
Date: 21/09/2023

Venue: Microsoft Teams

Present: David Taylor, Independent Consultant (Chair) (DT)
 Lee Quincey, Leicestershire County Council (LQ)
 Hina Gadhia, Leicestershire County Council (HG)
 Andy Gibbons, Leicester City Council (AG)
 Bijel Mistry, Leicester City Council (BM)
 Barrie Walford, North West Leicestershire District Council (BW)
 Nicola Tidy, Nottingham City Transport (NT)
 Andy Allen, Arriva (AA)
 Adam Hemingway, Vectare (AH)
 David Bott, First Bus (DB)
 David Robinson, Stagecoach (DR)
 Patrick Stringer, Stagecoach (PS)
 Steve Jones, Harborough Transport Action Group, Harborough Rail Users, Rail Future East Midlands (SJ)
 Bruce Wakley, Campaign to Re-Open the Ivanhoe Line (BW)
 Clare Waldron, ITP (CW)
 Rebecca Phillips, ITP (RP)

Purpose: Leicestershire Enhanced Partnership (EP) Forum Meeting

Minutes taken by: Rebecca Phillips (RP)

Minutes of Meeting

1. Welcome and Introductions

DT welcomed all to the meeting. Two new members were introduced to the group, with their attendance arising from the Bus User Group.

ACTION

Apologies / declined invitations were received from Ross Hitchcock (trentbarton), Matt King (Arriva), Chris Brown (Centrebus), Lawsons of Corby, Andy Yeomanson and Leon Charikar (Leicestershire County Council), Rob Mitchel and Liz Hopwell (Charnwood Borough Council), John Richardson (Blaby District Council), Bill Cullen (Hinkley Borough Council), Karen Beavin (North West Leicestershire Borough Council), and David Jones (Cross Country Trains).

2. Minutes of previous meetings

DT and CW informed the group of actions from the previously held EP Forum AGM (18th May 2023) and the EP Board (22nd June 2023).

EP Forum AGM Actions:

The inclusion of Leicester City Council as a non-voting member on the EP Board had been discussed at a previous EP Forum. It was considered that the inclusion of all neighbouring Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) should be considered. A vote was held among EP Board members via email on the question: 'Should all local transport authorities that border Leicestershire be invited to join the Leicestershire Enhanced Partnership Board on a non-voting basis?' Seven members voted in favour, one had no preference and one voted against. The decision to invite neighbouring LTAs to attend EP Board meetings was carried.

LQ added that the process for inviting LTAs should be similar to the process for inviting the District Councils, i.e. representatives may rotate in relation to the relevance of agenda items but will not be entitled to EP Board voting rights.

AG suggested the use of cross-boundary service provision to decide attendance of members. LQ agreed that it would be a qualifier to consider.

Membership of the EP Board differs from the EP Forum which is open to all local authorities and neighbouring authorities.

EP Board Meeting (22nd June):

All actions covered from EP Board are due to be picked up during the EP Forum.

3. BSIP Update and Refresh

LQ provided an update on the updating and refresh of the BSIP.

At the last meeting, LCC had announced its allocation of BSIP Plus funding, totalling £1.79 million. This was directed mainly at retaining and supporting bus services. A second tranche of BSIP Plus funding

has now been confirmed – another £1.79 million. BSIP+ funding is for revenue rather than capital spend.

DfT is due to bring out new guidance on BSIP updates and refreshes at the end of October 2023. As such, the review of the BSIP has been paused, with work likely to commence in the new financial year 2024/25.

LCC is focussing on feasibility work to inform the spend profile of the BSIP Plus funding for schemes and guide the BSIP refresh. These studies will explore a range of potential schemes including rural mobility hubs, Demand Responsive Transport (DRT), rural transport, electrification of the network, congestion pinch points, and youth ticketing schemes (learning from the under-22 fare scheme in Nottinghamshire) and multi-operator ticket opportunities.

LCC aims to use the BSIP Plus funding to help gain more tangible outcomes for users, whilst also being mindful of the cost of supported services.

4. Update on Supported Public Transport

In line with DfT guidance, LCC has commissioned a review of its existing policy and strategy for supporting public transport services, which is due to be completed by the end of 2023. Currently, the spend on supported services significantly exceeds the budget providing a number of challenges.

SJ queried what the split of supported and commercial services is within Leicestershire. LQ advised that there around 16/17 contracted bus services and 30 DRT services which are supported, plus a Digital DRT service which is supported through DfT's Rural Mobility Fund.

5. Scheme 1 – Standardisation of Bus Service Change Dates

This scheme was introduced in April 2023, confirming a fixed set of dates (over a weekend) through the year when service changes, such as revised timetables or routes, will be made.

DT asked operators to share their experiences of implementation of the changes. AA indicated that they are working well currently, with the option for weekend changes beneficial. DB agreed that the option to change over a weekend is useful to enable different operators' practices.

BW queried whether operators coordinate timetable changes with rail timetables. DT advised that bus service changes are largely linked to school term timetables, whereas rail service changes happen twice a

<p>year and are agreed significantly further in advance than within the bus industry.</p> <p>AA added that service changes in relation to rail timetables depend on the priority of the issue and type of issue that the service change is aiming to resolve. Service changes are generally related to schools which are deemed to be the priority. Changes will be made where possible, but it can be difficult to coincide with rail changes.</p>	
<p>6. Scheme 2 – Development of Minimum Standards for Roadside Infrastructure</p> <p>The roadside infrastructure standards document is in its finalised form and is due to be made available online.</p> <p>LQ added that LCC is currently scoping the online presence of the EP and associated documents. This will likely be through a specific EP page on the Leicestershire County Council website. As part of this, the website will be made more accessibility and user friendly.</p> <p>ACTION – LCC to continue work on the online presence of the EP including uploading the roadside infrastructure standards document</p>	LCC
<p>7. Passenger Charter</p> <p>The Bus Passenger Charter has been completed and a final version has been issued to operators. This will be added to the LCC website/EP webpage in due course.</p>	
<p>8. Public Transport User Group Update</p> <p>CW provided an update on the Public Transport User Group which had been recently held. Attendees provided a range of feedback on the Bus Passenger Charter and other more general bus industry issues. This session was well attended with 20-25 attendees, providing good coverage of the County.</p> <p><i>Bus Passenger Charter</i></p> <p>Attendees were pleased with the amendment requested relating to bus passenger behaviour when travelling. There were suggestions for further marketing activities to encourage good behaviour of passengers when travelling, such as a poster campaign.</p> <p>NT responded that many operators already have these types of posters and a more generic campaign may have limited impact.</p>	

AA agreed that operators have these posters and there is the risk of having too many posters. AA added that antisocial behaviour was usually more bus stop related than on bus.

General Feedback

CW highlighted some of the feedback from the User Group to the Forum:

- There were concerns of slow services between towns and whether there was scope to create more direct services or services which feed into faster services.
- Many did not know how to find public transport information, highlighting the opportunity to improve promotion of Traveline and Choose How You Move.
- Queries on the success of the £2 single fare initiative.

SJ asked for operators experiences with the £2 fare initiative and whether it has been a success. NT informed that users had typically changed the type of ticket previously bought and increases in patronage are difficult to conclude given the COVID-19 pandemic. It has also created an expectation of lower fares in the future.

CW added that members of the User Group queried whether to share the minutes from those meetings with members of the EP Forum/Board. LCC can field operator specific queries as far as possible but this could be a good opportunity for operators to gain user feedback and provide a response.

AA agreed it would be insightful to hear feedback as it provides suggestions beyond the usual customer service channels.

ACTION – Circulate the minutes of the Public Transport User Group meeting with the EP Forum/Board

ITP

SJ queried the extent to which operators see themselves in competition with each other. AA replied that it's healthy competition but not cut-throat; bus operators are all competing against the car rather than with other operators. NT and AG agreed.

NT queried what the members of the User Group are expecting from the meetings. CW replied it is mainly an acknowledgement of feedback and potential for changes to be made. LQ added that it gives users a voice and a platform where views will be heard.

HG added the need to ensure non-users are encouraged to join and provide feedback as that would likely also provide good value to operators.

SJ agreed with HG adding that publicity of the group needs improving. HG advised that participating in the group would be easier with the new dedicated web page.

9. Potential Future EP Scheme and Priorities

DT asked all attendees for any suggestions for future EP schemes.

BW suggested improved measures for bus/rail integration at train stations such as timetable changes to ensure a bus arrives 5 minutes before and leaves 5 minutes after a train arrives.

NT queried whether LCC has a summarised document with all schemes and suggested timescales to review at each meeting.

ACTION – Produce a list of EP schemes and estimated timescales for delivery

LCC

10. AOB

AG highlighted the second round of ZEBRA funding for zero-emission buses, offering the support of Leicester City Council if required. LQ added that LCC is considering options and exploring suggestions with operators currently. A notice to bid must be submitted by the middle of October with the bid being submitted by the middle of December. There is a particular focus on those areas with a rural element and those which have not received ZEBRA funding previously.

LQ informed the group of a number of resourcing issues within LCC and work on a plan to manage these vacancies as best as possible. As such, a number of schemes are not progressing as quickly as possible.

SJ and BW queried the potential for an improvement in bus and rail connectivity and how operators think integration would work. This included the suggestions for services in the Swadlincote area.

As Arriva operate services within this area, AA provided a response. Arriva can explore opportunities that arise and look to accommodate rail in future with involvement from an early stage. There would be some nervousness with the introduction of a rail network, given its potential to change current bus passenger's journeys.

AG highlighted that improving reliability of bus services typically is deemed a higher priority than improving integration between modes, but operators do accommodate rail services where they can.

LQ added from an LCC perspective, feasibility work due to be commissioned will explore opportunities for better bus and rail

interchange alongside wayfinding, information provision and advertising, aiming to improve integration.	
<p>11. Actions and Next Steps</p> <p>ACTION – Circulate the minutes of the Public Transport User Group meeting with the EP Forum/Board</p> <p>ACTION – Continue work on the online presence of the EP including upload the minimum standards for roadside infrastructure document</p> <p>ACTION – Produce a list of EP schemes and estimated timescales for delivery</p>	<p>LCC</p> <p>LCC</p> <p>LCC</p>
<p>12. Date and Time of Next Meetings</p> <p>The next EP Board Meeting Thursday 2nd November 2023</p> <p>The next EP Forum is due to be held Thursday 8th February 2024</p>	