

## Appendix A – Consultation Feedback report on draft Interim Bus Policy

### Introduction

A public consultation was undertaken on the West Northamptonshire Council Interim Bus policy consultation between 29 September 2023 and 12 November 2023, a duration of 6 weeks.

As well as an overview of the bus policy background the council's online consultation hub included links to the two reports from the recently completed Bus Network Review. This Bus Network Review recommended an updated policy position covering the council's support for the local bus network, and the wording of this policy based on the analysis undertaken. The new Bus Policy wording would guide activity over the next 12 months, in advance of a more comprehensive update to the council's suite of transport policies when the new Local Transport Plan is adopted by early 2025.

As well as being encouraged to complete the online survey, participants were also able to email the council's bus team with any feedback, and there was also an option for a paper survey to be printed and submitted by post.

### Results and Feedback

There were 734 responses in total to the consultation, of which 527 were fully completed.

Across all 734 responses we received the following results against the question asking participants whether they agreed with the 3 bus priorities stated in the policy:

- Priority 1: The Council will encourage the commercial operation of local public transport services, through partnership working and infrastructure investment. **67% (495) agreed, 4% (29) disagreed and 29% (210) had no view or gave no response.**
- Priority 2: Where there are unmet needs and gaps in the commercial bus network provision, the Council will seek solutions through supported local bus services or community transport initiatives, where funding is available and it is consistent with Council policies and priorities. **63% (465) agreed, 3% (18) disagreed and 34% (251) had no view or gave no response.**
- Priority 3: The Council will fund and administer concessionary travel for elderly and disabled residents in line with national regulations **60% (440) agreed, 2% (12) disagreed and 38% (282) had no view or gave no response.**

A review of the 527 fully completed survey responses gave the following results:

- Priority 1: The Council will encourage the commercial operation of local public transport services, through partnership working and infrastructure investment. **82% (433) agree**
- Priority 2: Where there are unmet needs and gaps in the commercial bus network provision, the Council will seek solutions through supported local bus services or community transport initiatives, where funding is available and it is consistent with Council policies and priorities. **77% (406) agree**
- Priority 3: The Council will fund and administer concessionary travel for elderly and disabled residents in line with national regulations **72% (382) agree**

Overall from all the survey responses received this demonstrates that there is positive support for the interim bus policy.

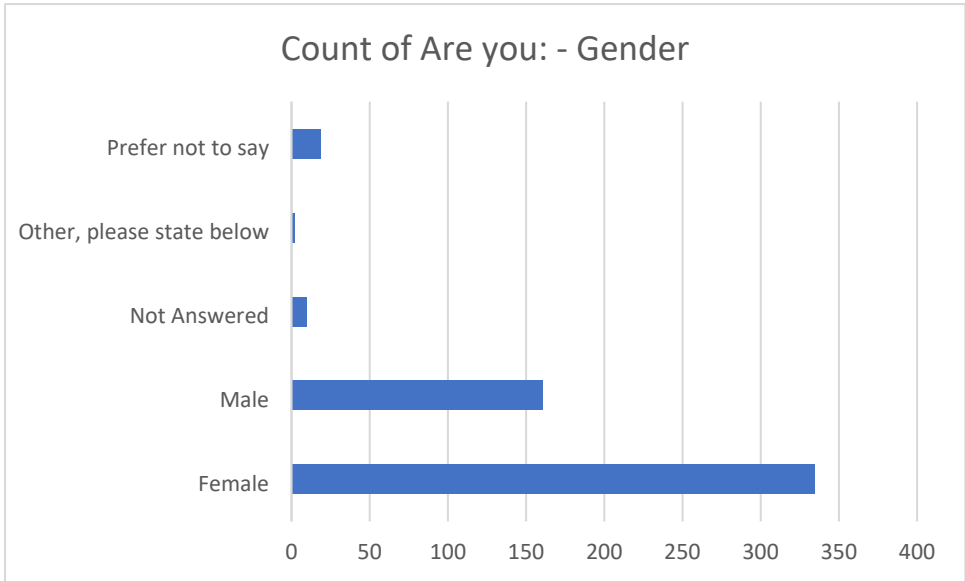
We received 324 comments to the question consultation when we asked respondents if they wished to provide further comments on the priorities, or to tell us anything else regarding local bus services. This has provided us with lots of useful feedback. The key themes, which are not in any rank order, are:

- Improvements requested to rural services including villages around Brackley, Towcester and Daventry
- Maintaining and Improvements requested to existing services (frequency, hours of operation etc.)
- An urban service to connect West Hunsbury to Northampton
- Improved connectivity for villages close to the boundary with Milton Keynes (Deanshanger / Potterspury)
- Positive feedback on Ability Community Transport

## **Demographic information on respondents**

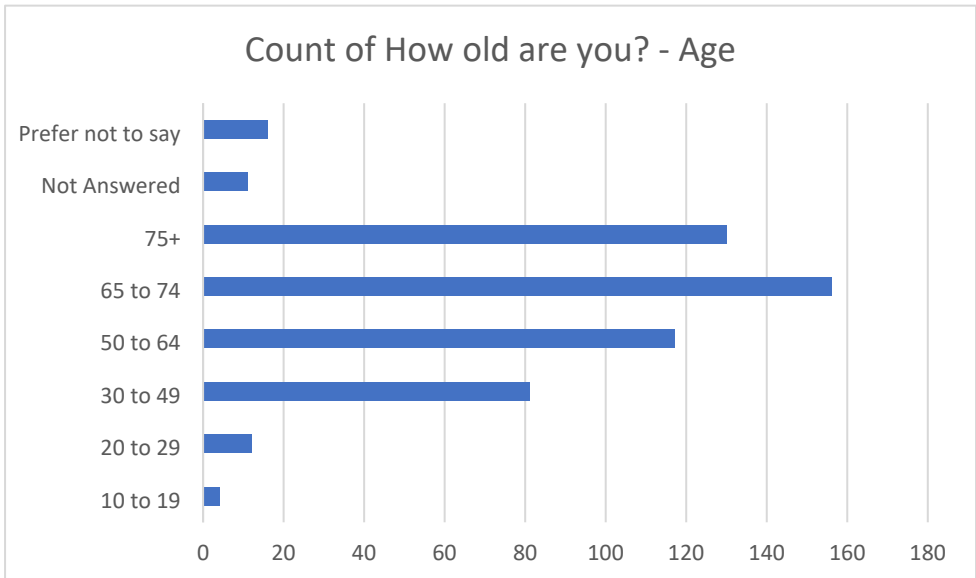
### Gender

Of the 527 fully completed surveys responses, 31% (161) were male, and 64% (335) were female, with 5% not answering/prefer not to say.



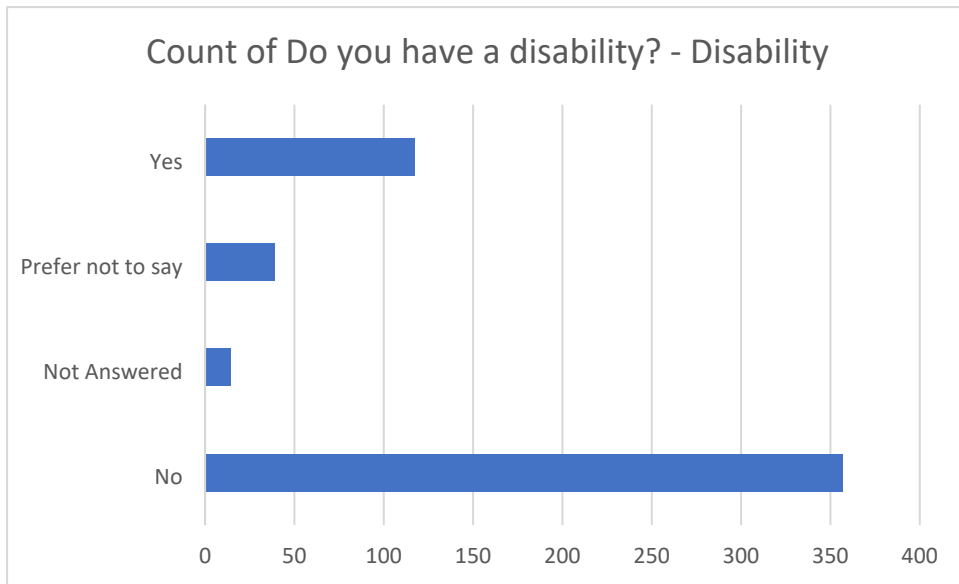
Age

More than half of completed responses were from people over the age of 65. 25% (130) of respondents were 75+, 30% (156) were 65-74, 22% (117) were 50-64, and 15% (81) were 30-49.



Disability

22% (117) of completed responses were from people with a disability.



### Religion, Sexuality and Marital Status

49% of completed responses were from people who identified as Christian, and another 49% did not provide an answer or preferred not to say.

70% of responses were from people identifying as heterosexual. 25% either didn't answer or preferred not to say. 2% identified as bisexual and 1% as other.

53% of responses were from people who were married, 14% from widow/widowers, 13% from single people, 6% were cohabiting and 11% preferred not to say or didn't answer.