

Local Transport Strategy – Annex 2

**Public Transport Information  
Strategy**

Falkirk Council

May 2006

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## Executive Summary

### Introduction

*Falkirk Council wishes to develop a Public Transport Information Strategy in accordance with Sections 33 to 35 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001. A Public Transport Information Strategy is an implied requirement for all Local Authorities in Scotland and is an important part of Falkirk Council's Local Transport Strategy.*

*This strategy document has been developed in a way that identifies existing information provision and uses a comprehensive consultation exercise to help identify a programme of delivery for Falkirk Council in partnership with local operators and other key stakeholders.*

### Study Methodology

*The strategy has been developed in five stages, namely:*

- ◆ *A review of existing information;*
- ◆ *A review of UK best practice;*
- ◆ *A consultation phase;*
- ◆ *The development of an information strategy; and*
- ◆ *A monitoring and Implementation phase.*

### Review of Existing Information

*A review of current information provision within the Falkirk area indicated that the Council currently offers transport information to the general public by the following means:*

- ◆ *Printed timetable information for supported services and area guides;*
- ◆ *The Council's web-site; and*
- ◆ *The information supplied at bus stops.*

*The Council has developed a number of one-stop-shops in various locations throughout the Falkirk Council area to help provide local information. However these offices currently do not provide any public transport information to the general public.*

*The major bus operator in the Falkirk area is First Group which currently provides a comprehensive set of timetable leaflets as well as a network guide for the area. Falkirk Council produce a number of timetables for the smaller supported services, mainly run by smaller operators.*

*The Council is responsible for the funding and provision of flags, poles and cases at the majority of bus stops and is predominantly responsible for maintenance. There are approximately 1,200 bus stops in the Falkirk area and 460 bus shelters.*

*The Council is responsible for the funding and replacement of all timetable information, which is normally replaced as close to the day of the service change as possible.*

### **Review of UK Best Practice**

*A review of the relevant public transport information sources and guidance was carried out, with a description of best practice provided along with the relevant national standards. In addition a number of transport information strategy documents prepared by other Local Authorities throughout the UK were reviewed as part of the review process.*

*The key features of the best practice review included:*

- ◆ The Traveline logo and telephone number should be prominent on all public transport information;
- ◆ Web based information should be accessible and easy to use;
- ◆ Timetable leaflets should be produced to comply with ATCO guidelines;
- ◆ Bus stop flags should comply with the Traffic Signs Regulations;
- ◆ Service information should be provided in a watertight case, either separately mounted or an integral part of a bus shelter;
- ◆ Real time information should be encouraged on as many routes as possible; and
- ◆ Information should be made available over as many media as possible including the internet, WAP phones, telephone and SMS messaging.

### **Consultation**

*Falkirk Council decided at an early stage that consultation would play a key part in the production of the strategy, and was designed in a way that would establish the views of a full range of stakeholders including both users and non-users. The consultation was undertaken in two distinct phases. The first phase included a number of face-to-face interviews with members of the public, undertaken at key locations in the Falkirk Council area, designed to try and ascertain the current view of local residents. In the second phase, key stakeholders including local operators and community representatives were invited to a focus group held at the Falkirk Council offices.*

*The results of the first phase of the consultation period indicated that the majority of people in the Falkirk Council area were fairly pleased with the amount and quality of public transport information available across the Council area. The vast majority of people had not heard of Traveline but thought that real-time information would encourage them to use public transport more often.*

*The results of the second phase of the consultation period resulted in the following selection of comments:*

- ◆ *The community groups indicated that the existing telephone based provision was adequate but they wanted the operators to have more local knowledge;*
- ◆ *There was confusion over the difference between Transport Direct and Traveline;*
- ◆ *More public transport information should be delivered by face-to-face interaction;*
- ◆ *The concept of one-stop-shops should be rolled out to other parts of the Falkirk Council area;*
- ◆ *Information terminals in the centre of towns was a suggestion;*

- ◆ *The general consensus was that the Council should provide an area wide map showing the main bus services in the Falkirk Council area;*
- ◆ *The operators indicated that the Falkirk Council web-site was adequate;*
- ◆ *The operators agreed that a joint production of an area wide map with the Council and the Tourist Board should be considered;*
- ◆ *Timetable leaflets should be available to the public on the vehicles; and*
- ◆ *First Group indicated that they were willing to discuss an involvement in a signing strategy for the main interchange points in Falkirk.*

### **Development of the Strategy**

*The information gathered in the consultation phase of the study was used to construct the framework for the strategy document which was developed under headings for each element of information provision. The strategy document provides objectives, standards and appropriate targets for implementation and was separated into immediate, short, medium and longer term delivery periods.*

*The key elements of the information strategy include:*

- ◆ *The Council will consider additional methods of promoting the Traveline facility;*
- ◆ *The Council will undertake a review of its existing web-site provision;*
- ◆ *A link to Transport Direct will be provided from the existing Falkirk Council web-site;*
- ◆ *The development of one-stop-shops throughout the Falkirk Council area will be encouraged;*
- ◆ *Falkirk Council will review ways of improving the presentation, clarity and distribution of timetable leaflets;*
- ◆ *The Council will undertake an audit all of the bus stop flags, poles and cases;*
- ◆ *Falkirk Council will work towards including SMS data on all timetable cases;*
- ◆ *The existing provision of on-bus information will be reviewed;*
- ◆ *A customer care strategy will be implemented by public transport operators; and*
- ◆ *The Council will identify and audit the key strategic transport interchange points in the Falkirk Council area.*

*The key objectives in the strategy document are to make the public more aware of where public transport information can be found and to make the information more easily available for users and non-users of public transport, thereby hopefully encouraging more people to use public transport on a regular basis.*

### **Monitoring and Implementation**

*The strategy sets out a programme for implementation over the immediate, short, medium and long term and indicates appropriate methods for monitoring.*

*The effectiveness of the strategy will be reviewed on a regular basis, primarily through the process of conducting customer satisfaction surveys throughout the Falkirk Council area. The information collected has assisted the Council in the production of the Falkirk Council Local Transport Strategy 2006-2009.*



# 1. Introduction

## BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Falkirk Council is committed to improving the scope, attractiveness and use of public transport services throughout the Local Authority area. The Falkirk Local Transport Strategy 2006-2009 (LTS) sets out the Council's overall public transport strategy and key policies.
- 1.2 As part of the LTS, Falkirk Council has prepared a Public Transport Information Strategy in accordance with Sections 33 to 35 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001.

## WHY IS A STRATEGY NEEDED

- 1.3 Under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001, local authorities have a duty to determine what local bus information should be made available to the public and the way in which this information should be made available.
- 1.4 The existing publicity for public transport services in the Falkirk area is fairly comprehensive, with the local authority and operators acting in a reasonably well coordinated manner. However there is a need for a strategy which helps existing public transport users and targets non-users in different ways to help grow the local market and increase patronage.
- 1.5 There is no single "one size fits all" formula which can be applied consistently across the country. Existing bus users who are familiar with public transport may prefer comprehensive publicity, while current non-users or people who use bus services occasionally, may prefer a more simplistic system.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE INFORMATION STRATEGY

- 1.6 The main objectives of the Falkirk Public Transport Information Strategy defined by the Council are to:
  - ◆ Help make the general public more aware of public transport information and increase the availability of suitable information;
  - ◆ Ensure that accurate, comprehensive public transport information is available to existing and potential passengers;
  - ◆ Help make public transport information more accessible;
  - ◆ Define the 'required' level of information and identify how this should be provided;
  - ◆ To identify who is responsible (local authority/operator) for each element of information provision;
  - ◆ Define who should meet the cost and how costs should be apportioned; and
  - ◆ To set out a staged programme for the delivery of the 'required' information.

### **CRITERIA FOR INFORMATION PROVISION**

- 1.7 For the purpose of the Falkirk Public Transport Information Strategy, a package of different forms of information (both available prior to travel and during travel) has been defined as “required” following discussions with the Council and has been identified in the following categories:
- ◆ Telephone information;
  - ◆ Website information;
  - ◆ One stop shops / enquiry offices;
  - ◆ Timetable leaflets;
  - ◆ Area wide maps;
  - ◆ Bus stop flags, poles and cases;
  - ◆ On-bus information;
  - ◆ Interchanging modes; and
  - ◆ Meeting the needs of particular users.
- 1.8 Within the context of the report, information is described under each category indicated above.

### **METHODOLOGY**

- 1.9 The strategy has been developed in five stages, namely:
- ◆ A review of existing information;
  - ◆ A review of UK best practice;
  - ◆ A consultation phase;
  - ◆ The development of an information strategy; and
  - ◆ A monitoring and Implementation phase
- 1.10 A review of current information provision was undertaken within the Falkirk area indicated that the Council currently offers transport information to the general public by the following means:
- ◆ Printed timetable information for supported services and area guides;
  - ◆ The Council’s web-site; and
  - ◆ The information supplied at bus stops.
- 1.11 A review of the relevant public transport information sources and guidance was then carried out. In addition a number of transport information strategy documents prepared by other local authorities throughout the UK were reviewed.
- 1.12 Consultation played a key part in the production of the strategy document and a wide range of stakeholders were consulted, including the Traffic Commissioner, public transport operators, local access groups and the general public.

- 1.13 The information gathered in the consultation phase of the study was used to construct the framework for the strategy document which was developed under headings for each element of information provision. The strategy document provides objectives, standards and appropriate targets for implementation.

#### **REPORT PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE**

- 1.14 This document outlines the Council's proposed public transport information strategy and implementation programme for the next ten years and has been developed to help promote a good working relationship between Falkirk Council, the public transport operators and the general public.
- 1.15 The report has been divided into even further sections following this introduction as follows:
- ◆ Section two – Policy context;
  - ◆ Section three – Review of existing information;
  - ◆ Section four – Review of best practice;
  - ◆ Section five – Public and stakeholder consultation;
  - ◆ Section six – Information strategy; and
  - ◆ Section seven – Monitoring and implementation.

## 2. Policy Context

### RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- 2.1 Sections 33 to 35 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001 deal with information about bus services and offer the following guidance:

#### **Section 33 – Information about Bus Services.**

(1) Each local transport authority shall from time to time determine, having regard to their relevant general policies –

(a) What local bus information should be made available to the public (in this section referred to as the “required information”); and

(b) The way in which it should be made available (in this section and in section 34 of the Act referred to as the “appropriate way”).

(2) Before making such a determination, the authority shall consult –

(a) The Traffic Commissioner;

(b) Such organisations appearing to the authority to be representatives of users of local services as they think fit; and

(c) Such other persons as the authority think fit.

(3) Each authority shall from time to time ascertain whether the required information is being made available to the public in the appropriate way.

(4) If an authority ascertains that the required information is not being made available to the public in the appropriate way the authority shall seek to make arrangements with the operator or operators of the local services concerned under which the operator or operators agree to make the information available in that way.

(5) In this section –

“local bus information”, in relation to a local transport authority means –

(a) Information about routes and timetabling of local services to, from and within the authority’s area;

(b) Information about fares for journeys on such local services; and

(c) Such other information about facilities for disabled persons, travel concessions, connections with other public passenger transport services (within the meaning of the 1985 Act) or other matters of value to the public as the authority consider appropriate in relation to their area; and

“travel concession” has the meaning given by section 68(7) of the Act.

### **Section 34 – Duty of an Authority to make Information Available.**

(1) If a local authority are unable to make satisfactory arrangements in pursuance of section 33(4) of this Act, they, or two or more such authorities acting jointly –

(a) Shall make available, or secure that there is made available, in such manner as they determine, such information as is not being made available in the appropriate way in their area, or each of their areas (whether by virtue of arrangements made under section 33(4) of the Act or otherwise); and

(b) May recover from the operator or operators of the local services concerned the reasonable costs incurred by them in doing so as a civil debt due to them.

(2) In determining for the purposes of subsection (1)(b) above what is reasonable in relation to a particular operator, the authority, or as the case may be authorities, shall have regard to –

(a) The amount of information which has to be made available; and

(b) The way in which that information has been made available.

In respect of the local services provided by that operator.

(3) If the authority, or as the case may be authorities, require an operator to provide information to them or another person in order to perform their duty under para (1)(a) above, the operator shall provide the information at such times and in such manner as may be specified by the authority (or authorities).

(4) The authority, or as the case may be authorities, shall give notice to the traffic commissioner of any requirement imposed under subsection (3) above.

### **Section 35 – Bus Information: supplementary**

In carrying out their functions under sections 33 and 34 of the Act, local transport authorities –

(a) Shall act in a manner which is, in the opinion of the authority, most economic, efficient and effective; and

(b) Shall not act in such a way as to discriminate (whether directly or indirectly) against any operator, or class of operator, of local services.”

### **NATIONAL POLICY GUIDELINES**

#### **Scotland’s Transport Future – June 2004**

- 2.2 The Scottish Executive published a transport white paper in June 2004. This has a vision for Scotland’s transport future which is *‘An accessible Scotland with safe, integrated and reliable transport that supports economic growth, provides opportunities for all and is easy to use.’*

2.3 The Executive suggests in relation to the delivery of the vision:

*Paragraph 4.40*

*Most bus services are provided commercially and the market approach encourages entrepreneurship and provides the incentive for operators to innovate, to put on new services and to provide new types of service.*

*Paragraph 4.41*

*The £18 million Bus Route Development Fund announced in April 2004 aims to improve the frequency and quality of bus services. The scheme will involve local government and bus operators working together to develop existing and new local services to encourage more people on to buses.*

*Paragraph 4.42*

*The Transport (Scotland) Act 2001 provides options for local transport authorities to use in relation to local bus services. These include quality partnerships and quality contracts.*

*Paragraph 4.43*

*Bus priority measures are often very important in enabling buses to combat congestion. Initiatives by transport authorities include bus priority lanes, priority at traffic lights and junctions, new and improved bus stations, interchanges and shelters, raised kerbs to ease boarding, and park and ride facilities. Initiatives in response by bus operators include increased frequencies, increased numbers of low-emission and low-floor buses and improved ticketing and passenger information*

### **Regional Transport Strategy**

2.4 The Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) for the South East Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN) sets out the vision, aims and objectives for strategic transport in the region. SESTRAN is a statutory partnership of eight local authorities including Falkirk Council with an emphasis on travel to and from the City of Edinburgh. The current strategy document was produced in March 2003. A revised RTS is currently under preparation and will be a statutory document as required by legislation.

2.5 The general objectives of the existing RTS are to:

- ◆ Reduce the number of people commuting in single occupancy vehicles in South East Scotland;
- ◆ Minimise the overall need for travelling by car;
- ◆ Maximise public transport provision;
- ◆ Improve safety for all road and transport users;
- ◆ Enhance community life and social inclusion;
- ◆ Maintain existing infrastructure; and

- ◆ Enhance movements of freight by rail and other non-road modes.

#### **LOCAL POLICY GUIDELINES**

2.6 Local policy guidelines for public transport are included in the following documents:

- ◆ Falkirk Council Strategic Community Plan;
- ◆ Sustainable Falkirk Strategy;
- ◆ Falkirk Council Structure Plan; and
- ◆ Falkirk Council's Local Transport Strategy.

#### **Falkirk Council Strategic Community Plan 2005-2010**

2.7 The Falkirk Council Strategic Community Plan outlines the vision and strategic priorities for the future of all communities in the Falkirk Council area and has been developed in partnership with a number of strategic organisations and partners.

2.8 The strategic community plan helps inform the direction of policy development in terms of the associated partner agencies and organisations and lists a number of specific themes and aims and identifies a number of target areas.

2.9 The five priority themes detailed within the strategic community plan are as follows:

- ◆ Improving the Performance of the Local Economy and Tourism;
- ◆ Enhancing Lifelong Learning and Opportunity;
- ◆ Creating a Sustainable Local Environment and Improving Transport;
- ◆ Regenerating Our Communities
- ◆ Enabling our Citizens to Live Safely; and
- ◆ Improving Health and Wellbeing.

2.10 The transport priority detailed in the document is as follows:

- ◆ Promoting a safe and efficient multi-modal transport system that minimises impact on the environment.

2.11 Specific tasks detailed within the strategic community plan include:

- ◆ Improving the road network and related infrastructure in key areas;
- ◆ Continuing implementation of traffic management measures;
- ◆ Promoting green travel initiatives;
- ◆ Continuing support for bus services and infrastructure
- ◆ Continuing to implement measures to improve access to railway stations including car parking; and,
- ◆ Continuing to develop the local countryside path network.

### **Sustainable Falkirk Strategy**

- 2.12 The Council demonstrates a commitment to promote sustainable development through the Sustainable Falkirk Strategy and through the integration of sustainable development principles into other areas of policy. One of the priorities of Sustainable Falkirk is 'Greener Transport' with the stated objective '*To reduce the need for travel but where travel is necessary, to reduce the proportion of travel undertaken by car and where car travel is necessary, to reduce the environmental impact of that travel*'.
- 2.13 The Policy for Procurement of Public Transport Services, in supporting the provision of bus services to supplement the commercial networks and focusing on priority groups and communities, contributes to the objectives and actions of the Sustainable Falkirk strategy.

### **Falkirk Structure Plan**

- 2.26 The current Falkirk Structure Plan was approved in June 2002, and sets out the proposed development strategy for the period up to 2020.
- 2.27 The development strategy has been built around four strategic themes, namely:
- ◆ Economic prosperity;
  - ◆ Sustaining communities;
  - ◆ Environmental quality; and
  - ◆ Sustainable transport.
- 2.28 Within the sustainable transport section the following key objectives are noted:
- ◆ Reduce the proportion of journeys made by car and increase the proportion by foot, using public transport and cycling;
  - ◆ Ensure that wherever possible new development is located so as to reduce the need to travel and be accessible by people walking, cycling or using public transport;
  - ◆ Safeguard land for infrastructure that will encourage journeys to be made on foot, cycling or using public transport; and
  - ◆ Promote the completion of key links in the strategic and local road network.

### **Falkirk Council Local Transport Strategy 2006-2009**

- 2.29 Falkirk Council published its second Local Transport Strategy (LTS) in 2006 based on guidance provided by the Scottish Executive.
- 2.30 The Council's vision for transport is to:
- To provide a transport network both within the Council area and linking to surrounding areas, which allows people a reasonable choice of travel options as part of a safe, reliable, convenient, accessible and sustainable transport system. To enable people to travel when and where they wish, regardless of their level of income, physical ability or access to a car. To achieve a transport system that caters for the car, but is not dominated by it.*

### *Transport Problems*

2.31 The LTS identifies a number of transport issues affecting the Falkirk council area. These are as follows:

- ◆ Increasing car dependence;
- ◆ Environmental quality;
- ◆ Community Regeneration and Social Inclusion;
- ◆ Safety; and,
- ◆ Transport infrastructure.

### *Transport Objectives*

2.32 From the above analysis of the transport issues, a number of objectives for transport have been developed. These are:

**OBJECTIVE 1:** To support the growth of the local economy in a sustainable way.

**OBJECTIVE 2:** To contribute to community regeneration through promoting social inclusion.

**OBJECTIVE 3:** To protect the environment by minimising the impact that transport can have on it and to improve health by promoting more active travel.

**OBJECTIVE 4:** To improve safety for all those using the transport network.

**OBJECTIVE 5:** To improve integration between different forms of transport.

2.33 One vision highlighted in the Falkirk LTS is that the Council will continue to ensure that the infrastructure necessary to make the bus journey comfortable and convenient for passengers is provided and maintained, including:

- ◆ Bus stops and shelters;
- ◆ Timetable cases; and
- ◆ A telephone enquiry service.

2.34 The Council also indicated that it would work closely with the Scottish Executive, SESTRAN, neighbouring local authorities and public transport operators to promote the National Public Transport Timetable database.

### **3. Review of Existing Information**

- 3.1 An audit has been undertaken of the existing public transport information provision within the Falkirk area to determine the quality and availability of information to existing and potential users.

#### **TELEPHONE INFORMATION**

- 3.2 The Council is a member of Traveline which offers a national telephone enquiry service for members of the public. The Council currently provides Traveline with timetable modifications approximately two weeks before the change is due to happen, with the process being electronic.
- 3.3 First Group operate a public transport telephone service where a team of people are available to answer timetable and ticket enquiries Monday – Friday, 7am – 7pm and on Saturdays between 10am and 4pm.

#### **WEB-SITE INFORMATION**

- 3.4 The Council provides the following information on its website:
- ◆ Timetable Information;
  - ◆ Information on Community Transport;
  - ◆ Information on Concessionary Travel Schemes;
  - ◆ Information on School Transport; and
  - ◆ Links to the Traveline Scotland, Citylink and First Scotrail websites.

#### **Timetable Information**

- 3.5 There is general information on how to receive timetable information along with a contact number for the Council. There are also hyperlinks to the Traveline Scotland, First ScotRail and Scottish Citylink websites.

#### **Community Transport Guide**

- 3.6 Information on community transport such as a dial-a-journey and the taxi card scheme is available. Application forms and related guidelines can also be downloaded from the Council's web-site.

#### **Concessionary Transport**

- 3.7 Detailed information on concessionary travel, including:
- ◆ Blue Badge Scheme – national concessionary parking scheme;
  - ◆ A selection of concessionary travel pass schemes; and
  - ◆ Red Permit Scheme – pass which allows members of the public that are mobility impaired to park in the pedestrianised area within Falkirk town centre before 11am and after 4pm seven days per week.

- 3.8 Application forms and related guidelines for all of the schemes noted above can be downloaded from the Council's website.

### **School Transport**

- 3.9 Falkirk Council arranges school transport to almost every school in the Council area. The Council also provides free school transport for distance entitled children and children with special needs.
- 3.10 Information and application forms for free school transport and special needs school transport are available on-line via the Council's website.

### **Traveline Scotland**

- 3.11 The Traveline Scotland website gives members of the general public the opportunity to plan a journey within Scotland and from Scotland to the main points in the UK using web-based information.

### **Citylink**

- 3.12 The site allows passengers to book express coach services between the main points of population in Scotland and also offers a journey planning service and timetable information.

### **First Scotrail**

- 3.13 The First Scotrail website offers a journey planning service and a full list of timetable data, fare and real-time information.

### **ONE STOP SHOPS / ENQUIRY OFFICES / LIBRARIES**

- 3.14 Falkirk Council has developed a network of One-Stop Shops to help provide local information and advice to residents and visitors to the Falkirk area. The offices are located in:

- ◆ Denny;
- ◆ Camelon;
- ◆ Falkirk;
- ◆ Stenhousemuir;
- ◆ Grangemouth; and
- ◆ Bo'ness.

- 3.15 The offices offer a comprehensive service on housing and finance and some provide a social work service. However they do not provide any public transport information to members of the public at present.

- 3.16 Falkirk Council has libraries in the following town centre locations:

- ◆ Falkirk;
- ◆ Grangemouth;

- ◆ Stenhousemuir;
- ◆ Denny;
- ◆ Bo'ness;
- ◆ Bonnybridge; and
- ◆ Slamannan.

3.17 These facilities have a number of free public internet access points and are open throughout the year. The Council are planning to open another library in Polmont in 2007.

#### **INDIVIDUAL TIMETABLE LEAFLETS**

3.18 The major bus operator in the Falkirk area is First Group, and they currently produce a comprehensive set of individual, colour coded timetable information as well as a network guide for the area. First have a mailing list of organisations and locations (such as libraries and one-stop-shops) that should automatically receive copies of new printed timetable information. However, it appears that a number of locations on the list do not appear to get timetable updates or their supplies replenished on a regular basis.

3.19 Falkirk Council also produces a number of timetable leaflets, mainly for the smaller supported service operators which are paid for by the Council.

3.20 The Council funds and produces area guides for specific villages in the Falkirk area or popular routes to destinations out-with the area. The guides show a summary of all the bus services in the area, and the locations include:

- ◆ Fankerton;
- ◆ Skinflats;
- ◆ Whitecross;
- ◆ Avonbridge and Braes; and
- ◆ Bo'ness Area.

3.21 It is the intention of Falkirk Council to update these guides on a regular basis, which will hopefully be every two to three years or as changes occur.

#### **AREA WIDE TIMETABLE MAP**

3.22 Falkirk Council does not have an up to date area wide map indicating the service provision between the majority of towns and villages within the Council area. The previous map was produced in 1996 by an external supplier with all proof reading undertaken by the Council.

3.23 First Group provides a good colour co-ordinated map of all of the bus services (provided by the company) that run in the Falkirk Council area. This map is regularly updated by the company.

### **BUS STOP FLAGS, POLES AND CASES**

- 3.24 The Council has approximately 1,209 bus stops in the Falkirk Council area with approximately 1,109 of the bus stops marked with flags. Of these stops 510 (46%) have roadside information panels.
- 3.25 The Council is responsible for the funding and provision of flags, poles and cases and the majority of bus shelters. The Council is also responsible for the maintenance of timetable cases.

### **BUS STOP TIMETABLE INFORMATION**

- 3.26 A standard information display panel in the Falkirk Council area may include:
- ◆ Services and operators that use the stop;
  - ◆ A timetable extract; and
  - ◆ A Traveline number and associated information where space permits.
- 3.27 The Council is responsible for the funding and replacement of all timetable information and the information is usually replaced as close to the day of the service change as possible. The information is changed every time a bus service is modified, for example when the route that the vehicle takes changes or the times indicated on the timetable vary.

### **SMS INFORMATION**

- 3.28 The provision of SMS (System Management Server) information to mobile phone users who can type in the SMS number of the bus stop and receive public transport information via a text message will become more common throughout Scotland in the future. Falkirk Council currently has SMS numbers for all the bus stops in the Council area and the system is operational. However only a limited number of timetable cases have SMS information due to a lack of available space.

### **ON-BUS INFORMATION**

- 3.29 At present approximately 95% of existing services have destination blinds indicating where the bus is travelling to.
- 3.30 The number of buses where timetable information is available on-vehicle to passengers throughout the Falkirk area is variable with the bulk of the services operated by First Group not supplying on-vehicle timetable information.

### **INTERCHANGING MODES**

- 3.31 Transport information is provided in a basic and uncoordinated way at a number of key interchange points throughout the Falkirk area.

## 4. Review of Best Practice

- 4.1 A review has been undertaken of relevant guidance relating to best practice on information provision. The main references being:
- ◆ 'Legibility of Timetables Books and Leaflets, Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC), 1996.
  - ◆ 'Passenger Interchanges', The Institute of Logistics and Transport, 2000.
  - ◆ Slevin R., 'Bus Services: Provision of Information', Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers (ATCO), 2001.
  - ◆ Kenyon S., Lyons G., & Austin J., 'Public Transport Information Web Sites – How to Get it Right', The Institute of Logistics and Transport, 2001.
  - ◆ 'Guidance on Part 2 (Bus Services) of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001', Scottish Executive, 2001.
  - ◆ 'Printed Public Transport Information – A Code of Good Practice', Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers (ATCO), 2003.
  - ◆ Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland – Valuable for anyone, valuable for everyone – providing accessible information about travel, 2004.
- 4.2 Draft and final public transport information strategies prepared for other local authorities have also been consulted. These include the documents for Councils in Cambridgeshire, Cheshire, Fife, Lancashire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Warwickshire.
- 4.3 This guidance suggests the following best practice constituents of information provision and their relevant standards.

### TELEPHONE INFORMATION

#### Traveline

- 4.4 Traveline is a national timetable telephone enquiry service developed in partnership between Local Authorities and Transport Operators. The information service comprises of eleven partnerships throughout the UK (one of which covers Scotland) offering multi-modal transport information and advice, with the Scottish Executive providing the development funding for the Scottish operation. All UK Councils and operators are encouraged to participate in the Traveline project, although not all are members. The Traveline service offers councils the opportunity to provide an impartial telephone enquiry service for journeys throughout the whole of the UK.
- 4.5 The Traveline logo and telephone enquiry number should be prominent on public transport information resources such as timetables, bus stop flags, maps and on web sites with generic wording.

### **WEB-SITE PROVISION**

- 4.6 Internet based information must be easy to use and must be accessible to help foster confidence in the system and encourage greater use. The user's first experience of using a public transport based web site is crucial in terms of encouraging the user to visit the web site again.
- 4.7 The users of public transport information sites have slightly different needs to the majority of web site users because they require quick and easy access to specific information. Users seek sites that are easy to navigate and simple to use.
- 4.8 Information from the Traveline service is currently being fed into Transport Direct who provides a web-based National multi-modal journey planner which currently includes a mapping system and in the longer term will provide links to the operators systems to enable access to fares information. In Scotland, Traveline also provides a journey planning facility though this was not part of the initial tender specification for Traveline Scotland. It is intended in the long-term that Transport Direct will provide the web-based enquiry system while Traveline will deal with the telephone enquiries.

### **Bus Operators**

- 4.9 Local operators can also provide timetable and fare related information over the telephone and it is good practice to provide contact numbers for the relevant operators on timetable information and travel maps.

### **COMMUNITY TRANSPORT**

- 4.10 A comprehensive guide to community travel schemes, accessible transport and concessionary transport schemes should be readily available to the general public and distributed in a variety of different ways such as written and web-based information.

### **ONE STOP SHOPS / ENQUIRY OFFICES / LIBRARIES**

- 4.11 Local Council offices, contact centres and libraries offer additional points of contact for local transport information, and can provide local timetables and relevant contact numbers for local residents who may feel more comfortable visiting a Council office or library rather than phoning a national helpline. Local offices should be encouraged to provide local transport information where appropriate.
- 4.12 These centres can be preferable to operator specific facilities, in that they can give more comprehensive information about all bus services together with other transport provision as required.
- 4.13 Libraries have a traditional role in providing a local point of contact for people requiring information, including details of public transport. The libraries have the ability to supply printed and electronic information to the general public and are usually open for business beyond the normal working hours.

### **INDIVIDUAL TIMETABLE LEAFLETS**

- 4.14 Printed timetable information is generally made available either on a route-by-route or area-wide basis. However there should be printed timetable information for every bus service and route within the region.
- 4.15 The situation with regard to the provision of information varies significantly throughout the country ranging from local authorities producing all publicity to those who produce none, in which case the responsibility rests with operators.
- 4.16 In general all material should contain the following information:
- ◆ Date of commencement;
  - ◆ Area of coverage;
  - ◆ A clear explanation of any codes/abbreviations used; and
  - ◆ Contact telephone numbers for enquiries.
- 4.17 The timetable leaflets should be produced to comply with “Printed Public Transport Information: A Code of Good Practice” produced by ATCO. Recommendations from this document include:
- ◆ Good quality paper should be used;
  - ◆ Point size should preferably be 14, but should under no circumstances be less than eight point;
  - ◆ Print colour should be either black or in a colour which contrasts strongly with the background. Intense blue or brown are acceptable alternatives to black, but red and green should be avoided. Printing ink should be selected to optimise contrast;
  - ◆ Route headings and numbers should be clearly printed on the leaflet;
  - ◆ The name of the operator should be clearly displayed;
  - ◆ Information on fares should be included in published timetables and leaflets; and
  - ◆ Timing points between agreed points should be shown where possible.
- 4.18 A map should be included in all timetable leaflets to show the route covered by the service. It helps sell a service and may even attract additional passengers if they are made aware of where buses actually operate. Network maps are ideal for an overview of services, maps in timetables are often more helpful for localised travel.
- 4.19 As a general rule, specific route timetables are best suited to urban areas while area guides tend to be more appropriate in rural areas. However Local Authorities should make a decision on the production of information based on local circumstances.

### **AREA WIDE MAP**

- 4.20 The recommended requirements for an area wide map are generally considered to be as follows:
- ◆ Compliance with the relevant codes of good practice for the publication of printed material;

- ◆ The provision of all operator services along with relevant and up-to-date contact details;
- ◆ A summary of routes;
- ◆ Service frequencies;
- ◆ Operating periods;
- ◆ Integration with other modes of transport;
- ◆ Access to major destinations; and
- ◆ Details of cross boundary services if appropriate.

### **BUS STOP FLAGS, POLES AND CASES**

#### **Bus Stop Flags and Poles**

- 4.21 Bus stop flags should comply with the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 and should be fitted to all marked bus stops. Where a bus operator is not prepared to provide a flag to the required standard, the Local Authority will provide a suitable flag. The flag should also show service numbers and the Traveline enquiry number. Poles are normally provided by the Local Authority and should be sited in an appropriate location in the local area with adequate pedestrian links. It is good practice in rural areas for a bus stop to be located in the centre of smaller communities or villages.

#### **Cases**

- 4.22 Service information should be provided in a watertight display case, either separately mounted or an integral part of a bus shelter.

### **BUS STOP TIMETABLE INFORMATION**

- 4.23 The presentation of information should be in accordance with the ATCO code of good practice for printed public transport information and should include:
- ◆ Stop specific displays with departure and arrival times;
  - ◆ A map showing a representation of the route;
  - ◆ Fare information;
  - ◆ Reference to the Traveline enquiry service;
  - ◆ A date when the information was effective from; and
  - ◆ Information on how to contact operators for information, to make suggestions on service changes and to make complaints.
- 4.24 In terms of timetable revisions, the new information should be posted no later than the date of implementation, and the outdated information should be removed on the day that the service changes are to take place. It is recommended that advance notice (minimum of a week) of scheduled changes or route diversions should be displayed at the appropriate bus stops and bus stations. Traveline should also be informed as soon as possible and in any event no less than 21 days prior to the service change.

- 4.25 It is also normal practice to use the local media including the press and local radio to advise on any significant or emergency changes.

#### **REAL-TIME INFORMATION**

- 4.26 Real-time information should be encouraged on as many routes as possible, but will normally be restricted to strategic bus corridors. Partnerships between local authorities and operators should be considered at an early date to make real time information available to as many people as possible.
- 4.27 Information should be made available over as many media as possible including the internet, Wireless Application Protocol (WAP) phones, telephone and SMS messaging to mobile phones.

#### **ON-BUS INFORMATION**

- 4.28 Best practice for on-bus information includes:
- ◆ Buses should carry printed timetable leaflets and fare information where practical, and the information should be easily accessible;
  - ◆ Vehicles should comply with accessibility regulations and have clear route numbers and destinations blinds;
  - ◆ Regular drivers should be used and should be able to give passengers information on timetabling, fares and promotions if applicable; and
  - ◆ Service changes should be displayed on board vehicles for a minimum of 21 days before implementation.

#### **CURRENT COMPLIANCE WITH BEST PRACTICE**

- 4.29 From the information provided in previous sections, a number of initial observations can be made as to how Falkirk Council performs in relation to current best practice in terms of public transport information provision.
- 4.30 The key observations are as follows:
- ◆ The Council has got reasonable telephone and web-site facilities;
  - ◆ The local enquiry offices offer a good range of information services for the local community but could be improved to offer more public transport information for local people;
  - ◆ The Council relies on First Group to provide the majority of printed timetables in the Falkirk Council area, but does provide timetable information for the smaller operators; and
  - ◆ Falkirk Council currently provides an SMS text messaging facility in the Falkirk area, but the publicity could be improved and details provided at a greater number of bus stops.

## 5. Public and Stakeholder Consultation

- 5.1 Falkirk Council decided at an early stage that public and stakeholder consultation would play an integral part in the production of the strategy document. The consultation phase of the study helped serve a number of purposes, including:
- ◆ To further investigate existing information provision in the Falkirk Council area;
  - ◆ To establish the views of the key stakeholders and the general public in terms of existing information provision;
  - ◆ To help identify what additional information is required and to receive suggestions on how to achieve these goals; and
  - ◆ To agree on how information provision in the Falkirk Council area should be funded.
- 5.2 Under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001, Falkirk Council was statutorily required to consult with:
- ◆ The Traffic Commissioner;
  - ◆ Any organisation appearing to the authority to be representative of users of local bus services; and
  - ◆ Any other person or organisation that Falkirk Council sees fit to consult with.
- 5.3 In addition to the Traffic Commissioner, Falkirk Council decided to consult with the following:
- ◆ Falkirk Council residents;
  - ◆ Local bus operators; and
  - ◆ Other stakeholders including:
    - ◆ Neighbouring local authorities;
    - ◆ Community Councils;
    - ◆ Tourist information centres;
    - ◆ Operators of specialist bus services, such as community transport;
    - ◆ Traveline Scotland;
    - ◆ Rail and coach operators; and
    - ◆ Representatives of disabled groups
- 5.4 The method of consultation for the information strategy included:
- ◆ Face-to-face interviews;
  - ◆ Focus groups; and
  - ◆ Written responses.

## QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS

- 5.5 The general public in the Falkirk Council area were targeted through face-to-face interviews conducted at the following locations:
- ◆ Falkirk town centre;
  - ◆ Denny; and
  - ◆ Bo'ness
- 5.6 The identified locations were busy areas within the specified towns as defined by Falkirk Council and both users and non users of public transport were interviewed.
- 5.7 The questionnaire was designed by an independent consultant, with the interviews undertaken by a specialised company. The questions were designed to establish:
- ◆ Whether people currently use public transport;
  - ◆ What transport information they currently use;
  - ◆ The public's view of public transport information in terms of quality and availability;
  - ◆ Whether the quality and availability of information is a factor in decisions to use/ not use public transport;
  - ◆ Improvements to the quality of information which would be welcomed by existing users;
  - ◆ Any gaps in the way information is provided; and
  - ◆ Changes which might assist non users in finding out about buses and encourage them to use them.
- 5.8 A summary of the responses are provided below:
- ◆ 59% of respondents indicated that their main mode of transport for local journeys was the bus, with 27% of people indicating the car;
  - ◆ 29% of people used the bus every day;
  - ◆ 79% of people received information on bus times from either the bus stop or from a printed timetable;
  - ◆ 79% of respondents indicated that adequate levels of public transport information are currently available in the Falkirk Council area;
  - ◆ 80% of people indicated that there is adequate information currently available on the bus;
  - ◆ 96% of people said that the information on vehicle destination blinds was adequate;
  - ◆ 92% of people thought that Real Time Information would encourage more public transport use; and
  - ◆ 77% of people had not heard of Traveline.
  - ◆ A significant proportion of both regular (35%) and irregular users (17%) do not consider the telephone enquiry services to offer adequate PT information.

- ◆ The majority of both regular and irregular users consider that there is adequate information on buses;
  - ◆ 86% of non-bus users stated that real time information would encourage them to use the bus more frequently;
  - ◆ The majority of respondents were not interested in receiving PT information on their mobile phones, although 37% of regular bus users stated that they would be interested;
  - ◆ Of the public transport users that have internet access, the most common site was found to be Traveline (67%) followed by Scotrail (33%). The irregular bus users only used Traveline. None of the respondents used Transport Direct; and
  - ◆ Only a small proportion of regular (23%) and irregular bus users (28%) had heard of Traveline, whilst none of the non-bus users had heard of Traveline.
- 5.9 A copy of the questionnaire and a more detailed review of the analysis undertaken are provided in **Appendix A**.

## OUTCOME OF FOCUS GROUPS

### Methodology

- 5.10 Two separate stakeholder focus groups were held on 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2005 in the Council Offices in Falkirk. One group included local operators and the other was with community representatives and other key stakeholders from throughout the Falkirk Council area. The advantage of a focus group over telephone or face-to-face interviews is that the facilitator can investigate the reaction of the whole group to opinions which are raised. The Traffic Commissioner was invited to the focus groups in Falkirk but unfortunately she was unable to attend. A copy of the consultation document was sent to the Traffic Commissioner for comment.
- 5.11 The stakeholders who were invited to attend the focus group session are listed in **Appendix B**.
- 5.12 The issues which were investigated in the focus group(s) included:
- ◆ The roles in providing information;
  - ◆ Opinions of existing information quality and availability;
  - ◆ Good practice and/or shortcoming of the existing arrangements;
  - ◆ A minimum standard for printed information;
  - ◆ Any additional information which is required;
  - ◆ Any changes to distribution methods;
  - ◆ Who should be responsible for providing and funding information; and
  - ◆ Issues relating to service changes (notice period for changes, can number of changes each year be limited).
- 5.13 The main outcomes from the Focus Groups are summarised below.

### **Community Representatives**

- ◆ The community groups indicated that the existing telephone based provision was adequate, although it was thought that customers in the Falkirk area would be more comfortable with people who could offer local knowledge as opposed to national call centres;
- ◆ Approximately 50% of the group had heard of Traveline;
- ◆ There was confusion over the difference between Transport Direct and Traveline;
- ◆ There was a concern that the information provided on the Council web-site was not up to date, and therefore could the Council consider providing an indication of when the site was last updated;
- ◆ The broad consensus was that there wasn't enough face-to-face interaction in the Falkirk Council area and that more public information should be made available at the one-stop-shops and libraries etc;
- ◆ The concept of one-stop-shops should be rolled out to other parts of the Falkirk Council area;
- ◆ The group felt that library staff should be trained to assist people in getting public transport information;
- ◆ Information terminals in the centre of town and in hospitals were suggested as possible improvements;
- ◆ Some members of the group suggested that the size of text on the timetables was too small to read;
- ◆ The general consensus was that the Council should provide an area-wide map;
- ◆ In terms of bus-stops, flags and poles, the existing council flag was deemed to be adequate. However the material used in the cases was difficult to see through when scratched or vandalised;
- ◆ It was felt that the amount of information on some of the destination blinds was too much for people to process quickly;
- ◆ Timetables should be provided in the vehicles and customer care should be encouraged for all drivers;
- ◆ It was suggested that electronic destination indicators inside the vehicle should be considered;
- ◆ Multi-modal information should be made available at all interchange points;
- ◆ Good signing is required at interchange points with particular emphasis on the links between bus and rail stations; and
- ◆ The funding for enhanced public transport information should be encouraged from different sources such as the Scottish Executive.

### **Public Transport Operators**

- ◆ In terms of Traveline membership, it appears that the Council can't force operators to become members, but can recommend that they consider becoming members;
- ◆ The operators indicated that the Falkirk Council web-site was adequate;

- ◆ It was suggested that Falkirk Council and First Group (the main operator) discuss the ten most appropriate locations in the Falkirk area that should supply timetable information;
  - ◆ The operators indicated that to reprint timetables every twelve months could be excessive;
  - ◆ The operators indicated that the area map was not essential for their business. They considered the timetable leaflets to be their primary tool for getting information to the public;
  - ◆ The operators conceded that a joint production of an area map between First Group, Falkirk Council and the Tourist Board should be considered;
  - ◆ There should be a reference in the strategy document that First Group maintain a number of bus stops in the Falkirk Council area;
  - ◆ The operators agreed that timetable leaflets should be available to the public on the vehicles; and
  - ◆ First Group indicated that they were willing to discuss an involvement in a signing strategy for the main interchange points in Falkirk.
- 5.14 The information gathered in the consultation phase of the study was used to develop the draft final information strategy.

## 6. Information Strategy

- 6.1 The information strategy for Falkirk Council has been developed from a best practice review, existing information provision and the input from consultation and is detailed within this section.
- 6.2 The information strategy is set out by theme as previously noted in this report and consists of recommended standards and delivery mechanisms. The proposed implementation of these measures has been separated into immediate, short, medium and long term delivery periods as outlined below:
- ◆ Immediate Measures – Measures that could be implemented in the next twelve months;
  - ◆ Short Term Measures – Measures that could be implemented in the next two to three years;
  - ◆ Medium Term Measures – Measures that could be implemented in the next five years; and
  - ◆ Long Term measures – Measures that could be implemented in the next ten years.

### TELEPHONE INFORMATION

- 6.3 An impartial telephone enquiry service should be offered to potential travellers. The Council will use Traveline as the main authoritative source for public transport enquiries.

#### Standards

- ◆ The telephone enquiry service should be available from 07.00 to 22.00 daily as a minimum;
- ◆ The information should consist of routes, times and the location of bus stops; and
- ◆ Traveline will provide the required information in the appropriate way.

#### Delivery

- ◆ Falkirk Council will pass on all information relating to changes in services notified to them within 21 days of the service change in the required format for Traveline; and
- ◆ Falkirk Council will publicise the Traveline telephone number on all printed public transport information prepared by the Council.

#### Implementation

##### *Immediate measures*

- ◆ The Council will consider additional methods of promoting the Traveline facility and will include the Traveline telephone information service on all relevant promotional material produced by the Council.

#### *Short Term Measures*

- ◆ No short term measures are recommended.

#### *Medium Term Measures*

- ◆ To increase the awareness of Traveline by providing the contact number on all bus stop flags and information displays and by displaying the number on all marketing and promotional material.

#### *Long Term Measures*

- ◆ No long term measures are recommended.

#### **WEB-SITES**

- 6.4 Impartial immediately accessible website enquiry services should be available to potential travellers. The newly available Government backed internet delivery service (Transport Direct) has been designed to provide this service throughout the UK. At present Traveline offers a web-based enquiry service, but will revert to only a telephone based service when Transport Direct becomes more popular. The Council considers that Traveline/Transport Direct will be able to offer an adequate web-based system for the Falkirk area and will be able to provide a journey-planning capability for people accessing the site at home or in areas of public access such as libraries.

#### **Standards**

- ◆ Traveline/Transport Direct should provide information on routes, times and location of bus stops;
- ◆ Traveline/Transport Direct should provide a 'journey-planner' facility; and
- ◆ Falkirk Council will provide general information on its support for public transport. This will include details of all types of facility supported / provided such as demand responsive transport, etc. In addition links will be provided to all associated sites including: Traveline/Transport Direct, train operators, national bus operators, etc.

#### **Delivery**

- ◆ Falkirk Council will pass on all information relating to changes in services notified to them within 21 days of the service change in the required format for Traveline/Transport Direct;
- ◆ Falkirk Council will publicise the Traveline/Transport Direct website address on all printed public transport information prepared by it; and
- ◆ Falkirk Council will maintain web-pages within the Council's website describing its support to public transport. These services include:
  - Timetable Information;
  - Information on Accessible Transport;
  - Information on Concessionary Transport; and
  - Information on School Transport.

## **Implementation**

### *Immediate Measures*

- ◆ The Council will undertake a review of its existing web-site provision and assess the content and quality of the existing provision, based on the Best Practice Guide on Public Transport Information Web Sites – Institution of Logistics and Transport, 2001 and other relevant documentation.

### *Short Term Measures*

- ◆ The Council will ensure that publicity for the Traveline / Transport Direct website will be provided on all printed public transport information material produced by Falkirk Council.

### *Medium Term Measures*

- ◆ Bus operators that provide their own web-sites will be encouraged by the Council to review their provision of web based information based on best practice; and
- ◆ The Council will ensure that a link to Transport Direct will be provided from the existing Falkirk Council web-site.

### *Long Term Measures*

- ◆ The Council will encourage local bus operators to provide links to Transport Direct from their web-sites.

## **ONE STOP SHOPS / ENQUIRY OFFICES / LIBRARIES**

- 6.5 When public transport enquiry offices are provided they should be able to provide impartial public transport advice to potential travellers where applicable.

## **Standards**

- ◆ Where staff are available to answer queries on public transport services they should be trained in customer care and to offer impartial advice; and
- ◆ At all publicly-accessible sites offering public transport information, a full range of printed information shall be provided covering all available services.

## **Delivery**

- ◆ Local operators in partnership with Falkirk Council will develop a strategy for the provision of public transport information at staffed enquiry offices, contact centres and libraries; and
- ◆ Falkirk Council will consider providing public transport information in a network of publicly accessible and advertised premises throughout the Falkirk area.

## **Implementation**

### *Immediate measures*

- ◆ No immediate measures are recommended.

### *Short Term Measures*

- ◆ A review of existing information provision at enquiry offices, contact centres and libraries throughout the Falkirk Council area (including facilities run by local operators) will be undertaken.

### *Medium Term Measures*

- ◆ Falkirk Council along with public transport operators and other stakeholders will develop a strategy for providing enhanced public transport information at staffed enquiry offices, contact centres and libraries.

### *Long Term Measures*

- ◆ The Council will encourage the development of one-stop-shops throughout the Falkirk Council area and consider the introduction of public access terminals in specific locations throughout the Council area.

## **TIMETABLE LEAFLETS**

- 6.6 Individual timetables or area books of timetables, for all bus services will be available to potential travellers.

### **Standards**

- ◆ Printed timetable information will be published and distributed by operators at least 14 days before the implementation of any change (except in exceptional circumstances);
- ◆ The timetables will carry an “effective from” or “start” date;
- ◆ The timetable will carry a suitable route map;
- ◆ A ‘new’ timetable will be printed at regular intervals or when required and a note is to be put on each timetable which will ask passengers to check with the operator that the timetable is still valid.
- ◆ Timetable information will adhere to the standards set out in the ATCO Code of Practice;
- ◆ Timetables will be in conventional matrix format, will include operators’ name, service number, all registered journeys on that service (regardless of operator) with their days and periods of operation. Reference will be made to any variations on public holidays, school term / holiday variations or special events. For urban routes, the information will include a route description;
- ◆ Where a service is supported in whole or part by Falkirk Council, a note to that effect will be included;
- ◆ Reference will be made to any relevant travelcards, other ticketing arrangements, commercial network cards and concessionary fares schemes;
- ◆ The Traveline telephone number and Traveline/Transport Direct web address and Falkirk Council web address will be included;
- ◆ Details will be included of how to complain about failures in service or to submit comments;

- ◆ The timetables will where possible identify those journeys normally operated with fully accessible vehicles;
- ◆ The timetables will show clearly any sections of route which are non-stop or limited stop;
- ◆ Contact details for all operators;
- ◆ Timetables may carry advertisements, but these advertisements must not detract from the purpose of the publication or influence the layout;
- ◆ There will be no charge for individual timetables, but a charge may be made for books of timetables or sets of leaflets; and
- ◆ For villages and other areas with diverse services, Falkirk Council intends to produce area booklets.

### **Delivery**

- ◆ The bus operators will provide Falkirk Council with information on all their service changes at least 70 days (of which 14 days are a consultation period, as per the Transport Act) in advance of them occurring, except in exceptional circumstances;
- ◆ Falkirk Council will produce timetables for all supported bus services within their area in quantities to ensure their continuing availability to all potential users through public offices;
- ◆ Falkirk Council will ensure that adequate supplies of its timetables will be distributed to public offices and bus operators' offices to ensure their public availability at all times;
- ◆ Falkirk Council and the bus operators intend to develop, in partnership, wider distribution strategies for timetables; and
- ◆ Timetables from Falkirk Council and operators will be available for on-bus distribution – there may be a charge made to the operator concerned if the operator did not produce any form of timetable or one that was unintelligible.

### **Implementation**

#### *Immediate Measures*

- 6.7 The contact details for Traveline will be included on all timetable leaflets produced by the Council, with local operators encouraged to include details of Traveline on the timetables that they produce.

#### *Short Term Measures*

- 6.8 The Council will continue to produce and distribute printed timetable information for all the relevant supported services in the Falkirk Council area, and will review ways of improving the presentation, clarity and distribution of the information.
- 6.9 Operators will be encouraged by Falkirk Council to produce timetables that meet the appropriate requirements.
- 6.10 The Council will set up regular meetings with local operators to co-ordinate delivery of timetable information to an agreed number of locations in the Falkirk Council area.

- 6.11 The Council will update the existing Falkirk area guides on a regular basis and will endeavour to print more guides for appropriate locations or for popular routes in the Falkirk area.

*Medium Term Measures*

- 6.12 The Council will consider measures to improve the timetable leaflets such as an indication of the routes that have access to low floor buses and potentially fare related information.

*Long Term Measures*

- 6.13 No long term measures are recommended.

**AREA WIDE MAPS**

- 6.14 Area public transport maps are the index for public transport travel for many potential users. At present Falkirk Council does not produce an area wide map.

**Standards**

- ◆ The maps will carry an “effective from” or “start” date;
- ◆ A ‘new’ timetable will be printed at regular intervals or when required and a note is to be put on each timetable which will ask passengers to check with the operator that the timetable is still valid;
- ◆ Maps will have a unique reference number;
- ◆ Maps will include relevant route information;
- ◆ An indication of service frequencies will be provided;
- ◆ Details will be given on how to access information on routes offering wheelchair-accessible vehicles or bicycle-carrying vehicles;
- ◆ Park and ride opportunities will be included with an indication of the number of parking spaces;
- ◆ The Traveline telephone number and Traveline/Transport Direct web address and Falkirk Council web address will be included;
- ◆ Details will be included of how to complain about failures in service or to submit comments;
- ◆ The maps will show clearly any sections of route which are non-stop or limited stop;
- ◆ Contact details for all operators will be included on the map;
- ◆ Maps may carry advertisements, but these advertisements must not detract from the purpose of the publication or influence the layout; and
- ◆ A charge may be made for maps.

**Delivery**

- ◆ If Falkirk Council decides to produce an area wide map it will produce maps in quantities to ensure their continuing availability to all potential users through public offices; and

- ◆ A charge may be made for the map if the Council decides to re-introduce an area wide map for the Falkirk Council area.

### **Implementation**

#### *Immediate measures*

- 6.15 No immediate measures are recommended.

#### *Short Term Measures*

- 6.16 The Council will review the re-introduction of an area wide map and will enter into discussions with local operators and the tourist board with a view to funding the production of a new map.

#### *Medium Term Measures*

- 6.17 Medium term measures will be reviewed if an area wide map is re-introduced.

#### *Long Term Measures*

- 6.18 Long term measures will be reviewed if an area wide map is re-introduced.

### **BUS STOP FLAGS, POLES, AND CASES**

- 6.19 Roadside information is the primary marketing point for potential public transport users.

### **Standards**

- ◆ A single bus stop flag complying with the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Direction 2002 should be fitted to all marked bus stops (including a point at the centre of each community). The flag will carry the:
  - Traveline telephone number;
  - Common name and SMS number of the stop as included in the Traveline database;
  - Operator name and logo relating to any commercial services stopping at that point; and
  - Numbers of routes serving the stop.
- ◆ A watertight display case will be provided at 50% of bus stops (except frequently vandalised sites and except in the direction of a terminal point within 1km of that terminal. This will not apply to circular routes). Subject to available space, the display case will include:
  - Departure time and route for all buses serving the stop;
  - One indicative fare (if all the fares are the same);
  - When the information was last updated.

Such information will be posted no later than the date of implementation of any change.

## **Delivery**

- ◆ The bus operators will provide Falkirk Council with information on all their service changes at least 70 days (of which 14 days are a consultation period, as per the Transport Act) in advance of them occurring;
- ◆ The bus operators will provide Falkirk Council with information on all their fares 14 days in advance of any change occurring;
- ◆ Falkirk Council will provide, erect and maintain all bus stop poles, flags and display cases;
- ◆ Falkirk Council will maintain the information provided within the display cases. However, to meet the standard of providing information at all stops, manpower or financial assistance will be required from operators.

## **Implementation**

### *Immediate Measures*

- 6.20 The Council will undertake an audit of all the bus stop flags, poles and cases in the local authority area.

### *Short Term Measures*

- 6.21 The Council will review the design of the existing bus stop flags, poles and cases in the Falkirk Council area.

### *Medium Term Measures*

- 6.22 Falkirk Council will consider entering the position of all the flags, poles and cases in the local authority area into a Geographical Information System to help with identification, monitoring and maintenance.
- 6.23 Falkirk Council will work towards including SMS data on all of the timetable cases in the Falkirk area and will encourage the use of accessing public transport information by SMS.

### *Long Term Measures*

- 6.24 The Council will work towards providing public transport information at all of the recognised bus stops in the Falkirk Council area, apart from the stops that are located less than one kilometre from a terminus.

## **ON-BUS INFORMATION**

- 6.25 The provision of on-bus information (verbal and written) is an important part of encouraging new customers and advising existing customers of timetable information and service changes. It also encourages 'repeat' usage and should be available on the majority of buses.

### **Standard**

- ◆ Where practical, buses should carry up to date printed timetable and fare information for the services on which they are operating; and
- ◆ Printed information should be easily accessible to all passengers and drivers should be able to give full information to passengers in terms of timetables, fares and promotions for the route being operated.

### **Delivery**

- ◆ Bus operators will ensure that all buses carry displayed publicly-available timetables for the service(s) on which they are operating. Charges may be made where an operator does not provide information, for instance on subsidised services where the operator can provide their own information at their cost or the Council will provide the information and will charge the operator for the provision of the information.
- ◆ If the operator does not provide any information on any other service, the Council will inform the operator and if necessary produce timetable information and charge the operator for their production.
- ◆ Bus operators will display posters on their buses indicating all service changes for at least 21 days prior to those changes; and
- ◆ Bus operators shall offer and provide customer care training for staff.

### **Implementation**

#### *Immediate Measures*

- 6.26 No immediate measures are recommended

#### *Short Term Measures*

- 6.27 The Council will review the existing provision of on-bus information and explore with local operators the distribution and cost of supplying this information on the main routes throughout the Falkirk Council area.

#### *Medium Term Measures*

- 6.28 A customer care strategy will be implemented by the public transport operators to a recognised industry standard, including annual refresher courses.

#### *Long Term Measures*

- 6.29 The Council, along with local operators will work towards providing publicly-available timetables on all the bus services in the Falkirk Council area.

### **INTERCHANGING MODES**

- 6.30 The provision of good quality publicity material at interchanges is a key method of improving the awareness of the travel opportunities from key points of the network. It is particularly important for attracting less frequent or first time public transport users.
- 6.31 A co-ordinated approach to information provision and signing at all of the interchange points is recommended to ensure familiarity to the user and ensure that the information is easy to find and of a similar type.

#### **Standard**

- ◆ A co-ordinated signage system should be provided indicating the relative placing of stops (and their services), other interchanging modes (rail / bus / taxi), and a board indicating service changes.

#### **Delivery**

- ◆ Falkirk Council in partnership with the operators will explore methods of defining and equipping interchange points with suitable information, together with potential means of funding these modifications.

#### **Implementation**

##### *Immediate Measures*

- 6.32 The Council along with operators and key stakeholders will draw up a list of key strategic interchange points throughout the Falkirk Council area.
- 6.33 The Council will undertake an audit of all the strategic transport interchange points in the Falkirk Council area.

##### *Short Term Measures*

- 6.34 The Council, in partnership with local operators and other key stakeholders will devise a strategy to equip identified interchange points in the Falkirk Council area with appropriate information, along with the means to fund these improvements.

##### *Medium Term Measures*

- 6.35 The Council, with the support of local operators will prepare a signing strategy for the interchange points within Falkirk town centre and other strategic locations within the Council area.

##### *Long Term Measures*

- 6.36 All of the main transport interchange points in the Falkirk Council area will have good quality and co-ordinated public transport information material.

## **MEETING THE NEEDS OF PARTICULAR USERS**

6.37 There are a number of potential public transport users with special needs.

### **Standard**

- ◆ The special information needs of certain users will be identified through consultation and contact, with the intention of meeting these needs within the available resources.

### **Delivery**

- ◆ Falkirk Council and the public transport operators in partnership will identify, cost and seek to fund special information needs; and
- ◆ A customer care strategy will be implemented by the public transport operators to a recognised industry standard, including annual refresher courses, initially to be undertaken by the operators. The Council would support the use of courses provided by GoSkills and would acknowledge that in the near future, operators will have to conform to the EU Training Directive which will be introduced in the near future.

### **Implementation**

#### *Immediate Measures*

6.38 No immediate measures are recommended.

#### *Short Term Measures*

6.39 Falkirk Council will review the existing provision of information for community groups and people with specific needs within the Council area.

#### *Medium Term Measures*

6.40 Falkirk Council with support from local transport operators will explore ways of enhancing the information given to people or groups with special needs.

#### *Long Term Measures*

6.41 No long terms measures are recommended.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

6.42 Satisfaction surveys may be carried out on occasion at the key access points throughout Falkirk.

6.43 The public transport operators will be encouraged to implement a customer care strategy to a recognised industry standard, with annual refresher courses.

6.44 The public transport information strategy document will be reviewed at the same time as the Falkirk LTS.

## 7. Monitoring and Implementation

### MONITORING

- 7.1 A monitoring programme is essential to ensure that the delivery of the information strategy will be carried out in an effective and efficient manner.
- 7.2 There are a number of indicators which will be used to assess the effect of the information strategy, although it must be noted that the aims of the strategy will be influenced by a wide range of initiatives, most of which are detailed within the Falkirk Council LTS. The indicators we recommend will include:
- ◆ The levels of growth in Traveline enquiries; and
  - ◆ Customer satisfaction surveys.

### IMPLEMENTATION

- 7.3 The strategy will be implemented over the next ten years and will be split into the following groups (as noted in Section six) for the purposes of delivery:
- ◆ Immediate;
  - ◆ Short term;
  - ◆ Medium term; and
  - ◆ Long term
- 7.4 Table 7.1 indicates a time plan for implementing the strategy, and has been designed to include an input from local bus operators as well as Falkirk Council. However, certain tasks will have a joint involvement therefore the following symbols have been used to indicate assumed involvement:
- ◆ FC: Falkirk Council Led;
  - ◆ Ops: Operator Led; and
  - ◆ Joint: Developed Jointly.

**Table 7.1 – Proposed Implementation of Information Strategy**

Action	Estimated Time of Delivery			
	One Year (2006)	Three Years (2008)	Five Years (2010)	Ten Years (2015)
<b>Telephone Information</b>				
The Council will consider additional methods of promoting the Traveline facility and will include the Traveline telephone number on all relevant promotional material produced by the Council.	FC	FC	FC	FC
To increase the awareness of Traveline by providing the contact number on all bus stop flags and information displays and by displaying the number on all marketing and promotional material.			Joint	Joint
<b>Web-site Provision</b>				
The Council will undertake a review of its existing web-site provision and assess the content and quality of the existing provision, based on the Best Practice Guide on Public Transport Information Web Sites – Institution of Logistics and Transport, 2001 and other relevant documentation	FC			
The Council will ensure that publicity for the Traveline / Transport Direct website will be provided on all printed public transport information material produced by Falkirk Council		FC	FC	FC
Bus operators that provide their own web-sites will be encouraged by the Council to review their provision of web-based information based on best practice			Ops	Ops
The Council will ensure that a link to Transport Direct will be provided from the existing Falkirk Council web-site.			FC	
The Council will encourage local bus operators to provide links to Transport Direct from their web-sites.				Joint
<b>One Stop Shops / Enquiry Offices / Libraries</b>				
A review of existing information provision at enquiry offices, contact centres and libraries throughout the Falkirk Council area (including facilities run by local operators) will be undertaken		Joint		
Falkirk Council along with public transport operators and other stakeholders will develop a strategy for providing enhanced public transport information at staffed enquiry offices, contact centres and libraries			Joint	Joint
The Council will encourage the development of one stop shops throughout the Falkirk Council area and consider the introduction of public access terminals in specific locations throughout the Council area.				Joint
<b>Timetable Leaflets</b>				
The contact details for Traveline will be included on all timetable leaflets produced by the Council, with local operators encouraged to include details of Traveline on the timetables that they produce.	Joint	Joint	Joint	Joint
Operators will be encouraged by Falkirk Council to produce timetables that meet the appropriate requirements	Joint	Joint	Joint	Joint
The Council will continue to produce and distribute printed timetable information for the relevant supported services in the Falkirk Council area and will review ways of improving the presentation, clarity and distribution of the information.		FC	FC	FC
The Council will update the existing Falkirk area guides on a regular basis and will endeavour to print more guides for appropriate locations or for popular routes in the Falkirk area.		FC	FC	FC
The Council will set up regular meetings with local operators to co-ordinate delivery of timetable information to an agreed number of locations in the Falkirk area		FC	FC	FC

The Council will consider measures to improve the timetable leaflets such as an indication of the routes that normally have access to low floor buses and potentially fare related information			FC	
<b>Area-wide Maps</b>				
The Council will review the re-introduction of an area wide map and will enter into discussions with local operators and the tourist board with a view to funding the production of a new map		FC		
<b>Bus Stops Flags, Poles and Cases</b>				
The Council will undertake an audit of all the flags, poles and cases in the Falkirk Council area.	FC			
The Council will review the design of the existing bus stop flags, poles and cases in the Falkirk Council area.		FC		
Falkirk Council will work towards including SMS data on all of the timetable cases in the Falkirk area and will encourage the use of accessing public transport information by SMS.		FC	FC	FC
Falkirk Council will consider entering the position of all the flags, poles and cases in the local authority area into a Geographical Information System to help with identification, monitoring and maintenance.			FC	
The Council will work towards providing public transport information at all of the recognised bus stop in the Falkirk Council area, apart from the stops that are located less than one kilometre from a terminus				FC
<b>On-Bus Information</b>				
The Council will review the existing provision of on-bus information and explore with operators the distribution and cost of supplying this information on the main routes throughout the Falkirk Council area.		Joint		
A customer care strategy will be implemented by the public transport operators to a recognised industry standard, with annual refresher courses.			Ops	Ops
The Council, along with local operators will work towards providing publicly-available timetables on all the buses in the Falkirk Council area.				Joint
<b>Interchanging Modes</b>				
The Council along with operators and key stakeholders will draw up a list of key strategic interchange points throughout the Falkirk Council area.	Joint			
The Council will undertake an audit of all strategic transport interchange points in the Falkirk Council area.	FC			
The Council in partnership with local operators and other key stakeholders will devise a strategy to equip identified interchange points in the Falkirk Council area with appropriate information, along with the means to fund these improvements.		Joint	Joint	Joint
The Council, with the support of local operators will prepare a signing strategy for the interchange points within Falkirk town centre and other strategic locations within the Council area.			Joint	Joint
All of the main transport interchange points in the Falkirk Council area will have good quality and co-ordinated public transport information material.				Joint
<b>Meeting the Needs of Particular Users</b>				
Falkirk Council will review the existing provision of information for community groups and people with special needs within the Council area.		FC		

Falkirk Council with support from local transport operators will explore ways of enhancing the information given to people or groups with special needs			Joint	Joint
<b>Additional Information</b>				
Satisfaction surveys may be carried out on occasion at the key access points throughout the Falkirk Council area.		FC	FC	FC
The public transport operators will be encouraged to implement a customer care strategy to a recognised industry standard, with annual refresher courses.		Ops	FC	FC
The public transport information strategy will be reviewed at the same time as the Falkirk Local Transport Strategy.			FC	FC