



Leicestershire Enhanced Bus Partnership Board

Minutes of meeting held on 12th June 2025

Gartree Committee Room, County Hall, Glenfield, Leicester, LE3 8RA

Present			
Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Richard Briggs (RB)	Acting Chair / LCC	Emma Odabas (EO)	LCC
		Andrew Jeffreys (AJ)	LCC
Tony France (TF)	Arriva	Hina Gadhia (HG)	LCC
Ross Hitchcock (RH)	trentbarton (Wellglade)	Yusuf Isat (YI)	LCC
Patrick Stringer (PS)	Stagecoach		
David Bott (DB1)	First Bus	Bijel Mistry (BM)	Leicester City Council
David Brookes (DB2)	Centrebus	Liz Hopwell	Charnwood BC
David Conway (DC)	NCT		
Apologies			
None			

	Item	Lead
1	Welcome and introductions RB welcomed all attendees and introductions were made.	RB
2	Actions from previous Board and Forum meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none">EP Board 20th March 2025EP Forum 22nd May 2025 <div><div></div><div></div></div> <h2>Actions from previous meetings</h2> <div><div><div>EP Board 20th March 2025 COMPLETED</div><div>LCC to circulate Phase 3 PTNR roadshow dates to operators</div><div>LCC to amend tender documentation timetables in Excel format</div><div>LCC to set up meeting with operator marketing teams to finalise LB branding guidelines</div><div>KB / TB to investigate adding LB logo to electronic destination displays</div><div>LCC to share summer campaign proposal with operators</div><div>LCC to send out EP Chair nomination forms</div></div><div><div>LCC to explore reactivating NM liaison meetings with operators</div><div>LCC to set up meeting cycle with Contract Managers</div><div>LCC to share regular social media statistics and analytics from PTNR phases</div></div><div><div>EP Forum 22nd May 2025 COMPLETED</div><div>LCC to bring final LB branding guidelines to EP Board for formal adoption</div><div>LCC to arrange for FoxConnect publicity to be provided at Market Harborough railway station</div><div>Members to advise LCC of any community groups where additional FoxConnect user sessions could be arranged</div></div><div><div>Operators to provide LCC with commercial leisure travel information for summer promotion comms</div><div>LCC to circulate finalised comms pack to participating operators and local stakeholders</div></div></div>	AJ

Ongoing / in progress

EPB724-1

LCC to circulate BSIP funding trackers – COMPLETED – can budget figures be added against each line

EPB724-4

Operators to email ideas for fares promotions – can a long-term costed ticketing offer be developed through the T&F

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 – Arriva will be supporting Phase 4 roadshows

EPF225-1

LCC to share completed franchising feasibility study – summary of recommendations to be circulated by email once completed

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

The outstanding actions falling to LCC from the previous Board and Forum meetings are in hand and will be completed before the next EP meeting. As the Leicestershire Buses branding guidelines were effectively agreed at the Forum on 22nd May, these will be circulated by email after this meeting with specific application and recommendations to the Board being led by the refreshed Branding and Infrastructure Task & Finish Group. In relation to ongoing actions, LCC would similarly like the Fares, Ticketing & Promotion Group to develop ideas on longer-term ticketing offers / products and that operator experience of these in other areas where they have a presence will be useful.

DB2: Would it be easier and potentially quicker to reach consensus for LCC to draw up a single proposal for a ticketing offer for discussion and adoption by the Board rather than being led by operators involved in a range of different schemes? There are examples that LCC could look at to seek a consensus on replicating in Leicestershire.

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

3 Task and Finish Groups

The current Task & Finish groups have made useful progress in their respective remits but, in view of the need to move quickly to deliver BSIP24 objectives against the spend timeline, need to be refreshed to take more of a lead on delivery and outputs. There are pros and cons to a centralised approach in that operators can still come back with different points of detail to a specific LCC proposal which could delay a final decision but if a lot of this can be unpacked through the T&F with the benefit of operator experience from participation in successful schemes in other authorities, it will be a more streamlined process. The Board will still be the decision-making body to the proposals brought forward by the Task & Finish groups.

DB2: It's not a model we see in neighbouring local authorities we're involved in and, given the funding that is in the pot and that needs to be spent, proposals have to be more substantive than free fare offers and backed by a clear understanding of where we know what is being committed.

EO: We recognise that and the funds will be spent which is why we want ticketing proposals to be well worked out utilising relevant operator expertise of 'tried and tested' but which also reflects other influences such as the announcement yesterday in the government's Spending Review that the £3 national bus fare cap scheme is being extended to March 2027. We're also mindful that as a deeply rural county with a relatively low level of commercial services, residents' awareness of or inclination

EO

	<p>to use the bus is low so short-term offers while we have this funding is useful but, for the longer term, schemes have to be more nuanced as well as affordable. Once the finance team have finished putting allocated spend into the tracker, this will be recirculated to the group as a basis for the work to be taken up through the Task & Finish groups. Working more collaboratively in this way provides greater transparency about decision-making and why, for example, the 2024 promotion was free fares rather than the more specific proposals that operators had put forward.</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to draft Terms of Reference for the refreshed Task & Finish groups and circulate to members.</p> <p>TF: Warwickshire CC have a separate marketing group to their EP which is looking at offers like evening service promotions, concessionary travel, bus stop publicity and infrastructure and is linked to KPIs so that there's a clear delivery pathway that the group is working to.</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to contact Warwickshire CC to discuss group experience and work processes.</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to circulate Task & Finish nomination forms to non-present operators.</p>	
4	<p>Summer 2025 promotion</p> <p>LCC has already contacted operators of supported services to request any relevant commercial fare offers / products e.g. family / group / saver tickets that can link into the promotion which will run on weekends between 2nd and 31st August so 10 days inclusive. Other EP operator members will also be informed so that all operators have the opportunity to raise any issues in relation to commercial services. The assets will be based on those prepared in 2024 for the Summer by Bus campaign and can be populated quickly with extra detail as provided. The comms will be very clear about the timeline and the services that are in scope and easily identifiable by their local Melton, Harborough Connect etc branding.</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to share details of the campaign to all EP Forum operators.</p>	HG
5	<p>EP Chair update</p> <p>The process of advertising for a candidate through the Assemble volunteer recruitment platform that LCC and a wider range of other public sector bodies use is in hand and is expected to be ready to go live in w/c 16th June. The platform enables a search of similar roles or opportunities to inform the style and tone of the advert which will include a succinct job and role description as well as key experience and attributes required.</p> <p>TF: It's good to widen the field and there are potentially some very good candidates with the right skills and background that might come forward as a result but there is also a risk of a nomination or appointment being made because a candidate is cheap or well-meaning rather than effective. If someone does come through this route, will Board members be able through the selection process or other means to be assured that the candidate has the right qualities for the EP?</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to keep members informed of EP Chair recruitment and assessment progress.</p>	AJ
6	<p>Future meetings format and schedule</p> <p>LCC is hosting meetings in the absence of a fixed Chair but propose that future Board meetings are hosted on a rotating basis amongst members; Forum meetings would stay online for now because of the potentially greater numbers of attendees. In-person meetings are also opportunities, as is the refreshing of the Task & Finish groups, to build relationships with the supporting teams in each members' organisation. If members are content with this, LCC will amend the remaining meetings for 2025 and draft a hosted meeting schedule for 2026. Members agreed to this.</p>	AJ

	<p>ACTION: LCC and Centrebus to liaise on the practical arrangements and notification of the EP Board meeting scheduled for 13th November.</p>	
7	<p>Future bus service change dates</p> <p>While the current pattern of fixed service change dates has been agreed with other authorities, principally Leicester City Council, and operators on the basis of school return dates which generate maximum demand, the changes on 6th January resulted in some feedback and capacity issues for LCC. It is also challenging operationally to arrange relevant and timely service publicity and other assets. Ideally a later date for the first change of the year such as the February half-term would alleviate these difficulties both for operators as well as LCC.</p> <p>TF: In principle, sticking to change dates that align with end of school holidays is the best thing to do despite the pressures it places on both parties but the post-Christmas change is particularly challenging if a workable solution could be found for that date. In relation to other dates, it's not helpful to operators when compiling schedules if authorities' tender awards don't allow a suitable gap between non-school and back to school duties being in place.</p> <p>RH: Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire have a nominal date at the end of January which is slightly easier operationally but it's also a wider issue of getting school transport teams' needs and those of others in alignment. A compromise might be to retain January as a date if a change has to be put in but then have February as the next date.</p> <p>DB2: A January change allows for exceptions such as a serious punctuality failing to be remedied but otherwise, or if it is genuinely difficult for whatever reason to meet a January date, then February provides a backstop.</p> <p>BM: City does not experience any problems with the January change date being so close to the Christmas and New Year break and simply adjust to the workload as required.</p> <p>It was agreed that the February half-term date be added to the existing set of LCC dates.</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to advise Leicester City of the additional date.</p>	EO
8	<p>LCC update</p> <p><i>Lead Member</i> To add to the information provided at the EP Forum on 22nd May, a briefing will take place on 17th June and LCC will feed any relevant observations or requirements back to the Board. [Update: the briefing took place and no issues were raised]</p> <p><i>ENCTS</i> LCC is looking at standardising how data is reported biannually in line with the DfT reimbursement calculation. Planning for this will begin in October so operators should expect to receive requests and to respond accordingly.</p> <p><i>Capital works programme</i> Building on the infrastructure requirements being identified through the supported services network review, LCC is looking to combine the BSIP capital funding with existing active travel and other funding streams to generate a wishlist of enhancements that will be sent round to operators for input. The Melton audit is being discussed with Melton BC in w/c 16th June in relation to bus shelter upgrades / replacement and the optimum locations for interchange hubs. This will form a template for Service Level Agreements with other boroughs and districts in relation to infrastructure ownership and maintenance arising from the other review phases. There will be appropriate liaison with operators of commercial services in the areas where the interchanges will be located.</p>	EO

	<p><i>Bus stop grading</i></p> <p>The other element of the infrastructure work is to develop a scoring matrix for stop infrastructure and attributes which will also enable a site-specific evaluation and recommendation.</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to share infrastructure scoring matrix with operators when it is available.</p> <p>DB2: Is this likely to include more RTI-equipped stops in Melton town centre? There is one RTI display on the 5A stand in Windsor Street but extending to the other stands there and also to St Mary's Way and other busy stops e.g. Valley Road would be a significant improvement.</p> <p>EO: Valley Road is down for complete replacement. Melton BC are keen to increase the proportion of RTI-equipped stops in the town and we will be checking this with them on-site.</p>	
9	<p>Operator updates</p> <p><i>Centrebus</i></p> <p>DB1: The only current issues are the start date for the Thorpebury-Leicester service which is still being deferred until August; and progressing the changes to the service times at St Luke's Hospital to omit the hospital grounds.</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to liaise with GTS on Thorpebury progress and revert to Centrebus on this and the St Luke's change.</p> <p><i>Arriva</i></p> <p>TF: We are aiming to consult imminently with neighbouring authorities on changes to cross-boundary <i>de minimis</i> services to time with the August change dates so any continued steer on that from the Lead Member briefing will be appreciated. Also any indication of the timeline for the proposed additional tender?</p> <p>EO: A new tender will be going out in w/c 16th June for a one-year trial service to respond to feedback LCC has received from the Phase 3 changes.</p> <p><i>NCT</i></p> <p>DC: There will be a minor change on service 1 with two journeys being adjusted to serve the new National Rehabilitation Centre at Stanford Hall, Loughborough. The change will take place at the same time as Nottingham Trent University term date.</p> <p><i>First Bus</i></p> <p>DB1: The business is currently being reviewed which may result in some changes to contact points but otherwise it is business as usual. Planned changes for the summer holidays involve service 18 which will no longer serve Meridian but will be extended to Fosse Park including on Sundays.</p> <p><i>Stagecoach</i></p> <p>PS: 41 new electric vehicles funded by Coventry Electric Bus (29 buses) and Warwickshire CC ZEBRA2 (12 buses) are being introduced into Nuneaton depot following completed charging infrastructure work and are being deployed on the 148 Coventry-Leicester.</p> <p><i>Klinchbus</i></p> <p>RH: The team are currently focussing on the changes to Loughborough town services on 14th July and managing additional demand caused by Download 2025. New diesel vehicles are upgrading skylink while the ZEBRA2 electric vehicles are expected to enter service in October once charging infrastructure is in place.</p>	All
9	AOB / Questions	

	<p>RH: The POs for the <i>de minimis</i> services have not yet been received; can they be expedited?</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to investigate the delay and respond to RH.</p> <p>RH: Can feedback be provided on RTI passenger displays as any problems do not show up on operators' bus tracking systems</p> <p>ACTION: Operators to provide examples of display issues to LCC to pass on to Leicester City Council RTI team.</p> <p>RH: Highway resurfacing at the same time as visitor arrival at the Download campsites doesn't help traffic flow in the area. Can LCC ask why?</p> <p>DB2: Can LCC process service registration proformas more quickly to help operators meet deadlines for submitting them to the Traffic Commissioner?</p> <p>TF: To add to that point, can LCC also acknowledge receipt of registrations and also the officer who is dealing with them?</p> <p>ACTION: LCC to acknowledge registrations on receipt and consider advising of the officer the registration is allocated to.</p>	
10	<p>DoNMs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PTUG – 11th September 2025 • EP Forum – 9th October 2025 • EP Board – 13th November 2025 (in-person at Centrebus, venue tbc) 	