



26 October 2021

To whom it may concern

Kent County Council - Bus Service Improvement Plan

We write in our capacity as representatives for the Kent Bus Operators to offer our support to Kent County Council (KCC) and the work we are undertaking to produce and ultimately deliver on Kent's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).

Following publication of the National Bus Strategy (NBS) in March 2021, KCC has fully engaged with all bus operators in the County. This included an Operator Engagement event on 17th June 2021. All Kent bus operators were given the chance to attend the event to understand Kent's approach to the BSIP, the identified key principles, operator data and information requirements as well as having the opportunity to make comments and raise questions. Following on from this, fortnightly meetings were held virtually between officers of Kent County Council and the representatives for the Kent Bus Operators where details of Kent BSIP progress were reported on, including sharing drafts of the document. The process of engagement has enabled operators to feel informed and able to inform the focus of Kent's Bus Service Improvement Plan and, subject to the outcome of the funding settlement, we are confident that the plan can secure recovery from the pandemic and deliver significant improvements for Kent's Bus Users.

In conclusion, we fully support the approach of Kent County Council and are happy to adopt the current BSIP as a shared vision for buses in the County. Any funding that can help implement the initiatives the Council has produced will help to make bus travel more attractive with a view to increasing bus patronage.

Matthew Arnold
Stagecoach / CPT Kent & Medway Vice Chair

Michael Jennings
Arriva

Norman Kemp
Nu-Venture Coaches Ltd / CPT Kent & Medway Chair

Joe Ratcliffe
Transport Strategy Manager
Kent County Council
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By email to: Joseph.Ratcliffe@kent.gov.uk

26 October 2021

Dear Joe

Bus Service Improvement Plan submission

I am writing to you in your role as the council's representative on the TfSE Senior Officer Group to support the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) that your Council has produced.

As you are aware, Transport for the South East (TfSE) is a partnership of 16 local transport authorities (LTAs). Following the approval of our transport strategy in summer 2020, we have been developing a series of area and thematic studies to identify the specific interventions that will be needed to implement the strategy on the ground. This work will culminate in the publication of a draft Strategic Investment Plan for public consultation in June 2022.

TfSE has identified that buses will have a vital role to play in delivering the 2050 vision set out in the transport strategy and in particular the target of achieving net zero carbon emissions from transport by 2050, at the latest. The delivery of BSIPs will have a critical role to play in helping us to achieve our 2050 vision.

TfSE will be providing further Bus Back Better support to all our 16 LTAs through technical work we already have underway to develop an evidence base that will identify the future ambition for buses across the region. We have also recently submitted a joint proposal with England's Economic Heartlands and Transport East to the DfT's additional workstreams for 2021/22 to support the LTAs in our area with the delivery of their BSIPs.

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The successful delivery of our transport strategy and our constituent authorities' Local Transport Plans will be dependent upon a significant improvement in bus service provision to encourage passengers back onto buses. I therefore commend your BSIP as a vital first step in setting out your ambition to improve bus services in your area.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rupert Clubb', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rupert Clubb
Lead Officer, Transport for the South East

Cc Shane Harmers
Mark Welch

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27 October 2021

Dear Stephen

Kent County Council Bus Service Improvement Plan

Transport Focus, as a member of Kent County Council's National Bus Strategy Stakeholder Group, has worked with the Council as it has developed its Plan. The Council has taken a collaborative approach to working with bus operators, Transport Focus and other key stakeholders. The Council has welcomed and drawn on insight, guidance documents and industry briefing sessions offered by Transport Focus. We welcome this collaborative approach and positive engagement.

The overall ambition of the Bus Service Improvement Plan, as shared in outline through the workshop sessions, reflects many of the areas we know passengers want to see improved. It contains several initiatives which we agree could deliver improved experiences for bus passengers and we welcome these proposals.

Transport Focus looks forward to continuing to work with Kent County Council as they deliver on the ambitions within this plan.

Yours sincerely



Robert Pain
Senior insight advisor

National Bus Strategy: Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Partnership Schemes

Kent County Council Highways and Transportation, Public Transport

Memorandum of Understanding

KCC Public Transport and XXXXXXXX Borough / District Council

1. The National Bus Strategy (NBS) was launched in March 2021 and represents the Government's vision for how Local Transport Authorities and Bus Operators should come together and work collaboratively to ensure bus network recovery from the impacts of the pandemic and then aspire to drive improvements to all aspects of service delivery.
2. In order to protect a number of existing and future funding streams provided to both Local Transport Authorities and Bus Operators directly, a number of requirements for local delivery are required, including the formation of a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) for publication at the end of October 2021 and the establishing of Enhanced Partnership Schemes (EPs) which will govern all public bus services operating in the County from April 2022.
3. BSIPs are the medium term (2 – 3 year) strategy and bidding document which represents the shared vision of LTAs and local bus operators as to how they intend to deliver the aspirations of the NBS. EPs are the resulting legal framework through which LTAs and Bus Operators can establish and agree minimum standards of delivery applicable to all services operating within the stated EP scheme area.
4. KCC and its local bus operators are committed to engaging fully with this process and in the Summer of 2021, began to form their BSIP and commenced the formal process to work towards establishing EP schemes.
5. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is between KCC and XXXXXXXX Borough / District Council. It is intended to form the basis of an agreed position and way of working whereby KCC seek to support the local aspirations of the Borough / District Councils through the Kent BSIP and EPs and the Borough / District Council commit to supporting KCC and Kent's Bus Operators in delivery with particular regard to Planning, Parking Enforcement, and the provision of Bus Shelters. The MOU has been formed on the basis that not all aspects related to NBS requirements sit solely within the remit of KCC as the Local Transport Authority (LTA).
6. **Through the Kent BSIP and EP schemes, KCC will:**
 - Engage with Kent's Borough / District Councils throughout the formation, delivery and ongoing review of the Kent BSIP and EPs to ensure that so far as is possible they reflect local aspirations and areas desired for improvement.
 - Ensure that Borough / District Councils have representation on the relevant EP Schemes Monitoring Board and Passenger Charter Review groups.

- As part of its Governance and meeting structure, establish individual (Borough / District) EP Local Focus Groups in order to replicate the local focus and detailed dialogue gained from current QBP meetings.
- Will, support Borough / District Councils in using the provision of services and raising of vehicle emission standards to improve Air Quality, particularly in identified Air Quality Management areas.
- Establish and share a consistent method for the assessment of all schemes and bus service initiatives to ensure that there is transparency about the use of NBS funding and how this is apportioned across areas.

7. XXXXXXXX Borough / District Council will:

- Support the Council and Kent's Bus operators in all aspects of the Kent BSIP and EPs.
- Support bus operators to provide reliable bus services in its function as the Parking Authority, reacting positively to requests for targeted parking enforcement and any need for new restrictions where this is needed to address a reported problem impacting on bus access and within the remit of the Borough / District.
- To ensure that the needs of bus services are considered appropriately as part of any public realm works, ensuring that any such scheme is not to the detriment of services or passengers.
- Work collaboratively with KCC and Bus Operators to maximise the opportunities for new Bus Stop Infrastructure (shelters) and work with operators and KCC to establish appropriate locations and to seek to ensure that all infrastructure is maintained and repaired as required.
- Promote the bus as an effective way of tackling air quality issues and work with KCC on any funding streams available for the support of low emissions vehicles
- Support KCC and the views represented by the Council in response to consultation in respect of proposed new developments ensuring that consideration of the needs of bus operators and services are a primary consideration as part of any application. Specifically, Borough / District Councils will give consideration to the Kent Design Guide as part of any new application and will seek to secure funding through the development process to support the introduction of new and enhanced services where this is appropriate.

For and on behalf of **Kent County Council Highways & Transportation**

Signed:

Name:

Position:

Date:

For and on behalf of **XXXXXXXXX Borough / District Council**

Signed:

Name:

Position:

Date: