Progress report on the work looking at future models of bus service provision

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Process

Where did we start from?	• Strategic Bus Review (2018-19) • Data from bus operators
What do we want from the bus?	• Needs and expectations – users / non-users • Stakeholder interests and views
What does a future bus network look like?	• Vision for bus • Characteristics of a future network
What are the implications of an enhanced network?	• Identifying potential impacts • Costs and benefits
Which is the best model to deliver the network?	• Outline Business Case, comparing costs and benefits under 4 different delivery models (or a mix of approaches in different parts of the area)
Decision	• Development of a preferred option

What do we want from the bus? – survey findings

- Consistent findings, with similar priorities amongst bus and non-bus users

- Most prioritised improvements related to:
    - Service reliability
    - Service frequency
    - Value for money/cost
    - Earlier morning start and later evening finish times

- Softer measures such as Wi-Fi and real time information are less of a priority

- Over 80% of users and non-users supportive of potential improvements, particularly:
    - Access to employment within 30 minutes
    - Expansion of network
    - More frequent services

- Lower levels of support for use of new technology

What do we want from the bus? – stakeholder views

- Network expansion:
  - More connectivity
  - More often
  - More throughout the day, evening and Sunday

- Reliability:
  - Reducing congestion
  - Bus priority measures
  - Reducing impact of roadworks

- Service changes:
  - More direct routes
  - Different types of services, including demand responsive
  - Better co-ordination, including interchange and unified fares and ticketing

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What do we want from the bus? – policy context

Document	Aspirations or objectives
Strategic Spatial Framework	Addressing congestion; improving public transport accessibility and connectivity
2030 Ambition	CAM; integrated system; access to employment within 30 mins
Independent Economic Review	Excellent place-making: transport and land use planning together
Local Industrial Strategy	Transformational change for transport, including public transport improvements / CAM
Strategic Bus Review	Enhanced bus services, new orbital routes, minimum levels of service; equity of access; targeted bus priority; rural hubs; complements CAM
Local Transport Plan	Improved levels of service and connectivity; access to employment within 30 mins; reliability; single fares / ticketing system

Vision for bus (agreed at the Bus Reform Task Group meeting 28 January 2020)

"Everyone should have the opportunity to travel; their chances in life should not be constrained by the lack of travel facilities open to them."

Central to this vision will be a bus network that is part of a world class public transport network that gives everybody an integrated travel service with high quality information and vehicles.

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Objective 1   The bus is an attractive mode of travel that competes with the car

Best-in-class services

Objective 2   The bus network supports sustainable growth

Objective 3   The bus helps to protect and enhance the environment

Encouraging sustainable growth

Objective 4   The bus network supports the health and well-being of the population

Opportunity for all

Objective 5   The bus provides opportunity for all

Best-in-class services

- Convenient routes and times
- Integrated and co-ordinated – viewed as 'one network'
- Attractive levels of service
- Reliable and punctual
- High-quality, accessible, consistent and comfortable
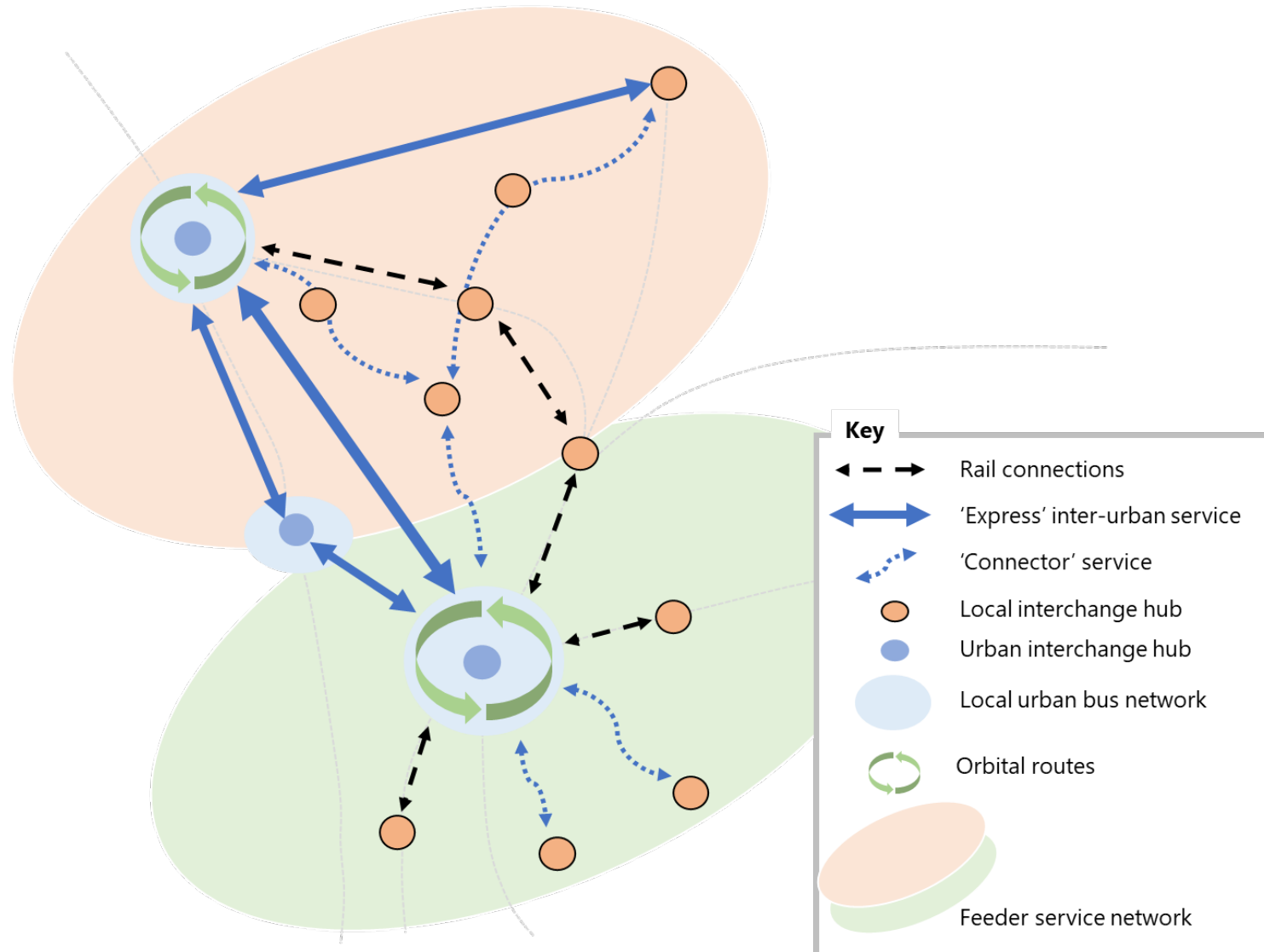- Core network complemented by connector and feeder services

Encouraging sustainable growth

- Evolving and flexible network
- Net-zero emissions
- Connects people to employment opportunities
- Links between market towns and to cities
- Stable and consistent services
- Integrated with other travel modes

Opportunity for all

- Understandable network with connecting services
- Improved, standardised supporting infrastructure
- Interchange hubs in villages, towns and cities
- Accessible and user-friendly services
- Simple, affordable and integrated travel
- Real-time information

Vision for bus: network concept

Key

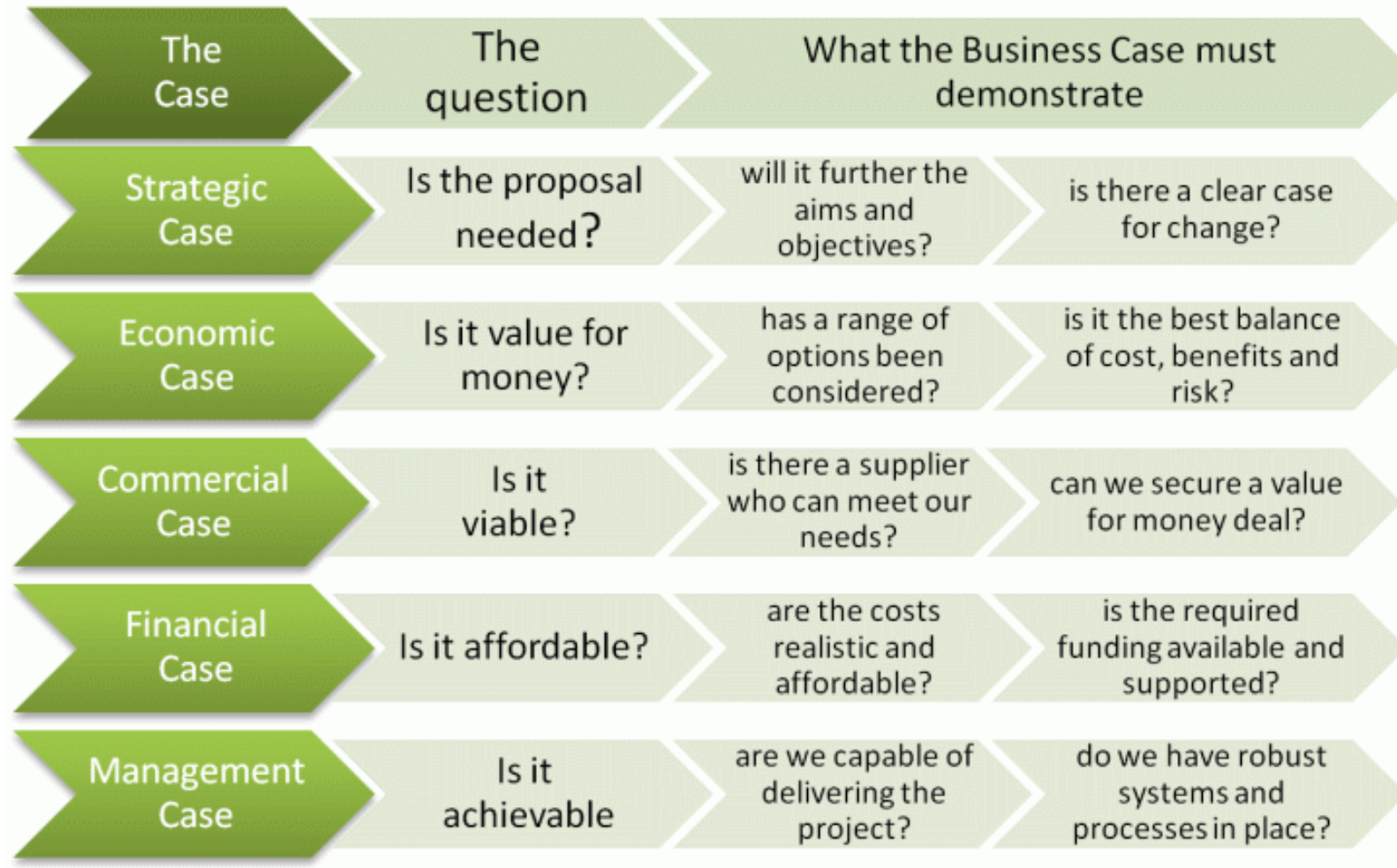|	
◄ - - - ►	Rail connections
◄═══►	'Express' inter-urban service
◄∙∙∙∙►	'Connector' service
●	Local interchange hub
●	Urban interchange hub
⬭	Local urban bus network
↻	Orbital routes
⬭	Feeder service network

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Outline Business Case

The Case	The question	What the Business Case must demonstrate	
Strategic Case	Is the proposal needed?	will it further the aims and objectives?	is there a clear case for change?
Economic Case	Is it value for money?	has a range of options been considered?	is it the best balance of cost, benefits and risk?
Commercial Case	Is it viable?	is there a supplier who can meet our needs?	can we secure a value for money deal?
Financial Case	Is it affordable?	are the costs realistic and affordable?	is the required funding available and supported?
Management Case	Is it achievable	are we capable of delivering the project?	do we have robust systems and processes in place?

Outline Business Case: responsibilities

Case	CPCA	ITP
Strategic	Support role	Lead responsibility
Economic	Support role	Lead responsibility
Commercial	Lead responsibility	Advisory role
Financial	Support role	Lead responsibility
Management	Lead responsibility	Advisory role

Outline Business Case – how we will appraise

- Need to differentiate between options (what can be done under each model: Deregulated environment; Advanced Quality Partnership Schemes; Enhanced Partnerships; Franchising Scheme) – and at different levels of funding.

- Will any complementary measures be in place (e.g. new parking management and parking policies or land use planning procedures and requirements)?

- Identify changes to individual bus services, in terms of:
  - Route, frequency and duration
  - Vehicle types and facilities
  - Service reliability
  - Bus priority measures
  - Roadside infrastructure and passenger facilities

- Some measures are area-wide:
  - Branding and network marketing
  - Fares and ticketing systems

Outline Business Case – what can we appraise?

- Assess changes to demand based upon elasticities
    - Transfer from car and other modes
    - New trips generated
- Demand changes will lead to forecasts for future income
- Use demand changes to estimate economic benefits
    - Journey time savings
    - Economic value attached to other aspects
        - Reliability – probably the biggest issue
        - Real time information, Wi-Fi, new vehicles
    - Associated CPCA investments (e.g. shelters)

- Various aspects can be appraised, not just benefits to passengers
    - Operating benefits
    - Environmental benefits
    - Congestion reduction benefits
    - Social benefits from new or reinstated services
    - Wider economic benefits
    - Quality of service for passengers
- Different levels of funding

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Bus Services Act 2017 and associated statutory guidance requirements

- Options, including the franchising scheme itself and the form of any partnership schemes, need to have been developed in sufficient detail to be able to accurately assess their impacts.

- Assessment should include detail regarding how the preferred option would be procured and delivery risks managed.

- Engagement with operators is required to explore whether there are realistic alternatives to franchising and potential forms of partnerships.

- Assessment must consider neighbouring authorities' policies relating to local bus services.

- Assessment must set out whether the authority can afford to make and operate each of the potential schemes – funding sources have to be identified.

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Learning from elsewhere

- Affordability, rather than value for money, is likely to be the bigger hurdle

- Guidance drives the assessment to a high level of detail on what the scheme is and how it will be procured – a challenge ahead of identifying a preferred option

- For a franchise solution, the auditor needs to remain independent and so difficult to start the process ahead of OBC completion

- Depot strategy will be key to achieving a level playing field for new entrants – any capital requirements need to be set out and assessed

- Fleet strategy is equally key, particularly availability of diesel stock ahead of move to full green fleet and may affect any franchise packaging strategy

- Clear operator and wider stakeholder engagement strategy is key

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Task Group:

1. Notes the progress to date with the review of future bus delivery options.

2. Supports the approach for taking forward the outline business case work, assessing the costs and benefits of the four different models (i.e. franchising; enhanced partnership; advanced quality partnership; current deregulated environment) in delivering a future bus network that will meet the vision.

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