

APPENDIX A

BUS SERVICE EVALUATION CRITERIA

Central Bedfordshire Council has inherited a very diverse portfolio of supported local bus services from Bedfordshire County Council. Supported services range from rural shopper buses which operate once a week and cost less than £3,000 per annum to area-wide networks costing in excess of £¼ million.

Bedfordshire County Council policy was, broadly, to mitigate the effects of commercial service withdrawals by providing alternative services, thereby minimising the impact upon existing bus users. Because recent years have seen de-registration of commercial services on a large scale, Bedfordshire's budget for supported services was continually under pressure, and a final round of cuts in the supported local bus network took place in June 2008. These cuts were identified using the weighted criteria below

<i>Criterion</i>	<i>Policy</i>	<i>Current Weighting</i>
Accessibility	Services are scored according to whether they carry people to the shops, to work, to school/college or to hospital/surgery. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN OBJECTIVE #5: <i>“To improve access to key facilities and services in Bedfordshire – particularly work and further education – through increased travel choices.....”</i>	12.5%
Congestion	The total number of passengers carried per annum, as a proxy for each service's value as a sustainable alternative mode of transport. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN OBJECTIVE #4: <i>“To minimise the growth of congestion in Bedfordshire, both in particular locations and on the overall network, and to manage its impacts on the transport system and the environment.”</i>	25%

Affordability	<p>The annual cost of each service – expensive services score lower than those which cost less.</p> <p>BUS STRATEGY SECTION 5.9:</p> <p>“Where financial support is required, this provision will be subject to a test of affordability.”</p>	25%
Value for Money	<p>An effective measure of whether a supported service represents good value for money.</p> <p>BUS STRATEGY OBJECTIVE #7:</p> <p>“To ensure that public transport is widely perceived to offer good value for money.”</p>	37.5%