

# **GUIDELINES IN THE PROVISION OF WYCA FUNDED SOCIALLY NECESSARY BUS SERVICES**

## **STATEMENT OF SERVICE COMMITMENT**

### **GENERAL APPRAISAL CRITERIA**

#### **APPRAISAL OF SERVICES TO SCHOOLS**

This document sets out guidelines which assist the Combined Authority in the discharge of its legal responsibilities under Section 9A of the Transport Act in accordance with its adopted policies.

### **Service Commitment**

WYCA will provide a transport service to link communities to the nearest transport hub at which they can transfer onto frequent and regular public transport services for onward travel.

- In determining the type and nature of the transport service, WYCA will have regard to the size and nature of the community and the predominant journey purpose.
- In determining access to a service, WYCA will consider a transport service accessible if it is available within a safe walking distance of 600m (up to 10 minutes) of a majority of households in a community. WYCA will have regard to the prevalent local geography and demographics.
- In determining the location of the transport hub, WYCA will have regard to the availability of local shops and facilities.

### **General Appraisal Criteria**

The following criteria will be used to assess an existing service:-

- **The Service Contributes To Local Transport Plan 3 objectives** – using passenger use data, mapping and demographic analysis determine how the service support the LTP3 objectives of:
  - **Economy** - the extent to which the service assists in getting people to employment and training.
  - **Low Carbon** - the extent to which the service provides an alternative to private car travel.
  - **Quality Of Life** - the extent to which the service supports people without access to private transport.
- **The Travel Needs Cannot Be Met On A Commercial Basis** – using passenger use data and mapping analysis assess whether:

- **Availability Of Core Network** - The area served is within 600m (7-10 minutes) walking distance of the core (high frequency) bus network, it is not appropriate to provide a publically funded bus service at any time of day in such cases.
  - **Availability Of Other Services** - The area served is within 400m (5-7 minutes) walking distance of an hourly or more frequent service to the nearest hub at the time of day at which travel needs are being assessed. It is generally not appropriate to provide a publically funded bus service in such cases.
  - **Sustainable Passenger Use** - The level of use of the current service is sufficient to generate sufficient fare revenue to support commercial operation. Commercial operation is likely where there are sufficient passengers to generate fare revenues (including concessionary fares) in excess of operating costs.
- **Are Enough People Are Using The Service To Justify The Current Provision?** - using passenger use data and surveys assess the current level of use against the cost of provision. The following criteria will be considered:
- **Passenger use** - how many people are using the service? Depending upon the nature of service this will be assessed:
    - **Passengers per trip** - assessing trips within otherwise commercial services and for end to end journeys.
    - **Passengers per hour** - used to appraise services involving very short or long trips give a comparable indicator to passengers per trip.
    - **Passengers per day** - used for mini networks and other complete services especially when usage fluctuates during peak and off peak times.
  - **Subsidy cost per passenger** - using annual cost and passenger estimates. In calculating this indicator, allowance should be made to exclude passengers boarding on sections of the route where alternatives are available.
  - **Action to be taken When Passenger Use Does Not Justify The Cost Of Provision**
    - **Alternative Provision** - cases where the subsidy cost exceeds £3 per passenger, alternative provision at a lower cost should be investigated.
    - **Withdrawal** - where subsidy cost exceeds £4 per passenger consideration will be given to withdrawal of the service.
- **Is The Service Cost Effective?** - assessment of the current contract price against industry norms and average costs for comparative services using the following metrics:
- **Operating cost per mile** - for individual journeys and part tendered trips, care is however needed as only fuel and consumable costs are distance related.
  - **Operating cost per bus per day** - for whole services and mini networks time is a more effective measurement of operating cost than distance.

- **Total Contractor Income Per Mile** - annual contract payment + estimated annual fares revenue (using an average fare) / annual miles.
- **Action to be taken When Service Is Not Cost Effective** - where the service does not demonstrate cost effectiveness, the following action will be considered:
  - **Review the resource requirements of the contract** - can the service be delivered using fewer buses/ bus hours?
  - **Re tender** – invite bids from other operators
  - **Investigate low cost alternatives** (eg community transport)

### **Cost Effectiveness Metrics**

The following metrics will be used in an appraisal of cost effectiveness:-

- A. Industry average cost per operating hour - £30.29
- B. Operating cost per mile =  $A/13\text{mph} = £2.33$
- C. Fare yield per passenger trip £1.26

The above figures will be updated periodically in line with industry costs and fare levels.

### **Rules Of Thumb**

Using the above metrics the following will be used in initial appraisal leading to further action:-

Break even number of passengers for commercial operation

$$A/C = 24 \text{ passengers per operating hour}$$

Average passenger usage where subsidy exceeds £3/ head leading to need to reduce cost of service

$$A/£3 = 10 \text{ passengers per operating hour}$$

Average passenger usage where subsidy exceeds £4/ head leading to consideration to service withdrawal

$$A/£4 = 7 \text{ passengers per operating hour}$$

## Services to Schools

### Requests for New Services to Schools

WYCA will consider the following in appraising requests to WYCA to fund new services to schools for students not entitled to transport by statute.

- **A new service will not be provided to a secondary school if students can reasonably be expected to make the journey by walking or using regular public transport .**
  
- **A test of “reasonableness”** will be applied to the journey
  - Walking distance 1.5 miles by a safe walking route
  - Bus Journey 1hr 15 minutes in total, including interchange
  - Maximum of 1 interchange using a safe interchange point
  - Home and bus stop are within 600m (10 min walk)
  - Pupil arrives no earlier than 30 minutes before registration
  - Pupil departs no later than 20 minutes after school finish
  - Bus Journey does not begin before 0700
  
- WYCA will not fund a new service where the statutory responsibility to provide transport lies with the LEA of another body. WYCA will however assist in organising such services on behalf of the statutory body.
  
- WYCA will not fund a new service arising due to a reorganisation of school sites of opening times. WYCA will however assist in organising such services where funding is available from the LEA, school, parents or another body.

### Guidelines for Appraisal of Existing School Services Funded by WYCA

Where WYCA is funding a school service carrying 75% or more students who are not entitled to transport by statute, the service will be appraised under the following tests:-

- **Students currently using the service cannot reasonably be expected to make the journey by walking or using regular public transport** - the above test of reasonableness will be applied.
  
- **There are enough students using the service to justify its continued provision** - alternative arrangements will be made where buses are usually operating at less than 25% occupancy during winter and spring terms.
  
- **The service is cost effective** - lower cost alternatives will be explored when the cost per mile exceeds £3.