

APPENDICES TO MD2460

Appendix A – Consultation Materials for Demand Responsive Bus Trial in Sutton

In line with the commitments in the Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) we want to explore how demand responsive bus services could complement conventional public transport services and enable good growth – particularly in harder to service areas of outer London.

Demand responsive services operate flexibly in response to local demand. These services can change routing and scheduling depending on when and where customers want to travel. This has the potential to increase the use of and attract new users to public transport.

We want to explore whether these services can improve public transport while improving accessibility and air quality (by reducing car use) in an area of outer London where car dependency is high and other forms of public transport have limited availability.

To achieve this, we are delivering a small-scale 12 month research trial in the London Borough of Sutton, with the potential to extend into a small part of the London Borough of Croydon. This trial would operate, in addition to the existing local transport network.

We are committed to delivering a trial in Sutton and Croydon. This consultation seeks to aid in the planning and delivery of this service by:

- Understanding the level of interest for this type of service
- Understanding any concerns or objections to the details of the proposed service area
- Identifying any issues not yet already considered

The consultation opens on 20 February 2019 and runs for four weeks. We will then report on the outcome ahead of the launch of the 12-month trial.

It should be noted that as a research trial, collecting feedback from users as well as other groups to understand feedback from non-users too will continue throughout the 12-month trial.

Background

Trialling these services in outer London is a commitment of the MTS. From May to November 2018, we undertook a competitive procurement process to secure an operator and identify the location for the trial, engaging a number of stakeholders through the process to ensure core requirements would be met.

Operators bidding through the procurement process had to meet strict criteria in proposing a service area for the trial including:

- Must be in an outer London borough that identified themselves in scope for the trial, where car dependency is high and public transport accessibility levels are low
- Must complement, (and not compete with) existing public transport and demonstrate demand from car users
- Must be specifically supported by the boroughs covered

Following this competitive procurement process we awarded a 12-month contract to ViaVan Technologies B.V who will operate in partnership with London General Transport Services Limited (Go Ahead London). Their proposed service area covers a large part of the London Borough of Sutton and includes a potential extension into the London Borough of Croydon. The boroughs have been engaged in the process and are supportive of the trial in the proposed service area.

What are we proposing?

This is a trial service that does not have a fixed route or schedule, but 'responds' to the request to be picked up by the customer. It can be booked at the desired time of travel, primarily through an app, and provide real time updates to customers of vehicle arrival time and guarantees a seat for confirmed bookings.

The aim of the research trial is to test the impact of a flexible route and schedule and a technology-based booking system to see if this can improve public transport outcomes while also improving accessibility and air quality (through reduced car usage). The key target markets for the service are those who usually use their car and who are not, for various reasons, using conventional public transport, walking or cycling. In the area identified, the service will provide access to key destinations and trip attractors within the local area, such as healthcare, education and leisure facilities

There will be similarities to a demand responsive bus service that is currently operated by Go Ahead and ViaVan Technologies in Oxford - PickMeUp. Please see [here](#) for further details.

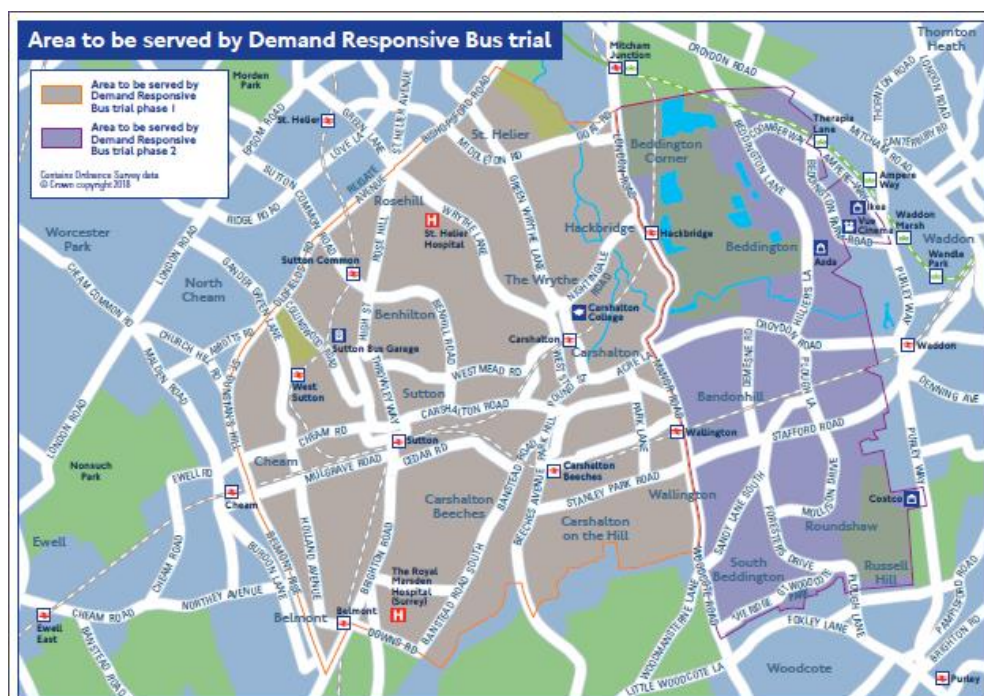
Vehicles

The service will run using up to eight Mercedes Cityline Low floor Sprinter 14-seater vehicles. The vehicles will be Euro VI compliant bringing them in line with the Ultra Low Emission Zone vehicle standards and will be fully wheelchair accessible.

Operating hours and service area

The current trial proposal is for the vehicles to operate between 06:30 and 21:30, seven days-a-week. However, these operating hours may be adjusted if we and the operator find that might better meet local demands.

The area that could be covered by the vehicles is outlined in the map below.



The service would begin in the core area (as indicated by the grey shaded area marked phase one) using six vehicles.

We will assess the public response and demand patterns in phase one to determine whether we are going to expand into the secondary area (as indicated by the purple shaded area marked Phase two). This would require two additional vehicles to maintain journey reliability over the larger area.

Buses will operate from the Sutton Bus Garage, located within the service area.

The primary standing point for vehicles not carrying or going to pick up a customer will be the Sutton Bus Garage. Standing locations would be different to usual bus operations, as the level for which they are required can be varied according to demand for the service. Any additional standing points will be agreed with the local authority and TfL in advance of service starting.

No new infrastructure or signage will be required for stopping points. With the availability of real time updates to customers of vehicle arrival time it is not expected that customers would be waiting long at stopping points. The service will use a mix of existing bus stops and approved stops which could be identified by nearest junction, address or business. These approved stopping points will be designed to be approximately every 200m within the designated service area, creating several hundred approved stopping locations across the service area. One of the benefits of the service is that stops can be easily added and removed during the trial period.

Stopping points would be identified by referring to the nearest junction, business or address and any other specific information to ensure they can be identified by all users. Stopping points will be carefully assessed to ensure every point is accessible and safe for customers who are waiting, boarding or alighting, other road users and that the stop will not impede traffic. The criteria used for this assessment will include: safe distance from junctions; locations of other traffic restrictions; kerb heights' sight lines and double yellow or red route restrictions and accessibility. Stops selected through this process will be further inspected as part of the overall route testing, to ensure other factors such as lighting, availability of pavement space, road speeds and road conditions are also considered.

Drivers of the service will be trained to the full standard of a London bus operator (holding a Category D Licence); ensuring drivers are well-placed to determine when it is safe to stop.

Drivers will be based at Sutton Bus Garage, directly employed by London General Transport Service Limited, who operate existing bus services for TfL in London. The London Bus Driver Professional Wage and Licence for London will apply to this trial, for further details please see [here](#).

Duration of the trial

This research trial will run for 12 months to collect the data required to meet our trial objectives. It is expected the service will launch in May 2019 and run for 12 months from the launch date. Advanced notice will be provided to customers ahead of launching and closing the service.

How will this demand responsive bus trial operate?

To provide the highest level of customer experience, this service is primarily designed to be booked through an app. To book a journey on this trial service, passengers will use a free downloaded app obtained through the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.

High-level information about how the service can be booked is included below to give you some understanding of the service. User-friendly guidelines of how to book will be available when the service launches.

Fares

It is expected the cost of the fare would be more than a standard London bus, in recognition of the enhanced level of service. Final fares will be subject to the consideration and approval of the Mayor and a Fares Direction will be issued with which TfL and the Operator must comply. The final fare will be part of the journey proposal offered to the customer, and the customer will have the option to reject the trip if they do not want to pay the fare proposed.

We do not propose to integrate the trial service with the TfL Oyster card payment system. Unlike our other services, payment for this bus will need to be made via the app (or over the phone if calling the operator) in advance of the trip and it would be too costly to integrate payment systems for such a small scale and short-term trial.

Freedom Passes and English National Concessionary Travel Scheme Passes will be accepted on this trial service following a simple registration process. These card holders will have to show their pass to the driver when boarding to confirm their validity.

Children under the age of 16 will only be allowed to use the service when accompanied by a guardian, parent or other adult who has booked a trip. This is to ensure the necessary data privacy consent is provided for the operator to be able to process and confirm the booking.

App booking

Once passengers have downloaded the free app, they will need to complete a simple registration process, which will include their payment details.

Once registered, passengers can then plan and book journeys. When ready to travel, customers will enter their origin and destination in the app (within the demarcated service area). They will then receive a journey proposal within seconds including the estimated time of arrival of the vehicle at desired pick up point (e.g. in 3 minutes or 9 minutes), walk time and route to pick up point, expected journey time to selected location and final fare. The customer can confirm or reject their journey easily at this point.

It is expected the average wait time for a vehicle would be 10 minutes. However, this would depend on demand and could be longer at peak times.

Once they have confirmed a journey, customers will be given walking directions to their pick-up location.

Customers will be kept up-to-date on the progress of their vehicle in the app, receiving automated alerts when the vehicle is two minutes away and again when it is on its final approach.

In parallel, the driver will receive directions to the chosen pick up location. On arrival, the driver will pull over in a manner that does not obstruct other road users and invite the customer to board. Drivers will assist wheelchair users to board the vehicle using an accessible ramp. All customers with a confirmed booking will have a guaranteed seat and can use the on-board USB charging points and free WiFi during their journey.

During the journey to the customer's destination, other customers will be picked up if they are travelling in a similar direction, with minimal impact on journey time.

At the conclusion of their journey, customers' registered payment method will be automatically charged. They will be prompted, in the app, to rate their journey, and if they wish, provide feedback, through a range of communication channels, such as in app, phone or email about things that went well, or could be improved for the future. This information will be used throughout the trial to improve the service and also at the end of the trial as part of the research evaluation.

Phone booking

For those users who don't have access to a smartphone; the service can be booked by phone via an operator. For those with an SMS enabled phone, real time journey updates would be provided by text. Journeys can also be booked by landline via an operator. However, real-time journey updates would be available only if users were able to receive text messages.

What do we want to learn from this consultation and subsequent 12-month trial?

Key to the trial will be a research program to collect the data required to understand if such a service can support the objectives of the Mayor's Transport strategy, including:

- Can the service model deliver a quality customer service offering that is accessible and easy to use?
- What are customers' experiences of using technology to request transport services in real time?
- Can the service model support mode shift away from car travel and meet the Healthy Streets principles?
- We are also interested to understand the economics and the technology behind the service

It will be important that as well as collecting feedback from users, we work with local stakeholder groups to ensure that perceptions and experience of those who are not using the service are gathered to understand any barriers to using the service.

Potential impacts of the trial

The purpose of the research trial is to understand from customers directly, the actual benefits and impacts of such a service. In the meantime, we have highlighted some potential impacts.

The service will provide a number of benefits

- The addition of these services in areas of outer London where conventional forms of transport are limited may improve access to jobs and essential services
- The design of this type of service could improve perceived personal safety and security
- The provision of a guaranteed seat for customers who have a confirmed booking
- An additional level of comfort including the use of on-board USB charging points and free WiFi which could improve customer experience
- A denser network of optional stops (approximately every 200m) which should mean shorter walking distances
- The app and phone booking system may add convenience to some passengers
- The availability of real time updates of the vehicle's arrival could help passengers in planning how long to wait at the stop
- Pre-registered payment - no need for card or cash
- The service will be wheelchair-accessible, with the added confidence of booking that space prior to travel

Some potential impacts are:

- The plan for booking and payment of trips means all users will require a bank account (except holders of Freedom Passes)
- Some customers may not find the booking of the service convenient
- Journeys cannot be pre-booked and can only be booked in real time at the time of travel
- The service is not available to unaccompanied children (under the age of 16)
- Customers who book the service from the landline and do not have SMS enabled phones to receive texts will not receive the real time updates of the vehicle's arrival

Have your say

We would like to know what you think about where and how we are proposing to run the demand responsive bus service trial, your level of interest in using the service and any issues you think it may raise.

Please give us your views by completing the online survey below by **Wednesday 20 March 2019**.

Alternatively, you can:

Email us at consultations@tfl.gov.uk

or write to us at FREEPOST TFL CONSULTATIONS

You can also request paper copies of all the consultation materials and a response form by emailing consultations@tfl.gov.uk, or writing to FREEPOST TFL CONSULTATIONS.

1. What modes of transport do you currently use most? (Please tick all that apply).

☐ Bus ☐ Rail ☐ Underground ☐ Motorbike ☐ Private car ☐ Private hire vehicle ☐ Black cab
☐ Walking ☐ Cycling ☐ Other (please specify)
Other

2. Would you be interested in using this service during the 12-month trial period?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

3. If yes, what about this service attracts you? (Please tick all that apply).

☐ Short walking distance to stopping points ☐ Includes key destinations I need to travel to ☐ Convenient booking ☐ Guaranteed seat for those who have confirmed a booking ☐ App-based booking - no need to talk to anyone ☐ App-based booking - convenient ☐ Wheelchair accessible ☐ Amenities on board (e.g. Wifi and USB charging) ☐ Ride comfort ☐ Size of the vehicle - fewer passengers ☐ Availability of vehicle arrival time ☐ Pre-registered payment - no need for card or cash ☐ Freedom pass/ENCT concession ☐ Other (please specify)

Other

4. If no or not sure, it's important we understand what may put you off using the trial service. (Please tick all that apply).

☐ I don't understand how it works ☐ I need more information ☐ I want to see how it operates first ☐ No access to smartphone ☐ No SMS enabled phone ☐ Booking process too complicated ☐ Service area not where I want to travel ☐ Don't understand where I'd find the stops ☐ Fare being higher than bus

☐ Fare not integrated with Oyster ☐ Size of the vehicle - too few/too many passengers ☐ Not available to unaccompanied children ☐ Other (please specify)
Other

5. If yes, how would you prefer to access this service?

☐ App via smartphone ☐ Booking via phone and operator

6. What do you think about our choice of specific service area and the destinations included for this trial?

☐ Strongly support ☐ Support ☐ Neither support nor oppose ☐ Oppose ☐ Strongly oppose ☐ Not sure

7. Do you have any comments about the detail of trial area covered, the operating hours or the approval process for stopping points?

8. Do you have any other comments or concerns about this proposed 12-month trial that you think we may not have considered?