

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

HOUSE OF COMMONS  
OFFICIAL REPORT  
GENERAL COMMITTEES

## Public Bill Committee

### BUS SERVICES BILL [*LORDS*]

*Third Sitting*

*Thursday 16 March 2017*

---

#### CONTENTS

SCHEDULE 4 agreed to, with an amendment.  
CLAUSES 16 and 17 agreed to.  
CLAUSE 18 agreed to, with some amendments.  
CLAUSE 19 agreed to, with an amendment.  
CLAUSES 20 and 21 agreed to.  
New clauses considered.  
CLAUSES 22 to 25 agreed to.  
CLAUSE 26 agreed to, with an amendment.  
Bill, as amended, to be reported.  
Written evidence reported to the House.

---

No proofs can be supplied. Corrections that Members suggest for the final version of the report should be clearly marked in a copy of the report—not telephoned—and must be received in the Editor’s Room, House of Commons,

**not later than**

**Monday 20 March 2017**

© Parliamentary Copyright House of Commons 2017

*This publication may be reproduced under the terms of the Open Parliament licence, which is published at [www.parliament.uk/site-information/copyright/](http://www.parliament.uk/site-information/copyright/).*

**The Committee consisted of the following Members:**

*Chairs:* †ALBERT OWEN, MR DAVID NUTTALL

- |                                                                                 |                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| † Ansell, Caroline ( <i>Eastbourne</i> ) (Con)                                  | † Phillipson, Bridget ( <i>Houghton and Sunderland South</i> ) (Lab) |
| † Dakin, Nic ( <i>Scunthorpe</i> ) (Lab)                                        | † Robinson, Mary ( <i>Cheadle</i> ) (Con)                            |
| † De Piero, Gloria ( <i>Ashfield</i> ) (Lab)                                    | † Spencer, Mark ( <i>Sherwood</i> ) (Con)                            |
| † Freer, Mike ( <i>Finchley and Golders Green</i> ) (Con)                       | † Stringer, Graham ( <i>Blackley and Broughton</i> ) (Lab)           |
| † Green, Chris ( <i>Bolton West</i> ) (Con)                                     | Tracey, Craig ( <i>North Warwickshire</i> ) (Con)                    |
| † Greenwood, Lilian ( <i>Nottingham South</i> ) (Lab)                           | † Zeichner, Daniel ( <i>Cambridge</i> ) (Lab)                        |
| † Jones, Andrew ( <i>Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport</i> ) |                                                                      |
| † Knight, Julian ( <i>Solihull</i> ) (Con)                                      | Kenneth Fox, Jennifer Burch, <i>Committee Clerks</i>                 |
| † Mann, Scott ( <i>North Cornwall</i> ) (Con)                                   |                                                                      |
| † Merriman, Huw ( <i>Bexhill and Battle</i> ) (Con)                             | † <b>attended the Committee</b>                                      |

## Public Bill Committee

Thursday 16 March 2017

[ALBERT OWEN *in the Chair*]

### Bus Services Bill [Lords]

11.30 am

**The Chair:** I remind all persons present in the room to ensure that their electronic devices are in silent mode. Today's selection list is available in the room. I remind the Committee that we will consider the clauses and schedules in the order set out in the programme motion, which was agreed on Tuesday and is at the back of the amendment paper.

#### Schedule 4

FURTHER AMENDMENTS: ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP  
PLANS AND SCHEMES

*Amendment made:* 18, in schedule 4, page 88, line 12, leave out "123A(4)(b) to (f)" and insert "123A(4)".—  
(*Andrew Jones.*)

*See explanatory statement for amendment 17.*

*Schedule 4, as amended, agreed to.*

*Clauses 16 and 17 ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

#### Clause 18

POWER TO REQUIRE PROVISION OF INFORMATION ABOUT  
ENGLISH BUS SERVICES

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Andrew Jones):** I beg to move amendment 12, in clause 18, page 74, leave out lines 7 to 12 and insert—  
"which have one or more stopping places in their areas".

*This amendment will allow regulations under new section 141A of the Transport Act 2000 to require local transport authorities to provide information about all relevant local services which have stopping places in their areas. As currently drafted the power is available only where there are franchising arrangements.*

**The Chair:** With this it will be convenient to discuss Government amendments 13 and 14.

**Andrew Jones:** An important element of the Bill is the availability of journey planning information about bus services. The clause will facilitate the provision to passengers of information about timetables, fares, routes and tickets, and live information about bus arrival times. This is one of the most exciting parts of the Bill.

Amendment 12 will allow the Secretary of State to make regulations requiring all local transport authorities, rather than just those that are franchising authorities, to provide prescribed information about local bus services. Our overall policy intention is still for operators to be responsible for providing route, timetable, fares, tickets and real-time information. However, during the development and drafting of the Bill, our discussions with operators and local authority representatives highlighted that current practices in the industry mean that local authorities rather than operators often hold the relevant information. That is particularly the case in respect of real-time information.

Historically, local authorities invested in real-time information systems, including the equipment fitted to the vehicles. In those cases, it will be important to require local authorities rather than operators to provide the relevant information. Without the amendment, there is a risk that the amount of real-time information available to passengers reduces in future because operators cannot provide the information held by the authority. To ensure that there is no degradation in the level of service available to passengers, we will amend the clause so that real-time information may be required from the local authority if it owns the real-time system. The intention is for that to be a short-term measure while appropriate processes and procedures are put in place to enable the obligation to be passed to operators.

Stakeholders have stressed the importance of two existing datasets currently maintained by local authorities, which accurately and uniquely describe and locate all bus stops in a common format. Those datasets are fundamental to the production of meaningful journey planning information for passengers. However, they are currently maintained by local authorities on a voluntary basis. Should it become necessary to put the ongoing maintenance of the datasets on to a statutory footing, amendments 13 and 14, in conjunction with amendment 12, will ensure that regulations could be made requiring information about stopping places to be provided and maintained by local transport authorities or operators.

The Secretary of State must consult with local authority operators and passenger representatives before making such regulations, and any impacts of new requirements will be assessed before implementation. The regulations are also subject to the affirmative procedure, so Parliament will be able to debate the detail of the final regulations.

The amendments are necessary to ensure that the level of information currently available to passengers is not reduced in the transition to the new open data arrangements, and to secure the maintenance of the datasets that are fundamental to all open data requirements. We are seeking to make information available from which app developers can produce products that offer a service outside London that will be comparable to that which is available inside London. We are not thinking of developing such a measure within the Department, but thinking of making it available so that entrepreneurs can pick it up, run with it and create exciting products.

**Nic Dakin (Scunthorpe) (Lab):** It is important that products are equally as accessible to small providers and large providers. Will that be the case?

**Andrew Jones:** Yes.

**Daniel Zeichner (Cambridge) (Lab):** I share the Minister's excitement on the clause. It is a huge opportunity. We have absolutely no objections to it, we are enthusiastic and support it. I reflect in passing on the amazing work that has gone on in London through Transport for London, and would have had across the rest of the country if we had had a similar system for the past 30 years.

**Andrew Jones:** I suspect we are going to have a further outburst of Tuesday's agreeing with each other. Helping passengers with information on how bus services in their areas can meet their transport needs will put more passengers on to buses. That is fundamental to what the Bill is about and why the clause is central to the Bill.

*Amendment 12 agreed to.*

*Amendments made:* 13, in clause 18, page 74, line 22, after “routes,” insert “stopping places.”

*This amendment and amendment 14 ensure that information about stopping places is included in the types of information that can be required by regulations under new section 141A of the Transport Act 2000.*

Amendment 14, in clause 18, page 74, line 23, at end insert “stopping places.”—(Andrew Jones.)

*See the explanatory statement for amendment 13.*

*Clause 18, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

### Clause 19

#### VARIATION OR CANCELLATION OF REGISTRATION: SERVICE INFORMATION

**Lilian Greenwood** (Nottingham South) (Lab): I beg to move amendment 31, in clause 19, page 76, line 5, leave out “may” and insert “shall”.

*This amendment would specify that regulations will require, rather than may require, operators to provide prescribed information.*

**The Chair:** With this it will be convenient to discuss amendment 32, in clause 19, page 76, line 13, leave out from “application” to end of line 14.

*This amendment is consequential on amendment 31.*

**Lilian Greenwood:** It is a pleasure to be back in the Bill Committee and serving under your chairmanship, Mr Owen. I hope the Minister will accept the amendments as being helpful and seeking to improve the Bill.

I will begin by explaining the background. The Competition Commission completed an investigation into bus markets in 2011 and recommended that the Government give local transport authorities powers to obtain revenue and patronage information for de-registered services and the right to disclose that information to potential bidders for subsequent tenders. It also recommended a 14-day pre-notification period preceding formal service registrations, variations and withdrawals, which I think was partly aimed at curbing undesirable operator behaviour—bus wars—but was also relevant to its recommendation regarding supported services, specifically in relation to the provision of revenue and patronage information. However, it was not specific in its report about whether those data should be provided by default, or whether the onus should be on local transport authorities to request it. I contend that providing those data should be the default, rather than it having to be requested every time.

Fundamentally, the amendment is about efficiency—the efficient operation of the tendered bus services market and the efficient administration of that market, both of which have clear implications for public funds. It would not be a significant burden on operators to provide the data by default because a competent operator would already have the data to hand, as they would have been vital in informing their decision to withdraw or vary the service.

Nowadays, data are available in electronic form, so it would be fairly straightforward for the local transport authority to agree with operators a standard format for the provision of data. Many have already done so for financially supported services. Service changes where the provision of data is not necessary—for instance,

normal frequency increases or minor time changes—can be specified in the regulations, making it clear what data the local transport authority is entitled to.

On the contrary, it would be an administrative burden, both for local transport authorities and operators, for the data to be requested and provided on an ad hoc basis. If the data were provided at the start of the pre-notification period, the local transport authority could make initial preparations for whether and how to replace most effectively the commercial service and, if appropriate, challenge the operator’s intention. That could result in either the operator continuing to provide the service commercially or amending the variation, so that less public sector service support was required.

Provision of the data to all potential bidders would encourage more and better-informed bids, which would result in more competitive prices, a lower risk of successful bidders being unable to sustain the service and, therefore, a lower risk of the need to retender the service, with associated administration costs and potential disruption to passengers. It would, of course, reduce the ability of operators to game the system by withdrawing or reducing a profitable service in the expectation of regaining the service when it was put out to tender.

In summary, having information available as quickly as possible is essential for supporting efficient passenger services and minimising disruption. The amendment seeks to address concerns raised by the Competition Commission and to implement its recommendations most effectively. Making provision of information the default and automatic removes unnecessary bureaucracy. Any draft regulations should align with the provision, making it clear that when an operator applies to vary or cancel a service registered under section 6, the operator should automatically disclose the information to the authority.

**Andrew Jones:** I will speak to amendments 31 and 32, tabled by the hon. Member for Nottingham South. They would require operators to provide the prescribed information automatically, without the local authority having to request it. The purpose of clause 19 is to improve competition in the supported services market by putting all bidders on an even footing, which is clearly positive.

Where an operator chooses to reduce or withdraw a service, the clause should help prevent incumbent operators from having an unfair advantage when preparing a bid, if the local authority decides to tender for a replacement service.

Not all local authorities will want to provide a subsidised service. If the requirement to provide information were automatic, it could present an unnecessary burden on both the operator and the council when there is no intention to proceed. They would simply be required to provide information to the local authority, even if no one intends to make use of it.

There is nothing in the provisions to prevent a local authority whose default position is always to consider tendering for replacement service from reaching an agreement with operators in their area for the information to be provided automatically, but compelling such activities regardless of need seems unnecessary and a bit excessive.

I hope that explanation and the reassurances are helpful to the Committee and that the hon. Lady feels able to—

**Graham Stringer** (Blackley and Broughton) (Lab): Will the Minister give way?

**Andrew Jones:** Good timing; I had two words left.

**Graham Stringer:** I am grateful to the Minister. He makes the fair point that there may not be a substitute subsidised service. My hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham South made the case that many bus companies, to get round the competition and to game the system, withdraw profitable services in order to get an extra subsidy. What will the Minister do to stop that happening? He has not addressed that point at all.

11.45 am

**Andrew Jones:** It is addressed by the fact that the local authority can request, at its instigation, data from the bus operator to prevent that from happening. It will have transparency on that. I am aware of such things happening in theory—the case was made by the hon. Member for Nottingham South—but the system is there to prevent that from happening. The question is whether the information is given at the request of the local authority or automatically, regardless of need.

**Lilian Greenwood:** Does the Minister not think that it could reduce bureaucracy if operators knew that they would always have to provide that information, rather than the local authority having a limited period to request the information and the operator then having to go away and find it? If it is readily available, as it must be if the operator has considered withdrawing or amending a service, surely it would be simpler if operators always provided that information.

**Andrew Jones:** The information will clearly be available, because the operator will be making a commercial decision, based on information. However, if the authority has no intention of taking it forward, do we need to go ahead with this proposal, or is it excessive? If sufficient interest in doing so is expressed in the current consultation, I am happy to consider adding a mechanism in the draft regulations under the clause to allow a local authority to notify operators if it wishes always to receive such information, but otherwise I think that it is excessive.

**Lilian Greenwood:** I thank the Minister for that assurance. On that basis, I beg to ask leave to withdraw the amendment.

*Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.*

**Andrew Jones:** I beg to move amendment 15, in clause 19, page 76, line 36, at end insert—

“( ) In this section “local transport authority” has the meaning given in section 108(4) of the Transport Act 2000.”

*This amendment adds a definition of a term, “local transport authority”, which appears in the clause.*

Clause 19 provides powers to the Secretary of State to make regulations that enable local transport authorities to request information on the revenue and patronage of commercial bus services that are being withdrawn or reduced, and to disclose that information to bidders for subsequent tenders. Amendment 15 is a little dry and technical. It basically adds a definition to the term

“local transport authority” to clarify that it has the same meaning as in section 108(4) of the Transport Act 2000. It is necessary because otherwise there would be no clarity about the definition of a local transport authority in proposed new section 6C of the Transport Act 1985.

*Amendment 15 agreed to.*

*Clause 19, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

*Clauses 20 and 21 ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

### New Clause 1

#### BUS COMPANIES: LIMITATION OF POWERS OF AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND

“(1) A relevant authority may not, in exercise of any of its powers, form a company for the purpose of providing a local service.

(2) Subsection (1) applies whether the relevant authority is acting alone or with any other person.

(3) In this section—

“company” has the same meaning as in the Companies Acts (see sections 1(1) and 2(1) of the Companies Act 2006);

“form a company” is to be construed in accordance with section 7 of the Companies Act 2006;

“local service” has the same meaning as in the Transport Act 1985 (see section 2 of that Act);

“Passenger Transport Executive”, in relation to an integrated transport area in England or a combined authority area, means the body which is the Executive in relation to that area for the purposes of Part 2 of the Transport Act 1968;

“relevant authority” means—

(a) a county council in England;

(b) a district council in England;

(c) a combined authority established under section 103 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009;

(d) an Integrated Transport Authority for an integrated transport area in England;

(e) a Passenger Transport Executive for—

(i) an integrated transport area in England, or

(ii) a combined authority area.”—(*Andrew Jones.*)

*This amendment prohibits county and district councils in England, combined and integrated authorities in England and passenger transport executives in England from setting up companies to provide local services.*

*Brought up, and read the First time.*

*Question put, That the clause be read a Second time.*

*The Committee divided: Ayes 9, Noes 5.*

#### Division No. 5]

#### AYES

Ansell, Caroline

Freer, Mike

Green, Chris

Jones, Andrew

Knight, Julian

Mann, Scott

Merriman, Huw

Robinson, Mary

Spencer, Mark

#### NOES

Dakin, Nic

Greenwood, Lilian

Phillipson, Bridget

Stringer, Graham

Zeichner, Daniel

*Question accordingly agreed to.*

*New clause 1 read a Second time, and added to the Bill.*

## New Clause 2

### NATIONAL STRATEGY

“(1) The Secretary of State must, within 12 months of the day on which this Act is passed, publish a national strategy for local bus services setting out the objectives, targets and funding provisions for rural, urban and inter-urban local bus services in the ten years after Royal Assent is given to this Act.

(2) The national strategy must include a consideration of a reduced fare concessionary scheme for young people aged between 16 and 19.”—(*Daniel Zeichner.*)

*This new clause would require the Secretary of State to publish a national strategy for buses.*

*Brought up, and read the First time.*

**Daniel Zeichner:** I beg to move, That the clause be read a Second time.

The new clause would mandate that the Secretary of State for Transport must issue a national strategy for local bus services, setting out the objectives, targets and funding provisions for buses over the next 10 years. Subsection (2) would mandate that the national funding strategy must include consideration of a reduced concessionary fare scheme for young people aged 16 to 19.

We believe that the new clause is necessary and long overdue. The Government have published national investment strategies for road and rail, as well as a draft investment strategy for cycling and walking—the latter is proceeding at a snail’s pace, but I am sure it will be welcome when it arrives—so why not a strategy for buses? The way buses are funded in this country is not simple, as we have discovered during our discussions; it is a complicated mix that has developed over time with piecemeal changes. We might describe it as a very British approach; it sort of works—not well enough, in our view—but almost no one knows how.

What we do know is that almost half of bus industry funding comes from the public purse. Total public support for buses accounted for 41% of overall industry funding in 2014-15, and in 2010-11 that figure was even higher at 46.3%. We know that money goes towards funding socially necessary supported services on routes not served commercially by private operators through central Government’s general grant to local authorities and the reimbursement of bus operators for trips made by concessionary pass-holders, including the statutory older persons’ and disabled passengers’ scheme.

I spent some time during the early years of the concessionary fares scheme introduced by the Labour Government trying to find out how the funding flows worked, not least because many district authorities suddenly found themselves substantially out of pocket at that time. I would like to be able to say that the many hours I devoted to it were well spent, but I have to confess that, despite much help from officials, I never really got to the bottom of how reimbursement rates were calculated and, in some cases, negotiated. I suspect that the number of people in the country who fully understand it could comfortably fit in a small room—some of them may be in this one today.

Large amounts of public money are spent on concessionary fares and the scheme is so popular that subsequent Governments have been reluctant to touch it, yet there is no overall mechanism for assessing the impact on the bus sector. As I have remarked previously, there is not a lot of point in having a bus pass if there is

no bus. Other questions are raised, often in areas where buses have disappeared, such as why community transport should not be available through the bus pass scheme.

On top of that complexity, we have the bus service operators grant—BSOG, to those of us who take part in the discussions—which was introduced back in 1965 as the fuel duty rebate. It is a rebate paid directly to operators and dates from a time when it was mainly an accounting transaction within the public sector. Of course, the world has changed considerably over that half-century—at times BSOG has changed with it. I suspect we will revisit that point later in our debate. I am informed by the Community Transport Association that in 2013, 21% of community transport schemes were completely reliant on BSOG, and 75% relied on it to some extent. There is a not insignificant amount of public money being spent.

The Government have argued, as I am sure they will this morning, that since the bus industry is a private one, a national investment strategy is inappropriate and unnecessary. However, where such large amounts of public money are being spent, even if the services are being delivered by private operators, we think it only right that there should be a proper planning strategy for how and why it is spent, as well as plans and objectives for future spending. Indeed, the Government themselves have said:

“Requiring operators to use their assets to provide a free service for a proportion of the population is a major market intervention”.

That is precisely why we need a proper strategy to be set out with clear objectives.

It is pretty clear—this is relevant to our earlier discussions on franchising—that there is scope to get better bang for the public buck. As my hon. Friends have several times said, the largest bus operators report significant profit margins. According to their annual reports, in 2014-15 Stagecoach’s operating profit margin on its regional bus routes was 13.5% and Go-Ahead’s was 13%. Yet those profits are not being shared with the public, despite the fact that large sums of public money are being invested in bus services.

**Julian Knight (Solihull) (Con):** Surely the point is that profits are being shared with the public, through shareholder dividends.

**Daniel Zeichner:** Shareholder dividends may be shared with some members of the public, but not many of my constituents find such money coming into their pockets. I think they would rather have it more directly, in lower bus fares.

Rather than getting money from dividends, bus passengers pay the price for those substantial profits, because bus fares have been rising. According to the Department for Transport’s local bus fares index, fares in England, outside London, rose by more than 156% between 1995 and 2016, while the retail prices index rose by 77%. That shows that bus fares—and I think that this is virtually everyone’s personal experience—have risen much faster.

Equally, bus companies sometimes tell us that the rising fares are due to rising fuel prices, but a number of us have noticed that when fuel prices go down, fares rarely fall; they tend to remain static. We believe that there is a strong case for a bus investment strategy, and we hope that the Minister will reconsider his objections.

[Daniel Zeichner]

Subsection (2) of the new clause relates to the consideration of a reduced fares scheme for young people. It would simply require the Government to look at and consult on funding options to help young people with the cost of travel. Many young people have to take the bus to school or college, but the number of councils financially able to provide a discretionary young person's pass has dropped from 29 to just 16 since 2010. With fares shooting up faster than inflation, the Government should look properly at introducing a statutory concessionary fare scheme for young people.

I appreciate that that would be a substantial commitment, but we ask the Government only to consider it and to do the preparatory work. I remember that, when I and others first suggested the older people's concessionary fares scheme to a Labour Transport Secretary who later became Chancellor, his immediate response was less than encouraging, but popular measures have a habit of making their way into manifestos—and the rest is history.

We all know that for many young people, the cost of getting to college and job interviews, and just of getting out to have a life, is a key determinant of what lies ahead of them. That is why the Opposition thought that the education maintenance allowance was so precious and that it was a mistake to remove it. Agreeing to the new clause would be a first tentative step in repairing the damage to the prospects of many young people and families who might even be described as “just about managing”.

There is not a word about funding in the Bill, yet cuts to local authority budgets have meant that thousands of routes and services have had to be withdrawn since 2010. Young persons' concessionary fare schemes have been cut, while large operators have experienced generous profit margins. The way buses are funded is not working well enough. We need a proper Government strategy to address the illogicalities of funding, and to bring buses into line with other modes of transport. The new clause would help to achieve that objective, and would send a strong message to young people that the Government understand what life is like for them.

**Andrew Jones:** New clause 2 would require the Secretary of State to develop and publish a national bus strategy. The hon. Gentleman mentioned that there is nothing in the Bill about funding. That is right; it is not a Bill about funding. It is about providing authorities with new tools to enable them to improve their local services in the way that best suits their areas.

Central Government have a valuable role to play in providing funding and setting the wider agenda through policy initiatives such as the low-emission bus scheme and our Total Transport pilots, but a centrally determined strategy for local bus services would not help local authorities to address issues relevant to them and their area. I am slightly reminded of a saying from my 25 years in business: “I'm from head office and I'm here to help.” Rarely is that the truth.

12 noon

I can assure the hon. Member for Cambridge that my Department already, without his proposed strategy, provides significant certainty of funding for bus services. As part of the 2015 spending review, we protected BSOG at

current funding levels for the period up to 2020-21. That funding is provided directly to local authorities and bus operators. It is not broken down by categories of service. Attempting to do so in any precise way would be a somewhat bureaucratic exercise that could simply embroil central Government in the detail of something that should be and is decided locally—local bus service provision.

Similarly, the statutory responsibility for transport to education and training for 16 to 19-year-olds rests with local authorities. That enables them to make the decisions that best match local need and circumstance. Many authorities and operators already offer discounts for passengers in that age group. I reassure the Committee, however, that the Government fully appreciate the importance of public transport for young people, particularly those living in more isolated areas. We recognise that the cost of transport can be an issue for young people—it can be an issue for all of us, but perhaps more acutely for the young. That is one reason for the introduction of the 16 to 19 bursary fund. The Committee may be interested to know that, in the year to September 2016, local bus fares in England increased by 0.6%—the rate of increase was significantly slower than that for the retail prices index, at 2%.

In short, the new clause would not add anything to help local authorities to deliver their services on a local basis, or directly benefit passengers, which is why I cannot support it. I hope the hon. Gentleman feels able to withdraw it.

**Daniel Zeichner:** I am slightly disappointed by the Minister's response, although obviously not entirely surprised. For bus passengers in areas where bus services are being withdrawn, the question whether the funding is coming from the Department for Transport or through local authorities from other Departments is a touch immaterial—the bus has gone. We have seen the figures for this right across the country. Across whole swathes of the country, buses have gone because the funding to support them is not there. From the passengers' point of view, that is all that matters. I am therefore disappointed that the Minister does not think that funding is worth addressing.

**Graham Stringer:** Did my hon. Friend notice, as I did, that when the Minister was relaying his experience of working in the private sector, he said that head office was rarely there to help? This is precisely the justification he has given for the mountains of regulations imposed centrally on transport authorities—he has said on a number of occasions in this Committee that the Department is there to help. When it comes to writing out a strategy, he will not do it, but when it comes to interfering in the detail, he will. Does he recognise that that is a huge contradiction?

**Daniel Zeichner:** I am grateful to my hon. Friend. I am sure that those who are carrying the 168 pages of guidance around under their arms will notice that head office is indeed there to offer a little assistance on occasion. We are returning to the theme running through the debate of the relationship between the centre and localities.

To return to the points about funding, just yesterday we saw newspapers in Stockton talking about the three women who describe themselves as “the three busketeers”.

They have found that their bus route has been axed and it costs them £6 to get a taxi to go and buy a pint of milk. That is the reality on the ground that people face, so funding is crucial, which is why we think the new clause is important.

The debate about opportunities for young people will no doubt be rehearsed over the next two or three years, and it will be a political decision in the end. I will not press the Minister on this, because I am sure he does not have the figures on the number of people benefiting from the 16 to 19 bursary, but I get no sense from my FE college and others that that has been a successful way of addressing that problem. The Opposition will come forward with what I hope will be a much more attractive offer to young people at the next general election. On that basis, I will press the motion to a vote.

*Question put, That the clause be read a Second time.*

*The Committee divided: Ayes 5, Noes 9.*

### Division No. 6]

#### AYES

Dakin, Nic	Stringer, Graham
Greenwood, Lilian	
Phillipson, Bridget	Zeichner, Daniel

#### NOES

Ansell, Caroline	Mann, Scott
Freer, Mike	Merriman, Huw
Green, Chris	Robinson, Mary
Jones, Andrew	Spencer, Mark
Knight, Julian	

*Question accordingly negatived.*

### New Clause 3

#### DISABILITY AWARENESS TRAINING

“(1) All drivers of buses and staff at bus terminals must complete approved disability equality and awareness training (“approved training”) by 1 April 2019.

(2) This training must cover the needs of persons with mental or physical disabilities, including hidden disabilities.

(3) After 1 April 2019—

(a) all new bus drivers and terminal staff must complete approved training within one month of starting work; and

(b) bus drivers and terminal staff must undertake refresher training at least once every three years.

(4) Bus operating companies must consult passenger groups, disability stakeholder groups, trade unions and relevant authorities when developing their approved training for bus drivers and terminal staff.

(5) In this section “approved training” means a training course concerning the needs of persons with mental or physical disabilities, including hidden disabilities, who use or seek to use bus services, approved in a manner specified by regulations to be made by the Secretary of State.”. —(*Daniel Zeichner.*)

*This new clause would require all drivers of buses and staff at bus terminals to complete approved disability equality and awareness training by 1 April 2019.*

*Brought up, and read the First time.*

**Daniel Zeichner:** I beg to move, That the clause be read a Second time.

**The Chair:** With this it will be convenient to discuss the following:

New clause 4—*Ability to make adjustments for disabled passengers.*

“Insert new section 6AA into the Transport Act 1985—

“(1) A condition for registration of a local bus service in England is that the operator has policies in place to ensure that it is able to conform to its duty under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 to make adjustments for any disabled passenger on the bus.

(2) This condition will be enforced by the Traffic Commissioner.”.

*This new clause would make it a condition for registration of bus services in England that bus operators have in place policies to ensure that they are able to make adjustments for any disabled passenger on the bus. This comes following the Supreme Court decision First Group v Paulley.*

New clause 7—*Priority wheelchair spaces.*

“(1) The Secretary of State may by regulations make such provision as appears to the Secretary of State to be appropriate for the purpose of facilitating travel by wheelchair users on local services.

(2) The regulations may in particular require operators of local services to put in place and enforce a policy for priority wheelchair spaces.

(3) For the purposes of subsection (2) a policy for priority wheelchair spaces is one under which—

(a) a wheelchair user has priority use of any wheelchair space on a public service vehicle unless it is not reasonable for other passengers to vacate the space;

(b) other passengers are required to vacate the space for the wheelchair user if it is reasonable for them to do so; and

(c) a passenger who unreasonably refuses to vacate the space may, if necessary, be required to leave the vehicle.

(4) The power conferred by subsection (1) includes power to amend, repeal, revoke or otherwise modify—

(a) an Act passed before or in the same Session as this Act; or

(b) an instrument made under an Act before the regulations come into force.

(5) Regulations under this section must be made by statutory instrument.

(6) A statutory instrument which contains (whether alone or with other provision) regulations under this section may not be made unless a draft of the instrument has been laid before, and approved by a resolution of, each House of Parliament.”.

*This new clause enables the Secretary of State to make regulations to require bus operators to put in place and enforce policies for priority wheelchair spaces.*

New clause 9—*Accessibility policies for bus passengers.*

“(1) After section 181 of the Equality Act 2010 insert—

#### “Chapter 2A

##### Bus Services

181E Accessibility policies for bus passengers

(1) The Secretary of State may, for the purpose of facilitating travel by disabled persons, make regulations requiring operators of local services to put in place and publish policies for making their services accessible.

(2) The regulations may make provision about—

(a) what is to be included in the policies;

(b) how and where the policies are to be published.

(3) The regulations may, in particular, require an operator of a local service to make provision in the policy about—

(a) passenger information;

(b) fares, tickets and reservations;

(c) facilities and assistance on the vehicle;

- (d) priority seating and wheelchair and scooter space;
  - (e) connections to local services and transport interchange;
  - (f) diversions, disruptions and alternative accessible transport;
  - (g) contact details, feedback and complaints;
  - (h) staff training.
- (4) The regulations may, in particular—
- (a) specify ways of making the policies available, including different media and alternative formats;
  - (b) specify standards and guidelines relevant to the policies or means of publication;
  - (c) specify requirements for reviewing the policies.
- (5) Regulations under this section may make different provision—
- (a) as respects different descriptions of vehicle;
  - (b) as respects the same description of vehicle in different circumstances.
- (6) Before making regulations under this section, the Secretary of State must consult—
- (a) the Welsh Ministers;
  - (b) the Scottish Ministers.

#### 181F Exemptions etc

- (1) The Secretary of State may by regulations make provision for securing that the provisions of regulations under section 181E do not apply or apply subject to such modifications or exceptions as the regulations may specify to—
- (a) public service vehicles of a prescribed description;
  - (b) operators of a prescribed description;
  - (c) local services of a prescribed description.
- (2) Regulations under subsection (1)(b) may, in particular, make provision by reference to an operator's size.
- (3) Regulations under this section may also make provision for securing that the provisions of regulations under section 181E do not apply or apply subject to such modifications or exceptions as the regulations may specify to—
- (a) a prescribed public service vehicle;
  - (b) public service vehicles of a prescribed operator;
  - (c) a prescribed local service.
- (4) Regulations under subsection (1) or (3) may make the provision subject to such restrictions and conditions as are specified in the regulations.
- (5) Regulations under subsection (1) or (3) may specify the period for which provisions of those regulations are to have effect.
- (6) Regulations under subsection (1) may make different provision for different areas.
- (7) Section 207(2) does not require regulations under this section that apply only to—
- (a) a prescribed public service vehicle,
  - (b) public service vehicles of a prescribed operator, or
  - (c) a prescribed local service,
- to be made by statutory instrument; but such regulations are as capable of being amended or revoked as regulations made by statutory instrument.
- (8) Before making regulations under this section, the Secretary of State must consult—
- (a) the Welsh Ministers;
  - (b) the Scottish Ministers.

#### 181G Guidance

- (1) The Secretary of State must issue guidance about the duties imposed on operators of local services by regulations under section 181E.
- (2) The Secretary of State—

- (a) must review the guidance issued under subsection (1), at intervals not exceeding five years, and
  - (b) may revise it.
- (3) Before issuing the guidance or revising it in a way which would, in the opinion of the Secretary of State, result in a substantial change to it, the Secretary of State must consult—
- (a) the Welsh Ministers,
  - (b) the Scottish Ministers,
  - (c) the Passengers' Council,
  - (d) such organisations representing disabled persons, including the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee and the committee established under section 72 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001, as the Secretary of State thinks fit,
  - (e) such organisations representing operators of local services as the Secretary of State thinks fit, and
  - (f) such other persons as the Secretary of State thinks fit.
- (4) The Secretary of State must arrange for any guidance issued or revised under this section to be published in a way the Secretary of State considers appropriate.

#### 181H Interpretation

- (1) In this Chapter—
- “local service” has the same meaning as in the Transport Act 1985;
  - “public service vehicle” means a vehicle that is a public service vehicle for the purposes of the Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981;
  - “stopping place” has the same meaning as in the Transport Act 1985.
- (2) For the purposes of this Chapter, a local service (“service A”) is a connecting local service in relation to another local service (“service B”) if service A has a stopping place at, or in the vicinity of, a stopping place of service B.
- (3) References in this Chapter to the operator of a passenger transport service of any description are to be construed in accordance with section 137(7) of the Transport Act 1985.”
- (2) In section 207 of that Act (exercise of power to make orders and regulations), in subsection (5), after “174(4)” insert “, 181E(5), 181F(6)”.
- (3) In section 208 of that Act (procedure for orders and regulations), in subsection (5) (statutory instruments subject to affirmative procedure), after paragraph (f) insert—
- “(fa) regulations under section 181E or 181F (accessibility policies for bus passengers);”
- (4) In section 26 of the Transport Act 1985 (conditions attached to PSV operators' licence), in subsection (1), after paragraph (bb) insert—
- “(bc) the operator has failed to comply with a requirement of regulations made under section 181E of the Equality Act 2010;”
- (5) In section 155 of the Transport Act 2000 (sanctions), after subsection (1ZD) (inserted by Schedule 4), insert—
- “(1ZE) Where a traffic commissioner is satisfied that the operator of a local service has, without reasonable excuse, failed to comply with a requirement of regulations made under section 181E of the Equality Act 2010, the traffic commissioner may make one or more orders under subsection (1A)(a) or (d).”
- (6) In section 39 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001 (penalties), in subsection (1)—
- (a) omit the “or” following paragraph (b);
  - (b) after paragraph (c) insert “; or
  - “(d) failed to comply with a requirement of regulations made under section 181E of the Equality Act 2010,”.

*This new clause inserts new sections into the Equality Act 2010 to enable the Secretary of State to make regulations requiring bus operators to publish accessibility policies for disabled passengers, and to give the Traffic Commissioners powers to enforce them. It reflects similar requirements on train companies.*

**Daniel Zeichner:** New clause 3 would require all bus drivers, as well as staff at bus terminals, to complete approved disability, equality and awareness training. That training should include mental and physical disabilities, including hidden disabilities, and make particular mention of those on the autistic spectrum.

An EU regulation on the rights of bus and coach passengers came into force in March 2013, and its chapter 3 relates to disabled passengers and persons with reduced mobility. We are aware that the UK legislated to provide certain exemptions to the regulation's requirements, including from the article 16(1) requirement for disability awareness training for personnel of carriers and terminal-managing bodies. In 2014, the then Transport Minister, the hon. Member for Scarborough and Whitby (Mr Goodwill), said:

"This exemption was applied in line with Government policy on adopting any EU legislation, to make full use of any derogation that would reduce costs to business. This policy ensures that UK businesses are not put at a competitive disadvantage compared with their European counterparts."—[*Official Report*, 9 January 2014; Vol. 573, c. 173WH.]

Put as bluntly as that, it rather sounds as though the Government's view is: "Stuff passengers, stuff safety; all that counts is cost to business." I am sure the Minister will be able to set me right on that.

The UK's five-year exemption from the EU directive requiring bus drivers and terminal staff to go undergo disability awareness training runs out in 2018. Given that the future status of such protections and exemptions is uncertain, we think it would be helpful to introduce clarity around mandatory disability, equality and awareness training. We understand from the guidance that the Government intend to do that, but given that the exemption is likely to still be running when the so-called great repeal Bill is brought forward, we believe it should be put in the Bill to ensure that it actually goes forward.

In 2014, the Government reviewed the exemption under article 16(2) to see whether drivers were receiving adequate disability training. The published responses showed, perhaps unsurprisingly, that the bus industry thought it was doing enough overall, while disabled people thought that it was not. My colleagues in the other place submitted an amendment but withdrew it following assurances from the Government Benches that

"there will be means other than this Bill to address any need to ensure that these requirements continue to apply to bus operators in the UK once we leave the European Union... We recognise the importance of driver disability training and are developing guidance to help implement it."—[*Official Report, House of Lords*, 20 July 2016; Vol. 774, c. 665.]

I see no reason why the Bill should not be the means to address mandatory disability awareness training for bus workers—after all, it is a Bill about buses. We hope for a positive response.

The Government's amendment on audio-visual systems, which I will return to, is linked to buses in a similar way. It seems fitting that an amendment on disability awareness training could be included in the Bill to put our minds at rest. The draft regulations say that the

Government are developing best practice in delivering disability awareness training, but to me that sounds like the training would still be optional and not nationally mandated. Particularly concerning is the comment that:

"Britain will in due course be leaving the EU. Until we do so we will meet our legal obligations."

That sounds like a minimalist approach, and the Opposition believe that we need to do better.

As I mentioned earlier, we are keen that disability awareness training also covers hidden disabilities such as neurological conditions. The Government funded national training for bus drivers as part of the Think Autism strategy, but we would like to see that go further in its scope and for the Secretary of State to ensure that training meets the needs of passengers with all forms of hidden disabilities.

In December 2015, when the then Secretary of State for Transport was asked if he would consider encouraging bus companies to give their staff more disability awareness training, he said:

"I will certainly give encouragement—not that they should need it—to the bus companies to make sure that facilities for disabled people are available and that their staff know the right way of making those facilities available to them. That is incumbent on all bus companies."—[*Official Report*, 10 December 2015; Vol. 603, c. 1136.]

However, in 2014, the Government estimated that only about three quarters of all bus and coach drivers had completed some form of disability awareness training.

**Lilian Greenwood:** I am sure that, like me, my hon. Friend welcomed the Government's change of heart on the provision of audio-visual indicators. However, many examples show why that is not sufficient and why we need the wider disability awareness training. I saw a piece by Patrick Robert, who travels with his guide dog. He said:

"I have had... some bad experience with bus drivers not stopping at the bus stop but a few metres away. Obviously if a bus driver does not stop in front of me, it makes it impossible for me to discuss with them and check the bus number."

Does that not precisely show the mismatch? If bus drivers do not have sufficient disability awareness training, even if there is an audio-visual system on the bus, they might not even stop to allow a person with a visual impairment to get on.

**Daniel Zeichner:** I thank my hon. Friend for that example, which clarifies the point. I doubt whether there is any disagreement on wanting better standards among drivers and on ensuring that they are properly trained to spot all these issues. In the end, the way to drive up standards is not to rely on voluntarism. We all know from our own experiences that many good employers will do that, but some will not. A level playing field where good employers are not disadvantaged is all we seek. This is a chance to offer the good employers a helping hand.

**Bridget Phillipson** (Houghton and Sunderland South) (Lab): Further to the point about the difficulties there can be in understanding where disability exists, I met locally with the Royal National Institute of Blind People and with Guide Dogs to hear about the difficulties people who are blind or partially sighted can face in hailing buses. Even knowing when the bus is likely to

arrive can present a difficulty. If bus drivers were given greater training so that they knew to look out for people who may find it difficult to hail buses, I am sure we would all welcome that. Bus drivers do a good job, but it is difficult day to day. That bit of greater understanding would make a real difference to people who find it quite difficult to access public transport.

**Daniel Zeichner:** My hon. Friend makes a strong point. I doubt whether there will be much disagreement with the Minister about wanting to improve standards. The question is how we do it. I suspect all Members have constituents bringing similar examples to them.

New clause 4 would insert a new section 6AA into the Transport Act 1985 and make it a condition for registration of all buses in England that the operator has policies in place to ensure that it is able in every circumstance to conform to its duty to make adjustments for any disabled passenger on the bus. The condition would be enforced by the traffic commissioner, who already has responsibility for bus registration. The new clause comes following the Supreme Court decision in *FirstGroup v. Pauley*.

12.15 pm

We want to take the opportunity to improve the accessibility of public transport for disabled people, which the Government have already done by acting on audio-visual information systems, as my hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham South indicated. The Supreme Court decision demonstrated that the rules lack clarity on the use of spaces provided for wheelchair users on public buses. On 18 January, the Supreme Court ruled that bus companies must end first come, first served policies on those spaces and do more to give priority to wheelchair users. To us, the Bill seems an opportunity to provide the legal clarity sought by the court case.

The Government said in the other place that it was inappropriate to take any decisions on an issue relating to an ongoing Supreme Court case, but that case has now concluded. Hopefully, the Minister sees the amendment as a helpful one that would allow him to give clarity to the industry following the outcome of the case, which many believe still leaves the situation unclear. It is particularly unfair for bus drivers who ultimately have to deal with sometimes delicate situations. We believe that the Government should accept our amendment, which would ensure that operators have policies on making adjustments for disabled bus passengers. It would help to clarify that every attempt should be made to give priority to wheelchair users, which should happen legally already.

We were pleased that, following cross-party collaboration and pressure from Labour Front Benchers, the Government tabled their own amendment requiring audio-visual announcements on buses. That concession from the Government was welcome and we congratulate them on it.

While we are on the subject of disability and equality, it would be useful if they confirmed the provisional timeline for introducing the requirements and the scope for possible exemptions. The Transport Committee recommended in its report on the Bill that the Government should commit in the Bill to implementing the change by 1 January 2019. That would mean consulting on the matter sooner rather than later, so will the Minister give us an indication of when that will happen?

**Lilian Greenwood:** I rise to support new clauses 3 and 4 and to speak to new clauses 7 and 9. Let me begin with new clause 7. My hon. Friend mentioned the Supreme Court decision in the case of *FirstGroup Plc v. Pauley*, which attracted a great deal of interest and led to the need for further clarification, which new clause 7 seeks to provide. Perhaps it would be helpful to remind the Committee of the Pauley case, which gave rise to the need for a change.

What happened to Mr Pauley was typical of the experience of many wheelchair users who attempt to board buses. He was told that he could not get on a bus because the woman whose pushchair was occupying the wheelchair space refused to move. Mr Pauley was successful in winning his case through the Supreme Court, which held that FirstGroup's policy did not go far enough, and that the driver should have done more to assist in securing the space for Mr Pauley. FirstGroup was not under an obligation to have a priority policy for wheelchair users requiring that someone who unreasonably refused to vacate the wheelchair space had to leave the bus. Effectively, that means that a priority policy for wheelchair users lacks the teeth of enforcement. That is despite the fact that, under conduct regulations, someone who is eating smelly food or otherwise causing a nuisance and refuses to stop can be asked to leave the vehicle. That seems out of kilter.

The new clause addresses the issue of an enforceable priority for wheelchair users by enabling the Secretary of State to make regulations so that priority for wheelchair users means just that: if a person unreasonably refuses to vacate space, they may be required to leave the vehicle. They would be required to vacate the space only if it was reasonable. If, for example, they had a disability—for example, if they had a guide dog or a walking frame—and therefore required the wheelchair space, they would not be acting unreasonably by refusing to vacate the space. As a last resort, the new clause provides the power to require an individual who unreasonably refuses to leave the space to leave the vehicle. Other options could be considered before such action is taken, such as stopping the bus, which might be done when people refuse to make payment.

In considering that, Lady Hale, the Deputy President of the Supreme Court, recognised that the duty to make reasonable adjustment is a duty owed only to disabled people. She said that

“service providers owe positive duties towards disabled people, including wheelchair users, which they do not owe to other members of the travelling public, including parents travelling with small children in baby buggies or other people travelling with bulky luggage...Disabled people are, for very good reasons, a special case.”

That does not mean that I do not recognise the sensitivities and complexities of the issue.

Despite the public awareness brought about by the Pauley case, many disabled passengers still struggle to use the bus regularly because of conflict over the space being occupied by a pram, buggy or bulky luggage. Transport for All has been incredibly effective in advocating change and in highlighting the impact that the lack of clarity has on its members as they try to go about their daily lives.

For example, Jeff Harvey of Camden says:

“I have missed trains, missed events, been late to work meetings and classes when I was a student, and had 3 buses in a row refuse to allow me to board because the space was occupied...Every

time I try to board a bus, I feel stressed because I have to be ready for an argument with the driver and/or other passengers, ready to try to raise my voice enough to be heard from the pavement”.

Someone wanting to use a bus simply should not have to feel that way just because they happen to have a disability.

Mark Wilson, a power chair user, says:

“I have been left at bus stops many, many times because there was a parent with a child’s buggy using the wheelchair space and they would not move, and the driver felt unable to ask them, let alone compel them, to move. On average I cannot board a bus due to this buggy effect on one in nine journeys, which is a big number if you consider I might use the bus for four journeys in one day”. That shows some of the issues that disabled people face.

**Bridget Phillipson:** My hon. Friend raises some important points. We would all hope that common sense would come into those cases. Speaking as a parent who has ridden on buses with a pushchair, I would always give priority to someone using a wheelchair or who had a disability. Given that conflicts can arise and can be stressful for disabled passengers, greater clarity would make things easier for everyone using buses, and enable them to understand what is required of them.

**Lilian Greenwood:** My hon. Friend is right. The amendment is not intended to put drivers into impossible situations. I recognise that they often try to deal with such matters helpfully. I would not want confrontations to arise between drivers and passengers who might be unwilling to move. However, the provision would arm drivers with legal backing, making it easier for them to pave the way for wheelchair users to get access to the space.

I recognise that many drivers in the industry receive disability awareness training and do all they can to help passengers with a range of disabilities to get on the bus, but that should happen everywhere, at all times, and the drivers should have the backing of the law in making sure that wheelchair users’ rights are protected. If guidance came from the Department, that would not be all. The issue is about raising public awareness, and about people understanding the impact. I hope such conflicts would then arise less often.

Bus operators could address the matter through their choice of vehicle design. There is a good argument for two spaces—one for a wheelchair user and a separate one for buggies and luggage. I have seen some buses with a large number of tip-up seats that could be used on routes where it is known that problems tend to arise. Nevertheless, back-up for drivers in dealing with situations could be important.

Under subsection (3) of the new clause, priority wheelchair spaces would mean that a wheelchair user has priority over a space unless it is not reasonable for passengers to move. Passengers must give up the space for the wheelchair user if it is reasonable to do so, and—this gives it the teeth of being required by regulation—a passenger who unreasonably refuses may, if necessary, be required to get off the bus. That has hopefully dealt with new clause 7.

New clause 9 would require operators to publish their accessibility policies. Essentially, it supports the new clause tabled by my hon. Friend the Member for Cambridge requiring bus operators to have accessibility policies. It seems entirely right that, if they have them, they should

also be required to publish them. Buses are a particularly important form of travel for disabled people, but standards of accessibility vary greatly among bus companies—some are really excellent and others leave something to be desired. Disabled people using public transport need to know in advance what provision is made, and should not face a postcode lottery.

The Government say they want an integrated transport policy. I am sure we would all agree with that, but we need consistency for that to happen. Without it, disabled people may not have the confidence to travel, especially when they have to cross different local authority areas or use different modes of transport. I have seen the experience of Claire Lindsey from Greenwich, who has talked about travelling on the tube as an autistic person. She says that she needs to have a fixed daily routine and know what is going to happen:

“This routine means always needing to travel the same way to and from places. When there are diversions, journey restrictions or cancellations, it doesn’t just irritate me, it can feel like the end of the world and it can cause an ‘autistic meltdown’—an extreme panic attack which causes me to pass out.”

For someone like Claire, using different modes of transport with different levels of protection and accessibility would be hugely problematic.

The proposal is not unreasonable—precisely the same requirements are made of rail operators. When the Bill was in the Lords, an amendment was tabled to introduce a system requiring bus companies to operate policies like the disabled people’s protection policy, which is used across train operators, and it seems reasonable to apply the same to bus operators. I have already mentioned audio-visual indicators. It is welcome that the Government acted on that, and in many ways this measure would simply extend it to all disabled people and the whole range of different disabilities. That should not be onerous, because it is good business and what any employer should be doing under the Equality Act 2010 in any event. Given that we have DPPP’s for train companies, there is no reason why something similar could not be developed for bus companies.

The fact that bus companies are not responsible for bus stations and bus stops should not be a reason for not explaining what their policies are and what they are doing to make bus travel accessible. Government guidance for local authorities will help to bridge the gap and complement the requirements on companies. Finally, I hope the Minister is minded to accept my hon. Friend’s new clause requiring bus companies to put in place policies for making their services accessible. It seems entirely reasonable that where they have such policies, they should also publish them.

**Andrew Jones:** We have been very clear throughout the passage of the Bill, both here and in the other place, that bus services must work for the people they serve. We have heard examples from colleagues this morning about how important buses are for people with disabilities. We know that is the case, and that buses and taxis are the two main modes of transport for people with disabilities.

New clause 3, tabled by the hon. Member for Cambridge, seeks to require bus drivers and other staff to complete disability awareness training. I am sure the Committee will be pleased to hear that there is much in the new clause that I agree with—I too have met campaigners and charities. Disability awareness training can help

transport staff to provide the assistance that disabled people require, and I agree that we should all expect bus drivers to complete it. That is why we fully support the implementation of article 16 of EU regulation 181/2011, which from 1 March next year—a full year before the hon. Gentleman's proposal would take effect—will require drivers to do so.

12.30 pm

I assure the Committee that even after we have left the European Union, our policy objective of ensuring that bus drivers are equipped with the knowledge and skills to assist disabled passengers will not change. That obligation will not be removed. That is important, for the reasons that I have just stated. I hope that that gives the hon. Gentleman the assurance that he needs to not press new clause 3.

New clause 4, which was also tabled by the hon. Gentleman, would require operators to put in place policies towards meeting their duties under the Equality Act 2010 as a condition of registration. I certainly support the principle of expecting operators to meet their legal duties. In light of the Supreme Court's judgment on the provision of reasonable adjustments on buses, we are bringing together key stakeholders to understand what further action might be required to ensure that those adjustments are provided.

Ultimately, however, operators are already required by law to comply with their Equality Act duties and to anticipate and respond to the needs of disabled passengers. I struggle to see how a new legal requirement to comply with an existing legal requirement will positively impact the level of service that disabled passengers receive. I am personally committed to doing all that I can to make our public transport system easier for disabled people to use. In the Bill, we introduce new requirements for accessible onboard information. We were delighted to include that in the Bill.

I was asked about next steps and timing. The next steps will be working with bus operators and the supply chain, and consulting this year on how to take this forward. Our intention is to implement the measures as quickly as possible. That said, it is right that we work with disabled people and the bus industry to finalise the details of the regulations, the guidance and the timetables for implementation.

I was asked about exemptions. The exemptions will be similar to those in the Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000 so that we have room for consideration as we develop the regulations in case it is necessary. I am thinking particularly of things like heritage vehicles. For example, it might be difficult to install an audio-visual display in a heritage bus, and I know that TfL still uses old Routemasters on one of its scheduled services—the 15H to be precise. There might also be an obligation to consider the implications for bilingual areas. Of course, we have an obligation to consult with the Scottish and Welsh Governments on this issue. The provision will be there, should we need it. It does not undermine our important intention in the Bill, which is to help people who need it.

Audio-visual displays help absolutely everybody, not just people with disabilities. I catch the bus regularly in London; everybody immediately gets on their smartphone and only notices the stop they are getting off at when they hear it. It is rather reminiscent of most

debates in the House of Commons. Our intention is to ensure that everybody gets the benefits as quickly as possible.

Later this year, we will consult on our cross-modal accessibility action plan, which will recognise the points made in this Committee about hidden disabilities. Last year, we held our first ever mental health conference on transport issues, which is an important part of how we are seeking to improve public transport. We must recognise that our society needs to become significantly more friendly to people who suffer some form of cognitive impairment, as we know one in three people over 85 does. We also know from all the data that bus use is heavily biased towards older customers. That is something that all bus companies and all forms of motor transport will have to be significantly more aware of in future. That is why we held the conference and why this issue will be in our accessibility action plan.

At the core of new clause 4 is a new legal requirement to comply with an existing legal requirement. In the light of the comments I have made, I cannot see the benefit of that.

**Lilian Greenwood:** I want to press the Minister a little further on that. I appreciate that there is already a requirement for bus operators to make reasonable adjustments but, frankly, the Paulley case would not have gone all the way to the Supreme Court if there was not a need for further clarity. If the Minister agrees that the wheelchair space should provide priority to the wheelchair user, rather than others who might wish to use that space, surely such legal clarity would be helpful to drivers who seek to ensure that that right is there for the disabled person. I am not sure I understand why the Minister is reluctant to provide that.

**Andrew Jones:** I will come straight to new clause 7, which the hon. Lady tabled. That new clause seeks to provide the means by which wheelchair users must be given priority use of the wheelchair space on buses. I fully recognise the comments that have been made about how difficult this is for bus drivers. That is clearly a fair and accurate comment. I recognise the challenges that wheelchair users face in accessing bus services. That was set out very clearly and powerfully in the written evidence to the Committee from Mr Paulley.

I have highlighted the work that we are doing to understand the implications of the Supreme Court's judgment on the provision of reasonable adjustments on buses and to identify what interventions might be required as a consequence. It is my intention that we should hear the advice of disabled people, wider passenger groups and communities, and bus operators themselves before we reach a conclusion on the best course of action.

I can see practical difficulties, as I think did the Supreme Court. We have to recognise that wheelchair users will not be the only passengers with a genuine need to use that space. Interventions should also protect the interests of parents with disabled children, those with walking frames and the owners of assistance dogs. This is a complicated issue and we have to take care to find the most appropriate solution.

We have already contacted people to ask them to join the group that we are pulling together. I recognise that there is a timeliness to this work. I assure the Committee that we will respond proactively to the Supreme Court's

judgment, where a need for Government intervention is identified. Without wishing to prejudge the outcome of our stakeholder discussions, I doubt that any new regulatory powers will be required. A range of existing powers, such as the Public Service Vehicles (Conduct of Drivers, Inspectors, Conductors and Passengers) Regulations 1990, are available to us, should we need them.

Given that, and with my assurance that this is live work that I will continue to treat with great importance, I hope the hon. Member for Nottingham South will recognise that the new clause is a little premature. We need to work through all the implications, but the good will is clearly there to find a practical way forward for the industry.

**Lilian Greenwood:** I certainly welcome the assurances the Minister has given. I would not wish to prevent that work with stakeholders from being undertaken, but will he give us the likely timescale for that work? I recognise that he is being very helpful, but I think that there will be concern among the wider community, particularly those with disabilities, that this matter has been discussed for some time. Although I am mindful of what he has said, I would like some assurance about when the work will be completed.

**Andrew Jones:** It is right to raise the issue of timing. I think that it took five years for Mr Paulley's case to go through our legal system. We have already started by making contact with the groups who would like to be involved in that work and we intend it to run during the course of the summer. I entirely recognise the timeliness of this and hope that that provides reassurance.

Finally, new clause 9, which also appears in the name of the hon. Member for Nottingham South, would require bus operators to publish policies similar to the DPPP's produced by train and station operators, in order to protect the interests of disabled passengers. My colleague in the other place, Lord Ahmad, looked into this issue in some detail. I, too, have considerable sympathy with the underlying aims of the proposal. I have met campaigners on the issue, including Baroness Campbell of Surbiton. I know that for many disabled people, a lack of information on the accessibility of bus services may well prevent them from travelling at all.

Confidence among disabled people was highlighted in our debate this morning, and I entirely agree with that point. Lack of information may ultimately mean that they are prevented from accessing work or excluded from their local communities. We have, therefore, committed to recommend in the guidance that authorities ensure that information on the accessibility of bus services is made available to passengers. That might be in a form provided by the authority itself or individual operators, but we hope it will be of significant help to disabled passengers in making more informed travel choices.

We have been working on the issue with the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee, which has developed a template that we could use. I am keen to publish that as part of the guidance and to encourage all bus companies to use it. That will keep it simple and bring the information together in a presentable way. I thank DPTAC for that work.

The hon. Member for Nottingham South talked about the difference between guidance and mandation. We are seeing significant progress in our bus industry. More than 94% of buses in England now meet the accessibility

standards. We want to make it 100%, but that is good progress. Mandatory disability awareness training will be introduced next year. Our work so far with the industry suggests that the vast majority of drivers have already had or are going through that training.

A requirement for all buses to be talking buses is in the pipeline, as we have just discussed, and there is a clear commitment to advise authorities of our view that disabled people must have the information they require. I believe that our bus sector is making significant progress in meeting the needs of all who wish to use its services.

There is a slight concern that a proposal of the kind made by the hon. Lady could lead to a cumbersome approach, although I recognise that was not her intention, as she made clear. I want companies to be focused on delivering for all passengers the services that they need. I am aware that DPPP's are in play in the rail sector. However, there are only 30 companies in our rail sector and more than 1,000 in our bus sector, so the read-across is a little difficult.

Given that and my clear and unambiguous commitment to make buses, and public transport in general, increasingly accessible for all passengers, including disabled passengers, I hope that the hon. Members for Cambridge and for Nottingham South will be minded not to press their new clauses.

**Daniel Zeichner:** There was much in what the Minister said that I strongly welcome. I very much welcome his assurances on driver training. We will obviously hold the Government to that in future but, on that basis, I will withdraw the new clause.

I had hoped that we would make more progress on the Paulley issue. The Supreme Court has basically passed the matter back to us to make some decisions. I heard what the Minister said about how difficult it is; it clearly is a very difficult issue and no one is pretending it is easy. However, every bus driver in the country faces this on a daily basis. Without leadership from us, they will still face this problem.

My hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham South put the case very well for moving towards some kind of decision. I worry, having listened to the Minister's account of the kinds of consultations that lie ahead, that this could go on for years and years. At some point, a decision has to be made.

12.45 pm

**Andrew Jones:** I was not talking about consultations in this area; I was talking about getting together a small working group of people who are directly involved in delivering services—big and small companies—and, importantly, people who use those services. We have already started this work and we intend it to take place this summer—I am not looking years ahead. I fully recognise the hon. Gentleman's points about how the industry will benefit from clarity. This is really quite a complicated point, as I tried to get across in my remarks, but I recognise the timeliness that he has mentioned.

**Daniel Zeichner:** I appreciate the Minister's point, but we can probably already predict the kinds of difficulties that will be raised. In the end, there are different interests and someone, at some point, has to make a decision. That is why my hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham

South was absolutely right to say, “Can the Minister put a timeframe on this?” I do not think I have heard him respond to that yet. Therefore, my hon. Friend may well want to pursue her new clauses, but I beg to ask leave to withdraw the clause.

*Clause, by leave, withdrawn.*

### New Clause 5

#### BUS SAFETY

“(1) An operator of a local service may not participate in any scheme under sections 1, 4, 7 or 9 of this Act, and an authority or authorities may not approve the participation of an operator as party of any such scheme, unless the operator has given a written undertaking to the applicable authority or authorities that—

- (a) it has subscribed to a confidential safety reporting system that—
  - (i) is suitable for bus operations staff;
  - (ii) can demonstrate it is adequately experienced, resourced and staffed; and
  - (iii) is entirely independent of any bus operator’s control;
- (b) it has used its best endeavours to ensure that all staff of the operator have been made aware of their right to use this confidential safety reporting system to enable bus operators’ staff to report incidents, unsafe acts, concerns and safety-related issues that they do not feel able to report through normal channels, or where normal reporting channels have not resolved the issue;
- (c) it will collect and monitor bus casualty data in a manner to be prescribed by the applicable authority or authorities from time to time, and
- (d) it will make its bus casualty data available to the applicable authority or authorities by way of a report on at least a monthly basis.

(2) The authority or authorities must publish on their own website, every quarter, the bus casualty data that they have collected from operators.”—(*Daniel Zeichner.*)

*This new clause would require bus operators taking part in any scheme to subscribe to a confidential safety reporting system, to make bus casualty data available to local authorities, and for local authorities to publish that data quarterly.*

*Brought up, and read the First time.*

**Daniel Zeichner:** I beg to move, That the clause be read a Second time.

The new clause was tabled following a discussion on Report in the other place about bus safety and casualty reporting. The new clause would require bus operators to subscribe to a confidential incident reporting scheme to report bus casualty data to the local authority, and require local authorities to publish that information regularly. I am aware that the Government said that an amendment on this issue was tabled too late during the Bill’s passage through the other place for it to be considered, but that they would look at the issue again in the Commons. I would welcome the Minister’s comments.

I do not think that it is too prescriptive to argue that bus operators entering into any form of scheme, whether franchising, an enhanced partnership or an advanced quality partnership, should be required to subscribe to a confidential incident reporting scheme and report bus casualty data to the local authority. Nor is it too prescriptive to require local authorities regularly to publish those data so that they are available to the public. Such a system works well in the rail industry. The cost of

membership of one confidential incident reporting system—the Confidential Incident Reporting and Analysis System—is based on turnover, and in our view fees would be unlikely to represent a serious obstacle. The Government said in the other place that they were

“keen to explore further the issues raised”.—[*Official Report, House of Lords, 23 November 2016; Vol. 776, c. 1978.*]

A confidential reporting system has proven effective in London. Statistics suggest that prior to the first year of operation of the CIRAS system in 2016, 64% of London bus workers said that the outcome of their having reported issues internally was “inadequate”, with a further 23% saying that the outcome was “adequate, but not implemented” and 13% reporting that there had been no response. There is clearly a need for this.

It is important that we consider bus safety. Although many people would say that, overall, the safety record is good, 64 buses and coaches were involved in fatal accidents last year and 5,381 were involved in an accident. Although those absolute numbers may seem small compared with the number of all road fatalities, the rates are fairly high. In fact, 24 buses and coaches were involved in fatal accidents per billion vehicle miles, which is much higher than the rates of 7.2 per billion vehicle miles for cars, 3.6 for vans and 19 for heavy goods vehicles. About 4% of all road fatalities last year were caused by accidents involving buses and coaches. There were 68 deaths and 7,571 casualties.

We all know that having the data helps us to improve our systems. We believe that the new clause would make buses safer.

**Andrew Jones:** The hon. Gentleman proposes a new clause that would require bus operators to subscribe to a confidential reporting system in order to participate in any bus scheme provided under the Bill. The new clause would also require operators to collect and monitor bus casualty data and make those data available to the relevant authorities for publication.

Let me start by emphasising that road safety is a critical issue and a matter of national importance. The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency plays an important role, along with the traffic commissioners, in seeking to ensure that drivers and vehicles are licensed and safe. My Department already collects and publishes data on reported road accidents, including details about the type of vehicles involved and recorded casualties. I am encouraged, though not in any way complacent, that we have a very good record of road safety in our country. I am aware that that has come about through the good work of many of my predecessors, and I am keen to build on that work.

Members will be aware of what we have been doing, including most recently the significant change to the mobile phone penalty points for hand-held use. It is encouraging to see numbers decline. In this case, the number of pedestrians killed or seriously injured in an incident involving a bus or coach outside London fell by 33% between 2005 and 2015.

I agree with the sentiment of the proposed new clause. However, I do not believe it is appropriate to mandate an independent confidential reporting system in primary legislation. I am aware of the TfL work, and that TfL mandates the confidential reporting system, CIRAS, as part of its franchising agreements with operators. TfL introduced that system in January of last

year but I am not aware yet of any robust evidence of the benefits it has brought. It is probably difficult to say with any certainty or to what degree reports from systems such as CIRAS have prevented road accidents from occurring.

I understand that TfL pays the subscription cost for CIRAS on behalf of its operators, and that is its choice. A bus operator that has a well established and efficient confidential reporting system in place that is already working effectively might take a different view. I do not want to impose the burdens that the new clause would bring on local transport authorities or operators, some of which could be very small community transport organisations, without clear evidence of the added benefits to be achieved.

Although I cannot support the proposed new clause, I have asked my officials to explore how the issue could be addressed through guidance, to encourage operators and local transport authorities to consider the benefits of an independent confidential reporting system when establishing a franchising or partnership scheme. Just as local authorities take other decisions relating to road safety, they can decide on this, too. That is exactly what has happened in London. I hope the hon. Gentleman has found that explanation reassuring and will, therefore, seek to withdraw his new clause.

**Daniel Zeichner:** I am not reassured, though I will withdraw the new clause. I heard what the Minister said but I do not see why we could not have taken this modest step in favour of improving bus safety. The amounts are relatively minor and the potential benefits considerable. We will pursue that in future when we come back to him with the evidence. I hope the guidance can be strengthened. I beg to ask leave to withdraw the motion.

*Clause, by leave, withdrawn.*

### New Clause 7

#### PRIORITY WHEELCHAIR SPACES

(1) The Secretary of State may by regulations make such provision as appears to the Secretary of State to be appropriate for the purpose of facilitating travel by wheelchair users on local services.

(2) The regulations may in particular require operators of local services to put in place and enforce a policy for priority wheelchair spaces.

(3) For the purposes of subsection (2) a policy for priority wheelchair spaces is one under which—

- (a) a wheelchair user has priority use of any wheelchair space on a public service vehicle unless it is not reasonable for other passengers to vacate the space;
- (b) other passengers are required to vacate the space for the wheelchair user if it is reasonable for them to do so; and
- (c) a passenger who unreasonably refuses to vacate the space may, if necessary, be required to leave the vehicle.

(4) The power conferred by subsection (1) includes power to amend, repeal, revoke or otherwise modify—

- (a) an Act passed before or in the same Session as this Act; or
- (b) an instrument made under an Act before the regulations come into force.

(5) Regulations under this section must be made by statutory instrument.

(6) A statutory instrument which contains (whether alone or with other provision) regulations under this section may not be made unless a draft of the instrument has been laid before, and approved by a resolution of, each House of Parliament.”—  
(*Lilian Greenwood.*)

*This new clause enables the Secretary of State to make regulations to require bus operators to put in place and enforce policies for priority wheelchair spaces.*

*Brought up, and read the First time.*

*Question put, That the clause be read a Second time.*

*The Committee divided: Ayes 5, Noes 9.*

### Division No. 7]

#### AYES

Dakin, Nic	Stringer, Graham
Greenwood, Lilian	
Phillipson, Bridget	Zeichner, Daniel

#### NOES

Ansell, Caroline	Mann, Scott
Freer, Mike	Merriman, Huw
Green, Chris	Robinson, Mary
Jones, Andrew	Spencer, Mark
Knight, Julian	

*Question accordingly negatived.*

### New Clause 8

#### TERMINATION OF BUS SERVICE OPERATORS GRANT

“Insert new section 112A into the Transport Act 2000—

(1) The Bus Service Operators Grant shall be terminated on the last day of the first financial year to begin after this Act has received Royal Assent.

(2) Sums equivalent to those projected to be spent on Bus Service Operators Grant in each year following the year specified in subsection (1) shall be provided to local transport authorities for expenditure on local transport.

(3) The meaning of “local transport” in subsection (2) shall be taken to include—

- (a) local transport services;
- (b) local transport infrastructure; and
- (c) supporting services, including ticketing and transport information services.”—(*Lilian Greenwood.*)

*Brought up, and read the First time.*

**Lilian Greenwood:** I beg to move, That the clause be read a Second time.

I will be fairly brief. As the Committee will be aware, bus service operators grant is currently paid as a rebate to bus companies. It is calculated based on the amount of fuel they use. It is therefore a direct disincentive to economising fuel consumption and/or moving to low-emission vehicles. The Department itself acknowledged that under the coalition Government in its “Green Light for Better Buses” document of 2012, which states: “we were...concerned that a system which pays subsidy according to how much fuel a company uses cannot be right for the twenty-first century.”

They were right about that. Back in 2012, they began to devolve funding in some areas, which were known as better bus areas. The results were encouraging.

The new clause simply seeks to build on that work by terminating the payment of the bus service operators grant directly to bus companies, instead passing the

money to local authorities, not least to promote the development of better partnership working, which is part of the thrust of the Bill. Where local authorities set up advanced quality partnerships or enhanced partnerships, it would be incredibly helpful if they could incentivise operators to meet the commitments they make under those partnerships. We could call that the carrot. Conversely, the stick would be to penalise poor compliance by limiting the payment of BSOG to operators, thereby helping them to adhere to the partnership work that had been set up. I am sure we would all recognise that sometimes we agree to do something and really do mean to do it, but we need a bit of a prod to remind us. Giving local authorities control over the bus service operators grant would enable them to do just that. It would be very helpful in enabling partnerships to operate effectively.

In 2012, the coalition Government considered further devolution of BSOG. There was a concern that it might lead to a loss of funding for bus services. That is why, in drafting the new clause, I was very clear that, as the funding passed to local authorities, it would be ring-fenced to be spent on local transport. BSOG needs to be used in such a way that passengers see a maintained or even improved local transport service. We would also like to encourage the bus to be greener and more efficient in the long run.

I hope the Minister will consider this a helpful new clause that follows on from other work he has done.

**Andrew Jones:** Each year nearly £180 million of bus service operators grant is paid to commercial bus operators that run local bus services. A further £40 million is paid to local authorities to subsidise socially necessary local bus services that are not commercially viable. In addition, a further £20 million a year is provided in incentives to bus operators, for example to encourage them to install smart ticketing machines or to use low-emission vehicles.

The new clause would abolish the bus service operators grant that is paid to commercial bus services. The funding would be transferred to be spent on local transport services. I simply do not think that would work effectively in practice. Commercial services often run across local government boundaries. If this approach were implemented, decisions taken by one local authority about funding buses could easily have adverse impacts on adjacent areas. Many of the passengers affected would have no way of making their views known at the local ballot box.

There would be no guarantee under the terms of the new clause that the funding would be used for bus services. It could be used on other means of supporting local transport. Nor does the proposal guarantee additional local authority funding for transport. An authority could simply substitute this funding for existing transport funding and divert that resource elsewhere. The proposal could therefore remove support for local transport entirely.

We are undertaking a review of how BSOG is spent in England and hope to publish details of our proposals later this year. We have already committed to devolve BSOG where franchising is implemented. Overall, I believe that it is right that the grant should generally continue to be paid to commercial bus service operators in a revised form. I hope the hon. Lady feels able to withdraw the new clause.

1 pm

**Lilian Greenwood:** I have listened carefully to the Minister. I welcome news of the work that he intends to do further to consider how the money could be used more effectively to support the development of local services. Clearly, franchising devolution is welcome, and I hope he considers how devolved BSOG could better support advanced quality partnerships and enhanced partnerships. That said, I beg to ask leave to withdraw the new clause.

*Clause, by leave, withdrawn.*

**The Chair:** To help the Committee, there is an open-ended sitting this morning—we do not have a cut-off point at 1 o'clock. Both Front Benchers have agreed that we will continue with the remaining business rather than reconvene at 2 o'clock.

*Clauses 22 to 25 ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Andrew Jones):** On a point of order, Mr Owen. May I confirm what happened to new clause 9? Did we withdraw it or vote on it? I do not recall a vote. What happened to new clause 9?

**The Chair:** The clause was not pushed to a vote by the hon. Member for Nottingham South.

## Clause 26

### SHORT TITLE

**Andrew Jones:** I beg to move amendment 16, in clause 26, page 79, line 37, leave out subsection (2).

*This amendment removes the privilege amendment inserted by the Lords.*

I beg to move that clause 26 stands part of the Bill, not out of zeal to move to a conclusion—I wanted to double-check that we have everything done. We have had a fantastic couple of days focusing on the bus sector. Before begging to move clause 26, may I thank you, Mr Owen, and Mr Nuttall—

**The Chair:** Order. We will finish with the amendment and the clause first. There will then be an opportunity for you to thank the officials under a point of order—I know you are keen to thank the officials. You can either move the amendment formally or speak to it. We can get the business done then move to the final bit.

*Amendment 16 agreed to.*

*Clause 26, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

*Question proposed, That the Chair do report the Bill, as amended, to the House.*

**Andrew Jones:** On a point of order, Mr Owen. As we conclude our Committee work on the Bill, I thank everybody for a very constructive and positive debate. It is clear that we have much passion for buses. It is a sector of our transport mix that does not always achieve much attention, but we have clearly shown that it has support. The Bill will go to the House for further consideration with measures to improve bus patronage, and to improve facilities for disabled passengers. I thank

everybody involved in the Committee for the positive way we have approached the Bill. I also thank the Clerks and you, Mr Owen, and Mr Nuttall, as co-Chairs.

**Daniel Zeichner:** Further to that point of order, Mr Owen. I thank the Minister and all members of the Committee for a cordial, constructive and positive discussion. I also thank the officials. We heard at one point about the decline in headcount at the Department. There are fewer people doing more work, and with Brexit, I am sure the pressures are many. Those of us who have ploughed through the guidance will know how much work has been done by officials. I thank you, Mr Owen, for your splendid chairing, and Mr Nuttall. I finally thank my colleague Juliet Eales, who has been working

with me and will finish at the conclusion of the Bill, which I am sure will come as much relief to officials, who will no longer be bombarded by her incessant and endless good questions.

**The Chair:** Those are bogus points of order, but because they flatter people, we allow them. I add my thanks to the Clerks and *Hansard*, and to all hon. Members on both sides of the Committee and on Front and Back Benches, for how they have conducted themselves.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill, as amended, accordingly to be reported.*

1.5 pm

*Committee rose.*

**Written evidence reported to the House**

BSB19 The UK Cards Association

BSB20 Mr Shouvik Datta

BSB21 Nexus

BSB22 Leicestershire County Council

BSB23 Mrs Sunitha Webster

BSB24 Baroness Campbell of Surbiton

BSB25 Wellglade Group

BSB26 West Yorkshire Combined Authority

BSB27 Worcestershire County Council Transportation  
Services Unit

BSB28 Transport for All and Doug Paulley

BSB29 Paul Russell

BSB30 Community Transport Association