

Highland Council Transport Programme Consultation Feedback Report

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Section 1 Introduction

Introduction

The Council currently spends £15.003m on providing mainstream home to school, public and dial a bus transport across Highland. At a time of reducing budgets, the Council has agreed a target to reduce the budget spent on the provision of transport by 15%. The Transport Programme aims to consider the needs of communities across Highland in the preparation for re-tendering the current services offered. It is important to understand the needs and views of communities to ensure that the services provided in the future best meet the needs of communities within the budget available.

The public engagement for the transport programme commenced Monday 26th October 2015 and over a 14-week period sought to obtain feedback from groups, individuals and transport providers. This consultation included local Member engagement, a series of 15 public meetings and a survey (paper and online).

The feedback from this consultation will contribute to the process of developing a range of services/routes.

The consultation survey document asked questions on:

- How suitable the current bus services are – what works, what should change and the gaps
- Is there anything that prevents or discourages the use of bus services
- What type of bus service will be important in the future
- What opportunities are there for saving by altering the current network

Fifteen public meetings were held throughout Highland. These meetings were advertised locally and on social media and provided local communities with the opportunity to contribute their views regarding the suitability of current services and what they would like to see from future services.

Additionally, a range of organisations submitted written responses to the consultation.

The key outcomes from the consultation process include:

- Identifying the impacts of service reductions on customers
- To gain individuals' views to inform any future proposals and/or any further actions required
- To evaluate and provide this information so decision making can be well informed

This report collates the feedback received at the public meetings and through the survey.

Overview and Key Themes

The consultation process received a high response rate.

557 responses were received to the questionnaire in total (via online and paper submissions).

Key respondent information to note, where demographic information is available:

- 63% of respondents were female
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- 24% of respondents were over 65
- 15% of respondents indicated that they have a disability
- 28% of respondents were from urban areas, 72% were from rural areas

Respondents

Table 1.1: based on 585 respondents

Response	Number	%
As a member of the public	521	90.3
As a community group representative	18	3.1
As a Community Council representative	24	4.2
As a commercial passenger transport company	5	0.9
As a community transport organisation	4	0.7
As a Highland Council Ward Councillor	5	0.9
Other	8	1.4

In total, 577 responses to the consultation survey were received. Over 90% of the respondents indicated that they were answering the questionnaire as a member of the public. There were 18 responses from community group representatives, 24 from Community Council representatives, 5 responses from commercial passenger transport companies. 4 responses from community transport organisations. 5 responses from Highland Council Ward councillors and 8 other responses.

Gender

216 respondents were females (41%), 123 respondents were male (23%) and 182 respondents chose not to disclose their gender (34%)

Age

Table 1.2: based on 339 respondents

Age	Number	%
16-17	4	1.2
18-24	18	5.3
25-34	26	7.7
35-44	64	18.9
45-54	69	20.4
55-64	75	22.1
65-74	55	16.2
75 +	28	8.3

From the respondents who disclosed their age: 4 respondents were aged 16-17 , 18 respondents were aged 18 - 24, 26 respondents were aged 25 – 34, 64 respondents were aged 35 - 44 (18.9 %)

69 respondents were aged 45 - 54 , 75 respondents were aged 55 – 64 (22.1%), 55 respondents were aged 65 – 74, 28 respondents were over 75

182 respondents did not disclose their age.

Disability

291 respondents indicated that they did not have a disability (85.3%), 50 respondents indicated that they have a disability (14.7 %%)

180 respondents did not disclose whether they have a disability.

50 of 341 respondents (15%) indicated that they have a disability (i.e. a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect upon their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities). The Highland census percentage for people with a limiting health problem or disability is 18%; therefore, the transport programme’s survey may be slightly under-represented in this regard.

Area

Table 1.3: based on 376 respondents

In total, 376 responses to the consultation were received that contained information about the area the respondent was based. The number of responses relating to each area were:

Response	Number	% of respondents
Inverness & Nairn Area	107	28.5
Easter Ross and Black Isle	84	22.3
Lochaber	50	13.3
Skye	25	6.6
Wester Ross and Lochalsh	26	6.9
Caithness	66	17.6
Badenoch & Strathspey	18	4.8

Emerging issues

Below is a summary of the general key points that were raised in the public transport questionnaire and public meetings. This is followed by a full report of the detailed feedback by area highlighting local concerns.

Concern about reduction or withdrawal of services

Respondents were concerned about the reduction or withdrawal of services. It was widely

commented that current provision does not reflect the needs of the community and a decrease in provision would therefore have an adverse effect. It was highlighted that public transport is the only way for many people to access services it was noted that vulnerable groups may rely on public transport and any withdrawal of service would therefore affect them disproportionately.

Improvements to current services

Respondents highlighted a series of improvements that could be made to transport These included; raising bus fares, using dial-a-bus services and altering school transport to fulfil local demand. Many respondents believed that improving provision would encourage others to use services, and therefore make services more sustainable.

Accessibility

Respondents to the community and public questionnaires noted some concern about the accessibility of public transport for disabled and elderly people. There are problems with getting to and from bus stops, getting on and off buses with steps and long waits for a return journey.

Barriers

Area	Yes	% in area
Inverness & Nairn Area	63	59%
Easter Ross and Black Isle	59	70%
Lochaber	30	60%
Skye	15	57%
Wester Ross and Lochalsh	17	65%
Caithness	35	53%
Badenoch & Strathspey	13	72%

In all areas, more than half of respondents indicated that there was a barrier preventing them using the bus or dial-a-bus service.

In Badenoch and Strathspey this was over 72% of the respondents. 70% in Easter Ross and Black Isle, 65% in Wester Ross and Lochalsh, 60% in Lochaber, 59% in Inverness and Nairn Area, 57% in Skye and 53% in Caithness.

The needs of the community

Feedback from the surveys indicated that current services were used for a range of purposes. The main focus was for leisure and social activities, for shopping and to attend appointments. In many areas respondents highlighted new developments and changes to local areas will require new services in the future.

Section 2 -Inverness and Nairn

Overview

There were four public meetings held in the Inverness-shire and Nairn area. These meetings took place in Nairn, Inverness Rose Street, Inverness Kinmylies and Drumnadrochit.

Attendees included local transport providers, Community Council representatives, local residents and Highland Councillors.

In addition there was a public questionnaire which asked questions to attain views on:

- The current bus service
- Barriers the public and communities face when using bus services
- What type of bus services will be important in the future
- What opportunities there are for altering the current networks

Table 2.1: Based on 105 respondents

Responses	Number	%
As a member of the public	89	84
As a community group representative	7	6
As a Community Council representative	8	7
As a commercial passenger transport company	0	0
As a community transport organisation	0	0
As a Highland Council Ward Councillor	1	< 1

105 people from the Inverness and Nairn area responded to the questionnaire. This included responses from members of the public, community group representatives, community council representatives and Highland Council Ward Councillors.

89 responses to the consultation survey were members of the public. There were 7 responses from community group representatives, 8 responses from community council representatives and 1 response from a Highland Council Councillor.

Important information to note:-

- 69% of respondents use public bus or dial-a-bus transport and 45% of these respondents highlighted they use it almost every day
- 21% of respondents highlighted they were retired
- 70 % of respondents were female
- 16% of respondents indicated that they consider themselves to have a disability

For the Inverness and Nairn area there was a written response from Ardersier and Petty Community Council. The points raised from this response have been noted in the area summary.

Emerging issues

Current use of services

Feedback from both the survey and public meetings indicated that current services were used for a range of purposes. The main purposes indicated for using public transport were shopping, social activities and medical appointments.

Concern about reduction or withdrawal of a service

There was a feeling that reducing current services would have a detrimental impact on individuals. 99 from 101 respondents noted that there was no service in their local area that was not needed.

Respondents in both the public meetings and the survey highlighted that particular groups e.g. the elderly would be particularly vulnerable to any service changes. It was widely commented that current bus provision is an essential public service, which allows individuals to access a range of services.

Improvement to current services

There was a consensus that many services could be improved and small changes would allow services to be more useful. A series of gaps in timetabling were highlighted. These included the lack of provision at the weekends, early in the morning or at key commuting times.

Accessibility

Respondents highlighted that the accessibility of bus services could be improved by ensuring bus timetables were in every bus shelter and that the information was accurate.

Barriers

Key barriers which were highlighted at the public meetings and through the public survey were bus times do not match users' needs. Other barriers that were highlighted included return journey times were not appropriate and drivers were unhelpful. It was also highlighted that bus timetable information was difficult to access and often out-of-date.

Future service needs

Respondents commented about the need to ensure that services matched local developments. At both the public meetings and through the consultation survey respondents raised points about the increased demand on bus services which the new UHI Beachwood campus has generated and pressure new housing development will put on services.

The needs of the community

There was concern raised by respondents that the current bus service did not meet the needs of the local community. Access to the hospital was highlighted as a concern; it was noted that current provision does not allow hospital staff to use public transport to get to and from work or allow individuals to access services.

Limitations of the services

The limitations of the current services were highlighted. Key concerns included that individuals using the services already have long waits and any reduction in service would make things even more difficult.

Better coordination of services

It was highlighted that better coordination of services would be helpful. Respondents highlighted particular examples of not being able to meet connections with existing services. E.g. traveling from Nairn to catch the first train to the Central Belt.

The 8A/C service

There was a strong feeling that the 8A/8C services were “lifeline” services and any reduction would have a significant impact on residents. It was also highlighted in the public meetings and public survey that there are gaps in the service and opportunities for improvement.

Ardersier and Nairn

Respondents noted that recent changes to bus services had made it very difficult to access Nairn from Ardersier. There was concern that bus users could not access health appointments, nor attend social activities and that access to employment opportunities was being hindered.

Public Consultation Questionnaire – Full Results

Do you/anyone in your household use home-to-school transport as an entitled pupil?

Table 2.2: Based on 89 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Yes	21	23
No	55	61
Not applicable	13	14

61% of the respondents indicated that their household does not use home to school transport. 23% of respondents indicated that someone in their household did use home to school transport and 14% of respondents said that the question was not applicable to them.

Do you/your household/your group use other types of public bus or dial-a-bus transport?

Table 2.3: based on 89 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Yes	59	66
No	25	28
Not applicable	5	5

66% of respondents indicated that they use public bus or dial-a-bus transport. 28% indicated that they did not use public bus or dial-a-bus transport and 5% indicated that the question was not applicable.

What do you/your household/your group use this service / these services for?

Table 2.4: based on 100 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Work	30	30
School	13	13
Further / Higher Education	2	2
Leisure activities e.g. sports clubs, swimming pool	22	22
Social activities e.g. meeting with friends or family	38	38
Shopping	45	45
To attend medical appointments	36	36
Onward connections (train/bus/ferry)	25	25
Not applicable – do not use services	3	3

From the 100 respondents to the question “What do you/your household/your group use this service/these services for” the most common responses were: shopping (45%), social activities (38%), to attend medical appointments (36%) and work (30%).

Are there any services that run in your area that you feel are not needed?

Table 2.5: based on 101 respondents

Responses	Number
No	99
Yes	2

99 respondents indicated that all services in their area were necessary. 2 respondents highlighted that there were services in their area that were unnecessary.

Respondents who selected “yes” noted:

Respondents who thought there were unnecessary services noted that services running during the day were frequent and there was opportunity to spread these out over the whole day.

In addition, it was noted there was considerable overlap between certain services; specifically the 8A and 8C.

Are there any services that run in your area that would be good to keep but could be run better with some minor changes?

Table 2.6: based on 102 respondents

Response	Number
No	42
Yes	60

42 out of the 102 respondents indicated that current services would not run better with minor changes.

60 respondents indicated that there were services in their area that could run better with some minor changes.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Aird routes:- It was noted that the weekend bus from Cannich to Inverness is a useful service. A number of respondents commented that without services to Beauly, Tomich and Cannich residents would be isolated. Respondents also noted that timings could be altered to allow for residents traveling from Drumnadrochit to go shopping or access the hospital. E.g. 10am leaving Drumnadrochit returning from Inverness at 3pm.

Inverness services 8A and 8C:- A number of respondents noted that any changes to the 8A and 8C services would have a significant impact on residents in South Kessock and Kinmylies. A suggestion was made that by altering the times of the 8A/8C to 18:30 rather than 18:10 this would allow people finishing work at 6pm to use the service. It was also noted that during the day the 8A/8C services from Westerbraigs to Croy are very frequent. Spreading the service out throughout the day would allow people working late shifts at the hospital to use the service. Respondents also indicated that there is a need to add a service to support the new demand on the university stimulated by the university campus developing at Beachwood. This would take pressure off the 8A/8C service.

Other Inverness area routes: - Respondents highlighted that the 19 is a vital service to allow residents to access interests, to go shopping or attend medical appointments.

Also, respondents commented on a number of services which do not allow adequate time for commuting or starting school. Services which were highlighted that could be improved included:

- The Foyers-Dores-Inverness school bus. The current service does not reach the school in good time.
- The 34x. The current service does not allow adequate time for students to attend Inverness College UHI.
- The first bus north from Kirkhill is 09:27 and doesn't arrive into Dingwall until 10am.

Nairn routes: - There were a number of comments regarding the bus service between Ardersier and Nairn. It was highlighted that this service is very limited and causes difficulties accessing Nairn hospital, commuting or accessing leisure and social activities. A suggested improvement was if the No11 service between Inverness and Nairn went via Ardersier it would help people access employment in either Nairn or Inverness. It was also noted that it is difficult to use public transport from Nairn to meet connections in Inverness e.g. the 06:50 train to the Central Belt.

General: - There were a number of general comments about how there is a need to have timetables readily available and improvements to bus stops being needed.

Respondents were asked to consider what the impact may be on them/their household/or community if the service changes they had suggested to the previous questions were to be implemented

64 respondents provided comments about possible impacts. A number of comments did not answer the specific question and highlighted general negative impacts on the reduction of

services.

In general responses to this question were very positive with respondents highlighting how these increased services would provide a better public bus service. The area specific impacts have been summarised below.

Shopping: - respondents noted that they would be able to access shopping in the Inshes area. It was also noted that residents living in Tomatin and Moy would have options to go to shopping in Inverness.

Young people: - It was mentioned by respondents that residents coming from the south of Inverness are disproportionately disadvantaged as the last bus leaving Inverness is 17:35.

Accessing college and further education: - A number of respondents commented that their service changes would allow young people to be confident to use the bus service to get to and from college or university. It was noted that young people traveling from the south of Inverness currently have to travel into the centre of Inverness.

Access to employment: - It was noted by multiple respondents that there is a significant demand from individuals living in the Westercraigs/South Kessock/Kinmylies areas and who work in the hospital and the town centre, to extend the bus operating hours so that they would be able to get home. There were a number of general comments that jobseekers would have wider access to jobs and employment opportunities.

Increased use of public transport: - Respondents highlighted that bus services would better utilised if the services better reflected their needs.

Impact elderly, young and vulnerable: - Respondents noted that their suggested service changes would have a positive impact on elderly, young and vulnerable residents. It was noted that the service changes would leave people less vulnerable, they would have better access to medical treatments, and they could avoid high costs of traveling by alternative modes of transport.

Environment: Respondents noted improved service would increase the use of public transport and therefore result in fewer cars on the road so better for the environment.

Are there specific venues/locations that bus services in your area should continue to reach?

Table 2.7: Based on 98 responses

Response	Number
No	9
Yes	89

89 of the respondents indicated that there were specific venues/locations that bus services in their area should continue to reach.

9 respondents indicated that there were not specific venues/locations that bus services in their area should continue to reach.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

General locations that respondents highlighted that were important were to doctors' surgeries, banks, chemists and shops. There was a consensus in the responses from individuals, community group representatives, community council representatives and local ward councillors about the locations.

These included: Inverness College, Inverness city centre, Raigmore Hospital, Eden Court, Drumnadrochit

Are there particular times of the day when services are needed?

Table 2.8: based on 96 responses

Response	Number
No	9
Yes	87

87 respondents indicated that there were particular times of the day that services are needed in their local area. 9 respondents indicated that there were no particular times of the day where services are needed.

There was no consensus amongst respondents about particular times of the day services were needed. Some key points that were highlighted were:

- There was a need for increased services at the weekends, particularly in the morning and at night.
- City Centre to New Craigs via Scorguie - increased service between 5pm-6pm which fits in with people finishing work at 5pm or 5.30pm or 6pm
- Bus timetables have to fit UHI timetable
- Hospital outpatients appointment times and hospital visiting hours

Are there specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should?

Table 2.9: based on 90 respondents

Response	Number
No	50
Yes	40

40 respondents indicated that there were specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should. 50 respondents indicated that there were not specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Inverness

A number of respondents commented that Raigmore Hospital and the UHI Beachwood campus were key locations that services should reach. Other comments highlighted:

- Raigmore Hospital to Cannich, Milton of Leys to Raigmore/Campus in Inverness, Kessock View to the Retail Park. Kessock View to Asda. Kessock View to Culloden, Dalneigh to Inverness UHI, Holm Farm Road to Lochardil Primary, early morning Sunday Hilton to Town Centre, Milton of Leys to Town Centre in evening, 8A/8C direct service in the morning, Morningfield Road to retail park, Raigmore to Westercraigs after 6pm

Inverness-shire

- Cawdor to Inverness in the evening, Inverness to Tomich

Nairn

- Househill Courtyard, Ardersier, Croy, Cawdor, Auldearn, Moss-side, Nairn Town Centre and Hospital etc. at regular intervals (e.g. every 90 mins) during both morning and afternoon, with a single late service to the outlying villages.

Other locations

- Joss Street, Invergordon Sports Centre, Invergordon Academy, Gills Bay to Dunbeath passing through Canisbay

General comments

More evening buses for working people and to allow families to go out to avoid becoming isolated, and to help those who may not be able to afford taxis, especially from the outskirts of town

Are there particular times of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues/locations but should?

Table 2.10: Based on 93 respondents

Response	Number
No	30
Yes	63

63 respondents indicated that there are times of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues but should. 30 respondents indicated that there was not any particular time of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues/locations but should.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Locations and times

Inverness

- Town Centre – evening- to/from Milton of Leys
- Balloch to Longman Industrial Estate for 6:00-9:00 start time
- Raigmore Hospital, all day – to cover appointments and visiting times
- Raigmore to Westercraigs should run later than 17.35.
- Morningfield Road, last bus is at 18.30 from town after that you have to walk from Fairways.
- A No. 5 bus between 5.10pm and 5.30pm going from the Shopping Park to the City Centre
- Better peak time buses between 8 - 9.30 am. City centre to Kinmylies - short route via Tomnahurich
- The times & servicing of provision to UHI need to be looked at these. These buses at peak times are dangerously over-crowded with people.

Nairn/Ardersier

- Afternoon bus to Nairn from Ardersier needed for afternoon appointments at Nairn Hospital and GP surgery

North

- Inverness to Dingwall to allow for commuting (early morning and evening)

West

- Early evening Foyers/Dores to Inverness
 - Later evening (9:30/10pm) Inverness to Foyers/Dores
 - More frequent later buses from Inverness to Drumnadrochit
 - Tomich on Sunday
-

Are there services that you/your household/your group use that connect with trains/buses/ferries?

Table 2.11: based on 96 respondents

Response	Number
No	57
Yes	39

39 respondents indicated that there are services that they use to connect with other buses, ferries or trains. 57 respondents indicated that they do not use bus services to connect with other trains, buses or ferries.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Local connections

- Balloch to Inverness train station
- 10 am from Culduthel Park connecting with the service to Nairn
- The 4 bus to Dalneigh
- Hilton to Town Centre.
- There are limited buses to get home for return journey i.e. 8.05pm train to Drakies

Trains/Buses

- Train from Inverness to Nairn is cheaper than taxis.
- Number1 to number 4 for bingo or hospital
- Nairn to Inverness to connect with trains to Edinburgh/Glasgow
- No buses in the morning to get an early train - depend on taxies
- Bus/train to Glasgow/Aberdeen/Stirling

Airport

- Nairn to Airport to connect with flights
- Service going to Ardersier and airport

General

- Bus from Inverness to Uig and then ferry to Tarbert, Harris
-

- Inverness to Ullapool to catch the ferry to Stornoway
- Dingwall to Inverness and Alness to Inverness
- Inverness - Dingwall, Tain, Golspie, Nairn
- No trains stop in Tomatin or Moy so if going anywhere on the train have to go into Inverness first, e.g. the 13.23pm 34X gets in at 14.05 which would allow one to catch the train to Glasgow or Edinburgh at 14.40pm.
- The 8A/8C service is too unreliable to depend on for linking with connecting services

Are there new developments in the area that need to be supported?

Table 2.12: based on 91 respondents

Response	Number
No	49
Yes	42

42 respondents indicated that there were new developments in the area that should be supported with bus services. 49 respondents indicated that there were not any new developments that would need to be supported.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Specific developments

- Respondents commented about specific new housing development in Holm/Culduthel, Westercraigs/Brudes Hill, Merkinch, Lochloy, Drumnadrochit, Kinmylies, Craig Dunain, Montgomerie Drive, Whitebridge, Gorthleck, Foyers and Tomatin.
- It was also noted that the Grant Street Bike Shed (Community events) Clay Studio and the Merkinch Community Centre are all expanding and could benefit with bus services
- It was also highlighted that specific changes to Ardersier health centre have resulted in patients having to travel to the Nairn health centre for appointments.

Other comments

- There were a number of general comments about new housing developments and the need for service provision. Respondents also highlighted the development of the West Link Road and city sports hub

Is there anything that prevents you or discourages you from using the bus or dial-a-bus services in your area?

Table 2.13: based on 66 respondents

Response	Number	Disability
I cannot get to the bus stop	4	3
The vehicle is not easy for me to access e.g.	11	4

because it has steps		
The timetable does not fit in with my lifestyle	36	5
I have to wait too long for a return journey	26	3
Drivers are unhelpful	19	2

The most common barriers that respondents indicated prevented or discouraged them from using the bus services were:

- The timetable does not fit in with my lifestyle
- I have to wait too long for a return journey
- Drivers are unhelpful

Is there any activity that you are prevented from doing, or service you cannot access because of a lack of transport?

Table 2.14: Based on 61 responses

Response	Number	Disability
Healthcare appointments	20	3
Commuting / getting to work	23	4
Sports clubs / Exercise classes / Gym	17	5
Swimming pool	17	4
Going to the theatre or cinema	33	7
After school activities	16	4
Visiting friends or family	25	7
Shopping	17	3
Going out for a meal or a drink	32	8
Educational training / classes	22	5

The activities that respondents highlighted that they are most prevented from doing because of lack of transport are: “going out for a meal or a drink”, “going to the theatre or cinema” and “visiting friends and families”.

13 respondents who submitted a response for the Inverness and Nairn area indicated that they consider themselves to have a disability. From these respondents more than half indicated that there are activities that they are prevented from doing because a lack of transport.

Local questions

How would people be affected if the City Centre / South Kessock / Kinmylies evening bus finished earlier, or didn't run on Sundays?

Key areas that were highlighted that would be affected were:

- **Access to employment** e.g. Shift workers, hospital staff, office cleaners, Bakers' and 24-hour supermarket workers. Many respondents commented that it would particularly affect low income workers who have no alternative to bus transport
 - **Social isolation/ Unable to get to social activities:** it was highlighted by a number of respondents that many social activities would be affected and if individuals could not access them it could lead to social isolation e.g. can't go to children Sunday classes, to work in catering, meeting friends. It was highlighted that this could result in specific groups becoming isolated and they will be unable to go to friends' houses and have sleep overs etc.
 - **Public safety:** An evening service to enable residents to go out in Inverness or Fort Augustus
 - **Social activities:** It was highlighted that a number of respondents couldn't attend a number of social activities, because they were limited to the bus services. It was specifically pointed out that the Raigmore estate did not have access to a bus
 - **Impact on other travel** e.g. It would impact on other travel, would be unable to connect with other transport services.
 - **Public safety** People in certain areas e.g. Kinmylies would be at risk, walking home in the dark over the canal. People with limited physical abilities would suffer and become isolated.
-

What service is needed on the Whitebridge – Farr – Inverness route on Saturdays? What are the main journey purposes and preferred times?

The key areas that were highlighted as the main purpose of these journeys were :

- Shopping
- Access to sport activities
- Links to town centre
- Accessing Raigmore Hospital

The preferred times of the service were:

- An evening service to enable residents to go out in Inverness or Fort Augustus
 - Better Sunday and evening services
 - In the morning and then rush hour
 - Socialising. Social interaction is essential for the elderly in our community.
-

From Whitebridge and Farr on weekdays, how long do people want to stay in Inverness on shopping trips?

There was no consensus of how long people wanted to stay in Inverness for. Responses varied from 2 – 6 hours.

Would a less frequent service from Foyers in the middle of the day cause difficulties

All but one commented that a less frequent service would cause difficulties.

What service is needed on the Foyers – Inverness route on Saturdays? What are the main journey purposes and preferred times?

The main journey purposes of this service were:

- Accessing campsites in the summer
- Commuting to and from work
- Social and shopping trips

Most of the comments highlighted that current provision was sufficient. Key times were:

- Morning and evenings for commuting
- Mid-morning and mid-afternoon for shopping and socialising

Are the times of the last buses from Inverness to Foyers suitable? If not, what would be better?

35 respondents provided comments to this question:

Most respondents highlighted that the current service was not suitable and suggested a later service would allow people to attend social activities in Inverness.

How would people be affected if the Saturday evening bus to Drumnadrochit and Cannich was withdrawn?

The key areas that were highlighted that were:

- People would be unable to attend events in Inverness e.g. evening activities or events at Eden Court
- Young people would be prevented from socialising in Drumnadrochit
- Workers would struggle to commute

For the buses from Strathglass and Aird, how long do you want in Inverness or Dingwall for shopping?

Comments highlighted that a minimum time of 2-3 hours would be preferred. There were also comments that people use this service to access employment and this is needed.

How would people be affected if there was no longer an evening bus service to Croy?

Respondents highlighted that people would no longer be able to get home from work (Tesco was specifically mentioned by more than one respondent), people would not be able to access leisure activities and socialising would be more difficult.

What frequency is needed for the Inverness – Ardersier evening service? Is there a need for evening transport between Ardersier and Nairn?

Comments noted that the current hourly daytime and evening service provision between Inverness and Ardersier is reasonable. Yes there is a need for an evening link between Ardersier and Nairn suggest early evening e.g. 6pm, 8.30pm and 11pm evening link.

A number of respondents highlighted the importance of this service for accessing the airport

Are there services which you find difficult to get to in Nairn?

Key services which were highlighted were

- The hospital or GP surgery – from Nairn and local area. A number of specific comments about changes to the Ardersier medical practice now require patients to travel to Nairn for emergency appointments.
 - Employment, specifically from the Ardersier area where it is impossible to travel to Nairn for work before 8:30am.
-

Public Consultation Meeting Feedback

Inverness – Kinmylies 04/11/15

Current Services

- Participants made the point that 8A/8C services were lifeline services and should be retained – many people have no car and cannot afford taxi fares.
- It was highlighted that timings /time-keeping is poor – this was due to poor infrastructure and no transport strategy. E.g. “How can a driver expect to make it from Farmfoods on Academy Street to South Kessock in 4 minutes” – this is putting pressure on the drivers and they are missing stops.
- Current service is not suitable for shift workers e.g. Lifescan or the hospital
- The last bus leaving the Raigmore estate at night is 6:20pm
- There was concern about the poor bus service to the new UHI campus.
- The level of bus service from the Culduthel Park area of the city, despite some evening service reinstatement. Particular concern about not being able to get to work on Sunday mornings, nor back home again on Sunday evenings. Also, to get to areas of the city such as Smithton it was necessary to first go into the centre then get a different service for the onward leg of the journey – lack of service using the Southern Distributor Road
- Online timetables – are not easy to understand (Stagecoach site) – can be difficult to access
 - “Timetable information – is very difficult to understand – especially the 8a and 8c services”
 - Bounced out when trying to look at a route.
 - Lack of maps – seem to go round in circles when on the web.
- Timetables often change before the leaflets become available.
- Real-time bus stops are not effective/accurate
- More people would use the services if they were more attractive/reliable

Future Services

- UHI Campus – needs provision
 - Leisure centre – bus to here would be good, especially after school hours, early evening and weekends.
 - A service to New Craigs – for both the housing development and hospital. There is also social housing by New Craigs
 - Outpatient transport needs, mainly 9-5 need, and visiting needs
-

Opportunities for savings

- It would be better if there was a flat fare
- Transfer tickets for buses – allowing residents to access connections easily and quickly
- The principle of shorter direct services might be worth considering as per practice in some European countries. But smaller vehicles could be less suited to the needs of those with physical impairments – these seen by some of the audience as being likely to be less accessible than the larger vehicles, particularly noting this concern in relation to minibuses
- Out of catchment school runs make traffic heavier
 - Encourage them to use the bus – environmental footprint is same as a car/taxi
 - Air pollution affects health in Inverness. 61 died via this in a year - Air Quality Report by Public Health England 2014
- Need city centre infrastructure to be better – wheelchair access for example
- Put notice in schools to encourage bus use
- Bus users perceived to be 2nd class – a need to change attitudes toward the value of using buses

Specific services and opportunities for savings

- (How would people be affected if the City Centre/South Kessock/Kinmylies evening bus finished earlier, or didn't run on Sundays?)
 - Would be a night effect – especially if 1035pm was affected from town to Kinmylies
 - Would affect Raigmore shift workers in evenings
- Sundays – not a bus early enough to get to Raigmore – (0929 is first bus) – starts work at 0730
 - also difficult to get bus home (finish 2000)
 - bus is at 2050 if on time
- Electric bikes in town - £1.75 per hour. Very expensive – big waste of money.
- Seek to have services provided by smaller companies running minibuses instead of big companies like Stagecoach dominating. Explained the tender process is open to all sizes of licensed operator, so open to smaller company principle.

Other

- Concern that some of the users of the 8A and 8C evening services wouldn't have been able to attend the meeting because they would be working
- Need drop-in session in city centre and on-bus survey for users of these bus services to have their views heard. Council agreed to organise this.
- Respondents recognise changes have to be made. However, people shouldn't be denied access to public transport –“the government and council policy is to go green – is there a better way than use the bus?”
- Small operators find it difficult to get contracts when competing with the larger operators
- Fuel has gone down by 20% this year – has this saving been passed on?
- There was a concern that if the project was to fail to achieve its 15% budget saving the saving will it be taken directly out of the public transport budget.

Inverness – Rose Street Car Park 09/12/15

Current Services

- Why does the Sunday bus service from Inshes Wood go via the UHI site when the facility is closed?
 - Service 8 route is far too long – shorten to make them workable.
-

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- Buses need to be back into Union Street not clogging up Queensgate.
 - Buses are late nearly all the time, and frequently beyond an acceptable 3 or 4 minutes. (Referring to Services 4 and 8)
 - Buses of poor quality, as are roads (Millburn Road specifically referred to).
 - Don't feel safe on evening service from Inshes Wood – bus drivers reluctant to resolve rowdy behaviour.
 - Old route from Inshes Wood to Culloden shopping area was much better – new route less helpful.
 - On Sundays the first bus service from Inshes Wood is 9.15am – not good enough.

Bus shelters

- Can't sit on the modern bus shelter seats – not conducive to someone with arthritic complaint – need a 'proper' seat.
- Poor standard of cleanliness of many bus shelters – specific examples being at the bus station in Inverness and those at Raigmore Hospital.
- Bus shelters at UHI
- Electronic destination boards are misleading and difficult to understand.
- Inshes Wood area bus shelters – no good as wind whistles through/under them – unpleasant
- Bus shelters at UHI are no good and there are no bins
- Bus shelters on Telford Street

Public Consultation Meeting Feedback **Nairn public meeting, 28/10/2015**

Current services

- Nairn and Ardersier Patient Groups Survey, findings suggest respondents' needs are not met via fixed bus or dial-a-bus services. Is there a better way, a more flexible way, such as further community transport?

Prioritisation

- How are contracts being prioritised? Are certain budgets being allocated by area, and therefore how are they being prioritised?
- Can't understand the priorities

Specific services -

- Nairn to Ardersier: no bus route, isolating people as no transport. Patients getting to Nairn, Ardersier cut off.
 - The bus service between Ardersier and Nairn received a lot of criticism – there has been a certain changing of where the bus stops to pick up passengers along the route – the change has affected the ability of individuals with additional support needs to access public transport.
 - Trying to make Ardersier a better place to live but very difficult without a transport service
 - Services from Inverness to Nairn in evening go via Ardersier but no-one uses
 - Integrated planning – health services point to Ardersier
 - Ardersier – Airport link
 - Nairn/Elgin/Aberdeen buses – quite frequent during day but don't go to Ardersier. Could the Nairn town centre service timetable be altered to run through Ardersier periodically?
-

Nairn

- Role for planning gain – The Council encouraged at meeting to urge new developers to contribute to running services. This has occurred in the past – the 20 Service arose through planning gain when Sainsbury's was built – now paid for by Highland Council.
- The grant awarded by The Highland Council to Nairn Community Transport considered insufficient to operate more expansive service delivery. New grant process being implemented – opportunity to apply for a grant to contribute to service development.
- Services – Doctor, Dentist, Nairn Hospital, work in Nairn.
- A social need – youth café, swimming pool
 - A service in the morning
 - A service at lunchtime
 - A service in the evening
- Would meet 80% of need (transport strategy)
- Options for delivery –Nairn Dial-a-Bus
- Expanding Nairn town service via Airport - cover those working at airport

Inverness

- Kids – school service would be helpful if was a public service – school bus working
- Dial-a-bus – Sunnyhill – no bus service at all apart from Culloden school bus
 - Not in Culloden catchment area, dividing line on wrong side
- Stagecoach 11A was previously used but doesn't go past - stays on A96 now – goes to Elgin. The service is considered by meeting participants to be little used at the times it runs (quoted in the meeting as leaving Inverness at 9.25am, 10.25am and 11.25pm) but doesn't seem to have services during the heart of the day when they could be helpful. Whilst this is not a service funded by The Highland Council, the Council has previously asked the operator to divert via Ardersier but this has been turned down on the grounds that it would not be a sufficiently commercial change. Would The Highland Council consider a subvention to encourage Stagecoach to divert a daytime service through Ardersier? Local people believe there is sufficient demand.
- Support worker comes in from Kinmylies – bus pass – can't use now.
- Buses often don't turn up and very expensive.
- Stagecoach – running a small bus not feasible as costs same as big bus.
- Timing and reliability prevents – decision-making
- Publicity for services – such as Dial-a-Bus and D and E Coaches – a definite lack of awareness.
- Stagecoach – a barrier to good bus services
 - 7-8 years ago a good bus service in Ardersier – not now
 - Lack of passenger numbers provided
 - Treat local area, especially Ardersier as second-class citizens
 - Mechanical reliability of vehicles

Accessibility

- Steps – buggies, elderly – especially on coaches
 - Buses need low steps
 - Elderly – high demographic – can't drive, reliant on friends or family but they're working
 - Young – access to social activity- after-school
 - Health – immunisations – continuity – doctor might not come to Ardersier
 - Bus drivers considered usually ok. Anecdotally they don't stop sometimes. E.g. bus timetabled to go into Culloden Battlefield – have to walk to Sunnyside, 1 mile to get bus, dark road alongside woods.
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- Commuters from Ardersier poorly served
 - Poor reliability of service (11 or 15 service at 0755 to Inverness for 0830) - often doesn't turn up
 - Delnies – round village
 - Out to airport – cost-saving, desirable, but not essential?
 - Folks in Nairn don't need an hourly service – may mean dropping regularity of town service rather than a dial-a-bus
 - Weekend – nice but not essential – others around to provide lifts
 - Priority required for medical service access
 - Stagecoach timetables are not clear e.g. Bught Park to Inverness city centre, or which way
 - A96 timetable
 - which way bus goes was bit of a guess
 - Need good local knowledge to interpret timetable
 - Website route map isn't too clear
 - Constant changes to bus timetables unhelpful – people can't rely on them.

Future services

- Can school routes be reorganised?
 - Priorities identified for bus services include: home-to-school transport; a good service to Nairn from Ardersier especially to access healthcare facilities as this is a considerable concern for Ardersier residents; and a good dial-a-bus service – current service does not meet sufficiently wide range of needs. The need to access Nairn more effectively is considered an urgent need – 2017 is too far away to wait for change.
 - Nairn-Croy-Airport-Ardersier-Nairn would be a good circular to have. Possibly include Cawdor – could help people get to the castle.
 - Community car scheme would be a good idea. Community minibus – lack of qualified drivers
 - Speaking to medical practice to improve services – patients who have mobility difficulties
 - Could Stagecoach not just detour to Airport?
 - Link to Fort George would be helpful too. Both for those barracked there and for those wishing to visit. Same applies for Culloden Battlefield.
 - A gap in the tourist season – extending service from Inverness down to Fort George – advertising needs to be better. Hourly service not necessary.
 - Feel excluded from public services outwith the village
 - Employment opportunities – Fort George and Airport – can't get to by bus.
 - Addition to 20
 - Expanding dial-a-bus
 - Friday evening social/leisure into Nairn
 - Getting into/out of Ardersier going east and west
 - The Nairn-Croy-Airport-Ardersier-Nairn circular
 - Ardersier in between Nairn and Culloden, for healthcare and schools (no access post-school unless own transport)
 - Vulnerability of living on her own – no access to facilities
 - Nairn bus a lifeline - 'safer in Nairn than Inverness' – more accessible
 - Lack of appointments in Ardersier
 - Banking in Nairn not Inverness
 - Changes to existing service –
 - If don't have GP registration in Nairn then no service – two medical practices don't offer the same – Ardersier and Nairn – emergency appointments, physio not in Ardersier
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- Croy – more disadvantaged – before changes in service - bus services for Croy residents considered poor.
 - Major kids won't get to after-school as don't have transport
 - Culloden School Service is well orchestrated
 - Don't see opportunities for efficiencies
 - Fares out of this
 - Could we subsidise part of the Stagecoach route
 - Bus/train interchange at airport would be helpful
 - To Inverness
 - To Nairn
 - Service which goes to Dalcross doesn't go to Airport – strange
 - Better influence with Stagecoach would be good
 - If Stagecoach put on a proper service e.g. every other hour in both directions from Ardersier that would be great. The Highland Council funding could then plug gaps better.
 - Would Highland Council consider transport contracts for individual events – no, event organisers are expected to organise transport where it is necessary.
 - Why favour funding for night-time services over day-time services?

Other

- Pigeon-holing the budget – just looking at transport in isolation –
 - What is the impact
 - Not thinking of the wider impact on economic outcomes
- Integrated transport strategy
- A chicken-and-egg – if provide a service then more people use
- Challenges of dial-a-bus meeting multiple needs – community car scheme would be more flexible to meet needs
- Budgets too small for community transport – this is the flexibility to meet needs
- Fixed routes don't work
- How to assess need?
- Why favour night-time over day-time service
- Building Lochloy Bridge to Sainsbury
- If providing some money to Stagecoach for an evening service then why are they not providing the service?

Drumnadrochit public meeting 10/11/2015

Key points

Current services

Publicity

- Strategic connections being cut – a need to link with Portree bus at Invergarry
 - Kiltarlity-Beaully afternoon gap
 - Ross's minibuses – a good service

 - When timetables change they are very difficult to get hold of
 - Couldn't get updated timetables after the October changes – timetables not posted at the bus stops in Drumnadrochit either.
 - Seems to be difficulties in using Traveline website – difficulty in finding correct services.
 - 'Can Community Councils change the timetables in the shelters?'
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Stagecoach

- Strategic connections being cut
- no link now to connect to Fort William, Oban and Glasgow
- Inverness –Invergarry – gap needs filled (to link with Portree bus)
- Citylink have pulled 2 services, Stagecoach have put on 1 Inverness to Fort William
- Drumnadrochit-Fort William-Glasgow Airport is a valuable link – the service being retained leaves Inverness at 5.20pm, but there is no link to Glasgow Airport.
- With void being created by Citylink service reductions between Inverness and Fort William can Highland Council provide an Inverness – Invergarry link?
- The Inverness to Portree service, leaving Inverness at 0915 turns off the A82 at Invermoriston. If it could continue on the A82 and instead turn off at Invergarry then it would provide a service to Fort Augustus. This arrangement might be accommodated if the service left Inverness at the earlier time of 0845.
- A query as to how the savings and consultations fits in with the broader local development plan which commits to the development and encouragement of public transport use and winter maintenance. Specific areas/ services
- The top road from Whitebridge and Foyers has no link to Fort Augustus. A low road-high road link is needed to link up Foyers and Whitebridge. There is a good service to Foyers but Whitebridge is poorly served.
- The last bus going out of Whitebridge is not operating as a service – appears only to be returning to base – could this be registered as a service to boost local provision, rather than run back to Inverness empty?
- The Saturday night Tomich to Inverness route has been highlighted on Facebook by a community group and received a lot of support. A comment that the service is not particularly well advertised
- 1920 from Cannich – a need for the service to turn around
- The Kiltarlity-Beaully afternoon run is a gap which could be filled e.g. a current gap – service change – always a demand – bus is in Beaully at 1500 and leaves again at 1550 – possible to get to Kiltarlity and back in between. The 307 service
- As a general principle the Inverness services are ok – but Beaully a gap - demand and spec required though – ensure not requiring another bus and driver etc. – an opportunity though
- Connectivity through Inverness – linking to train times is important
- Minibus runs 5 minutes behind Stagecoach
- Losing Citylink Inverness – Fort William service is a loss
- Can't get home to Whitebridge after work – stops at Foyers, run up the hill would be very helpful
- Foyers buses – extend to Gorthleck and Whitebridge
- Inverness – Fort Augustus link would be helpful
- Tourism businesses also very disappointed at Citylink withdrawals
- Demand responsive services would be good e.g. as in other Highland areas –
- How do you go about getting a demand-responsive service for an area? How should a community bring this to Highland Council's attention? Response
- South Loch Ness area e.g. to Fort Augustus, to Inverness, on some basis e.g. once per week or per month

17 service

- Lewiston etc. - different service numbers create confusion (especially with tourists etc.)
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- Service 17 – 8.07 Drumnadrochit-Inverness – not listed on Stagecoach’s timetable.
 - A Stagecoach service, but some provided by The Highland Council (0724, 1250 and 1740 Tomich)
 - Service 17, 7.20pm Cannich-Drumnadrochit-Inverness drives around Lewiston in summer to turn around (turns in tourist information centre car park during winter) – but it isn’t advertised as doing this, so people miss out. (Advised that this not in the current specification.)
 - Tomich – Inverness service doesn’t go into the bus station at Inverness – would like it to.
 - Also the 1500 and 1515 Inverness and Charleston service down the A82 – no-one gets on from Abriachan – perhaps necessary as different start places but a waste?
 - Gap – bus services around the Loch – might be helpful, especially in summer
 - Bad timekeeping – services in Oslo, Germany etc. amazing – on time all the time – not allowed to dig up roads (bar emergencies) till after 1900. Ease of use in buying of tickets, not holding folk up etc. Acknowledgement however of the difficulty in comparing urban and rural services.
 - Poor connections – Scotrail willing to get people home
 - Kiltarlity – morning run arrives in Inverness just as Citylink/Gold service is departing. Slight timing adjustments would be helpful Transport Unit undertook to explore this with the operator.
 - Whitebridge => Inverness Royal Academy school overloading – will return to route through Farr
 - New bus shelters have been requested for various locations

Whitebridge

- Demand-responsive opportunity?
- Low-use due to poor bus timings e.g. can’t get home after work
- Extend Foyers bus service - Could Highland Council consider running a service for school pupils to travel from Foyers to Fort Augustus? Response advised that Council policy was not to fund out-of-catchment transport for school pupils.
- Would demand-responsive be preferred as to off-peak in Whitebridge? Equally as necessary for use by a range of age groups
- A lot of new houses – from Compass to Knockie (Whitebridge)
- Need to consider a run to South Loch Ness
- Publicity an important issue – often timetables out-of-date, inaccurate and not in shelters
- A big issue in getting drivers – (Ross’s and more widely) – then 56 days’ notice leaving 13 to find a driver. A need to help rural operators too

Future services

- Council planners say developments will occur at places where there are public transport links – need to ensure transport and planning teams are co-operating.
 - Winter gritting of roads – again need to ensure transport units are co-operating with each other.
 - Western Isles/ Shetland – step-free access is provided
 - Will low floors be specified?
 - Those less than or equal to 23 seats will be low-floor
 - Those over 23 seats have no particular regulation
 - Will be inviting wheelchair accessible vehicles
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- Elderly – increased population who are told they can't drive etc. – more dependent on rural public transport to get to the doctors etc.
 - Housing expansion in Kiltarlity
 - Ross's service – very good
 - Night bus running Cannich-Inverness needs to be promoted. Bus operator contributed that the numbers using the Cannich service are down, but pattern is unpredictable, one good Saturday, a couple so-so, and then probably a poor Saturday night. Operators view was that the numbers of young people using the service to go to the cinema were down, perhaps due to the expense of attending the cinema. The operator stated the numbers using the service were quite good from Drumnadrochit through to Balnain, but reduced significantly thereafter.
 - Cannich to Glenurquhart – a coach – should be
 - Is a double-decker which is being used – doesn't have to be
 - Needs to be a high-capacity vehicle – 65 pupils
 - The return up to Cannich is commercial
 - Difficult getting to Inverness College – route 17 is being re-routed
 - Option 7 (cutting of evening bus to Drumnadrochit and Cannich) –
 - Would affect quite a bit –
 - People picking folk up with alcohol limits reduced etc.
 - Hospitality workers in Inverness
 - Youngsters socialising in Inverness
 - Option 8 (Strathglass and Aird Inverness and Dingwall shopping)
 - Service runs to Academy Street then Inshes etc. out to Asda arriving around 11 and returning 1250
 - Dingwall Kiltarlity service – around 1030 and returning at 12, same on Saturday
 - This time window is determined as about right – want some, but not too much time given people's requirements and commitments etc.
 - Ross's run service to Glen Affric and in tandem with hillwalking companies in the summer commercially – helps to pay for the other services
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Section 3 - Easter Ross and Black Isle

Overview

There were 3 public meetings held in Easter Ross and the Black Isle area. These meetings took place in: Culbokie, Milton and Conon Bridge.

Attendees included local transport providers, Community Council representatives, local residents and Highland Councillors.

In addition there was a public questionnaire which asked questions to attain views on:

- The current bus service
- Barriers the public and communities face when using bus services
- What type of bus services will be important in the future
- What opportunities are there for altering the current networks

Table 3.1: Based on 84 respondents

Responses	Number	%
As a member of the public	82	97
As a community group representative	0	0
As a Community Council representative	2	3
As a commercial passenger transport company	0	0
As a community transport organisation	0	0
As a Highland Council Ward Councillor	0	0

84 people from the Easter Ross and the Black Isle area responded to the questionnaire either online or by paper response. 82 responses to the consultation survey were members of the public. 2 responses were from Community Council representatives.

Key information to note is:

- 78% of respondents use public bus or dial-a-bus transport
- 74 % of respondents have lived in the Highland area for over 10 years
- 60 % of respondents were female
- 15% of respondents indicated that they consider themselves to have a disability

For the Easter Ross and Black Isle area there was a written response from Ferintosh Community Council. Key points from this response have been collated into the area summary.

Emerging Issues

Feedback from the survey , public meetings and community council response have been summarised below:

Concern about reduction or withdrawal of a service

In both the public meetings and public survey there were concerns raised that any reduction to

current services would affect people living in the Black Isle and Easter Ross significantly.

Improvement to current services

There were a number of comments made from members of the public about improvements to current services. It was widely commented that the current services did not currently meet the needs of service users in some areas. There were a number of comments raised about the use of smaller buses which could act as feeder buses to more established routes. It was noted that bus services in the Black Isle and Easter Ross should be better advertised.

The needs of the community

The most popular uses of public transport were shopping (57%), social activities (55%) and onward connections (39%). There were concerns that daytime services were used mainly by elderly residents and the current services did not match the user requirements.

Limitations of the services

It was highlighted by a number of respondents that the current services linking Inverness, Easter Ross and the Black Isle did not allow people to commute by bus. It was also highlighted that bus users were limited by the timetable.

Better coordination of services

The coordination of services between the different providers was highlighted as a key area for improvement. It was highlighted that having a bus service that complemented the train network would be beneficial.

Reliability

It was noted that many services in the Black Isle could not be relied on because it was common for services to be late or not show up at all.

Accessing social activities

It was widely commented that current bus provision restricted access to social activities, specifically in the evening and returning from Inverness

Public Consultation Questionnaire – Full Results

Do you/anyone in your household use home-to-school transport as an entitled pupil?

Table 3.2: Based on 79 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Yes	18	22
No	49	62
Not applicable	12	15

62% of the respondents indicated that their household does not use home to school transport. 22% of respondents indicated that someone in their household did use home to school transport and 15% of respondents said that the question was not applicable to them.

Do you/your household/your group use other types of public bus or dial-a-bus transport?

Table 3.3: based on 79 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Yes	62	78
No	14	17
Not applicable	3	4

78% of respondents indicated that they use public bus or dial-a-bus transport. 17% indicated that they did not use public bus or dial-a-bus transport and 4% indicated that the question was not applicable.

What do you/your household/your group use this service/these services for?

Table 3.4: based on 78 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Work	25	32
School	5	16
Further / Higher Education	7	8
Leisure activities e.g. sports clubs, swimming pool	23	29
Social activities e.g. meeting with friends or family	43	55
Shopping	45	57
To attend medical appointments	28	35
Onward connections (train/bus/ferry)	31	39
Not applicable – do not use services	0	0

From the 78 respondents to the question “What do you/your household/your group use this service/these services for” the most common responses were: (57%), social activities (55%) and onward connections (39%).

Are there any services that run in your area that you feel are not needed?

Table 3.5: based on 78 respondents

Responses	Number
No	67
Yes	11

67 respondents indicated that all services in their area were necessary. 11 respondents highlighted that there were services in their area that were unnecessary.

Respondents who selected yes noted:

- The Fortrose (0856) - Inverness (0930) gets to Inverness too late for commuting.
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- The Service 26 frequently runs between 20 and 30 minutes late each day. Subsequently, 2 buses end up coming minutes apart as the 26D Cromarty (0910) to Inverness (1000) runs to its normal schedule.
- The Contin-Inverness runs at 7am and 9am. The 7am is not used for commuting because it is too early and the 9am isn't used for commuting because it is too late. One service at 8am would be better utilised.
- There were also a number of general comments about how current services need to be extended and not reduced.

Are there any services that run in your area that would be good to keep but could be run better with some minor changes?

Table:3.6 based on 79 respondents

Response	Number
No	26
Yes	53

26 out of the 79 respondents indicated that current services would not run better with minor changes.

53 respondents indicated that there were services in their area that could run better with some minor changes

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Culbokie: Buses linking up to Number 25 bus in Duncanston for Inverness or 27 bus to Dingwall. This would help link up to other forms of transport as current buses do not allow Culbokie commuters or others to get early morning trains from Inverness. Other services could link up to before or after school drop off/pick up times i.e. if 14:55 from Culbokie was 10 minutes later it could service those picking up children from school. It would also be useful to have a bus into Dingwall just after school drop off at 9:00. 25U from Culbokie to Inverness at 8am is an excellent addition, but there is not a bus coming back from the University. A 5pm bus from Inverness College heading north via Culbokie would be well utilised. In the Ferintosh Community Council area, the majority of residents do not have realistic access to buses to and from Dingwall and Inverness. However, these same residents have realistic access to the two main B roads (B9163 and B9169) that cut right through the territory and at 'right angles' to the main commuter routes of the A835 and the A9. Culbokie to Inverness needs a better service. Route 21 Culbokie to Dingwall Business Park should be standard rather than stopping at Dingwall Academy then request onto the Business Park. Culbokie buses could extend beyond Schoolcroft and turn at east end of village (serving new housing estate and Braefindon area). Culbokie is a commuter village - it needs better links with Inverness. The south side of the Black Isle has a great service - some of these buses should be diverted to the north side. There already is an 'on demand' facility for the occasional service coming out of Inverness up the A9 which can be diverted through Culbokie. Extend this 'on demand' idea for buses plying the A835 and the A9.

Cromarty: The Cromarty to Fortrose to Inverness service is not reliable enough. Sometimes buses are late or don't turn up - the evening service is essential if any kind of social life is wanted, plus getting back from trains getting into Inverness after 6pm. The Cromarty to Dingwall service is

inadequate - it only runs three days a week and the timings don't work for getting much done at either end, e.g. for medical appointments. Route 26 to Cromarty - if this became a circular route and came through Munlochy to Tore residents would be connected to the other side of the Black Isle. Two buses from Cromarty around 7am could be merged. Additional service to those Black Isle villages nearer to Inverness instead if necessary. At other, off-peak times perhaps smaller buses could be considered. Inverness-Cromarty bus. A good enough service but the bus route which goes via North Kessock essentially (including the route via Jemimaville) adds extra time.

Dingwall: Alness - Dingwall. Dingwall - between 11.00 am and 5.00 pm. Suggestion to set up as community transport, could ply the B9163 and B9169 roads in a way that connects with the frequent service buses running on the A835 and A9.

Muir of Ord: More direct services to Inverness from Muir of Ord via Tore not Beauly, Kirkhill, etc. Morning service at Muir of Ord does not allow working parents to send children out and then bus to work in either Dingwall or Inverness.

Alness: The 25X to Inverness stopping at Alness Point Business Park to drop off students for college. A bus into Alness Point Business Park for 8:30 - 9am and a bus out from 4.30-5pm to catch college and local business passengers. This is a service that has been overlooked for years. There is a need to re-instate service to Dingwall from Alness. This service has been removed because of lack of use - but service not used because of uncertainty of making connection at Evanton, where passengers had to change. Alness - Dingwall needs to be more frequent - the recent cuts are causing major problems. There would be much greater uptake if bus served 'the schemes'.

Evanton: As the Evanton - Dingwall commercial service has virtually been withdrawn funding needs to be found urgently for an early afternoon return service to Evanton and further north.

Respondents were asked to consider what the impact may be on them/their household/or community if the service changes they had suggested to the previous questions were to be implemented

A number of comments highlighted general negative impacts on the reduction of services.

Impacts regarding suggestions about service changes have been categorised and summaries below:

Better connectivity: Respondents noted that if the services linked up with the trains and the school then it would improve connectivity in the area.

Increased passenger numbers: A respondent indicated that the changes would enable people to get to get to work college using public transport because key the services would be designed around key commuting times.

Better access to services: Respondents noted they would have better access to medical services, retail outlets and to social events.

Reduce congestion: A respondent noted that having a more representative bus service would reduce congestion e.g. Kessock Bridge

Are there specific venues/locations that bus services in your area should continue to reach?

Table 3.7: Based on 76 responses

Response	Number
No	9
Yes	67

67 of the respondents indicated that there were specific venues/locations that bus services in their area should continue to reach.

9 respondents indicated that there were not specific venues/locations that bus services in their area should continue to reach.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Locations: - respondents highlighted that services should continue to reach: Marybank, Avoch, Inverness, Dingwall, Culbokie, Jemimaville, Tomich, Strathpeffer, Alness point Business Park, Dingwall Business Park and the Health Centre in Tain.

Routes: - specific routes respondents highlighted services should continue to reach included: Marybank to Dingwall, Alness to Dingwall, Dingwall to Inverness via Conon Bridge, Easter Kinkell to Dingwall, The Cannich bus from Muir of Ord to Inverness, Muir of Ord to Inverness, Muir of Ord to Dingwall, Muir of Ord to Marybank, Marybank to Inverness, , Culbokie to Dingwall and Inverness, Fortrose to Culbokie, Inverness through to Cromarty via Croy.

General: There were a number of locations and services that were highlighted in the area that bus services should continue to reach. These included: doctors' surgeries, community health centres, opticians, train stations, orthodontists, dentists, sports and leisure facilities.

Are there particular times of the day when services are needed?

Table 3.8: based on 78 responses

Response	Number
No	17
Yes	61

61 respondents indicated that there were particular times of the day that services are needed in their local area. 17 respondents indicated that there were no particular times of the day where services are needed.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Times and locations

Culbokie

- Culbokie to Inverness 7-9am returning 5-7pm
-

- Culbokie to Dingwall Business Park 8-9am returning 5-6pm
- Inverness to Culbokie 4.30pm
- Inverness to Culbokie late night service

Dingwall

- Dingwall between 11.00 am and 5.00 pm circular town service
- A morning service from Western end of B9169 to take people to Dingwall and/or Muir of Ord to catch train
- Dingwall to Inverness from 6.30am to 8.30am and returning in the evening between 4 and 6pm

Cromarty

- 7.21am and 9.10am from Cromarty to Inverness
- 8.24am and 11.24am from Inverness to Cromarty
- Late night service Inverness to Cromarty – the 11:24 is too early
- A service between 6.30pm and 8pm Inverness to Cromarty

Alness

- Alness to business park for am start and pm finish
- Early morning, mid-morning, lunch times, mid-afternoon, early evening Alness to Dingwall

Cannich

- Cannich via Muir of Ord, Marybank, Dingwall Wednesdays Return

Black Isle

- Weekdays - all through and in the evenings between 8.30 - 10.30 pm Weekends - all through and in the evenings between 8.30 - 10.30 pm
- a service leaving Inverness for Fortrose in the evening around 10.00PM

Others

- Any additional service between Evanton and Inverness
- Improved evening service for 26
- Tomich 7:35, 8am (school bus), 10am (needed), 12:15, 6pm and returning bus at 10-11pm.
- Alcaig circa 09:30 Returning c 12:00

Are there specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should?

Table 3.9: based on 78 respondents

Response	Number
No	40
Yes	38

38 respondents indicated that there were specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should. 40 respondents indicated that there were not specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Dingwall

- Muir of Ord to Dingwall
 - Dingwall to Inverness via Marybank
 - Dingwall with connections to Strathpeffer and Muir of Ord
 - Dingwall to Raigmore Hospital direct
-

Culbokie

- Culbokie to Inverness College via city centre
- Culbokie to Dingwall
- Culbokie to Duncanston via Munloch, Fortrose and Rosemarkie across the Black Isle i.e. to reach services (doctors) in Munloch, and to Fortrose and Rosemarkie.
- Culbokie to Dingwall via Conon Bridge

Alness

- Bus services should go to Alness point Business Park as a means of dropping off and collecting Alness College and possible collection for Alness college students and staff
- Dingwall to Alness (and further into Easter Ross)

Fortrose

- Fortrose to Culbokie
- Fortrose to Raigmore
- Fortrose to Dingwall

Other

- Marybank to Strathpeffer
- Alness to Evanton and Dingwall
- Munloch, Ardross, Teanassie
- Cromarty to Alness and Cromarty to Strathpeffer
- Culbokie to Cromarty/ Fortrose/ Avoch
 - “Could the existing Inverness - Cromarty service be converted to a circular one around the Black Isle? Maybe connecting with services along the A9 to get to Inverness/ Dingwall?”
- Mounthigh to Muir of Ord, Beaul, Conon Bridge, Dingwall
- Inverness from Easter Kinkell.
- Muir of Ord to Inverness via Tore
- Strathpeffer to Contin

Are there particular times of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues/locations but should?

Table 3.10: Based on 70 respondents

Response	Number
No	32
Yes	38

38 respondents indicated that there are times of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues but should. 32 respondents indicated that there was not any particular time of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues/locations but should.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Times

- Not just first thing in the morning and after work
- Neither the school bus nor the service bus timetables allow for transport of pupils back

home after post school activities

- Later in evenings after 7
- Evenings are the most important but weekends need better services too
- Regular intervals 8am to 6pm

Dingwall

- Should be bus from Dingwall through Marybank to Inverness and Inverness to Dingwall Through Urray, Marybank
- Dingwall. Between 11am and 5pm
- A late bus on weekend nights (Friday/Saturday) from Inverness to Dingwall would be good, as the last is currently 11:05 on the route 27

Alness

- Alness – Dingwall; Dingwall - Alness
- Late night buses from Inverness to Easter Ross

Culbokie

- A bus from Culbokie to Inverness to link up with the 7:55 train to Central Belt
- Inverness to Culbokie between existing times of 1430 and 1740 - 3hrs 10 mins.
- More buses from Culbokie-Dingwall and Culbokie-Inverness. An earlier morning and later bus back from Inverness - Culbokie than 5.40pm.
- Evening to anywhere from Culbokie. Back to Culbokie from anywhere at night
- 4.30 Inverness to Culbokie allows students home from college instead of hanging around.

Fortrose

- Inverness - early morning Fortrose all day
- Rosemarkie to Inverness in morning between the 2 current buses e.g. depart Rosemarkie 08:15, avoid North Kessock, to Inverness. Arriving shortly pre 09:00
- Inverness to Fortrose around 10pm
- Too long gap between 0856 and 0928 from Fortrose to Inverness
- There are no buses between 6.30pm and 8pm from Inverness to Cromarty

Inverness

- Late night from Inverness to Conon via Beauly
- In general services to and from Inverness connecting with key train services
- From the Black Isle more option for a commuter bus to Inverness in the mornings and evenings is required. If someone works a standard day there is really only one option - miss the bus at either end or you are stuck.

Are there services that you/your household/your group use that connect with trains/buses/ferries?

Table 3.11: based on 77 respondents

Response	Number
No	38
Yes	39

39 respondents indicated that there are services that they use to connect with other buses, ferries or trains. 38 respondents indicated that they do not use bus services to connect with other trains,

buses or ferries.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Trains

- Train from Dingwall
- Trains to/ from Inverness, especially the East Coast ones.

Buses

- The Black Isle to bus station to catch coaches and trains
- Bus services from Alness to connect with Citylink to the south or train services
- Dingwall, the Cromarty bus does not always pull in on time to catch the number 27
- Buses to connect with Raigmore Hospital
- Bus to Inverness to connect with other areas of Inverness or to Dingwall, Beauly, Muir of Ord, Conon, or direct to Dingwall, occasionally on to Wick/Thurso

Bus routes

- Numbers 25 & 27
- 27 to bus station for train connections
- 26 to bus station
- 11 to airport
- 25 Inverness train station for Glasgow and Edinburgh
- Service 26.
- No 27 connecting with 5a, 11, 15 to Retail park

Locations

- Alness to Inverness
- Inverness, Tain, Scrabster
- North, south and west Scotland.
- Dingwall to Strathpeffer (doctors) and amenities.
- Fortrose to Inverness Bus and Railway Stations
- Conon Bridge
- Connect to Strathpeffer/Contin/ Beauly/Muir of Ord
- Bus connection to Strathpeffer/Muir of Ord/ Beauly for the 0755 south from Inverness to Edinburgh and Glasgow. There is no bus service connecting with the first train at 0650, could this be introduced?
- Tomich to Inverness, Inverness to Ullapool, Ullapool to Stornoway
- Culbokie to Inverness Railway Station.
- Dingwall to Inverness in order to get trains to Edinburgh/Glasgow
- Trains and buses south from Inverness.

Are there new developments in the area that need to be supported?

Table 3.12: based on 66 respondents

Response	Number
No	47
Yes	19

19 respondents indicated that there were new developments in the area that should be supported with bus services. 47 respondents indicated that there were not any new developments that would need to be supported

21 respondents provided comments about new developments in the area that need to be supported.

Culbokie

- Culbokie is going to be getting 100 new houses, most people work in Inverness so there is an opportunity to get more business and secure services if advertised properly and reliable
- A Black Isle circular or half the buses that go to Cromarty should go through Culbokie
- Extend service to new estate in Culbokie

Dingwall

- From Dingwall to UHI
- New estate past Tulloch Castle area, Dingwall

Black Isle

- Fortrose terminating buses should include the Chanonry Park development. Designated bus lay-by and shelter exist but are not served - would make good turning point, instead of bad manoeuvre on main road as at present.
- More reliability at being able to take bikes on buses (to encourage folk to cycle to where the bus is) along with secure bike parking near bus stops in Black Isle towns and villages.
- A 'round east Black Isle service' with an interchange at Tore would address many of the above concerns
- If the planned 50 houses are built in Rosemarkie, existing school transport provisions to Avoch Primary may be insufficient, and the bus stop will be in a dangerous location for the increased traffic at the Courthill Road junction
- New skate park roof and kids shall be visiting Muir of Ord from other towns but would like to bring a bike on the bus
- Service 27. Stagecoach

Is there anything that prevents you or discourages you from using the bus or dial-a-bus services in your area?

Table 3.13: based on 57 respondents

Response	Number	Disability
I cannot get to the bus stop	9	5
The vehicle is not easy for me to access e.g. because it has steps	6	4
The timetable does not fit in with my lifestyle	29	0

I have to wait too long for a return journey	26	3
Drivers are unhelpful	10	0

The two most common factors preventing/discouraging use of bus services are: the timetable does not fit my lifestyle and I have to wait too long for a return journey

What do you consider the impact may be on you/your household/your community if your service change suggestions were to be implemented?

Locations

- Can't get to work in Dingwall
- Far more convenient and I'd be able to attend GP appointments more easily. Would be able to continue living here on the Black Isle. Drivers on the dial-a-bus route are wonderful.
- People in North Kessock/ Munloch/ Avoch/ Fortrose/ Rosemarkie/ Cromarty and the surrounding areas would no longer be stranded in Inverness or at home between 8.30pm - 11.30 pm 7 days a week
- At the moment it's difficult to get to Munloch or Cromarty from Tore by bus without going into Inverness and out again, as there are no cross-island buses. If they all connected at Tore it would become a transport 'hub' and be easier for locals and visitors alike to explore the Black Isle.
- It would provide passengers and make it safer for people to get to work and college when using public transport as it is dangerous having to cross the A9 on foot. It would encourage more people to use public transport rather than private vehicles too.
- Would make life easier for Rosemarkie residents especially pensioners who need access to chemist, bank, post office which are all in Fortrose.
- It would reduce traffic on Kessock Bridge

General

- Access to medical services, retail outlets and to social events is a vital lifeline for people and the demand is set to grow inexorably.
- It would mean a much greater take up of using the bus service.
- The impact would be a service which runs on time and would be more reliable for work and appointments.
- Increased bus use
- Such a service would have much greater uptake
- Less stress as buses would turn up when they are supposed to and less time spent hanging about for buses which are late or don't turn up.
- It would make things easier for people within the community who totally rely on the bus services
- People would use public transport.
- It would relieve time pressures when shopping and going to the cinema and when going to the retail park
- Wouldn't be late for work or get stuck in town.
- Able to access more services, get to work on time and more easily to Dingwall for social meetings and appointments as well as shopping.
- I think it would be more detrimental, old and young in our community rely on public

transport services and I don't see that they can be cut back any further.

- It would be more practical to use the bus for shopping and appointments
- Would maybe make the service more accessible
- Less use of car. Use bus for commuting
- Many more residents would use the bus, and I would only have to cross the road once.

Is there any activity that you are prevented from doing, or service you cannot access because of a lack of transport

Table 3.14: Based on 47 responses

Response	Number	Disability
Healthcare appointments	17	5
Commuting / getting to work	17	3
Sports clubs / Exercise classes / Gym	14	1
Swimming pool	9	0
Going to the theatre or cinema	22	1
After school activities	6	0
Visiting friends or family	18	3
Shopping	23	3
Going out for a meal or a drink	21	2
Educational training / classes	14	2

The most common activities that respondents are prevented from doing include:

- Shopping
- Going to the cinema or theatre
- Going out for a meal or drink

Local questions

How would people be affected if there was no longer an evening bus service between Muir of Ord and Dingwall?

- It would mean that Dingwall and Muir of Ord passengers would have to go to Inverness to get a connection back to Dingwall
 - Difficult for people who are working an evening shift. Evening classes etc.
 - Struggle to access public services in Dingwall and to fulfil work.
 - Pupils at the academy would be unable to take part in organised after school activities and clubs or meet friends after school and then bus home.
 - At least they have the option of using the train. There is no evening bus between Muir of Ord and Dingwall at the moment.
 - It would be good if this service was transferred to Culbokie
-

There is a dial-a-bus in the Black Isle for journeys to Dingwall. Would this be better on a fixed route? If so, what route and timetable would you suggest?

- **Fixed route/times:** Mid-morning to late afternoon - for hospital visits and shopping. The dial-a-bus is too confusing for most people a fixed route would be better. A circular route around the Black Isle, connecting with services along the A9 would be a huge improvement. A cross island route from Muir of Ord to Cromarty via Tore, Munlochy and Fortrose. Include Mounthigh on the route as a fixed part of the journey. It could start from Munlochy and go via Fortrose, Rosemarkie, Cromarty, Jemimaville, call at Mounthigh, Balblair, Cullicudden, Culbo, Culbokie, etc. adding in any other diversions frequently used or with relevant community numbers. A regular, reliable bus between Fortrose and Dingwall would be very useful.
- **Dial-a-bus:** Flexible routing is better as the Black Isle has many people living remotely from bus stops. Current dial-a-bus is not ideal because of the operator and the vehicle used. Dial-a-bus most convenient with better booking facility.
- **Don't know:** Wider consultation would be needed. At the moment it is not satisfactory. Didn't know there was a dial-a-bus, more info/publicity needed.

What are the main journey purposes between Alness, Evanton and Dingwall? How long would people want to spend in Dingwall?

Services

- Alness - Dingwall 2-3 hours Shopping, Opticians , Friends
- Attending college at Alness Point Business Park
- Doctors - Dingwall Tesco supermarket – Dingwall. Time in Dingwall - max. 2 hours.
- Work - Tesco in particular do not give staff a full working day so the current times are unsuitable.
- Elderly people need to get to healthcare appointments, shopping etc. and don't want to spend all day in Dingwall

Does the Balintore – Tain bus meet the needs of the community? Are the connections at Tain satisfactory?

Yes – 1

Another – the bus from the seaboard villages to Tain is good but I do not travel further by bus

No - 3

2 comments included -

- No as students from Balintore that attend Alness College have to get a taxi to Tain from Balintore due to the serious lack of transport available from the seaboard villages
- No, my granddaughter uses these buses and the bus back from college often is late for the connection in Tain. It is already a long day and not having proper bus services with connections built in causes major problems.

Public Consultation Meeting Feedback

Culbokie– 23/11/2015

Key points

- Commuter services and timetable changes
- Afternoon gap
- Connections

Current Services

Communication –

- Issues such as timetable changes and website accessibility were raised
- A comment was made that for effective bus services, buses must be on time and that with over a third of the Black Isle being aged there is a clear need for daytime provision
- It was acknowledged that area booklets had been tried in the past yet did not get off the ground
- A chicken-and-egg regarding publicity and encouraging use vs. reducing current services etc. with relative lack of publicity and encouraging usage

Accessibility –

- Comments also surrounded the lack of information and accessibility of the buses – e.g. lay-bys etc.

Specific services –

- Gaps during the day between various Black Isle points and between Black Isle venues and Dingwall. Could a fixed term contract sacrifice be made to pay for more flexibility from community transport?
- Mid-afternoon gap – 3 hours – a local problem. Impacts on locals and tourists – any community transport solution possible? Can public use the home-to-school service – yes, if it registered as a public service.
- The 25 service (with UHI link) used to leave at 0745 and now leaves at 0803. This later start has a knock-on effect for commuters and workplaces in Inverness
- Another comment regarded why 2 buses effectively follow each other – There is a service which leaves Invergordon at 0700 which arrives at Duncanston at 0748, with another reaching Culbokie at 0802, and which arrive into Inverness at 0825 and 0826.
- Couple of instances of services not operating properly: Service 21, Dingwall-Culbokie-Dingwall on Tuesday/Thursday – poor timings; and Service 25A, bus took off without picking up passenger, unhappy.
- Schoolcroft, Culbokie – time only states the outward journey but not when the return journey takes place.
- Dial-a-bus users tended to be between Culbokie – Cromarty. Occasional complaint about how its timing works.

Future Services

- Information improvements
- Timing improvements/ consistency
- Issues of prams on buses
- Parents seem more fearful than before – not allowing their children on public buses as much
- Locations – new developments etc. in areas such as North Kessock and Fortrose – bus stops are there but there are no services!
- Key issues of communication and information

- Strothers Lane - Stance confusion, station co-ordinator would be helpful. Few seats for those waiting in the station
- Daytime travellers e.g. Pensioners less well-served by services. Commuters quite well-served. Timetable gaps a problem.
- Instead of focussing on reductions in budgets etc., create more income via encouraging bus usage
- Encouraging tourist usage may also plug some of the gaps in service and income from locals
- The 26, 22, and 25 services were discussed – most used services on the Black Isle
- Disability and accessibility equality legislation is now enacted and to be enforced.
- A need to reach Dingwall from Culbokie for the doctors and Inverness for Raigmore
- Park and Ride potential. Used to be a church at Redcastle with a car-park and arrangement.
- Comments also regarded informing and making aware of –
 - School bus from Culbokie to Fortrose
 - Service bus to Dingwall
 - Fare differences in the same services
- A more general comment regarded most of the public not being aware of how the service works – a need to make the public aware of the Council's role as intermediary. Public needs to know how the system works – Council needs to make an effort to tell them how to raise issues.
- Ferintosh Community Council noted that they now have a more effective direct relationship with Stagecoach and their representative Steve Walker as compared to that via Highland Council.
- Fortrose to Inverness – connection now required for school-children etc. – 26 service
- 26 bus leaves at 18.26, train gets in at 18.20 from Central Belt – a bigger buffer would be welcome
- Links to trains going to and from Central Belt – could do with better integration e.g. train 9.40 am, bus arrives 8.30 am or train 7.55 am, 8.45, bus needs to meet better. Need better integration with rail and ferries to get increased use of public transport. For example, link to the sleeper and when trains from Stirling/Perth arrive in the evening there is only a short window of a few minutes before the buses leave (16 and 22).
- Main gap – commuting in daytime, not workers, to Dingwall and Inverness to give sufficient times at these locations would be helpful. E.g. 2.30 – 5.40 pm is a big gap.
- Black Isle population is quite elderly – travel during the day – will need bus provision as the numbers of elderly increase – buses running to time are vital for elderly passengers.
- Big housing plans for Evanton, and Culbokie (c. 120 houses) – long-term development
- Teenagers – lack of public bus services for north/south link on Black Isle – none exists
- The bus back to Culbokie from Inverness leaves at 1740. There is also a bus which leaves Raigmore at 1805 and is a request service, which works although there is a perception that there is a lack of knowledge about this service.
- Attending societies – Inverness and Dingwall
 - 6.20 from Culbokie
 - 8.25 from Inverness – but may be leaving too early in evening for those at events

Other

- A query as to how the Council will meet its Climate Change Reduction targets if it cuts public transport

Milton Public Meeting 25/11/15

Current Services

- Dingwall-Alness for work is a problem aspect.
- Dingwall hospital visiting time is 2-4pm; buses don't arrive until 2.30pm.
- Difficult to get to Ross County matches on a Saturday.
- Buses going through Milton during the day empty, but at commuting times there is a deficit – can times be changed.
- No Nigg bus service
- Dial-a-bus around Nigg – practice of having to dial before 6pm the day before is restrictive. Will need a bus link to get ferry passengers to village from terminal – perhaps easing of dial-a-bus to get ferry passengers to Tain? Mix/match timetable/flexible options?
- Kings Route, Inverness to Tain via Cromarty Ferry (part of John O'Groats to Land's End) – but no foot passengers during summer as there is no linking transport – a loss to the area.
- Nigg school bus is available to the public.
- Lack of bus stops with timetables.
- Tain Health Centre – served by commercial buses but there is no shelter or timetables – could Highland Council consider providing a shelter and arranging timetables and for these to go to the health centre too?
- Tain Tennis Club – bus stop sign on lamppost, no shelter – shelter possible?
- Black Isle – Dingwall – Cromarty
 - Hospital appointments - but times are restrictive – small window to attend
- To get to Strathpeffer from Shandwick – you have to go to Inverness then Dingwall – the journey takes all day
- When liners come into Invergordon – hard for locals to get on bus to get to Inverness for work or even to get home from work from Inverness to Invergordon.
 - Can there be extra commercial service – there seems to be opportunity
- People need to get to/from work
 - Locals couldn't take up employment at Nigg for instance. Apprentices get paid £2.65 p/h – not enough to run a car or take a taxi
- Why don't buses go into Asda directly
- No toilets on buses to Inverness – affects people with poor mental health – may also be a problem with the elderly
- Hard to get on service with steps
- Dial-a-bus if you don't phone up before 6pm the day before you can't access the service

Future Services

- There is a bus service deficit between Milton-Dingwall. Residents can't travel to Dingwall to take up job opportunities in Dingwall (for example for shifts at the fish factory and at Tesco), often for early starts (8am in retail), nor can they get to Inverness on time for 9am start. Inverness and Dingwall are also important work destinations – call centres, fish factories – starting 8am, finishing 5-6pm. often low paid jobs so can't afford a car to use for work commuting.
- Alness-Evanton-Dingwall: lot of travel north for work e.g. to Drummie from Dingwall – possible to introduce more commuter services for fare-paying passengers?
- Hospital and shopping links are important too.
- Ease dial-a-bus to:
 - Serve Invergordon, its hospital and train station
 - Serve Alness for shopping and train services
 - Serve Portmahomack, particularly in summertime

- Run a 20 mile radius
- Permit on-the-day bookings
- Linking buses to trains
- Dial-a-bus for Fearn to Barbaraville – is this possible

Other

- There is a Nigg ferry point information project trying to be established – aim is to help people source transport for passengers arriving off ferry. Possibly 17-20,000 ferry passengers between Easter and October.
- Lack of public transport
- Health centre appointments – no flexibility in the service
- Elderly people have no access to services
- Doesn't work with the local ferry service
- Dingwall to Milton route a problem
- Pressure employers to help support transport
- No service between Dingwall and Alness – need a service to access the hospital especially that fits around visiting time (2 -4 pm)
- Bus from Milton to Dingwall – 1.5 hour wait in Alness
- 25x route – no one on the bus during the day
- How can we pressure Stagecoach to change their services
- Wheelchair accessible buses
- If you are living in rural communities you have to expect a rural bus service
- People working 12 hour shifts
- The similar route they have needs things to help with tourist trade
- Not enough bus stops with timetables – a major barrier in a rural area

Conon Bridge -12/11/15

Key points

- Going through rather than stopping often
- Conon Bridge rail link relationship
- Development at Braes of Conon
- Aging population

Current Services

- Rail service stopping at Conon has helped - although trains sometimes speed by to avoid 'train delay minutes'. The last train on Saturday comes circa midnight. The early morning service is popular. A gap-filler in some way.
- Last bus into Dingwall – 12.10 at night.
- So some duplication on part of route – a cost saving if bus stopped at Kiltarlity with train picking up slack from Beaully onwards to Dingwall.
- Passenger figures can be cut to a degree if driver forgets to press the button to record a passenger getting on.
- Peak services in the morning going to Inverness 7.30 – 9am often go past the stops because buses are full. Infrequent users can be caught out - not sure as to the occurrence of this. Issues in capturing passenger data on commercial services too. Half-hourly service.
- Occasions on which services don't come in to Conon- the speculation is that if services are full or running late then they bypass Conon.
- Demographic of Conon is older, so single decker, lower steps, or lift out steps are helpful – a part of Equality Act.
- Paper timetables are a problem – new timetable went live on 17/08/15 – but timetables

didn't become available until mid-September.

- Conon Community Council has a link to Stagecoach's website, and also has the Stagecoach complaints number listed.

Future Services

- Tulloch development at Braes of Conon – big housing development – 150 houses when finished – about a third through the development currently.
- The HPG development down by the Conon Hotel is seeking planning permission for 70 residential and a couple of commercial units.
- Linking services – linking to Inverness is important for onward travel, with buses/trains to Glasgow/Edinburgh/Aberdeen and the Inverness Airport service.

Potential for reductions

- Query of a service to run from Dingwall –Conon – UHI Campus
 - Yes there will be such a service, the exact route is not known yet
 - At least one morning service is likely

Specific routes

- Option 1 – Muir of Ord – Dingwall evening service –
- The alternative of the train - timing dependent- would impact here

Other

- Keep reasonable timings on Conon – Dingwall – Alness service especially for people going to work at the Alness call centre. Bus times may be discordant in relation to call centre shifts.
- Muir of Ord- Dingwall evening service – dependent on train alternatives and an idea of numbers.

Section 4 - Badenoch and Strathspey

Overview

There were two public meetings held in the Badenoch and Strathspey area. These meetings took place in Aviemore.

Attendees included local transport providers, Community Council representatives and local residents.

In addition there was a public questionnaire which asked questions to attain views on:

- The current bus service
- Barriers the public and communities face when using bus services
- What type of bus services will be important in the future
- What opportunities are there for altering the current networks

Table 4.1: Based on 18 respondents

Responses	Number
As a member of the public	15
As a community group representative	1
As a Community Council representative	2
As a commercial passenger transport company	0
As a community transport organisation	0
As a Highland Council Ward Councillor	0

18 people from the Badenoch and Strathspey area responded to the questionnaire. These responses included responses from members of the public, community group representatives and community council representatives.

15 respondents to the consultation were members of the public. There were responses from 1 community group and 2 community councils.

Of those responding to the questionnaire:-:-

- 83% of respondents use public bus or dial-a-bus transport, 23% of these respondents highlighted they use it almost every day
- 39% of respondents highlighted they were retired
- 76 % of respondents are female
- 42% of respondents are over 75
- 23% of respondents indicated that they consider themselves to have a disability

Emerging issues

Current use of service

The main uses of the current services were for: accessing leisure activities, shopping and accessing social activities. 100% of the respondents felt that all of the current services were needed. There was a feeling that the bus services are key to being able to access connections across the area.

Concern about reduction or withdrawal of a service

There were concerns raised about how the reduction of services would impact people living in the area and any reduction would have an impact on tourism in the area.

Accessibility

There was a feeling that the current services did not meet the needs of people who live with disabilities. Respondents noted that having transport that could accommodate disabled people would be beneficial.

Future service needs

Respondents noted that the planned Aviemore hospital would require a bus service that serviced the whole area.

The needs of the community

Respondents highlighted that current services did not meet the needs of elderly people, young people and commuters.

Limitations of services

It was noted that bus services were not accessible to all and that current provision was not suitable for many as timetables and long waiting times for return journeys disenfranchised many residents.

Do you/anyone in your household use home-to-school transport as an entitled pupil?

Table 4.2: Based on 17 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Yes	3	18
No	11	64
Not applicable	3	18

64% of the respondents indicated that their household does not use home to school transport. 18% of respondents indicated that someone in their household did use home to school transport and 18% of respondents said that the question was not applicable to them.

Do you/your household/your group use other types of public bus or dial-a-bus transport?

Table 4.3: based on 18 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Yes	15	83
No	1	5
Not applicable	2	11

83% of respondents indicated that they use public bus or dial-a-bus transport. 5% indicated that they did not use public bus or dial-a-bus transport and 11% indicated that the question was not applicable.

What do you/your household/your group use this service/these services for?

Table 4.4: based on 18 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Work	3	16
School	2	11
Further / Higher Education	1	5
Leisure activities e.g. sports clubs, swimming pool	8	44
Social activities e.g. meeting with friends or family	11	61
Shopping	11	61
To attend medical appointments	5	27
Onward connections (train/bus/ferry)	5	27
Not applicable – do not use services	0	0

From the 18 respondents who answered the question “What do you/your household/your group use this service/these services for” the most common answers in Badenoch and Strathspey were social activities (61%), shopping (61%) and leisure activities (44%).

Are there any services that run in your area that you feel are not needed?

Table 4.5: based on 16 respondents

Responses	Number
No	16
Yes	0

100% of respondents who answered this question stated that all current bus services are needed .

Are there any services that run in your area that would be good to keep but could be run better with some minor changes?

Table:4.6 based on 16 respondents

Response	Number
No	8
Yes	8

8 out of the 16 respondents indicated that current services would not run better with minor changes.

8 respondents indicated that there were services in their area that could run better with some minor changes.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Grantown: A circular bus from Grantown to Aviemore to have a better regular service. Later buses are needed on this route for workers - this would also help the recruitment crisis in certain sectors. The current bus contracts should be reviewed. More disabled accessible transport is needed.

Aviemore : 33, 34, 34X more consistent returns from Inverness and Aviemore. More regular buses to Inverness, and later in the evening return to Badenoch and Strathspey. Have shuttle buses to and from Aviemore, Aviemore being the main terminal so there are more direct buses from Aviemore to Inverness as opposed to Aviemore residents having to pay two separate fares to come back on Citylink buses.

Other : School buses could be used as a public service and a charge made for its use, thus contributing a small income. Fuel is used returning the bus from Kingussie High School to the depot in Aviemore and it is empty. A service user highlighted the reduction caused by the removal of the M91 service through Kincaig to Dalwhinnie. Running a smaller bus over Drumochter to meet the M9a at Blair Atholl makes sense.

Respondents were asked to consider what the impact may be on them/their household/or community if the service changes they had suggested to the previous questions were to be implemented

A number of comments highlighted general negative impacts on the reduction of services.

Impacts regarding suggestions about service changes have been categorised and summarised below:

Reliable service: A respondent noted that if timetabling was more realistic e.g. more time for journeys then services would be more reliable.

Accessibility: A respondent noted that disabled people would be able to use the services more and lead fuller lives

Opportunities: A respondent noted that younger people would have better opportunities to attend activities in Inverness after school if there were better services in the evening.

Are there specific venues/locations that bus services in your area should continue to reach?

Table 4.7: Based on 17 responses

Response	Number
No	2
Yes	15

15 of the respondents indicated that there were specific venues/locations that bus services in their area should continue to reach.

2 respondents indicated that there were not specific venues/locations that bus services in their area should continue to reach.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Aviemore: Aviemore Health Centre, Tesco Supermarket, Co-op Supermarket, proposed community hospital. A bus service Grantown-on-Spey to Aberlour with connections to Elgin was suspended in 2014. This was a vital service for the isolated individuals along the route. Also to travellers direct to Aberlour and onwards to Elgin. The Speyside Way is close to this route with potential pick-up/ drop off points for walkers. Likewise for visitors to Strathspey thus promoting a tourism service.

Kingussie - Newtonmore: the recent M91 service provided a good service to Badenoch users.

Inverness: For city, shopping, airport and further travel. Connection to Ft. William, Skye, Orkneys and further afield to England and Glasgow etc. Inverness at a reasonable time and Perth, for city shopping, airport and further travel.

Are there particular times of the day when services are needed?

Table 4.8: based on 15 responses

Response	Number
No	1
Yes	14

14 respondents indicated that there were particular times of the day that services are needed in their local area. 1 respondent indicated that there were no particular times of the day where services are needed.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

- To/from Aviemore - Grantown early morning and around 5.00 pm (as now) later too.
To/from Inverness - Grantown. Early morning, mid-day and approx. 5.30 pm (as now) and the later one (now Friday/Sat) at around 20.30 hr to connect from Glasgow, northern places and further afield. These need to be daily late, not just Friday and Saturday.
- For a service to be used regularly it needs to offer outward and inward services across the day so that users can have say two hours to conduct their affairs and be able to return home within the first or last five hours of the working day (which also allows for all day away and return).
- The school bus from Grantown to Nethy Bridge on a Friday should run earlier, leaving Grantown when the school finishes at 1.20pm. Current other times to remain as they are.
- Aviemore to Inverness in the evening.
- Bus times that promotes independence i.e. to meet and return home using the excellent Gold Bus to Glasgow. Evening visits to the new hospital, visits to the Aviemore Cinema, library, and sports facilities.

Are there specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should?

Table 4.9 based on 13 respondents

Response	Number
No	5
Yes	8

8 respondents indicated that there were specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should. 5 respondents indicated that there were not specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Inverness: Service to Inverness UHI is poor from Grantown and Aviemore. General service in area as a whole is poor.

East: Forres and Nairn from Grantown; Ballater from Grantown. A bus once supplied Speyside - Fort William. The only public connection currently is via Perth or Inverness. A daily bus service reinstated possibly an extension of the Aviemore (32) Newtonmore service to take in Laggan to F.W. return. The 'Heather Hopper' service once ran between Speyside and Deeside. A route popular with walkers, sightseers and locals. This should be reinstated. A direct bus from Grantown to Cairngorm, via Nethybridge.

South: Dalwhinnie and Laggan

Are there particular times of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues/locations but should?

Table 4.10 : Based on 14 respondents

Response	Number
No	3
Yes	11

11 respondents indicated that there are times of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues but should. 3 respondents indicated that there was not any particular time of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues/locations but should.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Morning : Southbound services don't start early enough in Newtonmore

Evening: Later evening buses to accommodate trains coming and going from the area. There are no buses to and from Badenoch & Strathspey and Inverness in the evening.

Weekends: Saturdays and Sundays Poor morning connections from Grantown to Aviemore and Cairngorms - be as the Monday-Friday services. The direct bus from Grantown to Cairngorm via Nethy Bridge should run at least on Saturdays and Sundays in the winter in time to get kids to the ski

clubs and possibly staff to work. Arriving at Cairngorm at 8.30am. The return service should be at the end of the day leaving Cairngorm between 4.30pm-5.00pm.

Are there services that you/your household/your group use that connect with trains/buses/ferries?

Table 4.11: based on 14 respondents

Response	Number
No	8
Yes	6

8 respondents indicated that there are services that they use to connect with other buses, ferries or trains. 6 respondents indicated that they do not use bus services to connect with other trains, buses or ferries.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Inverness: Flights from Inverness and back - no connecting bus after 5.30pm. Aviemore/Inverness to Oban, Orkneys, Lake District (train and bus), Glasgow, Edinburgh, Skye and further south including overnight to London (usually from Aviemore by local bus from Grantown)

South: Train services south from Aviemore. 09:14 to Glasgow. And return service to get you back to your village/ area of B& S

Are there new developments in the area that need to be supported?

Table 4.12: based on 11 respondents

Response	Number
No	7
Yes	4

4 respondents indicated that there were new developments in the area that should be supported with bus services. 7 respondents indicated that there were not any new developments that would need to be supported

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

- When new development of hospital and more housing is finished
 - Proper links with Inverness College, not having to into town and get a bus back out, or walk from the hospital.
 - Links with the Citylink A9 service if it will by-pass Badenoch
-

Is there anything that prevents you or discourages you from using the bus or dial-a-bus services in your area?

Table 4.13 based on 12 respondents

Response	Number	Disability
I cannot get to the bus stop	1	0
The vehicle is not easy for me to access e.g. because it has steps	3	1
The timetable does not fit in with my lifestyle	8	0
I have to wait too long for a return journey	9	1
Drivers are unhelpful	2	2

The most common barriers that respondents indicated prevents or discouraged them from using the bus service were:

- The timetable does not fit in with my lifestyle
- I have to wait too long for a return journey

Is there any activity that you are prevented from doing, or service you cannot access because of a lack of transport

Table 4.14: Based on 14 responses

Response	Number	Disability
Healthcare appointments	5	2
Commuting / getting to work	5	2
Sports clubs / Exercise classes / Gym	4	1
Swimming pool	2	1
Going to the theatre or cinema	7	1
After school activities	3	1
Visiting friends or family	6	2
Shopping	3	1
Going out for a meal or a drink	8	1
Educational training / classes	4	1

The activities that respondents highlighted that they are prevented from doing because of lack of transport are: “going out for a meal or a drink”, “going to the theatre or cinema” and “visiting friends and families”.

Local questions

Are the school bus and dial-a-bus adequate for the Cromdale / Advie / Tormore area, or is another scheduled bus needed? If so, at what times and for what journey purposes?

- Yes
- These need to be just after the end of the school day so children do not miss out on valuable schooling.

Does the Aviemore – Cairngorm bus need to be hourly throughout the year? If not, what savings would you suggest?

- It is needed but with better morning connection from Grantown (as it used to be) and more at week-end including early on Saturdays. Also better on Sundays and schooldays.
- In summer months it should be extended to late evening services to pick up walkers and campers/ SYHA users to/ from the Aviemore facilities, also to connect with long-distance bus/train services North and South and to Grantown.
- In the winter great service but don't think need it in the summer every hour, but for elderly we do need a regular local bus from Dalfaber to village.
- Less Aviemore buses in the late morning, early afternoon but other services need to be offered direct e.g. from Grantown via Nethy Bridge. Very few people are taking the bus to Aviemore then waiting, then changing to get the Cairngorm bus.

How useful is the two-hourly Newtonmore – Carrbridge bus (with connections for Inverness)? Are there changes which would make it more suitable for your needs

- Very useful to members of the Kingussie community wishing to visit Aviemore or Carrbridge.
- Extremely useful, it is a connecting bus from Inverness to Aviemore.
- Not convenient for anyone.
- Good service but a bit long for elderly people to sit.
- Attention has been drawn to the need for an integrated timetable of provisions which actually work - current posted service schedules do not show all services provided.

How would people be affected if the Grantown – Aviemore – Newtonmore evening bus (which runs on Fridays and Saturdays only) was withdrawn?

- Getting home to Newtonmore would be difficult or impossible.
- This service should be extended to an everyday service to connect with the late arrivals of the long-distance services in Aviemore from Glasgow/Edinburgh.

Public Consultation Meeting Feedback

Aviemore public transport consultation public meeting notes –afternoon and evening

Key points

- Balance of service for tourists and locals
 - Connections across area
 - Key development of Aviemore Community Hospital
-

Current Services

Tourism -

- Acknowledgement that its popular area for tourists
- A need for balancing service between tourists and locals given the significant income that tourists bring.
- Festive season buses to, and developments at Cairngorm

Information

- Information issue – timetables, passenger numbers
- Argyll has a coloured calendar on their bus stops – worth considering?

Timing

- Regularity key
- Some big gaps later in the afternoon, undermines the integrity of the service (relates to school transport)
- Sunday buses are very busy – busiest day

Specific services

- Aviemore – Nethy Bridge - insane gaps in service provision even at periods of 'natural' outflow from Aviemore to smaller communities.
- Carrbridge – could do with changing timetable to ensure connections are met.

Service providers

- Badenoch and Strathspey Community Transport Group could help with taking people to the hub areas (need to book in advance, not spur of moment) – it is available 7 days a week. It is a service they are 'allowed' to provide. The reach of Badenoch and Strathspey Community Transport Group is area-wide. But it is the regular commitment that Badenoch and Strathspey Community Transport Group could not accommodate e.g. work commitments - Is there a case for funding full-time drivers at Badenoch and Strathspey Community Transport Group?
- Lack of a taxi service – therefore if connections are missed then there is no alternative

Future services

Usage

- Supply-demand link. Service provision should be demand-led – whilst there is low usage there is a high level of need
- Cost implications – if a local bus joins up with a second, a concern that this will be more expensive for an individual

Connections

- Real concern about feeder buses – location issues
- Train service increase possible soon – connections to Aviemore make these more attractive.
- Train connections are important – bus services should aim to dovetail. A need to look at this particularly in Carrbridge and Newtonmore
- Linking to railway timetable would be good – a problem especially in Kingussie (5 minutes from main road) and Newtonmore (10 minutes from main road) and Carrbridge (1/2 mile from main road) – signage and timings of these links would be good
- Not able to buy same types of rail book tickets – an Abellio issue
- Reliability of sleeper train for commuting purposes (but normally a replacement bus if late)
- Implications for buses leaving Aviemore to get to Inverness at same time as dropped services
- Community car scheme could maybe assist with Citylink issue – car schemes links – good options and opportunities – providing transport flexibly

Other providers

- A need to look at commercial services, contracts and train all in the round – scope for integration and integration of services
-

-
- HITRANS – Integration focus – should examine southern Badenoch and Strathspey to determine potential solutions.
 - If Stagecoach are withdrawing then contracts need to take to take this into account

Tourism

- Capacity for bikes? Especially for tourists
- Community bus – will go to Wildlife Park (Kincaig) and Highland Folk Museum (Newtonmore), so are taking some tourists – mainly those with mobility issues used Newtonmore and Aviemore

Specific services

Grantown-on-Spey

- Inverness would be a good route to have a kneeling bus on
- Some would like a direct link to Elgin but would that mean losing an Inverness service?
- Bus stop in Grantown-on-Spey Square – electronic/real-time – it is really good
- Grantown – Tormore – how well is this used?
- On a Wednesday there is a service provided by Community Transport going through to Grantown around lunchtime – with this there is perhaps the potential to reduce another service.

Carrbridge

- Change in Carrbridge for Inverness – connection often leaves, therefore leaving people missing the connection => a concern about Citylink proposals
- 0924 32 connection to Carrbridge

Aviemore

- Grantown and Kingussie are typical destinations for 9am so Aviemore suffers.
- Need a service that will pick-up and drop-off at hospital – to help get people back to their areas (hospital linked)
- Knowing the need and working out how to deliver - need to await the service profile and daily operational hours before transport to the new hospital can be considered in detail.
- Will need to ensure transport to the new hospital is appropriate – could the NHS vehicle at Grant House or the school minibus operated by BASMA contribute
- May need two timetables: one pre, one post-hospital

Kingussie

- Planning permission for 300 new houses. A lot of development within the area in general.
 - Mini-buses – running Kingussie-Dalwhinnie – therefore might be a gap from Aviemore-Kingussie
 - Kingussie to Inverness is too long at 1 hr 40 mins
 - Booking service on Citylink website not permitting bookings e.g. Kingussie – Perth 27/11. Only one service, the new links not yet required there; Parks of Hamilton website does not list Kingussie
 - Implications of Citylink changes – Kincaig, Kingussie, Newtonmore, and Dalwhinnie need to be taken into account.
 - Gaps may occur: could this be local operators' opportunity?
 - Minibus replacements to House of Bruar – may deter use, or numbers kill off service altogether – Citylink via local operators. Maybe a bigger bus.
 - Laggan and Dalwhinnie – Very poorly served – covered by car scheme but very limited take-up. Same requests for Badenoch and Strathspey Community Transport Group – S22 Tuesday and Thursday
-

Other

Main concerns –

- When are the buses, and ability to book. Timetable lay-outs are complicated – makes it difficult to travel. Need to be up-to-date too. Affects the elderly and those with poor vision etc. e.g. no. 32 service – still running but timetable not published
- Need to enable and encourage people to use buses - need for accessible buses, combatting isolation, bus shelter provision (e.g. none in Kingussie outside Duke of Gordon hotel)
- Youngsters needing to socialise at weekend evenings in Inverness – buses leave Inverness quite early to return to Aviemore. Young people being disenfranchised. In fact, this affects all who wish to go out to social facilities, return services need to be later. Dingwall and Tain etc. – all have late night services. Only way to go to Inverness in the evening is by car. Something to explore.

Usage –

- Look at usage statistics – examine where interaction with Badenoch and Strathspey CTC (Cyclists' Touring Club)
- Kingussie school buses – could be used for public (return routes especially) – given problems with Citylink, could potentially help create efficiencies
- The disadvantage for a car scheme is that it can't be regular, e.g. for a work placement
- Look for school transport cost reductions - but difficult as it is not low cost
- Concerns if smaller bus is full then gives those with learning disabilities no way to get home

Timings

- Look at times of buses – can't leave Carrbridge to get to Aviemore for 9am
- Not using public transport as not the facility
- Same for Inverness route – commuting
- Is a challenge – e.g. Boat of Garten 1hr 40mins to Inverness

Routes

- Buses to Raigmore direct, rather than into city centre. Signs at Inverness bus station to direct people to go to Falcon Square for bus to Raigmore
-

Section 5 – Eilean a' Cheo

Overview

There were 2 public meetings held on Skye. These meetings took place in Portree and Broadford.

Attendees included local transport providers, representatives from a community transport company, a member of the local access panel, community council representative, local residents and Highland Council members.

In addition there was a public questionnaire which asked questions to attain views on:

- The current bus service
- Barriers the public and communities face when using bus services
- What type of bus services will be important in the future
- What opportunities are there for altering the current networks

Table 5.1: Based on 25 respondents

Responses	Number	%
As a member of the public	23	92
As a community group representative	0	0
As a Community Council representative	1	4
As a commercial passenger transport company	0	0
As a community transport organisation	0	0
As a Highland Council Ward Councillor	1	4

25 people from the Skye area responded to the questionnaire. These responses included responses from members of the public, community council representative and a Highland Council Ward Councillor.

23 responses to the consultation survey were made by members of the public. There was 1 response from a community council representative and 1 response from a Highland Council Ward Councillor

Of those responding to the questionnaire :

- 75% of respondents use public bus or dial-a-bus transport
- 41% of respondents were over 75
- 77% of respondents were female
- 23% respondents indicated that they consider themselves to have a disability

Emerging issues

Current use of services

Respondents highlighted that the bus service in the Skye area was crucial to connect with other methods of transport. It was also noted that many living in the area relied on bus services to do their shopping. It was noted that it is not widely known that the public can use school transport.

Improvement to the current service

There was general concern about the scope of the improvements that can be made to current services. In both the consultation exercise and survey there was a number of respondents who noted service changes which could lead to an improvement to the current service. In particular respondents noted that there was duplication in some school transport and there was a feeling that dial-a-bus services were not fully utilised. It was noted that many use school transport and outwith term time when the transport is not running it leaves a lot of residents isolated.

Accessibility

Accessibility has been highlighted as an issue in Skye. There are a number of issues with an aging population and what pressure this may put on a bus service in the future.

Barriers

There was a consensus that barriers to people using the service included: reliability of the service, having access to timetable information and accessing rural bus stops. The frequency of the bus service was seen as a key barrier to others using the service.

Future service needs

It has been highlighted by a number of respondents that the closure of Portree Hospital and the opening of Broadford Hospital would change the needs of the community in the future. The changing needs of the community were highlighted as a key concern. Accessing outpatient services at hospitals was specifically highlighted by a number of respondents.

Do you/anyone in your household use home-to-school transport as an entitled pupil?

Table 5.2 Based on 24 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Yes	3	12
No	19	80
Not applicable	2	8

80% of the respondents indicated that their household does not use home to school transport. 12% of respondents indicated that someone in their household did use home to school transport and 8% of respondents said that the question was not applicable to them.

Do you/your household/your group use other types of public bus or dial-a-bus transport?

Table 5.3: based on 24 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Yes	18	75
No	6	25
Not applicable	0	0

75% of respondents indicated that they use public bus or dial-a-bus transport. 25% indicated that they did not use public bus or dial-a-bus transport.

What do you/your household/your group use this service / these services for?

Table 5.4: based on 22 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Work	4	18
School	3	13
Further / Higher Education	4	18
Leisure activities e.g. sports clubs, swimming pool	4	18
Social activities e.g. meeting with friends or family	6	27
Shopping	12	54
To attend medical appointments	5	22
Onward connections (train/bus/ferry)	14	63
Not applicable – do not use services	0	0

From the 22 respondents to the question “What do you/your household/ your group use this service for” the most common use of these services were for onward connections (63%), shopping (54%), and social activities (27%)

Are there any services that run in your area that you feel are not needed?

Table 5.5: based on 25 respondents

Responses	Number
No	22
Yes	3

22 respondents indicated that all services in their area were necessary. 3 respondents highlighted that there were services in their area that were unnecessary.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

- Was the dial-a-bus used
- That there were two school buses between 8:20 and 8:30 that are under utilised
- The Dunvegan to Portree service on a Tuesday, via the Hill Road is poorly used because it is too late to use for getting to work and too early returning

Are there any services that run in your area that would be good to keep but could be run better with some minor changes?

Table: 5.6 based on 24 respondents

Response	Number
No	15
Yes	9

15 out of the 24 respondents indicated that current services would not run better with minor changes.

9 respondents indicated that there were services in their area that could run better with some minor changes.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Frequency: increase in frequency of local Skye services in and out of Portree, increase in frequency of Skye/Inverness service in both summer and winter, increase in frequency of Skye/Kyle of Lochalsh services. Increase in frequency of buses to and from Peinachorran, particularly around 5pm, increase in frequency of the Fiscavaig to Portree service

Changes or new services: Services could connect with Citylink in Broadford to travel further on, the school bus service Dunvegan via Sligachan to Portree could be used by the members of the public - it is currently only available to school pupils.

Respondents were asked to consider what the impact may be on them/their household/or community if the service changes they had suggested to the previous questions were to be implemented

A number of comments highlighted general negative impacts on the reduction of services.

Impacts regarding suggestions about service changes have been categorised and summaries below.

Flexibility: Respondents reported that it would allow more flexibility and convenience in undertaking routine tasks.

Reduce car use: A respondent noted that if services were to become more frequent then people would be more likely to use services and therefore become less reliant on private transport. It was noted that this would save individuals money, reduce congestion and be better for the environment.

Improved access: A respondent noted that it would provide sustainable transport for the area and therefore improve links with employment, shopping and leisure opportunities

Are there specific venues/locations that bus services in your area should continue to reach?

Table 5.7: Based on 25 responses

Response	Number
No	3
Yes	22

22 of the respondents indicated that there were specific venues/locations that bus services in their area should continue to reach.

3 respondents indicated that there were not specific venues/locations that bus services in their area should continue to reach.

Off the Island

- Inverness
- Kyle of Lochalsh
- Glasgow

Key Towns

- Portree
- Portree High School, and Portree Square
- Need to continue school service to Portree. Minginish will need a good service to the new hospital in Broadford when it is built
- UHI in Portree and shopping in Portree
- Peinachorran-Portree should be maintained as a service outwith school provision. We need to focus on trying to reduce congestion and parking in Portree.
- Broadford and Portree, with regular services
- Doctors/bank/shopping- Portree etc.
- Hospitals, GP surgery, Schools, Shops, Post Office, Portree, Sligachan for connection with Citylink buses to Inverness and Glasgow

Rest of Skye

- Carbost to Portree for people in 9 - 5 jobs
 - The hostels at Carbost and Portnalong
 - Uig
 - Ferry: college: Broadford for onward connections/shopping/social events/access to other areas
 - To be able to have an evening in Portree
 - As the hospital development happens in Broadford, more and improved bus services from Portree and north of Skye would help ease the need for patient transport. It might be worth thinking about smaller buses more regularly.
 - Public transport to Glendale is restricted to school bus. The times of these are not always suitable for working population or ageing population.
 - There is only one bus that covers the Minginish peninsula as far as Fiskavaig .
-

- Hostels in Minginish, Skye. Road end Fiscavaig, Portnalong, Carbost, Skye
- Minginish Community (Portnalong / Fiskavaig) remote community with both elderly residents with essential need of access to public transport and community dependent on tourism also dependent on public transport
- The whole of Fiscavaig, Isle of Skye
- Aros, Co-op, Dentist. Coolin Drive.

Are there particular times of the day when services are needed?

Table 5.8: based on 24 responses

Response	Number
No	4
Yes	20

20 respondents indicated that there were particular times of the day that services are needed in their local area. 4 respondents indicated that there were no particular times of the day where services are needed.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Times

- Commuting times, school drop off and pick up times.
- Buses that take workers in and out of main locations e.g. Portree and Broadford 9 - 5
- Between 8am and 10am to get non-drivers/tourists away from area. Between 4pm and 7pm to get workers, school children and tourists into the area, to accommodation and hostels
- A later bus at 5/6pm would allow children to do evening activities and also useful for work purposes. It would also allow a return bus in to Portree for evening events.
- Early morning mid-morning lunch time afternoon and early evening.
- Mornings, 8.30 - 10.30am, after lunch 1 - 2pm and late afternoon, 4.30 - 6.30 pm
- Daytime for shopping
- 6. 30 p.m. to and returning from Aros 9.40 p.m.
- 7 to 10 p.m. Co-op
- Fiscavaig to Portree between 10am and 2pm

Services

- Mainly ferry connection and connections to long distance buses along with Kyle, Portree etc.
- Schools/work/shopping/doctors
- Buses are needed to travel to Kyle to visit the dentist or optician without changing 3 times
- For shopping an additional service during the day
- Ability to travel to Dunvegan/Portree for onward travel; employment; shopping. So connecting with services from Dunvegan.
- Important to keep Braes, Skye Friday lunchtime bus.
- Currently there is only the school bus service to Portree, which doesn't run at weekends and school holidays. People should be able to get to and from Portree for work, shopping and appointments every day of the week.

Are there specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should?

Table 5.9: based on 24 respondents

Response	Number
No	13
Yes	11

11 respondents indicated that there were specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should. 13 respondents indicated that there were not specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Outwith Skye: Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Ullapool, Oban, Ayr/Prestwick , Eilean Donan in the summer from Armadale

On the Island: Tarskavaig, Ord , Uig, Peinachorran to Portree, Braes and Portree Industrial site, Home Farm estate, Glendale (outwith school term), Husabost/Borreraig/Galtrigill

- Broadford. If the proposed centralisation of hospital services in Broadford goes ahead then members of the community will need transport to and from Broadford (in addition to Portree).
- Minginish will need a new service to Broadford Hospital.
- At present there is no bus from Fiscavaig/Portnalong/Carbost to Broadford. This will be very necessary when the new hospital is open in Broadford and services at Portree Hospital are scaled down.

Are there particular times of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues/locations but should?

Table 5.10: Based on 20 respondents

Response	Number
No	10
Yes	10

10 respondents indicated that there are times of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues but should. 10 respondents indicated that there was not any particular time of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues/locations but should.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

- Kyle to catch the trains
 - Arriving at 9 and leaving after 5 from Portree
 - A late evening service from Portree / Broadford to Sleat would be brilliant.
 - Bus times more suited to shopping in Portree and return time suitable for people working normal hours e.g. 9-5. Also no link with intercity buses so impossible to get back to
-

- Glendale with relying on family friends to give lift.
- To connect with the Citylink service to Glasgow and Inverness, or if not both, either.
- Saturday for matinees at Aros.
- Shop hours Industrial Site.
- Co-op 7p.m.
- End of the working day 5/6pm

Are there services that you/your household/your group use that connect with trains/buses/ferries?

Table 5.11: based on 24 respondents

Response	Number
No	10
Yes	14

14 respondents indicated that there are services that they use to connect with other buses, ferries or trains. 10 respondents indicated that they do not use bus services to connect with other trains, buses or ferries.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

- Skye to Kyle of Lochalsh, Skye to Inverness, Skye to Glasgow, Raasay Ferry, Uig Ferry, Kyle Train , From Minginish to Sligachan to connect with buses to Inverness and Glasgow, Sligachan to Kyle could be improved by going Carbost to Kyle
- To connect at Sligachan with the Portree / Inverness

Are there new developments in the area that need to be supported?

Table 5.12: based on 22 respondents

Response	Number
No	11
Yes	11

11 respondents indicated that there were new developments in the area that should be supported with bus services. 11 respondents indicated that there were not any new developments that would need to be supported

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

- Air services from Skye, to Glasgow, Edinburgh, Prestwick, Aberdeen, Inverness, Western Isles.
- With RTE charges on the ferries there will be many more foot passengers coming to and going from Skye. Armadale is a crucial entry/exit point and visitors need to know (in advance through up to date timetables) that they can advance their journeys with confidence.
- The expansion of the Gaelic college with extra students and overseas visitors
- Home Farm Estate.
- Minginish to new Broadford hospital service
- No early buses to catch the early Glasgow bus, only 5 minutes between the Dunvegan bus

- getting into Portree and the Inverness bus leaving. No buses to the early train at Kyle.
- With proposed new business opening on the outskirts of Portree a more suitable village bus service should be looked at.

Is there anything that prevents you or discourages you from using the bus or dial-a-bus services in your area?

Table 5.13: based on 15 respondents

Response	Number	Disability
I cannot get to the bus stop	1	0
The vehicle is not easy for me to access e.g. because it has steps	1	0
The timetable does not fit in with my lifestyle	6	0
I have to wait too long for a return journey	8	2
Drivers are unhelpful	1	0

The most common barriers that respondents indicated prevented or discouraged them from using the bus services were:

- I have to wait too long for a return journey
- The timetable does not fit in with my lifestyle

Is there any activity that you are prevented from doing, or service you cannot access because of a lack of transport

Table 5.14: Based on 10 responses

Response	Number	Disability
Healthcare appointments	5	0
Commuting / getting to work	1	0
Sports clubs / Exercise classes / Gym	3	0
Swimming pool	4	0
Going to the theatre or cinema	7	0
After school activities	1	0
Visiting friends or family	3	0
Shopping	5	0
Going out for a meal or a drink	5	0
Educational training / classes	4	0

The activities that respondents highlighted that they are most prevented from doing because of lack of transport are: “going to the theatre or cinema”, “Going out for a meal or a drink”, “Healthcare appointments” and “Shopping”

Local questions

Would a less frequent service from Dunvegan or Uig/Flodigarry/Staffin in the middle of the day cause difficulties?

3 respondents indicated that it would not cause difficulties for them. Two respondents commented it would cause difficulties for them, their households or possibly for tourist.

What are the main uses of the Dunvegan and Uig/Flodigarry/Staffin services on Saturdays? Are the times suitable?

The main uses for the service that respondents highlighted were for going to Portree for shopping. It was highlighted by a respondent that the current times are not suitable for the Uig Ferry.

Is there a need for local transport to the villages in north Skye (e.g. Dunvegan, Uig) rather than all services going to Portree? If so, how often?

The comments made general statements about the need for a service between Dunvegan/ Talisker / Armadale Ferry

There were a number of comments about the suitability of the Portree circular route being a better fit. The comments had made general statements about the need for this service. It was noted that this service was improved in recent years and was an alternative solution.

It was noted by respondents that the dial-a-bus service might be useful for people visiting the health centre in Dunvegan. This respondent highlighted that this service from Talisker to Armadale would be better served by a circular route.

Would the evening taxi from Portree to Flodigarry be better to connect with the bus from Inverness and not wait for the Glasgow bus? How would people be affected if it was withdrawn?

Three respondents indicated that the service was no longer needed. A respondent did indicate that a reduction of service would affect young people who would either need to hitchhike or rely on others.

Does the morning shopping trip from Fiscavaig to Portree need to be daily (Mon-Fri)?

There was a split in opinion amongst respondents. It was highlighted that the service was needed because people currently used it for shopping, hospital outpatient appointments and for visitors

travelling to and from B&Bs in the area. A number of respondents thought it was not needed but did not give a rationale for this. There was a suggestion that it could be reduced to two or three times a week.

The times that respondents highlighted as being the most important were 10am and 1pm

How is the Saturday service from Fiscavaig used? What would be the most useful times on Saturdays?

The times that respondents highlighted as being the most important were 10am and 1pm to Portree returning 12pm and 4pm.

How much need is there for buses between Portree and Broadford (apart from school buses and Citylink services)?

There was an overwhelming consensus among respondents that the service from Portree and Broadford is needed. A number of respondents did highlight that demand may increase when Broadford Hospital opens or Portree Hospital closes.

Where are the most important destinations from Sleat (e.g. Broadford, Portree, Kyle) and why?

Broadford, Portree and Kyle were highlighted as the most important destinations. The reasons for visiting these places were to access services that are not available locally e.g. hospitals, libraries, banks. Shopping, opticians, dentists and other social activities.

Is the current level of service between Broadford and Kyle suitable? If not, why not?

Respondents highlighted that the current timetable was not suitable and was difficult to access. A number of people mentioned that the timetable was restrictive. A specific example was given that the service did not allow a resident from Glenelg to get to Broadford and return the same day.

Would one return trip between Elgol and Broadford be enough, especially in the winter?

Half of the respondents indicated that it would be enough as long as the service left enough time for shopping. Half of respondents indicated that it would cause problems especially as the weather in the winter can be extreme.

How is the Saturday service from Elgol used? What would be the most useful times on Saturdays?

The comments highlighted that a regular service was needed 9am - 5pm.

Public Consultation Meeting Feedback

Broadford public meeting: 26/10/2015

Current services

Timing : Current bus times are reasonable given resource available / need to come more frequently. Times depend on individual needs – when times are suitable. Summer timetable very good – but gap in the middle of the day. Visitors seem to take priority in the summer. Usage – recognised relatively low, although a swelling in summer. Timings between services – could be a long day

Accessibility:

- Wheelchair users – “one person couldn’t guarantee a place on an evening return so had to stay overnight in Inverness.”
- Steps, handrails – feeling very rushed getting on and off
- Pneumatic ramp needed on buses
- Accessibility of on-board toilets
- Access Panel recounted an experience where when travelling back to Skye some elderly folk were refused to get on the coach as there was no ramp to allow them on.
- Notices on windows, seat patterns, change in level – clear warning on steps – not suggesting braille or tactile signage, but Perspex a problem.
- Seating at bus shelters unsuitable for handles to lower into seats
- Low-lying buses are fine but require a pavement raiser. The pavement in Torrin and in other places is only on one side of the road.
- Stagecoach buses hard to get on – high step – affects older people
- Coaches – difficulty to get on in some locations. Pavement same level as the road.
- Toilets inaccessible at Inverness, Fort William and Glasgow bus stations
- Not all bus stops are physically marked for passengers to wait at.
- Every bus driver should know first-aid training
- Buses with low access flooring are great to get on/off, roomy and comfortable, although less seating capacity. Little Optare bus – no luggage space, often piled on seats; may run in summertime (as part of a commercial contract?).
- If person has no car could use a community taxi and feed into main bus. Bus passes not available for use here however. Also accessibility issue for subsidised taxis - query from a meeting participant who uses a wheelchair.

Specific services

- Inadequate for Sleat – especially for outlying communities off the main route. Sleat => Kyle a key route – Kyle, Portree and Broadford. 601/612 services – Weekly shop in Broadford (1st) and Kyle (2nd). Not as important for Portree (easier to get to Inverness).
- Service to shops in Broadford and Kyle critical (only 1 shop in Sleat). More people travel to Broadford. Later bus in evening – Sleat => Broadford – important.

-
- Poor connections from south into Portree. There is no bus on a Saturday from Broadford to Portree, whereas there are buses to Kyle. The service is available Monday to Friday.
 - Armadale ferry use has increased a lot in 2014 and 2015 – the increased volume of traffic has led to some problems for links to onward connections.
 - Pavements in Armadale are often under water – bus access issue.
 - Mallaig – Armadale – ferry changes are due. A question as to the impact of the Road Equivalent Tariff. Foot passenger numbers expected to increase.
 - Ardvassar – bus can't turn, people have to walk to ferry
 - The links from Armadale to Broadford are poor – using bus links could be looked at.
 - Students – 70 resident students for 30 weeks of the year.
 - Sleat/Armadale – service must tie in with schools. Calmac staff drives people to Broadford if there is a missed connection.
 - Portree – Armadale – winter service - for school pupils/public, which is contracted as a public service, is considered to be poorly publicised.
 - Clan Donald Centre (in Armadale) is open at 9am and is the second largest private employer on the island. They have two employees from the north of the island who would use the bus if it could connect at Portree.
 - It costs £10 from Armadale to Portree by bus – possibility for a cheaper rate for under-25s?
 - A need to use ferries better across the network and discussions with Calmac, although acknowledgement of a sizeable challenge.
 - Bus/ferry timetables don't link up – start in different months, e.g. – buses in late May, with Calmac on 27 March.
 - Broadford-Kyle – summer service operated by Citylink is very busy, often no room and the alternative is an expensive taxi to Kyle. Option to book seats would be useful.
 - Elgol service – starting to be used by young people. An issue from Elgol to Kyle overnight.
 - Kyleakin – buses don't join up – runs a hotel so guests can't get places back (Sleat – Broadford – Portree but not back down. Buses don't join in at, say, Broadford. Nothing on a Sunday in Kyleakin, except Citylink. Kyleakin Youth Hostel – closed 5 years ago – Stagecoach and Maclean's timetables still refer to it as a stop – change name to 'Kyleakin public car park'. There is a lot of social housing in Kyleakin – work issues? There is no bus from Kyle to Kyleakin – housekeeper walks.
 - All public buses disappeared from Kyleakin five years ago.
 - Double-decker out of Portree but couldn't reach it from south island to join the tour.
 - The Portree – Dunvegan service only gives 30 minutes in Dunvegan before having to return. Poor time at various places e.g. at Dunvegan.
 - Difficult meeting connections from West Skye
 - Optician/dentist in Kyle – need a service to go there for a couple of hours – current needs – 2/3 buses.
 - If train passengers come on the last train there are no onward connections.
 - No bus services to Plockton, 1 a day to Shiel Bridge
 - A reduction (5 to 3 days) would greatly affect, with a knock-on effect for evening service. There is no other way to get to Glenelg or Shiel Bridge other than private car. Glenelg – lost evening bus route as not using; there is now a pilot project which was fought for

Future services

- Parking at Portree and Broadford required for access. Broadford as a hub – a hub and spoke model
- Importance of connections – different and creative thinking required – Glenelg example shows a need and a community that wants to do it.
- Co-ordination with other forms of transport and Citylink-feed services into onward travel to

Inverness, Fort William and Glasgow. Links to trains – current service times are too early. If the times do change, links will be required to reach the station.

- There are no night services to visit the hospital – once a week evening service from Portree would be good.
- Fort William for surgery – no bus patient transport even if qualify for free bus transport
- Very difficult to get to Broadford from South West Ross at present and very much in the future
- Services to Sleat, Broadford and Portree Medical Practices – community taxi (pay for this service). Potential for a community taxi from Broadford to Elgol?
- Affecting lifestyle – people start shifts at different times
- Ageing population – less people driving, lack of transport; reliance on public transport to maintain independence

Specific services

- Need for an 8am Portree-Inverness service would be good to give more time in Inverness. Is this currently a commercial service?
- Stagecoach used to provide a service to Dingwall but it was felt this was not well promoted.
- Ferry pier – Bus doesn't wait for passengers currently, even if walking.
- The ferry link to Raasay – a link to Stagecoach times going forward. Calmac looking at service changes but links need to be in place. A need to think about the turnaround times so as not to lead to an erratic service. There have been connectivity issues for years for Armadale and Raasay – Armadale as key connection.
- Sleat subsidised taxi – could this service type be operated elsewhere on Skye? 50% of fare. Could apply to Community Transport Grants Scheme for use, say in hospital visits.
- There is only bell on the Sligachan bus (at the front) – difficult to get up
- Sligachan has no bus shelter – could there be one (at access to Car Park)?
- Capacity on service 600 – what happens if students wanted to get on it – how many spare seats? A dozen or so students live outwith the college. There is a bus stop at the top of the road. The College will be growing as a hub, with plans for housing.

Other

Tourism

- Coaches – a storage compartment for tourists with rucksacks is required – a particular issue in the summer with tourists. Tourists are often not aware that they require to book seats in advance.

Publicity

- Promotion of timetables and information required – community website, libraries, newsletters from existing group and hospitals etc.
- Council slow at getting timetables out and in bus shelters/stops on time and in place. E.g. timetables in information office in Kyle took a month.
- The Armadale-Broadford timetable on the Stagecoach website is also out of date.
- Maclean's timetables are not on the Travel Scotland website.
- Require 1 place for information – don't say whether whole route is accessible currently
- Public transport map – very useful if updated – could it be reinstated?
- Better to have one timetable to cover all services – include as hard copy and on online sources.
- Better coverage with reasonable turnaround times (not too long or too short)
- School holidays – different timetable with fewer buses as school buses stop.
- Getting information out locally – own timetables and how it links in

Impact

- Tourists, students – limited range of services not made aware so they are caught out.

-
- If the bus at Ardasar could turn it would help. It currently stops at Armadale pier 1 ½ miles from village – it affects those without cars and is a longstanding problem.
 - Patient Transport Service – Broadford area community – volunteer drivers/set-up
 - ⇒ Pay for service
 - ⇒ But people have free bus pass – but can't use them properly
 - For medical appointments there is often the issue of doctors running late, so very restricted
 - Better linking in to existing community transport schemes – a way to be more efficient
 - Where there are no services at the moment now provide for one day a week.
 - Connections key – not many roads – but need to get to train stations, ferry terminals, Portree, Dunvegan – good link-ups essential.

Sleat, Broadford and Kyle –

- Broadford/Kyle service needs to be improved
- From Kyleakin end people want to catch the ferry – need to take a taxi. Taxi to Kyle to get/return car hire too.
- Can't get to Kyle from Sleat. Too late for appointments.
- Dial-a-bus for south island areas? To help serve hospital e.g. for visiting. Students could use too.
- Sabhal Mor Ostaig - Would be able to get more students if better transport link to meet train/ferries were there. Allows family visiting too.
- Priorities – ask bus drivers. Routes are relatively far and so difficult to cut.
- Mallaig – Armadale – Eilean Donan – a good service to have. Tourists love Eilean Donan. Also love Talisker.
- Lot of buses stop in Broadford/Portree – don't go on to Kyleakin
- The Sleat school bus is currently only taking school passengers but there are seats available for the public (16 seats in the minibus).
- Minibuses not used for the rest of the day – e.g. there are a couple of buses that are parked at Plockton railway station but are then not used – a need to enhance this.
- Can get from Plockton to Kyle in the morning, but cannot return. Smaller bus going along Harbour Street would be better as parking on Harbour Street is difficult. Return midday.
- The Elgol Saturday service – is this used enough? A hope that it is not cut. In the summer months a local bed and breakfast has been giving lifts to some locals but does not do this in the winter – worried of a cut in service.
- 620 and T.21 – needs to return on same (*time?*)
- 2.30pm Armadale 51A did not go Kyleakin/Broadford, because of school contract. Could wait at Kyleakin for 30 minutes for Citylink or walk 1½ miles to Broadford.
- Bus leaves 5 minutes before ferry comes in – school run?

Central Skye –

- Tourists will stop in Portree as transport links better – if link-ups created this would open up island better.
- Elgol – boat trip, hillwalking purposes

Portree 26/10/15

Future Services

- West Highland College, Struan Road, Portree Taxis often used for student transport; supported living referrals; needs occur at various times of day. Should the college buy a minibus or try to link in with another community group – the Resource Centre uses their

minibus all the time.

Other

- Cost per passenger is “irrelevant” if someone needs the service – can’t base decisions solely on price.
- The Skye Old People’s Welfare Bus is considered under-utilised but there is disagreement on how/whether it might be used more.

Section 6: Wester Ross and Lochalsh

Overview

There was one public meeting held in Poolewe.

Attendees included local transport providers, Community Council representatives and local residents.

In addition there was a public questionnaire which asked questions to attain views on:

- The current bus service
- Barriers the public and communities face when using bus services
- What type of bus services will be important in the future
- What opportunities are there for altering the current networks

Table 5.1: Based on 26 respondents

Responses	Number	%
As a member of the public	24	92
As a community group representative	1	4
As a Community Council representative	1	4
As a commercial passenger transport company	0	0
As a community transport organisation	0	0
As a Highland Council Ward Councillor	0	0

26 people from the Wester Ross and Lochalsh area responded to the questionnaire. This included responses from members of the public, community group representatives and community council representatives.

24 responses to the consultation survey were members of the public. There was 1 response from community group representatives and 1 response from community council representatives.

Important information to note is:-

- 88% of respondents use public bus or dial-a-bus transport - none of these respondents indicated that they use it almost every day
- 65% of respondents indicated that they have lived in the Highland region for over 10 years
- 71 % of respondents were female
- 39% of respondents indicated that they were retired

Emerging issues

Current use of services

The main purposes indicated for using public transport were, onward connections (95%), to attend medical appointments (52%) and shopping (78%).

Concern about reduction or withdrawal of a service

Concerns were raised in both the survey and public meetings, respondents indicated that there had recently been significant reductions in some services. In the survey, only one respondent thought there were services in their local area that were not needed.

Improvement to current services

A number of respondents in the Wester Ross and Lochalsh area noted that current services were unreliable and could not always be relied on. It was noted this cause significant problems, especially when using bus services to connect with onward connections.

Barriers

The main barriers which respondents noted regarding using bus services were to do with the timetabling of services. There were strong feelings that the services did not meet the needs of the community.

Future service needs

Respondents commented about the need to ensure that services matched local needs; there were concerns that future bus services would be designed around school transport. It was felt that this would have a negative impact throughout the area as school roles are decreasing.

Publicity

Respondents noted that they felt that services would be better utilised if there was more information available about routes. E.g. members of the public being able to use school transport.

Tourism

Respondents noted that tourism is vital for the area, therefore having a reliable bus service which is accessible is vital to support local communities.

Public Consultation Questionnaire – Full Results

Do you/anyone in your household use home-to-school transport as an entitled pupil?

Table 5.2: Based on 25 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Yes	3	12
No	19	76
Not applicable	3	12

76% of the respondents indicated that their household does not use home to school transport. 12% of respondents indicated that someone in their household did use home to school transport and 12% of respondents said that the question was not applicable to them.

Do you/your household/your group use other types of public bus or dial-a-bus transport?

Table 5.3: based on 26 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Yes	23	88
No	3	12
Not applicable	0	0

88% of respondents indicated that they use public bus or dial-a-bus transport. 12% indicated that they did not use public bus or dial-a-bus transport.

What do you/your household/your group use this service / these services for?

Table 5.4: based on 23 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Work	2	8
School	4	17
Further / Higher Education	0	0
Leisure activities e.g. sports clubs, swimming pool	7	30
Social activities e.g. meeting with friends or family	10	43
Shopping	18	78
To attend medical appointments	12	52
Onward connections (train/bus/ferry)	22	95
Not applicable – do not use services	0	0

From the 23 respondents to the question “What do you/your household/your group use this service/these service for” the most common responses were: onward connections (95%), to attend medical appointments (52%) and shopping (78%).

Are there any services that run in your area that you feel are not needed?

Table 5.5: based on 101 respondents

Responses	Number
No	25
Yes	1

25 respondents indicated that all services in their area were necessary. 1 respondent highlighted that there were services in their area that were unnecessary.

Respondents who selected “yes” noted:

1 respondent provided comments. They noted that there is a bus service provided to take Lochcarron secondary school children to Gairloch High School, when their catchment area would be Plockton High School.

Are there any services that run in your area that would be good to keep but could be run better with some minor changes?

Table 5.6: based on 23 respondents

Response	Number
No	12
Yes	11

12 out of the 23 respondents indicated that current services would not run better with minor changes.

11 respondents indicated that there were services in their area that could run better with some minor changes.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Ullapool/Lochinver

- The Citylink service that meets the ferry can be delayed so cannot be relied on for train / flight arrangements.
- The Lochinver afternoon bus should be run a little later e.g. 5pm
- The Lochinver to Ullapool should be 30 minutes earlier.

Wester Ross

- If the school minibus from Cove (about 8.00am from Inverasdale) could link in with the Westerbus to Inverness, at Poolewe.
 - Poolewe-Dingwall and Poolewe-Ullapool - would be good to have 3 hours at destination rather than just over 2 hours.
 - School bus Cove to Inverasdale to link with Inverness bus at Poolewe.
 - All school transport in the area available to the general public: if, in theory, it is already, then this should be publicised. (This relates to the school buses serving Gairloch High School.)
 - Currently no way to depart Torriddon by public transport. You can arrive by DMK motors 702 which connect well with the train at Strathcarron. However, this bus will no longer pick you up if you want to depart from Torriddon, even though it comes to Shildaig (7 miles away) and since the train times changed connects badly with the train service to Inverness.
 - Service 61 is absolutely necessary for the general public because it goes at a set time early enough for people to access hospital appointments, catch onward transport etc. The bus connecting with the ferry is unreliable in that it waits for the ferry to arrive. Often this is late. Even when it is on time it does not arrive in Inverness until 11:30am, which is late for hospital appointments, especially as another bus has to be caught to get to Raigmore. Also it is only possible to book online in the winter when the tourist office is closed. Many people cannot do this, especially the elderly.
 - Without the 61 service Ullapool is in danger of becoming very isolated as you would not be able to visit and return to Inverness in one day.
-

Respondents were asked to consider what the impact may be on them/their household/or community if the service changes they had suggested to the previous questions were to be implemented

A number of comments highlighted general negative impacts on the reduction of services.

Impacts regarding suggestions about service changes have been categorised and summarised below.

Increased uptake: A respondent noted that with an improved timetable that fitted in with local working hours more people would use public transport in the area.

Are there specific venues/locations that bus services in your area should continue to reach?

Table 5.7: Based on 26 responses

Response	Number
No	3
Yes	23

23 of the respondents indicated that there were specific venues/locations that bus services in their area should continue to reach.

3 respondents indicated that there were not specific venues/locations that bus services in their area should continue to reach.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Places

- Inverness
- Torridon

Routes

- Glenelg to Kyle of Lochalsh
 - Inverness / Dingwall / Ullapool
 - Route 61 -Lochinver-Ullapool -Inverness return
 - Marybank to Dingwall
 - Marybank to Inverness
 - Ullapool - Lochinver 4:40pm
 - The bus to Lochinver (not the School bus) from Ullapool. This provides a valuable workers/after school bus.
 - Gairloch to Poolewe, Inverasdale, Cove, Aultbea and beyond, Ullapool, Inverness.
 - It would be good to have links between Cove, Poolewe and Gairloch. As there is no dial-a-bus or post-bus service, it would be good if the bus link were extended to include Aultbea.
 - Diabaig, Red Point, Kylestrome, and lots of other places. Also need a Highland-wide multi-modal transport timetable.
 - Ullapool - Dingwall - Inverness (the 61 service run by Stagecoach)
-

Are there particular times of the day when services are needed?

Table 5.8: based on 26 responses

Response	Number
No	3
Yes	23

23 respondents indicated that there were particular times of the day that services are needed in their local area. 3 respondents indicated that there were no particular times of the day where services are needed.

Respondents commented about the venues and locations and the times services are needed. There was no overall consensus amongst respondents about particular times of the day services were needed. Some key points that were highlighted were:

Times

- The minimum service is a morning run and a late afternoon early evening run in each direction. Evening services important on regional routes.
- It would be useful to be able to travel between the villages for evening events, which generally start at 1900-1930 for approx. an hour or so. There is no transport facility for evenings.
- The more services there are the better, and the more they will be used. In some areas weekend and evening services need restoring.

Locations

- Daily return service from Glenelg to Kyle of Lochalsh
- Leaving Ullapool not later than 9:05 am on weekdays. Route 61 returning to Lochinver via Ullapool. Otherwise Lochinver residents would have to overnight in Ullapool at considerable expense as they would miss the school bus run.
- Ullapool to Inverness 9am depart. 3 to 4pm return.
- Morning service departing Torridon, late afternoon/evening service arriving. Perhaps connecting with other services that go to Inverness and Dingwall or at least Achnasheen/Strathcarron to connect with trains

Are there specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should?

Table 2.9: based on 22 respondents

Response	Number
No	10
Yes	12

12 respondents indicated that there were specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should. 10 respondents indicated that there were not specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

- To meet other services from Kyle of Lochalsh to Broadford
 - Marybank to Strathpeffer
-

- Torrison - there is a service which arrives but it is not possible to depart by public transport
- Local links between communities desirable sometime between, 10 a.m. and 2 pm e.g. from Cove to Poolewe to Aultbea and Gairloch.
- Between Achnasheen and Torrison to meet train to and from Inverness.
- Torrison. Shieldaig. Achnasheen. Lochcarron. A bus to Gairloch is only available in the evenings. No use unless you want to stay overnight.
- Loss of the Torrison postbus has been devastating- no bus to Diabaig. No bus Torrison to Kinlochewe. Loss of Redpoint postbus-no bus to Redpoint.
- Loss of Skye ferry-minimal service to Kyleakin.

Are there particular times of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues/locations but should?

Table 5.10: Based on 22 respondents

Response	Number
No	5
Yes	17

17 respondents indicated that there are times of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues but should. 5 respondents indicated that there was not any particular time of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues/locations but should.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

- Should be able to reach Inverness in time for mid-morning train services and flights from Dalcross
- Making sure that the Cove bus links in with the Inverness bus at Poolewe, and in turn, links in with the Inverness train travelling south.
- Arrival from Ullapool to Inverness before 9am and return after 5pm
- Between Torrison/Shieldaig and Achnasheen to coincide with trains to and from Inverness
- Morning service departing Torrison, late afternoon/evening service arriving. perhaps connecting with other services that go to Inverness and Dingwall or at least Achnasheen/Strathcarron to connect with trains
- Shieldaig, Torrison – Kinlochewe, Diabaig, Torrison – Kinlochewe
- Meeting the evening train at Strathcarron. Currently the connecting bus will only take people to Lochcarron. There is no way to return to Applecross or Shieldaig/Torrison except by using the community car scheme.

Are there services that you/your household/your group use that connect with trains/buses/ferries?

Table 5.11: based on 26 respondents

Response	Number
No	2
Yes	24

24 respondents indicated that there are services that they use to connect with other buses, ferries or trains. 2 respondents indicated that they do not use bus services to connect with other trains, buses or ferries.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

- Achnasheen for Kyle of Lochalsh; Achnasheen - train, ferries
- Dingwall for Tain / Dornoch / Thurso
- Inverness for all parts of the UK; Inverness - Trains, Buses, Airport
- Ullapool for Western isles

Are there new developments in the area that need to be supported?

Table 5.12: based on 19 respondents

Response	Number
No	7
Yes	12

7 respondents indicated that there were new developments in the area that should be supported with bus services. 12 respondents indicated that there were not any new developments that would need to be supported.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Specific developments

- Inverasdale - old primary school used as a community hub (incl. Arctic Convoy Museum).
- New Gairloch Museum

Is there anything that prevents you or discourages you from using the bus or dial-a-bus services in your area?

Table 5.13: based on 12 respondents

Response	Number	Disability
I cannot get to the bus stop	2	0
The vehicle is not easy for me to access e.g. because it has steps	1	0
The timetable does not fit in with my lifestyle	9	1
I have to wait too long for a return journey	7	1
Drivers are unhelpful	3	0

The most common barriers that respondents indicated prevented or discouraged them from using the bus services were:

- The timetable does not fit in with my lifestyle
- I have to wait too long for a return journey
- Drivers are unhelpful

What do you consider the impact may be on you/your household/your community if your service changes were to be implemented?

A number of comments highlighted general negative impacts on the reduction of services.

Impacts regarding suggestions about service changes have been categorised and summarised below

Increased use of bus services: A number of respondents highlighted that improvements to the service would encourage more people in the local area to use public bus transport.

A connected community: A respondent highlighted that service changes to ensure that the areas remained accessible will ensure that residents can freely move around without the need to be dependent on a car.

Is there any activity that you are prevented from doing, or service you cannot access because of a lack of transport

Table 5.14: Based on 15 responses

Response	Number	Disability
Healthcare appointments	11	1
Commuting / getting to work	5	1
Sports clubs / Exercise classes / Gym	7	1
Swimming pool	7	1
Going to the theatre or cinema	8	0
After school activities	1	0
Visiting friends or family	8	1
Shopping	10	3
Going out for a meal or a drink	7	3
Educational training / classes	7	5

The activities that respondents highlighted that they are most prevented from doing because of lack of transport are: “Healthcare appointments”, “Shopping”, “Going to the theatre or cinema” and “Visiting friends and families”.

Local questions

How would people be affected if the bus between Glenelg and Kyle ran on fewer days per week? Are any days particularly important?

Key areas that were highlighted that would be affected were:

Respondents noted that there are people who do not drive and/or are elderly, who have medical appointments at Raigmore or Broadford for a clinic on a specific day. If the current timetable changed it would cause significant problems. Respondents highlighted that a link of at least 5 days per week is essential.

For people from Glenelg making longer journeys, which connections are most important?

Respondents did not highlight any specific connections but did highlight some key areas, including:

- Inverness
- Fort William
- Glasgow
- Ullapool
- Kyle of Lochalsh

How would people be affected if the bus between Torriddon and Strathcarron (apart from the school bus) ran on fewer days per week? Are any days particularly important?

It was noted that all days are important to different people. It was suggested that the timetable needs revising since the train times changed.

A respondent noted that Lochcarron Garage provides transport to Inverness on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday. But the Torriddon bus is used for connections at Strathcarron so a regular service is required.

What are your views on a service for Ullapool of: Connection to Braemore for Inverness on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays (as now);

Respondents noted that even though there are already buses from Ullapool to Inverness to meet the ferry, this bus is vital as it allows connection from Westerbus starting points into Ullapool. It was highlighted that it must be maintained as it is a reliable service is the only way to reliably get to Inverness for appointments as there is no word of a replacement 61 service. Respondents felt that the suggestion would be a poor substitute for the Monday to Friday service of Route 61, particularly as the 961 ferry bus is not reliable if the ferry is delayed or cancelled.

How useful is the Saturday service from Achiltibuie? Would a different timing be better? How would people be affected if it was withdrawn?

Respondents noted that even though it would not affect them individually, people living or wanting to visit Achiltibuie would be left isolated.

Public Consultation Meeting Feedback

Poolewe public meeting 16/11/2015

Key points

- Dial-a-bus in Poolewe would be beneficial
- Home to school provision, ability for public to use, term times etc.
- Summer tourist facility to Inverewe Gardens etc.
- Service to Braemore Junction valuable

Current services

- A concern was raised regarding the daily Gairloch – Inverness service amid some rumours that it is to be cut.
- It was noted that pupils were charged to use these buses in Edinburgh.
- The issue of picking up on where passes are not being shown was identified as something to be looked into, for records and revenue.

Future services

- A summer tourist facility for the area was identified given the existing nature and potential of the area, with said route encompassing attractions such as Inverewe Gardens
- A dial-a-bus/small vehicle fixed service for the Poolewe locality would be welcomed covering Poolewe-Inverasdale-Cove-Gairloch.
- One of the participants spoke of a need to get to work at times when the bus is not running and when she is not able to get a lift.

Specific services and opportunities for savings

- The Westerbus link to the Ullapool bus at Braemore was noted as very well-used by tourists and valuable.
- The impact of Tesco with online delivery was noted by the representatives from Westerbus.
- Regarding Community Transport Grants, the potential for tourism was noted. The issue of not going into competition with taxi services was noted

Other

- One of the participants noted that the price for the Council from Gairloch to Dingwall was double that of the Gairloch to Ullapool service.
 - A participant works in the Gairloch library and lives in Inverasdale and would be happy to pay a fare on the school bus.
 - Stated how difficult it was to get to Gairloch High School out-of-term. Has often to turn down request to come in on such days if husband is away with the car – no other transport option, especially since the dial-a-bus no longer operates. And the car scheme does not cover travel to employment. Lives at Inverasdale (north-west of Poolewe on B8057). Need to get to Poolewe, even during term time, to get on the school bus (nearly 5 miles from Inverasdale).
 - It was noted that there was no Dial-a-Bus running at present, although when it did run it was quite unreliable. The school bus is the only possible service often at present.
 - The Community Car Scheme was noted, although it was acknowledged that this more for social needs (appointments etc.) rather than regular work commitments.
-

-
- All about finding the need and balancing priorities – acknowledgment that not an easy solution.
 - The Poolewe – Cove road was determined a priority given that the settlements along it are more strung out, although the issue of waiting and hold-ups was acknowledged.
 - There was an acknowledgement of the issues of economies of scale but also of demography, which create a tension in public transport provision in the area.
 - Concerned to know to what extent demographics, such as school rolls, were used in determining services. Fearful of impact of falling school rolls on local bus service provision – demographic profile seems to be older people, fewer families with children.
 - There was an acknowledgement that the Dial-a-Bus in Aultbea is lightly used.
 - Sometimes it is unavailable, savviness is required regarding timings etc.
 - A note that Dial-a-Bus's biggest strength is its biggest weakness – high costs but a lifeline for those that use them.
 - A possible route could be Inverness to Inverewe, or a service running Achnasheen train station to Inverewe Gardens to serve seasonal tourist demand. If a commercial operator isn't likely could Highland Council/National Trust for Scotland combine?

Gaps in services

- A service for when the train comes in to Achnasheen at night.
- Braemore Junction service
- A possible gap for tourists in summer months – no real specific service mentioned
- Westerbus to Ullapool on Thursday evening – not very busy - but a lot of additional outlay for smaller buses. A question from the company as to what to do for the rest of the days? – Can be up and down e.g. 10-30 etc. (Inverasdale – Poolewe, Westerbus from Poolewe)

Timings for Westerbus –

- 1- The service from Inverness Bus Station to Contin – the Stagecoach service leaves around 17.15, with the Westerbus leaving at 17.20
 - 2- The service Achnasheen to Dingwall, and to Inverness – the Lochcarron buses service to Dingwall leaves around 09.15, whilst the Westerbus service to Inverness leaves around 09.20.
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Section 7 – Lochaber

Overview

There were two public meetings held in the Lochaber area. These meetings took place in Fort William and Strontian.

Attendees included local transport providers, Community Council representatives, local residents and Highland Councillors.

In addition there was a public questionnaire which asked questions to attain views on:

- The current bus service
- Barriers the public and communities face when using bus services
- What type of bus services will be important in the future
- What opportunities are there for altering the current networks

Table 7.1: Based on 50 respondents

Responses	Number
As a member of the public	45
As a community group representative	2
As a Community Council representative	2
As a commercial passenger transport company	0
As a community transport organisation	1
As a Highland Council Ward Councillor	0

50 people from the Lochaber area responded to the questionnaire. This included responses from members of the public, community group representatives, community transport companies and community council representatives.

45 responses to the consultation survey were members of the public. There were 2 responses from community group representatives, 1 response from a community transport organisation and 1 response from a community council.

Of those responding to the questionnaire: -

- 76 % use public bus or dial a bus transport
- 40% highlighted that they used bus or dial-a-bus transport almost every day
- 60 % were female
- 15 % indicated that they consider themselves to have a disability

Emerging issues

Current use of services

Feedback from both the survey and public meetings indicated that current services were used for a range of purposes. The main purposes indicated for using public transport were shopping, to attend medical appointments and onward connections.

Concern about reduction or withdrawal of a service

Through both the public survey and public meetings individuals expressed concern about the impact of a reduction or withdrawal of a service. A number of respondents commented that a modest fare increase would be acceptable if service provision was not affected.

Accessibility

Concerns were raised in the Fort William public meeting about the suitability of transport provision, it was highlighted that there is a need for accessible transport options, it was highlighted that many groups are left isolated with the current level of service. e.g. Sunday services.

Barriers

Respondents highlighted a need for up-to-date accurate timetabling information. It was reported that timetables were difficult to access online and many bus stops had out-of-date or no information.

Timetabling

There was a feeling that bus timetabling could be altered to meet the needs of bus users more effectively. It was highlighted that the time between return journeys was too long.

The needs of the community

The most popular uses of public transport were shopping (61%), to attend medical appointments (57%) and onward connections (48%). Respondents noted that future services should seek to ensure that return journeys took these into consideration.

Public Consultation Questionnaire – Full Results

Do you/anyone in your household use home to school transport as an entitled pupil?

Table 7.2: based on 49 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Yes	7	14
No	33	67
Not applicable	9	18

67% of the respondents indicated that their households do not use home to school transport. 31% of respondents indicated that someone in their household uses home to school transport and 7% of respondents said that the question was not applicable to them.

Do you/your household/your group use other types of public bus or dial-a-bus transport?

Table 7.3: based on 50 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Yes	38	76
No	9	18
Not applicable	3	6

76% of respondents indicated that they use public bus or dial-a-bus transport. 18% indicated that they did not use public bus or dial-a-bus transport and 5% indicated that the question was not applicable.

What do you/your household/your group use this service/these services for?

Table 7.4: based on 49 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Work	13	26
School	7	14
Further / Higher Education	6	12
Leisure activities e.g. sports clubs, swimming pool	17	34
Social activities e.g. meeting with friends or family	15	30
Shopping	30	61
To attend medical appointments	28	57
Onward connections (train/bus/ferry)	24	48
Not applicable – do not use services	0	0

From the 49 respondents to the question “What do you/your household/your group use this service/these services for” the most common responses were: shopping (61%), to attend medical appointments (57%) and onward connections (48%).

Are there any services that run in your area that you feel are not needed?

Table 7.5: based on 49 respondents

Responses	Number
No	46
Yes	3

46 respondents indicated that all services in their area were necessary. 3 respondents highlighted that there were services in their area that were unnecessary.

Respondents who selected “yes” noted:

- In winter the service from Inverness to Fort William, hardly has any passengers going the full distance. A smaller coach would reduce costs.
- Apart from peak times most buses run empty by the time they reach Henderson Road and most stops are empty
- At present during school holidays there are buses running that are not in service.
- The number 41 service that goes through the High Street and Bus Station 2 to 3 times in the space of 10 during the day

Are there any services that run in your area that would be good to keep but could be run better with some minor changes?

Table 7.6: based on 53 respondents

Response	Number
No	27
Yes	26

27 out of the 53 respondents indicated that current services would not run better with minor changes.

26 respondents indicated that there were services in their area that could run better with some minor changes.

Respondents who selected “yes” noted:

Fort William:

- The number 46 Fort William to Corpach service could be run a lot better. The buses are often late or do not show up at all. This is very often the case with the 3.25pm bus that also caters for the High School.
- No buses run from Fort William to Corpach in the evenings on a Sunday.
- Service 44 should never be a double-decker bus. The road is too narrow and in most parts very exposed to high winds which makes it impossible to operate a safe service.
- The use of one bus for two routes start at town go up Alma Road, Kennedy Rd, Argyle Road, Achintore Rd to Perth Place and back to town.
- The route from town to Plantation is a lot longer than is needed. It takes 40 minutes as it goes to Upper Achintore
- If 46 bus at 8.15 from Middle Street, Fort William to Corpach was a few minutes later it would connect with the Kinlochleven bus

Mallaig :

- A longer interval between arriving in Mallaig and leaving, accommodate medical appointments, and quick shopping.
- Bus connection from Fort William to Arisaig to connect with the Citylink that comes in after 6pm Mallaig bus leaves at 5.45 this bus comes from the airport.
- More buses between Arisaig and Mallaig. Doctor appointments are sometimes late and if one misses the bus there is no other connection.
- The local Shiel bus to leave Fort William later than 17.40 to Arisaig to allow for eating out in the evening. The buses could link to allow easier access to and from the local doctor and other outreach services provided in Mallaig (dentist, CAB, etc.)
- The bus during the day to Fort William (not the early school bus) restricts the time available in town, leaving to time for accessing recreational facilities.

Inverness:

- Services between Fort William and Inverness could be better planned to tie in with onward trains.
 - In summer, a larger coach (Megabus) for the popular 16:45 from Inverness to Fort William, especially when schools and universities break up.
-

- A later bus on a Sunday from Inverness to Fort William to replace one of the earlier services.

Rural Lochaber:

- Running the 12.10 bus from Acharacle to Fort William 4 days a week instead of 5 would be one way of saving more money.
- The Skye to Glasgow service and the Inverness to Fort William buses come through all the stops from Invergarry to Spean Bridge virtually at the same time. It would provide a more comprehensive service if they were staggered.
- The Kilchoan to Fort William bus service, being that it is such a long journey and round trip takes from 08.00 to 16.00 approx. passengers should be allowed to bring back any quantity of shopping and goods they want. There is plenty room in the storage in the base of the bus and also in the boot.

Respondents were asked to consider what the impact may be on them/their household/or community if the service changes they had suggested to the previous questions were to be implemented

A number of comments highlighted general negative impacts on the reduction of services.

Impacts regarding suggestions about service changes have been categorised and summarised below.

Improved uptake of public transport: Respondents indicated that they would be more confident in the bus service and therefore more likely to use it regularly.

Better access to public services: Respondents noted that they would be able to access public services, e.g. local doctor surgery and the hospital in Inverness.

Better access to social/cultural activities: It was suggested in a number of responses that it would allow people living in Lochaber to access social and cultural activities outwith the region e.g. Eden Court.

Are there specific venues/locations that bus services in your area should continue to reach?

Table 7.7 : Based on 50 responses

Response	Number
No	3
Yes	47

47 of the respondents indicated that there were specific venues/locations that bus services in their area should continue to reach.

3 respondents indicated that there were not specific venues/locations that bus services in their area should continue to reach.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Fort William: Medical and shopping centres or stores, i.e. from Fort William and from Mallaig to Arisaig. Upper Achintore to Corpach. From Fort William to Corpach Annat Point. A bus from Upper Achintore Fort William to Corpach via medical centre.

Mallaig: Mallaig community centre, medical centre. Fort William to Arisaig and Mallaig. The West Highland bus service may be sparse but provides a vital connection with Fort William for onward connections, hospital services etc.

Inverness: The late bus to Inverness on a Sunday should be reinstated as this reduction in service is causing transport issues to students travelling to Inverness from Fort William. Fort William to Inverness bus at 6:15 is vital for students travelling from Mallaig and Fort William to Inverness on Sunday for college. Evening service from Fort William to Inverness on Sunday. Cancelling the 5.20am bus from Inverness to Fort William daily should enable this service to be reinstated. Ballachulish to Raigmore Hospital

Ardnamurchan: Fort William. Mallaig, Acharacle. Kilchoan, Acharacle, Salen to Fort William, Acharacle to Lochailort/Fort William. Kilchoan and all stops to Fort William.

Are there particular times of the day when services are needed?

Table 7.8: based on 48 responses

Response	Number
No	7
Yes	41

41 respondents indicated that there were particular times of the day that services are needed in their local area. 7 respondents indicated that there were no particular times of the day where services are needed.

Evening: An evening bus from Mallaig and Fort William later than those scheduled at present. Evening service from Fort William to Inverness on Sundays. Sunday evening services in Fort William. After 6pm. if possible a taxi bus service in the A830 area for after 6pm and Sunday transport provision. Arisaig to Fort William

Afternoon: Buses to run to Upper Achintore and Plantation between 3-3.30 from Corpach. 3pm on weekdays and significantly more buses on a Sunday

Morning: Sunday 6:15 Fort William to Inverness. Morning service, Mallaig to Fort William. Time morning start 6 am from Fort William to Corpach Annat Point. Inverness morning service for hospital appointments/airport. Spean Bridge to Fort William at 10:00 approximately. Arisaig to Fort William morning and evenings – to enable people to get to and from work and also morning/evening's to enable students to get to and from college

Are there specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should?

Table 7.9: based on 47 respondents

Response	Number
No	32
Yes	15

15 respondents indicated that there were specific venues/locations that bus services do not

presently reach but should. 32 respondents indicated that there were not specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should.

Respondents who selected yes noted:

- A bus from Acharacle to Kilchoan
- A service from Fort William to Aviemore
- Service from Glencoe Village along the back road, passing the Youth Hostel.
- Fort William via Spean Bridge to Kingussie.
- A bus from Acharacle to Mallaig.
- A service that allows the residents of Moidart to easily reach and return from Mallaig in order to access all the public and health services, retailers etc. offered there.

Are there particular times of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues/locations but should?

Table 7.10 : Based on 47 respondents

Response	Number
No	23
Yes	24

24 respondents indicated that there are times of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues but should. 23 respondents indicated that there was not any particular time of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues/locations but should.

Respondents who selected yes noted:

Mallaig

- Evening returns from Mallaig and Fort William.
- Fort William bus station to Mallaig.
- Current bus timetable does not allow anyone from the Ardnamurchan peninsula to access Fort William for either a full day’s work, or to attend college.

Fort William Connections

- More frequent services on weekends Fort William service 44 especially in the morning.
- There should be a bus that leaves Upper Achintore and terminates at Corpach somewhere between 8:30 and 8:45am.
- In Fort William between town centre and Corpach Annat Point - 4:30am - 6:00am Monday to Friday and the same place 7pm- 10pm Sunday.
- Perhaps the Fort William to Kilchoan bus could alter slightly so that it could uplift children from schools in Strontian or Acharacle thus cutting down on school transportation or alternatively, transport providers should have minibuses so that maximum amount of children
- It would be better if the bus that passes through Roshven at 12.42 ran an hour earlier to give more time in Fort William for shopping before it does the school run back at 15.20.
- Glen Nevis Visitor Centre / Glen Nevis Lower Falls between 7am and 9am for people that want to climb Ben Nevis. Between 3pm and 5pm for climbers/walkers that want to return to Fort William.
- 3pm Kinlochleven to Fort William on weekdays and two or three buses on Sunday.

Inverness/Glasgow Connections

- Inverness on a Sunday
- Later buses to Inverness, Glasgow. Glasgow, Inverness
- Connect with late Citylink bus from Glasgow Airport.

Are there services that you/your household/your group use that connect with trains/buses/ferries?

Table 7.11: based on 47 respondents

Response	Number
No	23
Yes	24

24 respondents indicated that there are services that they use to connect with other buses, ferries or trains. 23 respondents indicated that they do not use bus services to connect with other trains, buses or ferries.

Respondents noted

Glasgow

- From Arisaig to Fort William to link with the bus to Glasgow and onward services, or to Inverness, and to Mallaig for the ferry. Times need to be jointly scheduled to provide a proper link.
- To catch the Glasgow bus
- Acharacle- Fort William connection with the Glasgow airport bus or connection with the Inverness (hospital) bus.
- Fort William to Glasgow then to Northern Ireland and Ayr
- Connect with service to and from Fort William, to and from Glasgow!

Inverness

- Sunday evening service from Fort William to Inverness
- Fort William to Inverness connecting to onward trains to both Aviemore and Aberdeen. Allowance needs to be made for both bus and train services running late.
- 8.45 from Fort William to Inverness for airport connection to Luton

Both

- Buses to Glasgow and Inverness in Fort William
- Inverness or Glasgow buses from Fort William
- Citylink from Fort William to Inverness/Glasgow and train to Glasgow
- Connections to Glasgow and Inverness often used

Islands/ Mallaig

- Yes, sometimes the Mallaig and Uig Ferries to the Western Isles
 - Bus train and ferry from Mallaig
 - Service 44 in order to reach connections to Inverness (bus) and Mallaig/ Glasgow (train)
-

- Kilchoan bus links with ferry in morning essential for island hoppers/tourism link

Fort William

- Transport to and from Kennedy Rd to the bus and rail hub at Fort William

Others

- Glasgow, Inverness, Mallaig.
- Traveling from Kinlochleven to Corpach daily I need to change buses in Middle Street daily
- The ONLY bus each day connects to the Fort William-Inverness bus and later Glasgow & Oban buses.
- Acharacle to Fort William
- Early and late evening buses to and from Mallaig/Arisaig to Fort William

Are there new developments in the area that need to be supported?

Table 7.12: based on 57 respondents

Response	Number
No	36
Yes	13

13 respondents indicated that there were new developments in the area that should be supported with bus services. 36 respondents indicated that there were not any new developments that would need to be supported

Respondents noted:

New Hospital

- To and from the new Belford Hospital
- New Belford Hospital when it's built

Services/Other

- Mallaig to Fort William bus to connect with Inverness bus
- Local taxi has 8 seat transport but this could be utilised for taxi bus service
- The community car scheme at present provides the only way in which many residents can reach medical appointments in Strontian & Acharacle, and often such appointments in Fort William. This scheme is an essential service for times that don't fit with the single bus time and where there are no taxis. Continued support from Highland Council is essential!!

Is there anything that prevents you or discourages you from using the bus or dial-a-bus services in your area?

Table 7.13: based on 22 respondents

Response	Number	Disability
I cannot get to the bus stop	0	2
The vehicle is not easy for me to	6	1

access e.g. because it has steps The timetable does not fit in with my lifestyle	11	2
I have to wait too long for a return journey	13	1
Drivers are unhelpful	14	4

The most common barriers that respondents indicated prevented or discouraged them from using the bus services were:

- Drivers are unhelpful
- I have to wait too long for a return journey
- The timetable does not fit in with my lifestyle

Is there any activity that you are prevented from doing, or service you cannot access because of a lack of transport

Table 7.14: Based on 22 respondents

Response	Number
Healthcare appointments	11
Commuting / getting to work	8
Sports clubs / Exercise classes / Gym	7
Swimming pool	6
Going to the theatre or cinema	10
After school activities	3
Visiting friends or family	12
Shopping	9
Going out for a meal or a drink	15
Educational training / classes	6

The most common activities that respondents indicated they were prevented from doing because a lack of transport were:

- Going out for a meal or a drink
- Visiting friends or family
- Healthcare appointments
- Going to the theatre or cinema

Local questions

The Mallaig – Fort William timetable allows for commuting. Is this important? Are there people who would be unable to get to work without these buses?

Nearly all of the respondents indicated that stated route is very important. Other comments suggested that a better use of resources would be to link Mallaig to Arisaig so that people could use

connecting train routes.

How long do people from the Acharacle / Kinlochmoidart area want to spend in Fort William?

There was a varied response indicating that flexibility is required. E.g., for short shopping trips 1-2 hours would be desirable, but for other activities such as leisure or to attend appointments a longer turnaround is required. A number of comments highlighted that it is hard to predict as needs vary. It was also stated that only by providing a regular bus service that people will choose to use public transport.

How often does Lochaline need a bus to Fort William? Which days would be preferred?

Respondents suggested that the route was needed daily as the current three days a week was unsuitable.

Would a bus every 2 hours between Kinlochleven and Fort William be acceptable? If not, what difficulties would this cause?

6 respondents indicated that the proposal would be acceptable.

12 respondents indicated that it would not be acceptable. Respondents noted a number of difficulties that this proposal would cause, including:

- Problems with getting to and from work
 - People in Glencoe, Ballachulish etc. would be limited/isolated
 - Tourists would be limited as the use this service to get to Glencoe Village and back
-

How would people be affected if the Fort William – Kinlochleven evening buses finished earlier?

The areas respondents highlighted that people would be affected by the proposal would include:

Using public transport to go to/from work: Late workers would have difficulty getting home, it was highlighted that this may specifically be a problem with people who work in hotels and do not finish until late.

Taking part in social activities: People would not be able to go/to from Fort William for social events, shopping or visiting relatives.

Connecting with other services: People would not be able to get connecting bus home from Inverness after hospital appointments

In Fort William, the main town bus service is reduced when school buses are running. Would you like the main town service to be improved even if it meant there were fewer school buses?

The majority of respondents did not feel it was acceptable to alter school transport. Comments noted that many school routes were already under pressure.

In Fort William, which of these is most important to you

Table 7.14

Answer Options	Response Count
Regular service at times I can remember	18
Frequent services	21
Buses go close to where I live or want to go	16

21 respondents selected that frequent services are most important to them. 18 respondents noted that a regular service at times I can remember is more important to them. 16 respondents indicated that buses go close to where I live or want to go is more important to them.

How would people be affected if the Treslaig – Fort William buses (apart from the school bus) ran on fewer days per week? Are any days particularly important?

Respondents noted that it would have a significant impact on employment.

Public meetings

Council Chamber, Lochaber House, High Street, Fort William
Tue 03/11/2015

General comments

- Publicity of routes is key
- Have you ever looked at a council-owned bus company
- There is no competition in the markets allowing operators to do what they want
- There was a consensus the buses that were used were of poor quality
- A participant stated if they had a choice of either paying a little extra for a service or see that service withdrawn they would rather the service price was increased.
- The bus service does not allow for multi modal travel – there has to be a more joined up approach

Current Services

1. Even though some buses may be wheelchair accessible there is no consideration given to other disabilities e.g. visual impairment
 2. Wheelchair users can book their outward journey ahead of time but they aren't allowed to book their return journey
 3. After 530pm on Sunday there is no access to bus services in Fort William
 4. Rumours locally that the early Fort William/Inverness service is to be cut – this would make reaching appointments difficult. .
 5. There is a 17:20 service from Middle Street to Roybridge but not a return service, the last service out of Roybridge being at 16:15
 6. Highland Council criticised for severing the 7:20am bus service, the Council should be seeking integration between different forms of transport.
 7. There is a service linking Fort William and Caol – why is Corpach not included? And why no Sunday services?
-

-
8. Citylink doesn't make it possible to book a return journey if you are a wheelchair user, can only book a single.
 9. It was reported that Stagecoach service 19, which is meant to be coaches, runs with double-deckers on this Fort William to Inverness route

Future Services

1. The Mallaig to Fort William bus timetable should be considered in light of the Lochboisdale-Mallaig ferry operation.

Other

2. Concern over lack of information on bus services affecting residents and visitors; plus concern about lack of bicycle provision on buses, also impacting on tourists which are important for Lochaber economy.
3. Highland Council needs to be aware of the "accessibility trap" – accessibility isn't just about wheelchairs – there needs to be consideration given to amputees, other walking impaired and visually impaired passengers.
4. Coaches with wheelchair lifts are OK – so long as you happen to be the first passenger with a wheelchair, otherwise no room. Also such lifts are no use for ambient walkers – it is a vehicle design issue.
5. Point made that Highland Council has to work with all operators to ensure integration
6. Concern that there is a 'hit list' of services to be cut –
7. Meeting participants concerned that the Council cannot exercise "clout" over the type of business used on non-contract services – often the buses are of poor quality; tourists will equally take a bad impression.
8. Is it possible to bundle profitable and unprofitable routes together to produce more services
9. Could Quality Bus Contracts enable such an approach
10. Has a Council-owned bus company been considered?

Strontian 03 November 2015 18:00-21:00

Key points

- For a commercial transport company there is concern about the concessionary fare and fuel rebate when tendering for new contracts.
- Local bus services are a lifeline service – many people in the local area have no other transport.
- There was a consensus that the priority for the area is links into Fort William. Provision into other local centres were important but Fort William and connections the priority.
- The bus provision to the youth club was key. The youth club was the only place where all the younger people can come to meet other people outwith school.
- A modest fair increase would be acceptable if service provision was not affected.
- The existing school bus to Kinlochleven makes a good connection for Fort William
- The bus contract put duties on operators to operate in certain ways but other things of the bus service will put users off e.g. bus stops being dirty

Current Services

- Morvern on the Move (from Lochaline) and Shiel Buses (from Ardgour and Acharacle) run buses to the Tuesday and Thursday evening youth club sessions at the Sunart Centre. Some of the Sunart Centre community transport budget supports this.
- Local bus service is considered a lifeline – for instance allowing access to Fort William on a Saturday for the young people and the elderly to go into Fort William mid-week for their

shopping and personal needs such as visiting the bank.

- The 7.10am from Mallaig to Fort William is very popular – workers and students depend on it.
- One of the ways people manage a night out without a car just now is to catch the school bus to Ardour, cross on the ferry, catching the Kinlochleven to Fort William bus – very popular.
- The link to Fort William is good also for getting to Glasgow – there is a 30mins buffer between arriving in Fort William and departing for Glasgow.
- Need to keep connections to ferry too – very important.
- Market youth club bus as dual use. Other residents would be able to access library, old folks home etc.
- It was highlighted that the service times currently linked well with onward connections e.g. Glasgow.

Future Services

- It would be good to encourage more use of the youth club bus services – as public services they could be used more, perhaps bigger buses could be used if demand grew.
- An important priority is establishing good rural transport to reach centres where services are – Strontian has the youth club, a library and a retirement home – people from all around wish to access these facilities.
- The timings of buses going to Fort William Monday-Friday from the locality considered good as they allow 3 hours in town to conduct business, but they seem lightly used. Would like to see a Saturday option too, with a later bus on Saturday, as with the one in summer; it would be helpful socially.
- There was a consensus that extending or moving back the return time from Fort William on a Saturday (currently 15:20) would enable residents to access more social activities
- There was an indication that capacity of the buses could be increased if there was a demand.

Other

- One of the two contractors present asked if the concessionary fares regime will continue – this would be important for determining tender prices. In response it was advised this is a Scottish Government controlled item, although at present there is no indication that a change is due. The theory of the concessionary fares is that transport providers should be no better, nor worse off than if there was no scheme. It is not built into the tender specifications currently – if a major change occurs in the future it will need to be addressed, likely impacted assessed and options explored.
- The number of retirees in the area is growing – likely to affect transport need and demand for bus services. It was highlighted that there was an ageing demographic. This could change local priorities of bus provision in the future.
- Local bus operators are very helpful.
- Bus shelters are a disgrace – it is a widespread issue in Lochaber – Council not doing its job well in this regard. Response – new 3-month cleaning cycle in place for the Highland area – intention is to produce better, cleaner shelters.

Section 8 – Caithness

Overview

There was one meeting held in the Caithness area. Attendees included local transport providers, Community Council representatives, local residents and Highland Councillors.

In addition there was a public questionnaire which asked questions to attain views on:

- The current bus service
- Barriers the public and communities face when using bus services
- What type of bus services will be important in the future
- What opportunities are there for altering the current networks

Please indicate on what basis your response to this survey is being made.

Table 8.1: Based on 67 respondents

Responses	Number
As a member of the public	61
As a community group representative	2
As a Community Council representative	0
As a commercial passenger transport company	1
As a community transport organisation	1
As a Highland Council Ward Councillor	2

67 people from the Caithness area responded to the questionnaire. This included responses from community group representatives, commercial passenger companies, community transport companies, members of the public and Highland Council Ward Councillors.

61 responses to the consultation survey were members of the public. There were 2 responses from community group representatives, 1 response from a passenger transport company, 1 response from a community transport organisation and 2 responses from Highland Council Ward Councillors.

Important information to note is: -

- 60 % use public bus or dial a bus transport
- 35% of these respondents highlighted that they use it almost every day

Emerging issues

Current use of services

Feedback from both the survey and public meetings indicated that current services were used for a range of purposes. The main purposes for using bus services in Caithness were for: social activities, leisure activities, onward connections and to attend medical appointments

Improvement to current services

Respondents indicated that current service provision prevents them from doing certain activities. These included shopping, commuting and after school activities. Respondents also highlighted that

the current timetables did not fit their lifestyle and timings of return journeys prevented them from using bus services. Nearly half of all respondents indicated that there were services in their area that could run better with some minor changes.

Future Services

Respondents noted that it is important that future bus services take into account the new college campus at Dale Farm and the new Wick High School, swimming pool and library.

Accessibility

Respondents noted that services might be better utilised if buses were more accessible. Respondents suggested that having buses with high steps e.g. X99 service were not suitable for particular groups.

Thurso to Wick

Respondents noted that current services were not suitable for commuting from Thurso to Wick via Castletown. E.g. for 8am

Caithness to Inverness

Many noted the importance of the Caithness to Inverness service. It was highlighted that the late night bus from Inverness to Caithness no longer goes to Thurso. Respondents also noted that the service should enable people to access the hospital in Inverness. A respondent highlighted that the Caithness to Inverness bus goes via Lybster, Main Street.

Public Consultation Questionnaire – Full Results

Do you/anyone in your household use home to school transport as an entitled pupil?

Table 8.2: based on 66 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Yes	40	61
No	21	32
Not applicable	5	7

32% of the respondents indicated that their household does not use home to school transport. 61% of respondents indicated that someone in their household did use home to school transport and 7% of respondents said that the question was not applicable to them.

Do you/your household/your group use other types of public bus or dial-a-bus transport?

Table 8.3: based on 65 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Yes	44	66
No	18	28
Not applicable	3	5

66% of respondents indicated that they use public bus or dial-a-bus transport. 28% indicated that they did not use public bus or dial-a-bus transport and 5% indicated that the question was not applicable.

What do you/your household/your group use this service / these services for?

Table 8.4: based on 61 respondents

Responses	Number	%
Work	21	34
School	8	13
Further / Higher Education	8	13
Leisure activities e.g. sports clubs, swimming pool	9	14
Social activities e.g. meeting with friends or family	18	29
Shopping	18	29
To attend medical appointments	13	21
Onward connections (train/bus/ferry)	14	22
Not applicable – do not use services	1	1

From the 61 respondents to the question “What do you/your household/your group use this service/these services for” the most common responses were: work, social activities, leisure activities, onward connections and to attend medical appointments.

Are there any services that run in your area that you feel are not needed?

Table 8.5: based on 65 respondents

Responses	Number
No	56
Yes	9

56 respondents indicated that all services in their area were necessary. 9 respondents highlighted that there were services in their area that were unnecessary.

Respondents who selected “yes” noted:

Wick

- Two buses go through Halkirk within 5 minutes of each other. approx. 7:10 am
- The X99 Wick to Inverness 09:46 is not needed because there are two buses that leave at similar times
- The Wick to Inverness 13.48 gets in at 16.43 therefore can't be used for shopping

Lybster

- Two x97buses leave Lybster at 12.03 and 12.38.
-

Are there any services that run in your area that would be good to keep but could be run better with some minor changes?

Table 8.6: based on 66 respondents

Response	Number
No	34
Yes	32

34 out of the 66 respondents indicated that current services would not run better with minor changes.

32 respondents indicated that there were services in their area that could run better with some minor changes.

Respondents who selected “yes” noted:

Wick

- A bus for workers during the late afternoon
- X99 Wick to Inverness 08.40 should come down the village as part of the route.
- X99 Inverness to Wick 16.40 should be reinstated and also a later bus service from Inverness should be permanent.

Thurso

- The 16.29 - 82 bus service arriving into Thurso for 17.17pm could be altered to connect with the 80 bus service that goes on to Dunnet
- The route on the service between Thurso - Halkirk could be altered to include the North Highland College Rural Studies Centre at Dale Farm in the morning and late afternoon.

Thurso to Wick

- From Thurso to Wick via Castletown. For people travelling to work this service is not fit for purpose. A bus earlier in the am that arrives in Wick for 8 and a service that provides a direct route to Wick via Castletown that arrives in Wick for 9.
- Bus from Wick to Thurso via Halkirk.

Other locations

- Thrumster on the B874 to Gillock.
- Local bus could go to Ackergill as it goes to Lochshell
- 08.40 from Wick to Inverness should come down Main Street Lybster (daily) and also 13.48 Wick to Inverness (Sunday) should come down Main Street, Lybster.
- An early afternoon bus from Caithness to Inverness.
- An early bus on Sunday on the 82 route

Respondents were asked to consider what the impact may be on them/their household/or community if the service changes they had suggested to the previous questions were to be implemented

A number of comments highlighted general negative impacts on the reduction of services.

Impacts regarding suggestions about service changes have been categorised and summarised

below.

No impact: A number of respondents noted that there would be no impact to question 8, apart from it would save the commercial bus company money.

Improved service: A respondent noted that by only supporting services where they were used frequently then it would lead to an improved service.

Help people in isolation: Respondents noted that people without their own transport would be less dependent on others and less isolated.

Access to Inverness: A number of respondents highlighted that improving the Caithness to Inverness services would have a positive impact as buses would not arrive late.

More flexibly with connecting services: A respondent highlighted by offering improved services from Caithness to Inverness during the early afternoon would allow people in Caithness to leave later in the afternoon if they have onward connections e.g. Edinburgh, Glasgow

Reliability: A respondent noted that the services would become more reliable. It was highlighted that buses going to the college are oversubscribed and sometimes individuals have to make alternative arrangements.

Are there specific venues/locations that bus services in your area should continue to reach?

Table 8.7 : Based on 64 responses

Response	Number
No	15
Yes	49

49 of the respondents indicated that there were specific venues/locations that bus services in their area should continue to reach.

15 respondents indicated that there were not specific venues/locations that bus services in their area should continue to reach.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Thurso: General locations that respondents highlighted were important to continue to reach were: the School, college, Tesco, Castletown to Thurso, train and ferry station, centre of town to outskirts, Halkirk, Wick via Halkirk, Dounreay, Bettyhill, Tongue and Melness.

Wick: General locations that respondents highlighted were important to continue to reach were: Tesco, Wick – Dunbeath, Dunbeath – Inverness, X99 bus to and from Scrabster including the 13.25 from Scrabster, Staxigoe to Wick High School bus, Service 81, Castletown to Wick, Thurso, John O'Groats, Inverness.

Inverness: There were a number of comments about the importance of having bus provision from Caithness to Inverness. It was highlighted by a number of respondents that current service already created problems for local people to attend hospital appointments either as outpatients or to visit

friends and family.

Are there particular times of the day when services are needed?

Table 8.8: based on 63 responses

Response	Number
No	17
Yes	46

46 respondents indicated that there were particular times of the day that services are needed in their local area. 17 respondents indicated that there were no particular times of the day where services are needed.

Some key points that were highlighted were:

Commuting: Before and after school and lunchtime 08.30 - 12.30 and 3.45/ 5.30pm, first thing in the morning, and at night, before and after work. (To Wick and Inverness)

Days: More on a Sunday, Monday – Friday, School runs, Saturday Service Every day of week

Specific services : Wick - Thurso service at 550AM Monday – Friday 0744 Wick - Thurso (Saturday) Wick - Thurso hourly services commencing at 910 are vital X99 buses coming from Dunbeath - Wick and Wick – Dunbeath. 08.40 from Wick to Inverness should come down Main Street Lybster (daily) and also 13.48 Wick to Inverness (Sunday) should come down Main Street, Lybster. Service route 81. This service is not currently fit to get to and from work. If living in any of the areas on this route. 82 a bus between the 0718 and 1018 at Watten to Wick.

Are there specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should?

Table 8.9: based on 62 respondents

Response	Number
No	45
Yes	17

17 respondents indicated that there were specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should. 45 respondents indicated that there were not specific venues/locations that bus services do not presently reach but should.

- The late bus from Inverness to Caithness used to go all the way to Thurso and now it terminates in Wick
 - 08.40 from Wick to Inverness should come down Main Street Lybster (daily)
 - 13.48 Wick to Inverness (Sunday) should come down Main Street, Lybster
 - Thurso - Bettyhill - Tongue - should have a daily service
 - Ackergill village and environs
-

Are there particular times of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues/locations but should?

Table 8.10: Based on 61 respondents

Response	Number
No	33
Yes	28

28 respondents indicated that there are times of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues but should. 33 respondents indicated that there was not any particular time of the day that bus services do not presently reach specific venues/locations but should.

Key times and locations respondents noted included:

- Gills Bay ferry arrival/departure times.
- The 8:30pm bus from Inverness terminates at Wick, it should continue to Thurso
- Around 10.30 pm Thurso to Halkirk
- Westerdale via Dale Farm - morning and late afternoon
- 82 a bus between the 0718 and 1018 at Watten to Wick
- Regular service to and from Inverness - adequate to allow attending /visiting Raigmore hospital
- Bus to Inverness from Wick at 7.30 pm

Are there services that you/your household/your group use that connect with trains/buses/ferries?

Table 8.11: based on 63 respondents

Response	Number
No	39
Yes	24

24 respondents indicated that there are services that they use to connect with other buses, ferries or trains. 39 respondents indicated that they do not use bus services to connect with other trains, buses or ferries.

Key areas that were highlighted from respondents were:

Specific services

- North Sutherland dial-a-bus
- Service X99
- X97 to Dunbeath and vice versa (X97 Stagecoach to Inverness)

Inverness –

- Trains/buses/airports in Inverness
 - Gills Bay/Scrabster Inverness X99 and X97
 - Caithness to Inverness then train or bus on to Glasgow/Edinburgh.
 - 7.00 am Thurso - Inverness 7.20 am Thurso - Inverness to catch Edinburgh/Glasgow/Aberdeen service
-

- Inverness to Thurso if you are in Glasgow bus is late into Inverness

Connections

- Ferry services, train services
- Ferry to Orkney
- Inverness or Scrabster
- The rail service from Caithness to Inverness is prone to late running. If I have onward rail travel from Inverness it's usually safer to get a bus to Inverness.

Are there new developments in the area that need to be supported?

Table 8.12 : based on 57 respondents

Response	Number
No	44
Yes	13

13 respondents indicated that there were new developments in the area that should be supported with bus services. 44 respondents indicated that there were not any new developments that would need to be supported

Key locations respondents noted include:

- New college campus at Dale Farm.
- The Rural Studies Centre
- Large new developments in Dornoch, Sutherland, which may require additional X99 services.
- The new Wick High School pool and library should have a service running from Tesco to the new school as it is far away from the centre of the town and not easily accessible for people with limited transport and mobility problems.
- Development with tidal/wave power
- Buses for school transport to replace the minibuses

Is there anything that prevents you or discourages you from using the bus or dial-a-bus services in your area?

Table 8.13: based on 35 respondents

Response	Number	Disability
I cannot get to the bus stop	5	0
The vehicle is not easy for me to access e.g. because it has steps	7	2
The timetable does not fit in with my lifestyle	21	2
I have to wait too	12	1

long for a return
journey
Drivers are
unhelpful 14 2

The most common barriers that respondents indicated prevented or discouraged them from using the bus services were:

- The timetable does not fit in with my lifestyle
- Drivers are unhelpful
- I have to wait too long for a return journey

Is there any activity that you are prevented from doing, or service you cannot access because of a lack of transport

Table 8.14: Based on 61 responses

Response	Number	Disability
Healthcare appointments	10	1
Commuting / getting to work	11	1
Sports clubs / Exercise classes / Gym	4	0
Swimming pool	8	0
Going to the theatre or cinema	4	1
After school activities	10	0
Visiting friends or family	7	3
Shopping	11	2
Going out for a meal or a drink	6	2
Educational training / classes	2	1

The activities that respondents highlighted that they are most prevented from doing because of lack of transport are: “shopping”, “commuting / getting to work” and “after school activities”.

Local questions

What are the main uses of the evening buses between Thurso and Wick? Are they important for travel to or from work? If so, where are the main employers?

The main uses of the evening buses between Thurso and Wick are:

- Hospital appointments
- College
- Socialising
- Work

Locations that respondents noted included:

Wick

- Tesco

Thurso

- UKAEA
- Thurso swimming pool,
- Dounreay Site Restoration Limited (DSRL)
- Battery factory
- Scrabster fish services

What are the main uses of the Sunday buses between Thurso and Wick?

Social activities

- I would use this to meet up with family but the times aren't quite right for me
- Visiting family, friends or traveling home from other locations e.g. Glasgow
- For traveling home after nights out
- Getting to/from church, gym and cinema in Thurso.
- Social and family visits.
- Visiting people in hospital

Shopping

Work

- To get to and from work in the morning and home in the evening

Connections

- Connect with other transport links

From the John O'Groats – Thurso area, which are the main destinations:

Table 8.15: Based on 42 respondents

Response	Number
Thurso	32
Wick	27
Connections to longer journeys	23

32 respondents indicated that Thurso was the main destination in the John O'Groats – Thurso area. 27 respondents indicated that Wick was the main destination. 23 respondents indicated that connections to longer journeys were the main destination.

Wick Public Transport Consultation, Public Meeting – 24 November 2015

Key points

Current bus services

- Accessibility issue – older folk would use services for appointments etc. if the buses were more accessible.
- More accessible buses would allow older people to use the buses to get to appointments. High steps are very off-putting. E.g. X99 Service.
- Rural areas – getting off at 'non-official' stops – terrain can be difficult to negotiate.
- Accessibility affects a wide range of services.
- Some drivers help, others are less obliging, but don't think it is their responsibility to help

Specific services -

- One participant would like to get to work in Wick for 8am (Castletown to Wick), or a direct route for 9am and for the journey to be faster, with no direct route during school term – takes 50 minutes for a 20 minute journey. The 7.42 needs to go to Keiss, and the 8.02 to Ackergill and Reiss.
- A request for the X99 to go the opposite way (Thurso => Castletown => Dunbeath => Wick)
 - Instead of shuttle Wick – Dunbeath put Thurso - ... - Dunbeath
 - X99 route has been cut which is causing an issue
 - Caithness Bus Users Group were told that this would never happen by Stagecoach
 - A sense of Wick being penalised and neglected (Dunbeath connection), as well as Keiss, Castletown etc. - Castletown – Bower – Keiss – very sparse service now – not fit for purpose.

Future services

Accessibility -

- Rural provision – people live off of main roads etc.
- X99 via Castletown to Wick – a need for a replacement for this service, especially on non-school days
- Bower, Keiss can't get to Thurso for 9am work.

Specific services -

- Service 81 needs a fresh look. Low current usage. It was suggested this was due to the timetable not being suitable.
- Thurso-Wick Hospital would be an attractive service; formerly a Community Council-run service, 10 or more years ago.
- New High School / Library / Swimming Pool development – putting two schools from different areas together
 - The school is looking at new school times
 - Public transport is likely to fit the school times
 - The development is due to open in August 2016

Specific services -

Option 1 (evening bus between Thurso and Wick) -

Thurso Business Park

Wick Tesco

Potential for a 'subsidised taxi'? – e.g. if always 5-6 people going on a 34 seater

- Incentives, popularity etc.?
- Big vehicles are underutilised sometimes – so long as cost to user isn't more expensive
- The 82 Service from Wick to Thurso – variable passenger numbers. Young people use for cinema; others for socialising etc. Drink driving laws
- Hotel, and Tesco workers
- A comment regarded how it would be possible to get an accurate response to this question if the meeting was scheduled for the evening.

Other

One participant lives in Castletown and works at the hospital in Wick

- Last Winter the service was deemed atrocious and the buses poor
- Currently the service is deemed ok but last year it was deemed horrendous, and the winter was not that bad
- The participant would like to get into work in Wick for 8 am (the Council provides an early

morning service which arrives for 9am)

- The Council acknowledged and appreciated the comments, noting that they all helped the representativeness of the consultation.
 - A comment regarded the lack of timetables being shown at the bus stop opposite the Norseman Hotel (St Fergus Road) – the Bus Users’ Group were told that this was The Highland Council’s responsibility, and that the timetable had not been up for at least a year.
 - A comment stated that they found Stagecoach’s website to be quite good, but that it was necessary to go online to access said information which disenfranchised many.
 - A comment on Community Transport noted that they are the only mechanisms for wheelchair accessibility in the area