



The Future of Public Transport: Why Data and Collaboration Matter

As local authorities and transport operators navigate the challenges of delivering efficient, sustainable services, one truth stands out: the future of public transport depends on better data and stronger collaboration.

Devolution is creating opportunities for regions to shape transport strategies that meet local needs, but success hinges on how effectively we share and use information.

Devolution: A Catalyst for Change

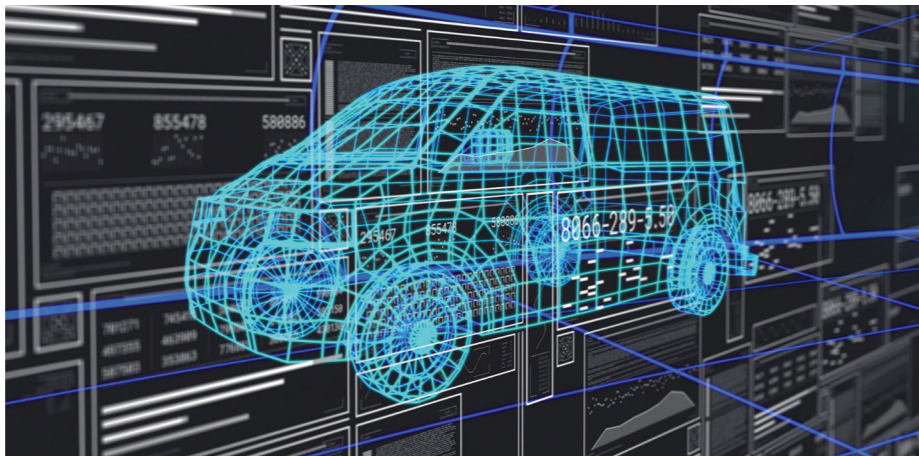
The shift toward devolved powers gives local leaders more control over transport planning and investment. This is a positive step, enabling tailored solutions that reflect the unique demands of communities. However, with greater autonomy comes greater responsibility. Decisions must be informed by accurate, timely data – covering everything from passenger flows and fleet utilisation to environmental impact.

Without this insight, authorities risk making choices based on assumptions rather than evidence, leading to inefficiencies and missed opportunities.

Data Sharing: Breaking Down Silos

One of the biggest barriers to progress is fragmented data. Operators, councils, and technology providers often hold valuable information in isolation. When these silos persist, it's impossible to gain a complete picture of network performance or customer experience.

By embracing open standards and interoperable systems, we can create a single source of truth for transport data.



This enables smarter scheduling, optimised routes, and better resource allocation. For example, integrating real-time passenger data with fleet management systems allows operators to adjust services dynamically, reducing congestion and improving reliability.

Driving Sustainability and Efficiency

Data-driven decision-making isn't just about operational efficiency; it's central to achieving sustainability goals. Understanding patterns of demand helps reduce unnecessary mileage, cutting emissions and costs. Predictive analytics can also inform investment in greener vehicles, ensuring resources are deployed where they deliver the greatest impact.

For local authorities, this means moving beyond traditional KPIs and adopting metrics that reflect environmental and social value. The ability to model scenarios

– such as the effect of introducing electric buses or demand-responsive services – empowers leaders to plan for a cleaner, more inclusive future.

Collaboration: The Human Factor

Technology alone won't solve the challenges ahead. Success depends on collaboration between stakeholders – local government, operators, and suppliers – underpinned by a shared commitment to transparency and innovation. This requires cultural change as much as technical integration.

At Civica, we're working with partners across the UK to deliver solutions that make data accessible and actionable. Our goal is simple: to help organisations turn insight into impact, creating transport networks that are efficient, sustainable, and responsive to the communities they serve.

Looking Ahead

The future of public transport is being shaped now. By harnessing data and fostering collaboration, we can build systems that not only meet today's demands but anticipate tomorrow's challenges. For local authorities, the message is clear: invest in data, embrace partnership, and lead the way toward a smarter, greener transport future.

• Keith Hawker, Managing Director – Transport, Civica



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