what that might be, based on knowledge at that time (2001). The problem is that the present Bus Strategy downgrades the transport solution whilst retaining the growth targets in the Framework; targets that have been further enhanced in the proposed South East Plan. It is becoming increasingly apparent that the planned increase in employment in CMK cannot, in the medium to longer term, be sustained by conventional means of public transport.</p>	<p>accessibility of the bus network (by reducing its simplicity and clarity). As development progresses, and the number of buses increases, it will be appropriate to review the situation. If the number of buses increases to the levels suggested by MK Forum (by inference from the TSR), stops might in fact be required on all three boulevards because that would be the only way of providing sufficient kerb space.</p> <p>In the recent past there have been proposals for a circular service around Central Milton Keynes as well as high-frequency shuttle services from Milton Keynes Central Station to Campbell Park. Additional services of this nature would be expensive to provide and may not necessarily add value to the bus network. In the former case it might be more useful, for example, to improve pedestrian routes to Midsummer Boulevard; while the latter could be achieved by better marketing and promotion of the existing high frequency of service along Midsummer Boulevard, perhaps including promotional or special fares.</p>
<p>457. MK Forum considers that such important strategic decisions cannot be made on the basis of a public transport study, now 5 years old, on which the present draft Bus Strategy is based. When this study was undertaken the:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expansion targets for MK as a whole and CMK in particular, were considerably lower. ▪ Permitted parking numbers in CMK were anticipated to rise to around 36,000 and not the present 31,000 spaces, despite the then lower expansion targets. ▪ Practical constraints of increasing the capacity of the grid road system beyond 25%, as explained in the TSR, were not appreciated. <p>We therefore call for an in depth study of public transport options for CMK, based on the latest expansion targets, the latest transport data and the wealth of new data and integrated targets contained in the Transport Strategy Review.</p> <p>The planning requirement for the Midsummer Boulevard spine, to be the prime public realm space where the pedestrian has priority over the car and a better more pleasant environment is created for the people who live, work and shop in CMK, needs to feature highly in the requirements of the public transport strategy. Such a requirement is in conflict with a street overloaded with conventional buses.</p> <p>We would be pleased to discuss our observations further, should you require any clarification.</p>	<p>The requirement for a wider bus or public transport strategy that looks further ahead than the limited timescale of the LTP periods is an issue that will be addressed with the developments that follow from the Transport Strategy Review.</p>

Respondent P-47 [name omitted]

<p>458. Are there any plans to improve the bus service to the new Coachway when it opens? ie All areas in Milton Keynes can get to the Coachway without having to go via Central Milton Keynes and offering an early morning service?</p>	<p>See comment 172: It is intended to provide an improved link from the Railway Station via Central Milton Keynes to the new Coachway when it opens next year but it would not be possible to provide through services to</p>
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		Coachway from every potential origin in Milton Keynes
Respondent MKC-17 (Woughton PC) - only comments directly related to the Bus Strategy are included here		
459.	WPC believes that a quantum improvement in bus services is necessary and WPC believes that priority investment should favour public transport.	The linkage to the CAGoT report implied here is dealt with in Chapter 5 of the Bus Strategy and in the Cabinet report: Whilst the CAGoT report recognises the need for modal shift and recommends that significant extra resources should be applied to expand the bus network in Milton Keynes, such an increase in funding is unlikely to be available in the near future. There would also need to be further thought both to identify the sources of any extra funds and the way in which such extra resources should be used to best effect.
460.	WPC argues for a bus interchange facility at Netherfield/Hospital that will radically improve public transport options from our area, and at the same time facilitate the provision of local estate bus services linking into it.	There are no plans in the short term for a bus interchanges at this location. At the hospital, better publicity might help so this point will be fed into the group considering the Marketing and Promotion plan (see Bus Strategy paragraphs 4.13 and 5.8 and Action No 50). (see also 184 and 226).
461.	MKC should undertake a review of all bus lay-bys to ensure they are in the right place to drop and collect passengers and if necessary to look at alternative sites in consultation with all Parish Councils.	The location of stops is being considered as funds become available (eg QBI works) to invest in level access which in due course will be provided at every bus stop.
462.	WPC encourages MKC to install Real Time bus information at more stops than planned and covering all services.	See comment 85: A real time information system will be introduced in Milton Keynes during 2009 - there is more detail on this in chapter 5 of the strategy (Paragraphs 5.15 - 5.18 and Action no 47). Provision of "at-stop" displays will be concentrated on key locations.
463.	WPC calls on MKC to review ticketing arrangements to encourage more casual use of the bus services.	Noted - see paragraphs 5.19 - 5.22 for more detail on fares and ticketing issues and Action nos 60 and 61.
Respondent MKC-18 (EPDC Bus & Transport Strategy Review Group) - only recommendations directly related to the Bus Strategy are included here		
464.	3.1 - First Bullet Point and 3.7 - Seventh Bullet Point: There needs to be a balance between cars, public transport (both bus and train), with enhanced choice, a free-flowing system, environmental concern, leading to a healthy and inclusive lifestyle. This is all part of the attractiveness of Milton Keynes that makes it what it is.	See also comment 167: - we accept that buses will not meet every need.
465.	3.1 - Second Bullet Point: Provision of affordable public transport is essential for inclusion of all our citizens. If they have no access to a car, access to jobs is seriously limited.	Developing and improving the bus services in Milton Keynes as the strategy intends will benefit all sectors of the community. On the issue of fares, the council is only able to offer concessionary fares to certain groups as defined in the 1985 Transport Act; it is not able to offer a general fares subsidy.
466.	3.2:	

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	<p>There has to be an integrated response on a regional and sub-regional basis. To facilitate cross-boundary travel, Real Time Passenger Information needs to be taken up not just for services within Milton Keynes but also for cross-country routes into and out of Milton Keynes, especially in rural areas. A texting service would be the easiest and most cost-effective way to provide this.</p>	<p>A real time information system will be introduced in Milton Keynes during 2009 - there is more detail on this in chapter 5 of the strategy (Paragraphs 5.15 - 5.18 and Action no 47). Provision of "at-stop" displays will be concentrated on key locations.</p> <p>It is intended that this information will eventually be available through the text message service which is already available (each bus stop has been allocated a seven letter code which the user can text to 84268). The service is not free (there is a charge of 25p plus the normal text sending charge) and in Milton Keynes it is not widely publicised, although codes are included in some of the roadside timetable displays. A web site is also part of the plan for real time.</p> <p>Extension of RTPi to cross-country routes (eg X5) will be difficult because each authority uses a different RTPi system. In the longer term, the intention is that RTPi systems will "talk" to each other.</p>
467.	<p>3.2: Through ticketing also needs solving as soon as possible, both outside and within the city.</p>	<p>See paragraphs 5.19 - 5.22 for more detail on fares and ticketing issues and Action nos 60, 61, and 62. Combined bus/rail ticketing is available through PlusBus, but only for purchase at stations.</p>
468.	<p>3.5 - First Bullet Point: Yes, particularly on buses, to promote modal shift. Bus travel needs to be easy, and for people to use it they need to know how much the ticket will cost and where the buses go to. They also need to feel comfortable with protocols (such as whether you need to tender the exact money for the fare) and with the drivers, who need to be personable and courteous.</p>	<p>These are all issues the bus strategy aims to address.</p>
469.	<p>3.5 - Second Bullet Point: The fast service is much used by people who would not otherwise use buses. The slow service is used more by people who cannot or do not want to walk far. Bringing the needs of both types of traveller together into one system will be a challenge. Accepted best practice from this country and Europe should be examined.</p>	<p>The strategy acknowledges (Paragraph 2.34) that the mix of running on grid roads and estate roads makes the services less attractive (slower) than they would otherwise be. However this pattern of operation is delivering increased bus patronage. There might, as patronage increases, be the opportunity for a mix of fast and slow buses along the same general corridor, and this might be a natural development of the three level approach (see new paragraphs 6.5)</p>
470.	<p>3.5 - Third Bullet Point: The Bus Strategy does not propose routes. Proactive planning of these needs to take place.</p>	<p>Some specific improvements are proposed, however within the current legislative framework the council cannot impose particular routes on operators (unless subsidised). The strategy aims to strengthen the existing partnerships through which route improvements have been implemented.</p>
471.	<p>3.6 - First Bullet Point: We are an ageing society. It is increasingly important that people with less mobility can use public transport and that it is made suitable for them. The goal should be independence and dignity in a system designed for all.</p>	<p>Developing and improving the bus services in Milton Keynes as the strategy intends will benefit all sectors of the community.</p>

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472.	<p>3.6 - Third, Fourth, Fifth Bullet Points: Buses will be a major part of the transport system. We hope there will be more bus users, but this is not likely to be disproportionately the case. Having a university in the city centre will help to increase the number of bus users; parking in the city centre will be expensive for students. It would be good to increase bus usage from 5% to 15%, especially as the city centre will get more crowded with the expansion of MK and will need an efficient system for people coming into it.</p>	A key aim of the strategy is continuing the growth in bus patronage.
473.	<p>3.9 - Fourth Bullet Point: Bulky shopping on buses is not convenient; Park and Ride buses should allow for this and offer an experience that is as nearly as possible as comfortable and convenient as using a car and parking near the shops.</p>	The specification of buses for bespoke Park & Ride services will need further consideration but there is a trade off between "space" and seating capacity. See also comment 86 and paragraph 4.18.
474.	<p>3.10: We endorse intelligent control systems, for example those using satellite navigation. Road space for buses is a reality that should endure. They should have priority at peak periods. Consideration should be given to allowing taxis to use bus lanes.</p>	Bus priority measures will be implemented where appropriate.
475.	<p>3.14 - First bullet point: What would it take to get more people to use the bus? Comfort, reliability, friendly and personable drivers, Real Time Passenger Information. They should not be so small that they are cramped. We endorse all the findings and recommendations of the Bus Information Review Group.</p>	<p>These are all issues the bus strategy aims to address (see also comments 466 [RTPI], 86 [vehicle quality], 87 [Customer Care]). The findings of the Bus Information Review Group will be fed into the group considering the Marketing and Promotion plan (see Bus Strategy paragraphs 4.13 and 5.8 and Action No 50).</p>
476.	<p>3.14 - Second bullet point Would better buses and more people using them be a benefit to the Borough? They would; it is important to enhance choice of transport mode to encourage a shift from excessive car use.</p>	See comments 464, 465 and 472.
477.	<p>3.14 - Third and fourth bullet points: Should the community subsidise more non-commercial bus services via the Council Tax? Yes; non-commercial routes are essential as some people need to get to and from late shifts, for example in industrial estates and hospitals, and from local pubs. It is important that these routes are subsidised for long enough – at least 5 years – so that people consider them reliable and use them. They should be there right from the start in new developments, so that people do not start off using cars and are less likely to use a bus when it does come.</p>	<p>The Council already subsidises non-commercial bus services (see chapter 5). It is true that the bus network in Milton Keynes could be expanded if more funding was available but there would need to be further thought both to identify the sources of any extra funds and the way in which such extra resources should be used to best effect. The mechanism for funding bus services to new estates is outlined in Chapter 3.</p>
478.	<p>3.14 - Fifth bullet point: Should increased parking charges be used to provide more bus services?</p>	This will be considered further as the Parking Strategy is implemented.

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	Yes, charges should be used to provide more bus services.	
479.	3.16 - First bullet point: Do the Bus Strategy and the Transport Strategy Review complement each other? Yes, we feel that they do, and look forward to the implementation of the Bus Strategy to promote modal shift.	Positive comment.
480.	3.17 - First bullet point: There was concern about the economic viability of the 'shuttle bus' services proposed as the third component of the Strategy. Some type of taxi service might be more appropriate, but might still have viability problems.	The strategy acknowledges that these "level 3" services are likely to require subsidy, however as comment 477 indicates, this is not something that should prevent such services being considered.
481.	3.17 - Second bullet point: If the 'eight spokes' design of transport routes were to be progressed, then we propose that consideration be given to a ninth service, comprising a circular 'outer rim' route, be added to link the outer ends of the spokes of the wheel. This would increase the viability of the outer ends of the spoke bus routes and dramatically cut the journey times of those wishing to reach the next spoke along, for example the west flank going to Wolverton or West Bletchley or the east flank going to Newport Pagnell or Fenny Stratford. As the city grows, the distance into and out of Central Milton Keynes in a low density city will increase. The location of interchange stops is problematic, but it should be possible to choose stop points with only short walks. However, through ticketing, carefully chosen to cope with this, would be needed to encourage interchange use.	On the issue of radial vs orbital routes, it is generally accepted that the biggest flows are on the radial routes to and from the town or city centre. This is why, in Milton Keynes as in most other towns and cities, the most frequent commercial services run to and from the city centre. In Milton Keynes, there are a few services that fulfil an "orbital" function (eg the 15/16 Westcroft-Bletchley and 43 Newport Pagnell - Wolverton) but these are not commercially viable (see paragraph 6.12). Experience elsewhere of orbital bus services is not conclusive. There may be scope for development of such links as patronage grows. See comment 467 on ticketing issues.
482.	3.17 - Third bullet point: The Council should initiate and promote a consultation among residents and ward and parish Councillors about the best and most appropriate routes for the spokes of the wheel. The routes proposed have emerged organically and do not necessarily reflect the most appropriate current routes. Careful consideration needs to be placed on any changes needed, to take account of the emerging expansion areas and to avoid any service reduction in existing areas. The Council should then pursue every means at its disposal to promote the adoption of the proposed routes by commercial operators.	See revised paragraph 6.4 - within the current legislative framework, the council will work in partnership with the bus operators to identify and deliver the core route network. It is not intended that there would be service reductions in existing areas.
483.	3.18 - First bullet point: Environment Policy Development Committee should include a regular review of bus routing and related matters in its work programme, with every Ward Councillor and Town or Parish Council and Parish Meeting being invited to contribute.	This is a matter for EPDC.
484.	3.18 - Second bullet point: Ward Councillors and Parish Councils should be invited to comment when each subsidised bus service through their area comes up for review or when commercial service providers in their area express concern about the viability of their services.	This recommendation will be considered further in conjunction with the Passenger Transport Operations team.

Full text from respondent B-6 (Jamie Wheway, ITP)

Thoughts in relation to the use of DRT services in Milton Keynes:

These centre around experience of living and working in Hong Kong, certainly a very different environment to MK, but one where a wide range of public transport provision serves a variety of different needs, users and markets. Many residential estates in Hong Kong have their own dedicated bus service which serves destinations decided upon by the residents. They are generally contracted out to bus operators, who use their own vehicles (usually minibuses, but occasionally larger vehicles) and drivers. A similar approach could be adopted in Milton Keynes, as follows:

- Residents of an estate would form a committee to research, discuss and agree where services should run. The research could be done in conjunction with a Personal Travel Planning exercise aimed at wider modal shift, but with the added benefit of being able to respond (through the residents shuttle service) more precisely to demands.
- A route(s) would be identified that included a number of pick up points within the grid square (or perhaps on a hail and ride basis) and then proceed directly to the destination(s).
- Routes, frequency, fares, and vehicle quality would be defined by the committee.
- The service would be tendered to the best value operator.
- The committee could chose to use the vehicle(s) as a scheduled bus service to specific destination(s) in the commuter peaks, and have the vehicle available on a demand responsive basis during the day and in the evenings. Thus a group of people going out for a dinner party in CMK in the evening could use the service, effectively as a large taxi. Alternatively, there might be a "shopper" service to CMK or one of the large supermarkets. The key thing is that residents are free to choose how and where the service is run.
- The vehicles would be liveried, promoting the local community

Some of the benefits of such a scheme include:

- Routes tailored to local demands
- Fast, non-stop journey times to chosen destinations
- Ability to attract car users with fast, direct services, comfortable vehicles, and "known" local, fellow passengers (providing a perceived safer environment)
- Promotion of community involvement
- Socially inclusive
- Demand responsive services during off-peak times

The scheme could begin with a pilot on 1-2 individual estates, perhaps in conjunction with personal travel planning. Research (interviews/ questionnaires) would be needed anyway to get information on travel patterns and to sell the concept, so it would make sense to undertake travel planning at the same time. The pilot could be funded from the new round of DfT KickStart funding.

If the pilots showed that long term subsidy was required, then one option would be to use residential travel plans for new developments as a mechanism for requiring annual contribution from each household to the overall cost of running the service.

Full text from respondent B-10 (Professor Stephen Potter, Open University)

Introduction

This response to the Bus Strategy is a result of an invitation following my participation in the Transport Question Time in September. In particular I was asked to comment upon the long term vision contained in the Bus Strategy and so I will concentrate upon this rather than detailed points.

The Bus Strategy covers the period of the second Local Transport Plan from 2006/07 to 2010/11, but it is also looking to longer term issues and developments, in particular the role of development in sustainable accessibility and seeking to correct the failings of the original design for Milton Keynes. In many ways this strategy seems to be seeking to set into place the foundations for a public transport vision to 2031 and beyond.

In this the strategy mentions national long term CO2 reduction targets and the need for all settlements to move towards more sustainable travel behaviours. The scale of this challenge seems not to be fully appreciated locally and this aspect could well do with a greater emphasis.

Milton Keynes' Bus Legacy

To some extent, in looking ahead it is worthwhile setting in context the Milton Keynes transport problem. A guiding principle of the urban design of Milton Keynes was that it should provide residents with 'freedom and choice' and flexibly accommodate the massive growth in wealth and consumption expected through to the 21st century. Key to this was the aim to design Milton Keynes as a flexible urban structure that could accommodate future anticipated and unanticipated economic and social changes.

Predominant among the anticipated changes that the *Plan for Milton Keynes* addressed was the need for the urban design to accommodate 'saturation' levels of car use without road congestion. So, in the 1970 *Plan for Milton Keynes*, consultants Llewelyn-Davies designed a town around the operational requirements of the private car, so that people could be free to use the car as much as they chose. This led to employment and all other major traffic-generating land uses being highly dispersed and traffic spread as evenly as possible across our non-directional grid roads. Added to this, residential densities are around half that of a normal UK city.

This design has served us well, contributing significantly to Milton Keynes' social and economic success. But it has to be recognised that a city-scale urban design to facilitate one freedom can be at the expense of curtailing the freedom of others. The ability for motorists to travel easily on the grid roads is at the expense of public transport users and it has generated a level of car dependence that is environmentally unsustainable.

The strategic transport conflict in urban design was well understood at the time the *Plan for Milton Keynes* was prepared. Linked to the designation of Milton Keynes was a regional study of Northampton, Buckinghamshire and Bedford by the planning consultants Jamieson and Mackay. As part of this, Jamieson and Mackay examined the urban design implications of the operations of public and private transport, and concluded that they were 'diametrically opposed' (Jamieson and Mackay, 1967). They noted that, in order to minimise road congestion, it is best to disperse facilities and traffic flow. By contrast, public transport works best along 'corridors' of movement, with the main journey origin and destinations located along such corridors. Such a design also increases pedestrian accessibility compared to car-oriented designs. You can either give the operational conditions for the private car priority, and then fit public transport, pedestrian and cyclist needs in as best can be accommodated, or the operational needs of public transport and pedestrian access determine the urban design of a town, with car travel accommodated within this structure.

Milton Keynes opted for an extreme version of the car-oriented design, and the Bus Strategy acknowledges the legacy of this key design weakness in that it makes Milton Keynes extremely difficult bus operating territory (as well as having low levels of pedestrian and cycle access despite the Redway system).

What is notable is that the fundamental design problem was realised from the very beginning, but kept quiet. Indeed, the official line was that the 1970 *Plan for Milton Keynes* would deliver both unrestricted, uncongested access by car and also public transport of a quality that would ensure those without a car would have no restrictions on their freedom and choice.

However, the *Transportation Technical Supplement* to the Plan for Milton Keynes (published at the same time as the main plan) admitted that:

“in the light of the selected land use plan, the provision of a competitive form of public transport does not make practical sense. This consideration of maximisation of freedom of choice has therefore been discounted. The appropriateness of providing a public transport service beyond the minimum level necessary to transport those not in a position to travel by car is solely a matter of policy.” The Plan for Milton Keynes, Technical Supplement No 7, Vol 2, p.34

This indirectly-phrased passage buried in a little circulated technical supplement contains the admission by the designers of Milton Keynes that its urban structure was so hostile to bus operations that it was incapable of supporting more than a minimal public transport service, falling considerably short of offering an alternative to car users. The phrase ‘solely a matter of policy’, of course, is code for subsidy.

There was also a vague reference to the possibility of a ‘dial-a-bus’ service (early demand responsive services were just starting in the USA at that time). It appears that, because the land use design fulfilled all the other development requirements, then it should be retained in the hope that the transport deficiencies of Milton Keynes’ design could be resolved by a combination of a technical fix and cash. This perhaps is understandable in the context of 1970. A key premise of the *Plan for Milton Keynes* was that by the 21st century we would be so wealthy that there would be plenty of public money around. So perhaps the idea was that this sheer affluence would provide the 70% subsidy levels for innovative bus services appropriate to a low density city.

Although, in 1975, Milton Keynes Development Corporation initiated a highly subsidised, and popular, demand responsive ‘Dial-a-Bus’. The scheme, it only covered a small part of the town, was scaled down and finally abandoned in 1980. In 1986 bus privatisation and deregulation rendered illegal the whole notion of a highly subsidised quality bus service. This was followed by 20 years of poor bus services, with Milton Keynes having about the poorest bus service for any town of its size. Bus patronage growth has been rapid lately as bus operators and the Council have, at last, got core services up to a reasonable standard. However the growth in Milton Keynes is from a very low base level and should not be compared with the likes of Oxford or Brighton, who have had consistently good bus services for as long as we have had consistently bad ones.

Towards a future transport vision?

Today, there is no way that anything like the urban design of Milton Keynes would be considered as a remotely appropriate for current and future needs. Indeed, among transport and urban planning professionals, the urban design of Milton Keynes would now be viewed as environmentally irresponsible, economically extravagant and socially divisive.

It is notable that the Bus Strategy is setting goals and objectives remarkably similar to those sought in 1970, but which the Plan for Milton Keynes failed to deliver. Given the scale of the environmental challenge to be tackled over the next 20-30 years and the need to prepare Milton Keynes for a less carbon and car intensive future, then the overall aim of having a public transport service that will ‘attract trips that would otherwise be made using a car’ is utterly crucial. The seven principle aims which support the bus vision are to be supported. These are: -

- Achieve reliable bus journey times
- Provide appropriate good quality information
- Provide an easily understood network
- Provide a product of good quality
- Ensure services are regular
- Minimise journey times
- Ensure an accessible network

However, the long term vision seems to be of a system that, although it could well address the travel needs of those without access to a car, it seems to fall well short of the quality of service that provides a real alternative to the car user. A 10-15 minute frequency for a limited core network and 30 minutes - 1 hour frequency for other areas is not exactly a vision of high standard public transport that will 'attract trips that would otherwise be made using a car'. The proposals in the Bus Strategy do not appear to be capable of delivering the vision of a public transport system of the quality to address the really difficult social, economic and environmental challenges that are looming in upon us.

Achieving our transport vision

There seems to have a single model for transport sustainability based around high density living and traditional forms of public transport. So, should we be shoe-horning all types of settlement into this model? Is there only one way for places like Milton Keynes to move towards transport sustainability? Without massive subsidy, there is no way that a dispersed design like Milton Keynes can support a tram system – even in the higher density expansion areas. Something more innovative is needed. Possibly a combination of conventional and demand responsive services might be the answer. This is what has happened in similar Canadian, Dutch, French and German suburban style towns, where the existing traditional bus routes have been entirely replaced by semi-scheduled Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) systems (Enoch et al 2004). For example, in Wunstorf near Hanover, the whole conventional bus service was scrapped and replaced by semi-scheduled DRT services operated by a mixed fleet of 50, 25 and 8 seater buses. Patronage increased by 75%. Lintz in Austria has shared night taxis rather than night buses (far more appropriate for smaller and lower density urban settlements). It looks like the original idea of a Dial-a-Bus for Milton Keynes was right, but was unfortunately an idea ahead of its time.

Such sorts of service can attract car users in suburban situations. But the real problem is that doing this under our system of deregulated bus operations is very difficult. The UK bus regulatory system is structured so strongly around conventional 1980s style of registered services, it makes innovations that are commonplace in other countries, difficult, expensive or illegal. It is thus not surprising that the Milton Keynes Bus Strategy is seeking to follow the conventional model of schedule bus operations. The trouble is that conventional bus operations cannot deliver the level of public transport quality that is needed for a 21st century city.

Milton Keynes has had an enviable record for innovation and setting a trend that the rest of the country has followed. Perhaps we need to have an innovative vision for public transport development that can set an example for the rest of the country. Practically this may need to concentrate on developing conventional services in the short term, but would at the same time set in place a framework and mechanism that will allow us to develop new forms of public transport, such a DRT and, in the longer term, automated personalised rapid transit.

This may initially sound fanciful, but we need to face up to the fact that the traditional single model for transport sustainability, based around high densities and traditional forms of public transport, is not really appropriate for the majority of suburban and semi-urban Britain. Perhaps what we need to be looking for is a bus strategy that provides the flexibility to evolve as new forms of public transport become available. The danger is locking Milton Keynes into a conventional bus system just as more appropriate alternatives are emerging.

This would suggest developing bus services as suggested in the Bus Strategy, but in parallel using the opportunities presented by the new Transport Act and the extension of Bus Quality Partnerships to explore new alternatives.

For example the Council could tender contracted bus services to develop innovative approaches such as return to Dial-a-Ride, which might be linked into an application to the *Kickstart* programme to shift supported services into the commercial sector and so start to make innovative bus services mainstream. That could be linked into markets where DRT is already present in the UK. An example is Chiltern Railways use of shared taxis to the railway station at Bicester.

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Other key locations (Stadium MK, Coachway etc) could also be candidates for innovative bus developments. Stronger partnerships with workplace travel plans might also represent another pioneering market.

As part of such a structure in which innovative systems can be fostered, to could be a range of high quality systems associated with differing levels of demand. For example, the CMK Station – CMK corridor could be developed with a higher-capacity automated people mover system that might later provide the core for a wider PRT system when the technology matures and becomes more affordable.

These are only illustrative examples of what could be transitional developments to explore paths towards a transformation of public transport in Milton Keynes. The main point is the need for a bus strategy that has a real vision that can take us towards a 21st century public transport system appropriate for a place like Milton Keynes. We cannot do this in one stage as our regulatory and market frameworks inhibit us – and it is not desirable to do so. But what we do need is a bus strategy in which innovative systems can be fostered and sets the foundations for reinventing public transport such that, over 10 – 15 years it will be able to provide a real alternative to car use. Such an approach could deliver the aims of the Bus Strategy, rather than just aspire to them, and also finally achieve the *Plan for Milton Keynes*' original goal of transport freedom and choice.

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APPENDIX E - Action Schedule from 2003 Bus Strategy

The Bus Strategy adopted in 2003 set out 46 actions, based on the recommendations of the Bus Review Group which was carried out in 2002. Many of these recommendations were quite detailed - what follows is a summary both of the action and the made in achieving the action.

No.	Description	Progress
1	Named Bus Stops	
a)	Bus stops and shelters should be named, a process should be undertaken through consultation with local people, Parish Councils and the bus companies.	All stops are named as part of the requirements for NaPTAN and Traveline data.
b)	Bus stop names should be prominently displayed on bus shelters and shown on maps and other information.	Now being shown where appropriate on printed and electronic information. Names on stops will be rolled out on a phased basis.
c)	Bus stop names and service numbers should be displayed on shelters.	
d)	The process of naming stops should start with the most obvious and most commonly used locations.	
2	Hail and Ride	
a)b)	Hail and ride sections should be equipped with fixed stops and/or bus shelters, to encourage passengers to congregate in designated areas.	Gradually being introduced as funding permits and where agreement is reached with bus companies, subject to consultation.
3	Bus Shelter Design and Location	
a)	Bus shelters should have adequate shelter, seating, lighting and information. Minimum standards should be developed.	Being progressed
b)	At key locations, such as interchange points (see recommendation 4 below), intercom-speaking facilities should be introduced.	No progress
c)	All bus stops and shelters should be surveyed, in consultation with local people and Parish Councils, to identify poorly located stops, where both passengers and drivers do not have a good line of sight. An action plan should be developed to address problems identified, and minimum standards should be considered.	Being undertaken as funds are made available (eg Quality Bus Initiative) to invest in level access which in due course will be provided at every bus stop
4	Interchange Points	
a)	A full review of existing interchange points should be undertaken with the objective of providing better and faster routes throughout the city, better centres for information and better waiting facilities.	Will be addressed within information strategy. Opportunities to improve interchange points will be taken when they arise eg funding bids & S106 funds. It is proposed that Midsummer Blvd will be developed as a central interchange as part of the CMK Transport Improvements Project
b)	The following locations should be designated as key interchange points: Bletchley, the Hospital, Wolverton, CMK, CMK Rail Station, Westcroft and Kingston. Similar facilities in the North of the new City and at the OU should	The need for improvements at these locations is recognised and will be addressed as funds become available.

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	be considered.	
5	Infrastructure Changes	
a)	The layout of CMK means that buses travel East/West through the City Centre and then often North/South on their main route. This produces a anomalies eg at CMK it is possible to catch buses to Bletchley from stops opposite each other. Solutions to resolve these anomalies should be explored.	Difficult to achieve because of commercial routeing decisions and the layout of the city centre/hospital but where simplified solutions can be identified these will be implemented if appropriate
b)	At the Hospital/Netherfield interchange a solution should be found that will enable all buses to converge on one side of the road.	
6	Traffic Management (traffic calming)	
	A policy of removing or altering vertical and non-bus friendly traffic calming to other non-vertical schemes or safety cushions is needed.	Agreed that this is a key issue on bus routes. Where appropriate and subject to funding, action is taken to make traffic calming 'bus friendly'. It is unlikely all vertical calming could be removed.
7	Bus Priority Measures	
	The Council should seriously consider developing more bus priority measures, these should include bus lanes, designated lanes and priority lanes. The possibility of the traffic light system in Central Milton Keynes being responsive to oncoming buses should also be explored.	This is taking place as funding permits and where appropriate as part of the Quality Bus Initiative and CMK Transport Project. The proposed RTP1 system will give priority to late running buses at traffic signals.
8	Low Floor Buses and Raised Kerbs	
	The policy of introducing low floor buses with raised kerbs to facilitate entry and exits from and onto buses is to be welcomed - these improvements should be phased in at the earliest opportunity.	Level access at stops is being provided as funding permits as part of the Quality Bus Initiative (QBI) and other projects funded eg through the LTP. Since 2000 all new buses for use on local bus services must be low floor. From 2017 all buses used on local bus services are required by law to be low floor. It is a commercial decision for bus companies whether to provide low floor buses in the meantime. New contracts for local bus services are awarded on the basis of low floor buses being used, where any extra cost over the use of step entrance buses can be justified.
9	Bletchley Bus Station	
	Bletchley Bus Station should be upgraded with improved passenger and driver facilities as well as a travel information centre, possibly as part of the Bletchley regeneration scheme.	Upgrading of the existing bus station costing approx £30K took place during 2005. An LTP bid has been submitted which includes a new Public Transport Interchange as part of the 'Bletchley Link 2' proposals.
10	Planning policy and the development of bus services	
a)	Newly developing areas should be provided with a level of bus service that is consistent with the level that would be reasonable once they are fully developed. Planning policies should be amended and developed to ensure that development occurs sequentially and in a less fragmented way.	Agreed and incorporated as policy within the Second Deposit Local Plan.

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b)	All new developments should take into account bus travel and include appropriate traffic calming measures that do not have a negative impact on bus services.	See a) above
11	Key Corridor Routes	
	Key corridor routes should be identified and developed and this should be a high priority.	These are identified as part of the QBI routes - investment is taken place on these corridors where appropriate and as funding permits.
12	Fast Routes and Local Services	
a)	A dual approach to fast routes whereby both fast and local services are developed. The policy described above (recommendation 4) of making enhanced use of interchange points may provide an opportunity to address both needs.	The type of routes operated are largely a matter of commercial judgment by bus companies. The Council's influence is largely restricted to services at the margin.
b)	Fast Direct Links should generally use grid roads between destinations.	
c)	In order to satisfy local demand a range of services, possibly circular in nature should be developed that will service local estates with CMK and at least one other principal interchange facility.	
13	Accessing Employment and Industrial Areas	
a)	Evening bus services should be developed to ensure that major industrial and employment areas where shift working is undertaken are served.	Where commercial bus services are not provided, the Council already provides subsidy where this can be justified. No further scope for additional services has been identified.
b)	The main industrial/employment areas and education sites should also be adequately serviced by careful route planning alongside the recommendations above or by other routes if necessary.	
c)	Direct services linking towns to the north of central Milton Keynes (Newport Pagnell, New Bradwell, Wolverton and Stony Stratford) nearby industrial areas and educational facilities should be considered for improvement.	
14	Accessing Education	
a)	A strategy should be developed to ensure that the main educational campuses are well served. Routing opportunities should be considered at all campuses, such as Woughton, working alongside students and the educational establishments concerned.	Strategy still to be written. This will take on board the needs of the proposed new university site in CMK.
b)	Consideration should be given to how school bus services and ordinary bus services could co-operate better together.	Most school bus services are fully subscribed – there is little scope for integration. Virtually all local bus services at school times are operated commercially
c)	The possibility of linking the concessionary fares for children and young people alongside provision of free home to school transport, should be explored. There are particular opportunities for the 16 to 18 age group.	Free travel is provided for entitled children by L&D. All children up to the age of 19 in full time education are entitled to concessionary travel (currently 35p per journey).
15	Accessing the Hospital	
	A review of routes should be undertaken to ensure that all areas have good	Most areas already have good links to the Hospital, albeit that a change of

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	direct links to the Hospital.	bus is required in CMK - it would not be possible to provide direct links from all areas.
16	Park and Ride Services	
a)b) c)d) e)	Detailed recommendations relating to the then existing service 210, and use of the MK Bowl site for Park & Ride.	No longer relevant as service 210 no longer runs and use of the Bowl has ceased.
17	Regional Links	
a)b)	A strategy to ensure that Milton Keynes is well linked with other towns and cities in the sub region (Luton, Bedford, Oxford, Northampton and Cambridge for example) should be developed, alongside and to compliment rail travel. Long distance coach services should also form an important part of a regional strategy.	No progress - most of the interurban services are provided commercially and it is difficult to ensure that these will remain in place.
18	Quality Bus Partnerships	
	The current approach to developing Quality Bus Partnerships should be retained and enhanced.	Voluntary Quality Bus Partnership signed between the Council and MK Metro in Jan 2007.
19	Service Frequency	
a)	Improved frequencies on then existing routes 5,14, 23, and 4 to at least 4 or 5 an hour during the day, within 3 years.	A Local Public Service Agreement frequency enhancement pilot on service 14 started in April 2003, but ceased during January 2004. This did increase patronage but was insufficient to make the increased frequency commercial and the Council did not have the resources to continue subsidising the additional frequency. Partnership with bus operators has delivered other frequency enhancements.
b)	Saturday timetables should reflect different travel patterns compared to weekday services, however they should not generally offer a reduced bus service.	Saturday timetables do reflect the different travel patterns, but this inevitably means a reduced early morning level of service as demand does not justify higher levels.
20	Evening, Sunday and Night Time Services	
a)	Evening and Sunday services should be improved to complement shopping, leisure and employment needs.	There has been considerable improvement in evening and Sunday services, with all proposed improvements now in place.
b)	A reasonably comprehensive network of services should be available up to at least 11pm. Consideration should also be given to ensuring that at least key employment areas can be reached by 6am in the morning.	A reasonably comprehensive network of services is now available up to 11pm. It has not proved possible to ensure all key employment areas can be reached by 0600.
c)	Development of night services up to at least 2am should be investigated.	No progress.
d)	The safety of both passengers and staff should be considered on services that go through potential trouble spots or at certain times of day, especially with evening and late night services.	Action is taken as and when trouble occurs eg with bus companies, Community safety & the police.
21	Customer Comments	

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a)	It should be made easier for passengers to complain or comment about services, with freepost complaint/comment forms available on buses.	Included in voluntary QBP.
b)	The Council should consider setting up bus user forums.	No progress.
22	Minimum Service Standards	
	Milton Keynes Council should develop a coherent service standard as part of a single document and this should be made available to members of the public and bus users.	No progress to date - will be developed under the Quality Bus Partnership with MK Metro.
	Access to services	
a)e)	That in the urban area of Milton Keynes (including Newport Pagnell) bus shelters along bus routes are provided so that at least 95% of the population live within 300 metres of such a bus shelter, with direct services to CMK at least half-hourly daytime and hourly early morning and evening/Sundays, and similar frequencies to at least one other major interchange point.	This is being rolled out as far as practicable as investment takes place in QBI and level access at stops.
b)	That at least 75% of the population in the urban area live within 300 metres of such a bus shelter.	
c)	That at least 75% of the population in rural areas live within 500 metres of a bus shelter on a bus route.	
d)f)	That direct services to CMK be available for all parts of the urban area and at least the principal towns in the rural area including Lavendon, Olney, Sherington, Hanslope and Woburn Sands, with a service frequency of at least hourly during the daytime and two hourly in the evenings until 11pm to CMK and at least one other major interchange point.	The Council cannot impose this requirement on bus companies - Additional services can only be provided if they meet social exclusion objectives, represent value for money and do not compete with commercial bus services.
g)	That fast direct routes be provided to CMK from the following destinations at least at 5 buses per hour (day time): Newport Pagnell, Lakes Estate/ Bletchley/Hospital, Bletchley/West Bletchley, Wolverton.	Bus companies will need to progress as a commercial enterprise. Most of (g), and some of (h) has been achieved as service improvements have taken place.
h)	That fast direct routes be provided on the following routes, at least every twenty minutes (day time): Kingston to CMK; Kingston to Bletchley; Westcroft to CMK; Westcroft to Bletchley; Stony Stratford to Wolverton/CMK.	
i)	Punctuality - Recommendation that a minimum service acceptability level, as on trains e.g. 95% of services should reach their destination within say 5 mins of time and 98% of services should run.	
j)	Cleanliness - The council should adopt minimum cleaning standards and	Already in the bus shelter contract with Adspace for shelter structures.

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	frequencies for bus shelters.	Further resources would be required if the floor of shelters are to be cleaned by Streetcare.
k)	Lighting and visibility standards - The council should adopt minimum lighting requirements for bus shelters.	A standard shelter is use on QBI routes.
23	Travel Information Centre Strategy	
	A Travel Information Centre strategy should be developed in line with emerging development plans for CMK. Including consideration of a centre close to the main bus stops in CMK where information as well as tickets and passes would be available. It should also consider smaller stations in other centres and interchange points. The strategy should also consider the use of unstaffed electronic information points. Information available on websites should also be developed to complement this recommendation.	A Travel information Centre is expected to be established as part of the CMK shopping Centre development. Information is now available on the website and will be extended to give RTPi when rolled out. This will also provide RTPi at key bus stops with the potential to extend to SMS Text Messaging. When opportunities arise eg through S106 Agreements, smaller interchange points and electronic information points will be considered.
24	Bus Route Maps	
a)	A new bus route map should be designed with simplicity, clarity and accessibility in mind.	New publicity is to be introduced in partnership with MK Metro to meet criticism of Travel Guide etc. This will include improved maps.
b)	Simplified bus route maps covering key routes and interchanges should also be developed.	
25/ 26	Bus Timetables/ Co-ordination of Timetable Changes	
a)	Timetable updates should be produced on a regular basis (at least 3 times a year).	Printed timetable information is to be published at pre-determined timetable change dates. The voluntary QBP with MK Metro proposes no more than 4 change dates a year. This encourages operators to confine their changes to these dates as otherwise they lose out by having out of date information in printed timetable information. Tender awards by the Council take place twice a year on set dates to co-incide with publication of printed information.
b)	The distribution of the timetable should be reviewed and improved.	
c)	Pocket timetables produced by rail companies are a good example to follow.	
d)	Efforts should be made to produce timetable information at route or area level, which is far easier to use.	
	Bus companies should be encouraged to make timetable changes less often and on co-ordinated, pre arranged dates.	This is part of the current Information Strategy.
27	Information in Community Languages	
	The Council should investigate providing transport information in a variety of community languages.	No progress.
28	Marketing and Publicity	
a)	A major marketing strategy should be developed to promote bus usage within Milton Keynes.	This will be picked up within the Information Strategy
b)	The group also recommends that a major publicity drive should be associated with this strategy.	

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29	Information at Bus Stops	
a)	Services and routes available from stops should be marked on both ends of shelters.	See 1 (b) & (c) above
b)	The main destinations and interchange points that can be reached from the stop should be listed.	Points (b) (c) (d) and (g) currently undertaken or within the Bus Information Strategy. Points (a) and (e) need further investigation.
c)	All shelters should include details of where to get more information, such as phone numbers and web sites.	
d)	First and last bus times on each route using that stop should be highlighted as on the Tube.	
e)	If zones were introduced, zoning signs or colours should be clearly marked on the stops and shelters.	
g)	Where the 24-hour clock system is being used, a conversion table should be shown.	
f)	Real-time information should be introduced on a rolling programme beginning with some of the key routes and locations.	Work to implement RTPI is underway.
30	Information on Buses	
	A selection of timetables and route maps should be available on all buses.	Difficult for MKC to achieve except on tendered services. The Council has purchased 200 holders which are available free of charge for operators. MK Metro and Arriva have some holders on their buses for timetables.
31	Signage in the Shopping Centre	
	Directional signage should be deployed at the main shopping and entertainment centres (particularly at CMK) to direct people towards buses.	Additional signs were erected in the Centre:mk towards the end of 2003 in consultation with MK Metro. The construction of the superstops will give the opportunity for a review of the signing.
32	Better Access for People with Disabilities	
a)	Better availability of large print information	Large print printed timetable information is available on request.
b)	Audible announcements of approaching stops	Bus stop naming should assist with this problem. RTPI will be capable of providing audible announcements of next stops and can include audible announcements to advise those waiting at stops of the route and destination of next buses.
c)	Enhanced driver training	Included in the voluntary QBP - the bus company will be encouraged to further develop driver training, also required by law from 2008.
d)	Progressive introduction of vehicles to full DIPTAC standards	Since 2000 all new buses used on local bus services must be low floor and to DIPTAC standards. Number and service information is on buses in accordance with the DIPTAC recommended minimum. The Council requires the Diptac
f)	Larger number and service information on the front of bus vehicles.	
g)	Similar information on the side of vehicles	
h)	Adequate storage (pushchairs and luggage) facilities in the buses	

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i)	Better facilities inside buses for the disabled	standard for information on the front sides and rears of all buses on tendered bus services. Approximately 60% of MK Metro buses operating in the borough are now low floor. As bus fleets are renewed a greater proportion will be low floor and to Diptac standard. On tendered services, the Council requires tenderers to quote for low floor buses and if justified, contracts are awarded to a contractor offering a low floor bus.
e)	Measures to improve lighting, remove dark vegetation cover and other community safety measures from grid road bus stops into the main housing estates	No progress.
33	Addressing the Needs of Certain Wards	
	The specific needs of estates and wards with low car ownership, high unemployment, low incomes and a high level of dependency on public transport should be investigated and addressed.	MKC will continue to bid for Challenge funds or similar to address perceived service deficiencies. Areas with low car ownership tend to have better levels of bus service. In more rural areas measures have been taken to improve access to facilities by improving public transport, for example by innovative solutions such as the Hanslope Harrier.
34	Bus Users from Black and Minority Ethnic Backgrounds	
	Further work should be undertaken to investigate and ascertain the particular needs of bus users from black and minority ethnic backgrounds.	No progress.
35/ 36/ 38	Concessionary fares for the elderly and disabled Reciprocal agreements for concessionary fares when journeys cross local boundaries Concessionary fares for the blind	
	Recommendation that concessionary fares for the elderly and disabled should be incrementally reduced with the objective of achieving free transport for these groups within 3 years, also that concessionary fares are made available to both men and women at the age of 60.	Free off peak travel within the borough became available in April 2006, with a 35p flat fare at peak times. From April 2008 free off peak travel will be available for travel anywhere within England. Concessionary fares are now equally available to both men and women aged 60 and over.
	The Council should investigate the possibility of instituting reciprocal concessionary fares arrangements for passholders where their journey goes across neighbouring authorities.	
37	Concessionary fares for young people	
a)	It is recommended that the concessionary fares scheme for children and young people (under 19 if still in full time education) should be better promoted.	Officers have been working with the Youth MP and youth services to promote the scheme more effectively.
b)	The charge for issuing the pass should be dropped (in line with the arrangements for the elderly and disabled).	A nominal charge of 50 pence is charged in order to meet the admin costs of schools through which the passes are issued. Investigations are to take

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		place to see if this charge can be waived.
c)	Schools and colleges should be used as information dissemination points, and schools enabled and encouraged to issue such passes.	Schools already issue the passes - see (b). See also (a) above.
d)	Recommendation that the flat fare reduced from the current 50p to 35p.	Introduced August 2003.
39	Family Tickets	
	Family ticketing arrangements should be reviewed to ensure that buses are an economical method for family travel.	MK Metro provide a family ticket which is promoted in MKC bus publicity. The Council is not permitted to subsidise family tickets.
40/ 41	Ticketing Incentives and Through Ticketing	
	<p>Ticketing incentives should be considered as a way of encouraging greater usage of buses, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Linking tickets to discount schemes, eg sponsorship by fast food companies, or council discounts such as leisure centre activities o Linking bus tickets to train journeys as in the London rover tickets 	<p>Will be investigated with MK Metro.</p> <p>Plusbus Rail/Bus tickets are available from rail stations.</p>
	Recommendation that an investigation of through ticketing schemes be undertaken, including developing daily, weekly and monthly passes. It should also include a consideration of alternative arrangements such as time-valid tickets and zonal fare structure.	
42	The Cost of Bus Fares	
	Recommendation that fares must not become a disincentive to travel on the buses and that increases should be kept consistent with the rate of inflation.	The Council is not able to influence the level of fares except for those groups identified in the Transport Acts 1985 & 2000, where the Council already provides subsidised fares, and on contracted bus services.
43	A Simplified Fare Structure	
	A simplified fare structure should be considered, either a single fare throughout Milton Keynes or a simple zone system; the grid layout of the city could provide zonal boundaries. A simplified fares structure would considerably enhance marketing and promotional opportunities.	Will be investigated with MK Metro.
44	Setting a clear, long term vision	
	The Council should set clear and unambiguous long and medium term objectives aiming to make bus services in Milton Keynes an example of excellence to all comparably sized towns and cities throughout the UK.	<p>MKC with EP appointed consultants to undertake Longer Term Public Transport Options Studies.</p> <p>As a result of this, MKC & EP were awarded over £14 million to spend on infrastructure in CMK. Elements of the Long Term Vision Study were adopted by Cabinet during 2005 following public consultation. Long and medium term objectives are included in the Bus Strategy and the QBP.</p>
45	The Passenger Transport Section	
a)	The sections limited resources should be targeted at monitoring reliability	Limited progress

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	and punctuality of all bus services as well as ensuring that publicity and information is of a high standard.	
b)	The section should work co-operatively with the bus companies to implement the bus strategy.	The Bus Strategy is endorsed by MK Metro and therefore co-operative working should follow.
c)	The section should develop methods and techniques of both collating and disseminating information not just about ridership, but also about journey patterns and modal use, alongside other colleagues in the Environment Directorate and elsewhere in the Council.	No progress
d)	Consideration should be given to frequent passenger and non-passenger surveys and census.	No progress
46	Travel Plans for Companies within Milton Keynes	
a)	The work of the Sustainable Transport Co-ordinator should be supported by a number of measures including pro-active planning policies. The Council should develop a strategy to work with schools on travel plans to minimise the use of cars.	For new developments, s106 funding is used to fund public transport improvements, including introducing bus services to new housing areas at an early stage in the development. Developers are aware that the Council is seeking good public transport provision and facilities - reference is made to this in the Local Plan.
b)	In addition the Council should lead by example and implement their own green travel to work plan.	No progress
47	Key Workers	
a)	Bus staff should be considered as key workers for housing purposes.	Response - agreed to a) and b) and will be passed to planning policy.
b)	Any strategy that is developed to meet the needs of key workers should include bus drivers within its remit.	No progress yet

