

Leicestershire Enhanced Bus Partnership Forum and Board

Minutes of meeting held on 11th June 2026 at 2:00pm at NCT

Present			
Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Steve Burd (SB)	Independent Chair	Emma Odabas (EO)	LCC
		Hina Gadhia (HG)	LCC
Toby France (TF)	Arriva	Richard Briggs (RB)	LCC
Ross Hitchcock (RH)	Kinchbus / trentbarton	Yusuf Isat (YI)	LCC
Patrick Stringer (PS)	Stagecoach	Andrew Jeffreys (AJ)	LCC
David Conway (DC)	NCT	Liz Goodman (LG)	LCC
Anthony Carver-Smith (ACS)	NCT	Heather Kent	LCC
Peter Matthews (PM)	First Bus	Usman Karim	LCC
Steve Jones	Harborough TAG	Bijel Mistry (BM)	Leicester City Council
		Jake Smedley	Charnwood BC
Apologies			
Ed Morgan	Oadby & Wigston BC	Jonathan Hodge	Blaby DC

	Item	Lead																																				
1	Welcome and introductions SB noted that although the meeting has served as the AGM for the EP Forum under para 8.5 of the original Leicestershire Enhanced Partnership Plan (April 2022), this was varied by decision of the EP Board at its meeting on 29th July 2024 so that the Board and EP Chair are nominated for election every two years rather than annually. This took effect from the 2025 AGM so the next AGM will fall in 2027.	SB / All																																				
2	Minutes and actions from previous meetings EP Board 13th November 2025 EP Forum 19th March 2026 Actions from previous meetings EP Forum 9th October 2025 <table><tr><th>Ref</th><th>Action</th><th>Owner</th><th>RAG</th><th>Date</th><th>Comment</th></tr><tr><td>EPF1025-2</td><td>LCC to provide a summary version of the franchising study to EP operators following internal clearance</td><td>LCC</td><td></td><td>20/3/26</td><td>Removed as an action until clarity from LGR</td></tr></table> EP Board 13th November 2025 <table><tr><th>Ref</th><th>Action</th><th>Owner</th><th>RAG</th><th>Date</th><th>Comment</th></tr><tr><td>EPB1125-8</td><td>LCC to consider request from City to allocate some funding to promote the Flexi add-on ticket within the county</td><td>LCC</td><td></td><td>Ongoing</td><td>Subject to funding availability</td></tr><tr><td>EPB1125-9</td><td>Arriva to co-ordinate Flexi add-on ticket promotion with Arriva marketing team</td><td>LCC</td><td></td><td>Ongoing</td><td>As above</td></tr><tr><td></td><td> Proposed pilot based on NWL area Using door drop, local print and broadcast, socials Based on Adult Week East Midlands+Flexi discounted product </td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>	Ref	Action	Owner	RAG	Date	Comment	EPF1025-2	LCC to provide a summary version of the franchising study to EP operators following internal clearance	LCC		20/3/26	Removed as an action until clarity from LGR	Ref	Action	Owner	RAG	Date	Comment	EPB1125-8	LCC to consider request from City to allocate some funding to promote the Flexi add-on ticket within the county	LCC		Ongoing	Subject to funding availability	EPB1125-9	Arriva to co-ordinate Flexi add-on ticket promotion with Arriva marketing team	LCC		Ongoing	As above		Proposed pilot based on NWL area Using door drop, local print and broadcast, socials Based on Adult Week East Midlands+Flexi discounted product					AJ
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Completed actions



EP Board 13th November 2025

Service change dates on CHYM

- LCC to emphasise the dates applicable only to changes outside of the Leicester Buses EP Scheme area
- LCC to add map to show the Leicester Buses EP / Flexi zone

Operators to develop a proposal for a through travel ticketing scheme in market towns

Operators to provide LCC with details of [pinchpoints](#) / hotspots

EP Forum 19th March 2026

LCC to provide members with final BSIP25 document

LCC to circulate summary of Bus Grant project plan showing 2025/26 spend to date

LCC to share summary results of BSIP bus passenger survey with all operators and detailed results to each individual operator



Members **noted** the completed and ongoing actions. In respect of the through ticket offer, LCC will arrange a set-up meeting with Arriva to agree a final proposal for consideration and recommendation by the Fares Task & Finish Group.

TF: Further to the ongoing pinchpoints work, is there any scope for re-introducing buses to Loughborough town centre? Both main operators now have electric vehicles serving the town with significant added environmental and other benefits that contribute to a more inclusive and attractive public space.

EO: We recognise that there is a changed environment and economic background now compared to that in 2016 when the town centre pedestrianisation was made permanent. As such, it could be looked at afresh but any case for potentially altering the scheme would have to consider the same issues as before, any specific design issues and a wider process of engagement with all key stakeholders, none of which would be a guaranteed outcome that favoured bus.

DC: Anything that slows buses down has an impact in operating terms with increases in cost per passenger journey. It's not just a lack of priority or congestion, roadworks can be equally detrimental, with NCT's recent network review identifying a 25% reduction in usage on one corridor.

3

Operator updates

Arriva

TF: Punctuality improvements have been made to the network in and around Swadlincote and on LCC-supported services in North West Leicestershire.

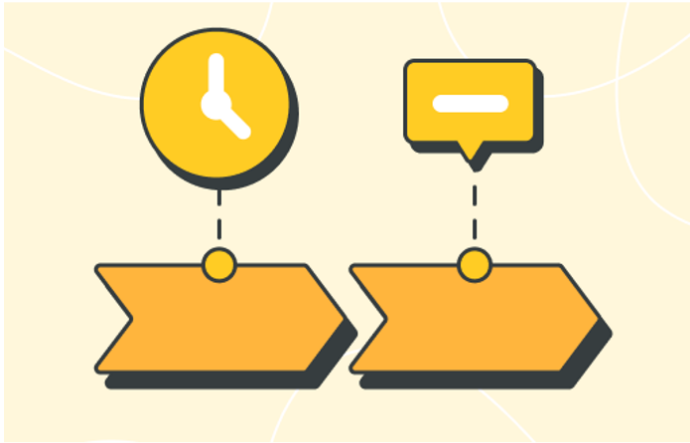
Kinchbus

The new electric fleet has been fully rolled out and included a launch event at Burleigh Court, Loughborough, on 22nd May. Minor timetable changes took place on the local network from 12th April.

NCT

The network changes take place from 21st June and are driven by the need to contain rising costs against a change in travel patterns and lower usage due to multiple causes (pandemic, fare cap increase, disruption from long-term roadworks). Each route has

All

	been reviewed individually and independently to minimise any loss of facility. South Notts 1 is relatively unaffected with a revised timetable on all days and retiming of evening journeys.	
4	LCC updates	AJ/EO
4a	EP Plan / Scheme timeline   Drafting – June/September 2026 Scrutiny – 5th November 2026 Statutory Notice of EP/S to operators and 28-day objection period – November 2026 Public consultation – December/January 2027 Second stage notification to operators and 28-day objection period (only if changes made to EP/S as a result of consultation feedback) – February 2027 Cabinet – by March 2027  This work will start soon in the light of the promised EP Manual from DfT which supplements the refreshed Bus enhanced partnerships guidance published in April. In the meantime, LCC is working to a provisional timeline based on statutory and governance requirements. Drafts will be produced for sharing and comment by EP operators through additional meetings and / or email as required to finalise the new documents given that Scrutiny falls before the next scheduled meeting of the EP. Action: LCC to set up arrangements for reviewing the draft EP Plan and Scheme documents as they are developed.  Minimum standards EP Schemes must now include commitments on: - Maintaining baseline LTA bus spending from non-DfT sources - Promoting concessionary travel - Re-investing any bus priority savings into other BSIP commitments Providing multi-operator service information Promoting a Passenger Charter - Offering and promoting multi-operator / capped ticket products Setting timetable changes (at least) twice yearly - Enabling access by disabled people - Enforcing any new bus lanes / gates - Maintaining LTA-owned infrastructure How: - Physical promotion on buses and stops of concessionary travel and Passenger Charter - Multi-operator ticketing via participation in Project Coral - Publish Your Bus Journey survey / response to outcomes - Accessibility via Bus NAP Status: All-operator service information, Passenger Charter and service change dates on CHYM - Multi-operator ticketing also dependent on LGR? - Physical constraints on other information provision besides t/t? 	

	EP Schemes must now meet a revised set of minimum requirements – as a condition of future bus grant funding – and which have been derived from LTA and other stakeholder engagement that preceded the new EP guidance. The new standards also include suggestions for how these commitments are communicated to passengers. LCC has asked DfT whether LCC's current Passenger Transport Strategy and Policy should also be refreshed as this would need to be profiled into the process; a response is awaited.	
4b	Bus Network Accessibility Plan  Bus Network Accessibility Plan - Must set out the extent to which LCC believes disabled passengers can travel independently, safely and in reasonable comfort / actions needed to achieve / review every 3 years - Outline Bus NAP - Would like all operators visibly represented – can your comms teams support / arrange? - Are you accredited to any disability standards / charters? - Do you have any dedicated accessibility staff in your teams / customer service areas? - Any projects to assist specific disabilities / conditions?   The draft that has been circulated in advance is a starting point for the eventual final document and to enable early feedback from operators well in advance of the submission deadline (March 2027). Whilst being an 'all in one place' resource to raise awareness of the facilities and assistance that are available to increase disabled passengers' confidence to travel by bus, it is also an opportunity to showcase any best practice that operators have developed or are aligned to. Action: LCC to seek suitable images and other operator-led content so that the document includes all EP members. Action: Operators to review the document content for accuracy. LG: This type of document also offers the scope to be creative through or linking to video formats including BSL. HK: It is also helpful to consider perceptions of disability and associated barriers as much as technical content around facilities and compliance.	AJ
4c	Bus stop infrastructure improvements The procurement process for stops in Melton has started which includes 8 RTI displays for key stops, 4 new shelters and 6 refurbished shelters. It is expected that these will be installed over late summer / early autumn. The wider cross-county audit continues with approximately a third of all stops now completed.	RB

RH: Can LCC and EMA work together to improve capacity at the airport bus station given that it acts as a local hub?

EO: This can be discussed if Kinchbus can provide an appropriate contact at EMA.

TF: If autumn is a target, it would be helpful to consider 'launching' these in connection with the planned change of town centre stopping arrangements for service 5.

LG: Is it an aspiration to improve all 4,000+ stops in the county?

EO: Ideally yes, subject to funding, although this wouldn't necessarily mean the provision of new infrastructure in every case.

5 Summer travel promotions and retail offer

HG

LCC summer promotions



Proposed offer for August	Operator information	Notes
National Free Child Fares Scheme	Subject to participation	LCC supported services to be included
FoxConnect – 50% discount	100% reimbursement on minimum subsidy contracts	Automatically applied to all journeys booked via the app and call centre
Travel for £1 on supported network	100% reimbursement on minimum subsidy contracts	Travel on HC, MC and LC services for £1 adult single journey
Operator commercial group tickets	No cost implication	Promote and signpost to operator websites Any subsidy at operators' discretion
Travel by bus	No cost implication	Generic comms and messaging to promote local attractors (Fosse Park, Twinlakes , Twycross, Great Central Railway etc) - Open to other destination suggestions from operators - Also any commercial / private services or excursions that could be included
Flexi ticket	No cost implication	Promote and signpost to Leicester Buses / CHYM websites

LCC had circulated a proposed offer to operators for comment and feedback. Details of the national scheme for free 5-15yo travel were still being worked up by DfT and key stakeholders including LTAs through 2 briefing sessions on 10th and 30th June respectively. The concerns already expressed by Kinchbus over safeguarding especially if the scheme allowed independent travel by very young children had been raised by attendees at the first briefing with suggestions including setting a higher age threshold or requiring adult supervision. DfT is considering practical solutions to address this before final scheme details are shared at the second briefing session.

TF: The general advice in conflict situations is to give passengers the benefit of the doubt especially if the amounts involved are relatively small. This is where off-bus purchase and validation gives a better customer experience overall as well as a platform for wider discounts / products.

DC: There is concern that the subsidised £1 fare on supported services risks abstracting from parallel commercial services as in the case of LC9 which runs alongside NCT service 90 between Bingham and Nottingham. Short-term offers like this offer little value compared to a continued fares offer for certain groups such as the EMCA scheme for youth travel which could be discussed at the Task & Finish group.

EO: The level of duplication between supported services and commercial provision is most likely to be confined to small pockets but if operators do have more specific concerns, please raise them with us.

	Action: Operators to provide more detailed feedback to LCC by email. RH: We also take the view that there is little value in offers like this when there is scope to build in longer-term patronage through a range of targeted, structured discounted offers through methods such as mango for Kinchbus or other operators' apps. BM: If the £1 supported offer is for the whole service regardless of boarding, including in the Leicester city area, we would need sufficient notice to brief Leicester Buses colleagues and bus station operating staff.	
5	AOB / Questions TF: Arriva is currently refurbishing vehicles on the X6 service with improved accessible facilities. Can LCC help identify a wheelchair bus user who would be prepared to test the new equipment? Action: LCC to provide Arriva with relevant disability organisation / network contacts. RH: Can there be consideration, perhaps through the Task & Finish group, of trying to avoid car parking prices undercutting bus fares as has been built into the Leicester City and Nottingham City EPs? EO: Parking strategies and pricing are the responsibility of the districts but we could explore the possibility of working with them on an individual basis. Action: LCC to raise at district level using Charnwood BC as a litmus test to assess scope to adjust car parking charges. RH: Given the impact roadworks can have on delivery and usage, can we identify any best practice measures to try and minimise the impact on bus services? HG: LCC Network Management work closely with works promoters to minimise disruption to the highway network and, where possible and practical, implement mitigation measures to reduce the impact on bus services. This includes coordinating works, challenging traffic management proposals where appropriate, encouraging off-peak or phased working, maintaining access where feasible, and liaising with bus operators to ensure any necessary diversions or service changes are planned and communicated effectively. While some disruption is unavoidable, every effort is made to lessen the impact on service reliability and passenger journeys. Action: LCC to liaise with Network Management and feed back at next meeting.	All
6	DoNMs • PTUG – 18th June 2026 – note rescheduled date • EP Forum and Board – 12th November 2026 at County Hall – this will be rescheduled to avoid the Quality Bus Conference event on the same day.	All