

# 6

## How Public Consultation Has Informed the Network Proposal

# Summary of the Planning and Consultation Process

## Choices Report and First Public Consultation

The contents of Chapters 1 to 5 of this report were initially published in June 2017 as the Dublin Area Bus Network Redesign Choices Report.

Following the release of the Choices Report, the NTA held a public consultation to help determine the degree to which there was a public appetite for the strategies proposed in Chapter 5:

- Standardize Service Categories so that users instantly know the frequency and service hours of any given route.
- Simplify Radial Services by consolidating core radial routes such that each major corridor is served by a single “spine”.
- Build Frequent Orbitals to create more frequent and direct paths between suburbs.
- Grow Suburban Feeder Networks so that services to regional centres can become much more frequent.

The feedback from the first public consultation suggested that large segments of the public favoured exploring the strategies outlined above, providing the NTA and consultant team a mandate to redesign the bus network along these lines.

## Network Proposal and Second Consultation

Following the first public consultation, the initial network redesign was elaborated over the course of a year. During this time:

- The NTA, Dublin Bus, local councils and the consultant team held an intensive design workshop to sketch out the basic principles and form of the proposed network, including the initial routing and frequencies of every all-day bus line.
- The consultant team developed the initial draft network, and refined the concept further over several months based on NTA guidance and Dublin Bus comments.
- A second workshop with the NTA and Dublin Bus focused specifically on designing peak-only services.
- NTA and the consultant team reported on the proposed network in the Public Consultation Report.

The initial network proposal was detailed in the Public Consultation Report, released in July 2018 along with other information materials. This launching a second public consultation that lasted throughout the summer of 2018.

## Revised Network Proposal and Third Consultation

The NTA received over 28,000 comments and submissions in response to the initial network proposal. Given the broad range of concerns, the NTA decided to make significant revisions.

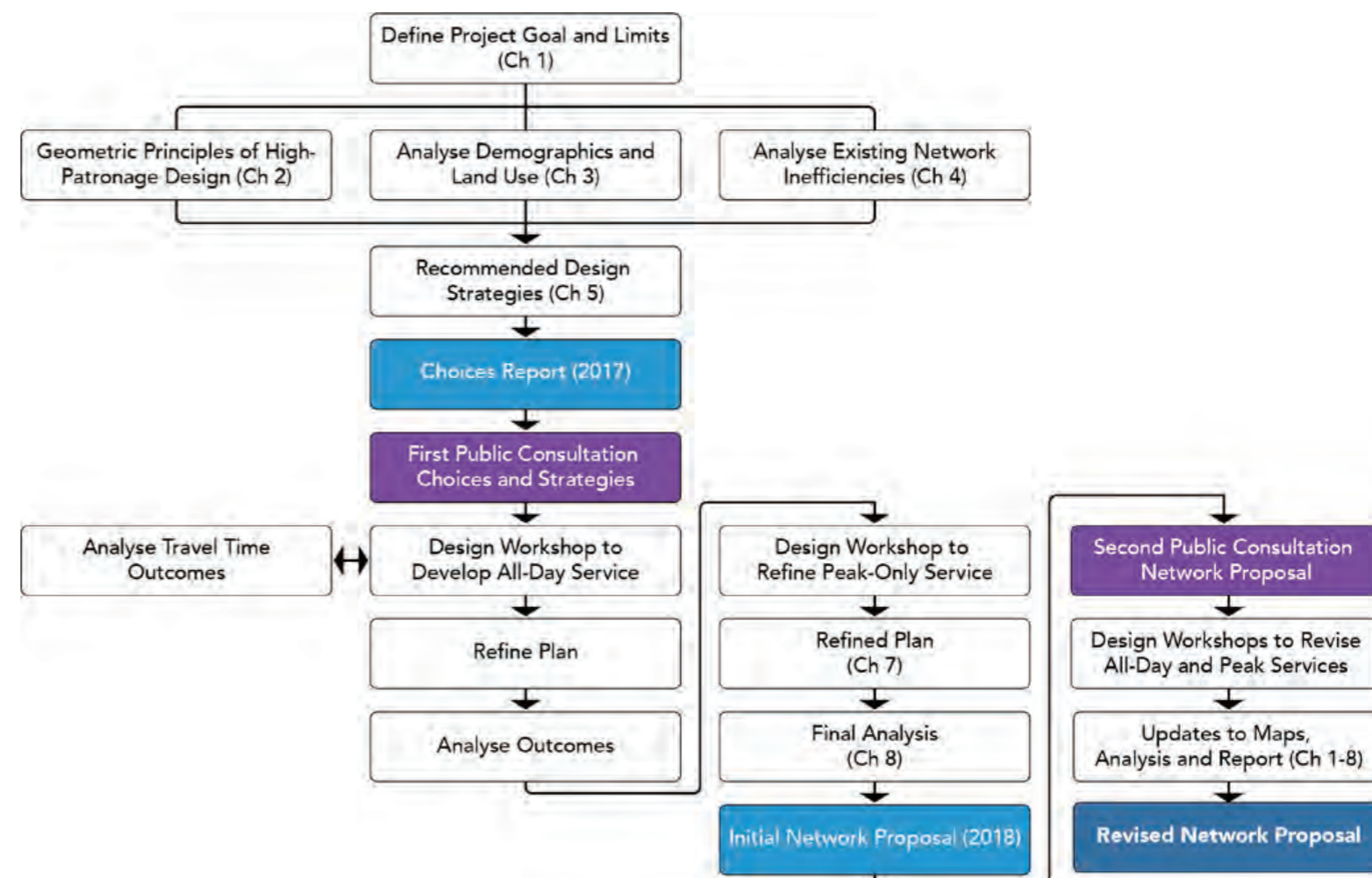
Over 2018 and 2019, the NTA, Dublin Bus and consultant team have held several more design workshops. Over the course of these workshops:

- The basic structure of the proposed network (spines, branches, orbitals etc.) was retained, but every single proposed route was reviewed and nearly all were edited in some way. New routes were added as well.
- The total quantity of service included in the proposal increased by over 20%, as a result of:

- » Frequency increases, particularly on most spines and secondary radials with service to and from City Centre.
- » Large increases in peak-hour service, responding to passenger loading surveys carried out in Autumn 2018.
- » Adding “lifeline” radial routes to maintain some direct service to City Centre in as many estates as possible.

This document, the Revised Network Proposal, is the update to the initial Public Consultation Report. The NTA is now launching a third public consultation regarding the revised proposal. Submissions and comments received during this phase of consultation will help guide final decisions about the plan.

Figure 87: The chart below shows the process used to develop the network redesign proposal, and how each step relates to the chapters in the report. The revised network proposal comes on the heels of a comprehensive design process and two rounds of public consultation, in 2017 and 2018.



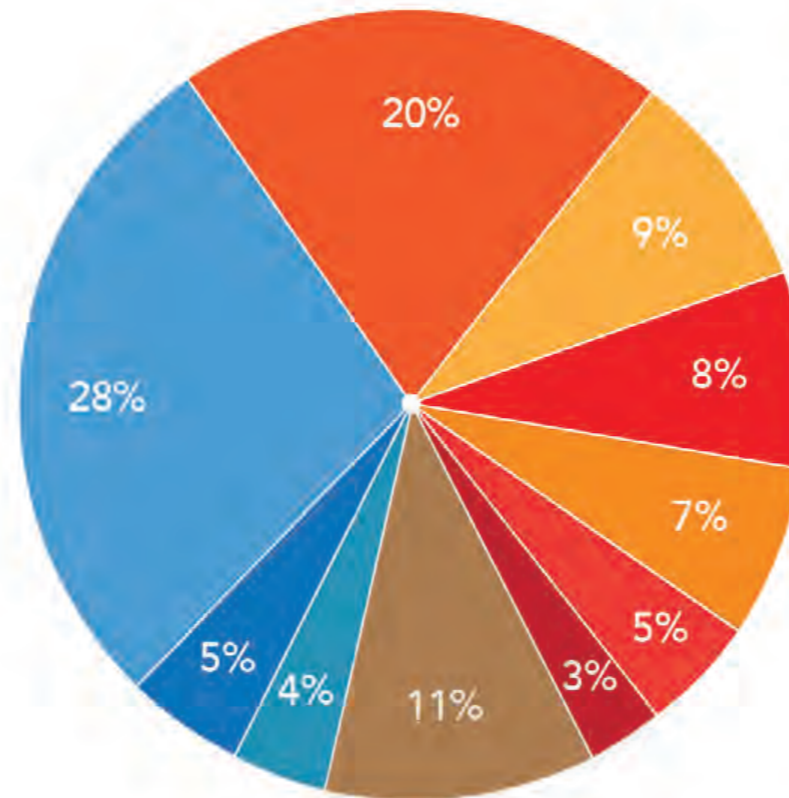
## Elements of Consultation

The initial public consultation, held in June 2017, included the following elements:

- **A public survey**, made available online and on paper, asked a series of questions about priorities for public transport, and about the specific ideas presented in Chapter 5 above. NTA received over 12,000 responses; almost 1% of Dublin's population replied, the largest response ever to an NTA consultation<sup>1</sup>.
- **Workshops with key stakeholders**. In each of the four Dublin council areas<sup>2</sup>, NTA invited a group of local elected officials, council staff, and civic leaders to an all-day workshop where the principles were explored in detail. About 20-40 people attended each workshop. During the workshop we polled participants on key questions largely similar to those included in the public survey.
- **Written submissions**. In total, 41 written submissions were received.

This section summarizes results of the public survey. Where the stakeholder workshops were asked the same question, we also describe those results.

Figure 88: Survey Respondents' top goal for public transport



### Higher patronage goals

- 20% 5. Reduce dependence on private cars
- 9% 6. Limit traffic congestion
- 8% 1. Attract as many customers as possible
- 7% 10. Require as little government subsidy as possible
- 5% 7. Reduce air pollution and climate impacts
- 3% 8. Help build a denser city with less sprawl

### Need-based goals

- 28% 2. Provide service everywhere that someone needs it
- 5% 3. Meet the needs of older and disabled persons
- 4% 4. Meet the needs of low-income persons

### General goals

- 11% 9. Make the city an attractive place to work and live

## 1. Goals of Public Transport

People have different ideas about what goals public transport should serve. The survey listed ten commonly expressed goals for public transport and asked respondents to rank them in order of importance. These goals are listed in the chart above.

Goals 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 10 tend to be met by achieving high patronage. Although this is only explicitly stated in Goal 1, high patronage is nonetheless also a precondition for: reducing dependence on cars (Goal 5), limiting congestion (Goal 6), or reducing pollution (Goal 7).

A denser city with less sprawl (Goal 8) is also one where large numbers of people use public transport. And because the cost of providing public transport depends on the quantity of service rather than the quantity of customers, the more people ride the lower the subsidy becomes (Goal 10). In other words, **goals associated with higher patronage were the top priority of 52% of respondents.**

Goals 2, 3 and 4 are about responding to individual needs. Responding to needs is about the basic availability of service; it isn't necessarily linked to whether that service generates significant patronage. There are people everywhere who need some public transport service, so these goals are relevant when justifying low-patronage services. Overall, **37% of respondents chose a need-based goal as their top priority.** Most of these responses chose Goal 2, "provide service everywhere that someone needs it."

Finally, 11% of respondents chose Goal 9, "make the city an attractive place to live and work. This goal can depend on any of the others, depending on what someone finds attractive in a city.

Consistent with this feedback, the initial proposed network was designed to focus primarily on increasing patronage by making the service more useful. It addressed need-based goals by proposing that most areas that currently have PSO bus service would retain service, though the proposed service might not be on the same street or at the same hours and frequencies.

<sup>1</sup> NTA received 12,769 responses. The population of the area within 400m of the Dublin public transport network is about 1.3 million. The total 2016 population of the four council areas that make up County Dublin is 1.35 million, with another roughly 200,000 in adjacent areas of counties Wicklow and Kildare that are affected by the network.

<sup>2</sup> Workshops were held in Dublin City, Tallaght (South Dublin), Dun Laoghaire (Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown), and Tyrellstown (Fingal). Representatives from County Wicklow were present at the Dun Laoghaire workshop, and some County Kildare representatives were present at the Tallaght workshop.

## 2. Importance of Frequency and Hours of Service

The survey asked people three questions about whether or not public transport services at different types of frequencies and duration are useful to them.

**The answers to these questions strongly point to the need for consistent all-day patterns of high-frequency service to serve the majority of residents** (in the range of 60 to 80%, based on survey responses). However, it also indicates that a sizable minority (perhaps 20 to 30%) can make some use of infrequent, peak-only or occasional services.

For each of the questions above, the survey also asked whether we should assume that most people are in the same situation. Depending on the question, only 30 to 50% believed their situation was typical and should be the basis of planning. This indicates some degree of openness to a plan that is not optimal for respondents personally, so long as it achieves the larger goals.

## 3. Openness to Network Change

To assess how open the public would be to changing the bus network, the survey asked the public to pick a position somewhere in between:

- Matching travel patterns of existing passengers
- Redesigning the system with reference to the future

Respondents could move a slider to whatever position in between these two points felt most comfortable to them<sup>1</sup>. On that slider, a score of 0 indicated the absolute desire to “keep patterns existing passengers are used to”, while a score of 100 indicated an absolute preference for “design[ing] the best system for the future”.

**The average response had a score of 81, suggesting a broad level of comfort with very significant change in the bus network.**

Figure 89: Survey responses regarding the prominence of the regular commute as the driver of public transport use.

I go to work or school at the same time every day. As long as I have service at those times, I do not need service at other times.

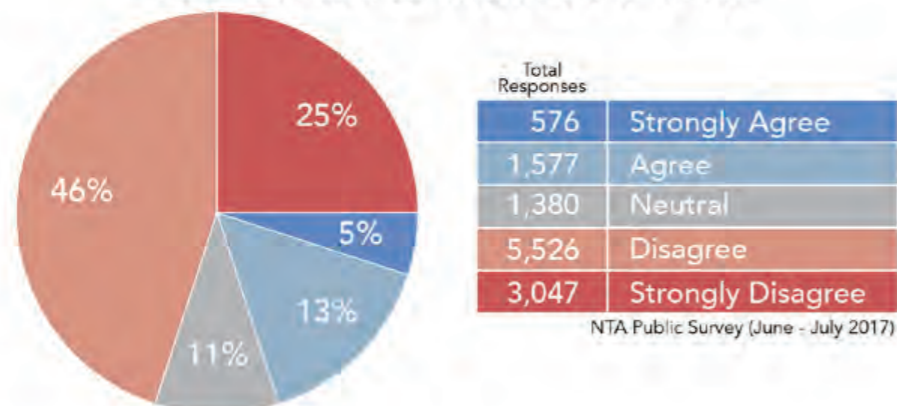


Figure 90: Survey responses regarding the usefulness of infrequent bus services.

I can usually use a bus service that comes only every 30 - 60 minutes.

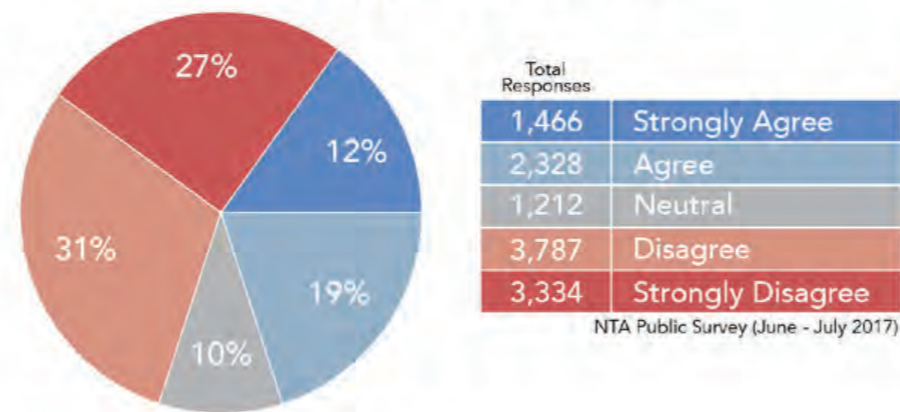
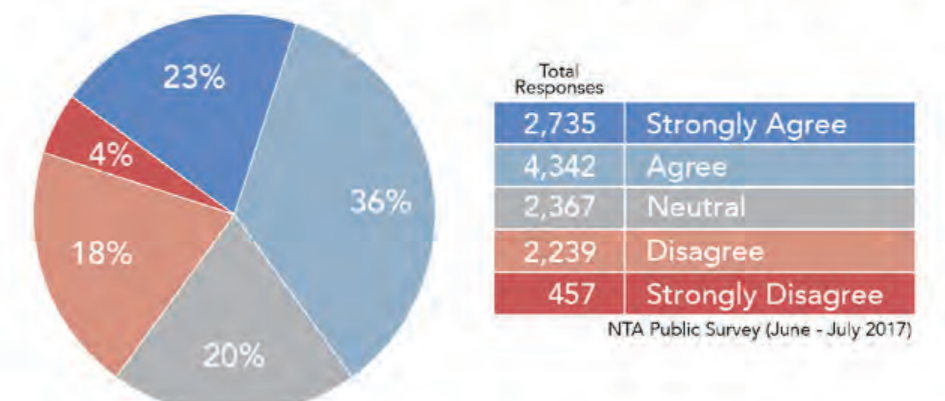


Figure 91: Survey responses on the need for frequent services at all times

I need the bus to be coming soon all the time, because I cannot predict when I might need to travel



<sup>1</sup> On the paper survey, respondents could mark their preferred position with a tick on a line somewhere in between the two extremes. The relative distance of the tick from either end was used to calculate the score from 0 to 100.

#### 4. Willingness to Interchange

The survey asked how people feel about three statements:

- “We can ask people to change vehicles (buses or trains) once during a trip, if those people reach their destination sooner.” 81% agreed.
- “We can ask people to change vehicles once during a trip, if that creates a network that helps more people reach more destinations sooner.” 80% agreed.
- “We can ask people to change vehicles once during a trip, if it helps make the network simple enough that people can remember it.” 68% agreed.

The responses to all three questions are summarized in the charts below.

These questions are very similar to a question that was asked in the stakeholder workshops. After presenting the various advantages and drawbacks of designing a network that relied on higher levels of interchange we asked participants in the workshop “Does the idea of relying on interchange sound promising?”

Responses from the stakeholder workshop are summarized in the table to the right:

While we know some people will be unhappy about having to make a connection, **the results of the survey and workshops nonetheless indicate very high levels of support (70 to 80%) for designing a network with higher levels of interchange.**

Figure 94: Stakeholder workshop responses on openness to interchange

Does the idea of relying on interchange sound promising?

	Dublin City	Dun Laoghaire Rathdown*	South Dublin**	Fingal
Strongly Agree	53%	43%	40%	53%
Agree	20%	47%	36%	34%
Neutral	13%	7%	16%	9%
Disagree	10%	0%	8%	3%
Strongly Disagree	3%	3%	0%	0%

\* included some attendees from County Wicklow  
\*\* included some attendees from County Kildare

Figure 93: Survey responses on openness to interchange for faster individual trips

“We can ask people to change vehicles (buses or trains) once during a trip, if those people reach their destination sooner.”

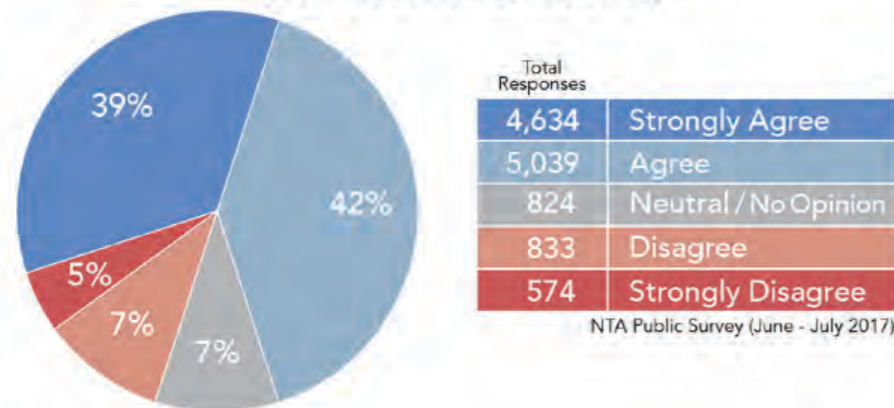


Figure 92: Survey responses on openness to interchange for faster trips generally

“We can ask people to change vehicles (buses or trains) once during a trip, if that creates a network that helps more people reach more destinations sooner”

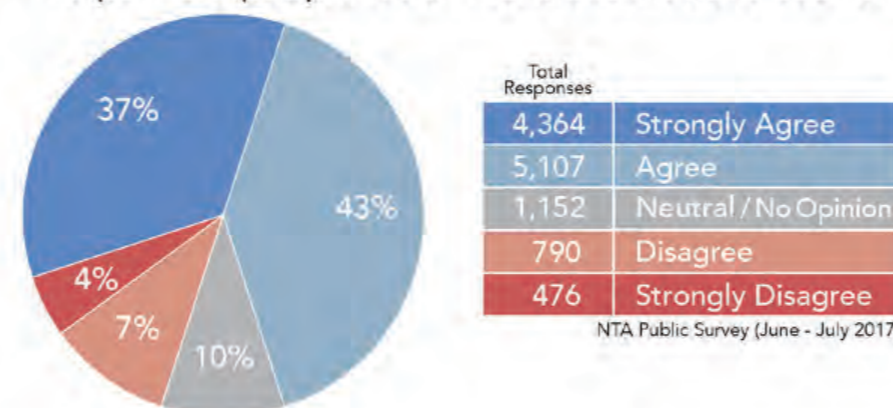
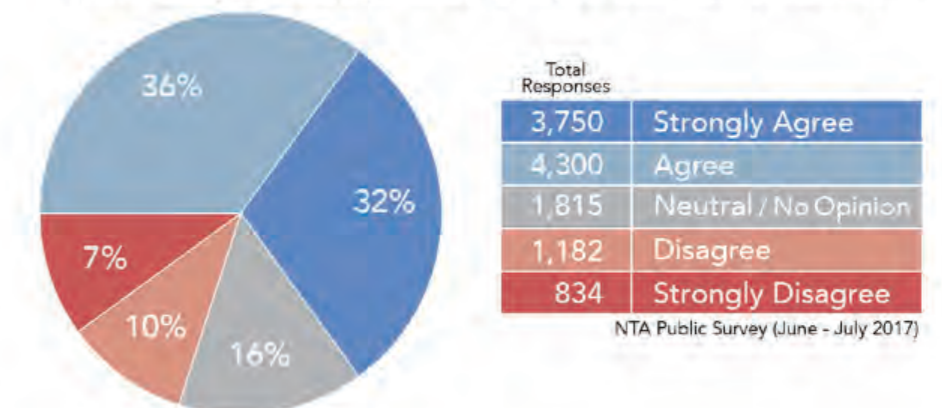


Figure 95: Survey responses on openness to interchange for simplicity

“We can ask people to change vehicles (buses or trains) once during a trip, if helps make the network simple enough that people can remember it”



## 5. Interest in Proposed Network Design Strategies

Chapter 5 of the Choices Report (also included as Chapter 5 in this report) proposed four strategies that could be used in a network redesign:

- **Strategy #1: Standardize Service Categories**
- **Strategy #2: Simplify Radial Services**
- **Strategy #3: Build Frequent Orbitals**
- **Strategy #4: Grow Suburban Feeder Networks**

The survey queried the public specifically on strategies 2 and 3 (spines and orbitals). We did not ask the public about service categories because the question was considered too technical.

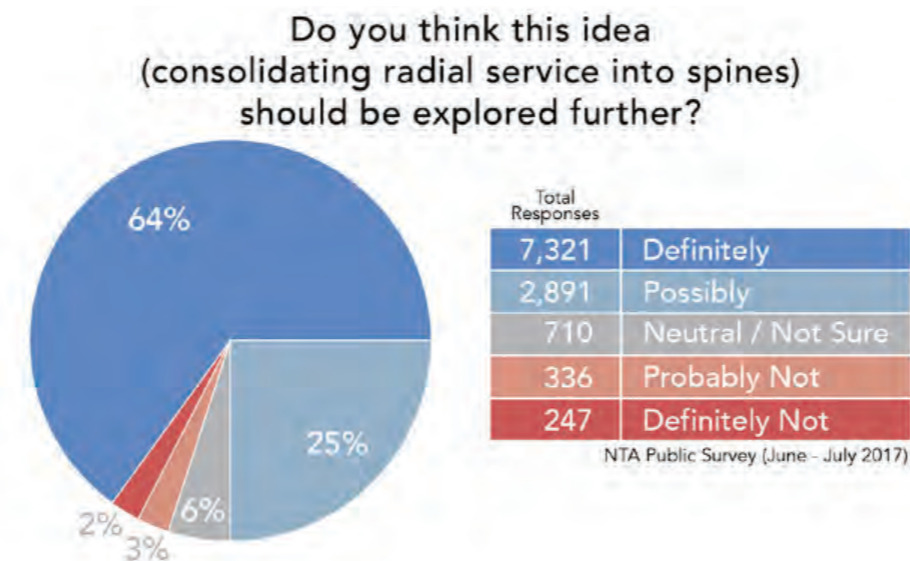
We also did not ask the public about Strategy 4 (suburban feeders) because in practice, many of the consequences of this strategy are very similar to orbitals: higher frequency service at the local level, but more areas that require interchange to reach the city centre.

Strategy 4 also would affect a much smaller share of Dublin’s population, so a citywide response (i.e. a response including many people who would not be affected by the idea) would be less helpful.

### Consolidate Radial Services into Spines

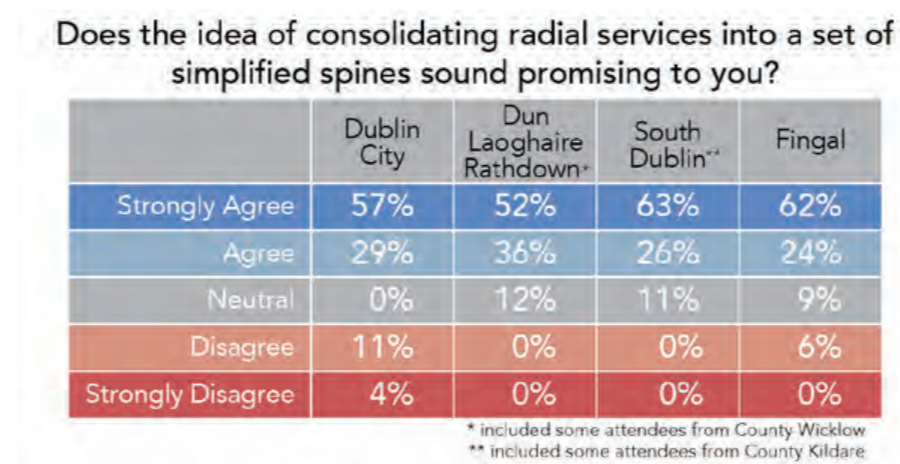
The survey provided an explanation of this strategy similar to what appears in Chapter 5 above, and then asked if the idea should be explored further.

Figure 96: Survey responses on the spine strategy



In the stakeholder workshops, we asked a similar question: “Does the idea of consolidating radial services into a set of simplified spines sound promising to you?”

Figure 97: Stakeholder responses on the spine strategy

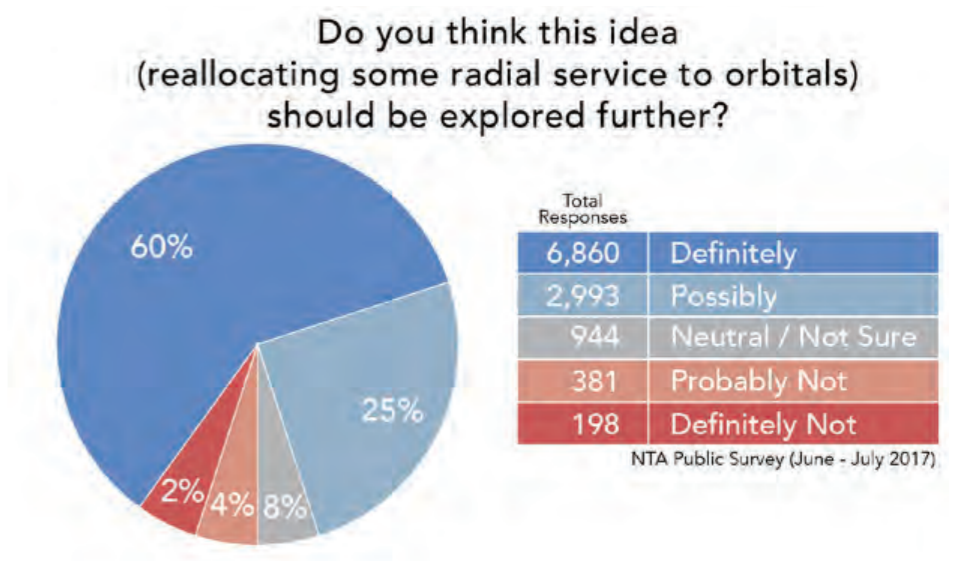


These results indicate very strong support (80 to 90%) for consolidating radial service into super-frequent spines. As a result, this strategy was taken as the central pillar of the proposed network design.

### Reallocating Some Radial Service to Orbitals

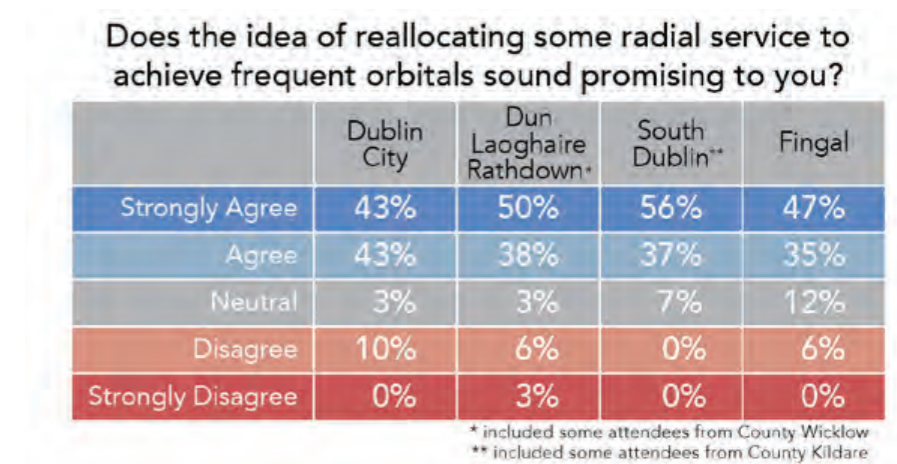
As with the prior question on radial services, the survey provided an explanation of this strategy similar to what appears in Chapter 5 above, and then asked if the idea should be explored further

Figure 98: Survey responses on the orbital strategy



We asked a similar question of the stakeholder workshops: “Does the idea reallocating some radial service to achieve frequent orbitals sound promising to you?”

Figure 99: Stakeholder responses on the orbital strategy.



These results also indicate very strong support (80 to 90%) for developing high frequency orbitals, even if it means some areas would no longer receive radial service.

### Suburban Local Feeders

As explained above, we did not ask this question in the public survey.

In the stakeholder workshop only, we asked: "Does developing or significantly improving suburban feeders by eliminating long radials sound promising?"

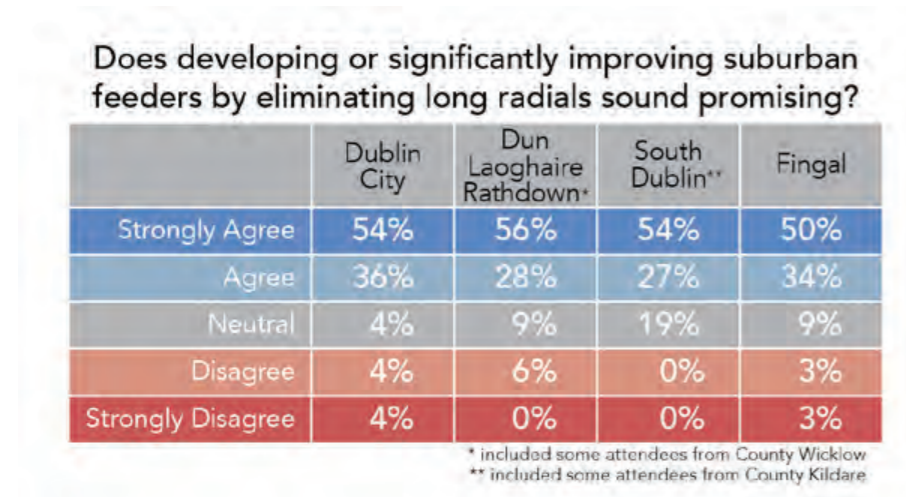
The response suggests a similar level of support for developing suburban feeders as for frequent orbitals.

### Conclusion

All of the feedback presented in this chapter was based on a high-altitude presentation of the issues, as summarized in Chapter 5. Each key question was presented as a trade-off with a clear description of possible negative impact.

**Despite this, the level of support shown for the proposed strategies was extremely high. Based on this, NTA directed the consultant to develop a detailed plan based on those strategies.**

Figure 100: Support for suburban feeder strategy



## Initial Network Proposal

In July 2018, the NTA released the initial bus network redesign proposal. The redesign proposed an overhaul of the existing bus network, along the lines of the strategies previously presented. Some of the key elements of the proposal included:

- Most radial bus services reorganized into a system of super-frequent cross-city spines (A to G), with branches in suburban areas.
- Increased number and frequency of orbital services, including a super-frequent inner orbital (O) and five other frequent orbital routes with service every 10 to 15 minutes.
- An increase in the number and frequency of local feeder routes in outer suburban areas.
- A 27% increase in bus service overall, compared to 2016 levels<sup>1</sup>. This notably made it possible to increase service levels on weekday evenings and weekends.

The combination of these features yielded significant travel time benefits. Based on these improvements:

- The average Dubliner using public transport would have been able to reach over 20% more jobs in 30 minutes, and 15% more jobs in 45 minutes on weekdays.
- Over 200,000 more residents and 50,000 more jobs would have been located within 400m of bus service every 15 minutes or better.

These benefits, while considerable, relied on a total redesign of the route structure. As a result, hundreds of thousands of people would need to experience a major service change, and certain areas would be located farther from bus service than they are today. The NTA therefore decided to launch a second public consultation to gauge the public's appetite for change in this direction.

## Elements of Consultation

The second public consultation was carried out from July to September 2018. The NTA offered the following informational elements to the public:

- The **Public Consultation Report**, including the rationale for the network proposal, results of the first public consultation, detailed description of the proposed network and high-level outcomes in terms of coverage, travel times and job access.
- **Detailed maps** of the existing and proposed network for all parts of Dublin, and **local area brochures** focusing on the changes applicable in different parts of the city.
- This information was made available both on the **BusConnects website** and through **33 community information sessions** held in locations throughout the Dublin area.

The resulting public conversation was carried out in many different forums. The network redesign effort was covered in the news media through the summer. Many local elected officials and neighbourhood groups organized their own meetings. Countless social media exchanges occurred on the merits and disadvantages of the proposed changes.

Throughout this time, the NTA recorded public comments on the proposal through:

- A **public survey**, available through the BusConnects website, which:
  - » Asked whether the new network would be an improvement over existing service.
  - » Provided an opportunity for open-ended comments in regards to specific areas, and existing or proposed bus routes.
- **Written submissions** provided by e-mail, post and in person.
- **Petitions** signed by members of the public, requesting various changes to the proposal.

In total, the NTA received 20,751 responses to the public survey, 7,780 written submissions, and 65 petitions with a total of 20,209 signatures. This represents an unprecedented level of response to a public consultation on public transport in Ireland.

<sup>1</sup> The NTA has increased bus service in Dublin considerably since this time. See Chapter 7, page 90 for further details.



### Overall Survey Response<sup>2</sup>

The survey asked respondents whether overall the proposed network would be better or worse for Dublin than the existing network.

**Overall, the survey response to the plan was negative.** The majority of survey responses (60%) said the proposed network would be somewhat or much worse. Only a quarter of respondents (25%) believed it would be somewhat better or much better.

### Response by Council Area

The survey asked respondents to identify which council area they lived in. It also split Dublin City into three areas: City Centre (between the canals), North and South.

The most positive responses came from those living in Dublin City Centre where over half of respondents (56%) indicated that the initial network proposal would be an improvement over the existing network.

Outside City Centre, majorities in all council areas except Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown responded that the network would be worse than the existing system.

### General vs. Specific Comments

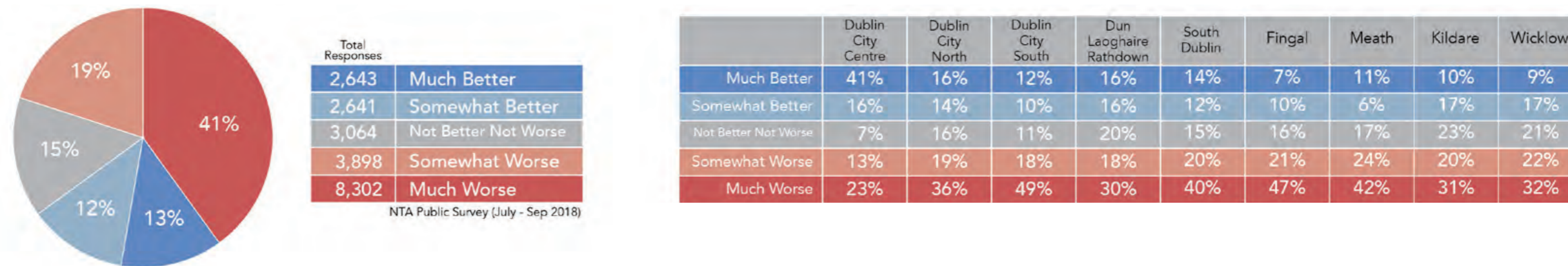
One notable trend was that **respondents with positive opinions tended to have general comments about the network.**

In contrast, **respondents with negative opinions were more likely to cite specific issues** or problems with reference to existing routes.

- Among those who said the network would be “much better” for Dublin, just over half (53%) of respondents provided a comment with regard to a specific existing route.
- Among those who said the network would be “much worse”, the vast majority (82%) had comments in regard to a specific route.

Figure 101: Public survey responses on the initial network proposal, summer 2018, for all of Dublin and by sub-area.

In your opinion, would the plan be better or worse for Dublin as a whole?



<sup>2</sup> In this and following pages, we focus primarily on responses to the public survey, because these are simpler to quantify, providing a sense of scale for the different types of input received by the NTA during the second consultation. However, every petition and written submission was also separately reviewed by the NTA. Though each written submission and petition focused on the specific concerns of its author and/or signatories, the general sentiments expressed were broadly similar to those expressed in the survey. The NTA and consultant team also explicitly considered the network design ideas suggested in more detailed submissions.

### Responses by Location and Existing Route

The pattern of survey responses by area and existing bus routes suggests that **there were very different levels of concern from one area to another.**

- Respondents had the option to identify their comments by area, based on a list of 147 different areas in Dublin.
  - » **50% of comments by area came from 22 areas.**
  - » The following 25% of comments came from 27 areas.
  - » The final 25% of comments came from 98 areas.
- Respondents had the option to identify their comments by existing bus route as well, among 115 routes.
  - » **50% of comments by route related to 19 existing routes.**
  - » The following 25% of comments related to 20 routes.
  - » The final 25% of comments related to 76 routes.

Furthermore, the areas that generated the largest number of comments also generated the largest number of negative comments.

- 40 areas produced 100 or more comments. Respondents from all of these areas had a majority negative opinion of the initial network proposal.
- 76 areas produced 50 or fewer comments. Respondents from only a third of these area (35%) had a majority negative opinion.

This suggests that, although a number of concerns about the proposed network were broad-based, **the strongly negative overall opinion in survey responses was significantly tilted by a limited set of neighbourhoods with strong objections.**

The adjacent table lists the existing routes that generated the highest number of comments, and the areas most impacted by proposed changes to those routes in the initial network proposal.

The table on the following page lists the areas that generated the highest number of comments, and the most cited concerns in those areas.

Figure 102: The table below shows the number of survey comments provided with reference to existing routes, and relates those comments to the areas most impacted by the change in those routes. About half of comments referencing existing routes were made in regard to the 19 routes listed below.

Existing Route	No. of Comments	Cumulative %	Areas Most Impacted
33	698	4%	Rush, Lusk, Skerries, Balbriggan
27	674	8%	Coolock
33x	645	12%	Rush, Lusk, Skerries
70	522	16%	Dunboyne, Clonee, Littlepace
13	517	19%	Ballymun, Clondalkin
1	506	22%	Sandymount, Shanowen
14	451	25%	Ballinteer, Beaumont, Artane
145	447	28%	Bray
4	435	30%	Monkstown
9	382	33%	Glasnevin
15a	365	35%	Perrystown, Greenhills
15	343	37%	Knocklyon
42	336	39%	Malahide
67	327	41%	Celbridge
16	318	43%	Ballinteer
47	301	45%	Belarmine, Stepside
66a	297	47%	Leixlip
37	265	48%	Castleknock, Carpenterstown
17a	253	50%	Blanchardstown, Finglas, Ballymun, Coolock
All Other Routes (96)	8086	100%	

### Recurring Themes in Submissions

Survey responses and written submissions cited a broad range of concerns regarding the initial network proposal. Many of those concerns were specific to individual situations. Nonetheless, certain recurring concerns have emerged from a detailed review of the whole. These recurring themes include:

- **People in many areas would be required to interchange to travel to or from the City Centre.** This is the result of reallocating radial service toward more orbital service. Although support for this strategy was very strong in the first consultation, many respondents to the second consultation objected to the consequences.
- **Certain interchange locations require significant improvements.** To date, the public transport network in Dublin has not been operated with interchange as a primary consideration.
  - » As a result, there are relatively few and small existing interchange facilities (e.g. at Blanchardstown, Tallaght, Dundrum). These would need to be expanded to accommodate proposed service, and in some locations safety issues would need to be addressed as well.
  - » Beyond purpose-built interchange facilities, most on-street bus stops are set back from intersections, making interchange where routes cross potentially difficult. This is something the NTA will address through infrastructure improvements, including in the Core Bus Corridor project.
- **Proposed peak routes and frequencies may not provide sufficient passenger capacity.** This is partly related to existing conditions. There has been rapid patronage growth on public transport in Dublin since 2016, and many peak-hour buses are overcrowded. The proposal focused service increases on evenings and weekends. The total amount of peak service proposed was only 5% above 2016 levels. However, patronage growth has outpaced this.
- **Existing conditions on Luas, DART and main bus lines do not favour additional interchange.** This point relates both to the quality of interchange and problems of peak overcrowding. The initial network proposal was built on the assumption that it is acceptable to require more interchange from orbital and feeder routes onto main bus and rail lines. However, existing peak-hour conditions on Luas and DART, and certain bus lines are already very crowded. As a result, there is a general concern that requiring more

Figure 103: The table below shows the number of survey comments provided with reference to specific areas of Dublin, and the most cited concerns. About half of comments referencing specific areas were made in regard to the 22 areas listed below.

Area	No. of Comments	Cumulative %	Most Cited Existing Routes	Closest Proposed Routes	Most Cited Concern
Rush	504	4%	33, 33x	285	Loss of direct service to City Centre.
Celbridge	387	8%	67, 67x	C4	Longer path to City Centre. Not enough peak trips.
Clondalkin	357	11%	13, 151, 40, 69	D3, G2, 63, 255	Loss of direct service to City Centre. Insufficient frequency and/or no service in some locations.
Coolock	350	14%	27, 27b, 17a	A1, N8	Loss of direct service and/or new paths to City Centre. Proposed orbital route does not serve enough destinations.
Malahide	345	17%	42, 142, 102	D1, 281	Loss of direct service to City Centre from certain areas.
Leixlip	325	20%	66a, 66x	C3, 259	Loss of direct service to City Centre from certain areas. Insufficient frequency and/or no service in some locations.
Bray	319	23%	145, 84x, 185	E1, 212, 213	Loss of direct service to City Centre from certain areas. Insufficient frequency and/or no service in some locations.
Lucan	314	25%	25, 25a	C1, C2, 252	Existing and potential peak bus overcrowding. Reliability of travel time.
Finglas	295	28%	40, 140, 9, 83	F1, F2, F3	Insufficient frequency on some proposed services to City Centre.
Swords	261	30%	41, 41c, 43	A4, 282, 280	Insufficient direct services to both Airport and City Centre.
Lusk	232	32%	33, 33x	285	Loss of direct service to City Centre.
Tallaght	205	34%	77a, 54a	240	Loss of direct service to City Centre from certain areas.
Ballinteer	197	36%	14, 16	A3	Fewer direct routes and change in route to City Centre.
Rathfarnham	196	38%	15b, 61	16, 234	Peak frequency/crowding on proposed route to City Centre. Loss of direct service to City Centre in some locations.
Clonee	195	39%	70	264	Loss of direct service to City Centre and Littlepace.
Blanchardstown	184	41%	39, 39a	B1, B2	Congestion at Blanchardstown Shopping Centre. Loss of direct service to City Centre in some locations.
Crumlin	180	42%	17, 18, 83	S2, S4	Fewer bus routes than existing, longer resulting walks. Loss of some orbital connections.
Howth	176	44%	31, 31a	N6	Loss of direct service to City Centre.
Chapelizod	165	45%	66	14	Significant reduction in service due to bypass routing. Insufficient frequency on proposed route.
Dunboyne	160	47%	70	264	Loss of direct service to City Centre and Littlepace.
Glasnevin	157	48%	9, 11, 83	7a, 7b	Longer walks to direct service to City Centre. Insufficient frequency on proposed services to City Centre.
Ballymun	156	50%	13, 17a	E1, E2, N8	Loss of direct service to City Centre from certain areas. Proposed orbital route does not serve enough destinations.
All Other Areas	5759	100%			

interchange at peak will be uncomfortable at best, or result in major delays to passengers at worst.

- **Changes to the network may be difficult for people who are elderly and/or disabled.**
  - » This concern is in part related to walking distances. The initial proposal was designed under the assumption that it is acceptable to trade a higher frequency of service for a longer walking distance to a bus stop. This is less acceptable to people for whom walking is more difficult.
  - » A second part of this concern relates to the notion that any change is harder for older and/or less able people. A network redesign would result in a service change affecting many people. People with less interest in or ability to absorb change would be more affected.
- **Many proposed routes take different paths than existing service, disrupting existing travel patterns.** This concern is partly about change in general (as above), but was particularly expressed with respect to schools and hospitals. The initial proposal was primarily designed with regard to all-day travel patterns. It has become clear that more peak-hour trips (like for schools) need to be addressed, and that connections to hospitals need to be reviewed.
- **Potential loss of transport service in semi-rural areas.** The initial network proposal did not include service in several semi-rural areas that have historically been served by Dublin Bus. The general idea was that these areas would be served by new Local Link services, but the replacement service had not yet been designed.

Many concerns expressed in public consultation touched on themes that were related to the network redesign, but are ultimately subject to separate decisions. Some of the more prominent themes along these lines included:

- Desire for a 90-minute flat fare across public transport to be implemented as soon as possible.
- Concerns about possible privatisation<sup>1</sup> of public transport services, particularly in relationship to the introduction of service provided by Go-Ahead Ireland.
- Desire for improvement of rail services, including relief of overcrowding on Luas and DART services, and acceleration of the Metro and/or Metrolink projects.

<sup>1</sup> These concerns were expressed as “privatisation”, but PSO services now operated by Go-Ahead are funded by NTA and operated as a public service under NTA’s authority. A more appropriate term to describe this would be “market opening for public transport services”.

## Conclusion

The first public consultation found that there was a high level of support for the strategies that would underlie a bus network redesign in Dublin.

However, the second public consultation revealed considerable concern over the actual network proposal built on these strategies.

There are several likely reasons for this apparent discrepancy:

- General support for a strategy does not necessarily indicate that one is ready to accept its consequences. For example, it appears from the first consultation that most residents agree with the principle of losing some direct service to City Centre in exchange for more frequent orbital routes. But every area actually affected by this type of change in the initial network proposal submitted many comments in opposition in the second consultation.
- People who are negatively impacted tend to submit more comments than people who are positively impacted. This is apparent from the analysis of survey responses: far more comments were received from areas where the proposal might have had negative consequences than from areas where the proposal was an unambiguous improvement.
- It may be that not enough public transport service investment has been made in the Dublin region generally. This is plausible because most of the concerns raised can be solved at a higher level of investment. For example, if more subsidy were available for service generally, it would be possible to increase orbital service without reallocating service away from direct services to City Centre.

### **The NTA has now taken on the feedback received in the second consultation, and the project team has made a large number of revisions to the proposed network.**

The full revised proposal is described in the following chapter (Chapter 7) of this report. A table detailing the changes from the 2018 to the 2019 proposal is also available as an appendix to this report.