

## PART 2

# THE NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL ENHANCED BUS QUALITY PARTNERSHIP SCHEME

The North East Lincolnshire Council (NELC) Enhanced Partnership (EP) Scheme for buses is made in accordance with section 138G(1) of the Transport Act 2000.

### Section 1: Enhanced Partnership Scheme Content

This document fulfils the statutory requirements for an EP scheme. In accordance with statutory requirements in section 138 of the Transport Act 2000, the EP Scheme document sets out:

**Section 2** – Scope of the EP Scheme and commencement date.

**Section 3** – Delivery to date.

**Section 4** – Schemes NELC will deliver as part of the BSIP programme.

**Section 5** – Schemes bus operators will deliver as part of the BSIP programme.

**Section 6** – What does the Enhanced Bus Quality Partnership aspire to deliver in the future.

**Section 7** – Governance arrangements.

Further details of facilities, interventions, etc. are set out in Appendices:

**Appendix A:** Identified Facilities and Schedules

**Appendix B:** Definitions

**Appendix C:** Inventory of Existing Facilities

**Appendix D:** Tabulated detail per intervention (scope, benefits, timescale, and operator commitments)

**Appendix E:** Identified Measures and Schedules (BSIP), including Authority and Operator ambitions)

**Appendix F:** Suspended Measures

The EP Scheme can only be put in place if an associated EP Plan has been made. Therefore, this document should be considered alongside the associated EP Plan.

The EP Scheme has been jointly developed by NELC, and those bus operators that provide local bus services in the EP Scheme area. (NELC is the Highway Authority for all roads in the area with the exception of the A180 west of a point to the north-west of Grimsby town Centre, which is unaffected by the BSIP / EP; and there are no relevant lower tier authorities.) It sets out obligations and requirements on all of these bodies / organisations in order to achieve the intended improvements, with the aim of delivering the objectives of the associated EP Plan.

If any operator of qualifying bus services fails to abide by such standards, enforcement action can be taken by the Traffic Commissioners – including the cancellation of individual local bus service registrations.

## Section 2: Scope of the EP Scheme and commencement date

The EPS will cover the same geographical area as the EP Plan and will support the improvement of all qualifying local bus services operating in North East Lincolnshire, as defined by the administrative boundary of NELC.

The EP Plan and Scheme were made on 17 December 2021, for implementation on 1st April 2022. The Plan will have no end date but will be reviewed every five years from commencement.

The EP Scheme will remain in force for at least five years after commencement. It will have no specific end date but will be reviewed by North East Lincolnshire at least annually (Section 7).

In accordance with the conditions set out in section 138C (11) of the Transport Act 2000, there are a number of local registered bus services, which operate within the Scheme area, which will be exempt from the requirements of the EP.

Services which are exempt include:

- Services registered as local bus services, but which are primarily intended for the carriage of school students at the start and end of the school day;
- Services which are registered as local bus services, but which operate no more than two journeys per day.

This EP Scheme includes a series of measures which, taken together, will represent a significant uplift to the quality of the public transport provision across North East Lincolnshire. The measures are listed in Appendix A. The EP will work up the detail of each of the proposed measures, including detailed targets and implementation dates, which will be included in the Scheme, through the bespoke variation process set out in Section 7.

Further measures may be added to this EP Scheme over time, using the bespoke variation process set out in Section 7.

### Reporting and Consultation

The EP Board will receive six-monthly progress reports on the development of the EP measures and reports of the performance of the network against the targets set out in the BSIP and EP Plan. Where targets have been achieved or bettered, the EP Board will consider setting new and more challenging ones. Where targets have not been achieved, the Partnership Board will consider and recommend additional actions and measures to address the under-performance. These progress reports will be published on the Authority's website.

Measures which make material changes to bus services and/or infrastructure will be subject to a public consultation process, prior to implementation, to ascertain the views of passengers, residents and other stakeholders who may be impacted by the development. Such measures may also require formal approvals within NELC at an appropriate level.

The EP Board will also provide an annual EP progress report, to be published by the Council, for approval by either NELC's Cabinet, Scrutiny, or the Portfolio Holder.

### Section 3: Delivery to date

NELC will provide and maintain all existing bus stops and passenger infrastructure as identified in Appendix C.

#### 2022/2023 Local Transport Plan Capital Programme Delivery (LTP)

As part of the 2022/23 LTP Capital Programme, NELC invested over £40,000 to the provision of existing Real Time Passenger information (RTPI) displays in a fit-for-purpose state and replaced any damaged displays.

LTP contributions were made to traffic signal junction improvements to provide bus priority measures at Ellis Way (near ASDA), Freeman Street, and the Cleethorpe Road corridor.

In addition, the authority introduced raised kerbs at select bus stops/ bus routes throughout the borough, including the renewal of bus shelters, where possible, and review of bus stop carriageway “cage” and clearway marking.

Except where agreed otherwise by the Partnership, new and renewed shelters should include all of the following features:

- Appropriate size and siting
- Lighting (where possible)
- Bench seating (providing there is sufficient highway space available)
- Accessibility adjustments, both to and at the bus stop

#### 2023/2024 Local Transport Plan Capital Programme Delivery (LTP)

At the time of writing this document, the 2023/24 LTP has made a £50,000 capital contribution to the BSIP delivery of Real Time Bus Information Displays (RTI).

The following LTP measures for Public Transport have been deferred to 2024/25:

- Bus Shelter Replacements
- Bus Stop Raised Kerb Improvements
- Bus Priority Measures

#### 2023/2024 Bus Service Improvement Plan Delivery (BSIP)

The Council has been awarded £4.7 million from the Department for Transport for the delivery of BSIP measures. In July 2023, the DfT awarded North East Lincolnshire Council £280,128 BSIP+ revenue funding, which is additional to the £4.7 million BSIP funding the council are already allocated. At the time of publishing this document, the authority has received £1,829,533 (£1,011,256 capital and £818,277 revenue) of BSIP, and the full £280,128 of BSIP+ funding.

The Authority will continue to work with the Partnership to develop a strategy for the delivery of additional facilities, which may be on a corridor or area basis, to support improvements to services and vehicles delivery by the bus operator.

The EP Scheme Bespoke Variation arrangements at Section 7 will allow for modifications to specific facilities arising from changes in the network, the operating environment, or the available funding, and as the Partnership evolves and matures.

Outputs: Enhancements to bus stops and services are a specifically targeted Outcome.

All operators of qualifying bus services have undertaken (M082) bespoke, enhanced regular passenger surveys, in co-ordination with NELC, in order to supplement existing survey data from Transport Focus – including origin / destination surveys, performance benchmarking, etc., at intervals, for better gathering of travel data, as well as passenger satisfaction.

In May 2023, Stagecoach East Midlands, with support from the BSIP, made changes to a number of bus services, with further alterations made in September 2023. The services detailed in section 5 have been amended and will continue to be supported through the BSIP until March 2026, when the services are expected to become commercially viable.

From the 3 September 2023, with support from the BSIP, Stagecoach reduced the price of the student MegaRider ticket from £12.80 to £10 per week for under 19s. To date Stagecoach have reported Student MegaRider ticket sales growth of 36.6%.

BSIP+ funding has enabled the delivery of a £1 Leisure & Shopper ticket on all Stagecoach bus services in North East Lincolnshire. This ticket provides £1 bus travel Monday to Friday after 6pm and all day on weekends.

In addition, the Council has successfully delivered the following measures through the BSIP:

- Installation of new CCTV cameras within the Riverhead, which ensures all 11 bus stops (A to L) are covered and monitored by the Council's Security Team.
- Delivery of new Real Time Bus Information displays. The Council has installed 10 new displays within the Riverhead bus stops and continue to install additional displays.
- Two Enhanced Parking Enforcement Officers have been appointed to target and focus on the bus network. These Officers aid the local buses by enforcing illegal parking at bus stops and on bus routes.

#### **Section 4: Schemes NELC will deliver, and continue to deliver, as part of the BSIP programme.**

The EP Scheme places a number of obligations on NELC. The authority already invests in the bus network. This includes expenditure on supported bus services, provision of passenger waiting facilities, at-stop information and Real Time Passenger Information and bus priority through the provision of bus lanes and bus gates. It is the intention that the Council will continue this existing support, subject to the usual budgetary review procedures.

North East Lincolnshire Council will deliver the following:

##### **Bus Priority**

NELC remains committed to implementing bus lanes on roads with frequent bus services, congestion, and sufficient space; yet, at the detailed level, it has tended to be the case that roads satisfying this third condition (sufficient space), have tended not to be those satisfying the first two. However; while

the Bus Priority Study will comprehensively review all feasible scopes for bus lane additions and extensions, tangible opportunities are already to be found across those traffic signals which, while located on bus routes, are not yet equipped with selective vehicle detection / traffic signal priority (TSP).

NELC will operate existing, and (M022) implement additional, selective vehicle detection for bus priority, at selected signal-controlled junctions and pedestrian crossings identified in Appendix A, with more detail in Appendix D.

NELC, as the highway authority, will develop with bus operators an evidence-based assessment process to determine the initial need and continued operational business case of any bus priority measures and / or enforcement system used under this EP Scheme. Effective interventions under this broad heading are seen as being amongst the most effective measures for improving service efficiency, journey times, reliability, punctuality, and the overall passenger experience – and hence, as drivers for increased patronage. NELC will seek to identify and quantify the most effective interventions achievable within the constrained budget.

In particular, NELC has, in collaboration with key bus operators, commissioned and contributed to (M021) a Bus Priority Study and Punctuality Improvement Plan, addressing complementary policy areas as well as those specific to bus operation. With the objective of improving bus journey times by minimising impediments, delays, and congestion impacts on bus flows, the Study will identify specific interventions, prioritising according to value (impact) for money. Its conclusions will direct the specific scopes and sequencing of interventions. Those under consideration include bus lanes (enhancements and additions); parking restrictions; prohibition of turns for general traffic; box junctions; facilitation of right turns for buses (additional signalised junctions or speed limit reductions); widenings e.g. selected corners and roundabouts; changes to bus stop layout; movement of street furniture; raised kerbs where this would significantly reduce dwell times through easier boarding.

This Study has delivered conclusions and recommendations, including options which were considered in spring 2023, and the selections and scopes of specific interventions, by late 2023, with delivery commencing in early to mid-2024. At that point it will be possible, and planned, to set out:

- The corridors that the priority measures will serve, with clear start and end locations;
- Targets for journey time savings, and any reductions in peak vehicle requirements (overall or for particular services) agreed with operators that the detailed scheme design will seek to achieve;
- The next steps and delivery timescales for the schemes including target operational dates;
- Requirements for consultation on schemes with potential adverse impacts, including measures to understand the full breadth of support, such as surveys of bus users on the corridor and representative polling – to be developed on a scheme-by-scheme basis.

Operators will be fully consulted at all stages of scheme development, principally through the meetings and other communication channels of the EP. Details of interventions will be adopted into the EP Scheme using the EP Scheme Bespoke Variation arrangements at Section 7.

Outputs: These will improve bus service punctuality, and may bring modest reductions in schedulable journey times, in response to aspirations of existing and potential users.

The North East Lincolnshire Council Bus Priority Study (November 2022) demonstrates that if bus traffic signal priority is requested at one junction (e.g. junctions running bus traffic signal priority technology) then by the next junction the bus, on average, ran 47 seconds earlier / closer to the schedule.

**Bus Priority: Real Time Bus Information System and Acceleration of Installation of automated bus priority measures at key signalised junctions within the Grimsby - Cleethorpes Conurbation, delivering a network strategy to improve journey times for the bus network.**

(M061) NELC will commission the installation of new, and enhancement of existing, equipment for collection / transmission / processing of real time vehicle locations, to enable functioning of further Traffic Signal Priority (TSP) installations (Appendix A), and as an enabler for additional real time information displays for customers at bus stops. The contract was in place for late 2023, ready for phased implementation across the remainder of 2023-24 and the early part of 2024-25.

Outputs: Those arising from TSP installations are described above, while improved information is a specifically targeted Outcome.

**Enhanced Parking Enforcement (Key Bus Corridors)**

(M023) NELC have provided up to two (FTE) Enforcement Officer resources, to cover 07:30 to 20:30 Monday to Friday, and 08:00 to 16:30 on Saturday & Sunday, deployed on the principal bus route network, to reduce casual obstructions & impediments. Staff were appointed late December 2023, and are to undergo relevant training, ready to start on site end of January 2024/ February 2024.

Outputs: This activity will thereby contribute to consistent and reliable journey times throughout the day - aspirations of existing and potential users.

**Local Bus Passengers' Charter and Enhanced Customer Satisfaction Survey Regime**

Bus Operators continue to collaborate with the Council to develop, or review existing, Bus Passengers' Charter(s), so as to align with local needs and priorities. They will also continue to develop and undertake bespoke, enhanced regular passenger surveys, in co-ordination with NELC, in order to supplement existing survey data from Transport Focus – to include origin / destination surveys, performance benchmarking, etc, at intervals, for better gathering of travel data. The Transport Focus passenger satisfaction surveys will also help to monitoring the success of BSIP measures.

**Strategic Bus Infrastructure: High-Quality Bus Station (Grimsby)**

(M051) NELC will replace the existing on-street bus interchange (a sub-optimally dispersed collection of stops across a cluster of nearby general-traffic streets) by a new, bespoke, high-quality bus station immediately adjoining the retail centre. This interchange facility will contain at least: multimodal information; real-time data; ticket purchase facilities; toilets; lighting; full accessibility; CCTV; seating and waiting facilities; simple and understandable onward signage. It is envisaged that construction will be concentrated in the 2025-26 year.

It is taken as axiomatic, and it is understood that DfT concur with the view, that a central bus station of this standard is a bare minimum expectation for a conurbation in Britain, as a fully functional, rather than dysfunctional, network hub. The current absence of such a facility in NEL, therefore represents a clear and early priority for 'levelling up' - and as such, in the absence of other funding forthcoming, a compelling case and high priority for BSIP funding, in order simply to get to 'base' standard for the UK.

Currently buses use, as the town centre terminal, a number of stops around three streets, traffic flows along which can be impacted by pedestrians, illegally / inconsiderately parked cars, and larger vehicles making deliveries. All these issues can cause delays to buses that would be avoided should there be a bus station with free-flowing ingress and egress. The route around these streets can also be circuitous and add time to journeys.

The proposed new bus station would address the above issues, such as public safety concerns and antisocial behaviour issues, including providing quicker and easier access in and out of the town centre with fewer delays caused by the current layout. In addition, the bus station would provide other benefits associated with the much-improved customer environment described above, which will help to improve customer satisfaction and grow passenger numbers. It is anticipated that the new bus station will aid in making public transport an attractive alternative to the car and enable public transport access to all users.

Outputs: 'Improved information' and 'Enhancements to bus stops and other key facilities' are specifically targeted Outcomes, while many of the concomitant improvements to the passenger experience are amongst the aspirations of existing and potential users. The 'quality leap' from the existing arrangement, in terms of ambience and information as well as bus-to-bus interchange, is self-evident; and it is expected that this will have a positive impact on patronage numbers.

#### **Security & safety of Passengers: Acquisition & deployment of mobile CCTV units**

(M116) NELC is tackling antisocial behaviour at shelters and stops where this occurs, by acquisition and deployment of CCTV units, to collect evidence necessary for police intervention to address the problem. The equipment was rolled out October 2023.

Outputs: The introduction of mobile CCTV units will enable Humberside Police and NELC's Neighbourhood Services Team to use the footage to tackle antisocial behaviour.

#### **NELC Local Transport Plan Capital Programme – Bus Shelter Improvements and Raised Kerb Bus Stops**

Waiting environment at bus stops is a high priority for bus users, as are (especially for certain disadvantaged groups) accessibility considerations, to/from neighbouring footways as well as onto / off the bus. New / additional bus shelters within the conurbation will provide existing users with a waiting environment that feels safe and secure, as well as protection from adverse weather.

The Equalities Act (2010) places a duty on both public transport operators and highway authorities to provide reasonable adjustments so that disabled passengers are not disadvantaged. Providing access between a low-floor bus (fitted with ramps) and the footway, is crucial to fulfilling these duties. It is also important to consider the needs of other disabled groups such as blind or cognitive

impaired bus passengers, as well as those carrying heavy luggage and pushchairs. Following the delivery of the 3 & 4 service Kickstart project (delivery of new low floor buses and raised kerb bus stops) in 2005/2006, Stagecoach East Midlands reported overall passenger growth of just over 20% throughout the whole bus network.

Through the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme, NELC will deliver a number of bus stop and raised kerb bus stop improvements.

### **Car Parking Strategy**

Complementary Policies of the EP Plan, NELC will bring forward its next Review of the Parking Strategy – engaging with key Bus Operators – as part of the ongoing, incremental re-balancing between relative costs and convenience of the bus service as against the car alternative. This Review is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2023/24; meanwhile, earlier this year, car parking charges in Cleethorpes have already been increased. The increase has seen prices rise at Cleethorpes Promenade from £1 an hour to £2, with it costing £7 for eight hours of parking. Compared to the £2.20 it costs for a single bus ticket to Cleethorpes or the £4 for a day rider ticket, the review will need to see further changes made to pricing in North East Lincolnshire. However, the cost of parking in Grimsby Town centre remains at £1.50 an hour, and £5 for eight hours, making it cheaper than travelling by bus.

### **Future funding bids**

NELC will, in partnership with the bus operators, identify all potential sources of funding to seek additional external contributions towards the ambitions of the Enhanced Partnership

### **Enhanced Resourcing of NELC Bus Team**

In addition to committing to retain over the duration of the EP Plan and Scheme the same level of FTE resource within its Bus Team as in 2021-22, NELC has appointed one member of additional staff - (M001) as an Enhanced Partnership Delivery Officer - specifically focused on managing the BSIP and EP, gathering evidence, working on local transport strategy and the monitoring and evaluation of the BSIP and EP.

### **Promotion of Concessionary Bus Travel**

NELC will continue to collaborate with operators to promote concessionary bus travel and to proactively inform local residents when the authority becomes aware that they are eligible for such a concession. A campaign will be delivered to promote Concessionary. The campaign aims to rebuild people's trust to travel on buses again, promote concessionary fares and passes to a target audience and raise awareness of the current local bus services in North East Lincolnshire.

Outputs: By facilitating increased participation in the local economy by affected groups, this contributes to 'Full integration into wider Council initiatives'.

### **Commitments to Overall Funding**

BSIP funding will be additional to previously planned 2023/24 bus funding levels, i.e., base funding for buses is not reduced:



Funding Category	2023-24 Allocations (£000)		2024-25 Allocations (£000)		2025-26 Allocations (£000)	
	Resource	Capital	Resource	Capital	Resource	Capital
<b>BSIP Allocation</b>	538	911	622	2.325	288	0
Local Transport Plan	0	125	0	*205	0	*300
Tendered Bus Services	160	0	160	0	**tbc	0
Demand-Responsive Transport	72	0	**tbc	0	**tbc	0

\* Provisional programme subject to further NELC Cabinet approval

\*\* To be confirmed

### Summary of LTA BSIP measures from Appendix D

Obligations on the Local Authority		
Measure/Facility/Intervention	Specific Commitments	Timescale
<b>Bus Priority Infrastructure &amp; Support</b>		
Bus Priority	The Local Authority will commission a third party to deliver the Bus Priority Study and identify measures that aid in improving bus punctuality.  NELC will review the study and seek approval from Council Members for the delivery of the measures identified within the study.	Scoping, design, and mobilisation to be complete in 2023/24.  Implementations approx. 2024/25.
Bus Priority: Real Time Information Bus Information	NELC will procure services to improve and extend the existing infrastructure to serve more of the bus network.	Planning, design, and procurement delivered by the end of October 2023.
Acceleration of Installation of automated bus priority measures at key signalised junctions within the Grimsby - Cleethorpes Conurbation, delivering a network strategy to improve journey times for the bus network	Up to 27 additional TLP junctions	Strategic network Planning and Implementation Scoping & Design– July – November 2023. Installation Period – Programmed across 2023/24 and 2024/25, with approx. 50% in each. 16 junctions complete in 2023/24, with additional junctions to be complete in 2024/25, but details and numbers of junctions are not yet known.
Enhanced Parking Enforcement (Key Bus Corridors)	Additional Enforcement Officers, to cover 07:30 to 20:30 Monday to Friday, and 08:00 to 16:30 on	Staff appointed late December 2023.

	Saturday & Sunday, dedicated to bus corridors.	
Local Bus Passengers' Charter and Enhanced Customer Satisfaction Survey Regime	Bus Operators will work with the Council to undertake bespoke, enhanced regular passenger surveys, in co-ordination with NELC, in order to supplement existing survey data from Transport Focus – to include origin / destination surveys, performance benchmarking, etc., at intervals, for better gathering of travel data.	Ongoing for duration of the BSIP. Commenced February 2023.
High Quality Grimsby Bus Interchange	Replacement of on-street bus interchange (a sub-optimally dispersed collection of stops across a cluster of nearby general-traffic streets) by a new, bespoke, High-quality bus station immediately adjoining the retail centre. Interchange facility will contain at least: multimodal information; real-time data; ticket purchase facilities; toilets; lighting; full accessibility; CCTV; seating and waiting facilities; simple and clear onward signage.	In recognition of the nature of this Scheme, and of the greater priority of other Schemes for the capital element of the funding allocation in the earlier years, construction will be programmed for concentration in 2025-26. This implies the following indicative programme: Design and planning of scheme(s) – To complete by early-2024 Public Consultation & Objection period – No later than Summer 2024 (4 weeks) Resolution period (if required) – No later than September 2024 (2 weeks) Construction Period(s) – From late 2024, to complete by September 2025 Introduction (more-direct services) – From winter 2025.
Security & safety of Passengers: Acquisition & deployment of mobile CCTV units.	Antisocial behaviour will be tackled at shelters and stops where this occurs, by acquisition and deployment of 'mobile' CCTV units, to collect evidence necessary for police intervention to address the problem.	Equipment rolled out October 2023.

<p>Delivering better and safe waiting environment with improved accessibility</p>	<p>NELC will seek to replace existing bus shelters within the borough.</p>	<p>1 April 2023 to 31 March 2026</p>
<p>Raised Kerb Bus Stops</p>	<p>The Equalities Act (2010) places a duty on both public transport operators and highway authorities to provide reasonable adjustments so that disabled passengers are not disadvantaged. Providing access between a low-floor bus (fitted with ramps) and the footway, is crucial to fulfilling these duties. It is also important to consider the needs of other disabled groups such as blind or cognitive impaired bus passengers, as well as those carrying heavy luggage and pushchairs.</p> <p>Following the delivery of the 3 &amp; 4 service Kickstart project (delivery of new low floor buses and raised kerb bus stops) in 2005/2006, Stagecoach East Midlands reported overall passenger growth of just over 20% throughout the whole bus network.</p>	<p>1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025</p>
<p>Car Parking Strategy</p>	<p>Complementary Policies of the EP Plan, NELC will bring forward its next Review of the Parking Strategy – engaging with key Bus Operators – as part of the ongoing, incremental re-balancing between relative costs and convenience of the bus service as against the car alternative. This Review is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2023/24; meanwhile, earlier this year, car parking charges in Cleethorpes have already been increased. The increase has seen prices rise at Cleethorpes Promenade from £1</p>	<p>Review completed by Spring 2024</p>

	<p>an hour to £2, with it costing £7 for eight hours of parking. Compared to the £2.20 it costs for a single bus ticket to Cleethorpes or the £4 for a day rider ticket, the review will need to see further changes made to pricing in North East Lincolnshire. However, the cost of parking in Grimsby Town centre remains at £1.50 an hour, and £5 for eight hours, making it cheaper than travelling by bus.</p>	
Future funding bids	<p>NELC will, in partnership with the bus operators, identify all potential sources of funding to seek additional external contributions towards the ambitions of the Enhanced Partnership.</p>	On going
Enhanced Resourcing of NELC Bus Team	<p>In addition to committing to retain over the duration of the EP Plan and Scheme the same level of FTE resource within its Bus Team as in 2021-22, NELC has appointed one member of additional staff - (M001) as an Enhanced Partnership Delivery Officer - specifically focused on managing the BSIP and EP, gathering evidence, working on local transport strategy and the monitoring and evaluation of the BSIP and EP.</p>	Officer appointed September 2022 to support delivery of the BSIP.
Promotion of Concessionary Bus Travel	<p>NELC will collaborate with operators to promote concessionary bus travel and to proactively inform local residents when the authority becomes aware that they are eligible for such a concession. A campaign will be delivered to promote Concessionary. The campaign aims to rebuild people's trust to travel on buses again, promote concessionary</p>	<p>1 April 2023 to 31 March 2026.</p> <p>Concessionary Fares survey complete to understand the barriers for pass holders, including local promotions and communications about the scheme.</p> <p>The Council are also using the local community guide,</p>

	fares and passes to a target audience and raise awareness of the current local bus services in North East Lincolnshire.	which is sent to all residents in NEL, to promote and raise awareness of the Concessionary Fares scheme.
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## **Section 5: Schemes bus operators will deliver as part of the BSIP programme.**

### **Qualifying Local Bus Services**

The obligations in the EP will apply to all registered local bus services in the area, other than those for which the Authority intends to exclude. Exemptions apply to services as defined in Section 2 of this Scheme.

### **Small and Medium-sized Operators (SMOs)**

The EP Plan (as amended) provides the Assessment that Grayscroft is a SMOs, following DfT EP Guidance. It also explains why their services are Exempt from this EP Plan and Scheme.

### **Introduction**

The scheme places a number of obligations on operators of qualifying bus services.

As detailed below, enhancements and amendments have been made to the following services through the BSIP (May 2023):

- 3 & 4 services\*
- 5 service\*
- 6 service\*
- 7 service\*
- 8 service\*
- 9/10 service\*
- 12 service

\*Further improvements made to these services on 3 September 2023.

The operators already invest in the bus network through their service provisions and vehicles. It is the intention that the operators will maintain their ongoing investment by committing to standards of service that reflect future investments in vehicles and technology.

Subject to anonymised and non-disclosure agreements, operators should make every effort to comply with the requirements of the Partnership, including the timely provision of Automatic Vehicle location and patronage and ticket sales data, participation in ticketing schemes and meeting punctuality and reliability standards.

It recognised that some smaller operators could be disadvantaged, financially or administratively, in their ability to comply with the requirements of some of the proposed measures in a timely manner. Consequently, detailed discussions will be held with all such operators (of Qualifying Routes), on an individual basis, on timescales for implementation or other adjustments to measures and operator requirements.

Local bus operators will deliver the following;

## Local Bus Service Enhancements (in partnership with the Council)

Through the Enhanced Partnership with Stagecoach East Midlands, the operator, with support from the Council, have provided service amendments and enhancements within the borough. Using BSIP funding, the local bus operator began delivery of the following services from Sunday 7 May 2023:

- **New 3 & 4 service** (between Morrisons and Cleethorpes Pier). A new 3 and 4 service is running on Sunday evenings at 6:45pm between Grimsby Town Centre and Morrisons.
- **5 service** (Grimsby to Immingham) continues to run every 30 minutes. New Sunday services go via Ladysmith Road to Tesco Hewitt's Circus.
- **6 service** running between Wybers Wood and Cleethorpes Pier every 30 minutes (Monday – Saturday) via Ladysmith Road and Clee Road.
- **7 service** runs from Grimsby Town Centre to Curzon Avenue/ Warwick Road via Hainton Avenue and Weelsby Road.
- **8 service** (Grimsby Town Centre to New Waltham). A new extension to Westward Ho has been provided to improve connections to Franklin College. Service also runs along Kings Road and Cleethorpes sea front, terminating at Cleethorpes Pier.
- **9/10 service** (Waltham to Cleethorpes) runs every 15 minutes, including an extended route to Tesco Hewitts Circus.
- **12 service** (New Waltham to Bradley Park) operates every half an hour between Grimsby Town Centre and Bradley Park. there is also an hourly service between Grimsby Town Centre and New Waltham.

Following the changes which were made to the local bus network on 7 May 2023, the operator identified an opportunity for further change and enhancements. Prior to the changes taking place, Stagecoach, in partnership with North East Lincolnshire Council, hosted a consultation event in Grimsby Town Centre on the 11 July 2023. As a result of this, the following bus service changes were made from the 3 September 2023:

- The **3 and 4 service** times changed to provide a 7/8-minute frequency with the 9/10 services from Cleethorpes. Evening times also changed to provide a 30-minute frequency with service 10 between Grimsby Town Centre and Cleethorpes.
- The **5-service** changed to ensure a 15-minute frequency is maintained in both directions. An additional journey in the morning is added to help address the issue with connections between service 5 and 10 in the early morning. Evening times changed by 5 minutes to allow better connections with other services, particularly from Diana, Princess of Wales Hospital.
- The **6-service** changed to improve the punctuality of the services. Improvements were also made to the Saturday afternoon timetable with journeys consistently extending to Cleethorpes all day.

- The **7 service** operates via Belvoir Road to the Tesco layby on Humberston Road and returns to Grimsby Town Centre via Taylors Avenue, Middlethorpe Road, Brian Avenue, Warwick Road and Curzon Avenue, to provide a two-way service to Hewitts Circus Tesco. Two additional journeys have been added to the 7 service from Grimsby Town Centre Monday to Friday at 3.40pm and 4.40pm.
- The **8 service** times were changed to provide a more reliable service throughout the journey up to Cleethorpes Pier.
- The **9/10 service** has changed in the evening to ensure the service runs to time between Grimsby Town Centre and Victoria Street. The revised schedule extends the service to Hewitts Circus in the evening which provides a consistent service all day and provides more buses running into Cleethorpes and Humberston in the evening.

### **Fare Capping by Day & Week**

(M034) All operators of qualifying bus services will implement daily and weekly limits on customer charging after a defined number of single trips have been completed, by installing any necessary technology and enhancing fares structures to enable this. Fare capping will be implemented by the end of 2024-25 financial year.

Buses fitted with the BSIP funded fare capping technology are to remain in operation in North East Lincolnshire, or in the event of fleet cascades, the technology is to remain in the area.

### **Discounted Fares for Young Persons (16-19-year-olds)**

This scheme will encourage more young people to use public transport by challenging their existing travel patterns. This attractive proposal of offering at least a 16% discount on young person's tickets (Student Ticket) went live on the 3 September 2023, and has seen an average growth of 36.6% in ridership numbers for this age group. Measure (M032) applies to all qualifying bus services and to young persons aged 16 to 19 years old.

### **Timetable Changes**

Within the North East Lincolnshire EP Scheme area, bus operators will continue to limit significant timetable changes for qualifying bus services to (M062) Fixed annual timetable change dates, two per annum, in April and September, unless there are unforeseen circumstances<sup>1</sup>.

A schedule of dates will be agreed and will be adopted into the EP Scheme using the EP Scheme bespoke variation arrangements at Section 7.

### **Bus to Bus Connections**

All operators of qualifying bus services will (M052) Optimise connections in Grimsby between low-frequency bus services, so as to ensure that connections and onward travel are both robust and convenient, minimising wait times for connecting services. Operators will identify and monitor principal connecting flows and optimise timetables to accommodate these. This will recognise the low frequencies applicable to most routes in the evenings and on Sundays.

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<sup>1</sup> In that event, the bespoke variation arrangements may be applied.

Using BSIP funding in 2024/25, the operators will be expected to (M013/14) Trial Enhancement of Service(s), paying particular attention to evening and Sunday services to assess demand and the commercial viability of future services. Details of the services being enhanced or trialled is to be confirmed.

Subject to the receipt of additional BSIP Phase 3 funding, additional enhancements/ connections, and/or trials of services could be delivered. Details of this funding are to be confirmed.

### **BSIP+**

Utilising the additional BSIP+ funding the Council has received from the DfT, Stagecoach have commenced delivery, from 12 November 2023, of a (BP01) Promotional Leisure & Shopper Ticket. This offer provides discounted bus travel of £1 Monday – Friday after 6pm and all-day weekends to aid in supporting local businesses and leisure opportunities. At the time of writing this document, Stagecoach have reported a 30% increase in passenger numbers during the time of this ticket. The partnership will continue to monitor the progress of this scheme.

### **Marketing and Promotion of Bus Routes**

All operators of qualifying bus services will undertake (M063) Refreshed / locally targeted Branding / Marketing; and (M052) Special promotions of selected routes. Examples include promotion of high frequency services as 'turn up and go', and the no. 17 Cleethorpes 'Holiday' service; other routes are to be promoted, such as based on themes, destinations, or events.

Outputs: This activity particularly supports 'Full integration into ... initiatives aimed at regenerating North East Lincolnshire, helping to revitalise High Streets ... and supporting the rejuvenation of our seaside resort and tourist facilities'.

### **Route and Timetable Information**

All operators of qualifying bus services will be expected to include all qualifying services within their operating area (regardless of who provides them) on their timetables and websites, or otherwise ensure that there will be a single set of multi-operator information available across all such operators. This is so that passengers do not need to consult multiple sources to find out about all the bus services they may wish to use or mistakenly believe there are fewer services than actually operate. (However; at the time of making this Scheme, and this revision, there is only the one operator of qualifying bus services, so this condition is not applicable, and / or already fulfilled.)

Outputs: Improved information is a specifically targeted Outcome.

### **Re-Investment of Savings**

Any operating expenditure savings resulting from new bus priority infrastructure and measures funded through the BSIP, are to be reinvested by the bus operators that benefit from them in other BSIP commitments. In the first instance, improving the reliability and punctuality of services within the Borough will increase the attractiveness of public transport, which would be reflected by realisation of passenger growth and air quality targets. Any time savings will be reinvested in route extensions and/or diversions to serve new stops and residential developments. The improved punctuality and reduction in delays will create better working conditions for bus drivers, which will see improvements to staff retention and recruitment.

Facilities (such as bus priority infrastructure) and measures – individually or collectively – may be identified as enabling such savings; this would be expected to arise principally, though not



exclusively, where journey time savings and reliability improvements enable services to be operated at unchanged frequency by fewer buses. Whenever this arises, this Scheme will be further enhanced – by means of a document agreed by the LTA and the affected bus operators - so as to specify:

- the operating cost information that operators should share on a transparent (and if necessary confidential) basis for each bus priority scheme and to what timescales;
- how and when that will be used to calculate the funding to be reinvested by the operators in improvements for passengers;
- what those improvements will be, who they will be set by and how the money will flow (including whether it will be reinvested directly by the operator concerned with the agreement of the LTA or will involve funding being contributed to support measures across the EP as a whole).

The document setting out the above will take the form of an Annex to this EP Scheme, and its inclusion will constitute a Variation, to be incorporated as set out in the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme, in section 7.

The local bus operator for North East Lincolnshire has provided a statement regarding the commitment to a reinvestment of savings:

*“Stagecoach East Midlands is the region’s largest bus operator delivering 20 million miles of bus services for local communities in partnership with eleven local transport authorities. We are a major employer with 1,350 staff responsible for maintaining and operating a fleet of 476 buses based at ten depot sites.*

*We have 64 buses based at our Grimsby Depot in Victoria Street running a comprehensive bus network covering frequent core routes through the urban conurbation of Grimsby and Cleethorpes. Longer distance bus services operate to Lincoln, Hull, Louth, and Barton.*

*We have a well-established bus partnership with North East Lincolnshire Council, which was formed to maintain and develop quality bus services for local people. Buses provide essential links to employment, education, healthcare, and retail services; the area has a low level of car ownership, which means bus services have a key role in the local economy.*

*Over the years, Stagecoach has invested in a modern accessible bus fleet supported by new technology to drive real time*

*passenger information and smart ticketing including contactless payments. Our inhouse training has given our staff a range of core skills to care for customers including diversity and disability awareness. A focused safety culture is the central theme to all aspects of our business.*

*Stagecoach was pleased to partner North East Lincolnshire Council to form a forward thinking, innovative and successful submission for funding through the Department for Transport’s Bus Service Improvement Plan initiative. We are committed to investing time and resources to deliver the planned enhancements for the local bus network.*

*This will include:*

- *Planning, and introducing a new network of bus services for communities at Waltham, New Waltham, Springfields, Scartho, Thrunscoe and Humberston into Grimsby and Cleethorpes town centre and the retail hub at Tesco, Hewitts Circus. New connections will be available for access to employment, education, healthcare, and retail.*

- *Using our experience and skills to introduce new technology to channel and manage digital real time bus information and ticketing for customers. This will include practical work to install ‘tap on, tap off’ ticketing equipment funded through the BSIP.*
- *Contributing to the planning and implementation process for bus priority measures and interventions to help buses cut through congestion and achieve quicker customer journey times.*
- *Delivering and promoting discounted ticketing schemes for major employers and young people to support a strategy to achieve modal shift towards sustainable transport for short urban journeys. This will include commuter plans and student rider schemes.*

*There are clear benefits from introducing smart ticketing and enhanced bus priorities to improve bus operational efficiencies:*

- *Faster boarding times and quicker bus journeys will make bus services more attractive for local people; this will encourage modal shift from private cars.*
- *Increasing passenger journeys will help to rebuild local bus revenues following the pandemic, helping to re-establish the viability of the transport network, underpinning economic growth.*
- *Modal shift will reduce traffic congestion and associated delays, which will help to further optimise bus journey times and provide timetable consistency. Bus reliability and punctuality are key factors in the journey quality experience for customers.*
- *Time savings through bus priorities and faster boarding times are likely to be relatively modest. However, it should be possible for Stagecoach to reinvest any significant gained running time in short additional sections of route or minor service diversions to serve new developments, communities, or facilities.*
- *Stagecoach East Midlands will invest staff and vehicle resources to create appropriate additional frequency and/or capacity to meet rising bus travel demand stimulated by quicker journey times.*
- *Reducing the cost per bus operating hour by improving urban bus speeds will help Stagecoach to keep fares at low levels and roll out more comprehensive discounts to user groups especially through commuter plans and young people’s travel schemes.*
- *Improving bus service efficiency will create a better, more relaxed working environment for bus staff, which will help with staff recruitment and retention. Improved stability in the workforce will provide greater opportunities for Stagecoach to invest in staff education and training, which will include personal development in addition to learning a wider variety of workplace skills.*
- *Creating consistent, punctual, and reliable bus journeys will encourage more people with special needs to use conventional bus services. Stagecoach has experience of working with organisations to deliver specialist travel training for individuals to help them lead more independent lives. We commit to expanding this work within the North East Lincolnshire BSIP to promote greater social inclusion; this may also provide opportunities for the council to make savings in specialist transport services.*

*Stagecoach East Midlands has an excellent track record of playing a key role in liaising locally with councils, retail groups, education providers, NHS Trusts, and other key stakeholders to create the optimum framework in which to deliver transport strategies. We are committed to investing time and resources to the Bus Service Improvement Plan in North East Lincolnshire.”*

## Reliability and Punctuality

Across the EP Plan period, the partners will deliver a significant improvement in service punctuality: the bus operators will make their best endeavours to improve the proportion of buses operating on-time. The Partnership has set a challenging target to achieve 97% bus punctuality by 2024/25.

To facilitate this, the principal Operator will support and cooperate with NELC, to contribute to (M021) a Bus Priority Study and Punctuality Improvement Plan (subject to approval for NELC input).

Meanwhile, the EP expects maintenance of the current high standard of service reliability, by the operators making their best endeavours to contain the level of lost mileage within their control to within 0.1% for the duration of the EP Plan.

### Summary of bus operator BSIP measures from Appendix D

<b>Obligations on the bus operators</b>		
<b>Measure/Facility/Intervention</b>	<b>Specific Commitments</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Local Bus Service Enhancements (in partnership with the Council)	Delivery of a number of service enhancements which will aid accessibility within the borough and made the public bus network easier to use. In addition, conduct a trial of an evening, Sunday, or off-peak service to assess demand and future deliverability.	<p>The following services changed as of 7 May 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 &amp; 4 service*</li> <li>• 5 service*</li> <li>• 6 service*</li> <li>• 7 service*</li> <li>• 8 service*</li> <li>• 9/10 service*</li> <li>• 12 service</li> </ul> <p>*Further service improvement made on 3 September 2023.</p> <p>Trial service enhancements to commence 2024/25.</p>
Daily/Weekly Capping of fares based on ridership to reduce overall journey costs for frequent travellers	Introduce a maximum cap on fares based on ridership and this should cost no more than the price of a multi operator day/weekly/monthly ticket. Install second readers (for contactless ticketing) on all buses operating in and out of NEL to allow “Tap on Tap off” and maximum capping. Funding will cover the necessary on-bus equipment, and advertising and publicity for this benefit, while also providing an element of contingency against initial revenue loss.	<p>Revised Fare Structure (single Fares Zone for NEL) – Delivered during 2022/2023.</p> <p>Active promotion of revised fares structure - During the 2023/24 financial year.</p> <p>Introduction of technology for fares capping – By end of the 2024/25 financial year.</p>

Discounted Fares for Young Persons (16-19-year-olds)	Following first-stage rollout in April 2022 (raising adult fare threshold from 16 to 20 years old), BSIP funding will enable further reductions in Youth fares.	Stagecoach commenced delivery of the scheme on the 3 September 2023.
Timetable changes	Within the North East Lincolnshire EP Scheme area, bus operators will limit significant timetable changes for qualifying bus services to (M062) Fixed annual timetable change dates, two per annum, in April and September, unless there are unforeseen circumstances.	Delivery from April 2023.
Bus to Bus Connections	At locations where bus-to-bus interchange takes place between services operating less frequently than 3 buses per hour, Operators will review schedules so as to optimise connections, so as to offer robust margins for minor delays while minimising additional waiting time.	Reviews & analysis to take place across 2023, into 2024; for implementation of new schedules from April 2024 timetable change date.
BSIP + Promotional Leisure & Shopper Ticket	Continued delivery and monitoring of the scheme. If the scheme proves successful, and where funding opportunities allow, the partnership will seek to continue to further enhance this fare initiative.	Scheme commenced on the 12 November 2023.
Marketing Campaigns and Promotion of Bus Routes	Bus Operators will undertake refreshed / locally targeted branding / marketing, and special promotions of selected routes. Examples include promotion of high frequency services as 'turn up and go', and the no. 17 Cleethorpes 'Holiday' service; other routes are to be promoted, such as based on themes, destinations, or events.	Scheme delivery targeted for early 2024/25.
Route and Timetable Information	All operators of qualifying bus services will be expected to include all qualifying services	1 April 2023 to 31 March 2025

	<p>within their operating area (regardless of who provides them) on their timetables and websites, or otherwise ensure that there will be a single set of multi-operator information available across all such operators. This is so that passengers do not need to consult multiple sources to find out about all the bus services they may wish to use or mistakenly believe there are fewer services than actually operate. (However; at the time of making this Scheme, and this revision, there is only the one operator of qualifying bus services, so this condition is not applicable, and / or already fulfilled.)</p>	
<p>Re-Investment of Savings</p>	<p>Any operating expenditure savings resulting from new bus priority infrastructure and measures funded through the BSIP, are to be reinvested by the bus operators that benefit from them in other BSIP commitments. In the first instance, improving the reliability and punctuality of services within the Borough will increase the attractiveness of public transport, which would be reflected by realisation of passenger growth and air quality targets. Any time savings will be reinvested in route extensions and/or diversions to serve new stops and residential developments. The improved punctuality and reduction in delays will create better working conditions for bus drivers, which will see improvements to staff retention and recruitment.</p>	<p>1 April 2023 to 31 March 2025</p>

Reliability and Punctuality	Across the EP Plan period, the partners will deliver a significant improvement in service punctuality: the bus operators will make their best endeavours to improve the proportion of buses operating on-time. The Partnership has set a challenging target to achieve 97% bus punctuality by 2024/25. To facilitate this, the principal Operator will support and cooperate with NELC, to contribute to (M021) a Bus Priority Study and Punctuality Improvement Plan (subject to approval for NELC input). Meanwhile, the EP expects maintenance of the current high standard of service reliability, by the operators making their best endeavours to contain the level of lost mileage within their control to within 0.1% for the duration of the EP Plan.	1 April 2023 to 31 March 2025
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## Section 6: What does the Enhanced Bus Quality Partnership aspire to deliver in the future?

The BSIP is viewed as the long-term strategy local bus services in North East Lincolnshire area and the current approved BSIP sets out the Council’s overall aspirations. Should further funding become available in the future, it is envisaged the Council and its partners would review the original BSIP prioritised funding table, review the measures which the £4.7 million (plus the BSIP+) funding allocation delivered (for example measures 1 to 21 out of 46 measures which are listed in prioritised order in our original BSIP) and then allocated any further available funding to the measures which have not been delivered (for example, delivering measures 22 to 46 based upon the original prioritised measures providing there is sufficient funding and subject to the measures still being relevant to meet future priorities).

Measure	Funding source	2023/24		2024/25		Total
		Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	
Bus Infrastructure	BSIP & LTP	£0	£125,000	£0	£1,910,499	<b>£2,035,499</b>
Bus fare initiatives	BSIP & BSIP+	£264,970	£105,000	£180,947	£0	<b>£532,917</b>
Tendered service	NELC	£160,000	£0	£160,000	£0	<b>£320,000</b>

Supported services	BSIP	£288,000	£0	£288,000	£0	<b>£576,000</b>
Concessionary Fares reimbursement	NELC	3.45m	£0	3.45m	£0	<b>£6.9m</b>
Demand Responsive Transport	NELC	£72,000	0	TBC	£0	<b>£72,000</b>
Bus Priority	BSIP & LTP	£0	£661,256	£0	£519,756	<b>£1,181,012</b>
Staffing Support	BSIP	£87,779	£0	£87,779	£0	<b>£175,558</b>
Safety & Security	BSIP	£8,400	£45,000	£4,200	£0	<b>£57,600</b>
Monitoring & Evaluation	BSIP	£9,000	£0	£9,000	£0	<b>£18,000</b>

## Section 7: Governance – Scheme Variation and Revocation

### EP Board Membership

The EP membership will include;

- One NELC Elected Member.
- NELC’s Assistant Director for Housing and Infrastructure. The Assistant Director shall represent all members of the Council’s Leadership Team and ensure a response is obtained in relation to any issues raised by the EP Board.
- One Regeneration Partnership Officer nominated by the NELC’s Assistant Director for Housing and Infrastructure.
- Two Representatives of dominant participating bus companies.
- One Representative of other participating bus companies - Subject to the number of bus company representatives being equal to those representing the Council (Elected Members plus Partnership Officers).

One vote shall be allocated to each member only of the Board and the Board membership shall consist of 6 people from the outset those being as above. The EP Board shall appoint a chair and a deputy chair on an annual basis.

Members of the EP Board may, at its discretion and with the agreement of all Members, co-opt individuals from partner agencies and organisations with responsibilities towards local transport (including other local bus companies). It is envisaged separate meetings will be used to engage with local bus user groups and the EP Forum (as described in the EP Plan) in order to discuss operational transport issues including progress with success of implementation of the EP Scheme, and these issues will be reported and discussed at the EP Board and feedback will be provided to the user group or Forum as and when required.

Meetings shall be considered quorate where at least one council representative and one bus company representative are present.

### Decision Making

Decisions of the EP Board need to be in line with existing decisions of the Council or will be subject to the decision-making processes of NELC as set out in the Council’s Constitution, and in line with the decision-making processes of the participating bus operators.

For decisions requiring a formal vote within the EP Board meetings, in the event of a tied vote the status quo shall prevail. One vote shall be allocated to each member of the Board only.

If new members are co-opted onto the EP board voting rights will be allocated accordingly. Co-opting shall be subject to the number of bus company representatives being equal to those representing the Council (Elected Members plus Partnership Officers and Assistant Director).

### Work Programme and Annual Report

The EP Board will agree an annual work programme setting out its key priorities and areas for action/improvement. A report on the activities of the EP will be presented to either NELC's Cabinet, Scrutiny, or the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport for review.

### Frequency of Meetings

The EP Board will meet four times per municipal year.

### Meeting Procedure

The venue for EP Board meetings will be New Oxford House, George Street, Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire, DN31 1HB (or online via Microsoft Teams). Meeting dates and times will be planned annually in advance.

Agendas and minutes will be produced by NELC. Minutes will be circulated within 2 weeks of the meeting.

The following basic agenda structure shall be:

- Apologies
- Standing Items:
  - Grimsby Town Centre Regeneration including Bus Station
  - Car Parking Strategy
  - Bus Priority including Park and Ride
  - Bus Service Improvement Plan including EV buses
  - LTP3 Update
  - External Funding Bids
- Bus Quality Partnership
- Future EP Developments
- Future EP Board Meetings
- Any Other Business

These arrangements and list of members can also be modified using a bespoke variation mechanism.

### Review of EP Plan and Scheme

The EP Board will conduct an initial, mid-year review of the EP Plan and EP Scheme, to assess whether any modifications are necessary following its first six months in operation. This initial review will consider the working arrangements and the monitoring and reporting procedures.

In March 2023, NELC will request a meeting of the EP Board, to consider the review that shall be completed no later than 31st March 2023.



Thereafter, the EP Scheme will be reviewed annually, by 31st March each year, following the publication of data on progress towards targets, as required by the BSIP. This will ensure that any necessary remedial action can be taken to deliver the targets set out in the BSIP.

The review process of the BSIP, EP Plan and EP Scheme will be conducted by NELC with input from the Enhanced Partnership Board and may be subject to approval (via a formal report) from North East Lincolnshire Council's Cabinet, Scrutiny, or the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport unless otherwise delegated to the Assistant Director for Housing, Highways, Transportation & Planning.

### **Bespoke Arrangement for Varying or Revoking the Enhanced Partnership Scheme**

Variations to the EP Scheme can be made, provided that it will contribute to the implementation of the policies set out in the EP Plan and that the variation will benefit passengers or reduce traffic congestion, noise, or air pollution.

The EP legislation allows flexibility to introduce new scheme content, amend existing content or revoke parts (or all) of a scheme, without the need to follow the full statutory variation procedure.

It is the intention that the mechanism for variation to the EP Scheme will use this flexibility and be a less onerous process. This will be particularly beneficial during the early years of the Partnership as patronage stabilises, post-COVID, the availability of funding is clarified and as the Partnership matures and gains confidence.

Therefore, all variations to the Enhanced Partnership Scheme will be subject to a bespoke voting mechanism as set out in this section.

Consideration will be given to a potential EP Scheme variation, partial or full revocation, proposed by Council, following NELC approval at an appropriate level of authority.

Other members of the EP Board may request consideration, via NELC approval processes, of a variation or revocation, in writing and submitted, by email, to North East Lincolnshire Council at [transport@nelincs.gov.uk](mailto:transport@nelincs.gov.uk). The proposer of a variation should demonstrate how this might contribute to achieving the objectives set out in the BSIP, EP Plan and current local transport policies. Through the Chair of the Enhanced Partnership Board, all requests will be forwarded onto all Board members within 5 working days.

Any variation will need to be consistent with any original approvals. Should the variation make a significant change, a report may need to be considered by NELC's Cabinet, Scrutiny, or the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport unless there is already a relevant delegation of authority available. Following Council approval for a proposed variation or revocation of part or all of an EP Scheme, the Chair will convene the EP Board, giving at least 14 days' notice for the meeting, to consider the proposed variation or revocation proposal. Any Board members that are absent or not expressing a view at the meeting (either in person or in writing) will be deemed to be abstaining from the decision.

Any EP variation or revocation will require a simple majority vote of the Board in favour of the same.

Scheme Variation proposals on matters which are;

- Contrary to existing Council decisions or budget;
- Likely to be significant in terms of their effects;

- Related to local communities;
- Impact on the finances of the Council;

Will have been subject to a formal Council decision following the Council constitution and governance policies and processes. Council decisions are subject to call in and so decisions are not implementable until the call-in period has expired with no call ins, or the call in has been dealt with under the relevant Council process.

If the proposed variation is agreed by all bus operator representatives present, and if NELC also agrees, the EP Scheme variation will be made within seven working days and the revised EP scheme will be published on the Council website or a statement will be issued confirming that the scheme has been varied.

In the event that the Board recommends that the appropriate action would be to revoke the entire EP Scheme, the default Operator objection mechanism set out in the EPs and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018 (as may be varied from time to time) will be used to determine if that course of action should proceed.

In that event, the Steps taken will be as set out in paragraphs 7.27 to 7.33 of the DfT Guidance document, “The National Bus Strategy: Delivering Bus Service Improvement Plans using an Enhanced Partnership”.