

Minutes

HaskoningDHV UK Ltd.
Mobility & Infrastructure

Present: David Taylor (DT) Chair
Lee Quincey (LQ), Emma Odabas (EO), Hina Gadhia (HG), - LCC
Nicola Tidy (NT) - NCT
Liz Hopwell (LH) – Charnwood Borough Council
Ross Hitchcock (RH) - Kinchbus
David Bott (DB) – First Bus
Toby France (TF) - Arriva
David Robinson (DR) - Stagecoach
Andy Gibbons (AG) - Leicester City Council
Bijel Mistry (BM) - Leicester City Council
Gill Callingham (GC) - Blaby District Council
Barry Allitt (BA) – CT4N
Steve Jones (SJ) - Harborough Transport Action Group

Clare Waldron (CW), ITP
Matthew Tough (MT), ITP (Minutes)

Apologies: David Jones, David Brookes
From: Matthew Tough
Date: 08 February 2024
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Classification: Open
Enclosures: N/A

Subject: Leicestershire EP Forum

Number	Details	Action
1.	<p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>DT introduced Barry Allitt (BA) as a new member of the Forum. BA introduced himself as the Commercial Director at CT4N. Gill Callingham (GC) introduced herself as the Interim Director at Blaby District Council, informing the meeting this would likely be her only time in attendance, following the appointment of a new Director in April 2024, who will attend future meetings.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of Previous Meetings</p> <p>- EP Forum held on 21st September 2023</p> <p>DT summarised the actions and next steps from the previous Forum meeting.</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate the minutes of the PTUG meeting with EP Forum/Board membership had been completed • Continue to work on the online Presence this was ongoing and was further discussed in the Branding item • Produce a list of EP schemes and estimated timescales for delivery. LQ indicated that this was also in progress. <p>The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">- EP Board held on 2nd November 2023</p> <p>LQ informed the meeting that LCC had not been successful in recruiting an EP Manager but have appointed Emma Odabas (EO) as the Manager of the newly created Sustainable Travel and Transport team. The formation of this integrated team is designed to make LCC’s transport operations more streamlined and seamless moving forward.</p> <p>LCC are in the process of drawing up a recruitment plan to bring additional resource into the team and specific Enhanced Partnership focussed resource will be built into that plan..</p> <p>EO introduced herself, stating that the Sustainable Travel and Transport team would take on more responsibility for the EP work and delivering on the BSIP. This should mean people have to deal with fewer people in the Council when carrying out EP business, with familiar faces and a coordinated approach. She stated she would be happy to be contacted by people outside of the Forum meetings if they wish to discuss any future business.</p> <p>LQ informed the meeting that LCC was still awaiting a decision from DfT regarding the ZEBRA bid submitted before Christmas.</p> <p>The proposed branding and youth fares task and finish groups have now been established and the update on the first meetings are picked up later in today’s agenda.</p>	
3.	<p>BSIP and passenger transport update</p> <p>LQ reported that LCC has received BSIP Plus and Network North funding to maintain, support and improve its passenger transport network. The BSIP Plus funding is broken down into two tranches of £1.79 million (totalling £3.58 million) to be spend in 2023-24 and 2024-25, whilst the Network North funding is a £4.05 million allocation from the reappropriated HS2 fund. LQ advised that strict conditions are attached to use of the monies which are revenue</p>	

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	<p>rather than capital, with outputs to be realised within 12 months. The proposed breakdown of how the funding should be spent was detailed in a cabinet report – see links below:</p> <p>Cabinet Report Improving Passenger Transport Cabinet 191223 FINAL.pdf (leics.gov.uk)</p> <p>Passenger Transport Policy E&T Asset Management Policy (leics.gov.uk)</p> <p>Passenger Transport Strategy Appendix B Passenger Transport Strategy.pdf (leics.gov.uk)</p> <p>The intention behind the Policy and Strategy is to strengthen the existing commercial network, and improve the quality of the supported network, via a combination of scheduled, flexible and demand responsive transport solutions which better reflect levels of travel demand. There will be a DfT visit later in February where LCC aims to outline how the BSIP money will be spent and the benefits this will provide.</p>	
4.	<p>Update on first Youth Fares task and finish group meeting</p> <p>CW provided an update on the youth fares meeting. She stated that operators had agreed to the inclusion of youth fares schemes within the original BSIP, including standardising the age of a child fare across operators in the county, and the development of a young person’s fare scheme, possibly up to age 25.</p> <p>The task and finish group comprises four operators, two of which joined the meeting with LCC officers and ITP earlier this week. It was decided to pilot a scheme offering free travel for children/young people over the two-week Easter 2024 school holiday period, to test whether cost is a barrier to travel for young people. Operators have been contacted for comment on the proposed scheme and whether they wish to participate.</p> <p>NT apologised that she couldn’t attend the meeting, but questioned whether NCT could apply the promotion at its Nottinghamshire stops, or only administer it within Leicestershire.</p> <p>EO responded that the aim is to encourage bus use and we shouldn’t overly focus on local authority boundaries, so whilst some people may abuse the pilot, getting more people on the bus is a benefit, whilst acknowledging the point about council tax from one area benefiting those from another. EO stressed that LCC is committed to increasing bus usage in the BSIP, and that this scheme offers an opportunity to do that.</p>	

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	<p>NT thanked EO for her response and said NCT could administer it only to people who board in Leicestershire should that be needed. CW suggested that the aim should be to put as few restrictions on the scheme as possible, as it is only a two-week pilot. NT noted that Lothian Buses had seen a 17% rise in patronage over the last 2 years, and it was considered that free travel for U22s was the primary driver for this.</p> <p>TF added that he agreed with the need to make it as simple as possible. He noted the data request was subtly different to what was agreed within the meeting, as he assumed it was only journeys that started in Leicestershire, rather than journeys that start and finish within the county. He suggested Arriva may provide two sets of data to match the data requested in the meeting, and then in the subsequent email. RH agreed with TF's comment that the request that has come out is slightly different.</p> <p>CW agreed to catchup with EO to ask if the data request needs to be revised.</p> <p>NT questioned whether discussion on how the pilot will be publicised has taken place. CW said that it hadn't but that it would soon, noting there is another Task and Finish group in two weeks. HG suggested that a comms plan would be in place to roll out the pilot once details were finalised. EO suggested that maybe we record future sessions to keep a record for when invitees cannot attend.</p>	<p>CW</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Update on first EP Branding task and finish group meeting</p> <p>DT summarised that the first branding task and finish group was about setting the scene for branding the Enhanced Partnership and stated that the branding of the EP had also been discussed at the Public Transport User Group (PTUG) meeting on 25th January. He stressed the importance of consistency, generating revenue, but above all, customer satisfaction, creating a recognisable brand which doesn't compete with those of commercial bus operators. He acknowledged many people don't actually know what the EP is, and suggested we looked at a website and infrastructure as a way of branding, and that it was considered that 'Choose How You Move' would be a good starting point for a website. He re-emphasised that the brand would be an umbrella for all operators to acknowledge but not replace existing brands.</p>	

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	<p>DT summarised that feedback from the PTUG and the task and finish group had been received and would be taken into consideration and welcomed Forum members to share their views.</p> <p>EO noted the difficulties of the branding task and finish group compared with the youth fares, stating that coming up with a brand is a process requiring multiple inputs, and welcomed the operator feedback at the meeting. She suggested the benefit of building on a brand that's already there which promotes all sustainable travel, rather than spending money on a new site just for buses.</p> <p>In response, SJ asked what else could be included other than bus. EO responded she didn't mean the branding would include multiple modes, and that a bus brand would be developed, just that the first meeting was more a process of setting a direction and ruling out what people didn't want to include.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Public Transport User Group – feedback from meeting held on 25th Jan 2024</p> <p>CW outlined those 13 members of the PTUG attended the meeting, where LQ shared information about the new government funding that had been received. One member highlighted their satisfaction with the Qualifying Agreement between Arriva and Stagecoach, and how more of these would be welcome. Improving access to locations that are currently poorly served by bus, such as East Midlands Parkway rail station, was discussed as a possible use of BSIP money. The reintroduction of a bus link between Melton Mowbray and Nottingham was also suggested as another possible use of BSIP+ funding.</p> <p>CW continued that the main suggestion regarding youth fares was to ask young people what they want, as young people have not signed up for the PTUG. Consulting young people about what would make them use public transport more was an important step, noting free travel proposed in the pilot was probably not a long-term option.</p> <p>Discussion of the branding also took place, with the fox being considered by some to be an image that is synonymous with Leicestershire but noted that the Partnership is not only about the County Council, so developing a separate brand may be a better idea. Building on the Leicester buses brand was also suggested as an option, although concern was raised about how this would resonate within the county towns.</p> <p>SJ questioned the point about PTUG attendees age, noting that concessions for the elderly had become established, so why can't this be replicated for young people. CW responded that the English</p>	

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	<p>National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) is heavily funded by central government, and that local authorities can offer additional provision, such as longer hours of eligibility or extension to other modes but are not responsible for funding the entire scheme.</p> <p>TF expressed concern regarding use of the fox image and would need to ensure that development of such a brand would not infringe Arriva's intellectual property.</p> <p>RH noted the need to avoid using BSIP+ funding to provide new services where a service already exists, noting Nottinghamshire's West Rushcliffe DRT that serves East Midlands Parkway, as well as the multiple other services that travel to East Midlands Airport.</p> <p>SJ questioned if there was any promotion of the DRT service at East Midlands Parkway station. RH stated there was in the station but not from East Midlands Rail.</p>	
7.	<p>Forum thoughts re. potential future EP schemes and priorities (DT)</p> <p>DT asked whether anyone had any additional ideas that could be taken forward as an EP scheme, using the additional revenue-based funding that the council has received.</p> <p>NT responded that it was difficult to say anything when operators haven't seen the cabinet report.</p>	
8.	<p>AOB – questions / discussion</p> <p>TF highlighted that he and RH had attended a meeting with the Charnwood Borough Council scrutiny panel, who expressed interest in interacting with the EP Forum, and asked whether inviting them to the next Forum meeting was possible. TF suggested having a representative, such as Liz Hopwell, from each of the districts would be beneficial.</p> <p>DT responded that the more people who attend the Forum, meetings the better, stressing that ~70 people, including representatives from each of the Leicestershire district councils, receive the invitation, but that the Forum is a professional stakeholder rather than a political group. LQ agreed with DT, highlighting that LCC officers attend the meeting, with the aim of making this an expert stakeholder meeting, and that politicians can</p>	

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	<p>have inputs to the group via officers. TF clarified that he wasn't asking for elected members, rather representatives from each council.</p> <p>DT noted the next Forum is the AGM</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Date and time of next meetings</p> <p>EP Board – 14/03/2024 10:00 – 11:30</p> <p>EP AGM / Forum – 10/05/2024 13:30 – 15:00</p>	