
Date: 23/06/22

Venue: Microsoft Teams Meeting

Present: David Taylor, Independent Consultant (Chair) (DT)
 Clare Waldron, ITP (EP Manager)
 Toby France, Arriva (TF)
 Tom Morgan, Trent Barton (TM)
 Patrick Stringer, Stagecoach (PS)
 Adam Hemingway, Vectare (AH)
 Lee Quincey, Leicestershire County Council (LQ)
 David Atkinson, Harborough District Council (DA)
 Adrian Thorpe, Oadby & Wigston District Council (AT)
 Samuel Islam, ITP (Secretariat) (SI)

Purpose: Leicestershire EP Board Meeting

Minutes take by: Samuel Islam

Minutes of Meeting

	ACTION
<p>1 Welcome and agreement of agenda</p> <p>CW identified an error in the agenda – item 6 should refer to Narborough Station, not Harborough Station.</p>	
<p>2 DfT Feedback on BSIP</p> <p>DT highlighted that the feedback received by Leicestershire County Council from DfT was similar to that received by a number of other authorities, with limited detail regarding why funding was not granted.</p> <p>DT invited responses from other board members.</p> <p>PS suggested that it is a stock response from DfT as opposed to a detailed and considered response – there is no delving deeper into understanding specific issues.</p> <p>DT asked all present (and those operators who are not members of the Board) to provide their thoughts on the specific comments received</p>	ALL

from DfT (shown as bullet points with italics below) and how the BSIP might be revised to incorporate the feedback by **31st July 2022**:

- *We thought that your BSIP was well-presented and followed a clear and logical structure. We would have welcomed more detail on the local context and the challenges/barriers to bus use in the county.*
- *There was evidence of local engagement, however we would have welcomed more detail on the public survey which was undertaken, including the questions and the results.*
- *We welcome how the BSIP is aligned to wider transport strategies including your Local Transport Plan.*
- *We also welcome your commitment to working with operators and Leicester City Council. Your BSIP refers to discussions with neighbouring authorities and community transport operators, it would have been beneficial to note what the outcomes of these discussions were in your BSIP.*
- *We would have welcomed more developed and ambitious bus priority proposals, including evidence on why specific interventions have been chosen.*
- *We would have welcomed an explanation as to why BRT or Superbus measures were not appropriate for the area.*
- *Your BSIP could have been strengthened with more detail on key outputs and outcomes and how they are connected to your proposals.*
- *We would have welcomed more detail in your BSIP about the integration of bus with other travel modes such as rail, cycling and walking.*

LQ invited board members to suggest any successful BSIPs that could be used as reference to improve the Leicestershire BSIP and strengthen the case for future funding.

ALL

Identify successful BSIPs from similar LTAs to inform any enhancements to the Leicestershire BSIP

CW, SI, DT

3 Funding Opportunities

DT announced there had been no funding update – but hinted at potential opportunities in the letter received by the County Council.

DT invited input from board members regarding funding opportunities.

DA asked if Warwickshire County Council had received any funding for their BSIP. PS confirmed that that had not.

DT stated that Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire were the only authorities that received funding in the relative locality.

DA asked would it be worth meeting with them. DT confirmed that the neighbouring local authorities meet on a regular basis to discuss BSIP issues. *(This group includes officers from: Leicestershire, Leicester City, Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham City, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Rutland, North and West Northamptonshire)*

LQ indicated that all BSIPS are available online via the relevant LTA website.

4 EP Scheme 1: Service change dates progress

CW provided an update on EP scheme 1, which involves operators of qualifying services agreeing a fixed set of service change dates per year. Operators had made contact to indicate services which would sit outside of this scheme as they operate predominantly in neighbouring LTA areas and are therefore governed by differing term dates, etc. The timescale for implementing this scheme is to be agreed. October 2022 is when BRG funding is scheduled to end, so the beginning of the next calendar year is proposed for the first fixed change date to be implemented. Richard Briggs in the Safe and Sustainable Travel team is leading on this scheme.

One of the questions that arose was whether Leicestershire could align its change dates with those of neighbouring authorities. Warwickshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Leicester City would be contacted to see if they intend to standardise change dates, and what those dates might be.

CW encouraged operators who hadn't already suggested their preferred change dates to do so, so a list of the top 6 preferred dates could be compiled before reaching final agreement.

CW indicated that Vectare and NCT services are Nottinghamshire based so unlikely to be included in this scheme. AH responded that new services were being launched in Leicestershire on 1st August which may be able to sit within this scheme.

SI, CW

CW asked AH to provide an update regarding the new Vectare services and their inclusion within the change dates scheme (CW will share with Richard Briggs).

AH

TM asked whether it would be better to hold off aligning revised dates until April 2023 to allow for BRG and concessionary reimbursement issues to stabilise.

CW responded that 6 change dates should be sufficiently spaced to make changes in response to any funding announcements which may be introduced. CW also indicated that it would be preferable to go with the start of 2023 for standardised change date implementation.

TF said that he would be happy to propose dates to commence in Jan 2023 and review in the autumn (2022) to account for any changes from April 2023.

Ask Richard Briggs to have a separate meeting with operators to discuss and share proposals via email and invite comments DA voiced concern over potential cuts which may affect services, and whether Christmas time would be the right time to implement change dates.

CW

DT suggested that it is difficult to establish a good time objectively, but starting it from Jan 2023 and keeping it under review would be a measured approach.

5 EP Scheme 2: Bus stop infrastructure audit update

CW updated board members on the first meeting regarding the bus stop infrastructure audit, with David Brookes, Ross Hitchcock and Toby France. Issues explored included: bus stop hierarchies; at stop infrastructure; bus bay length and width; and at stop information. ITP is undertaking a review of good practice elsewhere which may be of relevance to Leicestershire as a rural LTA. ITP will also post a question on Basecamp to request good practice examples.

Hertfordshire was suggested as a good example of an LTA which has been working on bus bay issues.

CW indicated that Warwickshire is currently undertaking bus stop auditing and standards development work which can feed into our work.

TM asked what customers' views are with regard to roadside infrastructure, and suggested customer consultation would be useful CW will contact Leicester City Council regarding their bus stop infrastructure changes, to consider how consistency of approach might

SI, CW

be achieved and check the BSIP online consultation results for feedback on passenger infrastructure

CW would consult with Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group re. roadside infrastructure priorities.

SI, CW

It was not known if Leicestershire has an accessibility officer to consult on roadside infrastructure issues, CW would find out.

LQ indicated that a bus user forum will be established which will be able to feed into the standards work.

LQ

CW indicated that the bus stop infrastructure project is scheduled to take 4 months to complete, although it has been delayed in getting started. A follow-up meeting was scheduled for July.

CW indicated that a questionnaire is being developed for the Narborough Road South Corridor (B4114) audit.

LQ indicated that a hierarchy of stops should be considered, in terms of usage, locality and classifying stops and facilities, based on location and population size and what is required at certain locations.

TM proposed that a minimum standard should be established – and queried whether there is anything from the Transport Focus survey we can use?

CW indicated that Leicester City intend to participate in the Transport Focus ongoing survey, but Leicestershire may not.

DA voiced concern regarding the management of infrastructure provision depending on what is needed at each bus stop location. DA also expressed the importance of a strong brand / identity to convey the message of a unified network.

TM suggested it is good for the customer to know who is responsible for maintaining the infrastructure.

DT asked what the brand should be for the Leicestershire bus network

TF expressed concerns of branding at cross-boundary locations. Any on bus branding would need to be appropriate for county passengers. DT suggested the branding should appear on fixed infrastructure rather than on vehicles – TF agreed with the suggestion.

The issue of seeking to complement rather than compete with any Leicester City branding was raised. City and County branding does not need to be the same as there are county services that don't go into Leicester.

<p>TM echoed TF's comments, stating that more confusion would be caused by not distinguishing between brands.</p> <p>PS also identified that some Stagecoach services also operated into Northants which would also raise branding conflicts.</p>	
<p>6 Passenger Charter</p> <p>DT presented slides regarding the elements for inclusion in a passenger charter, highlighting that all EPs should develop and agree a charter for the entire BSIP area.</p> <p>CW suggested that there are examples in existence that Leicestershire may draw upon rather than starting with a blank piece of paper.</p> <p>TF recommended the Warwickshire and Milton Keynes examples as a starting point.</p> <p>Circulate the Warwickshire and Milton Keynes passenger charters and ask operators to identify elements which they are comfortable with as well as those they would wish to change</p>	<p>SI, CW, ALL</p>
<p>7 Transport Hub at Narborough Rail Station</p> <p>LQ introduced plans identified by Blaby District Council to develop Narborough stations as a mobility hub. Blaby DC manages the car park at the station and is keen for the new Rural Mobility Fund-financed FoxConnect Demand Responsive Transport service to serve the site, as well as providing space on site for driver breaks. The site has also received funding for new cycle storage.</p> <p>LQ stressed that the proposed hub approach for Narborough chimes with Leicestershire's BSIP aspirations for seamless interchange between modes, particularly in rural areas. He agreed to keep the Board updated on progress at future meetings.</p>	
<p>8 Bus User Forum</p> <p>CW indicated that the County Council is considering how to proceed in establishing a Bus User Forum for the county. Discussions with Leicester City indicated that they are planning to adopt the Transport Focus approach of ongoing customer surveys, rather than establishing a separate group.</p> <p>LQ assured the meeting that LCC is keen to establish the Forum and will look to move things forward in discussion with operators.</p>	

9 AOB

LQ raised concerns over branding of the network and the need to formulate a working group with partners to explore branding options which would seek to strike a balance between city and county approaches.

DT asked who would be interested in joining a branding working group.

DA indicated his willingness to be part of a branding working group. TF indicated that he would like to bring Arriva marketing colleagues into any branding conversation.

TF supported the proposal for a transport hub at Narborough Station and highlighted the synergy between the EP scheme to develop roadside infrastructure standards based on the Narborough Road South audit.

TF highlighted the importance of enabling wayfinding from Narborough station to main stops for fixed line bus routes, which could be rolled into work around the station.

In response to TF's question., CW confirmed that David Jones from CrossCountry and Laura Etheridge from EMR are part of a working group being developed by John Richardson at Blaby DC to take the hub concept forward.

TM suggested 'Loughborough pedestrianisation and bus access' could be added as a future EP Board agenda item. Focus on how to encourage bus usage in Loughborough town, improve efficiency of the network, reduce costs and improve journey times.

DT confirmed this will be added as a future agenda item.

CW/SI

DT raised the suggestion of a targeted marketing campaign as a quick win to increase post-Covid bus usage. DT suggested a coordinated effort with a uniform and cohesive theme under a single brand would be beneficial for Leicestershire.

ALL

DT indicated that the County Council has employed a new social media officer who may be available to help – something to be added to remit to working group.

10. Date and time of next meetings

DT indicated that the EP forum meeting will be scheduled for September, followed by the next board meeting in October. Either or both of these could be hybrid (face-to-face and virtual).

DT thanked all for their attendance and contributions and closed the meeting
