

Bus Review Consultation 2017

Analysis of Results



DOCUMENT DETAILS

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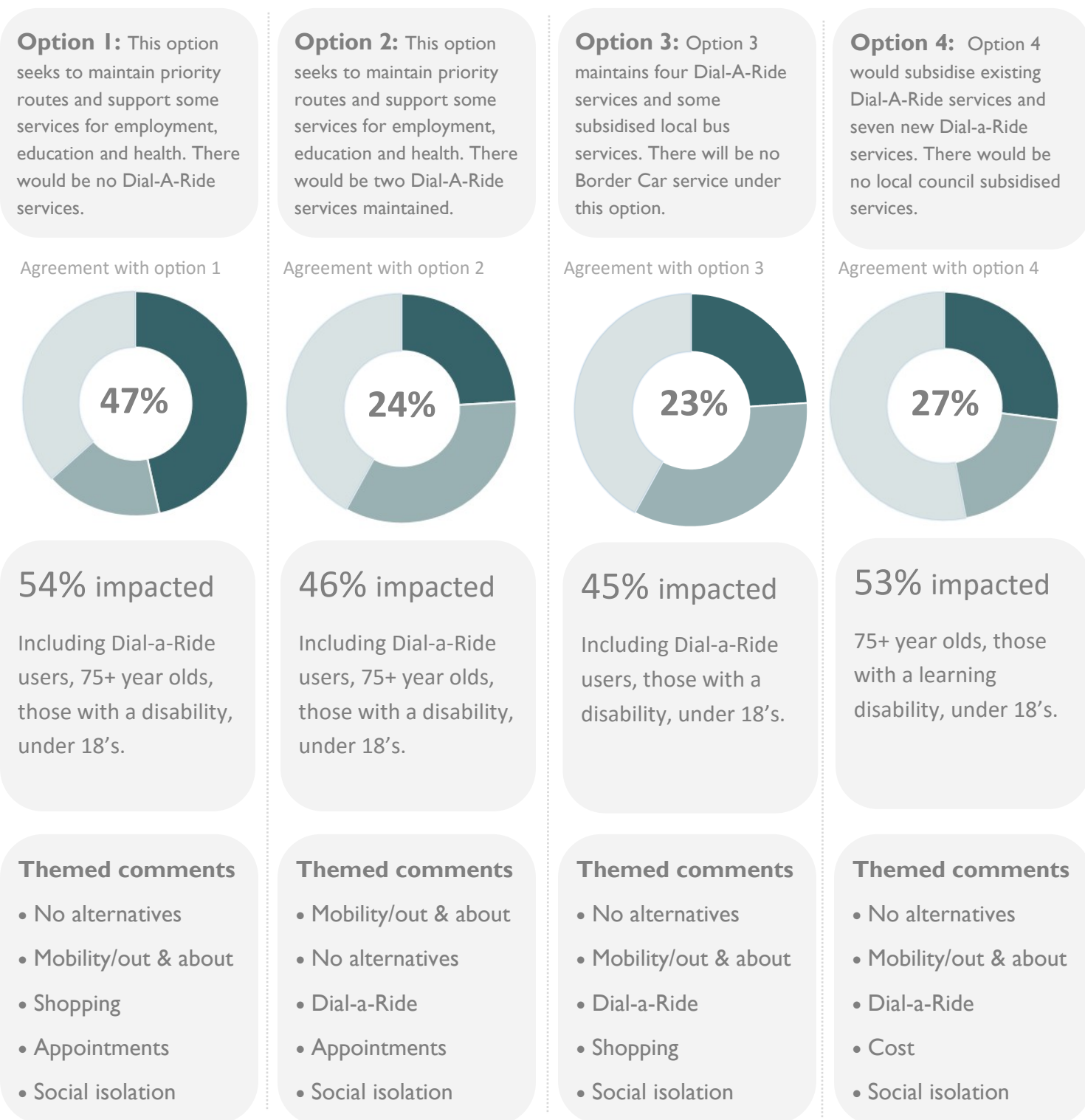
I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In total, 2024 individuals, organisations and stakeholders shared their views in Staffordshire County Council’s consultation on subsidised bus transport. This provides meaningful insight into preference and impact, and robust representation of some of those most affected by the proposals in Staffordshire. The responses received included individual and organisational survey responses, letters and emails.

1.1: Views on the proposed options for subsidised bus services

The consultation responses indicated the highest level of agreement with option 1, the County Council’s preferred option. This option would however have the highest level of impact on some key protected groups and upon Dial-a-Ride users. Other options reflected a lower level of overall agreement with options 2 and 3 reflecting marginally lower levels of impact. Views on all four options and their impacts are outlined in the graphic below:

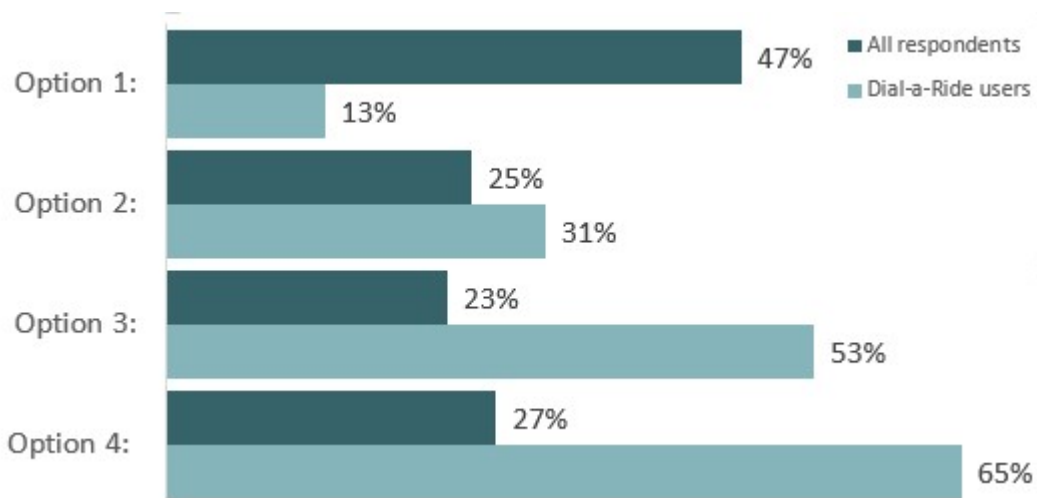
Figure 1.1: Agreement and impact of proposed options



1.2: Dial-a-Ride users

Agreement with the options varied greatly between respondents overall and Dial-a-Ride users. As the graphic below displays, Dial-a-Ride respondents showed higher levels of support for options 2-4 than respondents overall did. Option 1 was the least popular with Dial-a-Ride users.

Figure 1.2: Agreement with options from Dial-a-Ride and all respondents (%)



1.3: Making Alternative Arrangements

Over half of those individuals responding (56%) would be unable to travel if the buses they currently use, at the times they use them, were not available. A higher proportion of those who would be unable to travel had protected characteristics. These included age (particularly those under 18 and 75+ year olds) and also those with a disability.

1.4: Support in Maintaining Services

- ⇒ Respondents indicated some appetite for running or supporting future local community or voluntary transport schemes with 15% of respondents showing expressions of interest. 2% (or 29 people) expressed 'a great deal of interest' and 13% (or 194 people) would be interested 'to some extent'.
- ⇒ Respondents offered support for a range of key roles including the 'day to day running of the scheme' and 'being a volunteer driver'. Respondents also expressed an interest in wanting to be able to use new schemes if they were "set up in the local area".
- ⇒ Respondents needed 'more information on the proposed options' (31%) and 'more information on the types of community or voluntary transport schemes available' (26%) to encourage them to support the future maintenance of services.
- ⇒ Organisations were keen to share information on the types of schemes available and to signpost people to existing schemes. There was also some appetite for supporting communities with the set up and implementation of local community or voluntary transport schemes.
- ⇒ Organisations also suggested alternative solutions including a revision of pricing and timing of services to fit with employment, education and health and introducing taxi based flexible transport where patronage figures are below that required to support a conventional bus service.

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3. INTRODUCTION

Staffordshire County Council has to balance what it spends on subsidised transport services against other services which there is a legal duty to provide such as adult social care. Last year the decision was taken to review the amount the County can continue to pay towards bus travel. This consultation is about options for how the County Council can best spend it's available budget and to understand the appetite from communities to develop their own community and voluntary transport schemes. The County Council has consulted widely with local people and organisations on its proposed options for buses. This report provides a summary of the consultation findings. These will be considered by Cabinet in the Autumn of 2017, as part of the decision making process.

3.1 METHODOLOGY

The consultation took place between 24th July and 17th September 2017 with local people, bus service users, organisations and other stakeholders being encouraged to share their views through a survey, by email or by letter.

Involvement was actively encouraged from a wide range of people including protected and vulnerable groups such as young people, older people, ethnic groups, disabled people, carers and a range of health and transport advocates such as Clinical Commissioning Groups and Transport Focus.

The consultation was widely publicised including:

- ⇒ Briefings being held with a number of important individuals and groups including transport providers.
- ⇒ Communications to Staffordshire MP's, District and Borough Councils, also Parish and Town Councils.
- ⇒ Communications to a wide range of organisation and groups representing protected individuals and groups.
- ⇒ Strategic Delivery Managers promoting the consultation in their districts and to protected groups within their local area of representation.
- ⇒ Posters being used to promote the consultation on buses which would be affected by the proposed options and on buses in general. Posters were also used in bus shelters, libraries and in other community venues.
- ⇒ Advertisement of the consultation and inclusion of background information on the Staffordshire County Council Consultation Portal, held on the Staffordshire County Council website.
- ⇒ Issuing press releases which led to media coverage in local newspapers and on regional news programmes.
- ⇒ Extensive use of social media (Facebook and Twitter) particularly to target hard-to-reach groups.
- ⇒ A targeted social media campaign over the final 10 days of the consultation, which focussed on increasing responses from various geographical areas.

3.2 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

In total, 2024 responses have been received to the consultation. This includes both surveys, letters and emails. Responses by type and method are outlined below.

- ⇒ 1923 individual survey responses have been received (this includes 979 paper surveys and 944 web surveys).
- ⇒ 37 organisational survey responses have been received. These reflects the views of the organisation/people they represent.
- ⇒ 64 written responses were received from organisations and individuals and these include two of the nine Staffordshire MP's.

In statistical terms, the 95% confidence level has been applied to the survey results. This means that if the survey was repeated, in 95 out of 100 occasions, the same response would be achieved.

Residents responses have an overall confidence interval of +/-2% meaning that the percentage responses given to any questions could fall in the range of 2% higher to 2% lower than their actual reported response. A confidence of +/-3-4% is fairly typical for a statistically robust survey.

- ⇒ Two petitions were also received in the consultation period and these totalled 1109 unvalidated signatures.

3.3 SURVEY RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

The majority of individuals responding provided details about themselves. Where provided, these have been outlined below.

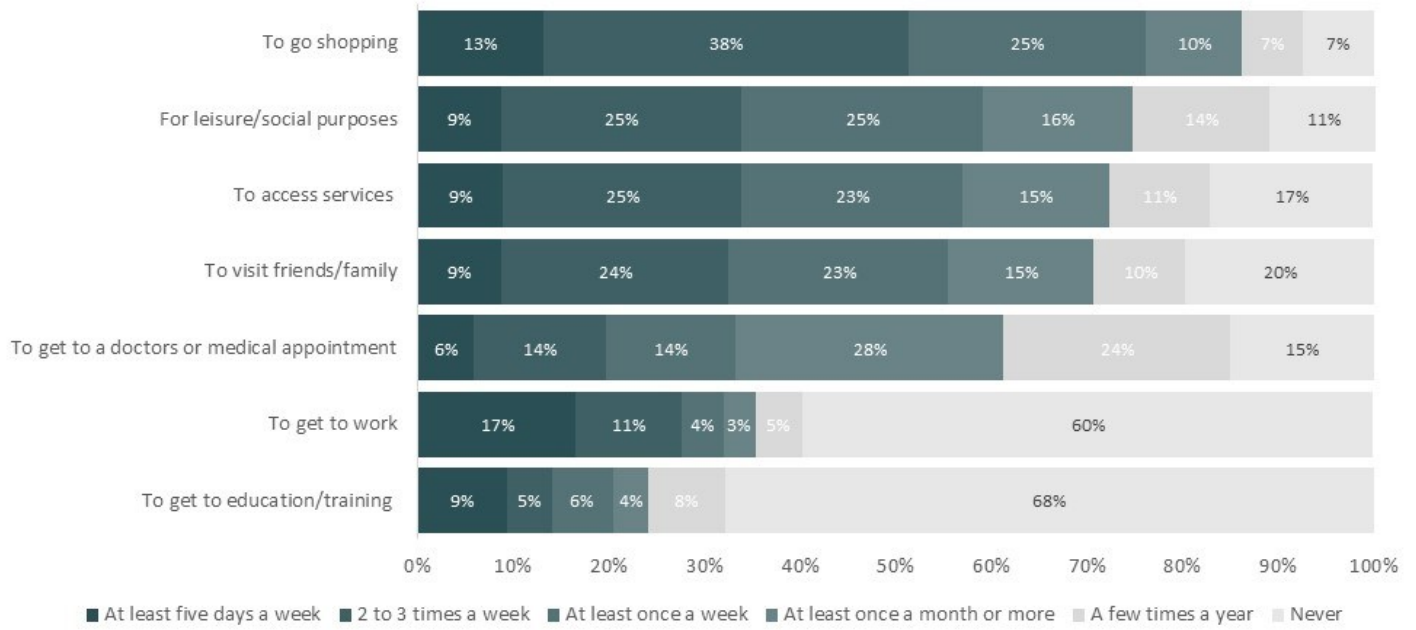
- ⇒ The majority of respondents were 'bus users in Staffordshire' (82%), 1.3% were 'staff at Staffordshire County Council' and 0.2% worked for 'a bus company in Staffordshire'.
82% were bus users
- ⇒ 4% responded in 'another capacity'. These included as "a parent of a child using buses for school or college", "parish councillors", "bus users living in neighbouring counties", "carers", "volunteers", "business owners" and "tourism operators". Also people "considering a move to Staffordshire".
- ⇒ The response rate from female residents was disproportionately high when compared to the mid year population estimates from the Office of National Statistics 2016. 66% of respondents were female compared to 34% who were male.
- ⇒ By age, the majority of the respondent profile (64%) were aged 65 or above. Responses were received from all age groups including those under the age of 18.
- ⇒ 39% of respondents indicated a long term disability or illness which affects their day to day activities. This is twice the proportion of Staffordshire residents overall who have a disability which affects their day to day activities (19%).
- ⇒ By ethnicity the respondent profile was similar to the Staffordshire proportions for the population overall.

4. BUS USAGE IN STAFFORDSHIRE

4.1: Reason for usage

Respondents who were regular bus users (those using them once a month or more) indicated reasons for their usage. It was most common for respondents to use buses 'to go shopping' (86%), 'for leisure/social purposes' (75%), 'to visit friends/family' (71%) and 'to get to a doctors or medical appointment' (61%). 35% of respondents used buses regularly 'to get to work' and 24% used them 'to get to education or training'. Respondents frequency of bus usage by reason for usage is outlined in the graph below.

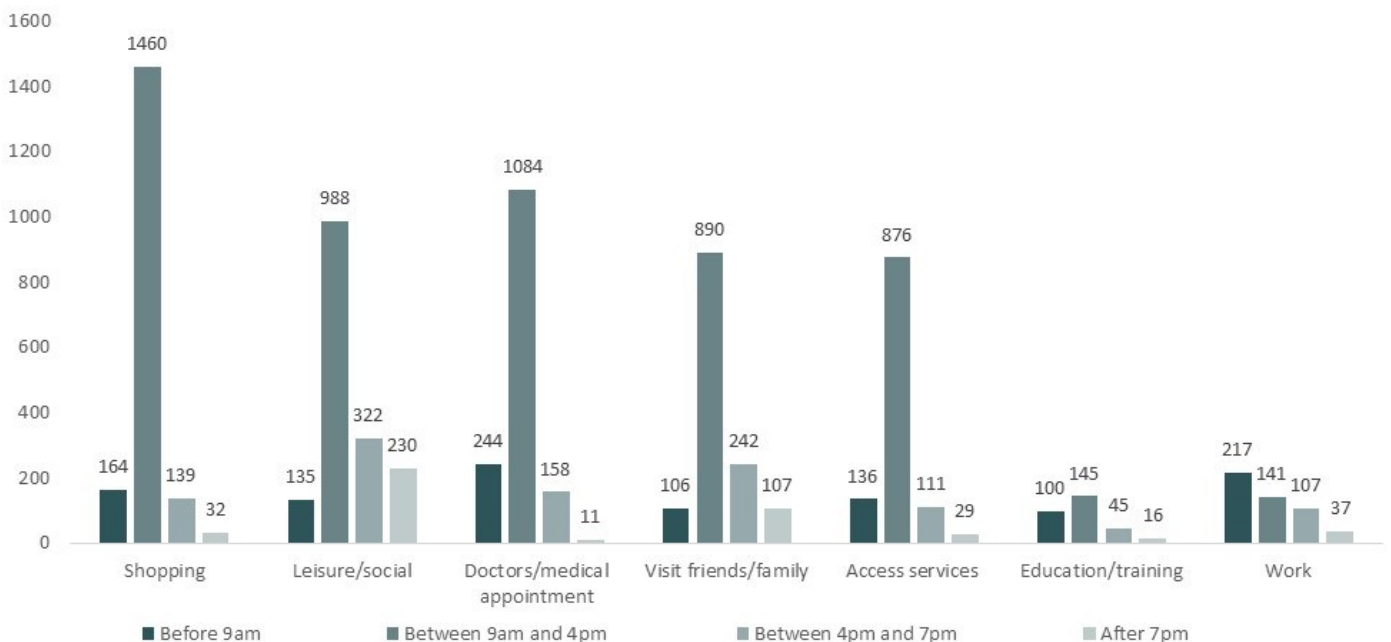
Figure 4.1: Frequency of bus usage in Staffordshire by reason for usage(%)



4.2: Times of day for bus usage

It was common for respondents to use buses between 9am and 4pm. This was for a variety of reasons which most frequently included 'to go shopping'. There was also an identified need for bus transportation before 9am, between 4pm and 7pm and after 7pm. Before 9am this need was greatest for 'getting to the doctors/ medical appointments' and 'to get to work'. Between 4pm and 7pm, this need was most likely to be for 'leisure/social' purposes, 'to visit friends/family', 'to access services' and to travel home from 'work'. After 7pm 'leisure/social' and 'friends/family' were the most common reasons for using buses.

Figure 4.2: Times of day for bus usage and reasons for usage (No. of response)



4.3: Bus services used

Survey respondents indicated regular usage of 76 of the services included in the consultation. The highest number of responses were received about each of the following; D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 14; Staffordshire Border Travel; Ashbourne Community Transport; D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 12 and D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 30. A full list of respondents service use is contained in the appendix. Responses were not received for each of the below services—Bennetts Travel Ltd—455, D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 56, Derbyshire County Council - V3, G E Scragg & Sons - 182, Shire Travel - T3 and Shire Travel - T5.

4.4: Concessionary passes

Respondents were asked to identify if they held a concessionary pass for free travel. Nearly three quarters (73%) said they did. Just over one fifth (22%) paid full fare, 3% used a Your Staffordshire Card and a further 3% used an operator pass or season ticket.

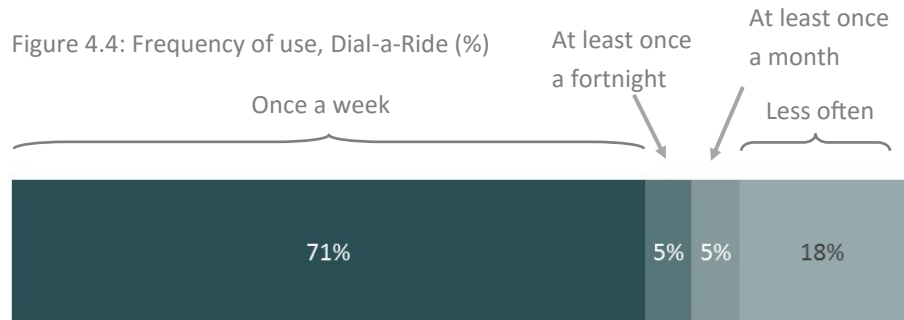
4.5: Dial-a-Ride

24% of respondents (or 440 people) said they used Dial-a-Ride services. Of those that used these services, the majority, (71%) said they used them at least once a week.

Figure 4.3: % using Dial-a-Ride (%)



Figure 4.4: Frequency of use, Dial-a-Ride (%)



Dial-a-Ride users were asked to indicate if they would be prepared to pay between £8-£10 per single journey for travel to continue. 79% disagreed and said they would not be prepared to pay this amount. 8% agreed they would be prepared to pay this amount and 13% neither agreed nor disagreed. In their comments respondents did indicate they would be prepared to pay a “small nominal fee” for the service to continue.

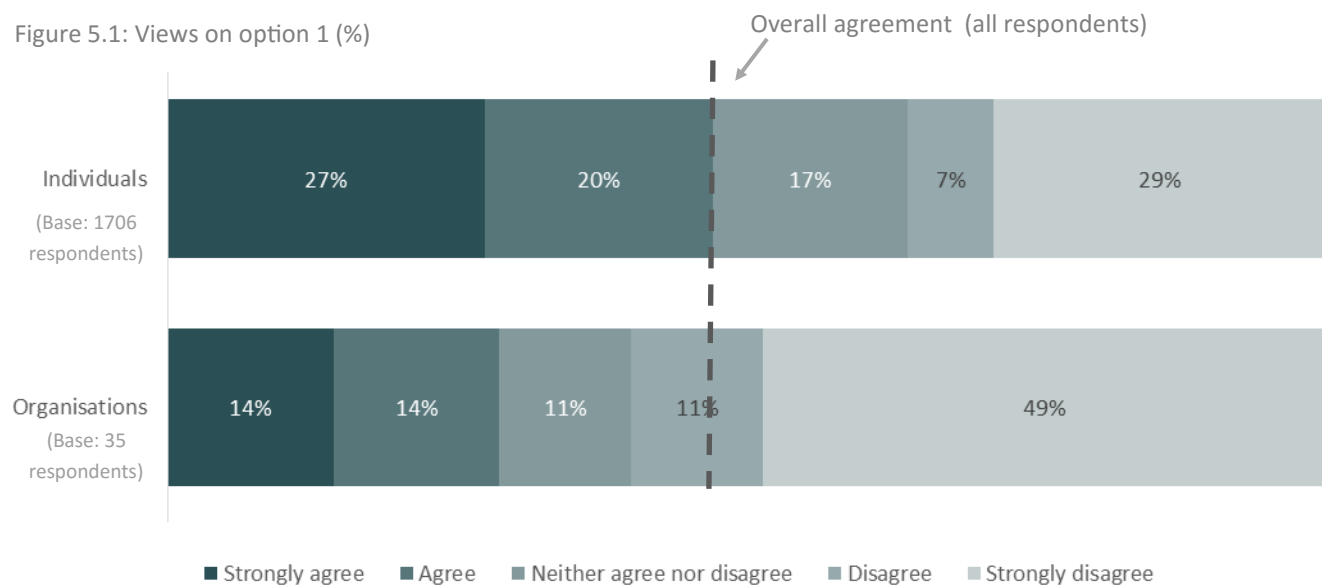
5. OPTION 1

Respondents were invited to state to what extent they agreed or disagreed with each of the four options.

Option 1: This option seeks to maintain priority routes and support some services for employment, education and health. There would be no Dial-A-Ride services. This is the county council's preferred option because it retains the greatest number of journeys.

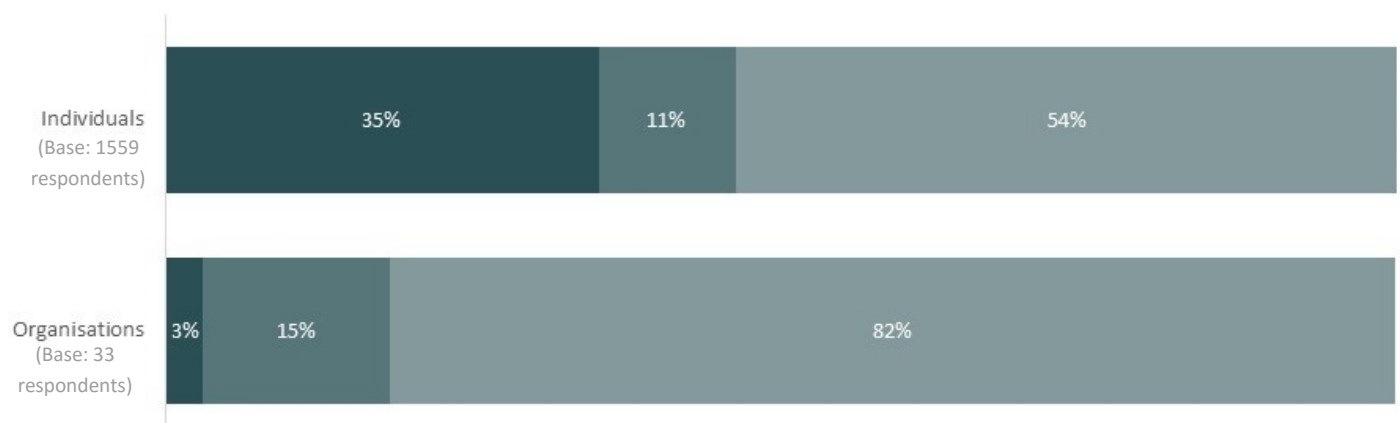
5.1: Agreement The graph below illustrates the level of agreement for option 1. 47% of all respondents expressed agreement for this option. The same proportion (47%) of 'individuals' also expressed agreement with this option, while a smaller proportion (28%) of 'organisations' said the same. The level of agreement varied by some respondent types. Those individuals least likely to be in agreement with this option were; those with a 'long term disability which affects their day to day activities' (44% agreed), those with a 'learning disability' (37% agreed) and those 'using Dial-a-Ride services' (13% agreed).

Figure 5.1: Views on option 1 (%)



5.2: Impact Respondents were also asked to articulate the level of impact option 1 would have upon them or the people they represented. A total of 54% felt option 1 would have either 'quite a big/big effect'. The level of impact varied by respondent type. All the respondent types listed below felt the option would have an above average 'quite a big/big effect' on them; 'Dial-a-Ride users' (86%), '75+ year olds' (72%), 'Under 18's' (58%), 'Learning Disability' (66%), 'Mobility Impaired' (65%) and 'Disability' (60%). Also the majority of 'organisations' (82%) felt option 1 would have quite a big/big effect on the people they represent.

Figure 5.2: How travel under this option would affect individuals and their families (%)



5.3: Comments: Impact of option 1

Respondents were encouraged to identify the impacts of option 1 upon themselves and their families. 1878 views have been themed and summarised below.

Those who expressed agreement to this option were, in the main, not affected by the proposed changes as the services they most regularly used would still run. Some respondents felt that after assessing all four options this would be the one that least affects the people living in their area while others stated that they had alternative options to travel. In a number of cases, there was clearly some confusion as while the respondent had selected agreement for the option, their supporting comments about impacts reflected quite the opposite.

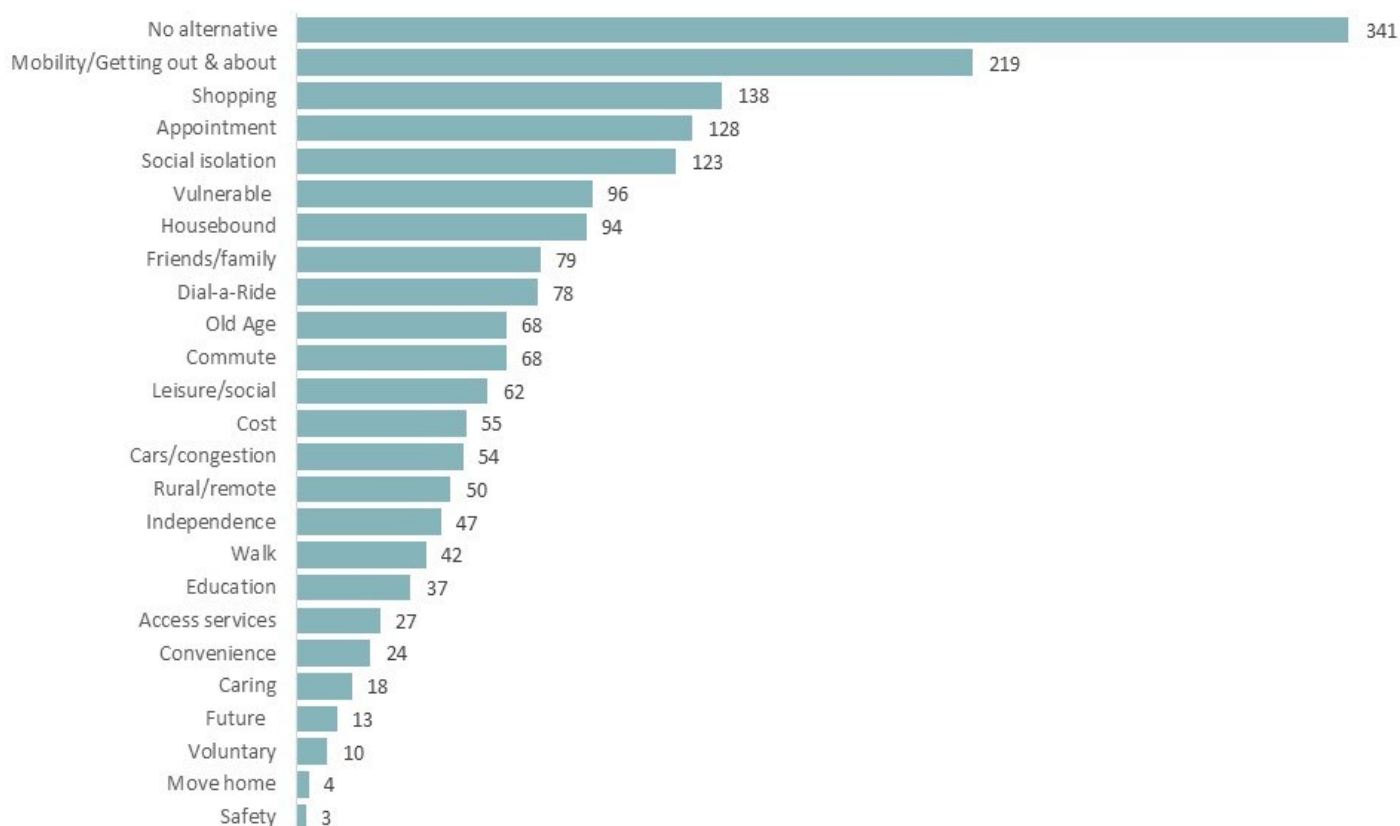
For those who disagreed with this option, or felt that this would have a negative impact of their lives the most commonly mentioned concerns were about; 'a lack of alternative options'; issues of 'general mobility/the ability to get out and about'; concerns about undertaking 'shopping'; concerns about being unable to make hospital and doctors 'appointments' as well as 'social isolation'.

These issues were also reinforced in the responses received from 'organisations'. Organisations' have also highlighted particular vulnerable groups who would be protected or impacted by this option. These have been shared with the service.

Key comments which reflect the most commonly mentioned themes captured in the graphic below, are outlined in section 10 of this report.

Figure 5.3: Impact of option 1—themed comments (Number of responses)

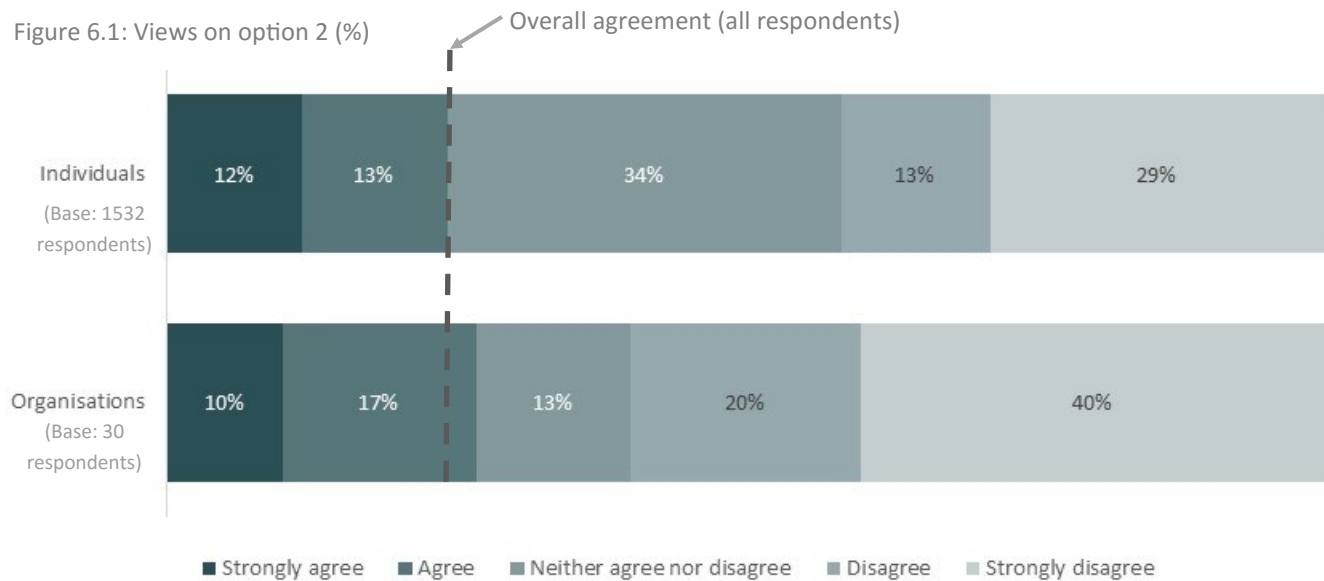
Base: 813 respondents



6. OPTION 2

Option 2: This option seeks to maintain priority routes and support some services for employment, education and health. There would be two Dial-A-Ride services maintained - Staffordshire Moorlands Connect and South Staffordshire Connect.

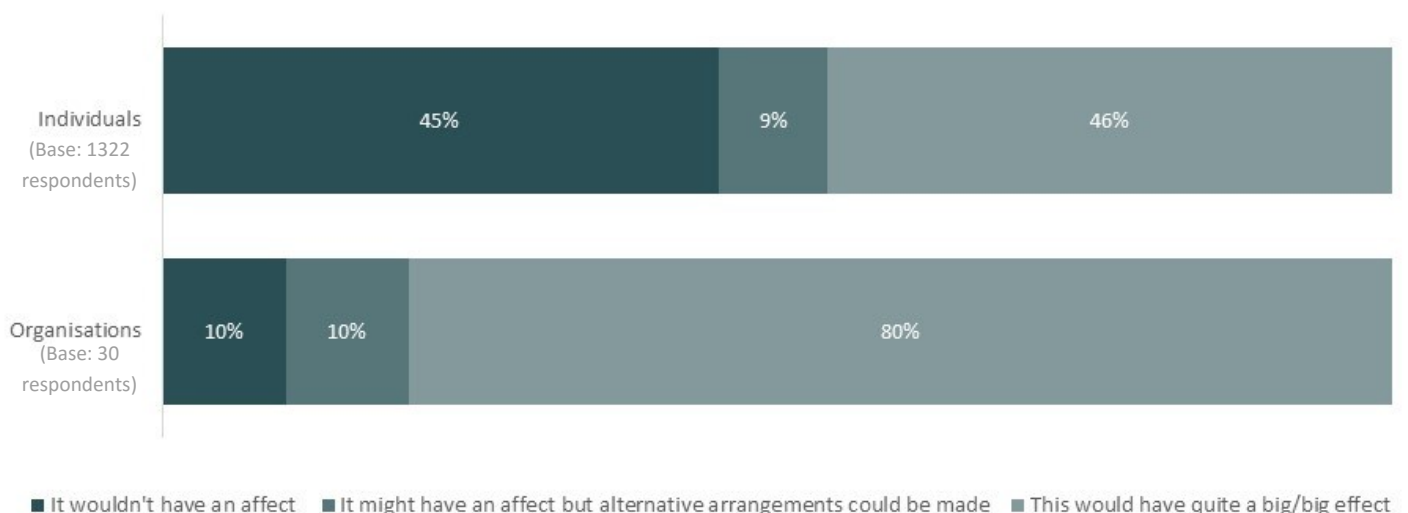
6.1: Agreement The graph below illustrates the level of agreement for option 2. 25% of all respondents expressed agreement for this option. The same proportion of 'individuals' also expressed agreement with this option, while a slightly higher proportion (27%) of 'organisations' said the same. The level of agreement showed minimal variation by the majority of respondent groups. However, 'Dial-a-Ride users' were marginally more likely to be in agreement with this option (31%). In addition, 27% of 'organisations' agreed with this option.



6.2: Impact Respondents were also asked to articulate the level of impact option 2 would have upon them or the people they represented. A total of 46% felt option 2 would have either 'quite a big/big effect'. The level of impact varied by respondent type. All the respondent types listed below felt the option would have an above average 'quite a big/big effect' on them; 80% of 'Dial-a-Ride users', 77% of 'under 18's' & 57% of '75+ year olds', 57% with a 'learning disability' and 56% of those whose 'mobility was impaired due to a disability'.

The majority of 'organisations' also felt this option would have 'quite a big/big effect' (80%) on the people they represent.

Figure 6.2: How travel under this option would affect individuals and their families (%)



6.3: Comments: Impact of option 2

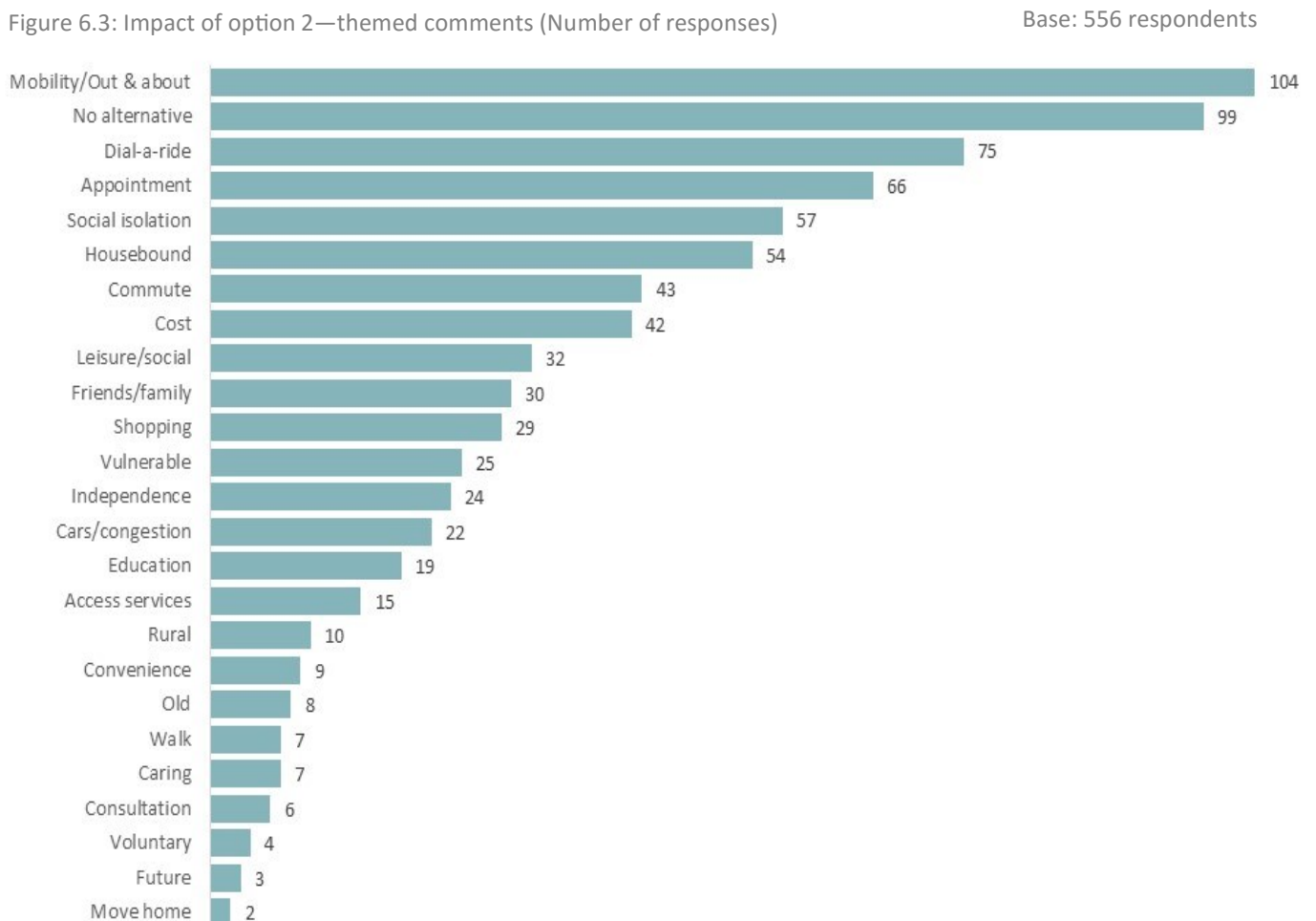
Respondents were encouraged to identify the impacts of option 2 upon themselves and their families. Views were expressed on a wide range of potential impacts. 792 views have been themed and summarised below.

The comments from those who expressed agreement for this option reflected how the proposals would have little or not impact on their lives as either they did not use the services themselves, the services they use would be maintained or there is an alternative available. Several respondents commented that this was the preferred option for all as it still maintained links for those in the most rural areas and as well as the main routes.

For those who disagreed with this option and felt it would create negative impacts on their lives, the most commonly mentioned concerns were about; issues of 'general mobility/the ability to get out and about'; a lack of 'alternative' options as well as individual comments on 'Dial-a-Ride' which have been shared with the service. Concerns about being unable to make hospital and doctors 'appointments' were also raised.

These issues were also reinforced in the responses received from 'organisations'. Organisations' have also highlighted particular vulnerable groups who would be protected or impacted by this option. These have been shared with the service.

Key comments which reflect the most commonly mentioned themes captured in the graphic below, are outlined in section 10 of this report.

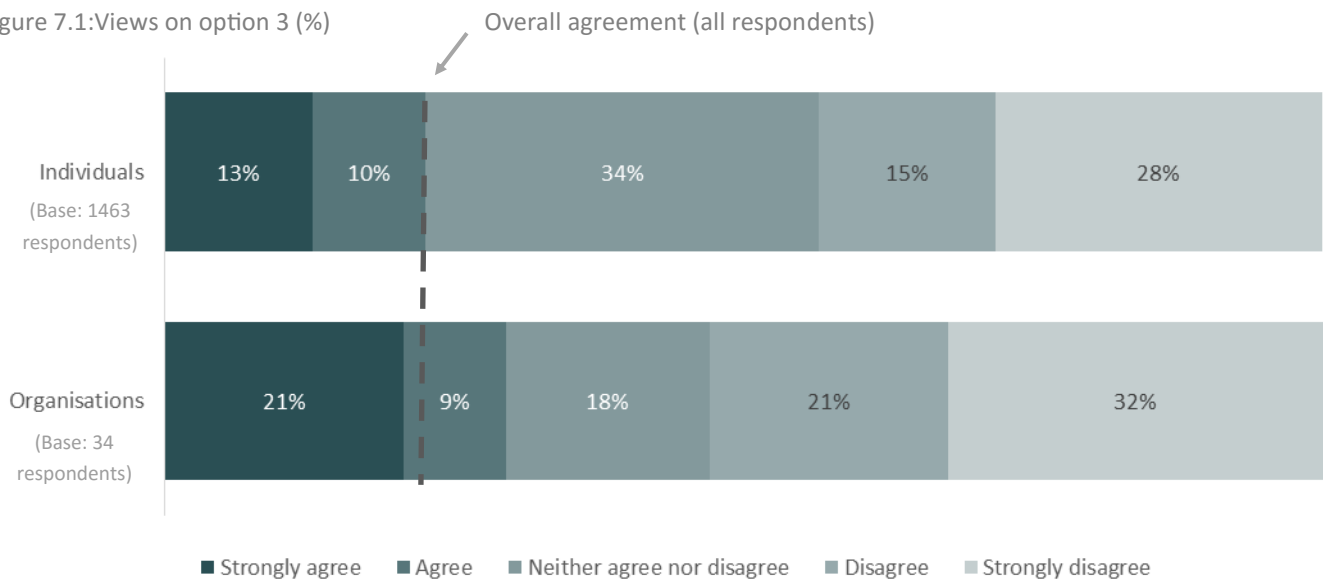


7. OPTION 3

Option 3: Option 3 maintains four Dial-A-Ride services - Staffordshire Moorlands Connect, South Staffordshire Connect, Needwood Forest Connect and Lichfield and Rugeley Village Connect. This option also maintains some subsidised local bus services. There will be no Border Car service under this option.

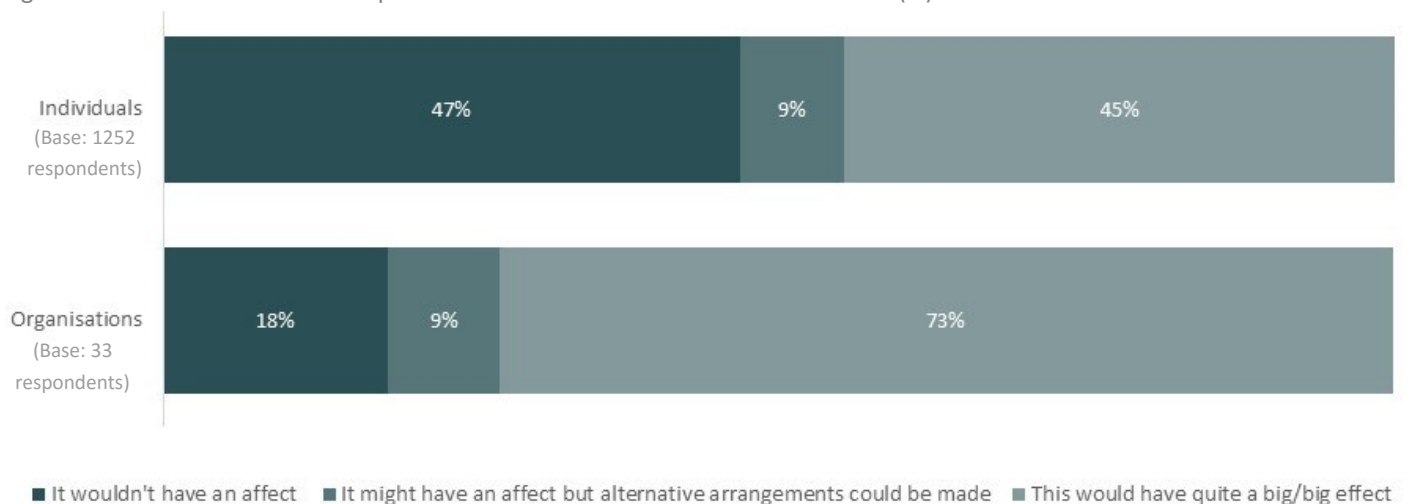
7.1: Agreement The graph below illustrates the level of agreement for option 3. 23% of all respondents expressed agreement with option 3. The same proportion of 'individuals' felt the same while a slightly higher proportion (30%) of 'organisations' also agreed with this option. The level of agreement varied by some respondent types. Some respondent groups were more likely to be in agreement. These included 'Dial-a-Ride users' (53% agreed), those 'aged 75+' (30% agreed), those with a 'disability which affects mobility' (27%) and those with 'a long term disability' (26%).

Figure 7.1: Views on option 3 (%)



7.2: Impact Respondents were also asked to articulate the level of impact option 3 would have upon them or the people they represented. A total of 45% felt option 3 would have either 'quite a big/big effect'. The level of impact varied by respondent type. All the respondent types listed below felt the option would have an above average 'quite a big/big effect' on them; 79% of 'Dial-a-Ride users', 71% of 'under 18 year olds', 66% of respondents with a 'learning disability' and 56% of respondents whose 'mobility was impaired due to a disability'. The majority of 'organisations' also felt this option would have 'quite a big/big effect' on the people they represent.

Figure 7.2: How travel under this option would affect individuals and their families (%)



7.3: Comments: Impact of option 3

Respondents were encouraged to identify the impacts of option 3 upon themselves and their families. Views were expressed on a wide range of potential impacts. 772 views have been themed and summarised below.

Where respondents showed support for the proposals, they expressed that these changes would not have a great impact on them either due to the services they most regularly use has little or no change or that they have an alternative means of travel or do not frequent bus transportation very often.

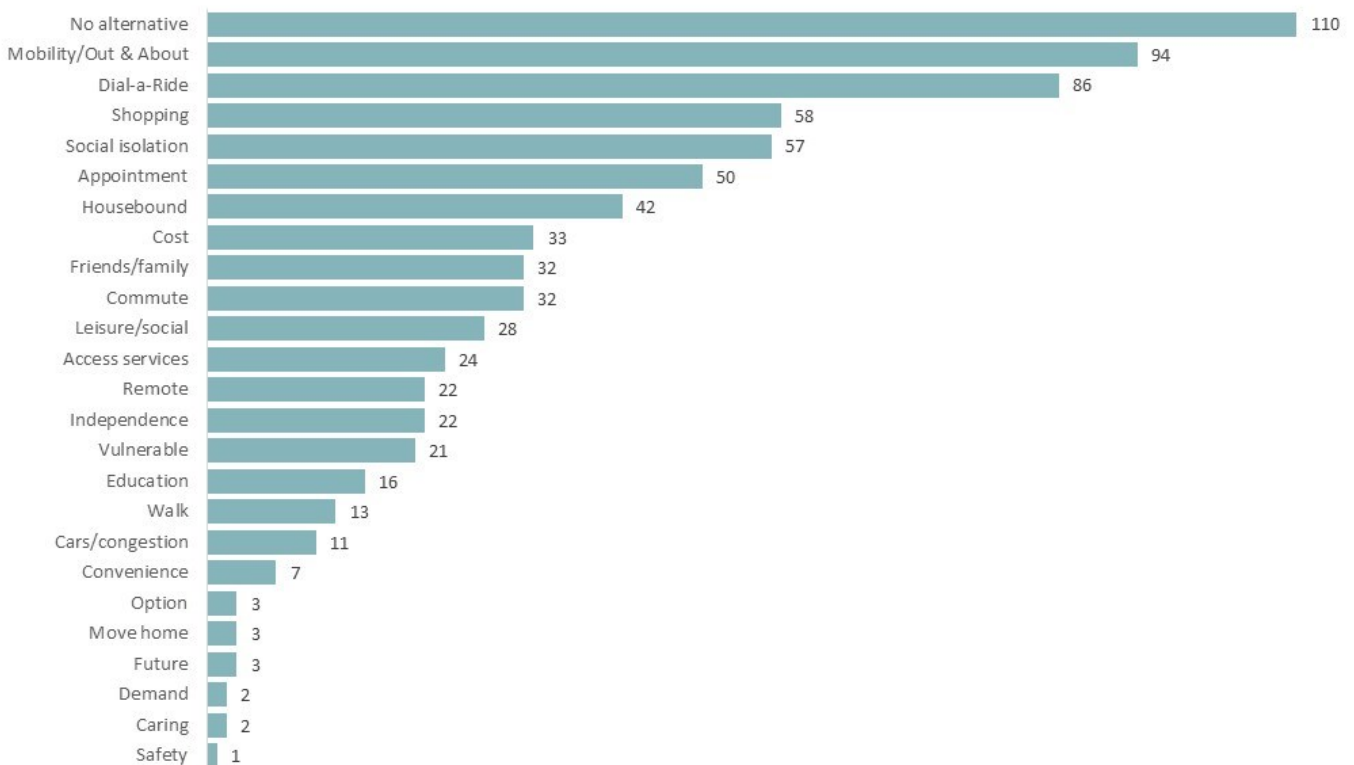
Where concerns were raised, the most common were about; ‘no alternatives’, issues of ‘general mobility/ the ability to get out and about’; individual comments on ‘Dial-a-Ride’ (which have been shared with the service), ‘social isolation’, difficulties with being able to pick up ‘shopping’ and concerns about being unable to make hospital and doctors ‘appointments’.

These issues were also reinforced in the responses received from ‘organisations’. ‘Organisations’ have also highlighted particular vulnerable groups who would be protected or impacted by this option. These have been shared with the service.

Key comments which reflect the most commonly mentioned themes captured in the graphic below, are outlined in section 10 of this report.

Figure 7.3: Impact of option 3—themed comments (Number of responses)

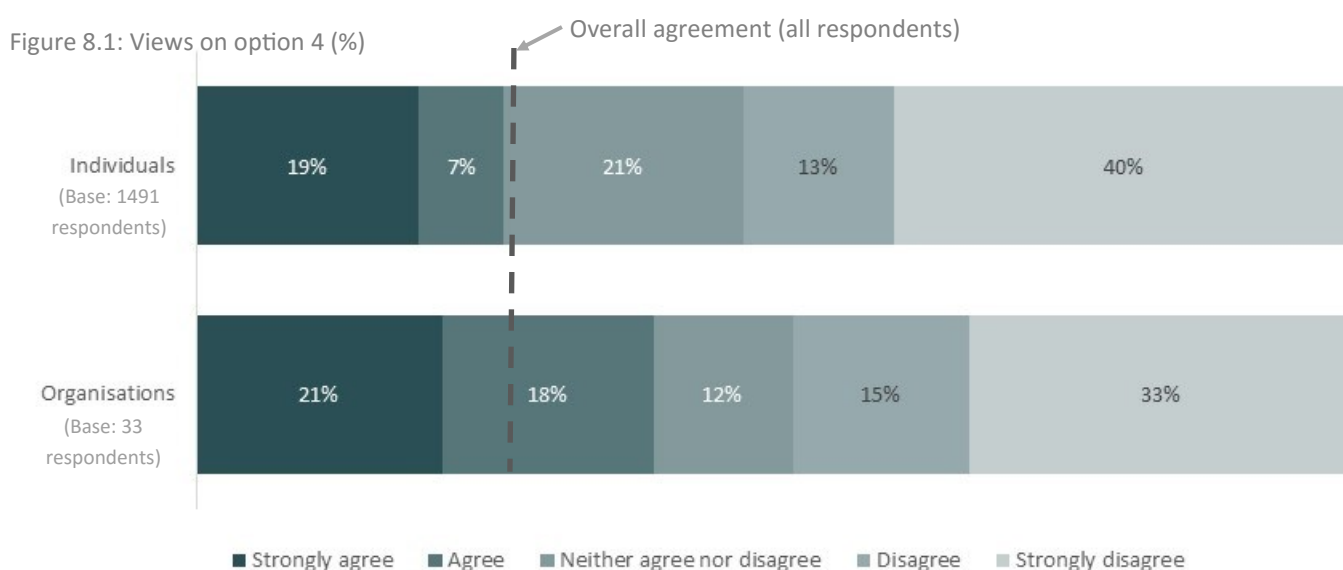
Base: 497 respondents



8. OPTION 4

Option 4: Under this option, Staffordshire County Council would subsidise Dial-A-Ride services only. The existing Dial-A-Ride services; Staffordshire Moorlands Connect, South Staffordshire Connect, Needwood Forest Connect, Lichfield and Rugeley Village Connect and the Border Car would be maintained. An additional Seven new Dial-A-Ride services would also be introduced. There would be no local council subsidised services.

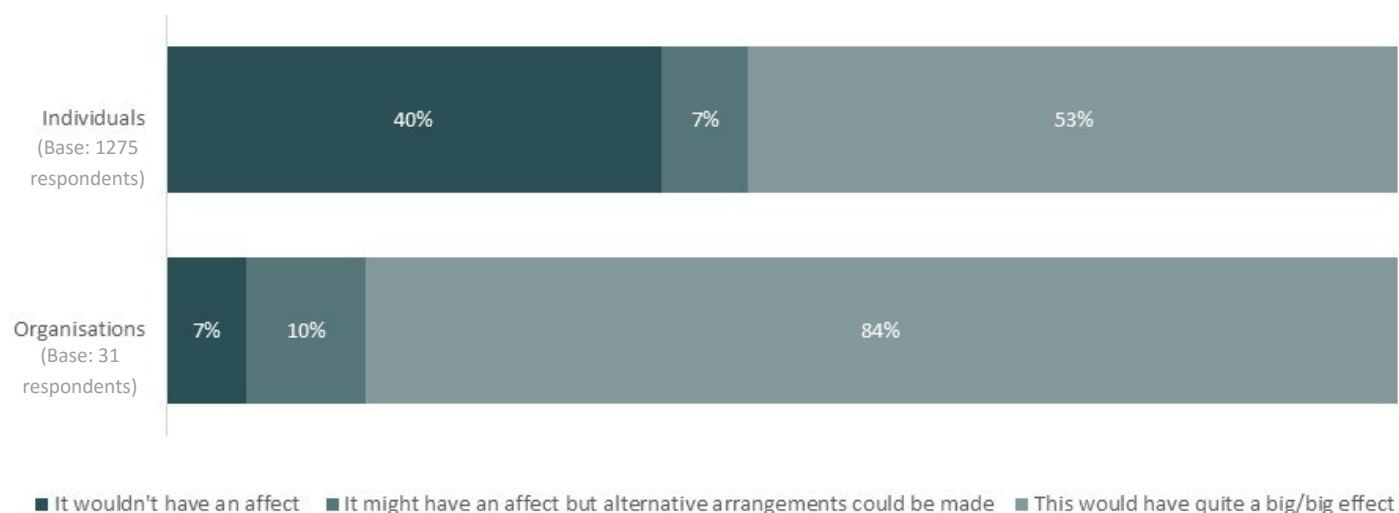
8.1: Agreement The graph below illustrates the level of agreement for option 4. 27% of all respondents said they agreed with this option while a slightly lower proportion (26%) of 'individuals' felt the same. This was the preferred choice of 'organisations' with the highest proportion (39%) expressing agreement with this option. The level of agreement varied by some respondent types. Some respondent groups were more likely to be in agreement. These included 'Dial-a-Ride' users (65%), those 'under the age of 18' (38%), those 'aged 75+' (34%) and those with 'a learning disability' (32%).



8.2: Impact Respondents were also asked to articulate the level of impact option 4 would have upon them or the people they represented. A total of 53% felt option 4 would have either 'quite a big/big effect'. The level of impact varied by respondent type. All the respondent types listed below felt the option would have an above average 'quite a big/big effect' on them; 62% of those 'aged 75+', 57% of those 'under the age of 18' and 60% of those with 'a learning disability'.

The majority of organisations also felt this option would have 'quite a big/big effect' (84%) on the people they represent.

Figure 8.2: How travel under this option would affect individuals and their families (%)



8.3: Comments: Impact of option 4

Respondents were encouraged to identify the impacts of option 4 upon themselves and their families. Views were expressed on a wide range of potential impacts. 910 views have been themed and summarised below.

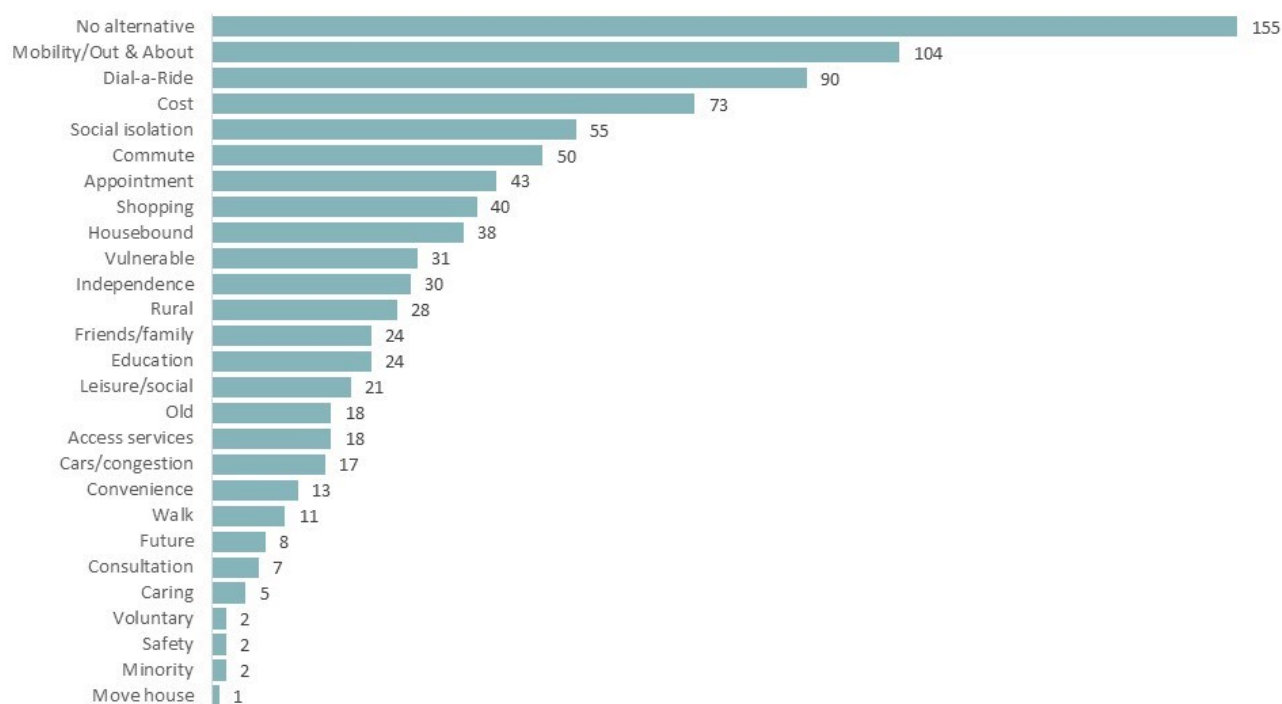
As with all other options, generally speaking, where respondents agreed with this option, it was because the implementation of such proposals would have the least impact on the services they use. Most commonly mentioned were concerns about; having ‘no alternatives’, ‘general mobility/the ability to get out and about’; comments on Dial-a-Ride, which have been shared with the service, the ‘cost’ of the service, ‘social isolation’ and the ability to ‘commute’ to and from work.

These issues were also reinforced in the responses received from ‘organisations’. ‘Organisations’ have also highlighted particular vulnerable groups who would be protected or impacted by this option. These have been shared with the service.

Key comments which reflect the most commonly mentioned themes captured in the graphic below, are outlined in section 10 of this report.

Figure 8.3: Impact of option 4—themed comments (Number of responses)

Base: 540 respondents



9. COMMENTS ON KEY THEMES ACROSS ALL OPTIONS

There were a number of key themes within respondent's comments that spanned across all four proposed options. A selection of these are shown below. It must be noted, however, that all individual comments have been forwarded to the service area to be considered in planning and decision making.

'No alternatives':

- *"We have no other services available".*
- *"No other means of transport".*
- *"We cannot get out any other way as nothing else runs in our village".*

'Mobility/Ability to get out and about':

- *"It would limit journey opportunities without walking".*
- *"I fear without subsidised bus services I won't be able to travel. I live in a village and I don't drive so rely on the subsidised bus services".*
- *"We would be very restricted without the bus to take us to the town".*
- *"I couldn't go out on my own without this service, I would lose my independence".*

'Shopping':

- *"I have no transport, I would be unable to get anywhere, for shopping. There are no shops in my village".*
- *"Trouble with weekly shop/will be cut off from the shop" and "I don't even want to think about how I would get food, nappies, baby milk etc.".*

'Appointments':

- *"Attendance at my doctors would be almost impossible"*
- *"it would make it difficult to get to hospital for my many appointments".*
- *"I rely on this bus to get me to all my appointments"*
- *"I would not be able to get to my hospital appointments for my dialysis....every 2 days"*
- *"our health could be put in danger if we can't get to the doctors for medication and doctors appointments".*

'Social isolation':

- *"This would cause isolation for the elderly community", and "this would have a huge impact on my personal wellbeing".*
- *"We would all be left very isolated if this service is cut".*
- *"We would become isolated".*
- *"We would not be able to leave the village".*
- *"I would feel extremely isolated if we haven't got a service".*
- *"I would feel lonely and depressed".*

'Housebound':

- *"I would be unable to leave my house other than with the help of friends even for medical visits. I might not be able to continue to live independently".*
- *"This would trap people in their homes as no other bus service operates in this area".*

'Cost':

- *"It could increase prices even more, my kids could not afford to go to college or uni at £8 - £10 per journey, £100 per week".*
- *"I could not afford the number of journeys we make and would find access to shops and hospital visits expensive".*
- *"I would pay for the service".*

'Commute':

- *"Without this bus, I'd be unable to maintain this job".*
- *"A lot of people in this area will lose their jobs with it being rural".*
- *"I'd be unable to go to work in the morning on time".*
- *"Could make it harder to get to and from work".*
- *"I and my son would lose our jobs, having no other means of transport".*

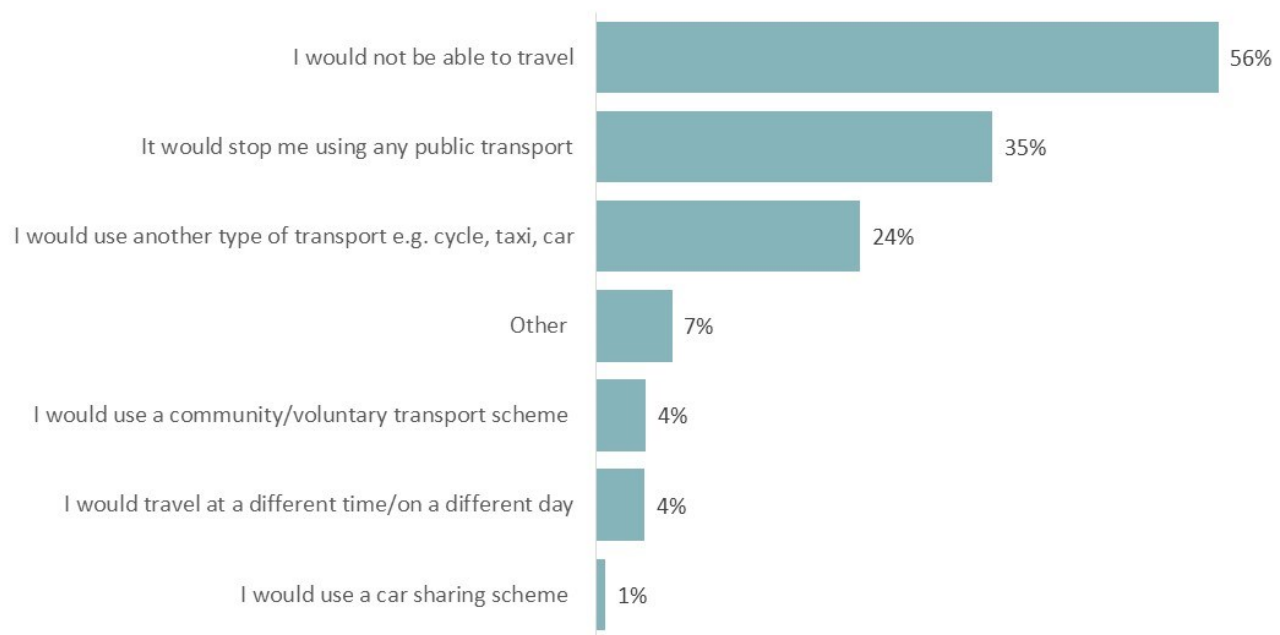
10. MAKING ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

Respondents were asked to consider how they would travel if the buses they currently use, at the times that they use them, were not available. Over half of those responding said they would not be able to travel (56%), just over one third said it would stop them using any public transport (35%) and just under one quarter (24%) said they would use another type of transport. All respondents views are outlined in the graphic below.

A higher proportion of the 56% who said they would not be able to travel were 'aged 75+', 'female', had a 'long term disability' or 'impaired mobility'.

Those who wanted to use a community/voluntary transport scheme were more likely to be under the age of 24, aged 75+ or have a long term disability, a mobility impairment or a learning disability.

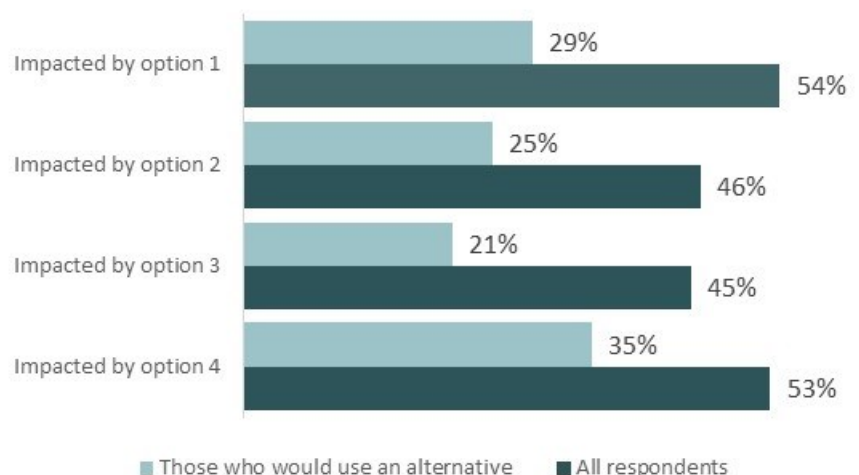
Figure 10.1: Making alternative arrangements (% responses)



7% said they would make 'other' arrangements and these included "walking to another bus stop" or to the "destination", asking "friends/family and neighbours for lifts", "learning to drive/buying a car", "taking more buses to reach destination" e.g. work and "taking the train".

Those who would use one of the four alternatives outlined in the graph (these included using another type of transport, using a community/voluntary scheme, travel on a different day/at a different time or using a car sharing scheme) were less likely to say that each of the four options would impact upon them than respondents overall were.

Figure 10.2: Comparing impact of the options between those who had an alternative and all respondents (% impacted).



11. SUPPORT IN MAINTAINING SERVICES

11.1: Awareness and usage of local community or voluntary transport schemes

Respondents were asked to indicate their knowledge of and involvement in local community or voluntary transport schemes. The largest proportion of respondents (48%) said they 'had never heard of these', 40% had 'heard of them but never used them' and 12% 'had used them'.

Of the 200 respondents that had used local community or voluntary transport schemes, 63% included the names of the services which they had used. Most commonly mentioned were 'Mobility Link', 'Loggerheads and District Community Cars' and 'Homeline'.

The details of all the schemes used by respondents have been shared with the service.

By respondent type, users of community or voluntary transport schemes were more likely to be;

- ⇒ Female: (12% or 135 females had used these).
- ⇒ Younger or older: 19% or 105 respondents aged 75+ had used these. The proportion of younger people using these was also higher. 12% or 3 respondents were under 18 and 12% or 4 respondents were 18-24.
- ⇒ Have a disability/impairment: 23% or 16 respondents had a learning disability, 18% or 75 respondents had a mobility impairment due to a disability and 17% or 113 respondents had a long term disability.
- ⇒ Be from an ethnic group: 31% or 4 respondents were from a Mixed/Multiple ethnic group and 17% or 1 respondent were from an Asian/Asian British background.
- ⇒ Whilst the proportion of people using community or voluntary schemes was higher in those respondent groups outlined above, users from a wide range of demographic backgrounds had made use of these services. Further details of these can be found in the Appendix.

Respondents who had used community or voluntary transport schemes were asked to share their overall experiences of these. It was most common for respondents to say they would recommend them (50%). However one third felt they were no substitute for a bus and 18% wouldn't recommend them.

Figure 11.1: Overall experience of using community or voluntary transport schemes (% response) (Base: 200 respondents)

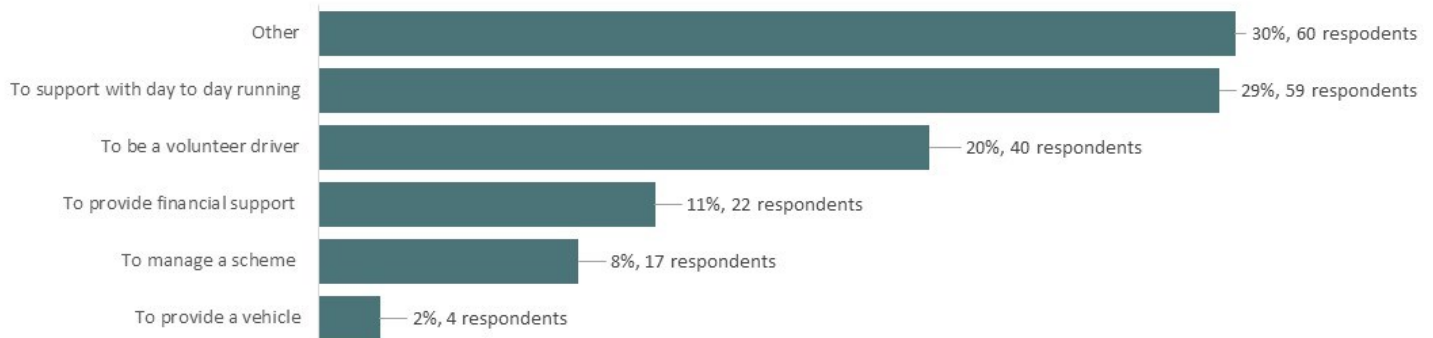


11.2: Involvement in running/supporting local community or voluntary transport schemes

Whilst the majority of respondents would not be interested in running/supporting local community or voluntary transport schemes (85%), expressions of interest were provided by 15% of respondents. 2% expressed 'a great deal of interest' and 13% were interested 'to some extent'.

In terms of the types of involvement respondents would like to have, the most common offer was 'to support with the day to day running of the local transport scheme'. Respondents views are outlined in the graphic below.

Figure 11.2: Types of involvement respondents would be interested in (% response)



60 respondents identified 'other' types of involvement they would like to have. It was most common for respondents to say they would "like to be able to use the scheme" and/or "to make a small contribution to cover their usage".

Other responses included being able to offer "occasional lifts" or provide "occasional support as a driver". Additional respondents offered help "co-ordinating", "promoting" and "administering" new schemes.

11.3: Information/support which organisations would need

Respondents were asked to articulate what types of information or support they would need from the County Council to help them with setting up and running/supporting a local community or voluntary transport scheme. These most commonly included 'more information on the proposals' (31%). All responses received have been bullet pointed below:

- ⇒ 'More information on the proposed options' (31%).
- ⇒ 'Information on the types of community or voluntary transport schemes available' (26%).
- ⇒ 'Support with implementing a community or voluntary transport scheme' (20%).
- ⇒ 'Information on what's involved in setting up and running a community or voluntary transport scheme' (19%).
- ⇒ 'Other' (4%) e.g. "certification of competency of voluntary driver" and "the ability to make special arrangements e.g. tail lifts for disabled users".

12. SUGGESTIONS/IDEAS

Respondents continued to express their concerns and views on the proposals as a whole, using the space for suggestions to reiterate their strength of feeling towards points captured within earlier questions. However, aside from these comments, there were also some suggestions for an alternative approach. The service area have received all the comments and suggestions put forward for consideration in the decision-making process, but the most common are summarised below:

The most common suggestion was for passengers to pay more than they currently do to sustain services, with many respondents stating that they would be prepared to pay more as it would still be less than a taxi and would maintain a vital part of their life. Some suggested that those with a concessionary bus pass could pay an annual charge while others suggested a fee each time they travelled. Others suggested that concessionary passes were means tested.

- *“I would be prepared to pay £3 towards costs for my journey. I am so worried about this service going.”*
- *“Bus passes for only people that can’t afford the fares.”*
- *I would be happy to contribute towards my fare rather than lose the service. The service isn't just 4 wheels, it's our own little community.”*
- *“I have a bus pass, but would be willing to pay perhaps £1 per journey to keep our buses running.”*
- *“Those with passes - such as myself - should pay for them - perhaps £10- or £20 a year.”*
- *“A long time ago we used to pay half fare on our local bus, I would be happy to do that again, as an 81 year old, I do need buses.”*

Another common suggestion was to revise bus scheduling rather than cutting routes completely. Some suggested a reduction in frequency of certain routes, while others suggested deploying a minibus to the less popular routes or revising the routes themselves, possibly combining some:

- *“Coordinate bus times better so that 2 different services on the same route don't overlap. Rather than cut routes, cut frequency”.*
- *“Stripping some of the less popular ones and more later on, smaller buses during the day- provide a skeleton service to cover the main day/times of travel rather than cut them completely”.*
- *“No objections to a reduction in buses running but need at least 2-3 buses running on route each day.”*
- *“Why not run mini buses on quieter routes?”*
- *“Combine bus routes. Stone local bus services could be combined S1+ S2 + S3 or S5. As stated previously the return of Walton, Stone, Rough Close, Meir Heath to Longton. Surely more passengers than having small separate services.”*
- *“Reduce availability on some popular routes e.g. not every 20 mins but every 30 mins. Hourly not half hourly.”*

Several respondents understood that funding had to be reduced drastically but felt that the County Council should *“make cuts elsewhere”*, not only because this is a *“lifeline”* to many elderly and isolated but also because using the bus helps with the green agenda by reducing the number of cars on the road and consequently having a positive impact on pollution. Some felt strongly that *“the County Council urgently needs to fight back against central government as the cuts imposed are now severely damaging important community infrastructure at all levels.”*

13. OTHER FEEDBACK: EMAIL AND LETTER CORRESPONDENCE

A total of 64 letters were received during the consultation period. These were from bus users (27), community groups (3), Councillors (8), including 2 MPs, councils (3), Dial-a-Ride provider (1), Health representatives (2), Organisations (4) and Parish Councils (16).

Two petitions were also received, one with 532 unvalidated signatures from residents of Biddulph and Biddulph Moor specifically objecting to the proposed removal of the subsidy from the 93 D&G service. The other contained 577 unvalidated signatures objecting to the proposed removal of the subsidy from the Border car service.

There was real passion and feeling behind the comments in the letters, particularly so from bus users themselves. Some offered preferences for the proposed consultation options with option 1 or 4 being the most popular. However for some, none of the options were deemed suitable as their local services would no longer be subsidised. The themes within the letters tended to follow the same as those captured within the individual and organisational surveys. These are summarised below:

13.1: Impact on the vulnerable and elderly

The impacts on the elderly were greatly documented in the letters received and the strength of feeling within the contents of these letters demonstrates just how important these services are to people. Many of those who used Dial-a-Ride services had no alternative and often described the services as their *“lifeline”* and asked that *“people don’t look at this service as their own private luxury but as a vital necessity”*. A large proportion of letters were received from Border Car users and these contained such praise for the staff member, describing her as a *“personal carer”* who *“goes above and beyond”* and helps them in many other capacities as well as keeping them connected to local services and shopping areas.

The importance of the services in maintaining the independence of the elderly and isolated was also stressed within the letters received, for example *“even though we have health problems it’s good to think we can manage to stay in our house”* and *“this allows me to purchase my personal shopping, to bank and of course to see a bit of life beyond the confines of the house.”*

13.2: Impact on young people

Impacts on young people were identified in a number of letters and referenced the difficulties young people from rural locations would face regarding *“access to education and leisure facilities”* and how *“rather than encouraging their independence, these proposals would mean that unless they had access to a car themselves, they would have to continue to rely on parents/carers to give them lifts to places. If there was no family car in the first place then this would be even more problematic”*.

13.3: Mental health/social isolation issues

Several letters discussed how the consultation itself has brought anxiety to those who heavily rely on the services that are under threat by the proposals. It is also noted that these services (particularly the Dial-a-Ride, Border Cars and Connect bus services) have a positive effect on the health and wellbeing of some of the most vulnerable residents of Staffordshire. For example, *“a trip into town for the market, shopping or appointments can be a way of keeping in touch and preventing mental health problems arising from social isolation.”*

13.4: Inability to access services/places

Many letters described how the proposals would mean that residents in certain areas would no longer be able to get to *“health appointments”, “access shops and banks”* or visit *“friends and family who live in other areas of the county”*.

Some respondents alluded to the fact that *“many elderly people do not have access to a computer to enable them to shop online as an alternative”*. Equally some of the areas where cuts are proposed are *“so rural that they either do not have internet coverage or supermarkets do not deliver there anyway”*. The impact of *“not being able to attend health appointments was queried; would this mean that medical staff would have to make more home visits? If so, will the cost of this be more than the cost of keeping the subsidised buses?”*

13.5: Cost issues

For some, the only alternative was *“to rely on taxis”* and for many this was seen as *“too costly and unrealistic”* within their budget. Several suggestions were put forward that *“people would not mind paying a little more to keep a vital service going especially since the alternative (taxis) would be much more costly”*.

13.6: Increased congestion due to increase in car use/dependency

For those who had access to a car or were able to ask others for a lift, the alternative would be to use this mode of transport where buses were no longer available or would not run at a certain time. This would *“increase congestion on the roads, particularly at the busiest times of the day where people had been previously using the bus for the commute”* and *“the use of public transport does also limit the use of private cars and taxis, cutting down on pollution and traffic problems on Stafford's inadequate roads.”*

13.7: Inconvenience

Several letters described how reduction or removal of specific subsidised routes would mean they would have to *“take several buses to get to certain locations and where timetables did not correspond they would be subject to long waits between connections which is not only an inconvenience but also, in some cases, an impossibility to get to appointments at a reasonable time”*.

13.8: Other comments and suggestions

There were a number of suggestions about specific service routes as well as the idea of people paying a little more to enable the service to be sustained.

Other suggestions and comments included:

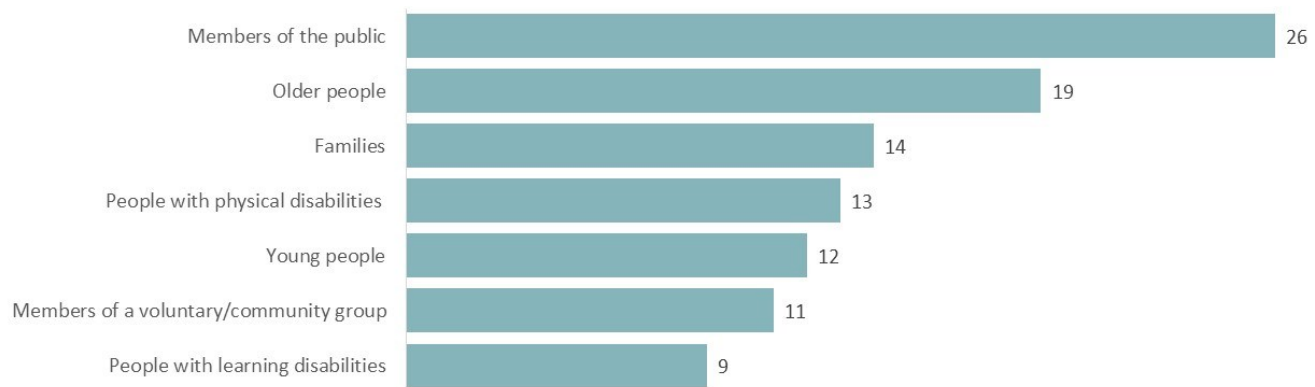
- ⇒ Ring fencing an increase in Council Tax to ensure that subsidies can continue.
- ⇒ Working with local councils to reduce journeys rather than abolish them entirely.
- ⇒ An offer from the operator of Border Cars to take on two local school runs for free (these are currently part of the contract).
- ⇒ Giving due consideration to legal duties under the Equalities Act 2010 and to national statistics and local feedback provided in a report as part of the consultation feedback.

14. ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSES

14.1: Organisations/people represented

37 'organisational' survey responses have been received and these reflect the views of organisations/people representing members of the public and a range of protected groups. 'Members of the public' and 'older people's groups' were most commonly represented. Other people/groups represented included people with 'physical health' and 'mental health' issues.

Figure 14.1: Groups, organisations and people represented in the organisational responses (No. of responses)



14.2: Geographical areas represented

'Organisations' across all Staffordshire districts and Stoke-on-Trent responded to the consultation. In addition, geographical areas bordering Staffordshire also responded. The responses are outlined below:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ⇒ Stafford (7 responses) | ⇒ East Staffordshire (5 responses) |
| ⇒ South Staffordshire (7 responses) | ⇒ Cannock Chase (4 responses) |
| ⇒ Staffordshire Moorlands (6 responses) | ⇒ Tamworth (3 responses) |
| ⇒ Newcastle-under-Lyme (6 responses) | ⇒ An area outside of Staffordshire (3 responses) |
| ⇒ Lichfield (6 responses) | ⇒ Stoke-on-Trent (1 response) |

14.3: Views/effects of the proposed options

'Organisational' views have been incorporated along with 'individual' responses in the options section of the report. 'Organisations' (when compared to respondents overall) were more likely to agree that the people and groups they represented would be impacted by each of the four proposed options.

Over half of those organisations disagreeing with the options were representing older people and they were particularly concerned that there were no alternatives, that people would have difficulty with getting to medical appointments, that they would have general issues with mobility/getting out and about, and would suffer from social isolation. Organisations were also more concerned that younger and older people would find it difficult to access leisure activities.

14.4: Comments

'Organisations' comments have also been incorporated into the options section of the report. These reiterated common themes identified by 'individuals' including not being able to make 'appointments' (including doctors and hospitals), a loss of 'independence', an inability to 'access shops and services', young people not being able to get to 'school/college', an inability to 'get to work', 'mobility issues/not being able to get out and about' as well as issues of 'social isolation'. There was also a general feeling expressed that all of the proposed options would be impacting upon *"those who most need support"*.

14.5: Organisational and group support for maintaining services

40% of 'organisations' were 'aware of the existence of community and voluntary transport schemes' in their local area. A further 29% were 'aware of these to some extent' and 31% were 'not aware of the existence of these at all'.

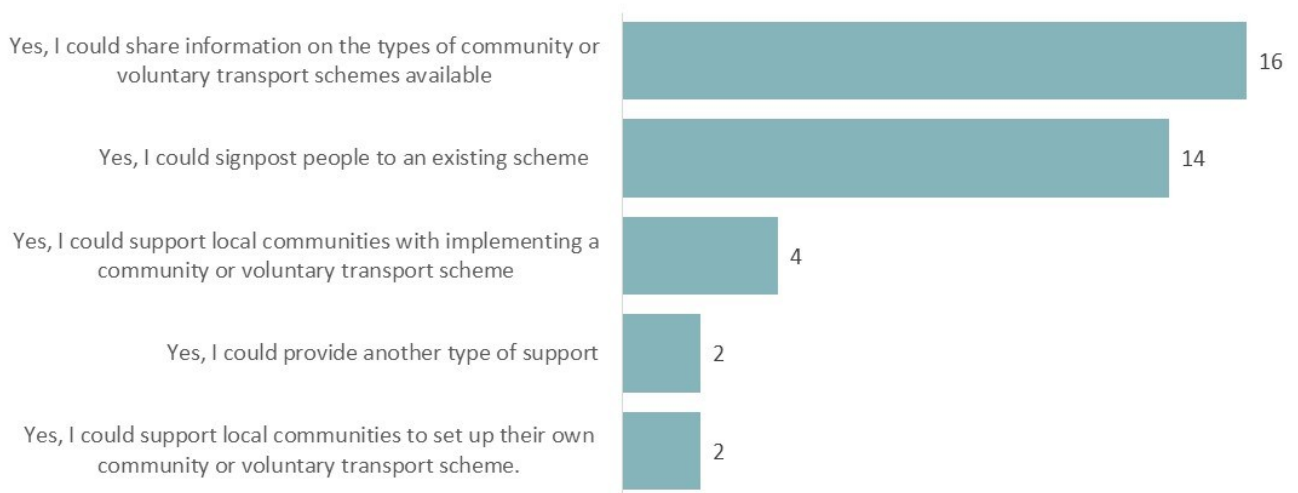
14.6: Community and voluntary transport initiatives

'Organisations' were encouraged to name those schemes which they were aware of. In total, 17 'organisations' documented details of schemes they were aware of and these have been shared with the service. A few 'organisations' expressed a concern that some current initiatives are "small scale" and "not set up for regular use". Others were "already up to capacity e.g. with transporting patients to medical appointments".

14.7: Supporting local communities to set up community and voluntary transport schemes

'Organisations' were most keen to share information on 'the types of schemes available' and 'to signpost people to existing schemes'. There was some appetite for supporting new schemes with the set up and implementation. Details of those who could offer 'another type of support' have been shared with the service.

Figure 14.2: The types of support which organisations can provide (No. of responses)



14.8: Suggestions/ideas

Some 'organisations' provided suggestions and ideas that could help contribute towards the savings that need to be made. These included:

- ⇒ A revision of pricing and timing of services to fit with employment, education and health.
- ⇒ Seeking to restore previously cancelled routes.
- ⇒ Incorporating additional areas into existing services.
- ⇒ Introducing taxi based flexible transport where patronage figures are below that required to support a conventional bus service.
- ⇒ Increasing subsidies for Dial-a-Ride and seeking to make other efficiencies in the service provision.

Some concern was also expressed by 'organisations' in this section. Key issues raised included a concern that people would no longer be able to live in rural areas not serviced by transport schemes. In particular this would impact on older people's ability to remain independent and live in their own homes.

APPENDIX I—INDIVIDUALS SURVEY—OVERALL DEMOGRAPHICS

What is your gender?

Gender	Survey responses		Staffordshire MYE 2016
	No's	%	%
Male	599	34%	50%
Female	1171	66%	50%

Do you have a long term disability or illness which affects day to day activities?

Disability	Survey responses		Staffordshire Census 2011
	No's	%	%
Yes	670	39%	19%
No	1066	61%	81%

How old are you?

Age	Survey responses		Staffordshire MYE 2016
	No's	%	%
Under 18	26	1.40%	19%
18-24	34	1.90%	8%
25-34	77	4.30%	12%
35-44	101	5.60%	12%
45-54	178	9.90%	15%
55-64	230	12.80%	13%
65-74	605	33.70%	12%
75+	545	30.30%	9%

Is your mobility impaired in anyway?

Disability	Survey responses	
	No's	%
Yes, due to a disability	413	24%
Yes, due to age	506	29%
No	813	47%

Do you have a learning disability?

Disability	Survey responses	
	No's	%
Yes	69	4%
No	1664	96%

Would you describe yourself as?

Ethnicity	Survey responses		Staffordshire Census 2011
	No's	%	%
White	1729	98%	96%
Mixed	13	1%	1%
Asian	6	0%	2%
Black	3	0%	1%
Other group	8	1%	0.2%

Do you have regular access to a car?

Disability	Survey responses	
	No's	%
Yes	69	4%
No	1664	96%

Bus services used by respondents

Service name/number	No of responses	Service name/number	No of responses	Service name/number	No of responses
D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 14	136	Select Buses - 73	28	Arriva Midlands North - 10A	13
Staffordshire Border Travel	125	D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 74	24	D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 116	13
Ashbourne Community Transport	89	Midland Classic Limited - 401	24	Community Transport WMidlands	12
D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 12	77	D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 14A	23	D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 73	12
D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 30	73	D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 85	23	Midland Classic Limited - 403	12
Select Buses - 11	69	Arriva Midlands North - 2E	22	Arriva Midlands North - 21	11
Solus - 82	68	D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 13A	22	Arriva Midlands North - 76A	11
D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 16	65	Midland Classic Limited - 812	22	Arriva Midlands North - 70	10
Select Buses - 877	60	Arriva Midlands North - 9	21	D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 80	10
D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 15	59	D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - S1	20	Midland Classic Ltd - 18	9
First Potteries Ltd - 6A	59	Accessible Transport Group	17	Derbyshire County Council - V1	8
D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 842	58	Midland Classic Limited - 402	17	Stanton's of Stoke - 429	8
Arriva Midlands North - 8	53	Arriva Midlands North - 10	16	Central Buses (Cen) - 35B	7
Bennetts Travel (Cranberry) Ltd - 123	53	Arriva Midlands North - 71/A	16	D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - S4	7
Arriva Midlands North - 61	48	D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 842A	16	D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 14B	6
D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 841	47	D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - S2	16	Community Link Stafford and District (Lodgefield Park - Stafford)	5
D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - S5	45	Midland Classic Limited - 10	16	D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 841A	4
Arriva Midlands North - 5	42	Taxico - 108	16	Stoke City Council (Scraggs) - 50	4
D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - S3	41	D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 33/35	15	Coastal Liner Ltd - 16	3
Arriva Midlands North - 62	38	Midland Classic Limited - 811	15	Community Link Stafford and District (Coppenhall - Ten Butts - Stafford)	3
Mobility Link (Lichfield and Rugeley Connect)	36	Derbyshire County Council - 442	14	Midland Classic Limited - 402A	3
D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 13	34	First Potteries Ltd - 72A	14	Select Buses - 67	3
Mobility Link (Needwood Forest Connect)	33	Mobility Link - 411	14	Stoke City Council (Scraggs) - 44	3
Travel West Midlands - 10	33	Taxico - 109	14	Derbyshire County Council - 21E	2
Select Buses - 878	31	Taxico - 18	14	Arriva Midlands North - 10S	1
D & G Coach & Bus Ltd - 93	28				

What is your district of residence?

District	Survey responses		Staffordshire Census 2011	District	Survey responses		Staffordshire Census 2011
	No's	%	%		No's	%	%
Cannock Chase	72	4%	11%	South Staffordshire	167	10%	13%
East Staffordshire	129	7%	13%	Stafford	564	32%	15%
Lichfield	207	12%	12%	Staffs Moorlands	357	20%	11%
Newcastle	213	12%	15%	Tamworth	45	3%	9%

APPENDIX 2—INDIVIDUALS SURVEY— DEMOGRAPHICS FOR COMMUNITY/VOLUNTARY TRANSPORT USERS

Have used community/voluntary transport by gender

Gender			
	No's used	No's in survey	% used
Male	49	599	8%
Female	135	1171	12%

Have used community/voluntary transport by age

Age			
	No's used	No's in survey	% used
Under 18	3	26	12%
18-24	4	34	12%
25-34	6	77	8%
35-44	7	101	7%
45-54	10	178	6%
55-64	16	230	7%
65-74	43	605	7%
75+	105	545	19%

Have used community/voluntary transport by ethnicity

Ethnicity			
	No's used	No's in survey	% used
White	183	1729	11%
Mixed	4	13	31%
Asian	1	6	17%
Black	0	3	0%
Other group	1	8	13%

Have used community/voluntary transport by whether have a long term disability or illness which affects day to day activities?

Disability			
	No's used	No's in survey	% used
Yes	113	670	17%
No	73	1066	7%

Have used community/voluntary transport by whether mobility is impaired in anyway?

Disability			
	No's used	No's in survey	% used
Yes, disability	75	413	18%
Yes, age	64	506	13%
No	47	813	6%

Have used community/voluntary transport by learning disability?

Disability			
	No's used	No's in survey	% used
Yes	16	69	23%
No	170	1664	10%