Big Society, School Empowerment and Sustainability

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Hertfordshire

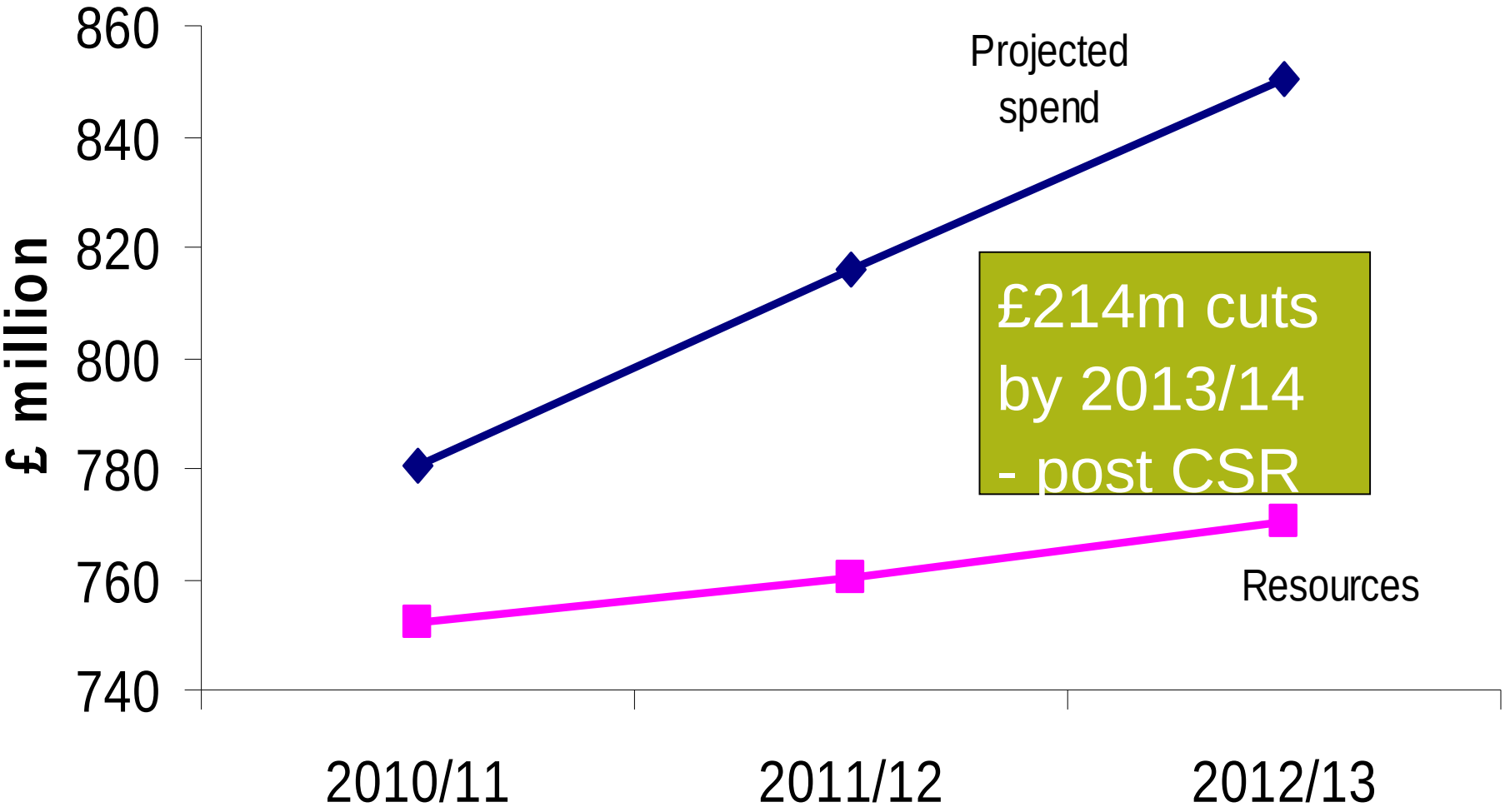
Hertfordshire’s school transport plan and efficiency savings

A presentation to the 10th Annual School Transport Conference

Introducing Hertfordshire

- Conservative controlled - supportive but influential political environment
- A population of over a million
  - 65,000 from an ethnic minority
- Mobile workforce - 277,000 commuting in or out each day
- Well qualified adult population
  - informed and demanding parents
- A prosperous county - but with deprivation in key areas
- A very diverse range of independently minded schools

Background and Context



Hertfordshire

Background and Context

- Discretionary arrangements have evolved over a number of years
- Pressure to reduce public spending
  - requires the Council to review every aspect of its work
- Services to be delivered more efficiently and effectively
- Need to prioritise spending to ensure available funding is targeted at those in greatest need
- Need to balance proposals against the Council's commitment to continue to promote parental preference.

Our aim is to . . .

Develop a school and college transport policy and process that is clear, efficient and flexible to meet the needs of the changing education agenda, whilst making the most cost effective use of all resources.

1st Consultation on policy

In 2009/10 The Council spent **£25m** on home to school transport:

£9.2m Mainstream

£13.4m Special Educational Needs and Disability

£2.8m 800 Routes and the SaverCard Scheme

Savings identified relating to school transport are in the region of **£5m to £6m**

Engagement with Partners

- Local schools communities empowered to procure and manage transport and travel solutions in the future
- Capacity building workshops
- Central Procurement Hub or Cluster Expert Hub
- Commercial operators
- Individual Schools become commissioners of their own transport – *established examples already in operation*

2nd Consultation –

How will your child get to school from September 2012?

A consultation on the future school transport network, covering 800 routes, Education (E) routes and small vehicle provision

Alternatives for the future . . .

Commercial Sector can:

- Work directly with schools
- Extend their current networks
- Decide to run their own arrangement

In the future:

- As the commissioner of school transport, county council will procure best value for money when purchasing seats for children with a statutory entitlement
- Through buying seats from schools, commercial operators, or procuring buses/coaches/16 seaters

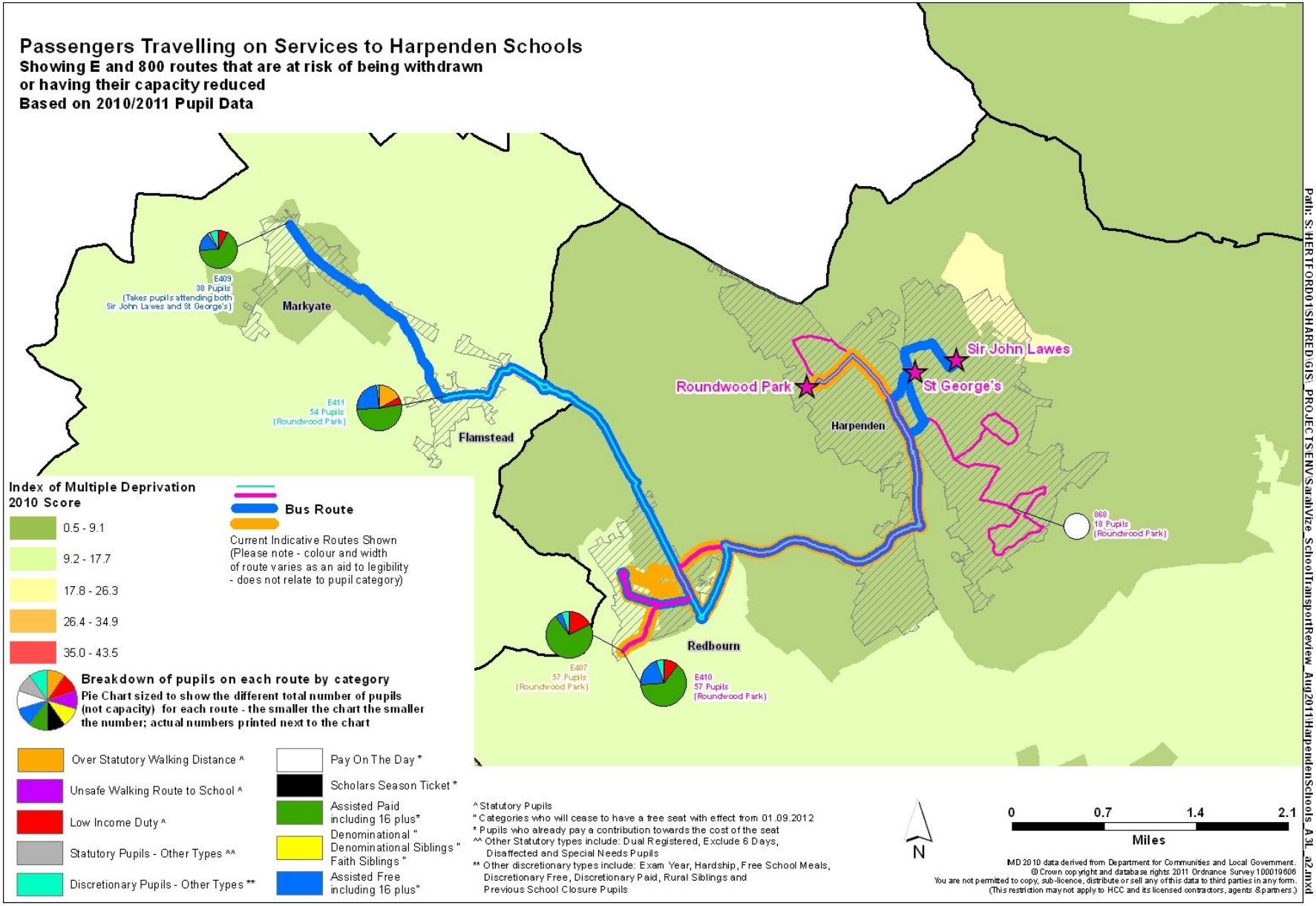
Support to the commercial sector:

Data and maps available to support commercial operators
Survey available for parents to tell us whether they would buy a seat on a bus
In response to HBCOA offer to meet regularly

Ongoing arrangements:

- HCC committed to publishing information for parents, schools and commercial operators about future arrangements
- Commitment to support existing arrangements until September 2012
- Where feasible, to novate contracts to individual schools
- Continuing to explore and offer a self sustaining Central Procurement Hub business model to support schools – already in place in the BHBI area

Creating a commercial market



Central Procurement Hub

BIGHERTSBIGIDEAS

Delivering BIG changes to transport in Watford, Hemel Hempstead & St Albans

Hertfordshire

- Currently running in the area of St Albans, Watford and Hemel Hempstead as part of Hertfordshire's LSTF Key Component bid package for 2011/12
- Schools in the area have the opportunity to use the hub for procuring services, enabling partnership development (schools & operators), and accessing support
- Benefits include reduction in congestion and carbon emissions from reducing individual car journeys – directly links to economic growth
- In the bid area, the Hub is complemented by other **BIG**HERTS**BIG**IDEAS package interventions (e.g. school and businesses travel planning, intelligent transport systems, bus infrastructure improvements)
- Financially self-sustaining in the long term as schools pay by contract

A vision for localism for Hertfordshire

***To shift power from the state (in the form of the County Council and its local partners) to individuals and families, both personally and also in geographic localities in which they live. It seeks to position councillors as an indispensable resource within active communities. It aims to ensure that residents are suitably informed to allow them to influence and shape local services and take a more active part in helping them help themselves*.**

Next Steps and Transition Strategy

Implement from September 2011 to September 2013:

- Support Schools/Academies
- Travel Plan Development Offer
- Continue to work with the commercial operators
- Support to communities
- Online survey for Parents
- Co-ordinate Information about school transport and travel

Timetable

Autumn Term 2011:

- Contact schools directly, support offered to schools
- Explore data detail with us
- Scope out opportunities
- Discretionary travellers parents informed of their loss of transport

Spring Term 2012:

- **By 1 February 2012:** By this date, schools will need to have found alternative arrangements
- **1 March 2012:** Parents receive secondary school offers

• *Summer Term 2012:*

- Transport eligibility completed and procurement for September 2012 underway.

September 2012:

- New arrangements and policy operates

thank you

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