

## Appendix 3 – Monitoring the Strategy

### 3.1. Introduction

In developing and implementing a strategic commissioning approach to determining service priorities, it is essential that the impact of any decisions and subsequent service changes are carefully and comprehensively monitored. In addition, the Equality Impact Assessments require the mitigation measures and their effectiveness to be monitored, including any alternative models of provision.

The Transport Hub Team monitor the supported bus network performance through an ongoing dialogue with partners and contractors. Regular quantitative and qualitative surveys of passengers are undertaken as part of this work. They also monitor closely the performance of the commercial bus network and seek to anticipate any changes to the network which may lead to travel needs not being met or access to key services being affected. The Team is therefore well-placed to assemble data on service performance, operational and support costs and any key service issues as they arise.

### 3.2. Alternative Models

In pursuing the Strategy, consideration has been given to alternative models of service delivery and funding mechanisms. These alternative models are informed by the challenges on a national level to deliver local public transport networks within tighter fiscal restrictions.

As further mitigation it was agreed that the County Council would work with Borough, District, Town or Parish councils to identify potential sources of funding or set up alternative travel solutions such as wheels2work and car share schemes and to actively promote these or any alternative travel solutions such as walking and cycling. We undertook to liaise with other relevant parties including other County Council departments, the NHS, Clinical Commissioning Groups and developers to identify and implement alternative solutions.

The adopted Strategy also suggests opportunities to secure additional funding for supported bus services through a number of sources, all of which have been considered and nearly all pursued in the course of mitigating the effect of reduced funding for the RSBN.

#### 1. Discretionary Spending by District, Borough, Town and Parish Councils

**Context:** There are some limited examples in East Sussex of clusters of parish and town councils using their precept powers to help finance community transport services, but district and borough councils in East Sussex do not contribute to local transport services to the extent that is seen in many other parts of the south east. For example in West Sussex, districts contribute about 5%, but in Surrey and Hampshire in the latest year they contributed 15% and 23% respectively of the total bus operator support.

**The Strategy says:** *While the agreements elsewhere may be historical one offs to retain threatened services, we should establish whether the loss of a service is of sufficient concern to secure complementary funding from a district or borough council or even, perhaps, parish or town councils.*

**What we've done since December 2014:** We have worked with a number of additional Councils with the aim of securing funding for service improvements. This has helped to build positive relationships and increased their understanding of the commissioning process. Whilst the high cost of additional service provision has been found to be a considerable barrier, some progress has been made.

- Rotherfield Parish Council have made a contribution to the operator of service 224 to secure the secure in the area, the service already being funded by Wadhurst and Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Councils to secure the service on 3 days a week

- Lewes Town Council made a contribution to Compass which has assisted the company in increasing the frequency of their commercial town services 127 and 128. Advice was provided by officers in the early stages of the proposal and significant work undertaken with the bus operator in reconfiguring these commercial town services in an integrated way to also improve supported service 129 too. Its successful outcome was reported to Lead Member Transport Environment on 19 October 2015.
- Northiam, Peasmarsch and Beckley Parish Councils in February 2016 confirmed their agreement to funding additional journeys on service 313. As a result of this community funding an improved bus service from Spring 2016 will aid passengers in make shopping and medical trips as well providing better train connections at Rye.

## **2. Use of Parking Charge Surpluses**

**Context:** East Sussex County Council is permitted to use any surplus from on-street parking schemes in, Eastbourne Borough, Hastings Borough and Lewes District to support 'public passenger transport services'. This provides a potential continuing funding stream for the supported bus network, subject of course to the relative merits of competing applications for the funding.

**The Strategy says:** *Data provided by the Council's Parking Business Officer, in June 2013 shows a forecast annual surplus of around £800k going forward, assuming continuation of current levels of both income and expenditure. If 50% of this was allocated to the supported bus service budget, an additional £400k of funding would be available.*

**What we've done since December 2014:** County Council in its meeting on 9 February 2016 agreed the use of the Parking Surplus to contribute towards the supported bus network budget and concessionary fares budget. Historically, the Parking Surplus has been used to support integrated transport schemes. At the same time, we have funded a gap in the grant funding for the statutory concessionary fare scheme and used revenue budget for support parts of the bus network. Both of these would be legitimate uses for any parking surplus. Any integrated bus schemes with committed funding would not be impacted. However, there is likely to be a far reduced fund that may be available for integrated transport schemes in the future. There remains a risk that a parking surplus will not be generated, in which case the department would have to find alternative ways to meet this savings pressure.

- Members of the Hastings Parking Board agreed that some of the parking surplus be used to secure the continuations of Hastings Sunday service 128 and Hastings-Pett Level-Rye Sunday service 101. Funding is initially for one year from April 2015 with a view that any future funding would be reduced with an expected increase in the bus operator's income from fares.

## **3. Contributions from Schools and Colleges**

**Context:** Provision of transport to children who are not eligible for statutory free home to school transport and are not travelling to their nearest available school or college is not one of needs based priorities of the Strategy. We will however work with children, parents, schools and operators to find alternative travel solutions where currently non entitled children are travelling beyond their nearest available school on supported local buses, which do not meet our Priority 1 or 4 criteria.

**The Strategy says:** *Schools and colleges can choose to subsidise or fund transport services to attract pupils from a wider area, and, by doing this, the schools and colleges can get additional pupil premium payments.*

**What we've done since December 2014:** It has been necessary to stand firm to the

priorities in the Strategy in the face of pressure from parents who have campaigned for support to be provided for additional services to more distant schools.

- In Spring 2015 parents from the Newick area requested that the County Council funded additional seating capacity on the Sussex Bus commercial service 31 to Uckfield Community Technology College. This was due to concerns that the existing service would not cope with the additional children who were expected to use the service from September 2015. In line with the strategy we worked with the all parties to help find an alternative travel solution which culminated in an agreement between Sussex Bus and the school to provide an additional school bus.
- Schools in general appear to now have a reduced expectation of the County Council's ability to fund improved services for non-entitled pupils. Some schools are now approaching commercial operators directly to secure improved access for children travelling from more distant areas.

#### **4. Raising Home to School Fares**

**Context:** Where the income from services does not meet the cost of their provision, it is reasonable to consider the extent to which users could be asked to make a greater contribution to costs. This is particularly relevant for home to school transport where the cost of peak service provision is relatively expensive.

**The Strategy says:** *If fares were raised by 30% for schoolchildren not entitled to free travel, we estimate that fares income could increase from around £290k per year to £350k. Similarly if fares were raised by 60%, income might approach £400k per year. If the additional income was used to fund supported bus services, these actions would increase the available budget by £60-110k.*

**What we've done since December 2014:** Bus operators factored into their tender submissions for supported school services that they would receive higher fares income as a result of increasing fares, with the outcome that the County Council benefitted from lower contract prices.

- In line with the agreed Strategy from April 2015 adult and child fares were increased by up to 30%. Following discussions with officers, most bus operators of contracted bus services proceeded with increases of less than 30% as they felt this would be counter-productive. Stagecoach along with most operators adopted increases in the region of 10%.
- Compass was an exception as they took the decision to generally increase fares on its services by up to 30%. The additional income allowed them to commercialise a significant number of previously supported school and daytime services.
- In the case of Heathfield College service 267/268/269 it was reported to Scrutiny and Cabinet that fares would increase from £11 to £16 per week so as to retain this long established service as it did not otherwise meet the priorities in the Strategy. This service, along with several other services, was tendered after the Cabinet decision in December 2014. The increase in fares income was sufficient for Seaford & District to take a decision to run the service on a commercial basis.

#### **5. Development Contributions**

**Context:** New commercial and residential developments require the planning authority to consider their transport impact. Where appropriate, the County Council will consult with commercial transport providers. This is to recommend measures to try and ensure the detailed design is likely to offer public transport providers the ability to serve the development on a commercial basis once established and fully occupied. In particular, best

public transport practice estate design can be critical in ensuring a commercial bus service. Development contributions may be necessary to improve the public transport infrastructure, e.g. bus stop provision, and to kick-start a new or enhanced bus service over the early years of the development.

**The Strategy says:** *Two opportunities arise with development contributions:*

- *to ensure that all previously promised contributions have been collected and managed for the full term of the S106 agreement*
- *to identify local transport and school bus support requirements earlier with developers and encourage greater contributions, while recognising the need to avoid onerous or excessive demands out of step with the National Planning Policy Framework:*

**What we've done since December 2014:** The County Council's Transport Hub team continues to liaise closely with the CET teams which manage development contributions. This includes working with the Transport Development Control and where appropriate, the Borough and District planning authorities, to secure transport access contributions in accordance with policy frameworks. The resulting transport solutions will of course only be realised once the contribution payment has been triggered by the specified stage in the development, which can often be a number of years after the contribution was agreed.

- Where the scale and nature of the development requires significant interventions to support transport access it can be appropriate to specify development contributions to kick-start new or additional bus service provision. A previous example of this is the Hellingly Roebuck Park development where we expect Stagecoach will be able to maintain their service 1/51 once the S106 development contribution support their bus contract runs out. A similar S106 contribution for bus service improvements and related bus stop infrastructure has recently been secured relating to the north east Bexhill development.
- The vast majority of transport access contributions secured relate to small and medium size developments. Due to the limited scale of these contributions these will often be used to improve bus stop infrastructure including the provision of real time signs where there will be a significant number of bus users. Apart from addressing access equality issues, such improvements also help to support increased use of bus services which helps to sustain their commercial viability.

## **6. Support from the Health Sector**

**Context and what the Strategy says:** *The change in NHS commissioning arrangements, and the replacement of Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) by five Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), may provide a new opportunity in East Sussex for more imaginative support of bus services – particularly any supported bus services that are known to carry passengers to hospitals or community health facilities.*

**What we've done since December 2014:** Progress in this area has been more difficult to achieve as the CCGs is on clinical arrangements. This said, there have been some notable developments:

- Coperforma has very recently been awarded the contract by the CCGs for the delivery of Patient Transport Services (PTS) for Sussex. They are keen to work with and fund different transport partners to deliver the service, including community transport providers. This model will potentially provide opportunities for individual community transport providers, with the desire and capability to do so, to expand into new service area with potential cross-benefits for the communities they serve.

- The community transport provider CTLA has been contracted by the High Weald Lewes Havens CCG to provide free patient transport to surgeries and the Victoria Hospital in Lewes. The aim of the project is to improve access to health care, with associated benefits for the CCG too in reducing the number of missed appointments and improving the utilisation of Victoria Hospital whilst relieving pressure on the Royal Sussex County Hospital. The Transport Hub team has engaged with CTLA to learn from the project and to explore opportunities to replicate the model.
- Access to the new centralised primary health care provision is ultimately a matter for the CCGs and the East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust. However, East Sussex County Council agreed to continue to work with all relevant partners to facilitate opportunities to develop a sustainable shuttle bus service between the Eastbourne District General Hospital and the Conquest Hospital, Hastings. Progress on this has proven to be difficult as such a service is unlikely to be provided on a commercial basis due to the low number of passengers expected to travel between the two hospital sites.
- At a more local level we continue to work with local communities, transport providers and surgeries to address concerns expressed over healthcare access. This work includes engaging Rother Voluntary Action to expand the provision of voluntary car schemes where interest is shown by the local communities. One recent example of this is work to develop a medical car scheme in the Peasmarsh area.

### **3.3. Customer Feedback**

The Transport Hub Team has analysed the correspondence received about the Strategy and RSBN changes following the Cabinet decision in December 2014. 267 items were recorded up until the middle of February 2016, including correspondence received directly via phone, email, post, on-bus survey feedback forms or via other departments and the Contact Centre. Multiple items of correspondence relating to the same correspondent about a specific issue were recorded as a single correspondence item. Items such as concerns over late running buses are considered to be operational issues and directly related to the outcome of the RSBN, so have been excluded from this figure.

The Transport Hub Team has analysed the correspondence received about the Strategy and RSBN changes following the Cabinet decision in December 2014. 330 items were recorded up until the middle of February 2016, including correspondence received directly via phone, email, post, on-bus survey feedback forms or via other departments and the Contact Centre. Multiple items of correspondence relating to the same correspondent about a specific issue were recorded as a single correspondence item. Items such as concerns over late running buses are considered to be operational issues and directly related to the outcome of the RSBN, so have been excluded from this figure.

330 items of correspondence is 2% of the estimated 14,900 weekly number of people travelling on supported bus services. The volume of items could be regarded as relatively small, which would appear to indicate the effectiveness of the communications plan in explaining the background to the Strategy and the likely future shape of the supported bus network. 87 of the 330 items were requests for further information about the Strategy or the RSBN, 70% of which were received in March and April 2015 around the time the detail of the new supported bus services, including individual route timetables, was made public.

32 were compliments about the outcome or implementation. The remaining 211 were complaints. 29 of these were concerns regarding the level of fares increases and the other 182 related to concerns over the level of service provision in the new network. 71 of the service related complaints are considered to now have been resolved through further

mitigating actions. The remaining 111 complaints are considered not to have been resolved relate to mainly individual service concerns.

Only 9 services generated 7 or more complaints for each service of which all apart from Heathfield school service 267/268/269 (for the imposition of a 30% fares increase) were with regard to reductions in the days of the week or frequencies. The highest number of complaints was 17 for Newhaven town service 145 (where the frequency was reduced from hourly to 2 hourly). Complaints relating to 2 of these 9 services are considered to have been resolved following mitigating interventions.

Since November 2015 complaints about the new RSBN have reduced to less than 10 per month, most of which are from 'Have Your Say' forms. These Freepost comment forms are offered to passengers during the on-bus surveys who wish to comment about bus services. More information on the results of customer feedback is provided in Appendix

The 6 services with the most recorded complaint resolutions are shown below:

Service	Complaints
7	10
129	8
167/168	5
127	5
31	5
166	4

The 7 services with most recorded complaints that have not been resolved are shown below:

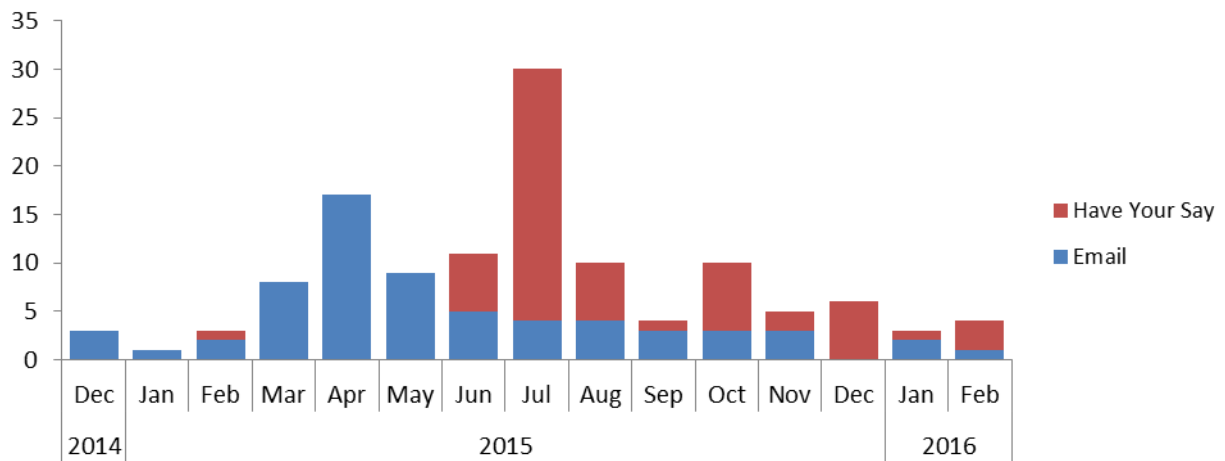
Service	Complaints
145	17
313	15
267/268/269	12
225	9
123	7
121	7
126	7

The service with the second highest correspondence volume is service 313 with 15 items. The concerns expressed for this service, linking the rural communities of Northiam, Beckley and Peasmarsch with Rye, centre on the difficulties in making shopping and medical appointments through the reduction in frequency from hourly to 2 hours. Whilst the concerns relating to service 313 are not yet considered to be resolved, the Transport Hub Team and the Parish Councils are working collaboratively in various ways to reduce the impact of the change. These include promoting the use of the Rye area dial-a-ride as way of meeting local transport need, the setting up of a community medical car scheme run by local volunteers with assistance from Rother Voluntary Action, and using Parish precepts to fund an additional morning journey on service 313.

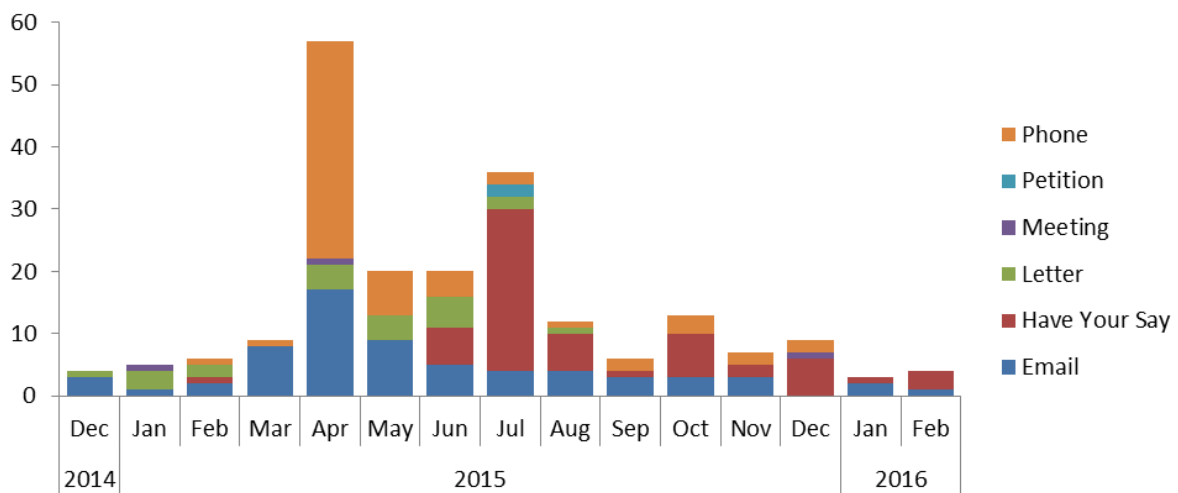
Services 7 (St Helens area of Hastings) and service 129 (Winterbourne and the Spences Lane area of Lewes) were also service with higher volumes of correspondence, with 10 and 8 items respectively. Both services were the subject of petitions presented to County Council on 14 July 2015. These petitions called on the County Council to improve the frequency of these services, which had reduced to 2 hourly having been hourly before the RSBN. The Transport Hub Team was already actively engaged in seeking solutions in conjunction with

the two contracted service operators. In the case of service 7 the bus schedule was reconfigured to provide an improved frequency from November 2015. With regard to service 129 an improved timetable was implemented in September 2015 by re-configuring the contracted bus schedule more efficiently with that of the Compass commercial Lewes bus service 128.

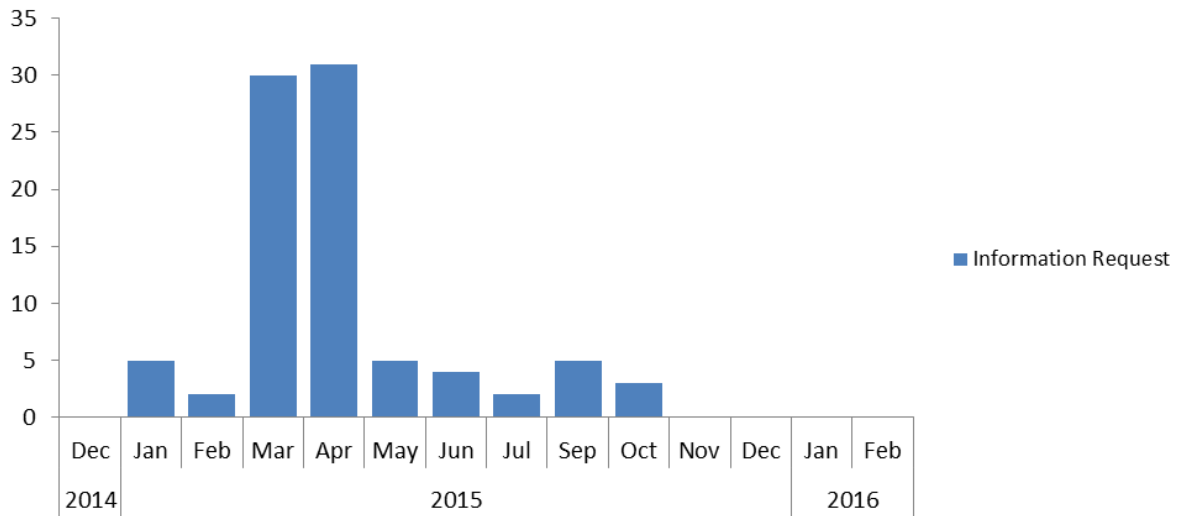
### Types of complaint by month



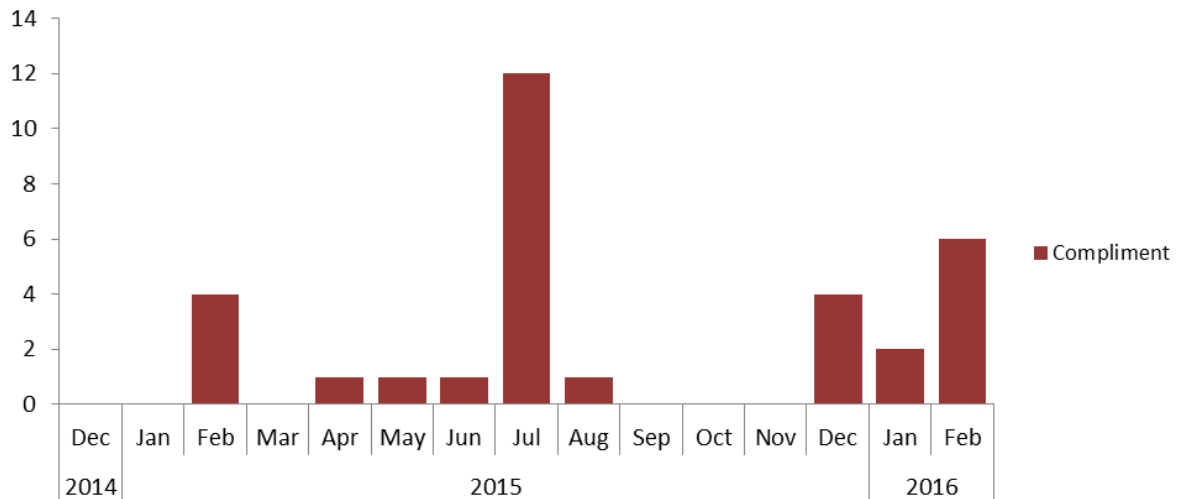
### How were we contacted?



## Information Requests by Month



## Compliments by Month



### 3.4. Daily Passenger Numbers

The impact of the proposed RSBN considered by Scrutiny and Cabinet was estimated to result in 93% of bus users being able to continue to use buses after introduction of the changes. Future figures were calculated on daily passenger numbers estimated using the County Council's passenger data records as at April 2014, with standard industry demand elasticity factors applied that describe the relationship between service level and bus use.

With the take up of services commercially by operators, circa 600,000 trips per year previously made on the supported network were estimated to transfer to the commercial sector. This was expected to increase the proportion of all local bus trips made on commercial services in East Sussex from 80% to 85%.



## Impact on Employment, Shopping and Medical Trips

### Employment

The Strategy places access to employment as a high priority and the reformulated supported bus network has been designed to maintain this.

### Shopping and Leisure

It was estimated that in April 2014 4,300 people used the supported bus network on an average day for shopping and leisure purposes. 216 shopping trips were expected to be lost per day as a result of implementing the proposed network.

The table below shows services where it is forecast that there will be a reduction in shopping trips:

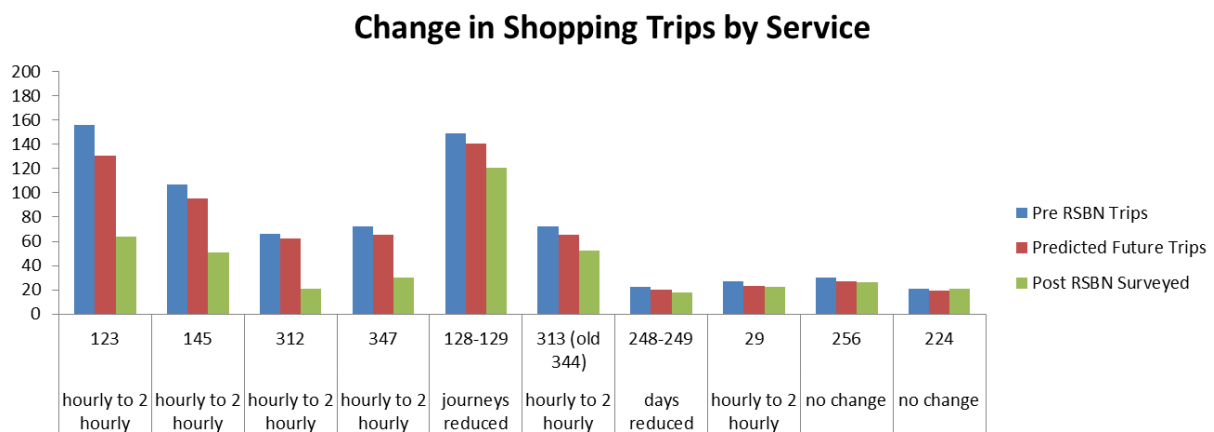


Fig 2: Data in Appendix 5: 5.1

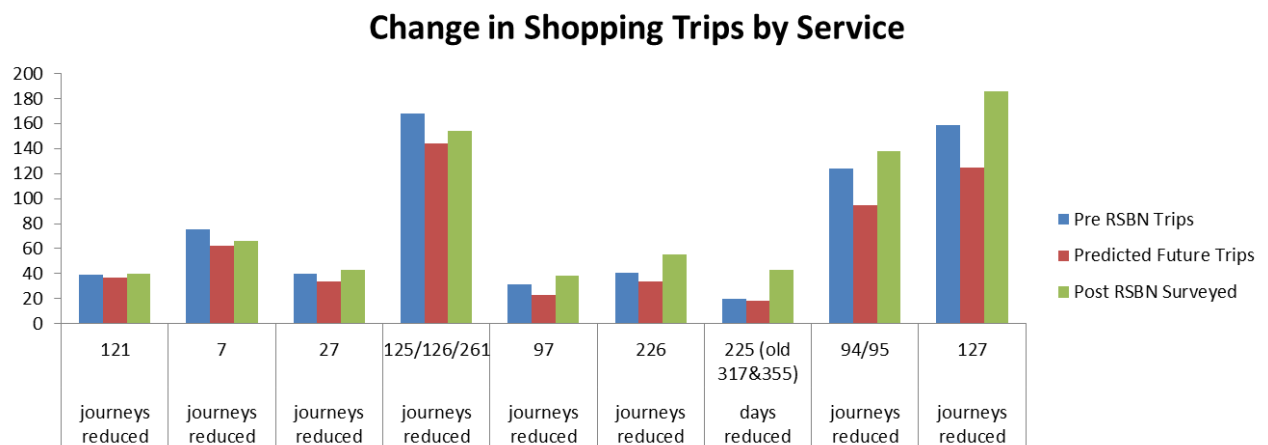


Fig 3: Data in Appendix 5: 5.1

### Impact on Medical Trips

Our estimate was that around 400 people per day used a supported bus service to get to a health or medical appointment. Following the revisions to the supported bus network, around 85% were expected to be able to continue to use a 5 or 6 day a week service with a two hourly or better frequency.

We estimated that around 25 medical trips a day could have been compromised by the proposed change to the network presented in December 2014. A small number of these were likely to be people who will continue to have access to a daily service, but who are not

able to cope with the reduced service timetable. However, most of these lost trips were expected to be on services that would no longer operate daily. These included those people using dial-a-ride services to get to an appointment, and other users of public bus services that would in future operate two days a week only.

One of the key concerns has been to help people reach a medical appointment the days the service is no longer operating. We wrote to hospitals and surgeries to explain that some people will have less flexibility in terms of appointment times. We asked that non-emergency appointments be arranged to fit with patients' travel options. Patients themselves too need to clear, when arranging appointments, about the days and times that they can attend.

The tables below show the estimated trips that would be made on the amended proposed network for medical purposes and those that would potentially be lost.

### Change in Medical Trips by Service

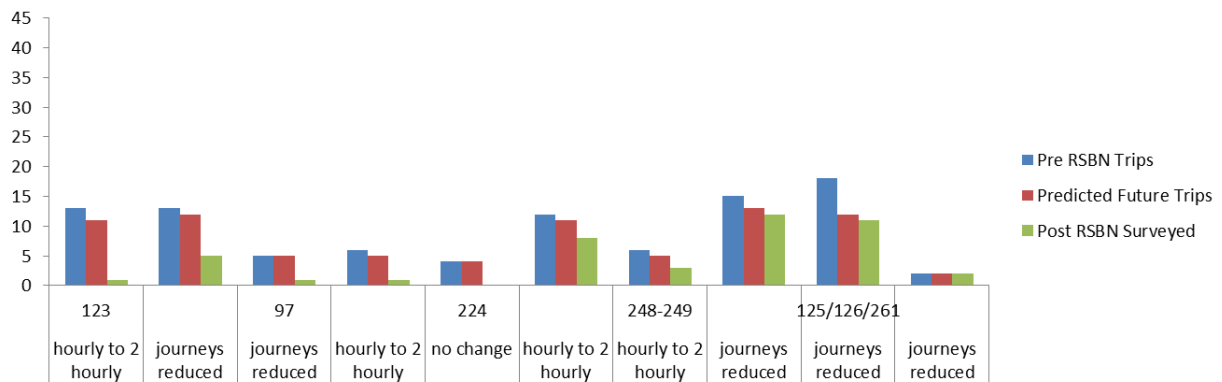


Fig 4: Data in Appendix E: E2

### Change in Medical Trips by Service

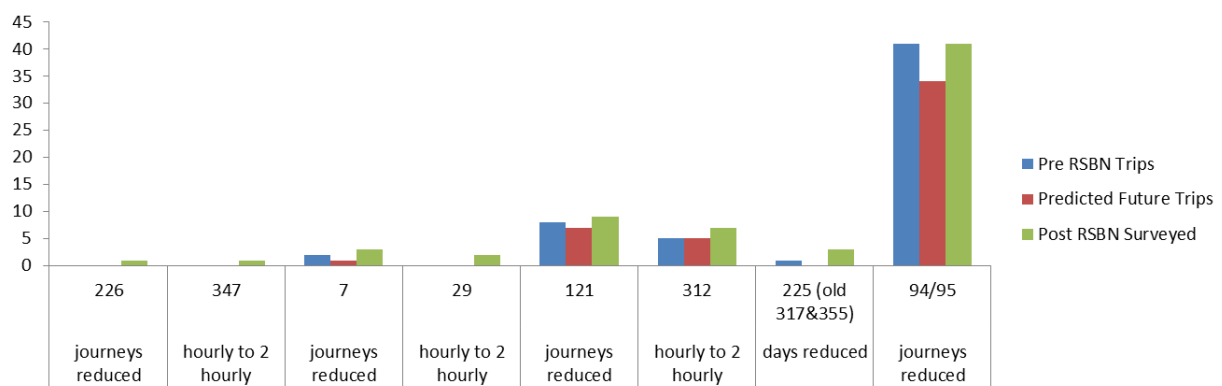


Fig 5: Data in Appendix E: E2

