

TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND STRATEGIC HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE 12th November 2024
REPORT OF Paul Evans – Assistant Director Infrastructure
SUBJECT Bus Service Improvement Plan
STATUS Open

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

The North East Lincolnshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) 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 on the North East Lincolnshire Bus Service Improvement Plan.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

This report provides an update on the North East Lincolnshire Bus Service Improvement Plan and provides the opportunity to identify any areas for clarification.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

1.1 In 2021, the Government launched the National Bus Strategy (NBS) for England, which sets out the vision and opportunity to deliver better bus services for passengers. The strategy aims to improve the quality of local bus services and increase bus passenger numbers, following the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. As required by the Department for Transport (DfT) and in response to the opportunities offered through the NBS, the Council's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) was developed and describes how a properly funded Enhanced Partnership (EP) will achieve the overarching goal to grow bus patronage back to pre-Covid-19 levels, and then beyond. The BSIP was developed in collaboration with local bus operators and community stakeholders.

1.2 The table below clarifies BSIP programme projects, a description of the project, the status and identifies whether the delivery of the project is on track (Red is off track, amber is slightly off track and green is on track);

Project	Description	Status	Delivery
Bus Priority Measures	Minor highway works to ensure bus punctuality.	On-going	
BSIP Project	The BSIP is subject to project management, monitoring and	On-going	

Management	evaluation.		
Traffic Signal Priority	To allow late running buses priority at traffic signals.	On-going	
Branding and Marketing	To deliver local bus branding and marketing campaigns aimed at encouraging bus use.	On-going	
Transportation Hub	Financial contribution from the BSIP towards the delivery of the Transportation Hub.	On-going	
Bus Services	The BSIP is delivering support for the bus network and delivered a new Bradley Road Bus Service and also delivered up to a 10 minute frequency on the 3 and 4 bus service.	On-going	
CCTV	New CCTV cameras which provide coverage of bus stops in Grimsby Town Centre to reduce anti social behavior.	Complete	
Youth Fares	Discounted tickets for young people.	Complete	
Real Time Bus Information	Delivery of real time bus information screen enhancements.	Complete	
Infrastructure	Improvements to bus shelter waiting facilities.	On-going	
Parking Enforcement	Additional parking enforcement on bus routes.	On-going	
Leisure & Shopper fares ticket	Delivery of £1 leisure and shopper discounted tickets.	On-going	
Pre 09:30 Concessionary travel	Delivery of pre 09:30 travel for bus pass holders from 3 June 2024.	On-going	

1.3 The BSIP is subject to regular bus passenger satisfaction surveys. The table below outlines the final 2023 results, the average for England, the 2024/25 performance targets and the 2024 results to date;

Item	2023 Results - NEL	2023 Average for England	BSIP 2024/25 Target - NEL	2024 Results to date - NEL
Overall Satisfaction	85%	80%	92%	87%
Value for money	71%	67%	77%	70%
Bus stop where you caught the bus	79%	76%	TBC	75%
Length of time you had to	76%	68%	TBC	76%

wait for bus				
Punctuality of bus stop (arriving on time)	79%	70%	82%	78%
Bus driver	87%	85%	82%	86%
Length of time bus journey took	87%	81%	90%	85%

1.4 The table below identifies additional BSIP headline performance;

BSIP Headline Performance	Description
+5% Passengers 2022/23 to 2023/24	Using data supplied by Stagecoach East Midlands, and through the Enhanced Partnership, it has been identified that passenger numbers have increased by 5% in 2023/24 when compared to 2022/23 data, which is up to 88% pre-Covid levels.
+17% Bus Pass Use Jul 23 to July 24	Whilst the number of people with an active Concessionary bus pass in North East Lincolnshire have been approximately 22,000 since 2020, Covid-19 does not seem to have affected the number of people either applying or renewing their bus pass. In April 2024 Concessionary Fares usage was 130,843 and increased 17% to 152,323 in July 2024 which is the highest increase since the Covid-19 pandemic.
+57% Youth Travel since 2019	Although overall passenger numbers have started to recover since the Covid-19 pandemic, youth travel has exceeded pre-covid levels and has increased by 57% since 2019.
+31% Passengers Nov 23	Since the introduction of the £1 Leisure & Shopper ticket in November 2023, ticket sales average 41,000 in a 4-week period. During the first month of delivery Stagecoach reported a 31% growth in passenger journeys during this time, which has continued to grow.

2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 2.1 Once the BSIP funding period ends, all bus services supported by the BSIP will need to be commercially viable and operate without any local authority funding.
- 2.2 It is envisaged the BSIP 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 current economic environment may have an impact on the commercial viability of bus services, which would require future consideration regarding subsidy.
- 2.4 The BSIP provides the Council with an opportunity to be seen as a best practice authority which may enhance future bidding opportunities.

3. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

It is not expected there are any reputational or communications issues associated with this report.

4. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The continued delivery of the BSIP interventions will be dependent on the release of Government funding.

5. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 During the development of the BSIP, including any associated document updates, public consultation was delivered, which identified the need for discounted fares for young people.

5.2 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.

6. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

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.

7. MONITORING COMMENTS

In the opinion of the author, this report does not contain recommended changes to policy or resources (people, finance or physical assets). As a result no monitoring comments have been sought from the Council's Monitoring Officer (Chief Legal Officer), Section 151 Officer (Director of Finance) or Strategic Workforce Lead.

8. WARD IMPLICATIONS

All Wards in North East Lincolnshire are affected by this report.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Portfolio Holder Report (12 February 2024), Bus Service Improvement Plan & Enhanced Bus Quality Partnership Progress Report;

[-Bus-Service-Improvement-Plan-Enhanced-Bus-Quality-Partnership-Progress-ReportPDF-318KBicon-namepaperclip-prefixfa.pdf](#)

Cabinet Report (3 April 2024), North East Lincolnshire Bus Service Improvement Plan;

[Cabinet-Bus-Service-Improvement-Plan-ReportPDF-120KBicon- namepaperclip-prefixfa.pdf](#)

Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Bus Quality Partnership Plan and Scheme;

[North East Lincolnshire Bus Service Improvement Plan June 2024](#)

[PART 1 Enhanced Bus Quality Partnership - January 2024](#)
[NELC Part 2 Scheme](#)

10. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

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