

STATES OF JERSEY



BUS SERVICE: INTRODUCTION OF THROUGH-FARES (P.19/2020) – AMENDMENT (P.19/2020 Amd.) – COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 26th June 2020
by the Minister for Infrastructure**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

Summary of amendment

PAGE 2 –

After the words, ‘through-fares’ insert the words, “and other improvements, such as a Town ‘hopper’ service,”

If adopted, the proposition would read as follows –

“THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion to request the Minister for Infrastructure to take the steps necessary with LibertyBus to introduce through-fares **and other improvements, such as a Town ‘hopper’ service**, on their buses, with immediate effect. (Amendment in **bold**)”.

In effect, the Constable is requesting alterations to the LibertyBus service offering, which would come with an additional cost to the public purse, in advance of the process clearly outlined within the Sustainable Transport Policy ([P.128/2019](#)) as recently adopted by the States Assembly.

The Constable acknowledges, within the report accompanying his amendment to [P.19/2020](#), that the Minister for Infrastructure has already agreed to bring forward a Bus Service Development Plan for debate during the Spring session of 2021.

Furthermore he notes that, in light of this, it would be a waste of time to debate [P.19/2020](#) (introduction of a free transfer ticket) when bus ticketing is a key component of the Plan –

“For bus travel to become the norm, work needs to continue – with LibertyBus – to build on the successes that have been achieved and explore ambitious improvements that could be made.

The Bus Service Development Plan will undertake – for the first time in Jersey – a systematic and whole-system analysis of the options, opportunities and challenges associated with making changes to –

- the optimum distribution, design and frequency of routes, including existing routes;
- infrastructure, including where improvements could make it quicker and more convenient to get the bus;
- the size and types of vehicle used;
- allocation of space, including for priority bus lanes, junctions and bus stops;
- **the ticketing and fare structure**, concessions and the government subsidy;
- the school bus network and service; and
- the long-term investment plan for the bus fleet, acknowledging the move to ultra-low emissions technologies.

The Plan will be based on detailed quantitative modelling, and qualitative analysis, of where, when and why people do (and don’t) want to travel.”

(The Sustainable Transport Policy Framework for a Sustainable Transport System 2020-2030)

In other words, as a result of the States Assembly's very recent decision to adopt the Sustainable Transport Policy, the Minister for Infrastructure has already undertaken to take steps to introduce improvements to the public transport network. While the Constable does not acknowledge this, LibertyBus have announced that they will be adding a discounted transfer ticket to their range of bus fares, and this facility therefore represents one such improvement.

Therefore, it is true to assert that there are more pressing matters than the structure of bus ticketing to deal with, and it would indeed be a waste of time to debate a specific aspect which the Assembly has already instructed the Minister to review, as part of a broader piece of work, in a methodological and scientific manner.

The Sustainable Transport Policy (Sustainable Transport Strong Start Delivery Plan) 2020 says –

“What will success look like? We will know we have been successful in delivering our vision when we see changes resulting from... bus service improvement –increased bus ridership.”

And goes on to state –

“Active Travel Plan and **Bus Service Development Plan** – A wholesale review of our current network to identify the improvements required to deliver our transport vision. By June 2020 we will have identified the terms of reference for the study and started a programme of data collection to identify where the demand for bus, cycle and walking infrastructure is. By the end of 2020 we will have a detailed delivery plan to start implementing these network improvements between 2021-2030.”

Although the timescales have been affected by the Covid-19 outbreak and the consequent need to focus on other priorities, the Minister's commitment to carry out this work remains. In relation to the specific matter of dedicated additional bus routes serving the town area, the potential demand for and viability of such changes to service provision will be investigated as part of the Plan.

To adopt the proposition as amended would divert GHE officer resources away from progressing the Bus Service Development Plan, and risk impacting the performance of the bus service with the imposition of insufficiently-considered policies which affect the commercial principles of the bus contract that have underpinned its success over the past seven years.

Accordingly, the Minister for Infrastructure urges States Members to reject the Amendment to the Proposition.

Financial and resource implications

The introduction of a viable Town Bus service would require a budget in the order of £1 million per annum, in addition to set-up cost.