

Highland Council In-house bus service



Highland Council



Area 26,484 km²

20% bigger than Wales

Population 238,060

Less than Aberdeen

Population density 9/km²

Highland Council

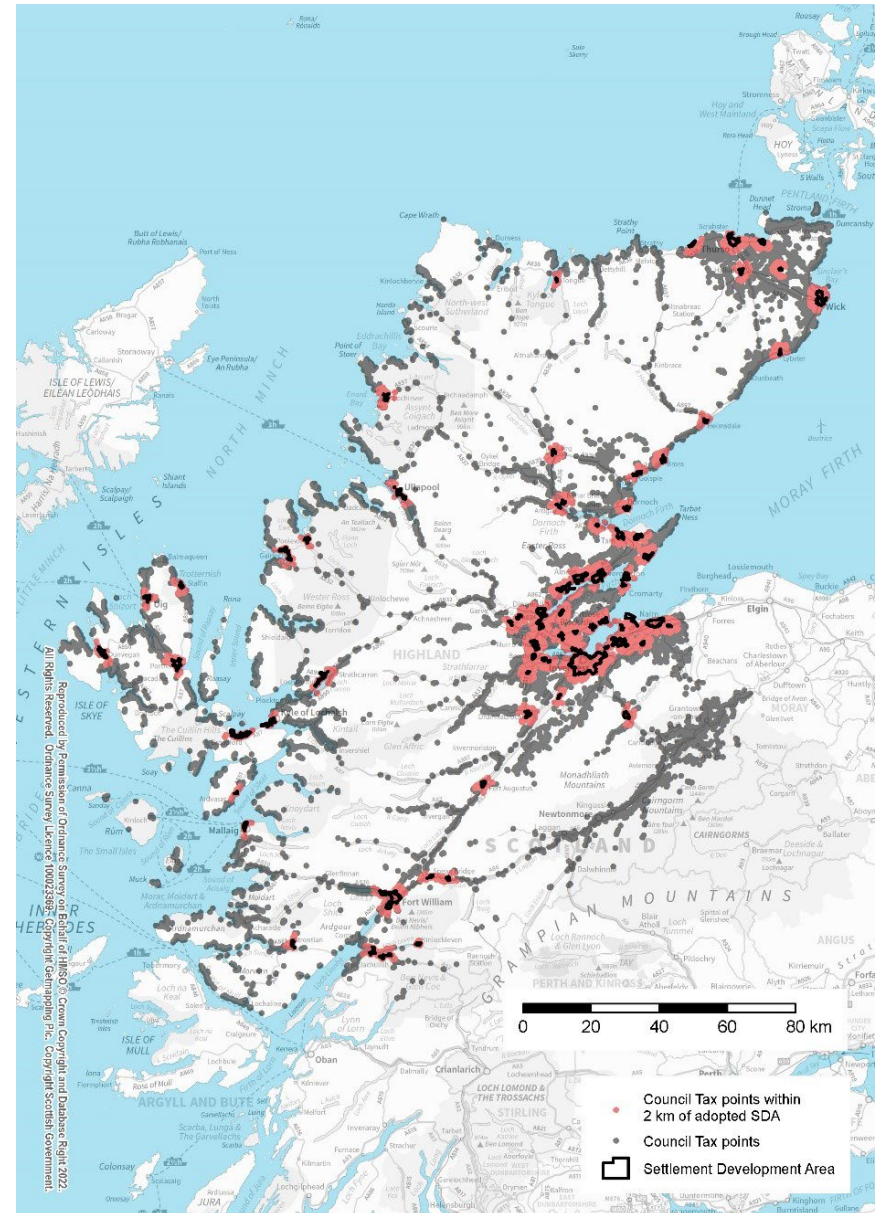
Bus services approx. 50% commercial

61 bus contracts

10 DRT contracts

28 CT grant agreements

c.450 home to school transport contracts



Transport (Scotland) Act 2019

Royal Assent 15 November 2019

Part 3: Bus Services

- Provision of services by local transport authorities
- Bus service improvement partnerships
- Local services franchises
- Provision of information

Legislation in force from 24 June 2022.

Transport (Scotland) Act 2019

The Act repealed sections of the Transport Act 1985, fundamentally Section 66:

“... in Scotland, a council (other than the council for Orkney Islands, Shetland Islands or Western Isles) shall not have power to provide a service for the carriage of passengers by road which requires a PSV operator’s licence.”

Transport (Scotland) Act 2019

The Act amended the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001 by inserting:

2A Provision of bus services etc. by local transport authorities

(1) A local transport authority may provide a service for the carriage of passengers by road using vehicles that require a PSV operator's licence to do so.

(2) The local transport authority must be satisfied that the provision of such a service will contribute to the implementation of their relevant general policies.

Contract price increases

Impact of covid-19

Contract prices renegotiated - ~35% increase

Several would otherwise have been terminated

Overhead costs no longer shared with private hire work

A few routes retendered

Contract extensions and retenders

- Contracts were due to expire December 2021
- Most extended until December 2022
- But only able to extend Skye and Lochaber until March 2022



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Why?

- Increasing contract costs
- Lack of competition 1.9 tenders per contract
(incl. taxis)
- Risk of further increases in cost after retendering

Pilot proposals

Where?

- Pilot proposed for 6 routes – all worked from Inverness
- Seventh route added after tender prices received



Transport (Scotland) Act 2019

How?

Licence or Permit?

According to guidance the same legal entity cannot hold both a PSV O-licence and a Section 19 Permit.

Many of our schools have minibuses on S19 Permits.

So we decided to use S22 Large Bus Permits which the Traffic Commissioner issued.

Pilot setting-up

- Ali MacDonald seconded from Public Transport team as Project Manager
- Three Project Officers appointed (2 from my team, 1 external)
- New buses leased
- Secondhand buses bought
- Search for depot

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