

Leicestershire Enhanced Bus Partnership Forum and AGM

Minutes of meeting held on 22nd May 2025 at 1:30pm via MS Teams

Present			
Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Emma Odabas	Acting Chair / LCC	Andrew Jeffreys (AJ)	LCC
		Hina Gadhia (HG)	LCC
Toby France (TF)	Arriva	Kim Salt (KS)	LCC
David Bott (DB)	First		
Patrick Stringer	Stagecoach	David Fenlon (DF)	Leicester City Council
David Brookes (DB)	Centrebus	Liz Hopwell (LH)	Charnwood BC
Tom Bridge (TB)	Kinchbus / trentbarton	Marc Greenwood (MG)	Blaby DC
Lee McClory (LM)	NCT	Kirstie Rea (KR)	Hinckley & Bosworth BC
Adam Hemingway (AH)	Central Connect	Sarah Legge (SL)	Melton BC
		Steve Jones (SJ)	Harborough TAG
Apologies			
David Conway	NCT	David Atkinson	Harborough DC
Ross Hitchcock	Kinchbus / trentbarton	Bijel Mistry	Leicester City Council
Item			Lead
1	Welcome and introductions		EO / All
	Attendees were asked to introduce themselves as and when they spoke.		
2	Annual General Meeting – Election of EP Chair and EP Board		AJ
	<p>The main function of the AGM is to elect a Chair and Board for the EP. Following David Taylor's notification of his stepping down and the call-out following the Board meeting on 20th March of nominations for a new Chair, two candidates have been proposed by operator members: Emma Taylor (ITP); and Robin Pinton (Go Travel Solutions). However, LCC's first preference is to seek a candidate who would be willing to work as Chair on an expenses-only basis as any other arrangement would constitute a paid role and be subject to recruitment controls. The other key consideration is to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest in relation to other work being undertaken for LCC by either candidate.</p> <p>As an alternative while nominations are being considered, LCC is exploring whether a suitable candidate could be identified through the Council's volunteer portal. In the meantime, it is proposed that the Chair is rotated between LCC and operator members until a new Chair of the EP Board and Forum can be elected; this arrangement is consistent with DfT guidance. Members agreed this through a show of hands.</p> <p>One nomination had been received for membership of the EP Board from David Bott (First Bus) for the Small Operator category in place of Barry Allitt (CT4N). Existing representatives from Arriva (TF) and Wellglade (RH) in the Large Operator group, from Centrebus (DB) and Stagecoach (PS) in the Medium Operator group and NCT (DC) in the Small Operator group were happy to continue. All nominations were duly elected.</p>		

Thanks were extended to both David Taylor and Barry Allitt for their contribution to the work of the EP.

AJ

3 Minutes and actions from previous meetings

- EP Forum 6th February 2025
- EP Board 20th March 2025



Actions from previous meetings

□ EP Forum 6th February 2025

EPF225-1	LCC to share completed franchising feasibility study at next EP Forum (22nd May)	LCC			Inception meeting held 23 April, not likely to be ready until mid-June 2025
EPF225-2	LCC to update and share BSIP spending plan and workstreams when available	LCC		20/03/2025	Verbal report provided to EP Board, link to outline document shared by email on 29 April
EPF225-3	Operators to provide suggestions and comments about potential service improvements as part of the Passenger Transport Network Review to LCC	Operators		Ongoing	
EPF225-4	LCC to develop an outline promotions calendar and share with the group	LCC		Ongoing	
EPF225-5	LCC to circulate draft branding guidelines to T&F members	LCC		10/03/2025	Guidelines shared and comments received from operators

The outcome of the franchising feasibility study will be shared with members as soon as it is available for consideration at the next available EP meeting.



Actions from previous meetings

□ EP Board 20th March 2025

EPB0325-1	LCC to circulate the finalised BSIP Delivery Plan spreadsheet once approved by DfT to EP members			29/04/2025	Link to outline delivery plan shared
EPB0325-2	LCC to provide regular social media campaign statistics and analytics from Passenger Transport Network Review phases to the EP Board			Ongoing	
EPB0325-3	LCC to circulate latest Passenger Transport Network Review phase roadshow dates to operators once confirmed			29/04/2025	Roadshow dates arranged and shared
EPB0325-4	LCC to add onward journey monitoring as a business item at next Fares T&F meeting			Ongoing	
EPB0325-5	LCC to amend tender documentation timetables in Excel format				All recent tenders and future tenders will now include any timetables in Excel format
EPB0325-6	LCC to set up separate meeting with EP members marketing teams to discuss draft Leicestershire Buses branding document			08/04/2025	Meeting held 8 April, consensus on guidelines, recommendations to be taken to EP Board on 12 June

Actions from previous meetings

EP Board 20th March 2025

EPB0325-7	Kinchbus / trentbarton to investigate adding Leicestershire Buses logo to electronic destination displays			22/05/2025	Only few services are supported (de min) Free fares on LCC supported services in August
EPB0325-8	LCC to develop proposals for a summer campaign on supported services and share with EP members				
	LCC to check that the advance notification process for road closures is still in place			14/04/2025	LCC advertises all public works on One.Network and also through engagement with affected operators
EPB0325-9	LCC to explore with Network Management team whether Bus Operator liaison meetings can be reinstated			14/04/2025	LCC has raised with NM team and agreed in principle
EPB0325-10	LCC to set up meeting cycle with Contract Managers and nominated EP member representatives				
EPB0325-11	LCC to send out nomination forms for the election of a new EP Chair prior to the AGM to be held on 22nd May		LW		
EPB0325-12				29/04/2025	Emailed to EP Board members and nominations received

Members noted the completed and ongoing actions from previous meetings. Minutes of previous meetings have been circulated and published on Choose How You Move as an agreed record in line with EP Plan governance. Further updates are provided under the agenda as follows.

4 BSIP25-26 Delivery Plan

EO

The outline delivery plan was submitted to DfT at the end of March as required and this document has been published on the corporate LCC website. The link was shared with operators in line with the completed actions above. There is little to add at this stage other than, with the new amount of funding not yet received, capital spend projects will begin to happen from July and August onwards and we are well within the timescales for the individual projects within the plan. A lot of work is being done on the Choose How You Move webpages which will be used even more going forward as a 'one stop shop' for all updates and commentary on BSIP-funded projects. [Update: DfT confirmed payment of £7.6m capital + revenue funding on 3rd June 2025].

LCC has responded to operators that have been in touch for further clarification on specific projects but, if there are any queries about anything that members may have seen in the project delivery plan itself, please raise them under AOB or contact officers separately outside of the meeting for more detail on anything that is not clear.

5 Passenger Transport Network Review update

HG

Further to the introduction of Phase 1 of the network review in Melton from 6th January, Phase 2 covering longer-distance services in the Charnwood and Harborough areas was implemented on 17th March. This adds a further 5 zones to the FoxConnect DDRT including in areas with no previous public transport provision in order to link them into mainstream services, as well as trialling a Sunday service on Centrebus 154 and an evening and Sunday service on Kinchbus 2.

Phase 3 of the review covers the town networks in Charnwood and Harborough and will be introduced in two stages. As with Phase 1, the focus is on redesigning services to enhance access for shopping and other key journey purposes including school and college movements. Some of the improvements reflect feedback from the roadshow events such as a completely new Wednesdays and Saturdays shoppers service between Market Harborough and Corby on an experimental basis.

Phase 3 changes

2nd June

- New redesigned Harborough Connect services to replace 30, 33A/B/C daily and Fri/Sat eves
- New [FoxConnect](#) will replace Rural Mobility Funded pilot in south-west Leicestershire supplemented by fixed route provision for commuters and regular users
- New Wednesday and Saturday shoppers service Market Harborough – Corby on 1-year trial basis

Interim arrangements up to 12th July

- 5A new Grange Park / Haddon Way service in Loughborough
- 3 and 13 (Loughborough town services), 7 and 125 – no change to current timetable

14th July

- Remaining new contracts commence – full details when all operators have been confirmed

All of the changes are being communicated through the network review webpages on Choose How You Move, LCC social media channels and through Leicestershire Buses-branded roadside and other timetables / publicity.

6

Branding Task & Finish Group update

AJ




The Leicestershire Buses branding guidelines were discussed at a T&F group meeting on 8th May in relation to technical aspects of use of the LB logo (whether there should be a minimum space around the logo to avoid intrusion or visual clutter, suitable font types) and these points have been added into a final version of the guidelines. Care has been taken to ensure that the guidelines are also consistent with earlier work commissioned in 2022 to develop minimum standards for roadside infrastructure which recommend that:

- New bus stop flag orders will include the LB logo while a vinyl will be applied to existing and older stops until they are due for replacement for any reason
- Operator-owned bus stop flags will include an appropriate LB vinyl to unify them with the wider EP
- Other information (stop location, service numbers) will be provided within timetable cases for ease of maintenance and updating.

The 2022 work also relates to the EP Scheme commitment to audit roadside infrastructure along the B4114 Narborough Road corridor and this was carried out for the 34 stops under the original scheme which has since been extended to include further stops in Enderby. Other developments since then have been the introduction of the new supported services networks including in areas / roads previously without a bus service and where new infrastructure is needed and the opportunities provided by the recent introduction of EVs by Arriva on the Melton and Loughborough corridors. There is also the imminent electrification of Stagecoach vehicles on the Hinckley corridor as another opportunity for roadside infrastructure to be used to rapidly promote the LB brand across the county.

The minimum standards are also being reviewed against the [Campaign for Better Transport](#) call for a national bus stop standard and comparable frameworks adopted by other local transport authorities so that current best practice can be incorporated.

ACTION: LCC to bring final recommendations to the EP Board.

	<p>EO: In terms of the supported services networks, a shelter audit has been carried out in Melton to identify improvements to be taken forward with Melton BC. This methodology will also be applied to the other network review phases so that decisions about upgrading / replacing facilities can be taken based on usage of the new services.</p>	
7	<p>Fares Task & Finish Group update</p> <p>Work on devising an annual promotions calendar to share with the group as a basis for forward planning and co-ordination of promotional activity is still ongoing. In the meantime, LCC is proposing a summer promotion on supported services and FoxConnect in August to highlight the new local networks and follow on from the final phase implementations.</p> <div>   </div> <p>Fares T&F update</p> <p>Summer promotion proposal</p> <p>What</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Free travel on fully supported LCC services in August <p>When</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> From 2nd August (weekends and bank holiday) to 31st August (11 days) <p>Who</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Open to everyone using LCC fully supported bus services <p>Comms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Build on the 'Summer by <u>bus</u>' campaign & free travel messages in 2024  <p>TF: This is a much better proposition to support compared to Free Fare Super Saturdays as eligibility is clearly based on the supported service identities so easier for operating staff to deliver and be understood by passengers.</p> <p>EO: It is intended as a wider social amenity offer than the previous summer campaign which just promoted bus travel generally. This time LCC would like to be able to signpost to operator offers on family / group or leisure travel and tie that into the comms.</p> <p>TB: Although this is essentially a short-term proposal, it is linked to the funds being hypothecated?</p> <p>EO: Yes and, as a predominantly rural county, even a patronage uplift over a few weeks is still a win. The plan for comms is that every service will be listed and be supplemented by local area messaging. There are no cross-boundary issues and the scale is manageable compared to covering every service in the county.</p> <p>SJ: We can share with the Harborough forums when the comms are ready.</p> <p>ACTION: Operators to provide LCC with commercial leisure travel products / offers for inclusion in the comms pack</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to circulate finalised comms pack to Forum members and local stakeholders</p>	AJ

8	<p>Feedback from PTUG meeting 8th May 2025</p> <p>LCC has been improving engagement with the PTUG so that agendas are more topic-based with the meeting providing members with insight on how the new inspector resource supports effective delivery of LCC supported services.</p> <p>Feedback on operational issues focussed mainly on Harborough FoxConnect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can vehicles show the FC zone they are operating into as this can be a problem where services meet, e.g. at interchange points • There is no publicity or information for FC at the railway station although it is a destination point for the service and would help people arriving at the station and wanting to find out about onward travel options • Incidences of the app displaying a 'location out of zone' message on valid journey details <p>AJ: The vehicles have the facility to show zone details e.g. on the destination display but passengers can always check they are on the right bus with the driver.</p> <p>EO: We can arrange with the station operator for FC literature to be placed at the railway station.</p> <p>YI: We were aware of some incorrect messaging issues with the app and have now resolved these with the technology provider.</p> <p>HG: There are also the local user sessions that are being organised to support the introduction of the FC service in each network review phase. The date, time and place of each session are publicised on Choose How You Move. These sessions also tap into coffee mornings and other regular community activities that we are aware of.</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to arrange for FC publicity to be provided at Market Harborough station</p> <p>ACTION: Members to advise LCC of any community groups where additional FC user sessions could be arranged</p>	AJ
9	<p>LCC Elections</p> <p>The county council elections had resulted in a change of administration at LCC with Reform UK taking over as the majority party. The Lead Member for the new portfolio of Highways, Transport and Waste is Mr Charles Whitford CC for the Markfield, Desford and Thornton Division. Induction and other briefings are being organised and LCC will update on these at the next available EP meeting.</p>	EO
10	<p>AOB</p> <p>Service change comms</p> <p>EO: It would be helpful if any operator-led publicity on changes involving any supported services is fed through LCC at draft stage for supplementary or other input particularly in relation to informing elected members who may be contacted by residents. There have also been incidences during the network review implementations where passengers have been told by drivers that a service is ending when it is actually continuing on a like-for-like or enhanced basis under the new tender. Better communication at all levels reduces this and other risks such as some calls to MPs' offices to 'save' a service which have then been passed onto LCC for a response.</p> <p>TF: Unfortunately the advance Arriva comms about the new services being introduced on 2nd June and 14th July were quickly put together to respond to the local MP who</p>	All

	<p>was advising customers of the changes before they were in the public domain. Would LCC be able to let operators know of any MP contact where services change hands under tender so that the response can be co-ordinated?</p> <p>KS: Managing information correctly is challenging and especially when there is a political dimension but good co-operation saves a lot of time and effort down the line. Obviously we tailor the amount of detail to the audience but the main aim is to provide reassurance to passengers and the public without diving too much into specific processes (e.g. the specific stages of tendering and contract awards) when they are mostly concerned with whether they have got a bus service and what times does it run at. The restrictions during pre-election period also meant that there could not be as big a build-up to the changes as would be usual but there will be a LCC press release in w/c 26th May with the new Leader about the June changes.</p> <p>EO: As well as publicising upcoming changes, we are also looking to report on the network review phases introduced in January and March through a mix of passenger feedback, usage statistics and other data to demonstrate the benefits of the new services. We also want to maximise opportunities to showcase individual services and events through the annual calendar and by working closely with operator and other partners' comms teams.</p> <p>Future meetings</p> <p>EO: There was a preference at the EP Board meeting on 20th March to continue with in-person meetings for the Board and LCC agrees with this. The next meeting is on 12th June and this will be hosted at County Hall where a timetable for hosting future meetings can be discussed.</p>	
10	<p>DoNMs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EP Board (in person) – 12th June 2025 • PTUG – 11th September 2025 • EP Forum – 9th October 2025 	All