

City of Wolverhampton Council's Travel Unit Transformation and challenges

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What is wrong with this picture?

- High level of customer dissatisfaction
- Spiralling budgets within pupil services
- Lack of technical knowledge within both departments
- Silo thinking – no joined up working


The Options

- Option One – Privatisise everything

Sell off the in house fleet assets, make all of the Drivers redundant and utilise the Travel Assistants on privately contracted vehicles.

- Option Two - Keep the fleet running and create 1 integrated Travel Unit

Merge the 2 failing departments and employ a suitably qualified and technically knowledgeable Manager to oversee the new Unit.



The initial challenges and solutions for the in-house fleet

- **No effective defect reporting system in place**
- **No forward maintenance planner**
- **Lack of engagement resulting in lack of compliance knowledge amongst Drivers**
- **Battling the perception that contracting everything out would be the best solution**
- **Ageing vehicles**
- **Historic reputational damage to be repaired**



The initial challenges of managing external operators and the resolution

- **No technical knowledge within the team of Operator licensing or compliance and a resistance to learning what was required**
- **No understanding or interest in the role of DVSA and the Traffic Commissioner**
- **Ineffective record keeping**
- **Lack of compliance checks on Operators resulting in the utilisation of Operators who did not hold the correct O' Licence**
- **A default points system that was not fit for purpose**

Covid 19 impact and our response



- Social distancing
- Constantly changing government guidance
- Managing staff shortages
- PPE requirements
- And then came 'Bubbles'



So where are we now?



- The whole team has been successfully integrated and is working in one single location
- Staff are engaged and trained
- Supervisors are now ROSPA accredited Driver Assessors
- A second qualified PSV Transport Manager to assist and educate
- Regular toolbox talks
- 24 new vehicles on order
- Close working relationships with all internal and external stakeholders
- All Travel Assistants PATS trained
- We have our first Independent Travel Training Co Ordinator in post

So what are the ongoing challenges and how do we intend to face them?

- National shortage of D1 Drivers
- The requirement for more single occupancy taxis
- All owned vehicles are now in use
- Rising costs of utilising private contractors and lack of legally compliant, reliable contractors who operate larger vehicles
- Working toward the carbon net zero target of 2028 as published by City of Wolverhampton Council

How do we measure success?

- Rising pupil numbers – lower cost per head
- Staff and customer satisfaction
- DVSA have found no faults with either our in-house vehicles or our Contractors during recent checks
- In house fleet utilisation (numbers of vehicles used and pupils per vehicle comparison)
- Reduction in vehicle downtime – increase in support services

Pupil Numbers and annual cost per head

