



# **Leicestershire County Council**

## **Passenger Transport Policy**

## Foreword

Leicestershire County Council recognises the important role that passenger transport services have to play in keeping people and places connected, especially in a rural county such as Leicestershire. Use of such services rather than private car travel also helps reduce congestion and limit emissions.

Facilitating and supporting an appropriate mix of services, working with communities and commercial and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector operators, is a key aim for the Council, against a backdrop of a challenging funding situation. These will meet statutory requirements, help Leicestershire County Council deliver on its strategic priorities and outcomes, and support the people of Leicestershire in accessing key services.

Our Passenger Transport Policy and the associated Passenger Transport Strategy have been developed to help us to take account of these needs and challenges.

## 1. The Passenger Transport Framework

- 1.1. The framework shown in Figure 1.1 places our approach to supporting passenger transport in Leicestershire in context. The Passenger Transport Policy and Strategy sets the context against which service delivery and performance will be monitored on an ongoing basis. The framework reflects current Government thinking on service development, delivery and performance.

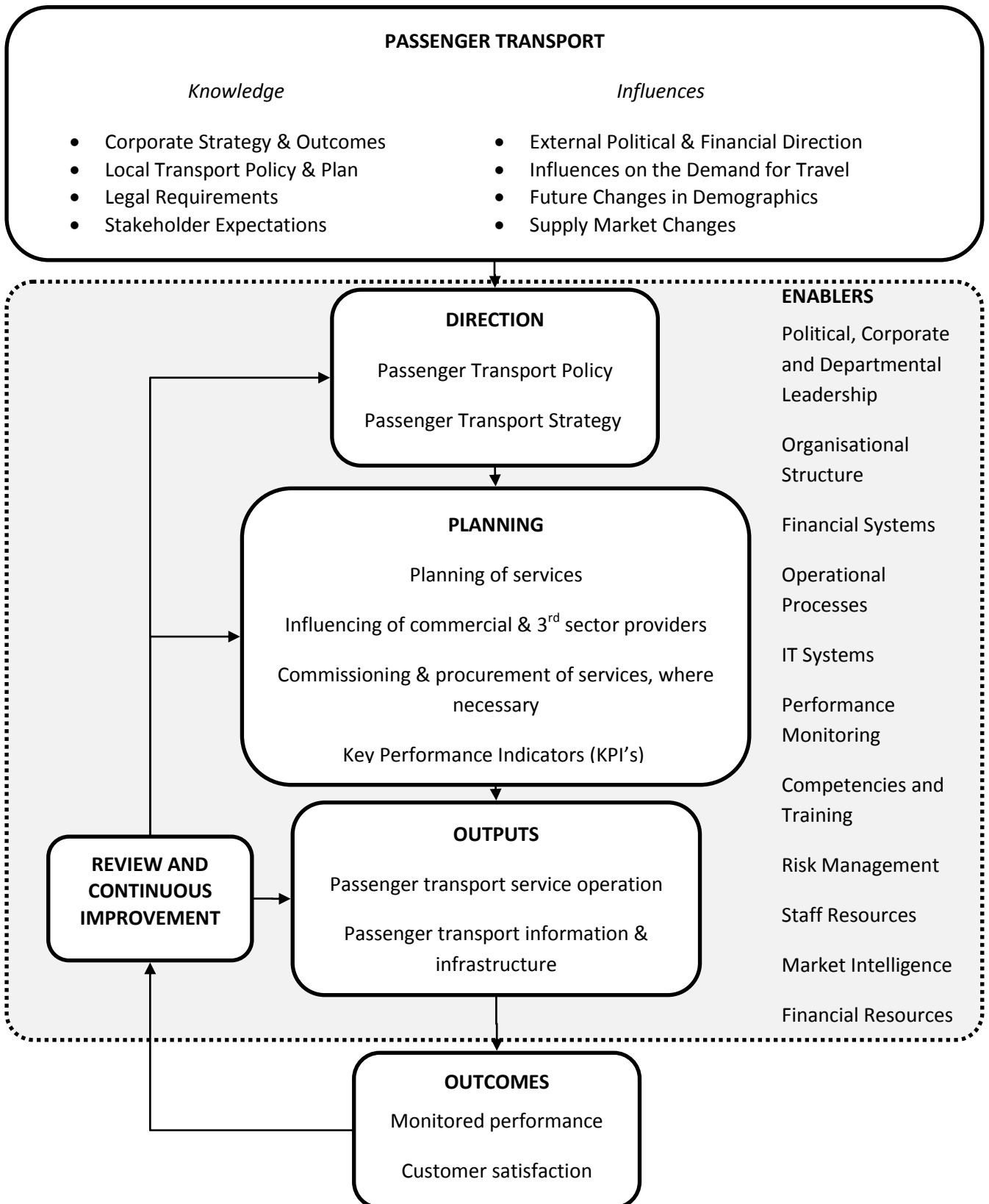


Figure 1.1: Passenger Transport Framework

## 2. The Document Framework

- 2.1. This policy and the associated Passenger Transport Strategy document sit within a document framework that is similar to those used in other areas of responsibility covered by the Council's Environment and Transport Department. Figure 2.1 below shows the framework within which these documents sit.

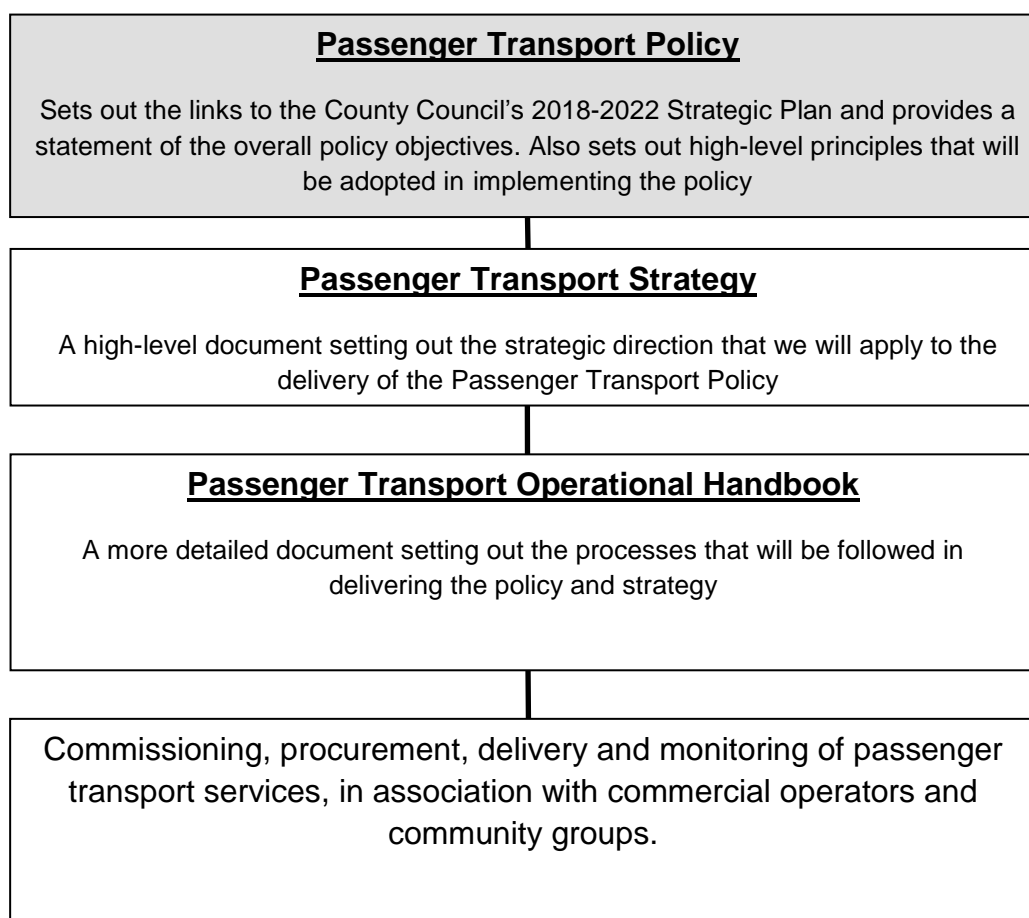


Figure 2.1: Document Framework

# Passenger Transport Policy

## 3. Purpose

- 3.1. This document sets out the policy objectives and key supporting principles that guide the County Council's support for road-based passenger transport services across Leicestershire. It supersedes the County Council's 2013 Local Bus Policy.
- 3.2. The policy is intended to meet the statutory duties placed on the authority and address priority needs within budget constraints. The relevant statutory duties and powers of the County Council can be summarised as follows:
  - Outside London, operation of local bus services was largely opened to commercial market forces by the Transport Act 1985, making bus service operation a profit-driven business. However, Section 63(1)(a) of the Act explains that local transport authorities must "secure the provision of such public passenger transport services as the council considers it appropriate to secure to meet any public transport requirements within the county which would not in their view be met apart from any action taken by them for that purpose." Leicestershire County Council is a local transport authority within the meaning of the 1985 Act.
  - The County Council, in common with other transport authorities, is required to formulate, from time to time, general policies on the type of services it proposes to secure under the above duty – as covered in this document and the associated Passenger Transport Strategy document.
  - As a local transport authority the County Council is provided with powers by the 1985 Act to:
    - Enter into an agreement providing for service subsidies for the purpose of securing any service.
    - Take any measures that appear to be appropriate for the purpose of, or in connection with, promoting the availability and operation of public passenger transport.
  - The Transport Act 1985 also requires an authority in exercising its power to promote the availability of public passenger transport services, to have regard to the needs of older or disabled people.
  - The Transport Act 2000 (amended in 2008) introduced the means for local authorities and bus operators to enter into bus quality partnerships. It also required authorities to consult on, and determine, what local bus information should be made available to the public and the way in which

it should be made available. Where satisfactory arrangements for information provision cannot be made with operators, authorities are required to make information available.

- The Bus Services Act 2017 provides local transport authorities with a wider set of tools to use to address ‘inefficiencies’ in their local bus markets and to work with commercial bus operators to provide better local bus services for passengers. It includes provision for improving local bus quality partnerships, making franchising (the London model of bus operation) easier, and improving information provision.

## 4. Scope

- 4.1. This policy is applicable to road-based general passenger transport services within Leicestershire. This covers a broader spectrum than just conventional ‘big bus’ services and includes passenger transport solutions using a range of appropriate smaller vehicles. Rail travel, commercial taxi and private hire services, and specialist transport services for education and social care purposes, are not included as these are dealt with in other policy documents.

## 5. The Passenger Transport Policy and Supporting Principles

### Policy

<b>PTP1</b>	<b><i>Leicestershire County Council will continue to encourage residents, workers and visitors to use passenger transport services in preference to the private car wherever possible, because of the environmental and decongestion benefits of doing so.</i></b>
<b>PTP2</b>	<b><i>Leicestershire County Council will encourage commercial transport operators to meet as many of the access needs of Leicestershire residents, workers and visitors as possible through provision of commercial transport services.</i></b>
<b>PTP3</b>	<b><i>Leicestershire County Council will encourage community organisations to provide transport services for their communities that address access needs that are not covered by commercial passenger transport services. The aim will be for such services to be self-financing; however, the Council will provide some level of grant support (within affordability constraints) to help facilitate the establishment and operation of such services where necessary.</i></b>

<b>PTP4</b>	<b><i>In the planning of new development in Leicestershire, the County Council will work with district and borough councils (planning authorities) to ensure that viable, long term accessibility by passenger transport is properly considered and, where appropriate, contributions are secured to facilitate such accessibility.</i></b>
<b>PTP5</b>	<b><i>Where commercial, development-supported or community passenger transport services do not meet high priority needs for some residents, the County Council may consider intervening by offering organisational, operational or financial support for alternative passenger transport services. Leicestershire County Council is not a major passenger transport provider to the general public and will only consider intervening where there is demonstrable and significant unmet demand<sup>1</sup> for transport services that serve the high priority journey purposes of food shopping, primary healthcare, and/or employment and training. Financial support will only be offered subject to affordability, value-for-money and other criteria defined within the Passenger Transport Strategy.</i></b>
<b>PTP6</b>	<b><i>The County Council will provide concessionary travel on registered local bus services for older and disabled people in accordance with legal requirements.</i></b>
<b>PTP7</b>	<b><i>The County Council will work with commercial and community service providers to ensure that up-to-date, clear and accurate information is available to the public on passenger transport services through a range of appropriate information channels.</i></b>

## Supporting Principles

<b>SP1</b>	Leicestershire County Council will engage with local communities that approach us, to identify any demonstrable and significant unmet demand for travel for the high priority purposes identified in PTP 5. The Council will also work with these local communities to discuss ways of shaping passenger transport services to best meet local needs.
<b>SP2</b>	Leicestershire County Council will engage with commercial passenger transport service operators to explore ways of shaping their services to

<sup>1</sup> The level of passenger demand meeting this test will depend on the nature and cost of the particular potential service or part-service under consideration.

	meet local needs, and maximising use of those services.
SP3	Leicestershire County Council will engage with community organisations to explore ways of shaping community transport services to meet local needs, and of maximising use of those services.
SP4	The County Council will work with operators and neighbouring authorities to seek to encourage use of low emission technologies on passenger transport vehicles operated in Leicestershire.
SP5	The County Council will work with operators and neighbouring authorities to seek to promote passenger transport use over the private car through behavioural change initiatives. This will help passenger transport services remain or become commercially viable.
SP6	The County Council will seek additional funding for operating or promoting passenger transport through competitive bids to appropriate specific funds established by Government from time to time.
SP7	The County Council will seek user and non-user feedback on passenger transport services that are supported financially.
SP8	The County Council will require operators of financially supported services to provide accurate monthly data on use of the services, in order to ensure that they still represent value for money.
SP9	Commercial transport service providers and community transport service providers will be expected to take the lead role in providing public information on services that they operate.
SP10	Where the Council supports passenger transport services financially, it will seek to maximise value from those services, including looking at their potential to carry school and college attendees.

- 5.1. Implementation of the policy and supporting principles set out above and the associated Passenger Transport Strategy will be evidence-based. Objective data and information will be sought to underpin decisions made.

## 6. How this Policy Supports the County Council's Strategic Aims

- 6.1. Our corporate vision, set out in the County Council's 2018 - 2022 Strategic Plan is for "Leicestershire to have a strong economy that creates the best life chances for all. People are well and safe, living as part of great communities where people enjoy life with maximum independence in quality homes that are



affordable. The Council wants to remain a sustainable and successful organisation leading modern, highly effective services.”

6.2. The Passenger Transport Policy is intended to help deliver the five priority outcomes that guide all activities of the County Council. The five priority outcomes essentially give a target vision for the future of Leicestershire. These are:

- O1 - Strong Economy

Leicestershire’s economy is growing and resilient so that people and businesses can fulfil their potential.

- O2 - Wellbeing and Opportunity

The people of Leicestershire have the opportunities and support they need to take control of their health and wellbeing.

- O3 - Keeping People Safe

People in Leicestershire are safe and protected from harm.

- O4 - Great Communities

Leicestershire communities are thriving and integrated places where people help and support each other and take pride in their local area.

- O5 - Affordable and Quality Homes

Leicestershire has a choice of quality homes that people can afford.

6.3. The ways that the Passenger Transport Policy can help deliver these outcomes are set out below.

O1 - Strong Economy

6.4. The Passenger Transport Policy will help to deliver the right conditions for a thriving local economy that can attract inward investment. In particular, it will help:

- Minimise congestion on Leicestershire’s roads (since passenger transport vehicles generally take up less space per person than private cars) with the consequent delays and journey time variability that hinder business operations.
- Help to ensure accessibility of workplaces and other economic centres for people without access to a private car.

- Support commercial bus operators, with consequent direct local employment benefits.

#### O2 - Wellbeing and Opportunity

- 6.5. The policy will contribute to wellbeing and good life chances for all by:
- Helping people in Leicestershire who don't have access to a private car reach key services and facilities by passenger transport, where that is possible within affordability and value-for-money criteria.
  - Contributing to accessibility of workplaces and training / education centres that help deliver good life chances.
  - Helping to ensure that people are aware of the passenger transport opportunities available to them by working with commercial and community partners to make information readily available.

#### O4 - Great Communities

- 6.6. The Passenger Transport Policy will contribute to good quality, thriving neighbourhoods by helping to ensure that local communities are encouraged and supported in contributing to their own passenger transport solutions.

#### O5 - Affordable and Quality Homes

- 6.7. The policy will contribute to having affordable and quality homes by working to ensure that new housing developments are planned with passenger transport links in mind and that developers contribute appropriately to any costs associated with providing such links.

## 7. Supporting Environment & Transport's Commissioning Strategy

- 7.1. The County Council recognises the significant challenge that it faces in delivering services against a background of reduced local government funding. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out this challenge and identifies where the County Council intends to deliver efficiencies and savings in the medium term. To help support these changes the County Council has developed a *Corporate Commissioning and Procurement Strategy* which was introduced in 2014/15. The Environment & Transport Department's Commissioning Strategy fits within this corporate strategy.
- 7.2. The Passenger Transport Strategy that will underpin the implementation of the Passenger Transport Policy will support the Environment & Transport Department's Commissioning Strategy by setting out an objective evidence-based approach for commissioning services. The Environment & Transport

Commissioning Strategy explains that whilst the authority's current Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) remains in place for the time being, as part of the development of service specific plans and strategies, it will be assessed and reviewed where appropriate to ensure that it remains fit-for purpose. These service specific plans and strategies will augment LTP3.

## 8. Policy Review

- 8.1. This policy is closely aligned to other developing policy documents across Environment and Transport services. It will require regular review and sense-checking while these documents are in development.
- 8.2. Thereafter, it will be considered for review within 5 years or earlier if there are significant changes in local circumstances, national policy or guidance that affects passenger transport.