

Leicestershire Enhanced Bus Partnership Forum

Minutes of meeting held on 26th September 2024 at 1:30pm via MS Teams

Present			
Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
David Taylor (DT)	Chair / Independent	Hina Gadhia (HG)	LCC
Christian Allen-Clement (CA)	Trentbarton	Andrew Jeffreys (AJ)	LCC
David Brookes (DB)	Centrebus	Richard Briggs (RB)	LCC
Barry Allitt (BA)	CT4N	Yusuf Isat (YI)	LCC
David Bott	First		
Lee McClory (LM)	NCT	Bijel Mistry (BM)	Leicester City Council
Ashley Holland (AH)	Roberts	Liz Hopwell (LH)	Charnwood BC
Alex Niemczyk (AN)	Roberts	Lilith Hine-Dickinson (LH)	Melton BC
Patrick Stringer (PS)	Stagecoach		
		Steve Jones (SJ)	Harborough TAG
Apologies			
David Conway	NCT	Emma Odabas	LCC
Ross Hitchcock	Trentbarton	Sharon Stacey	Hinckley & Bosworth
Adam Hemingway	Central Connect	Toby France (TF)	Arriva

	Item	Lead
1	<p>Welcome and introductions</p> <p>Deputies for the member apologies above were noted and welcomed.</p>	DT / All
2	<p>Minutes and actions from previous meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EP Forum 9th May 2024 EP Board 29th July 2024 <p>The completed and outstanding actions from these meetings were agreed with further updates being provided under the Forum agenda.</p>	DT
3	<p>LBSIP24 refresh update</p> <p>The refreshed LBSIP24 document in design format was approved by the LCC Cabinet on 13th September and submitted to the DfT as required. It has also been shared directly with EP members and is publicly available to view on the BSIP webpage on Choose How You Move and the corporate LCC websites or on request. The document is themed around the vision of a single system with improved information and ticketing offers for passengers as well as more integration of different journey objectives to improve connectivity across the network. EP members noted the report.</p>	HG

<p>4</p>	<p>Passenger Transport Network reviews update</p> <p>Planning for the network reviews and associated engagement through a series of Sustainable Travel Roadshows continues with Melton being the first event taking place on Monday 14th, Wednesday 16th and Saturday 19th October at Melton Civic Suites. Other events will follow across the rest of the county from now into Spring 2025 and background work is taking place on this engagement as well as preparing for the procurement and implementation stages in each of the 5 phases.</p> <p>The roadshows are not focussed solely on public transport but are an opportunity for LCC and other partners (such as Carbon Team, Public Health etc) to promote walking, cycling and other sustainable and healthy travel modes, as well as for operators to have stands with information about their commercial service offer or as community partners and local employers.</p> <p>In terms of procurement, LCC has set up a new Dynamic Purchasing System which operators have been invited to register on by 9th October so that they can submit bids for the first tender phase.</p> <p>SJ: How are community stakeholders being involved in contributing ideas for changes such as serving new housing in Market Harborough?</p> <p>HG: Local knowledge from groups like Harborough is welcomed as part of the data gathering / analysis that LCC and ITP are carrying out for all the review phases. Harborough area is phase 4 of the network review therefore, any suggestions put forward by Harborough TAG can be considered. There have already been discussions with HAG and further engagement with the group is welcome in the meantime.</p> <p>DB: How long will tenders be for and where does the BSIP funding sit in relation to the supported services budget?</p> <p>HG: BSIP funding is additional to the supported budget but is dependent on specific conditions including DfT deadlines. LCC is awaiting confirmation to carry forward some spend into the next financial year but have been able to use some of the funding already to maintain the current provision including some de minimis support as well as on marketing, promotions and the Leicestershire Buses branding. On tender durations, some of the Melton services may be longer due to Section106 developer contributions.</p> <p>DB: Does 'Change Winter 2024/25' mean when the new network is introduced as this will affect when registration changes need to be submitted?</p> <p>HG: Yes, the aim is that Melton changes will be implemented in January 2025.</p> <p>DB: The roadshow timing is unhelpful given that some Melton services have been served termination notices and the new network is not yet known.</p> <p>HG: The roadshows are not intended to be about any individual services but to give people information about the aims of the review and what LCC want the new network to look like in terms of improved travel opportunities.</p>	<p>HG</p>
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	AJ: It also allows opportunities to launch the Leicestershire Buses brand to communities and the partnership work behind it.	
5	<p>Fares Task & Finish Group / promotions update</p> <p>LCC took informal soundings through the Task and Finish group on options for an October-November promotion. Four options were then shared to all EP operators: Free Travel Fridays; Free Travel Saturdays; Free / Discounted u16 Travel; Free / Discounted Group Travel. Group and Saturday travel were first and second preferences of which LCC considers a universal offer to be more attractive and in line with other EPs where BSIP funding had or is being used to support free fare promotions.</p> <p>In opting for Free Travel Saturdays, experience from the Easter young person's promotion has been considered to minimise issues experienced around cross-boundary travel and clear messaging that supports bus drivers. The final agreed proposal is for free travel on any journey where a passenger boards or alights in Leicestershire on 7 consecutive Saturdays from 19th October to 30th November.</p> <p>Most Forum bus operators have already agreed to take part and provided loadings and forecast revenue data. Reimbursement will be on a 100% basis against actual revenue foregone once the promotion has ended although performance will be monitored on a weekly basis in case of a need to respond to any significant fluctuation of patronage.</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to contact participating operators for confirmation of data and services in / out of scope of the promotion</p> <p>Other promotions that could be funded through the BSIP grant include seasonal enhancement of the Park & Rides and possible capacity increases on routes serving key retail and other destinations over the upcoming winter holiday period.</p> <p>Comms and marketing plans have been drafted and, as well as headliners, will include FAQs to provide customers with more detailed information about the promotion, when it applies, how to plan their journeys, what they can expect while on the bus – especially if new or infrequent bus users – and other relevant information on safe travel. This also provides a space for messaging around any capacity issues experienced as a result of increased loadings.</p> <p>Full information about all services in and out of scope will be updated on Choose How You Move. Mirror pages could be supplied to operators for customisation and upload to their own websites. Time constraints mean that the promotion would be digital with no hardcopy or physical advertising except possibly on bus destination displays (subject to operators' views and regulatory requirements) as an easily visible indication of the free fares offer to intending passengers.</p> <p>SJ: How will monitoring be able to identify increased patronage either in total or to differentiate between passengers who are using the bus just because of the free fare?</p>	AJ

	<p>HG: Data has been obtained for the same period in 2023 and data recorded on drivers' ticket machines will measure the impact of the scheme. The ticket data will be required from operators in order for the reimbursement to be processed.</p> <p>DB: Yes, it will work in similar fashion to how drivers already press a button to record ENCTS passholders and would give a total figure as well as how many passengers are on board at each stage of the route.</p> <p>BM: What cross-boundary issues were experienced during the previous promotion?</p> <p>HG: There were some issues when passengers boarded in the county to travel to Leicester and had to pay for the return. There was a map on Choose How You Move that could be used to identify if the passenger was boarding in Leicestershire. The new scheme covers all journeys regardless of boundary provided they travel at some point in the county.</p> <p>BM: The other issue with boundaries is that some people might say they are travelling to the county to get the free fare but actually get off within the City boundary.</p> <p>AJ: Yes, that is a risk but a proportionate one in relation to the offer only being available on 7 specific dates. At the other extreme, there may be passengers who use a longer distance route to outside of the county but again they are likely to be in a minority and will have met the minimum condition to travel within Leicestershire.</p> <p>DT: Is there an informal consensus from members on branding the promotion as Super Saturdays?</p> <p>HG: This will all be reflected in the comms pack that is being prepared to share with participating operators shortly</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to circulate comms pack to operators for feedback and finalisation</p>	
6	<p>Branding Task & Finish Group update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHYM website • Leicestershire Buses branding <p>The finalised Leicestershire Buses branding has been made available to all EP members. There are two versions in green and white and black and white respectively for use on publicity and promotional materials as appropriate. Branding guideline will be developed with the T&F group.</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to schedule next Branding T&F meeting</p> <p>All EP information has now been brought together on the Leicestershire Buses webpage on Choose How You Move which enables a more accessible structure and links to information about the formal EP documents and processes. The new page was demonstrated to members for feedback.</p> <p>SJ: It's good to see that information about PlusBus availability is included on CHYM as this is an under-used and not widely known facility.</p>	AJ

	<p>HG: CHYM is a dynamic micro-site that can be quickly and easily amended as required, for example, to make information about rail travel and facilities more visible.</p> <p>ACTION: All to feedback to LCC about the EP webpage and any other aspects of CHYM</p>	
7	<p>Feedback from PTUG meeting 12th September 2024</p> <p>Comments made by PTUG members in email correspondence and verbally at the meeting include a mix of service issues and observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delays to buses using Loughborough (High Street, Leicester Road, Pinfold Gate, Woodgate junction) • Age of Arriva buses on route 127 • Connections between Roberts route 7 and Diamond 19 in Measham – hour wait for connection to Ashby – risk of underuse • Routing of Arriva service in Ibstock does not serve village centre / high street • RTI information on Centrebus route 22/A at Leicester Station stops • Level of provision to Wigston and south-west Leicester compared to infrequent service Leicester – Kirby Muxloe, Desford and beyond • Franchising as an option – Cambs & Peterborough CA consultation cited • Future of £2 fare cap – Ministerial statement • Next stop due information on buses • How is FoxConnect performing? • New / additional P&R at County Hall? • Reroute alternate journeys on Diamond Airway 9 via Newbold Coleorton and Worthington? • Expectant mothers pictograms on buses? <p>Most of these have been followed up or are being shared with operators directly or through T&Fs as necessary. Responses will be recorded in PTUG minutes.</p> <p>DT: The meeting agenda included changes to format and frequency but this wasn't covered due to time. However, it is a bit of a gap that meetings only take place twice a year compared to Board and Forum meetings. Could PTUG meetings be increased to match?</p> <p>AJ: Yes, and it would go alongside conversations about changes to meeting times, dates and frequency. PTUG is an essential part of the EP and any changes that help to reassure them that they have a real voice that influences our work will be welcome.</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to canvass PTUG members on changes including an additional meeting date in 2025</p>	AJ
8	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting format <p>DT: Do Forum members have any views on changing meeting format to hybrid or in-person?</p>	All

	BA: Travel and diary issues make online a more effective use of attendees' time although there will always be an occasional happy medium. Perhaps consider one in-person a meeting a year?	
9	DoNMs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EP Board – 7th November 2024 • EP Forum – 6th February 2025 	All