

NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL ENHANCED BUS QUALITY PARTNERSHIP PLAN (2022-2027) AND SCHEME

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FOR DfT REVIEW OF INDICATIVE FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

1 Introduction

On 7th June 2021 North East Lincolnshire Council (NELC) issued its formal statement of intent to proceed with an Enhanced Partnership. The Enhanced Partnership (EP) is intended to deliver the vision and ambition set out in the NELC Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) 2022 – 2027.

The EP Scheme for buses was made in accordance with section 138G(1) of the Transport Act 2000 on 17 December 2021, for implementation on 1st April 2022.

The Department for Transport (DfT) has issued a letter to NELC, “BSIP: Indicative funding allocation for North East Lincolnshire Council”, dated 4th April 2022, setting out the priorities, conditions, and further Guidance, for confirmation of this funding. A second version of the EP Plan and Scheme has been developed accordingly.

2 Current Requirements

That further Guidance included the following specification for further information, required by the DfT, by the end of June 2022, as preconditions for confirmation of this Indicative Funding allocation:

- (1) an updated summary table, incorporating any feedback;
- (2) a draft EP (or variation to an existing EP) which shows how relevant aspects of the BSIP will be implemented. This does not need to have completed the statutory process for operator objections but should be accompanied by letters of support from sufficient operators to demonstrate that it is likely to be supported at that stage;
- (3) a separate document which sets out how any commitments which would not be implemented through or included in detail in an EP (such as the tendering of additional services or new DRT schemes) have been selected and will be delivered - with clear outcomes, outputs, milestones and costs; and
- (4) confirmation from [NELC's] section 151 officer that they consider that the funding represents Value for Money (VfM) and that they will continue to monitor this and comply with [DfT's] vfm reporting and approval requirements.

Subsequently, an update was issued by DfT in a Fortnightly Bulletin, dated 16th June, setting out DfT's requirements for information / material to be provided by the end of June 2022; again, this comprised four items. While the first, second, and fourth items of the latter were largely consistent with the earlier guidance, that for the third item was as follows:

A concise explanation, no more than a page, of how North East Lincolnshire's (NEL) Network Review aligns with NELC's BSIP spend proposals – specifically on services. This should demonstrate how a future financially sustainable network is enhanced by the indicative BSIP funding allocation. As per the DfT's guidance, BSIP funding is not intended to replace Bus Recovery Grant. Service support spend proposals should have a well-developed rationale.

3 Response to Requirements

The following items – namely, the responses to the first, second, and fourth of the requirements in each list - are provided separately:

Funding Summary Table – this is essentially the same as the Annex 4 table submitted at the end of May, as per paragraph (a) of the 4th April letter (above), as there have been no updates since then;

Revised version of EP Plan and Scheme, reflecting guidance to date and the Indicative Funding Allocation;

Letter of Support for the above from the principal Bus Operator for the area, which provides all of the Qualifying Services;

Letter from NELC's Section 151 Officer, confirming that the funding represents value for money, etc.

This document provides, as Appendices,

- (1) Appendix A: Statement of BSIP Measures falling outwith the EP mechanisms (as mandated in the 4th April Guidance); and
- (2) Appendix B: Alignment of BSIP Spend Proposals with Network Review (as mandated in the 16th June guidance).

Appendix A:

Statement of BSIP Measures falling within / outwith the EP mechanisms

The first Revised Enhanced Partnership Scheme (EPS) for North East Lincolnshire (NEL) – developed in the context of the Indicative BSIP Funding Allocation as communicated by DfT on 4th April 2022 - has been crosschecked back to the ‘parent’ Bus Services Improvement Plan (BSIP), dated September 2021.

The first table below summarises those proposed BSIP Measures – including Facilities - which, subject to funding, are- or would be- for NELC to procure directly.

Table 1: Interventions deliverable by Local Authority

Category	Funded or Partially Funded	Not funded
Bus Priority Infrastructure	(M021) Bus Priority Study + Punctuality Improvement Plan (M022) Acceleration of Traffic Signal Priority Programme	(M026) Bus-only Highway Infrastructure (esp., Bus Bridge) (M055) Park & Ride Feasibility Study & Implementation
Other Infrastructure	(M051) High Quality Grimsby Bus Station (interchange) (M061) Real Time bus information (M116) Acquisition & deployment of mobile CCTV units (M111) Raised kerbs / better wheelchair access (M114) Enhanced waiting environment at bus stops	(M025) Disruption messaging system (M112) Review & repairs of walking routes to bus stops
Bus Service Support (DRT)		(M093) DRT Efficiency & Best Practice study / synergies (M083) Expanded role for DRT (Phone-n-Ride)
EP delivery / ‘services’: LTA costs	(M001) Enhanced Partnership Delivery officer (M002) Review Local Strategies to Influence Bus Use (M023) Enhanced parking enforcement	(M024) Information and Disruption Messaging Officer (M113) Enhanced bus stop / shelter cleaning regime

With the exception of items in the ‘Bus Service Support (DRT)’ category, all of the above Facilities and Measures are - or would be if funded – included explicitly within the EPS mechanism.

It is noted that DRT services are not registered with the Traffic Commissioner and are not classed as local bus services, so obligations on their operators cannot be included within the EP. Thus, in the event that overall funding were to accommodate these, the respective interventions would therefore be included instead in supplementary documents alongside the EPS.

The second table (below) summarises those proposed BSIP Measures which, subject to funding, are, or would be, for the Bus Operators to provide; such 'funding' could be in the form of payments from or via NELC; or as savings arising from the implementation of other measures / facilities – principally, in the event that cumulative savings in journey times become sufficient to enable a reduction in buses required to operate the service (at unchanged frequency). This eventuality has not been identified as likely within the NEL bus network.

Table 2: Interventions deliverable by Bus Operator(s)

Category	Funded, Partially Funded, or Operator-funded / 'Business as Usual'	Not funded
Fleet / 'On-Bus' equipment		(M074) Enhancement of Contactless Payment (M073) Low / Zero Emission Buses (M071) Retrofit on-bus Comfort & Amenity Features (M072) Next Stop announcements
Fares & Ticketing	(M034) Fare Capping by day/week (M032) Discounted fare products for Youths (M033) Ticket Carnet for NEL (M031) Fare stage rationalisation	(M036) More targeted PlusBus zoning
Bus Service Support *	(M011) Uplift core urban corridor frequencies to 6 bph (M052) Timetable alignment btw. low-frequency services (M062) Fixed (2) annual dates for timetable changes	(M013) Improvements to evening services (M014) Improvements to Sunday services (M012) Standardise cross-boundary service frequencies (M054) Cross-Boundary Links to Hospitals (M091) Securing existing network base / Expanded support (M056) Innovative services: P&R, tourist route (M053) Timetable alignment w. rail services
Marketing & Customer Service	(M101) Commuter travel plans (M035) Step up levels of Promotional fares (M064) Special promotion of selected Bus routes	(M102) Green Bus Travel Plans Officer & Material (M083) Improved Lost Property facilities & processes (M115) Passenger assistance at interchange

	(M063) Refreshed / locally targeted Branding / Marketing (M081) Passenger Charter	(M082) Enhanced & Annual passenger survey regime
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* Noting that it is possible that additional frequency on a given corridor may not necessarily be provided by the incumbent(s); the service frequency improvement shown as funded in the above table (M011), has **not** been set out as an Operator commitment in the body of the EPS. However, it is, for completeness, included in Appendix E of the EPS, which sets out outcomes, outputs, milestones and costs for all funded Measures and Facilities.

Some of the 'not funded' items may, of course, be implemented by the Bus Operators at their own expense, if and when a business case for 'self-funding' materialises.

Thus, as explained, there are no interventions within the BSIP which have secured funding, for which it is necessary, in this Supplementary Document, to "set out how any commitments which would not be implemented through or included in detail in an EP (such as the tendering of additional services or new DRT schemes) have been selected and will be delivered - with clear outcomes, outputs, milestones and costs".

In the event that additional funding were to extend to any interventions in these categories, i.e. which would not be encompassed by the EPS, then this Supplementary Document would be augmented accordingly so as to provide the required detail.

Appendix B: Alignment of BSIP Spend Proposals with Network Review

The first Revised Enhanced Partnership Scheme (EPS) for North East Lincolnshire (NEL) – developed in the context of the Indicative BSIP Funding Allocation as communicated by DfT on 4th April 2022 - has been crosschecked against the very recent (June 2022) Network Review.

This Appendix seeks to explain how that Network Review aligns with the BSIP spend proposals – specifically on services; and demonstrate how a future financially sustainable network is enhanced by the indicative BSIP funding allocation.

The BSIP and the EP set out a wide range of fares and ticketing interventions envisaged, together comprising a radical change in pricing policy, to reflect changes in social and economic trends, and aimed at boosting bus patronage; the Network Review explains further how these will contribute to commercial sustainability of the greater part of the current network.

Given the limited funding available, and the range of priorities set out by DfT for allocation of same; scope for spend on service level increases is very limited, if it is not to be spread so thinly as to have little discernible impact. Therefore, the proposed spend on this area is concentrated upon a meaningful increase of frequencies on the corridor considered, to be the most ‘promising’ in terms of additional patronage attracted, and long term commercial viability – as below.

The EP aims to increase the daytime frequency of the 9/10 route to every 10 minutes, with improvements to its weekend and evening service frequency. The route connects the Town Centres of both Grimsby and Cleethorpes with major residential areas, Grimsby’s Diana Princess of Wales Hospital, and the Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education.

This corridor therefore serves areas with some of the highest population densities, and highest levels of ‘trip attractors’, in the area; thus, taken together, the boost in frequency and the radically improved fares and ticketing offer, provide the greatest potential for sustained commercial viability, on this corridor in particular and the greater NEL area in general.

Stagecoach East Midlands has a track record of working with North East Lincolnshire Council to deliver bus passenger growth. Investment in Services 3 and 4 in 2006 led to passenger growth across the overall urban network of over 20% in the subsequent years.

Subject to reshaping and rebuilding post-pandemic patronage through the September Bus Review, which may require some short-term recovery funding particularly to support the re-establishment of the evening economy, experience shows we have the skills, expertise and partnership working to enhance the bus network for further growth. This will be achieved by raising bus service quality and customer convenience supported by policies to encourage modal shift towards public transport to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality in the central areas of Grimsby and Cleethorpes

(Ends)