BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Living with Austerity – Transforming Bedford's Transport and STAR Quality

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# Transport Tale Since 2009

**Chapter 1 : Setting the Scene**

**Chapter 2 : Dealing with Austerity**

**Chapter 3 : The STAR pilot**

**Chapter 4 : Conclusions**

# Chapter 1: Setting the scene

- **General**
  - Medium sized unitary authority (158k population)
  - Diverse community
  - 40 mins north of London (contract prices)
- **Transport**
  - Public Transport
    - Good day town network/ rural & evening sporadic
    - Stagecoach dominate operator
  - School Network
    - Competitive (ish) markets & in-house provision
    - Emphasis on ‘quality’

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# Chapter 1: Setting the scene

- **Distinct Issues**
  - New unitary authority 2009
  - Elected Executive Mayor
  - Strong leadership
  - Fresh, open and questioning culture
  - **Unitary Transition Savings**
    - » Seamless transition, smooth new year & savings second part of the year

# Chapter 2 : Dealing with Austerity

- **Seamless Transition - YES**
- **Smooth New School - YES**

- **Savings commitment second part of Year:**
  - **Comprehensive Re-tender**
  - **Single Taxi's, Privilege & Scholar Tickets**
  - **Savings over £500k on £7m budget by April 2010**
  - **No adverse reaction to change**

# Chapter 2: Dealing with Austerity & Initial Savings

- Feeling pretty good but  Austerity Agenda Emerging
- Transformation Agenda launched at Bedford Borough Council
  - Heads of Services to Audit services
    - Efficiency Quick Wins
    - Protect frontline service
    - Transform rather than cut
- Transport Management team self Audited service

May 2010

# Chapter 2: Dealing with Austerity

**Transport Audit**

- Limited quick wins
- Vehicle utilisation, procurement, staffing & tendering (£150k)

- Longer Term Transformation opportunities
  - Fleet Maintenance & Management
  - Community Transport

# Chapter 2: Dealing with Austerity

- Imbalance in expenditure
  - Client £7m v Public £700k
  - Reliance on bespoke transport
  - Potential Benefits - personalisation, extended education agenda, community
- Under utilisation of public transport network for client transport (180!)
  - 1500 pupils could access public transport network
  - Historical nature of old County, scholar costs
  - Barriers
  - Potential Benefit per pupil costs halved

# Chapter 2: Dealing with Austerity

- Very generous entitlement processes
- Spare Capacity on mainstream network
  - Numbers based on entitled travellers rather than those travelling
  - Potential Benefit reductions in vehicle requirements
- Tendering
  - Taxi/Private Hire cost
  - Procurement processes
  - Mileage & time especially on Special Needs
  - Potential Benefit significant cost reductions

# Chapter 2 :Dealing with Austerity

- Agreed two further Transformation
  - Transforming Public Transport Network
    - Better links with client transport
  - Transforming Client Transport
    - Greater use of public transport
    - Maximise Capacity
    - Alter tendering processes
- Conservative estimated savings At £250k p.a.
- To be delivered by September 2011

# Chapter 3 : The STAR pilot

## Issues – Data collection

- Desperate need (don't have smartcards) for:
  - Actual passenger numbers (administration numbers)
  - Mileages
  - Travel Times
- Affordable
- Practicality
- Desirable Quality Benefits

# Chapter 3: The STAR pilot

**STAR FEATURES**

- GPS Vehicle Tracking
- Comprehensive customisable user reports including
  - Passenger Numbers
  - Mileage
  - Timing
- Multi –user Web based information platform
- Mobile and compact data terminals

**BUT REQUIRED SMARTCARDS or Did it?**

STAR
Schools Transport Automatic Register

# Chapter 3 : The STAR pilot

- Affordability
  - Low cost Pilot
  - Very Low revenue costs
  - Minimal or no capital costs
- Practicality
  - Could be initiated without Smartcards
  - Easy portable
  - Easy to Install
  - 10 mins to train
  - Information all in one place

# Chapter 3 : The STAR Pilot

| Issues | STAR solution |
| --- | --- |
| • Expedient need for<br>– Actual numbers<br>– Mileages<br>– Travel Times | • Developed can collect |
| • Affordable | • Yes |
| • Practical | • Yes |
| • Desirable Quality benefits | • Yes |

# Chapter 3 : The STAR Pilot

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**Additional Longer Term Benefits**

- Safety & security of pupils (pictorial identification)
- On-line live passenger manifest
- Smart Card utilisation in service delivery (eliminating fare-dodging)
- Misbehaviour Reporting
- Automatic incident reporting
- Instruction to driver for Special needs students
- Integrated Navigator
- Voice & text communication with driver
- Multi –user Web based information platform

# Chapter 3 : The Star Pilot

- Very Early days of pilot
  - Technicality Works
  - Ease of use (no driver resistance)
  - Information in one place
- Results (small pilot area at this stage/risk)
  - approx 25% over capacity
  - need for application process
  - data for tendering
  - case for smartcards

# Chapter 4 : Conclusions

- Open minded
  - not defensive or defeatist
- Get the easy wins quick (& advertise!)
- Continue to look
- But savings are limited
  - External factors (FUEL!)