

Transport Committee

Oral evidence: [Joined-up journeys: achieving and measuring transport integration](#), HC 1222

Wednesday 25 February 2026

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Members present: Ruth Cadbury (Chair); Steff Aquarone; Dr Scott Arthur; Jacob Collier; Alex Mayer; Baggy Shanker; Rebecca Smith.

Questions 53–103

Witnesses

I: Will Jansen, Chief Operating Officer, Forest; Martijn Gilbert, Managing Director, Arriva UK Bus; Samuel Griffiths, Head of Northern Europe, Via; Robert Price, Programme Manager – Transport and Mobility, techUK.

Written evidence from witnesses:

- [Arriva Bus UK](#)
- [techUK](#)

Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Will Jansen, Martijn Gilbert, Samuel Griffiths and Robert Price.

Q53 Chair: Welcome to this morning's evidence session. This is the second session of our inquiry into joined-up journeys, in which we are examining how the Government can shape transport services and culture to meet the needs of transport users and the journeys we make in our daily lives. This morning we will be considering the physical infrastructure needed to support integration, and the ways in which technology could support joined-up journeys. Could I ask each of you to introduce yourselves?

Samuel Griffiths: I work for a company called Via, which is a technology and operations company focused on transport. We do a number of things: we work on the planning side by providing software that enables organisations to plan their transport networks better; we provide software that allows them to operate those networks better; and we provide entry points for passengers to plan their trips and purchase tickets more effectively in the form of apps such as Citymapper. We bring these things together and work with a number of local authorities in the UK to instil technology and operations within their networks.

Martijn Gilbert: I am the managing director of Arriva UK Bus. We operate nearly 4,000 vehicles across the UK and are part of the wider Arriva group. We have train operations in the UK, and bus and rail operations in 11 countries across Europe.

Will Jansen: I am chief operating officer at Forest, which is one of the leading e-bike operators in London. We have 20,000 electric bikes across the capital, covering about 450 sq km right across the city. Today, I am hoping to represent how new mobility services such as Forest can support integrated transport journeys.

Robert Price: I am the transport and mobility programme manager at techUK, which is Britain's premier technology trade association. We have over 1,000 members covering the full suite of the UK tech sector, but within our infrastructure and transport team we have organisations covering a huge range of the modes and cross-cutting issues of UK transport.

Q54 Chair: I will start with an overarching question: is the UK's transport infrastructure set up in a way that supports integration? If not, why not? I am not looking for too much detail at this point, because we will have plenty of time as the session goes on.

Samuel Griffiths: There are both yes and no answers. I will keep it high level for the moment, then we can dive into some detail. On the positive side, Government interventions have been made to support greater transport integration. The Bus Open Data Service enables open data access to bus timetable and schedule information. It allows organisations such as us to utilise that data and provide better information, enabling us



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to present joined-up journeys to passengers in the form of apps such as Citymapper. Things like enhanced partnerships and franchising, which we strongly support, have the ability to bring together organisations to plan more effective transport networks.

On the other side, and things that may be hindering some aspects of integration, we believe there is a lack of modern planning tools and data available to local authorities to enable them to do their jobs effectively. One thing we are increasingly focusing our attention on is empowering local leaders and organisations with better tools to allow them to do their jobs more effectively and create more integrated transport networks.

Martijn Gilbert: From my perspective, again, the answer is yes and no. The biggest challenge is around the physical infrastructure: how do we make journeys seamless, particularly on the roads? We are seeing too many examples of new transport hub schemes that, in some cases, disintegrate and make things worse in terms of pushing buses further away from railway stations, a lack of covered walkways, a lack of signage, and a lack of integration. This has been going on for 20 to 30 years. When I was the chief exec of Reading Buses, we had a fantastic bus station right alongside the railway station, but a brand new multimillion-pound scheme then pushed buses into five different street corners outside and around the town. That is not integrated transport and we need to be doing more.

In the context of GBR—we put this in our submission—I am very keen that better integration should be a key consideration. It feeds through to a local planning perspective as well: how city centre road networks can get buses closer to railway stations.

Where I live in the north-east, if I get a bus to the station it is a five-minute walk to the bus stop, but if I get a bus going in the opposite direction it is a 20-minute walk. We have lots of examples like that. The technology piece is great, but there is a physical integration piece on how we plan and enable new schemes.

Chair: We will come on to that in a moment.

Will Jansen: I can really only speak for London because we are a London operator, but I would highlight two areas. First, the digital side of things: where we are at with our technology and the app. There is evidence of good integration. We have a partnership with Citymapper and you can find one of our bikes in its app and book it. We have also had a scheme called the Great Alliance, where we have partnered with other micromobility operators from overseas, so if tourists come to visit London they could use their app—for example, Bird is a big operator in North America—and book one of our bikes through that. It is happening, but there is still no seamless end-to-end to connect you from bike to bus to train. That is still to come.



The second area is, again, the physical space element. Everyone would agree that there are clear examples of dockless e-bikes being a nuisance; that is coming from a lack of physical space and infrastructure at places such as train stations and key areas where we get a lot of volume as there is high demand. These bikes simply need a protected space to be lined up in neatly so they do not fall and cause obstructions.

Robert Price: It is very interesting to hear a range of specific details from other witnesses on the panel. To join in the yes and no theme, it is probably a fair analysis. Broadly, it is about using the technology that we have and that is coming through to ensure that the physical infrastructure we already have is used more effectively and efficiently. It is definitely working in some ways, but it is a little too piecemeal at the moment. The Government have a good opportunity in the integrated national transport strategy to find where we are currently falling short and ameliorate it.

Q55 **Chair:** Martijn has already started us off on physical infrastructure. What changes to the physical infrastructure would make the biggest difference to people's ability to make joined-up multimodal journeys? Thinking about the example of Reading station, which I have been to and tried to find a bus at, how do we undo some regeneration schemes without undoing them completely? How can we reverse design to bring the buses closer to the stations and other aspects of physical infrastructure?

Martijn Gilbert: Reversing huge regeneration schemes is going to be a challenge. We would probably get a greater bang for our buck by making sure that the right principles are laid down for any new schemes going forward.

In the context of railways moving into GBR, there needs to be something embedded in GBR's mandate that does not just give a nod to integrated transport, but properly and genuinely promotes integrated transport in all aspects of what it does in respect of the planning and delivery of new infrastructure schemes.

In terms of ticketing, we have a fantastic scheme—the best-kept secret in the sector—in PlusBus, but also integration with other modes and the digital information piece, but there is a tension around car parking, and trip generators of local journeys should have a greater responsibility to take into account the impact of the additional journeys that they cause on a first and last-mile basis.

From a highways perspective—as you rightly say, Chair, many of these are joint schemes with the local authorities—I would be keen to advocate something in planning legislation that better promotes considerations around integrated transport. If we are going to have a truly integrated transport system, we cannot encourage people to transfer from bus to rail, or bike, or taxi, and then have them get lost along the way or soaking wet or whatever. That is what happens across much of our transport infrastructure in the UK at the moment.



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Q56 Chair: Will, how can we enable your area of micromobility to better integrate with bus and rail in terms of physical infrastructure?

Will Jansen: London is currently quite a patchwork for micromobility operators. Every agreement is done borough by borough as opposed to having one uniform scheme, so each borough is deciding how the infrastructure is obtained and looks. Some boroughs are making moves towards moving out car parking space, removing personal permits or pay and display bays, and creating space for vehicles. Other boroughs have still not got around to it and have a free-floating approach. They do not really know how to install physical infrastructure: how it would look, where to put it, and those kinds of challenges. My own opinion is that, under a more regulated scheme—potentially, following the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill, under TfL—there needs to be a look at what that infrastructure could look like and where it could best be placed.

Bikes are quite unique, in that they are a new mode to a lot of people. They are not really that familiar with what a parking space might look like. Currently, it is just a white box that does not look that different from a disabled bay, a doctor's bay or a solo motorcycle bay. There needs to be an approach that asks how the infrastructure signals to people very clearly that it is a parking space for bikes and guides those users into the bay, as opposed to having bikes left outside as obstructions. At the moment, there is protected space around station entrances and TfL land; we have not had the right to park bikes anywhere near those. They are key spots. We need to get proper parking infrastructure, very clearly marked, as close as possible to these locations.

Q57 Chair: When our borough rolled out e-bike hire and implemented parking bays, it put them on the public highway because that was its land. We did not have any in the station car parks that are much nearer the platform. Is that a common challenge in your world?

Will Jansen: Yes. We are very much left to negotiate directly with private landowners, TfL or the borough. It is a slow process because naturally it is challenging to negotiate how that looks. People are a bit reserved and sceptical about how that might look for them.

Q58 Chair: I am not sure it even asked Network Rail. Is that your responsibility or the local authority's responsibility?

Will Jansen: Under a scheme run by TfL, say, we could provide a lot of that data and intelligence, and maybe some of the relationships that we have already brokered, to help with that. At the moment, it is very much left to us. We are the ones negotiating and trying to get access.

Q59 Dr Arthur: You seem to be saying that bikes are cluttering pavements because there is not enough parking space for them, but surely your bikes should never be blocking pavements. You operate e-bikes; surely they should never be blocking pavements. You are saying that riders often do not know where to park the bike. Some see poorly parked bikes



and they think that this is what you do. Your comments almost seem to justify that by saying, "Well, there is no good place to park them, so let's just dump them on pavements." Surely it is never acceptable for them to be a barrier. If we are serious about integrating transport and people connecting to bus services, the most basic form of integration is being able to walk from your house to your local bus stop. Surely bikes should not be a barrier to that.

Will Jansen: Absolutely. I didn't cover it specifically in the introduction, but I was giving examples of specific parking bays with high demand where the bay becomes full across, say, three operators, and we are not syncing up to know how many bikes the other operator might have in that location. Specifically on that, we are seeing bikes arrive with users not really knowing exactly where they can put them.

When it comes to the bike ending up in a location where it could be an obstruction, the operators use technology to guide the user not to block pavements. It actually takes a screen capture of the bike and, if it is shown to be on a double yellow line, on the grass or blocking a pavement, then the phone will tell the user to move the bike as it is in an obstructive area. That is validated until you have it up against a wall or can show it in a bay. We capture that data and can send follow-up emails to users saying, "You are a good parker so here is a reward" or "you have had a series of negative parks so we are going to either penalise you or provide education on how to improve."

Q60 **Dr Arthur:** It is not working, is it? As you walk around London, these bikes—not necessarily your company's bikes—are often scattered and they are a barrier. I am relatively fit and able but there are people who have mobility problems. They are a real challenge at times, are they not?

Will Jansen: Yes, and I am not—

Dr Arthur: Thinking about integration, they are a barrier for people.

Will Jansen: I am not going to claim that it comes without issues and challenges: it absolutely does. The data we have shows there have been huge improvements. As boroughs have added infrastructure and parking, the compliance levels have increased a lot. We are seeing less and less issues with obstructions and the things you are speaking about, and will continue to do so. It really does come from that density of parking. You need not just one car parking space to be relieved, but swathes of space in some places where there is a huge demand for these bikes and people want to park them.

Dr Arthur: I agree on that point. We have to get these on the roads, and that might mean losing some parking spaces.

Q61 **Chair:** Robert and Samuel, do you have anything to add or are you mainly going to focus on the tech elements?



Samuel Griffiths: No, we are happy to comment on the physical side of the infrastructure as well. In a number of primarily rural areas of the UK, we operate what are called demand-responsive transport services. There is no definitive fixed route within that area, but we have an area that essentially allows passengers to request their trips and then we dynamically try to route vehicles and aggregate passengers together to take them where they want to go. Increasingly, one of the aspirations around this type of service is how it links in with core commercial bus networks. One challenge that often comes with that, certainly in a rural environment when you operate these types of services, is where the physical infrastructure should be best located, which then enables passengers to go from one mode to another.

In places like London, one reason you see people taking the bus into the tube in terms of the intermodality of their trips is that you have high-frequency services, but there is often infrastructure in place that enables that transition to take place for a passenger, whereas in rural areas this can be more challenging. If we want to enable joined-up journeys outside of the urban areas, a very deliberate and data-driven view needs to be taken in terms of the location best placed to enable passengers to change from one mode to another.

Robert Price: I would add that there should not be a really strict distinction between physical and technological digital infrastructure because the two really do interplay increasingly closely. The transport system generally is creating ever more data, which enables people to understand more clearly how the passenger wishes to use the system and the network. That can help you plan for the future and understand how future physical infrastructure should be deployed. It also enables more live tracking and maintenance. It can help reroute people if there is a failure in physical infrastructure. Integrating not only modes of transport, but the technological side, for the benefit of the passenger is key. There is a whole suite of emerging technologies, such as automated vehicles and demand-responsive transport, that can really enable the physical infrastructure side of things to be used more efficiently. It is not just about pouring more concrete; it is about better using the concrete you have.

Q62 **Chair:** Not thinking so much about central London, but you cannot ignore the private car in the context of integrated transport, whether in terms of drop-off or parking. How much do you think about the role of the private car when considering integrated transport and what good delivery looks like?

Robert Price: The private car is slightly outside my specific remit, but fundamentally, an integrated system can enable people to make different transport choices if they wish. The benefits of shared mobility, active travel and so on that can be digitally enabled and does not necessarily prevent the use of the car for those who wish to use it, enable broader environmental and health benefits to people. That is something that—



Chair: We should also include taxis and private hire, because they are part of that physical mix.

Martijn Gilbert: It is absolutely key. Personal mobility is going from strength to strength in terms of the things we have heard about from colleagues, and we certainly cannot ignore that. From a bus operator perspective, proper road space allocation that prioritises the vehicles that are carrying the largest numbers of people—bus lanes—is absolutely key. It is what strikes at the heart of the UK bus sector in terms of the unreliability and unpredictability of journey times and is outside our control. There are some great ideas for schemes out there, many of which could improve integrated transport by getting buses closer to railway stations, but they need to be locally palatable and have buy-in from the local highways authority.

To bring it back to cars, bus priority can be a brilliant concept aligned to park and ride schemes, which can decongest our town and city centres and integrate with cars: we have cars go into a super park and ride scheme and then a fast and guaranteed bus journey time into a city centre because it has a bus lane. That is the transformational stuff that will drive modal shift and bring us to where we need to be. Instead, what we have in many places is a huge inequality for public transport users, with free car parking while bus, rail and metro fares do not receive the same financial support. I like to think of it as an inequality against public transport users where you can park your car for free in some locations but you cannot use public transport for free. We have to address that balance in the mix of this.

The final one is ride-hailing app-based taxis, where the costs to the user are getting more and more affordable. There are many examples where, if there are two people travelling or the journey is a certain distance, it can be more attractive than a public transport journey from a door-to-door perspective. That should be a constant challenge to us: how can we be more competitive on journey times and the locations we can get to, because we have better priority in the use of technology to make the journey more efficient from a road use space and sustainability point of view by using public transport?

Will Jansen: There is absolutely a place for the private car, but it is important to acknowledge that cities, in particular, are still geared towards private car ownership, in everything from parking in residential areas to road lanes. You can see across London that a lot of it is still not cycle highway friendly. It is a case of prioritisation around what we want to get to. For the e-bike space, for example, we are seeing greater and greater adoption year on year as we see cycle infrastructure added and the transport network change in favour of green-friendly modes such as bikes.

We potentially need to apply a little more pressure, especially in cities, around private car ownership. I am not saying that people should not be



told they cannot have one, but a little more pressure could be applied, for example, to homes that have two or three cars registered to them. Is there really a need for it? What would the benefits be if we put some challenge towards people giving up their car? It would reduce congestion and may change habits in a positive way.

Chair: Yes, in another inquiry we have looked at car clubs, which seem to be on the demise with Zipcar moving out of London, but that is for another day.

Q63 **Dr Arthur:** I guess we are all here to speculate on what the Government are thinking and perhaps we are hoping to influence things a little. In terms of what the Government are going to publish, it would be good to understand the absolute minimum you are looking for, and what you would be looking for in an ideal world. We have already heard Martijn's dream of bus lanes—exciting times!

Samuel Griffiths: When we work with local authorities, our goal and objective is to give them the tools and data to make very deliberate decisions around how they can improve their network. Looking ahead to the integrated national transport strategy, we are hopeful of seeing authorities enabled to plan better through tools and technology.

First, in other places in the world, such as Ireland and Estonia, we have seen that often central Government take a role in procuring these tools and then allow them to distil down into the authorities or the public transit agencies that sit underneath them. That then creates a virtuous circle enabling those authorities to do their jobs more effectively.

Secondly, on the greater use of technology in providing better information to passengers, you see large amounts of inequality across the UK around the accessibility of information given to passengers to better plan their trips. There needs to be a set of minimum standards that organisations have to adhere to, or strive for, in terms of how they can give better information to passengers that will allow them to make more informed decisions in planning their trips.

Finally, sometimes strategies can be very good conceptually, in saying, "This is what we would like to see," but there needs to be practical guidance on how these things can be broken down and achieved. We have seen a number of areas of the UK where services between home and school, SEND, and passenger transport, still exist as very siloed services. Increasingly, these things can be integrated, to the benefit of the authority, because it reduces the cost of providing them. Somewhere like Lincolnshire, for example, thinks about its passenger transport and home to school delivery in a somewhat joined-up manner. One vehicle may take children to school in the morning, then do demand-responsive transport in the rural areas as more of a general passenger transport service, then take children from school to home, and then go back into providing passenger transport service. The foundations are there to allow



more authorities to do things like that, but there needs to be more practical guidance offered and support for authorities to achieve it.

- Q64 **Dr Arthur:** It is difficult, isn't it? We live in the era of devolution and the Government want to give up all sorts of powers. This very complicated set-up that I often cannot quite understand can lead to different systems in different parts of the country; it is a real challenge. Martijn, do you have anything to add?

Martijn Gilbert: We should not forget that we have had an integrated transport White Paper in previous times. The first thing is to make sure that whatever is published actually has teeth and sticks, because there have been some very good things in previous plans.

For me there are five quick areas. The first is the physical element of this. Technology is great but it needs to be supported by the right physical elements to make the journey seamless for the user. That goes hand in hand with, secondly, the planning piece, with highways authorities and other scheme sponsors and initiators. I do not want to single out GBR but railway stations, as we have heard, are key nodes for many of these integrated journeys. It is fair to say that, having spent so much of my career on both sides of bus and rail, there is a little David and Goliath sometimes, in that there is a lot of will among partners outside railways but you have to find the right person inside the railway organisation, which is not always easy, and how empowered is that person to deliver and enable schemes? GBR gives a great opportunity to reset that and to put integrated transport foremost on the agenda.

The third area is bus lanes—but not just for the sake of buses. They can be used to genuinely improve transport integration. Where I live in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, for example, one short bus lane could get my local bus right outside the railway station, so there is not the confusion that it picks you up in a completely different place from where it drops you off, which again causes disintegration, and would help guarantee journey times.

The fourth area is park and ride, which I have already made the point about—

- Q65 **Dr Arthur:** A controversial thing in Edinburgh is whether private hire cars should get access to bus lanes. Taxis already have it. Do you think that would be good for bus users?

Martijn Gilbert: At a minimum, they should be multi-occupancy user vehicle lanes; a single person in a taxi should perhaps not get the same priority. On ticketing, we need something that encourages better integration of systems. Bus operator ticketing is very flexible; it was the first to deliver contactless bank card and tap on/tap off. How it integrates with the other modes is often the cause of the disintegration. There is a lot of flexibility and will on our part; it is the metro and rail systems that are complicated and need a lot more work.



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Fifthly, echoing what Samuel said, is minimum standards for information. There is a lot of information out there and the real-time passenger information, particularly for buses, metro and light rail systems, is in the hands of the local authorities, and some data is quite inconsistent. Some is based on predictions rather than real-time. It is not clear to the user whether it really is real-time or just a timetable being displayed in a digital form. That can strike at the heart of users' confidence. If we are going to convert people to public transport with this great integrated transport vision, we have to give them the right digital data to keep their confidence. I am not confident myself that it exists in many parts of the country at the moment.

Will Jansen: I will speak to three things. The first is infrastructure funding. There is a positive correlation between cycle highways being installed and confidence in cycling and people adopting the modes—particularly women and the elderly, for whom we want to close the gap on male riders—and safety and incidents. For example, we are all familiar with the red light issues; we can potentially have a bit of a rethink around the tools we have at our disposal to make the infrastructure safer and friendlier to cycling. That is a big area.

The second thing is consistency and getting away from the patchwork that we have today—the borough-by-borough situation that I mentioned. There are three primary operators in and across London right now: two have a licence but the other has not. For the user, this is a terrible experience, and it has an impact on adoption. Moving to a contiguous operating area, with a unified scheme, would solve a lot of these issues. When it comes to the permits themselves, the boroughs are taking that into their own hands. We have examples of boroughs going from free contracts to half-a-million-pounds-a-year contracts. There is no consistency or transparency over where that money is being spent. It is all very high level.

The third thing is acknowledgement of e-bikes as a key part of the transport mix. We have a lot of evidence to support that now. The year-on-year growth has been tremendous. Last year was our busiest year, with 80% more rides than the year before on the same number of bikes, which shows how many people are choosing these modes now. They are great for those kind of side transit trips, particularly in remote areas of London where you struggle to get a bus. They get people to their doors late at night. There are a lot of benefits to e-bikes, and I think we are ready to acknowledge them as a major part.

Robert Price: I would echo a few things that have been said. Fundamentally, what would be useful is a clear mission statement and vision as to what the Government mean by integrated transport. It can be a term that is hard to pin down and, especially as the Government are going to be leading on the role quite a lot and, hopefully, engaging with the private sector as well, we all need to be on the same page as to what it means.



Keeping the UK's tech sector as a central part of the strategy overall is key. We are lucky to have such a diverse, vibrant and exciting tech sector in this country. Many benefits that passengers who use transport have seen over decades and centuries have come from technological innovations. Ensuring constant communication and integration between Government and the private sector is key, especially with a focus on those emerging technologies that the UK has a lead on—things like automated vehicles, AI and all the various mobility-as-a-service issues—and we need to ensure that we keep that lead.

As well as ensuring that the strategy has some teeth, which I completely agree with, it has to integrate quite well with other strategies and authorities. A lot of good work is coming out of the DFT at the moment on AI and transport. Work is ongoing on open data and how that might work. Many of the issues in transport are affected by things in other Government Departments, such as energy costs and planning. Of course, when it comes to local authorities, there are those cliff edges where one authority ends and the next one begins. It is about ensuring that this piece of work not only exists by itself but actually brings all those other important bits of thinking and activity together in quite a meaningful way.

Dr Arthur: We have been trying for decades to join up Government Departments, so let's hope the integrated transport strategy does that.

Q66 **Steff Aquarone:** As with plastics, cars are quite useful, so banning them seems like a fairly extreme approach. I am glad we have been talking about the role of the private car, because it is essential in rural areas; we are never going to get a bus to every corner of every village at a frequency that is going to work for people. We have also touched on infrastructure. I wonder what your views are on mobility hubs and, in the wider context, transport interchanges, particularly ones that may not exist at the moment. How could they bring together modes and offer transport users genuine choice in completing or beginning their journeys?

Robert Price: As I have said, the exact use of private vehicles is slightly outside my remit, but it is worth mentioning that, although they are key for many people in rural areas who do not have access to some aspects of public transit, not everyone has access to a car in terms of being able to drive, to afford one, and so on. Not only do we need to realise that there will be a role for private vehicles in those areas, but we need to understand that other things are required, such as demand-responsive transport, autonomous shuttles and things that can help connect those in communities who do not have access to private vehicles.

Q67 **Steff Aquarone:** Can I gently challenge you on the remit point? Surely there is a technology opportunity for your members in putting live real-time information in car dashboard displays that shows the departure point and time of the nearest public transport, for instance, just to pick a random idea out of thin air. Is there not an opportunity to push further and seek to integrate by virtue of widening that scope?



Robert Price: I think there is. This plays into broader questions about open data generally. A lot of benefits can come from that and it is something that the Government are working quite hard on. I would add a few caveats on how the systems should be operationalised in terms of their proportionality and scope. The protection of commercial interests is quite key as well. Open by default can be useful but there are caveats as to exactly how the private data within those systems can be made completely open. Anything that can create those regulatory barriers and uncertainties for people to engage in that market has a risk.

Q68 **Steff Aquarone:** I am talking about public data that is currently available. I do not think any suppliers into car manufacturing systems are using bus or train data, for example, to inform car drivers with real-time information that could link into their journey.

Robert Price: There plausibly is a role for that, but it will probably be a decision made by the OEMs.

Will Jansen: On the mobility hub topic, consistency is key. I mentioned it earlier when talking about trying to get to good compliance, particularly in schemes such as the e-bikes. There are a lot of ideas as to what that might look like that could be shared around. Key interchanges is a must, because we want to make sure that users can get straight off a bus or train and jump on a bike to do that last or first-mile leg. At the moment, that does not really exist because of the barriers that we have spoken about already.

A big part of consistency is people being a bit more trained into what a shared or mobility hub looks like. What can I expect from it when I go to one? Will I find a couple of car-share vehicles or a line of e-bikes that I can use? Once there is that familiarity, people start depending on it more and you start seeing greater adoption. There are a few ideas. Interchanges is one, as is street by street; it might be that you do not need a mobility hub on every single road or street, but can have one every four or five. It might make sense on a wider road to clear some space for one of these hubs.

Q69 **Steff Aquarone:** Being cynical, it is problematic, isn't it, when a local council decides to call something a transport hub but all it is really is a bus shelter in the middle of a car park? Going back to what you were saying about the infrastructure implications of having shared cycle and scooter facilities, do you think buses had that problem when they first came out? Were people saying, "Eurgh, buses, get them out of my street"? Was there previous infrastructure, or did we put it in at the same time as we rolled out the service?

Dr Arthur: People have always loved buses.

Will Jansen: The presence of something abnormal or new definitely attracts more nuisance complaints; we see that when we launch in a new borough. There is normally a big spike in complaints, even if bikes are



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parked compliantly: “What are these things? Why are they there?” People do not like them until they try them and find out that they are useful. I cannot speak for how people were with buses but I imagine that anything new takes a bit of time to bed in and prove that it is actually of real use.

Martijn Gilbert: Bus operators still get correspondence about people not wanting buses down their street; despite the fact that we get as much correspondence from people who do want a bus service, we still get some of that nimbyism, dare I suggest it.

On mobility hubs, I fully support anything that puts physical infrastructure in. Physical infrastructure is, in itself, a great statement of wider societal support for public transport. It is a beacon that says, “Consider this for your journey and please use it.” It absolutely gets my full support.

In terms of integration of cars, you have already heard me talk about park and ride, but it has to go hand-in-hand with proper priorities such as road space allocation. Yes, we should be living in a world where a car sat-nav tells you that the fastest journey is to come off at junction X, go and park in that car park, and you will have a super-fast and sustainable bus journey that is going to whizz you into the city centre, or a metro or light rail or rail connection. That should not be off of our radar.

Back to the detail of hubs, the concept of integrating with e-bikes—potentially even rural versions of them—with real transport connectivity is great. I would be keen to see two things with regard to hubs to help encourage more public transport journeys. We touched on one previously: properly integrated live real-time passenger information; that is not a given in many parts. I know we have open data, which is great, but at the point it is all transmitted—when people want to look at a screen, because not everybody wants to be on their phone or knows where to go on their phone for some of this information—these are good places for that. It needs to be correct. They can also help us with some security aspects and create an environment where users feel more secure getting on and off, as well as changing modes, with proper lighting, CCTV and undercover waiting areas.

Q70 **Steff Aquarone:** You made an interesting point. It is not just the car. Even in Google Maps or Citymapper, or others that might be available, it is two buttons, isn't it? You are either an eco-warrior or a petrol head. Walking, cycling and public transport integrations only happen at the exclusion of considering the car. That is a fundamental bifurcation in people's thinking, baked into the very technology they often start their journey planning with. When you talk about road route prioritisation, am I right in thinking you are saying that for those integration points, interchanges or hubs to be viable, the public transport link has to have priority going to the final destination or the next hub?

Martijn Gilbert: It is case by case, but if we want public transport to be the choice, because it is a highly efficient way of moving millions of



people, it should rightly get a better priority on the highway to encourage more people to switch. We have some traffic lights that turn green when the bus approaches, but that does not deal with road congestion up the street or highly unpredictable roadworks. All these are things we have to factor in when making public transport reliable. The biggest thing we get from users is around reliability and dependability, which is not always in the gift of operators. We are absolutely determined to work with anybody who will work with us to fix it. Technology can help to a point, but we need some of that physical aspect as well on the highway network.

Samuel Griffiths: Steff, you mentioned the rural aspect of transport and how it is particularly challenging at times, which necessitates the use of private vehicles. When we consider joined-up journeys within rural areas, it sounds excellent in theory. In practice, when you start thinking about it, you imagine a stick in the ground which indicates a stop, where a passenger gets off one bus route and then waits potentially for an unforeseen amount of time to connect to another bus route at night in the rain. It quickly breaks down without proper investment in infrastructure. We are very supportive of the idea that if you want to encourage intermodality between different public transport options, there has to be some sort of infrastructure to enable that and ensure that changing modes is an enjoyable experience and not a big deterrent for people from using public transport.

On the use of technology and bifurcation between petrolheads and climate warriors, one thing we are focused on in Citymapper this current quarter is developing a feature to enable park and ride within the journey planning element. Citymapper is an app that is quite well used in London; we have about 3 million users in the UK, predominantly in places like London, Birmingham, and Manchester. What we are solving in London is that there is a multitude of ways you could go from Earl's Court to Oxford Circus. We are saying to a user, "This is the one that reduces step-free access," or, "This one has the fewest interchanges," or, "This is the cheapest," or, "This is the one with air conditioning in a summer heatwave."

How can we serve up all this choice in a very intuitive way to a user? What we have increasingly started to do with apps like Citymapper is bring them to more rural parts of the UK. If you go to Worcestershire, Shropshire or Lincolnshire, you can use Citymapper to plan your trips in those areas. The use case is very different from the one in London. In London, you have a plenitude of options that you can narrow down to your preference. In places like Lincolnshire and other rural areas, you are focusing on the real-time information and reliability aspect. Users in a village often know the one bus service they have a day but they do not necessarily know if or when that bus is coming. They do not have the infrastructure that enables them to leave 15 minutes beforehand and, if it is raining, have a shelter to stand underneath. They have to try to plan their trip to catch the bus as it comes up the road. We have started to incorporate park and ride functionality. These areas have not been a use



case for us before, but we can now increasingly use private vehicles to get passengers to an interchange point to get on an Arriva service for onward connection. But we wholeheartedly agree that you need to have the infrastructure to underpin the technology that supports that intermodal trip.

- Q71 **Steff Aquarone:** You referred to a stick in the ground—lucky them if they have a stick in the ground for their bus stop. What you are saying is that you need the infrastructure as timetabling is not enough on its own. But surely, if you have infrastructure that either consolidates or grows passenger footfall at a particular pick-up point, then it is easier to make the case for enhanced and increased timetabling. Is that fair or do you not know?

Samuel Griffiths: One point I noted down is the idea that if you can create a true hub that connects multiple different modes and you drive footfall and patronage through that place, then you can potentially start building in concessions that offer a monetisation opportunity that then pays for that investment. There are opportunities to do things like that.

Specifically on timetabling, one reason why places such as London and Manchester have been so successful in driving intermodality for an end-to-end trip is that you have very frequent services. As a user, you do not feel that it is a huge inconvenience to go from bus to tube. It is very difficult to replicate that across the country, certainly in more suburban or rural areas. But you can often straighten out bus routes by offering an option to feed people into a network. Rather than having bus routes that snake around lots of different villages and take an extremely long time to go from their start terminus to their end terminus, you can have feeder services to straighten out the bus route and increase the frequency and headway. That starts to give you options to encourage intermodality, because the wait times are potentially less than what they are today.

- Q72 **Steff Aquarone:** We assume that greater passenger usage is the egg. Is the chicken infrastructure or improved timetabling—or both? Is there a mummy and a daddy chicken?

Martijn Gilbert: Improving infrastructure will help us improve the quality of services. It improves the attractiveness of them to users and that, in turn, will cause more people to use public transport. I hope that will build a greater case for us doing more infrastructure, investment, service improvements and so on, but it has to start with a catalyst for change that shifts the dial. There are some very good examples out there today. I mentioned PlusBus. We have great apps that link out the best of our data across the modes, but there is more to do, and we have to see the more that is there to be done before public transport can be an even more viable choice for more people.

Will Jansen: With infrastructure, when it is well established, there is a dependability factor: you feel that you can trust it. If it is physical, you can see it. Also, who are you engaging? The technology is great but it still



displaces a lot of people who do not have access to a mobile phone or are not tech savvy. They want to see something when they turn up, which may be an interactive billboard that shows where the bus is on its route and gives them that peace of mind.

With our bikes, we can explore ways of being able to phone our customer service team and say, "I am this user," so you can register on a computer at home and then ring up and book the bike. The hubs instil a confidence in people that they are where they are meant to be and can get extra guidance if they are not able to access technology.

Robert Price: It is very much that interplay between the two. Just as you cannot have a chicken without an egg, or vice versa, you need to see the two acting together, so a balanced view is probably the most useful.

- Q73 **Alex Mayer:** I want to follow up on what Steff was saying about apps not including cars. Samuel, I get what you were saying about park and ride, but to some extent that is public transport. What I am concerned about is the fact that people, in effect, do park and ride but they are doing it themselves as part of the journey. What is stopping that within apps? Is it a lack of passenger demand? Is it that, when you are selling those services to councils, they are not asking for it? Is it an assumption by the tech companies? Is it too hard? What is stopping us putting a car as a part of a journey so that you are not choosing one or the other?

Samuel Griffiths: That is what we are currently developing within Citymapper in more suburban and rural areas. If you specify your start and end point, as well as surfacing up buses and active transport modes, we will also provide an option for you to drive to a park and ride site for onward connection using the app.

- Q74 **Alex Mayer:** I do not mean just to a park and ride site. What if you decide that, for the first bit of your journey, it would be sensible to drive to a station or a bus stop that is not a specific park and ride? People are not just going to go to the park and ride; they are going to make a decision: "Actually, it makes more sense for me to drive to this station and then do the rest of my journey." At the moment, because most apps, including Google—the main one—assume that you will do either/or, so they will set you off with a little on foot, and then a bus, and then to the station, whereas a normal person would drive to the station and then get the fast train to somewhere. Why is that not available to passengers at the moment?

Samuel Griffiths: From the perspective of Citymapper, we were formed out of a London environment where people did not act like that because people did not necessarily drive to a tube or train station; they just went to that location. As we go out into more suburban and rural areas, we are learning that this is something that could be very useful. We are starting off with the idea of driving to a park and ride for an onward connection to begin with, but your comment is very valid. We may find additional



feedback that would allow us to prioritise it as a development within the Citymapper app; we are very open-minded on this.

Chair: If him indoors is prepared to pick me up at a station, it might help to work out which is my quickest journey with that option, which does not necessarily involve parking.

Q75 **Rebecca Smith:** My question is about integration in different areas—urban, suburban and rural—and it leads on from Alex's, so I am going to pick it up from what Samuel said. One challenge the Committee faces is that a lot of success stories are based in the big cities and it gets difficult when you try to roll them out. I am sure my colleagues get frustrated with me talking about the back of beyond of the south-west. Ultimately, we do not have a nice concentric circle of a city, then the suburban areas, and then the countryside; we have a city on the coast and it expands from there. I suppose that is an element of a plug for those smaller cities, although I appreciate that business starts in London. I used to live in London. I use your apps. I don't use your bikes, because I am too short. Perhaps we should look at that. Basically, if you are 5'2" or under, you can't ride a bike.

Will Jansen: We're working on it. We're rolling something out.

Rebecca Smith: You can't come to a safe stop; it's too heavy. I once rode around Hyde Park and then realised that I couldn't get out of the park. Anyway, that's too much information.

Alex made an interesting point about integration. In a lot of suburban areas or smaller cities, you might have a car park that you can use for free for three hours and hop on a bus to get into town. That is, in effect, a park and ride, but it is not a park and ride. People obviously have that local knowledge. It is what can be done using technology to speed that process up.

While we have been here, I have had a quick look on Citymapper for the south-west and it does exactly that; it is either one or the other. You are faced with 111-minute-long bus journeys to get from where I live to a point in my constituency that I could drive to in 20 minutes. Obviously, you are doing that. Where there are those different needs, what do you think good integration looks like, or what could it look like? What should we be pushing to enable you to enhance those experiences for people who live either in the urban fringe or in the midst of the countryside? We often talk cities or rural but you also have those people who live in that urban fringe who might have access into the city but not out of the city, and vice versa. It is a bit of a vague question, but what could the art of the possible be and what might you need to help develop that?

Robert Price: It is about understanding that different areas and different people in those areas often have different needs. The suburbs aspect is often about commuting. For more rural areas, it is about accessing services when that plethora of transport options is not available. As well



as the technology and ideas discussed already that I would highlight again, it is all about understanding that services, especially in those more rural areas, should be as community-centred as possible. Data that allows us to understand exactly why and where people travel can help ensure not only that the travel itself happens very well, but that the deployment of the public services they are trying to get to are better integrated into the transport system. It is not necessarily about transport hubs; it can be about public service hubs that connect into that as well.

Q76 Rebecca Smith: That is helpful. It is an issue of the development of council services, local government reorganisation, and where those services are delivered in those different areas. This is where the integrated transport strategy is going to be so important. Obviously, we are not quite keeping on track with that.

Martijn Gilbert: First, we have to remember that public transport is a form of mass transit, so it is not going to be the provider of every single journey for every single person. Therefore, the private car, walking, cycling and taxi schemes need to be an important part of an integrated transport mix.

Conversely, we have some very good apps out there that aggregate information over multiple modes and providers, such as Citymapper and Google Maps. Perhaps there is a need to encourage a bit more of a blended approach to that data in the transport hierarchy so that, if there is a quicker option that is a blend between driving and connecting into public transport, it is displayed in some way.

I use public transport an awful lot and sometimes, in particular rural areas, it will suggest a taxi to the station to then get a bus or train. I have certainly seen that in some apps, but I do not know how you turn it on its head to become an option in the app—I own a car but I do not really want to use it—to see what it gives you as the fastest journey. Of course, it is speed that consumers want, so that may discount the public transport option if the interchange is not right because the bus stop is over here and the railway station is over there. It goes back to my physicality point.

You mentioned free car parking, which always gets my ears to prick up. That can be used as a tactical initiator of transferring people on to public transport if it is in the right location, but what we cannot have is free car parking in our very heavily congested city centres, which encourages yet more people to drive when we need to be more efficient with our use of road space. I fully support a blended approach to how we present that information. It is probably something that would be good to see in the strategy. We certainly need single-user or low-users mobility solutions as part of the integrated transport mix.

Q77 Rebecca Smith: The point you make about free car parking in the city centre is absolutely right. The example I am thinking of is not in the city centre but at a suburban shopping area. It is encouraging people to shop,



but has that added—although perhaps not intended—benefit.

As providers of transport services, what factors do you consider when deciding what services to provide in different areas? Martijn has already touched on the fact that not everybody is going to get everything that they want. What do you do, particularly when looking at that urban fringe to rural piece? How do you decide what services you offer, and which are too difficult or do not have the demand to make them worthwhile?

Samuel Griffiths: As an organisation, we are entirely mode agnostic. Typically, when we partner with local authorities, we take a view on what transport provision is currently there, what their budget is, and what their policy goals and objectives are. Using those as inputs, we start reviewing the services that are there and consider how we can make improvements and changes within those networks. In the west of England, for example, we operate a transport service north of Bristol. We started to look through the data and found that there were patterns of demand that could be better served with a conventional fixed route bus service rather than demand-based transport. We created a fixed route bus service to cater for that demand, which led to an overall increase of 42% in patronage year over year. There are examples where using data, inputs, budget and the policy goals and objectives enables you to create and design services that encourage modal shift and encourage patronage growth in passenger transport.

Q78 Rebecca Smith: That sounds really interesting, in the sense that you have these local authorities coming to you. Do you think there is scope within the integrated transport strategy planning to almost incentivise local authorities to use that data? It strikes me that you are going to have some councils jump on board and others that might have a guy who has sat there for years doing the transport planning but does not look at what new technology could do. Do you think there is a space to almost challenge local authorities to look at how they can use technology better?

Samuel Griffiths: In some respects, it is a challenge for them rather than a challenge to them. If you consider what has happened on the policy side over the last few years with the development of enhanced partnerships and franchising, you are now asking authorities to take a much more active role in the planning of the bus network and transport services, which they potentially have not had to do much of since the 1980s with the deregulation and privatisation of bus services.

If we start breaking it down and say, "Okay, can you take a very data-driven view to how you can successfully change and enhance your network?" the data lives in all these different places. It is not very easy to have one central repository of information that allows individuals to go there and say, "Great, I have the data. It's served to me in a very intuitive way, and then I can make adjustments and recommendations for my network." The reality is that they have to go to multiple different operators within their geography to try to understand the patronage on their bus routes. They often cannot get all that information, because of



the split between tendered and commercial, and understand the rationale for that. It is often extremely difficult for them to make these views. We are fortunate because we have tools to enable us to do that, which we offer to partners.

On the split between urban and suburban, our technology is often used across a number of different types of area. The planning tool that London uses to plan its bus services—our Remix tool—is also used by West Midlands and Manchester, and by rural authorities such as Lincolnshire, Shropshire and Wiltshire. The technology is the same; how you configure it and the specific use case can be slightly adjusted, but it does have breadth. It enables authorities to think in the same way as a body like TfL might be able to.

Martijn Gilbert: Samuel has touched on some points around deregulation and franchising, but the traditional local bus model outside London is an evolution of where the network was at the point of the Transport Act 1985. That network has evolved. It responds to our key trip generators: city centres, places that people want to go to, places of new work and housing, and density of population. Importantly for local buses, we are on a constant journey of responding to changing patterns of demand, such as home working and shopping, which are absolutely affecting demand for bus services. As road congestion worsens through home delivery vans and single-occupancy vehicles, it changes the time and attractiveness of bus services, which in turn feeds into timetable patterns.

Some really great work is going on with local authorities across the UK. Enhanced partnerships were mentioned. From a rural perspective, it is not an easy fix. There is no silver bullet to solving the rural transport challenge. There have been some good trials with demand-responsive type services. There is more that can be done from an integrated perspective, perhaps with taxi and feeder schemes. We have seen some of that in the west of the UK. Of course, you then have the franchising piece. It is an ecosystem, and I do not think any one partner should be planning their activities in isolation. As Samuel touched on, the ever-increasing flow of rich data that is out there can be a useful tool in helping us optimise our networks. In the context of what we are here to discuss today, greater encouragement of the right tools to support and enable integrated transport could potentially lead to new journey opportunities and new services.

Chair: We will move on to an area that is important to the Committee: accessibility and inclusion.

Q79 **Dr Arthur:** Robert, I think am going to put words in your mouth. Earlier, you were saying that basically we talk a lot about how we are doing integrated transport but not why. One of the reasons we might want to do it is to improve the experience of people who are living with disabilities. Have you—not just you, but others too—had a think about



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how the Government could use this policy to improve the accessibility of the transport system?

Robert Price: Yes. The Government work on these issues a lot, and it is good to see that as a recurring theme throughout a lot of the work that they do. From a more technological side, there are certainly various aspects that can be brought in for the safety and accessibility of vulnerable users in particular. We have covered quite a lot of the types of transport that are available to them, but in addition, quite a lot of the system can now be developed to allow for the particular needs of passengers to be taken into account when they are planning their journey on a digital interface. A real-time analysis of how the system is working can pinpoint potential infrastructural failures and communicate those in real time to people using the system. There is that more up-to-the-minute and up-to-date engagement with vulnerable users that technology nowadays can develop a bit more broadly.

Will Jansen: The point I would make is around the importance of reinvesting money into upgrades that we can make to the vehicle. Rebecca's earlier point about the height of the seat post is an example of where we have recognised an issue for users and are reinvesting money into changing the bike so that it can drop even lower and accommodate a wider range of users.

There are obviously challenges when operating in the private sector to drive adoption with a new scheme such as e-bikes, and naturally the focus is very much on the primary model that we have. Having a good density of these bikes, and then users who are going to use them frequently, is super key. We are making investment in areas such as smaller bikes that are lighter and might give greater access to smaller users or women who find them easier to ride than our primary bike.

Q80 **Dr Arthur:** When you say smaller users, are you also talking about children?

Will Jansen: No, our terms and conditions do not currently allow anyone under 18. I believe the law is that you are potentially allowed to ride an e-bike from 16, although I could be wrong. My point is just that there is investment we are trying to make, but density is so key, so if you only have limited numbers of these new vehicles, it can be challenging and costly. Where do you place them? Do you match the size of the fleet that you currently have, or do you take a user group and maybe run trials with them? These are the kinds of things we are exploring and continuing to invest money into. It is also why it is key that we get the help and support, where possible, to reinvest some of this money into these things rather than just focusing it on things like permits that rise and rise.

Martijn Gilbert: Accessibility and inclusion need to be at the heart of anything that is integrated; integration by its very nature should mean it is accessible and inclusive. I have said a lot on the physical infrastructure piece. Taking the bus and rail example, we have a relatively good, highly



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accessible bus network and reasonable accessibility across the rail network. What is the bit in the middle like? It is often full of steps, uncovered walkways and poorly designed wayfinding. That is something we should be encouraging to be fixed.

Just building on what has already been said about information, it needs to be clear, reliable and trustworthy, but there are also opportunities to better support journeys, particularly for those with accessibility needs. The railway has done a lot with its passenger assist programmes; we should have the technology today that can automate the assistance customers may need on their journeys and replan it if there is disruption. We surely cannot be far away from that now, but I am not the person writing the technology.

Samuel Griffiths: When we introduce technology into public transport our goal is always for it to be additive and improve passenger experience. There is very real risk that the incorporation of technology can be disenfranchising for users if they do not feel comfortable using technology or they have some form of impairment that hinders their ability to use it.

Generally, across the UK, we have seen that there are a number of measures you can take that really use the technology to improve accessibility of public transport. One example is in Milton Keynes, which replaced all its subsidised bus network with demand-responsive transport about five years ago. As part of that, we were able to say that individual users could contact the council and say they suffer some form of disability and then, through the technology, get a door-to-door trip. Everyone else will get a corner-to-corner trip—they will be assigned a stop where they get picked up and dropped off—but that section of riders that self-identify as having a form of disability, which is about one in three of our total users in that service, are now able to have a door-to-door trip. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Just through the advent of technology, we have personalised their ability to use public transport in a place like Milton Keynes.

There are a number of guardrails you can put in when you incorporate technology, which I am sure companies such as techUK and others can incorporate, and there are guidelines around how the app, voice reader and things like that can be used, to mitigate some of the risk of disenfranchising users from the use of public transport through the advent of technology.

Q81 Dr Arthur: That is quite positive. Martijn, we have been quite critical of the Railways Bill for how people with disabilities are represented within the passenger watchdog. Would you like to see the integrated transport policy put real duties on providers to engage with the disabled community and people with accessibility problems—to listen to the kinds of examples you gave of barriers to accessing services and how we can bring that integration together? Do you already do this as a company? Do you speak to your passengers with disabilities to ask them how they



experience your vehicles and also, perhaps, the wider trip?

Martijn Gilbert: Absolutely; we have good dialogue with our customers, through both formal surveying and informal discussions. As I said, I am quite a hyperactive user of public transport myself and I am certainly not shy of talking to people on board our vehicles on my journeys. But anything that encourages organisations to not just talk to each other but have a bit of a framework—"these are the key things that should be considered"—can only help improve the integration of journeys. As we have all said, accessibility and inclusion is a key element of integrated journeys: it needs to be easy for everyone, for all our customer groups.

Q82 Dr Arthur: What more can the Government do to make sure people with disabilities have a voice? If transport could become more integrated and our cities less congested, perhaps there would be more people using buses, trams and trains. How can we make sure people with disabilities have a voice in how those services are designed, to ensure they work for them?

Will Jansen: I think through organisations that represent these groups; that is really important, and that is how we engage at Forest. We have representatives internally that will attend working groups and sessions, on-street demos and so on—it can be a range of things—just to listen to what their needs are. In the dockless industry, it could simply be about the nuisance that could be created at times, and it is about hearing that and explaining and then implementing changes that help and better the situation for them too. Engaging with the user groups that represent disadvantaged groups is key.

Q83 Chair: Do the tech companies engage with different types of user groups on accessibility?

Samuel Griffiths: We are an interesting organisation, because we are both a technology and an operations company, so we have individuals and teams on the ground interacting with the passengers and groups in the same way that Martijn described.

To give you concrete examples of things we have done in the last few months, we recently took over operations in the West Midlands for its ring-and-ride service, which is a dial-a-ride-type service for people who cannot access conventional forms of public transport that enables them to get door-to-door trips. As part of that exercise, we did a vehicle demo day, when we took vehicles that we were considering using in the fleet and asked some of the users to come along and try them out and give us feedback. That feedback went into the final decision making around the specific fleet that we use in those types of services.

Government guidelines are absolutely necessary, but they cannot be a substitute for the local. Transport is inherently local, and there are always going to be these things in the locality that mean you have to be flexible in your approach, hence that local dialogue is really important.



Robert Price: When it comes to accessibility issues like this, individual companies are clearly better placed to describe exactly their own processes. As an industry body, techUK engages in detailing these questions and tries to gather industry-wide points of view when they come up in pieces of Government engagement.

- Q84 **Chair:** I have a central London-oriented question on interchanges and accessibility. It is good that London Underground differentiates between stations that have full level boarding street to carriage, those that have level boarding street to platform and those that do not have level boarding, but is it possible for it to differentiate between those stations that have full lift access and those that have escalator access? Also, there are lots of people with mobility challenges who can use escalators but cannot use steps. I know it to my cost; occasionally, when I have had luggage, I have found that I did not realise that a station I use regularly only has steps, and not an escalator, for the interchange. That is a question for the tech people: is it possible to put that level of information in? It would be very useful to very many travellers.

Samuel Griffiths: It is absolutely technically possible. It is interesting that you mention that, as we actually had a service in Berlin that did something very similar for a few years. The idea was that if there was a lift that was out of action that weekend, it would be able to divert users who would otherwise not be able to use that station to the next one. It was able to incorporate that so it was not a surprise to passengers when they turned up. It is technically possible, but I do not know the specifics for TfL—whether it has that information out there today and whether it is available as open data.

- Q85 **Baggy Shanker:** We have spoken a lot about the importance of physical infrastructure, and obviously data sharing and good data and technology are really important to get good integration. How could different types of technology improve joined-up travel for passengers?

Robert Price: There is a very wide range of technologies that can be implemented, but it is all about ensuring that passengers can feel a smoother journey process throughout getting from point A to point B. It is all about finding those cliff edges between different aspects of a journey and helping to smooth over them. There are various things—integrated ticketing and timetabling, live network data and so on—that can help people plan and go through a journey more smoothly.

We have talked a lot about the real-time informational challenges, especially if there are customers with particular needs and if there are particular failures throughout a journey, especially if the journey has already commenced. If that is part of the journey planning that they have undergone, a live update can sometimes be sent to them to ensure a rerouting to a more suitable journey that they can use.

This is this very wide range of things. The planning for future deployment of services is a particularly useful one, and the emerging technologies in



automation, ride-hailing and demand-responsive transport are likely to be some of the key themes in the coming few years.

Will Jansen: I can give one real-world example that we have implemented in Forest, using the app to guide users based on pricing. We have implemented something called dynamic discount. We do not surge the price—it will always be capped at whatever we state it will be—but we will ticket some bikes with a heavy reduction. For example, you can ride the bike for 30 minutes for free and only pay the £1 unlock fee.

With the bikes, there is a free-floating model where the assets move all around the city, and at times you might have a greater demand in a different area of the city. Where bikes need rebalancing to reset that, you can either pay operational resource to move them in vans, or you can be clever with your pricing to try to incentivise and encourage users to choose that mode and take them there for you. That can be something that benefits both the user and, obviously, the business.

I cannot speak to how that can be utilised in joined-up travel, but maybe one of the other panellists can. We are doing it for real in London on our bikes: using pricing to try to encourage different user groups to use the bikes. Perhaps you could use pricing to influence the time of day that someone might decide to take a trip, which could reduce congestion in other parts of the day. We have seen really good results in doing that with the bikes.

Martijn Gilbert: Robert has covered the joined-up planning aspects of how it can be more integrated. On ticketing, there is probably a point for public transport operators to reflect on whether we can get a better means of ticketing to be available through some aggregator and micromobility apps. Is that the right commercial model? Can that be explored? At the moment, they are very good at planning the journey but they do not actually sell you the journey, yet some of the taxi operators are on there, and if you put in the details of how much it costs to run your car, it will give you a cost comparison. There are some green shoots in that ticketing space.

Building on that, in order to give public transport users greater confidence and support in their journeys, especially when things go wrong, we have to be realists. There could be a delay on the highway network, an infrastructure challenge on the railway or something that impacts people's journeys, and therefore it is particularly critical if this technology can help give users greater confidence by saying, "Don't worry, there are no problems at all on 99 out of 100 journeys, but if you are the unlucky one that it goes wrong with, the technology is going to support you through any of the issues that you are going to face in terms of replanning your journey."

We have just spoken about the accessibility needs of some users, which this can help with, and rebooking assistance for people who need it. There are security aspects as well. We have some hot topic issues on



which we have some good, strong alignment across the sector, such as violence against women and girls. If that security dynamic can be bought into some of the technology support that we have for integrated public transport, again, that can only help build greater user confidence and get more people to use integrated public transport.

Samuel Griffiths: On the idea of planning in a very practical way, the introduction of technology into local authorities arms them with data, and often the way that will work concretely is that you are able to give them a planning tool that visualises their whole transport network and just surfaces up the bus routes within their area, but through journey planning apps such as Citymapper we are able to understand what true passenger demand looks like within their network, because people are making the trips they want to make and are not reliant just on the trips that fit within the existing network. It is incredibly helpful when they can visualise their existing transport network, because they can then surface up what passenger preference and demand look like.

This is stuff local authorities have not typically always had access to in the past, and they can make very informed decisions about how they may want to change their network to better serve demand. Through demand data, they might understand if there is latent demand in their area that they are not currently serving very well and then use that to prioritise investment in new services and infrastructure.

One of the things we are able to see and understand now is how far people are having to walk on average to access their bus stop. That is typically an indication that there is demand there but there is not a service that currently serves them very well, or the bus stop that serves them is too far away. This is all a big barrier to accessibility to public transport. Using data in a very deliberate way in planning essentially allows local authorities to make better decisions about how they can serve their residents.

Q86 **Baggy Shanker:** How do we make the platforms and the technologies more consistent? The biggest frustrations for passengers—your customers—are different platforms being used, different ticketing, and different real-time systems. What can be done to make it more consistent and easier for people to navigate?

Robert Price: There is a level of data standardisation and ability to share those pieces of information between operators a bit more effectively that is needed, with the caveats that I have mentioned already. That is quite a key one. I know that in a lot of the responses to the Committee's inquiry there was talk about open by default and those sorts of aspects of data sharing. That is something that, with those caveats, has some significant opportunities to bring benefits.

Martijn Gilbert: I should caveat this by saying that I suspect this is a discussion that may divide some across the world of public transport, but if we are going to get new users, which we should absolutely be



determined to do, it is more likely that we will get them through an aggregator, third-party app that consolidates different journey options and different modes than through our own channels.

I would be keen for us to do more work to make the Citymappers and Google Maps of the world tools for people to say, "What could I do?" and then go and experience that fantastic journey, and then my app can be for somebody who has done it, really liked it and wants to come back again and again. It is a bit like how some booking aggregators for guesthouses and hotels have a global platform and have broken down all the barriers to booking, and then, if you really like X, Y or Z guesthouse in Scarborough, you might go back to it direct next time. That is where my app should be: for our existing users, who we can convert after we have broken down all the barriers and demonstrated just how easy public transport is. We need to get better on the data and ticketing and see what value-add we can leverage by joining up the dots across the transport mix.

Q87 Rebecca Smith: Just briefly on the safety of women, and violence against women and girls, we did a big piece of work in Plymouth on this about three years ago after a couple of really horrific incidents. One of the issues was about people feeling safe on transport. The challenge in a place like Plymouth is that no one is on the roads after about 5.30 or 6 o'clock, so it is actually an empty-space fear rather than a lots-of-people-around fear like in London. We looked at how we can use apps to help people feel safer, so I was interested in what Martijn said about not necessarily needing a violence-against-women-and-girls-specific app, but that we could utilise all those other ones.

One of the challenges is that Google Maps, or something like that, does not necessarily reflect the fact that there might be six different bus stops on one road, and I could end up walking down a very long road in Plymouth at 10.30 at night trying to figure out which bus is the best one to catch.

How quickly can technology help us get into that nitty-gritty of what would be the safest route for somebody to take, rather than just the most convenient one? Is that a layer that can be factored in? Is it something you have already done? I am just thinking that if we could have a quick win by helping the existing apps and platforms to do that, it would perhaps preclude the need for anything more specific.

Samuel Griffiths: Very practically, Citymapper actually has a feature that is a kind of light: if you are walking at night to use public transport, it essentially guides you down well-lit roads, because often people do not like to walk down a badly lit road.

I agree that there is more to be done. Manchester has recently piloted something very interesting through the Bee Network app where, if you are using public transport, you can connect to a service team through the app and they can help you in real time. Things like that are actually very



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interesting. You are almost hitting a panic or alert-type button in situations when something happens.

Part of it is the technology, and the technology to enable that should not, in theory, be too complicated, but a lot of it is the infrastructure that sits behind that. Is there a budget that can enable a team to be on hand to go straight through to the police? How do they respond? In some respects, the technology piece is the easier part; it is often the actual process and the programmes that sit behind that that could be much trickier and take longer to work out.

Will Jansen: There is technology in our app as well, and other micromobility apps, where you can share your ride. It just pops up and says, "I want to share my progress with a friend or family," and it is very quick and easy. Obviously, you are pinging someone who is then keeping an eye out that you are not potentially deviating. I am sure this technology can be replicated.

Robert Price: There are also ways that the information about where you are and the exact service that you are on can be communicated with law enforcement a bit more easily, without you having to identify where you are yourself; it can do that more automatically. There are aspects of remote monitoring and things like that in technology that can have significant benefits here: local councils are using a lot of AI tracking for pothole development and things like that, which can also be used to discover streetlamps that have gone out. That more automated and crowdsourcing way to identify physical infrastructure failings can help to improve safety.

Q88 Chair: To get true digital integration we need full access to all relevant data. Do any of you have views about whether there should be guidelines on data sharing and open access? Should they be strengthened to encourage providers to work particularly over, say, ticketing prices, but also timetabling and real-time information about services? How far do we have to go and what needs to happen to make sure that there is true open access to information, or open data?

Will Jansen: We see this coming with a regulated scheme like under TfL. I believe it is already the case with the e-scooters, which is run by them, so we can imagine that it is going to be very similar for the e-bikes once that is in place. That will include a lot of information that the e-bike companies are capturing from live tracking of the bikes, the journeys, hotspots, demand areas, and potentially even further detail of points of interest, such as what type of journeys people are making and why. Maybe you will never truly know why, but with obvious things, like if it is going to an area where there are a lot of offices, or a Westfield shopping centre, you can draw certain conclusions from those kinds of trips. Yes, we see that coming in the e-bike space.

Chair: We need to move on as time is running out.



Q89 **Jacob Collier:** I have some questions about how private providers can work with Government. As we have said throughout, the evidence is that there is quite a piecemeal approach at the moment, with some areas doing it very well and then places like mine, which look to London and Greater Manchester with envy about what is possible in the transport space.

How do you think Government and operators like yourselves could work together better to plan and manage integrated services? I am particularly interested in what mechanisms you could suggest that might be able to support this. Martijn, given your experience in this field, it might be helpful to start with you.

Martijn Gilbert: On the part of operators, there is a huge role to work with national and local governments to make things better for our users. That is how we become successful: we are public transport operators, and if there is no public using the transport then it is not very good, is it? That obviously has to be matched with a commitment. Right back at the start of the session you heard me talk about the challenges of congestion. That is around road space allocation and proper management and co-ordination of highway works that, from a bus operator's perspective, strikes at the very heart of what we do and then causes lack of confidence among users.

The efforts and abilities of the operators need to be matched by the ability, willingness and resources, certainly at local government level, to interact on some of these topics. There is definitely more to be done on tackling congestion, and a lot more to embed proper public transport and integrated transport measures into the planning process. I keep talking about Reading, which was a great place to work, but probably because it owns the bus company. On every planning application, the planning committee would ask, "Have you spoken to the public transport operators? How are you, in this planning application, going to encourage the use of public transport?" That does not happen in many other parts of the UK.

Some of the good stuff that we do needs talking up. It is very easy to bash public transport, sometimes for things that are not within its own gift. Positivity breeds positivity and we should get members and other officials to be celebrating some of the good stuff.

There are very stringent data standards for public transport operators. In the bus operator fraternity there are the bus open data standards, which are leading to good, consistent levels of digital data. I should give a shout out to bustimes.org, which is not at the heights of Citymapper or Google Maps but has really great, consistent, good-quality information across the world of buses. The same exists with the railways with apps such as Real Time Trains. But when local authorities come to transmit that information, if you look at the real-time passenger transport screen in Burton high street in your case, for example—



Jacob Collier: We don't have one.

Martijn Gilbert: There is one there, actually. There are a couple of those big screens; I have been there. But again, is that information the scheduled time or the real time? Is it supported by wayfinding? There should be the same data standards, resources and efforts committed at local government level for this all to be matched and aligned; we cannot just look at the operators.

Chair: Given the time, could I ask you all to keep your answers as brief as possible, and not even answer if somebody else has already said it?

Q90 **Jacob Collier:** Does anybody want to add anything?

Robert Price: On co-ordination between Government, regulators and private operators, we should understand that transport integration is a process, not a finite journey. There will never be a time when everything is integrated and that is the end; it is a constantly iterative process.

More generally, the speed of Government activity is quite useful. It is great to have a culture of openness and dialogue, but sometimes, when consultations happen, my members see that there are questions that have been asked previously and answers have already been given. It is about ensuring that companies are listened to, but when those views are heard, it is important to act quite quickly, because we are in a global competition and it is important to ensure that we stay at the front of the pack.

Q91 **Jacob Collier:** We have spoken a lot about local authorities, but obviously there is the devolved element to this as well. Do you think that we should be considering national baselines or consistent standards for integration of transport in planning and delivery in different areas? If so, what does that look like?

Will Jansen: Again, I can only really speak to London, but yes, we are very much calling for the regulatory side to come, because it will address a lot of the issues that we can see and, for Government, some of the things around data and wanting to be seen to better connect journeys. Yes, on the regulatory side, for London and e-bikes, it is important.

Q92 **Chair:** Martijn, again speaking for my constituency issues, once a contract between a local authority or transport authority and a bus company is signed and sealed, is it impossible to, say, increase the service as the population increases?

Martijn Gilbert: Far from it; there are plenty of examples of contracts being varied as they go through their life, but because it is a contract between the bus operator and the authority, it is the authority that needs to signal the desire to change and then enter into dialogue with the bus operator. But yes, they absolutely can be changed.

Q93 **Alex Mayer:** Moving on to how private companies work together to



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deliver integration, what more incentives do you think are needed, and what disincentives do you think need to be removed? Are there examples where the bus waits because the train is late, or the train waits because the bus is late, or do you not do that because you get into trouble with the traffic commissioner? Let us start with Robert.

Robert Price: It might be better to hear from individual organisations directly when it comes to working together.

Will Jansen: I come back to the point about the need for a number of things to happen in the e-bike space in London, and the regulatory control that TfL might then have, and, potentially, better collaboration across operators that would then have a licence to work together. In terms of further integrations with other technology apps, I mentioned that we are already doing that with the likes of FreeNow, Citymapper and Bird, and we had a partnership with Bolt. We saw those succeed and work very well. When it comes to developing that further, at the moment there is no end-to-end solution, as such, where with one app you could potentially go from bus to bike to your destination, but we are very supportive of getting to that point in the future.

Q94 **Alex Mayer:** Do you think you need direction to do so from some form of government?

Will Jansen: We have already done it to some extent privately, but yes, some level of co-ordination, particularly going back to the infrastructure piece. It is really important that we integrate e-bikes with the physical infrastructure really robustly; at that point, it is much clearer to users of these modes, because they can get off a bus or a train and see the mobility hub providing e-bikes for the last leg of their journey.

Q95 **Alex Mayer:** Martijn, are we going to stop all the trains so that they link with your buses?

Martijn Gilbert: There are lots of people in this space, so not everybody might be working with everybody, but there are some very good examples of people at least talking, if not working together. From an incentive point of view, common data standards are very helpful, so thank you to previous Government work for things such as the bus open data standard, because it gives the app providers one source to work through. It is beyond my technical understanding to know if the same data standards are out there for other modes of the wider transport mix, such as e-bikes and the availability of taxis and things.

Another aspect that could help is around ticketing; it can be a blocker, but it could be an incentive. You have heard me say that the systems we use in bus retailing are very flexible, but there is a lot of complexity in terms of barriers, gates and ticket vending machines in rail and metro systems. We have PlusBus, which is a great integrated transport ticket. Could it be expanded to include e-bikes if it was really embraced in city centres? I do not know, but I would love bikes to be on our apps. Passenger, a provider that does a lot in the bus space, has had some



examples of e-bike docking station availability and costs being in an end-to-end journey map for buses.

To answer your last question, within our portfolio of examples I am sadly not aware of buses waiting for trains or vice versa, except that it certainly can and has been a feature in some of the demand-responsive transport trials. It is certainly something that we need to look at but we are, of course, regulated to high standards of punctuality and reliability by, as you say, the Office of the Traffic Commissioner. I would not want to get into trouble with any of the traffic commissioners of Great Britain.

Samuel Griffiths: There are already good examples where private companies work together with local and combined authorities for mutually beneficial reasons. Speaking on behalf of Via, there are situations where we work as a subcontractor to established bus companies; there are times when we work directly with a local authority and it has a separate contract with a private bus company that requires us to work in partnership. In those situations, it all feels very mutually beneficial for us to collaborate and work together.

Furthermore, we work with companies such as Citymapper and we are actually very reliant on working with private businesses in order to aggregate that information together. Without access to APIs from Forest and without access to ticketing information, we cannot provide a very good service within cities, so we are reliant on that. There are lots of examples where there is good evidence that private companies are working, and it provides a public good when they work together very well.

On intermodality between trains, bus services and things, we do have the capabilities, when planning an intermodal trip, to start to signpost that to drivers through a driver app and suggest, "Hey, this passenger is getting off this bus." There are sometimes very strong guidelines and prescriptions in place that do not allow the driver always to wait in those situations, but we can give them the information to make an informed decision about whether they can or cannot wait to time themselves with a delayed train.

Q96 **Alex Mayer:** When you have multi-operator tickets or capped fares, or people are going from different types of transport to others—or, indeed, when someone is driving one set of passengers into another form of transport—are there good methods in place to allow the revenue to be fairly allocated?

Samuel Griffiths: It is actually quite well established within a fixed route bus network. There are a lot of examples of multi-operator ticketing. I am not super au fait—Martijn probably is—with the exact calculations they use for how they disburse the revenue among themselves, and who retails the ticket.



One thing we are starting to see increasingly is the request to have demand-responsive transport and fixed route covered under one ticket. The challenge sometimes created by that is that often the cost bases are the same in a fixed route network, so the marginal cost of each additional passenger you have in your vehicle is very low, whereas in a demand-responsive transport service where there is no fixed route and you will sometimes cover a very large geographical area in a rural location, the marginal cost that you pay as an operator for each trip varies hugely. That is because if you have to travel far to pick up a passenger and take them somewhere, the cost profile is very different compared with a trip where the passenger is already in close proximity to the interchange point. That becomes a little tricky. You can often solve that in these services if there is an organisation like the local authority that assumes the fare box risk and keeps the fare box from subsidised services. That mitigates some of the concern that operators would have about enabling a multimodal ticket.

Martijn Gilbert: I would echo that. The concept of revenue apportionment and allocation systems has been in place for many decades, but smart ticketing—the use of smartcards and contactless payment cards—just enables that to become all the more intelligent and even more fair and equitable. For about the fourth time during this session, with apologies, I will shout out PlusBus, because it has delivered a UK-wide network of pre-agreed commercials for the apportionment of revenue between multiple bus operators and rail operators. That is a shining example of what can be done and we can absolutely do more of it if needed.

Q97 **Chair:** I want to quickly ask about funding for infrastructure and technology, because transport authorities and passenger groups have made comments on that. You are all from the private sector. How could the current funding structure for both transport infrastructure and technology be improved to support integration outcomes? What is the role of the private sector in this?

Robert Price: At techUK, our thinking on that is developing, so I might keep the Committee informed as it develops. There are broad concerns that sometimes transport funding is a little too short-term and individual project-based, and perhaps there is not that more holistic view as to the value of projects over their lifetime, not only in terms of economic efficiency, but on broader metrics of integration and passenger benefit. Those are some of the key headings that should be taken into consideration, but I am happy to follow up later.

Will Jansen: It comes via the regulatory control and the more uniform approach that we have spoken about under TfL, and coming away from the patchwork where we are seeing things like fees rising borough by borough. There needs to be a more targeted and uniform approach to what the infrastructure potentially looks like across the operational zone that is set, and a more uniform approach across boroughs, rather than



looking like one thing in a central borough and potentially something very different in an outer borough. That needs to be looked at through the consultation phase that we go through with TfL in the future. Where the costs are kept in check and it is a fair approach to e-bikes in London, some investment and money that comes through the schemes could potentially be directed to proper infrastructure that works.

Q98 Chair: Sticking with funding, how do you think that rural and non-commercial routes should be funded so they can be reliably fed into main networks? Samuel, I know you are quite involved in the area of rural and non-commercial routes.

Samuel Griffiths: There always has to be an initial assessment of what is the value for money of that service, what the subsidy per passenger looks like, and how many people could access that bus service. One of the things we are increasingly asked to consider by local authorities we work with is how we can do more for less: how can we provide potentially greater coverage at equivalent or lower cost?

We are generally mode agnostic, so we are trying to take the view: "Given your policy objectives and goals, how can we serve a rural community?" Sometimes this comes down to the measurements or success criteria that authorities place on services. The golden metric they often refer to is the cost per ride, or subsidy per trip. That often then forces authorities to focus their attention and resources in some of the denser areas where they can bring the cost down, but that comes to the disadvantage of everyone who lives in a more rural area. We are working with a number of authorities to shape thinking around something like cost per resident served, which is how you make sure you are trying to provide accessibility to as many people as you can at the cheapest possible cost, rather than just focusing on subsidy per trip.

Q99 Dr Arthur: We have talked a lot about the benefits in quite broad terms—it is all going to be a sunny nirvana. It sounds fantastic, doesn't it? But this is going to cost money, and for a lot of our towns and cities that are really congested, delivering these benefits will mean some modes are going to lose out. How do we evaluate the costs and benefits, from the perspective of passengers first and foremost, but also of providers like yourselves and the Government, who I am guessing do not want to pay for it all? How do you evaluate the costs and benefits?

Chair: And are the current appraisal guidelines appropriate?

Samuel Griffiths: There are a lot of people who work in the transport industry who will ride a bus for the sake of riding the bus, but the majority of people are using buses to access things. The focus increasingly has to be the economic benefit or success of these services: are you increasing affordable access to employment, education, healthcare and other services versus what may have existed before? One element of value for money is if we invest in the network, have we expanded access to essential services that people require, and jobs?



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In the current climate, with greater focus on economic growth and productivity, transport is certainly a big enabler for that. If people cannot access jobs then how can you expect to generate strong local economic growth? We believe that is one fundamental element. I have talked about cost per resident served, which is this idea of how you can provide coverage within a network. There are obviously things like patronage: are you increasing patronage within your network through the money that you are allocated? That is a sign of success, and if you are demonstrating success within your network, that breeds confidence that you can continue to make the investment, and that then potentially enhances your future funding settlements as well.

Martijn Gilbert: We absolutely have to have mechanisms in place that demonstrate we are delivering value for money in the investment in areas like this, but also that it is matched by the private sector investment piece. Certainly, if we as a public transport operator are seeing huge investment in facility X that is going to encourage more people to use public transport, we want to make sure we are matching that with even better-quality services and investment, to make our services as attractive as part of that mix.

Q100 **Dr Arthur:** So the local authority might invest in, say, bus lanes and priority measures, and, in response, you might buy more buses or improve accessibility of buses and so on.

Martijn Gilbert: Absolutely. In recent years, with bus service improvement plans, we have seen a number across the UK that have made a commitment that if the better bus priority improves journey times and saves vehicles, those vehicles will be ringfenced and those resources will be committed to be redeployed elsewhere. That is a really good example of that.

I really like Samuel's cost per resident served; we just have to be careful that when we get down to some of the micromobility, we do not end up signing up to things that actually cost more than the cost of a taxi, for example. That is a real danger in the rural transport mix and therefore, to go back to my value for money point, there needs to be some sort of parameter in there to calibrate that.

Will Jansen: On the cost side of it, there is a lot more that already can be done. The e-bike operators are providing a lot of data to the boroughs and to TfL in guiding them on where good parking could go; I am not sure if the cost of that would be significant. We do a lot of stuff with geofenced parking in our app, for example, so you can identify with a borough an area in which it is more responsible to leave a bike. It is purely a virtual bay that is in our app with a photo, saying, "Here is where you need to leave the bike," and that does not really cost.

Q101 **Dr Arthur:** I get that, but are you able to quantify the benefits? You are providing a service, but you are also a business; are you able to provide the benefits to the local authority so it says, "Actually, yes, this makes



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sense for us because it maps up against our aim to have a more active population” and so on?

Will Jansen: Absolutely. We have a lot of data on our users: different profiles of user, the type of trips, and the people it is benefiting. Through that kind of data we can quantify where the money is going to be spent and who it is going to benefit. With e-bikes, the pricing is a factor: you do not want it to be too disproportionate to other modes that people have access to, especially if it is integrated and part of the journey. We have been aggressive with pricing, and for the five years we have worked in London that has been sustainable and has made money, but, as I say, other costs and factors that are rising disproportionately are making that more challenging.

Robert Price: More generally, as has already been said, decent transport integration can boost the economic growth and economic prospects of individual regions to help defray some of the costs. We have already talked about more in-depth data analysis that can help us understand not only the kind of journeys that are being made but the kind of journeys that people would like to make, to help ensure that the services that are procured fit customer need better. If you can make those services more reliable then people are more likely to use them and you can get better footfall. Again, quite a lot of public transport is very well used, but then there are certain services that are not. If they can be made more reliable, that can help defray some of those costs.

In terms of who procures and how they are procured, the ongoing local government reorganisations are going to be very interesting, and there are some big transport-related parts of that. Exactly how that will bed in over the next few years remains to be seen, but it is certainly something that we are watching closely and engaging with both as the transport part of techUK and as techUK generally.

Q102 **Dr Arthur:** Martijn, you are probably best placed to answer Ruth’s clarification of my question, which was about how the existing evaluation methods work. Are you able to say whether you think they are fully evaluating the costs and benefits, and resulting in the best decisions? It would also be good to hear—because it is something that frustrates people—about how much time it takes what seem like simple things to go through the process, and how long it takes to make a decision. Is it working just now, or do you just not feel comfortable getting into the detail of that?

Martijn Gilbert: If I may, we will perhaps go away and reflect on that and write back to the Committee with some more substantive evidence. I have been back in bus for six months after some time in rail, but certainly reflecting on my first time here, some good schemes got through the early approval hierarchies when authorities and bus operators were invited to pitch for bus service improvement planning initiatives. I did not detect that it was much about the evaluation of the value for money and costings; it was more about, once the schemes were



in a plan, whether there was then the political appetite at a local government level to actually get on and do the highway and infrastructure stuff that supports them when you get to the point of deliverability, rather than necessarily the financial evaluations of them. But we will take that offline, reflect and get some meat on the bone of a proper response to you on that.

Q103 Chair: Given that they are going to be bringing out their strategy, what is the one thing the Government should prioritise when supporting operators to deliver integration?

Robert Price: It is difficult to suggest just one thing, but maybe just a broader culture of constant engagement and understanding of the needs and aspects on which the operators can bring success and use to the market generally. That open dialogue is quite helpful.

Will Jansen: There are three that I have referenced, but the physical infrastructure is probably the absolute key. There are examples around the world where these schemes run brilliantly, and e-bikes work really well as part of a joined-up transport network.

In London, while it is unregulated, there is fast growth and huge demand, and that is spilling into some issues that we have obviously referenced. While the operators are doing everything possible to combat these things through technology and adding resources, all this stuff obviously comes at cost as well. A much more joined-up, uniform approach to parking—much clearer identification of what those bays look like, user education over how to park appropriately and what it looks like when they arrive at a parking bay—is super key to making these schemes a lot tidier and more efficient.

Martijn Gilbert: I echo everything Will said on infrastructure, but you asked us each for one thing. Working on the assumption that the strategy includes all the right things, mine is to make sure that the strategy actually has teeth. For me that is about making sure that it connects and drives change at the right levels of local government and through the right transport bodies, including GBR, to make sure that the topic of integrated transport is properly considered and properly built in, particularly into future infrastructure schemes.

Samuel Griffiths: Integration begins at the planning phase, so the one thing Governments can do to best support local and combined authorities is enable them with planning tools that allow them to do those jobs effectively.

Chair: Thank you all very much for your evidence. Feel free to write to us with anything you have not been able to cover, or that you think of after this morning's session. We look forward to resuming our oral evidence on this inquiry in a few weeks' time. That concludes today's meeting.