

PORTFOLIO HOLDER – ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT

DATE	12 February 2024
REPORT OF	Cllr Stewart Swinburn, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Carolina Borgstrom, Director for Economy, Environment & Infrastructure
SUBJECT	Bus Service Improvement Plan & Enhanced Bus Quality Partnership Progress Report
STATUS	Open
FORWARD PLAN REF NO.	PHET 02/24/04

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

The North East Lincolnshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and Enhanced Bus Quality Partnership Plan and Scheme (EP) contributes towards key Council priorities by improving public transport within the borough, providing access to work, training, education, and social opportunities, and creating affordable transport services, which, in turn enables a 'Stronger Economy and Stronger Communities'. The BSIP is also expected to enable improved safety and sustainability and contribute towards actions identified in the Councils Carbon Roadmap strategy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update in relation to the work of the EP and BSIP in North East Lincolnshire (NEL).

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder notes the report and receives a further BSIP and EP progress report by early 2025, in line with the Department for Transport's (DfT) and EP requirements.

It is also recommended that the Portfolio Holder provides approval for this progress report to be published on North East Lincolnshire Councils website.

REASONS FOR DECISION

This report provides an annual progress report which is a requirement of the DfT and the Council's EP Plan.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 1.1 The Government's 2021 National Bus Strategy for England offered an opportunity for step changes in local bus services in North East Lincolnshire. The Council has been awarded £4.7 million of BSIP funding through a successful funding bid to the DfT National Bus Strategy.
- 1.2 On the 13 February 2023, the Portfolio Holder considered a BSIP and EP progress report and approved for this update to be provided early 2024.

- 1.3 At the time of the 2023 progress report, the Council were yet to receive BSIP funds from the DfT and were therefore mobilising ready for funds to be released. In addition, a business case was submitted to the DfT to support the delivery of fare capping (Tap on, Tap off) technology, and Equans were updating the EP document ready for republication.
- 1.4 A timeline of the progress to date, following the February 2023 progress report, can be found in Appendix A.
- 1.5 To monitor the progress of the BSIP, the Council commissioned Transport Focus to conduct passenger satisfaction surveys. Results of the satisfaction survey (covering the period Feb-Nov 2023), are shown in the table below (See Appendix B for more information):

Item	2019 Data	2019 Average for England	BSIP 2024/25 Target	Results so far
Overall Satisfaction	90%	89%	92%	85%
Satisfaction with value for money	72%	64%	77%	72%
Satisfaction with bus stops	N/A	N/A	TBC	78%
Satisfaction with journey time	89%	85%	90%	87%
Satisfaction with punctuality	79%	74%	82%	79%
Satisfaction with driver	79%	76%	82%	87%

- 1.6 Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, over 7 million people were travelling on Stagecoach vehicles. During the pandemic, passenger numbers decreased by over 61%, however, as seen in the data in Appendix C, passenger numbers have since increased by 72% of pre pandemic levels.

2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 2.1 It has been agreed with Stagecoach that once the BSIP funding period ends, all bus services supported by the BSIP are to be commercially viable and operate without any local authority funding.
- 2.2 It is envisaged the BSIP and EP performance will be taken into account by the DfT when they consider future external funding bids from the Council, therefore poor performance may have a negative impact on future bidding opportunities.
- 2.3 The continued economic downturn may have an impact on the commercial viability of bus services, which would require future consideration regarding subsidy.
- 2.4 The BSIP and EP provides the Council with an opportunity to be seen as a best practice authority which may enhance future bidding opportunities.

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1. This report provides an update, as approved in the February 2023 report, in relation to the work of the EP, options are to be considered as part of the EP delivery process.

4. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1. There are potential positive and negative reputational implications for the Council resulting from this report. A formal Highways & Transport engagement process has been agreed by the Council and Equans for all transport schemes to ensure that reputation and communications are considered at an early stage for all schemes.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1. The confirmed NELC BSIP and EP funding allocation is:

Financial Year	BSIP+ Revenue	BSIP Phase 3 Revenue	Revenue Delivery	Capital Delivery	Total
2022/23	£0	£0	£538,149*	£1,011,256*	£1,829,533
2023/24	£280,128	£0			
2024/25	£280,128	£893,000	£910,094	£2,225,255	£4,308,477
Total	£560,256	£893,000	£1,448,243	£3,236,511	£6,138,010

*2022/23 & 2023/24 combined allocation.

- 5.2 At the time of writing this report, the spend to date, including value of orders raised, is as follows:

	Capital	Revenue	Total
Budget	£1,011,256	£818,277	£1,829,533
Total of orders raised	£349,727 <i>(35% of budget)</i>	£488,149 <i>(60% of budget)</i>	£837,876 <i>(46% of budget)</i>
Spend to date (transacted)	£152,430 <i>(15% of budget)</i>	£217,385 <i>(27% of budget)</i>	£369,815 <i>(20% of budget)</i>

6. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. During the development of the BSIP and EP, including any associated document updates, public consultation was delivered, which identified the need for discounted fares for young people.
- 6.2. The BSIP and EP is currently delivering cheaper fares for young people and those in education/ apprenticeships, which, in conjunction with other BSIP measures, will break down barriers to young people accessing employment and educational opportunities.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Government expects Local Authorities to develop ambitious strategies,

targets, and measures for cutting carbon from transport in their area and to work with bus operators and energy providers to include ambitions to decarbonise the local bus fleet. The measures within the BSIP will encourage the use of public transport within the borough by making it cheaper, and more accessible, which supports the Councils Net Zero Carbon Roadmap, by encouraging and supporting modal shift away from single occupancy car trips to public transport.

8. CONSULTATION WITH SCRUTINY

- 8.1 The Economy Scrutiny Panel considered the BSIP on the 12 October 2021 and the EP document on the 1 March 2022.
- 8.2 The BSIP document update is scheduled to be considered by the Panel on the 27 February 2024 and Cabinet on the 13 March 2024, subject to the release of DfT guidance.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations within this report. BSIP and EP performance will continue to be monitored against current funding allocations for both capital and revenue expenditure.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. As this is an update paper there is very little to comment upon. It remains the case that the BSIP is consistent with the stated aims and objectives of the Council underpinning its strategic objectives of Stronger Economy, Stronger Communities.
- 10.2. It should be noted that amendments to the EP from the version agreed by Cabinet will need a decision under delegated powers.
- 10.3. Any actions undertaken under the EP will need to comply with procurement and subsidy control law and Council policies.

1. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. There are no direct HR implications.

2. WARD IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1. All Wards

3. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 13.1 North East Lincolnshire Bus Service Improvement Plan, Cabinet Report, 20 October 2022 –

<https://democracy.nelincs.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/3.-North-East-Lincolnshire-Bus-Service-Improvement-Plan-reduced.pdf>

- 13.2 Enhanced Bus Quality Partnership Plan and Scheme, Cabinet Report, 9 March 2022 –

<https://democracy.nelincs.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/9.-Enhanced-Bus-Quality-Partnership-and-Schemes-combined.pdf>

13.3 Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Bus Quality Partnership Plan and Scheme –

<https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/assets/uploads/2021/10/NE-Lincolnshire-Bus-Service-Improvement-Plan.pdf>

https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/assets/uploads/2023/11/PART-1_Enhanced_Bus_Quality_Partnership-North-East-Lincolnshire-Nov23.pdf

https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/assets/uploads/2023/11/PART-2_Scheme_document-North-East-Lincolnshire-Nov23.pdf

<https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/assets/uploads/2023/11/Appendix-Documents-North-East-Lincolnshire-Nov23.pdf>

13.4 National Bus Strategy, Bus Back Better –

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/980227/DfT-Bus-Back-Better-national-bus-strategy-for-England.pdf

4. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

- Paul Evans, Assistant Director of Infrastructure, Housing & Infrastructure, North East Lincolnshire Council. Tel: 01472 323029
- Martin Lear, Head of Highways and Transport, Equans. Tel: 01472 324482

CLLR STEWART SWINBURN
PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT

Appendix A – Timeline of progress to date.

8 February 2023	DfT approved the business case for fare capping (tap on, tap off) technology, to enable delivery through the BSIP.
16 February 2023	The Council's EP document was approved by the DfT and published on the Councils website.
30 March 2023	<p>DfT released the 2022/23 funds to the Council. For 2022/23 the Council received £837,070, of which £495,570 was revenue and £341,500 capital.</p> <p>Due to the delay in receiving the 2022/23 funding, the DfT agreed that the Council could combine this funding with the 2023/24 funding. Breakdown of the combine funding can be found under the Financial Consideration section of this report.</p>
April 2023	Following confirmation of the new combine budget for 2022/23 and 2023/24, Equans submitted a Project Adjustment Request (PAR) to the DfT outlining how the Council intends to spend the combined funding allocation. The DfT approved the Councils request, enabling the funding to be spent.
7 May 2023	<p>Stagecoach East Midlands, with support from the BSIP, commenced with delivery of the following service changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New 3 & 4 service running on a Sunday evening at 6:45pm between Grimsby Town Centre and Morrisons. • 5 service continues to run every 30 minutes. New Sunday services goes via Ladysmith Road to Tesco Hewitt's Circus. • 6 service operates between Wybers Wood and Cleethorpes Pier every 30 minutes. • 7 services operate from Grimsby Town Centre to Curzon Avenue via Hainton Avenue and Weelsby Road. • Extension to the 8 service to Westward Ho. Service operates along Kings Road and Cleethorpes sea front, terminating at Cleethorpes Pier. • 9/10 service runs every 15 minutes, including an extended route to Tesco Hewitt's Circus. • 12 services operate every half an hour between Grimsby Town Centre and Bradley Park. Also, there is an hourly service between Grimsby Town Centre and New Waltham.
17 May 2023	The DfT announced indicative BSIP+ funding allocations for local authorities. North East Lincolnshire Council received an allocation of £280,128 revenue.
11 July 2023	<p>Following the 7 May 2023 timetable changes, the Council and Stagecoach hosted a public consultation event in Grimsby Bull Ring to gain feedback on the service changes.</p> <p>The approach the Enhanced Partnership took to consult and promote the service changes has been well received by passengers.</p>
12 July 2023	As required by the DfT, the Council must update the BSIP document annually. As part of this update, the Council must consult with both bus passengers, and non-bus users, to ensure

	<p>BSIP measures reflect their priorities.</p> <p>The BSIP survey was launched by the Council on the 12 July 2023, and closed on the 1 September 2023. The feedback from this survey is being used during the BSIP update.</p>
30 August 2023	<p>The DfT required all local authorities in receipt of BSIP+ funding to submit a PAR to the DfT by the 30 August outlining how the authority intended to spend the revenue funding.</p> <p>North East Lincolnshire Council submitted a request to use the funding to deliver additional discounted fare measures, primarily to support the local shopping and leisure industry. The DfT provided approval for the Council to utilise funding for fares.</p>
3 September 2023	<p>Following the consultation event on the 11 July, Stagecoach, with BSIP support, provided further service enhancements, detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 3 & 4 service times were amended to provide a more even frequency throughout the day, alongside the 9/10 service. • The 5 service now provides a 15-minute frequency in both directions between Willow Shops and Grimsby Town Centre. An additional journey in the morning is provided to help address connection issues between the 5 and 10 service in early mornings. Evening times have altered to allow better connections with other services. • Amendments made to the 6 service to improve punctuality of the service. Improvements also made to the Saturday afternoon timetable with journeys consistently extending to Cleethorpes all day. • The 7 service now operates via Belvoir Road to the Tesco layby on Humberston Road and then returns to Grimsby Town Centre via Taylors Avenue, Middlethorpe Road, Brian Avenue, Warwick Road, and Curzon Avenue, to provide a two-way service to Tesco Hewitt's Circus. Two additional journeys have been added at 3:40pm and 4:40pm. • The 8 service times were amended to provide a more reliable service throughout the journey to Cleethorpes Pier. • The 9/10 service has a revised evening schedule which extends to Hewitts Circus, providing a consistent service all day and more buses running into Cleethorpes and Humberston. <p>On the 3 September 2023, in line with the new school term, Stagecoach, with BSIP support, launched the new discounted youth MegaRider ticket. This offer reduces the existing weekly ticket from £12.80 per week to £10 and is available to those under 19 years of age.</p> <p>This discounted ticket will operate for the duration of the BSIP funding. The Enhanced Partnership regularly monitor the progress of this youth ticket, and Stagecoach have reported that</p>

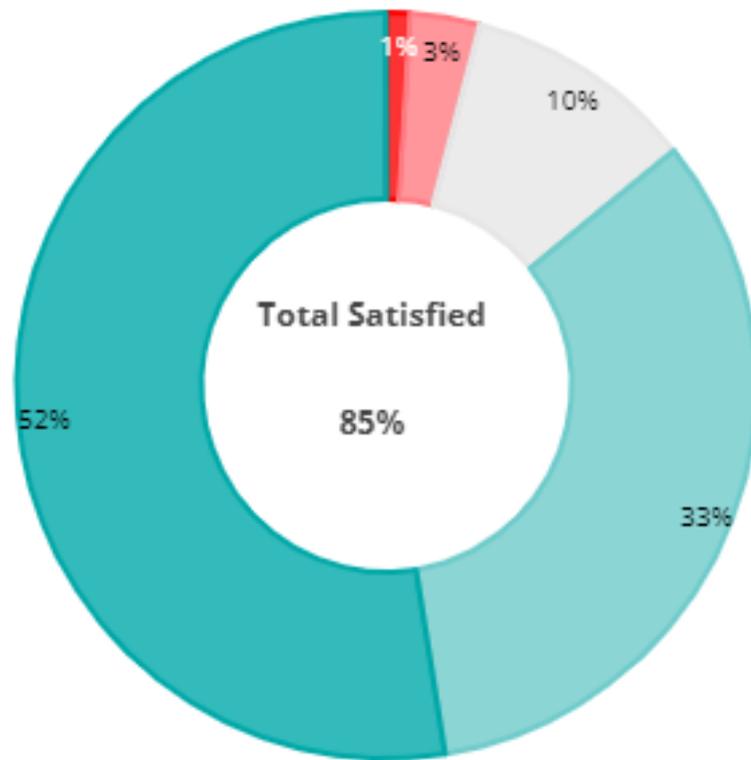
	<p>growth sales have reached 68%.</p>
October 2023	<p>On the 4 October 2023, the Government announced new revenue funding for the 2024/25 financial year for every authority in the North and Midlands, called BSIP Phase 3. From this announcement, North East Lincolnshire Council have an indicative allocation of £893,000.</p> <p>Four additional new CCTV cameras were installed within Grimsby Town Centre to ensure all Riverhead bus stops (stands A – L) are covered by security. A good news press release for the new cameras has been published by the Council.</p> <p>This BSIP measure is in response to feedback received in both the 2021 and 2023 BSIP surveys about passenger and driver safety at bus stops, particularly in the Town Centre at night.</p>
November 2023	<p>Using BSIP+ funding, on the 12 November 2023, Stagecoach East Midlands commenced delivery of the £1 leisure and shopper ticket. This ticket provides £1 discounted travel after 6pm Monday – Fridays and all-day weekends. The Council published a good news press release to promote the new ticket, which local businesses and regional news shared.</p> <p>Stagecoach have reported, since the scheme was introduced, there has been a passenger increase of 31%. The discount is available as a promotional offer and is scheduled to finish 3 February 2024, however, following the good news and success of this ticket, discussions are underway, funding permitting, for the scheme to be extended.</p> <p>New TFT Real Time Bus Information (RTI) displays were procured and installed in November 2023. The first 10 displays were installed at the Riverhead bus stops, to replace the out of date displays that were previously in place.</p> <p>Equans are liaising with the suppliers, R2P, on additional locations for the new displays.</p> <p>For two weeks in November, Traffic Signal Priority Equipment was installed at 16 junctions within the borough. At the time of writing this report, Equans Officers are working with Swarco, who installed the equipment, and R2P, who supply the back-office equipment, to get all 16 junctions fully operational.</p>
December 2023	<p>A briefing Note was presented to Cllr Swinburn which listed potential options for the BSIP Phase 3 funding. It has been approved that BSIP Phase 3 funding will be used on delivering service enhancements, or new services, and fare measures.</p> <p>The Transport Team has a prioritisation matrix of requested and desirable bus routes, using this matrix, the Council will make an informed decision of the service being delivered through this funding.</p> <p>Two new Parking Enforcement Officers have been appointed to focus primarily on the bus routes and bus stops. The</p>

	appointment of the two Officers will aid in alleviating illegal parking, which currently impact local buses.
January 2024	Presentations were held with statutory stakeholder groups and local Ward Councillors to provide an update on the BSIPs progress, and the delivery plan for 2024.
27 February 2024	<p>After the BSIP Passenger survey closed, Equans drafted the updated BSIP document, based upon the survey results. Before the Council can progress with this document update, the DfT must publish guidance to all authorities on BSIP updates. At the time of writing this report, the guidance had not been published by the DfT.</p> <p>The DfT have advised that the guidance will become available early 2024, therefore, in preparation, the document update is scheduled to go to Scrutiny on the 27 February 2024.</p>
29 February 2024	The DfT require the Council to submit a PAR by the 29 February 2024 outlining how the authority intends to spend the BSIP Phase 3 funding.
13 March 2024	BSIP document update is scheduled to go to Cabinet on the 13 March 2024, subject to the DfT releasing the appropriate guidance.
March 2024	Transport Focus have advised that there is a backlog of passenger satisfaction data, therefore full survey results will be made available March 2024.

Appendix B – Transport Focus data to date.



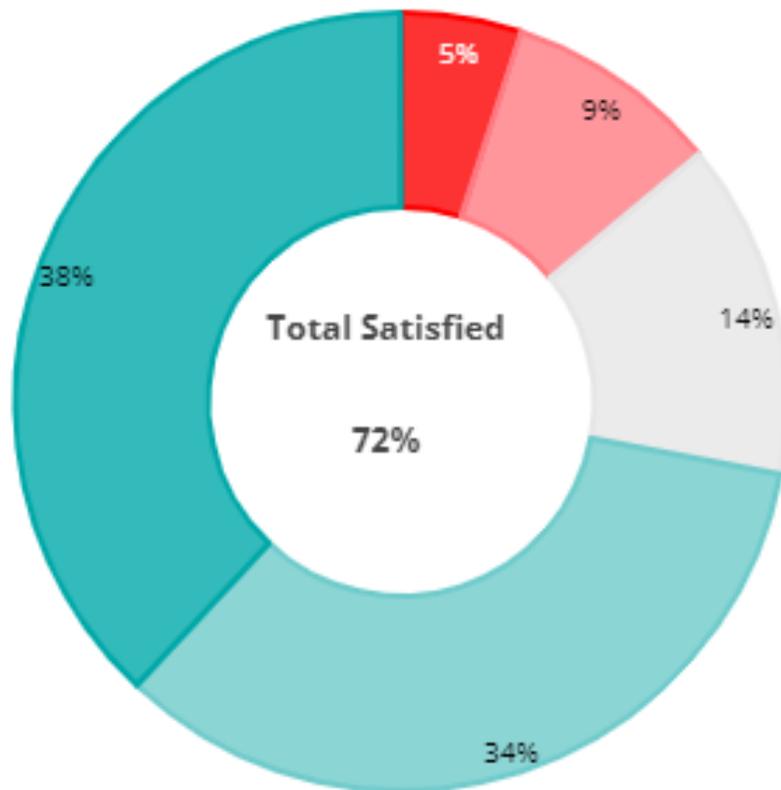
Q9.How satisfied were you with your bus Journey? (Year to Date)



- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

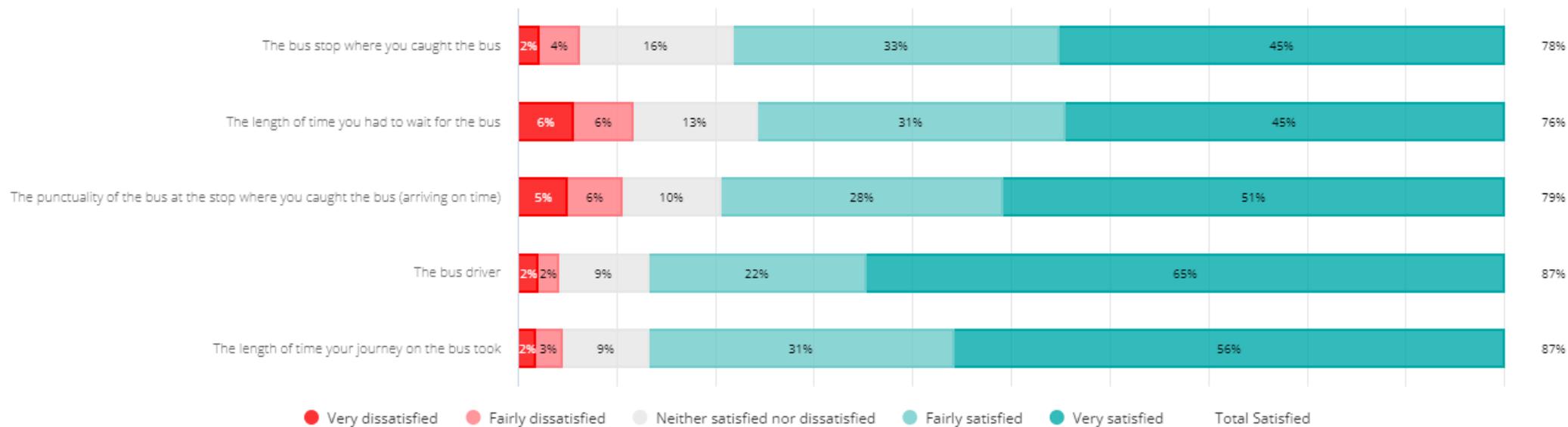


Q10A.How satisfied were you with the value for money of your journey? (Year to Date)



- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

Q8r1-Q8r5. How satisfied were you with each of the following during the journey? (Year to Date)



Appendix C – Bus Passenger Data

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2019	583822	557392	619884	617271	631117	604250	633199	657262	619336	633911	597892	552808
2020	585897	550359	408702	108391	127472	123946	218850	282160	342357	335227	248298	287618
2023	457404	442557	512799	485740	494033	505807	477384	529194	511517	487026	467659	378879

