



Leicestershire Enhanced Bus Partnership Board

Minutes of meeting held on 20th March 2025

Arriva Midlands, 4 Westmoreland Avenue, Thurmaston, LE4 8BT

Present			
Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
David Taylor (DT)	Chair / Independent Consultant	Lee Quincy (LQ)	LCC
Toby France (TF)	Arriva	Emma Odabas (EO)	LCC
Ross Hitchcock (RH)	trentbarton (Wellglade)	Andrew Jeffreys (AJ)	LCC
David Brookes (DB)	Centrebus	Hina Gadhia (HG)	LCC
Patrick Stringer (PS)	Stagecoach		
David Conway (DC)	NCT	Bijel Mistry	Leicester City Council
Apologies			
Barry Allitt	CT4N	Liz Hopwell	Charnwood BC
Observing			
Bhavesh Mistry	LCC	Richard Briggs	LCC
Lisa Wilkinson	LCC	Daniel Philps	LCC
Suleman Patel	LCC		

	Item	Lead
1	Welcome and introductions DT thanked Arriva for hosting the meeting and the following Electric Vehicle demonstration event. Introductions included LCC's Contracts and Compliance officers attending as observers.	DT
2	Actions from previous Board and Forum meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EP Board 7th November 2024 EP Forum 6th February 2025 <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">   </div> <h3 style="color: #800080;">Actions from previous meetings</h3> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="background-color: #6b8e23; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> EP Board 7th November 2024 COMPLETED </div> <div style="background-color: #2980b9; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> EP Forum 6th February 2025 COMPLETED </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 20px;"> <div style="background-color: #6b8e23; color: white; padding: 10px; width: 45%;"> LCC to arrange Fares T&F meeting following on from Leicester EP Board discussion on 20th November </div> <div style="background-color: #2980b9; color: white; padding: 10px; width: 45%;"> LCC to update and share BSIP spending plan and workstreams when available ON AGENDA </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 20px;"> <div style="background-color: #6b8e23; color: white; padding: 10px; width: 45%;"> LCC to contact the Traffic Commissioner's Office to identify any specific requirements of the TC in relation to registrations </div> <div style="background-color: #2980b9; color: white; padding: 10px; width: 45%;"> LCC to circulate draft Leicestershire Buses branding guidelines to T&F members ON AGENDA </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 20px;"> <div style="background-color: #6b8e23; color: white; padding: 10px; width: 45%;"> LCC to include the fare cap as a priority item at the next Fares T&F group meeting when arranged </div> </div> <div style="background-color: #6b8e23; color: white; padding: 10px; width: 45%; margin-top: 20px;"> LCC to review exempted services list and add to CHYM </div>	AJ

Ongoing / in progress

EPB724-1 LCC to circulate BSIP funding trackers	EPB724-4 Operators to email ideas for fares promotions	EPF924-4 All to feedback to LCC about the EP webpage and any other aspects of CHYM
EPB1124-3 Operators to provide LCC with hard copy information for PTNR roadshows on confirmation of event dates by LCC	EPF225-1 LCC to share completed franchising feasibility study at next EP Forum (25th May)	
EPF225-3 Operators to provide suggestions and comments about potential service improvements as part of the Passenger Transport Network Review to LCC	EPF225-4 LCC to develop an outline promotions calendar and share with the T&F group	

DB: When will the BSIP funding snapshot be available and can this be shared as a regular item at every Board meeting to show what has been committed and what is available or overspent?

EO: There is no overspend but the profile has been constantly changing due to BSOG / s.106 and other uplifts but all detail is being finalised for LCC's Bus Grant Delivery Plan which must be submitted to DfT by 31st March. This needs to show all schemes and measures that have been or are to be funded by the 2025-26 grant – which is conditional upon timely submission of the delivery plan – as well as any carryover funding from previous rounds. The main areas of spend to date have been the Passenger Transport Network Review and associated workstreams.

ACTION: LCC to circulate the finalised spreadsheet to EP members once approved in w/c 24th March

RH: What account is taken of changing travel patterns and behaviours, e.g. from new developments or engagement with major employers, in deciding projects and allocating funding?

EO: LCC obtains feedback from various processes including roadshows and DDRT support sessions at service user level as well as more strategic engagement such as ROWIP. There is also a cross-LTA BSIP working group that has been set up to share and co-ordinate activity.

HG: Travel planning for new developments and related s.106 contributions are also considered in identifying actual or potential gaps in provision.

DT: The EP Forum also provides an opportunity to widen engagement with key stakeholders, e.g. Fosse Park.

Members **agreed** the respective minutes as a true record.

3	Passenger Transport Network Review update Phase 2 of the review covering Charnwood and Harborough wider district services was introduced on 17th March. This has provided enhanced evening and Sunday services on two routes, improved accessibility to St Luke's Hospital and the railway station in	EO / HG
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	<p>Market Harborough and five new FoxConnect DDRT zones covering 66 settlements which had either no or very limited lifeline taxi bus services and providing onward travel between zones or with main network services through interchange points at Countesthorpe, Houghton on the Hill, Kibworth Beauchamp, Lutterworth, Oadby, Somerby, Thurmaston and Uppingham.</p> <p>Although the new networks have been designed to meet a wider range of needs compared to pre-existing services, it is not possible to anticipate all needs so the priority is to get the networks 'on the road' to draw out any issues around insufficient or unmet provision. Early issues in Phase 2 have been identified with school connections that are being addressed by retiming journeys and alternative provision for a small number of eligible and non-eligible scholars.</p> <p>Phase 3 covers Charnwood and Harborough town services, north and south-west Leicestershire (including the current South Leicestershire FoxConnect service) with an implementation date of 2nd June. Tenders for this phase are expected to issue in w/c 31st March with contract offers being made in the following 2 weeks. As with previous phases, sustainable travel roadshows are being planned for Loughborough and Market Harborough towns as well as Coalville, Measham and Ibstock; these will follow the format that has been established of a mix of indoor events and market walk-around canvassing.</p> <p>DT: How have the roadshows been advertised and can the results of social media campaigns be shared?</p> <p>EO: The roadshows have been promoted on the Upcoming Events tile on the Choose How You Move website as well as on the dedicated webpages for each review phase. All councillors are briefed of each phase activity so can cascade within communities when information is placed in the public domain.</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to provide regular social media campaign statistics and analytics updates to the EP Board</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to circulate roadshow dates with operators once confirmed</p> <p>TF: Is any monitoring taking place of onward travel journeys and can this be used as a basis for some promotional work, e.g. on through ticketing, to improve connectivity?</p> <p>HG: There may be scope to incentivise cross-boundary connectivity provided operators have no issues with a supported and commercial split.</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to add as a business item at the Fares T&F group meeting</p> <p>It was requested that LCC provide Excel timetables for future tenders on one page where possible instead of multiple pages on Word.</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to amend tender documentation appropriately</p>	
4	<p>BSIP25-26 Grant update</p> <p>The full revenue figure taking into account carryover of 2024-25 grant is £8.8m which is being used to maintain the current commercial and supported networks including the network review and associated enhancements to services under the Leicestershire Buses brand and marketing work. Capital funding of £3.1m is earmarked for infrastructure improvements at the new DDRT interchange hubs and also a wider programme of stops, shelters, totems, kerbing and other hard works. Specific</p>	EO

	<p>allocations to individual projects are in outline at present and will be shared with Board members once a fully worked up version has been signed off by Cabinet.</p> <p>ACTION: As for item 2 above</p>	
5	<p>Task & Finish Groups update</p> <p>Branding A draft Leicestershire Buses brand guidelines document had been shared by email with T&F Branding group members for substantive comment ahead of the EP Board meeting. Key principles underpinning the document are that it covers all bus service settings and supporting activities and infrastructure that are funded by LCC; and that the adoption of guidelines is deliberately intended to allow flexibility of use to a range of assets on a case-by-case basis rather than being overly prescriptive.</p> <p>T&F group members had made some technical comments but otherwise no significant changes had been identified. Specific comments about application of the branding had been received from Arriva in respect of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any planned roll-out for Leicestershire Buses branded bus-stop flags within the existing EP Scheme (Narborough Road South) • Extending to include the 5/5A and 127 corridors which are now worked by LB-branded EV vehicles that connect Leicester with market towns where new LB-branded networks are being introduced • Extending to include the 148/158 corridor where there is a need to replace legacy Arriva Sapphire bus stop flags with operator agnostic flags • Site-specific applications where Arriva manages infrastructure for all operators, e.g. Coalville, Memorial Square and Hinckley, The Crescent. <p>EO: The final guidelines will cross-reference as appropriate to the previous infrastructure studies for consistency.</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to set up a separate meeting with EP operators' marketing teams to discuss these points and related issues around cross-boundary branding</p> <p>It was agreed that there was no need for LB branding to be used to identify non-liveried vehicles on LCC supported services, e.g. by removable boards, as this was communicated by the new service numbers being introduced under the network review phases. The LB logo could otherwise be shown on fitted electronic destination displays and RH suggested that operators' technical staff could do this.</p> <p>ACTION: RH to investigate the possibility of adding the logo to destination displays and feed back to the Board.</p> <p>Fares Participating EP operator members had been offered the opportunity to take part in a repeat of the Free Fare Super Saturdays promotion over the Easter 2025 holiday period, but no consensus had been reached. The success of such schemes depended on consistent and inclusive messaging so that it was as easy as possible for passengers to use and operators to deliver.</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to develop proposals for supported services for a summer promotion and share with EP members</p>	AJ
6	<p>DfT Franchising Information Workshop report</p> <p>The DfT had arranged an Information Workshop on 6th March (rearranged from 12th March) for Local Transport Authorities. This provided an outline of some of the different</p>	AJ / EO

	<p>ways in which franchising powers could be used beyond the usual approach of one or more contracts covering all services within an authority's area, the resources and support that would be available from DfT for any LTAs interested in franchising, and the development of a Pre-Franchising Assessment Toolkit based on case studies to assist MCAs / LTAs to evaluate market conditions, risks, financial implications and the strategic objectives for franchising.</p> <p>The range of models include franchising: of tendered networks under cross-subsidy protection; jointly with an incumbent or new operator; to protect demand responsive services; an area where it is not commercially viable to introduce services under an EP; or as a means of managing the flow of buses through a key corridor. At first sight, some of these models might also have implications for existing arrangements such as corridor-based Qualifying Agreements.</p> <p>Locally, the Leicester Buses EP sees no advantage of franchising given the time and cost of implementation and prefers an Enhanced Partnership Plus approach to build on current improvement schemes and progress. The feasibility study that is being commissioned by LCC will be used as the basis for any decisions on ruling franchising in or out. Those authorities that are moving towards franchising now have in most cases been working on this scenario for some years unlike LCC.</p> <p>DB: Is it viable to undertake a feasibility study against the backdrop of local government reorganisation?</p> <p>LQ: Any boundary or administrative changes resulting from local government reorganisation won't influence the outcome of the feasibility study as Leicestershire is predominantly rural now and will still be so whenever reorganisation, which will not happen overnight, eventually takes place.</p>	
7	<p>Project Coral multi-operator ticketing</p> <p>Midlands Connect is seeking updated data from LTAs and operators about existing multi-operator schemes including ticket / concession types, ticketing technology, payment platforms and services in scope. This would be used as the basis for a brokered product offer which likely to become available in late 2025 or early 2026.</p> <p>Existing data already flags up EP operators' participation in the Leicester Flexi scheme and the Leicester Buses EP is discussing a new discounted Flexi add-on product to boost usage of Flexi by linking to operators' own day and weekly tickets. One aim of this is to increase the proportion of cross-city movements and so would replicate the facility provided by a multi-operator scheme.</p>	AJ / RB
8	<p>Operator issues</p> <p>RH: The Leicestershire Half-Marathon on 23rd February had involved road closures requiring skylink Nottingham services to be diverted and resultant customer information to be provided at short notice. When such events occur, patronage losses of 10-20% are experienced. Can these events be communicated earlier?</p> <p>RB: There is an events co-ordinator responsible for collating details of all events affecting the road network. Information about the half-marathon should therefore have been communicated in advance.</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to check the process of providing appropriate advance notice of events is still in place</p>	All

	<p>ACTION: LCC to advise RH of dedicated National Highways events co-ordinator contact</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to explore with Network Management team whether Bus Operator meetings between them and operators can be reinstated</p>	
9	<p>AOB / Questions</p> <p>The Contract Managers were introduced to EP members. It was suggested that regular meetings between operators and the managers were set up as a focal point to cover compliance issues arising from network review implementations.</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to set up meeting cycle with nominated EP operator representatives</p> <p>DT reminded members that the forthcoming Enhanced Partnership AGM on 22nd May would include elections for the role of Chair.</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to send out nomination forms for the election of a new EP Chair prior to the AGM</p>	
10	<p>DoNMs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PTUG – 8th May 2025 • EP Forum and AGM – 22nd May 2025 • EP Board – 12th June 2025 	