

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET
SUBJECT:	SOUTHAMPTON BUS PARTNERSHIP
DATE OF DECISION:	1 AUGUST 2011
REPORT OF:	CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT
STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
Not Applicable	

BRIEF SUMMARY

The key objective of Southampton Bus Partnership (SBP) is to create a governance framework within which Southampton City Council and local bus operators can work together. Fundamentally this is designed to increase bus patronage and modal shift as well as improve and promote local bus services and associated infrastructure within Southampton through various mechanisms including (but not exclusively) a voluntary quality bus partnership.

Accordingly, the SBP will provide a governance framework for improving and promoting local bus services within Southampton. Further to this, a venue will be provided where the Southampton Quality Bus Partnership (QBP), the Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnership (PIP) and any other similar or related plans may be discussed and agreed.

A mechanism needs to be in place to effectively deliver public transport solutions. A Statutory Quality Partnership cannot be entered into unless a voluntary agreement has been tested. Relationships with transport operators are at a level where a partnership approach has been developed and a draft agreement negotiated with bus companies.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Having had regard to the provisions of the Community Strategy and having satisfied itself that the proposals in this report will or are likely to improve the economic, social or environmental well being of the area:

- (i) To approve the Southampton Bus Partnership (Appendix 1)
- (ii) To appoint the Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport to represent the Council on the Southampton Quality Bus Partnership
- (iii) To delegate authority to the Director of Environment, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport to agree elements of work pertaining to the SBP.
- (iv) To approve, in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules, the addition of £300,000 in 2012/13 to the Environment and Transport Portfolio Capital Programme for a Bus Partnership scheme funded from the confirmed LTP3 Integrated Transport allocation for that year.
- (v) To agree, in principle, to add similar schemes in 2013/14 and 2014/15, subject to confirmation of the LTP3 Integrated Transport allocations for those years and to future Council capital expenditure priorities.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To enable Cabinet to agree a mechanism to deliver bus based elements of the Local Transport Plan 3 agreed at Full Council in March 2011.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2. It is not acceptable to do nothing as the economic building blocks using the bus as one of the main modes of transport for the city need to be laid. Statutory Quality Contracts cannot be entered into unless it can be demonstrated that alternative partnership based approaches have failed to deliver benefits. The terms of a Voluntary Partnership Arrangement can be met through using the mechanism outlined in this report without a binding commitment.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

3. Bus operator investments tend to favour locations where such agreements are in place; particularly where they can have confidence that their investments will get a greater return because of complementary investments or policies of the local authority. Bus operators are already doing this in Southampton in response to the inclusion of longer term programmes of work that support bus service growth. Consequently Bluestar have committed to implement a smartcards scheme in the city for their bus operation and other operators have made informal commitments to match this investment by 2013. The regional Directors of our two largest bus operators and representative of the smaller operators have helped design this approach to joint working.

The SBP will be a voluntary agreement. Unlike previous voluntary agreements it is the intention of this new agreement to improve relationships between bus operators and the city council by backing the agreement up with actions and financial commitments over a medium term period. These are not subject to any binding contract or statutory process but by honest intention.
4. The Local Transport Plan aims to bring about the following outcomes:
 - Reduce dependence on the private car
 - Improve awareness of the different travel options
 - Improve journey time reliability for all modes
 - Improve road safety within the sub-region
 - Improve accessibility within and beyond the sub-region
 - Improve air quality and environment
 - Promote a higher quality of life.
5. Around 17% of peak period trips and 16% of off-peak trips to and from the city centre are made using buses. A quarter of journeys to work are less than 2km in length, three-quarters less than 10km. Thus there is considerable scope for public transport usage to increase, given that 30% of households do not have a car available and a further 45% only have one car.
6. Current levels of provision and usage will need to be supported and expanded to meet growth expectation. A key element of this is the Bus

Strategy which has the challenging goal of increasing bus patronage by 50% over the next 20 years.. Achieving the goals of the Bus Strategy involves:

- Roll out of new and innovative **smart ticketing technology**
 - A **modernised bus fleet** accompanied by effective **marketing and information to attract new passengers;**
 - A **coherent network and prioritised network** to allow buses to make faster and more reliable journey
7. The South Hampshire Bus Operators Agreement was signed between Transport for South Hampshire, First Hampshire & Dorset, Go South Coast (Bluestar, Unilink & Wilts & Dorset) and Black Velvet Travel in June 2010. This aims to promote modal shift in favour of the bus to support the growth agenda, with the objective of delivering 5% growth in passenger numbers across South Hampshire per annum. The agreement supports the use of partnership based delivery including the use of Punctuality Improvement.
 8. The Traffic Management Act 2004 encourages Local Authorities to work with relevant parties, such as the traffic commissioner and bus operators, in formulating and implementing plans for bus priority.
 9. As part of the development of LTP3 bus operators have been involved in the development of the Bus Strategy as well as the Intelligent Transport Systems & Bus Priority elements of the implementation plan. The agreement is now at a stage where it is acceptable as a delivery vehicle to all parties of the agreement.
 10. The Southampton Bus Partnership aims to put in place the delivery mechanism to deliver prioritised schemes to accommodate this growth through:
 - A *Strategic Board* to oversee the delivery of work programmes by the working group. This will develop proposals for future development of SBP and liaise and report to TfSH / PUSH / the LEP in delivering the key objectives;
 - A *Working Group* to deliver or monitor the delivery of work programmes (including but not limited to bus based schemes agreed for delivery from LTP funding). To implement the decisions of the Strategic Board. This is likely to take the form of Bus Punctuality Improvement Task Force or similar.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

11. The approved Environment & Transport Capital Programme includes a total budget of £480,000 in 2011/12 for bus based capital projects. It is recommended that £300,000 is added for a Bus Partnership scheme in 2012/13, to provide for initiatives such as Bus Priority, which will be funded from the confirmed LTP3 Integrated Transport allocation for that year (£2.027M). This equates to an allocation of 15%, which is roughly equal to the current modal share of bus patronage in the city.
12. In principle, and subject to funds being available, it is proposed that a ring fenced allocation of the Local Transport Plan 3 funding period (2011-2015) be allocated to bus based capital projects such as Bus Priority to enable bus

groups to attract internal funding to complement Council investment. However, this level of investment will be subject to confirmation of LTP3 Integrated Transport allocations for those years and also to future Council capital expenditure priorities.

13. Approval to spend the budget on specific work programmes (for capital schemes less than £500,000) is with the appropriate Chief Officer, in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer and the Cabinet Member. The projects developed through this agreement will need to comply with the robust, but easy to use, LTP scheme prioritisation methodology, which complements internal project management processes. This will ensure that decision makers are well informed about what schemes offer greatest value for money.

Property/Other

14. Some LTP schemes will have land issues associated with them. These will be addressed on a case by case basis.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

15. Section 2 Local Government Act 2000 allows a Local Authority, having had regard to the provisions of the community strategy, to do anything it considers likely to improve the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of its area.

Other Legal Implications:

16. In delivering services in accordance with the proposals set out in this report the Council must have regard to its duties under the Equalities Act 2010 and section 17 Crime & Disorder Act 1998.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

17. This delivery mechanism is wholly in accordance with the approved Local Transport Plan 3 .
18. The Proposals are supported by the aims and objectives of the Community Strategy, in particular towards the achievement of improved transport infrastructure and transport systems.

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KEY DECISION? Yes/No Yes

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Non-confidential appendices are in the Members' Rooms and can be accessed on-line

Appendices

1	Draft Southampton Bus Partnership
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Documents In Members' Rooms

	None
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Integrated Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to be carried out.	No
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Other Background Documents

Integrated Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
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1.	Local Transport Plan 3	
2.	LTP3 Bus Priority Compendium	
3.	Bus Priority Implementation Packages	