

Date of issue: Monday, 20th June 2022

MEETING	PLACE SCRUTINY PANEL (Councillors Mohammad (Chair), Wright (Vice Chair), Begum, Cheema, Gill, Grewal, M. Malik, Minhas and Sandhu.)
DATE AND TIME:	TUESDAY, 28TH JUNE, 2022 AT 6.30 PM
VENUE:	COUNCIL CHAMBER - OBSERVATORY HOUSE, 25 WINDSOR ROAD, SL1 2EL
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: (for all enquiries)	LAUREN FAIR 07564 046033

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend the above Meeting at the time and date indicated to deal with the business set out in the following agenda.



GAVIN JONES
Chief Executive

AGENDA

PART I

AGENDA ITEM	REPORT TITLE	PAGE	WARD
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Apologies for absence.

1. Declarations of Interest

All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary or other Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to the circumstances described in Section 9 and Appendix B of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed.

CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th January 2022

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3. Member Questions

(An opportunity for panel members to ask questions of the relevant Director/Associate Director, relating to pertinent, topical issues affecting their Directorate – maximum 10 minutes allocated.)

SCRUTINY ISSUES

4. Bus Enhanced Partnership 7 - 62

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

5. Date of Next Meeting - 8th September 2022

Press and Public

Attendance and accessibility: You are welcome to attend this meeting which is open to the press and public, as an observer. You will however be asked to leave before any items in the Part II agenda are considered. For those hard of hearing an Induction Loop System is available in the Council Chamber.

Webcasting and recording: The public part of the meeting will be filmed by the Council for live and/or subsequent broadcast on the Council's website. The footage will remain on our website for 12 months. A copy of the recording will also be retained in accordance with the Council's data retention policy. By entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings.

In addition, the law allows members of the public to take photographs, film, audio-record or tweet the proceedings at public meetings. Anyone proposing to do so is requested to advise the Democratic Services Officer before the start of the meeting. Filming or recording must be overt and persons filming should not move around the meeting room whilst filming nor should they obstruct proceedings or the public from viewing the meeting. The use of flash photography, additional lighting or any non hand held devices, including tripods, will not be allowed unless this has been discussed with the Democratic Services Officer.

Emergency procedures: The fire alarm is a continuous siren. If the alarm sounds Immediately vacate the premises by the nearest available exit at either the front or rear of the Chamber and proceed to the assembly point: The pavement of the service road outside of Westminster House, 31 Windsor Road.

Place Scrutiny Panel – Meeting held on Wednesday, 12th January, 2022.

Present:- Councillors Mohammad (Chair), Strutton (Vice-Chair), Gill and Minhas

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillors Ali, Gahir, Hulme and Mann

Apologies for Absence:- Councillors R. Davis and Grewal

PART 1

14. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

15. Minutes of the Meeting held on 28th September 2021 and the Extraordinary Meeting held on 1st December 2021

Resolved – That the minutes of the meetings held on 28th September 2021 and the extraordinary meeting held on 1st December 2021 be approved as a correct record.

16. Member Questions

No Member Questions had been submitted.

17. Place Directorate Budget Proposals 2022/23

The Executive Director of Place & Community gave a comprehensive presentation that updated members of the Panel on the 2022/23 budget and savings proposals for what was formerly the Place directorate. An update on the Place & Community directorate restructure was also provided.

The 2022/23 savings were summarised as follows:

- Lease renewals and renting floor space (£1.38m), including at Observatory House.
- Increase in charges for waste services (£0.13m).
- Street cleansing reductions (£0.4m).
- Grounds maintenance reductions (£0.45m).
- Place directorate restructure (£1.15m General Fund and £2.4m overall).

The Panel noted the key and risks and pressures relating to the 2022/23 budget which included the impact on rent and lease income when buildings were sold; fluctuating diesel, petrol, electricity and gas prices; and further work on the costings for officer salaries in the directorate.

In relation to the Place & Community directorate restructure it was noted that detailed work was taking place and that this would align with the capability and capacity review that the Council was required to undertake by the end of February 2022. There were 703 posts in the directorate of which 104 posts may be deleted, but noting that there were currently 99 vacant posts and a further 54 occupied by agency staff. All the proposals would be subject to union and staff consultation.

The Panel discussed the process of developing the savings proposals, including the detailed business cases that had been made available to Members to review. The Director was asked whether he was confident the business cases were consistently of the required quality on which to base savings proposals. The Director confirmed he was content with the overall quality and that their purpose to provide sufficient confidence that the saving figures identified were accurate and deliverable. The bigger risk to future savings was the financial data for the directorate and significant progress had been made to set a much more solid baseline than in the past, which would now provide a stronger foundation from which to build the budget from the bottom up.

Members discussed Observatory House and asked about the impact of renting out floorspace on any potential future sale if that was what the assets review recommended. The Director emphasised that the overall approach to asset disposals would be that each asset would be assessed independently and professionally with the overriding objective of securing best consideration for the Council. A procurement process was underway to appoint independent expertise to support the Council. The market remained strong for good quality office space in a prime and accessible location. A Member commented on the rental options for different parts of Observatory House and also commented that the lower ground parts of Herschel car park belonging to Observatory House were under-utilised. He asked if there were any plans to rent the car parking spaces out to nearby flats or hotels. It was responded that there were various potential options for the building and a flexible approach would be taken, but the key point in terms of the budget was that the estimated level of savings was considered to be a reasonable estimate of the income. In relation to the car park, it was noted that an occupier may want to utilise the spaces and this would therefore need to be considered as part of the asset review.

The Panel, and Members attended under Rule 30, asked a number of questions about individual savings during the course of the discussion which are summarised as follows:

- Leisure facilities – a Member commented that there was nothing in the savings plans about generating more income from leisure facilities such as the Salt Hill Park Activity Centre. The Director noted there was a separate savings plan for the leisure contract which was focused on securing the management fee as part of the contract with the provider, Everyone Active. Covid restrictions had had a significant negative

impact on leisure centre income but the recovery was underway and the budgeted figure was therefore considered realistic.

- Waste services charges – Members asked about the approach to various charges for certain items such as mattress disposal and the Director explained that the strategy was to make the charges as simple as possible to administer and understand whilst ensuring the charges fully recovered costs.
- Fly-tipping - concern was expressed that higher bulky waste charges would increase fly-tipping, however, the Director stated that this perception was not supported by evidence and that most fly-tipping was by commercial tradespeople or unscrupulous landlords rather than residents seeking to dispose of unwanted large items. He commented on the approach being taken towards enforcement of fly-tipping and highlighted the need to take a balanced approach given the high cost of prosecutions, but that the Council did carry out surveillance, prosecution and removal to tackle the problem.
- Bulky waste fee discounts – the proposed charges for 2022/23 included a minimum charge of £51 for 3 items. Members expressed concern at the proposal to end free bulky waste collections for residents over 65 years of age or those in receipt of personal independence payments. In 2022/23 it was proposed that there be a £10 discount for those in receipt of income related benefit. The Director explained the rationale for the proposed changes. The charges had been reviewed in comparison to other local authorities and the proposed charges and exemptions would bring Slough more into line with comparators. The approach was based on the ability to pay. Several Members commented on the potential impact of a minimum fee and removal of free collections from those on low incomes and the Director agreed to carry out further review on the eligibility for discounted collections.
- Street cleansing – Members scrutinised the proposed savings and asked questions about vehicle leasing costs, enforcement of littering and dog fouling and litter picking regimes. It was acknowledged that the reductions in the frequency and litter picks, vehicles and staff would have an impact but levels of cleanliness would be closely monitored and the resources that were available would be deployed in a more responsive rather than regimented way to achieve acceptable levels of street cleanliness. There were set service standards and response times set for certain areas.
- Grounds maintenance – Members asked about the likely impacts of service reductions. The Director commented that there was likely to be an overall impact on the amenity but it hoped they could be minimised through good management. Priority would be given to maintenance where there were potential safety issues e.g. hedge trimming to maintain sight lines on highways. It was clarified that provision for HRA

land was separate from General Fund provision and the Council would continue to comply with service standards provided for tenants.

- Restructure – further detail was requested on how the savings would be achieved. The detail was still being worked through but the Director was confident the proposed level of savings could be achieved.

A question was also asked about the proposed Customer & Community saving regarding reductions to the community and youth work teams. The Director stated that the Customer & Community Scrutiny Panel has expressed concern about the possible impact of this saving and work was ongoing to seek to identify alternative funding and gather evidence on the impacts of the service.

At the conclusion of the discussion the Panel noted the report and broadly accepted the savings proposals. It was proposed by Councillor Minhas, seconded by Councillor Gill, and agreed by the Panel that the Director be asked to carry out a further review of the eligibility for the bulky waste discount to support people on low incomes as far as possible.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Place directorate budget and savings proposals for 2022/23 be noted.
- (b) That the Director be asked to carry out a further review of the eligibility for the bulky waste discount to support people on low incomes as far as possible.
- (c) That the update on the Place directorate restructure be noted.

18. Forward Work Programme

The Panel reviewed the forward work programme for the remainder of the municipal year. Members expressed an interest in future scrutiny of the use of Section 106 funding and on income generation from the Place directorate. These would be considered for addition to the Panel work programme at the appropriate time, and noting that the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee and Overview & Scrutiny Committee had also expressed interest in the Section 106 issue.

Resolved – That the forward work programme be agreed.

19. Members' Attendance Record

Resolved – That the Members' Attendance Record for 2021/22 be noted.

20. Date of Next Meeting - 24th February 2022

The date of the next scheduled meeting was confirmed as 24th February 2022.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.00 pm and closed at 9.21 pm)

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SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Place Scrutiny Panel **DATE:** 28th June 2022

CONTACT OFFICER: Eddie Hewitt. Principal Transport Strategy Officer.
(For all Enquiries) 01753 474101

WARD(S): All

PART I
FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION

BUS ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP**1. Purpose of Report**

An Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme (EPPS) has been created in partnership between Slough Borough Council (SBC) and the bus operators of registered local services in Slough, following on from the Bus Service Improvement Plan (previously reviewed by Scrutiny and approved by Cabinet in October 2021). The Enhanced Partnership (EP) is the next essential stage in the development of the Council's response to the Government's National Bus Strategy (NBS). The EPPS is due to be submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) following approval by Cabinet. The submission date is expected to be in June 2022.

A Cabinet report has been produced in support of the proposed EPPS. This will be reviewed by Cabinet on 20th June 2022. The recommendations in the Cabinet report are to: note the proposed plan and governance arrangements, approve the final version of the EPPS, and approve the formal commencement of the EP with the bus operators. We are now seeking comments from the Scrutiny panel. All comments and requests will be considered and applied to the Cabinet report, but changes to the EPPS itself are not expected to be applied at this stage. Any such changes would require another round of operator and other stakeholder consultation. However, all comments received from the Scrutiny Panel will be used to help inform the ongoing development of the EP as it commences in action.

2. Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Panel is requested:

- A) to note the report for information regarding the Enhanced Partnership; and
- B) to make any comments and requests for consideration by the Transport Team, noting that the Scrutiny meeting will be after the Cabinet meeting.

3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy and the JSNA

3a. Slough Wellbeing Strategy Priorities

The Enhanced Partnership, along with the BSIP, will contribute to meeting the needs of the Slough Wellbeing Strategy as follows:

Priorities:

1. Starting Well

Increased availability and patronage of public transport is essential to all aspects of sustainability. The EP/BSIP will help create a safer and more reliable network, which will be of benefit especially to young people, include school children, by meeting their transport needs in the first instance, and also forming part of a much wider behavioural change process that is needed in society, and which must cover all age groups.

2. Integration (relating to Health & Social Care)

A better, more reliable bus network will lead to greater accessibility and mobility, particularly for those without private transport. The EP/BSIP will help ensure that services will provide better access in particular to health care services and facilities, and all locations where people want and need to travel to. Improved connectivity across the borough is expected.

3. Strong, healthy and attractive neighbourhoods

The EP / BSIP include measures to promote environmental sustainability, including better air quality and reduced carbon emissions. This includes proposals to support better quality fleets and zero emission buses. Furthermore, reduced congestion and better infrastructure, along with improved modal integration are all expected to be realised through the plan.

4. Workplace health

As above, better environmental conditions will contribute to better workplace health, including a fitter workforce, for the bus companies and more widely throughout the borough.

4. Other Implications

(a) Financial

4.1. From 2022, Local Authorities with BSIPs / EPPs in place will be invited to submit bids for EP / BSIP related schemes, for funding contributions from the overall funding pool. SBC was not awarded funding in the initial DfT announcement in April 2022, however the establishment of an EP will enable SBC to apply for any further funding from National Bus Strategy and from other government sources to improve bus services.

4. 2. An underlying principle applicable to all schemes and improvements proposed in the EPPS (and previously the BSIP) is that they are subject to availability of funding and that they are feasible in all relevant ways. Currently there is no funding available from the Council. Furthermore, the Council is

currently seeking ways to reduce expenditure in any way legally and practically possible, including, for example, supported bus services.

4.3. Bus operators will be expected to be equally committed to the EP (they will be joint members of and legally bound to all decisions made by the EP board).

4.4. Regarding services to Heathrow Airport, there is a possibility that funding opportunities may arise in the future, potentially to be provided by Heathrow Airport Limited, for improved services across the relevant authority areas.

4.5. Consistent with the terms of the BSIP, the EPPS does not include any immediate financial commitments. However, given the requirements of the Government and the DfT, it is necessary to have an Enhanced Partnership with the bus operators in order to support the improvement of services and infrastructure at local level.

4.6. Overall, subject to the successful establishment of the partnership, and ongoing effective provision of bus services and relations with the bus operators, no negative financial impacts are anticipated.

However, should the Council not have a satisfactory EP in place, the DfT has stated an intention to cease the Bus Service Operators' Grant (BSOG) payments to local authorities and bus operators not participating in an EP. BSOG helps operators to keep fares down and to run services that might otherwise be unprofitable. Loss of BSOG income would therefore be likely to lead to service cancellations.

The absence of an EP would also prevent the ability to bid for DfT funding for schemes in the lifetime of the National Bus Strategy, placing both the Council and bus operators at a disadvantage compared to other authorities where partnerships or franchises are in place.

4.7. A grant of £100K already has been received by SBC from the DfT from the Bus Capacity Grant. This was in response to the Council's provisional indication that it has committed to an Enhanced Partnership arrangement and BSIP submission. A subsequent £50k has been received to further assist in the development of the BSIP. The funding covers the following:

- Preparation of the formal statement committing to an Enhanced Partnership
- Development of the BSIP, including preparatory work with the bus operators
- Development of the subsequent specific scheme bids in the Enhanced Partnership Plan (EPP).

Expenditure on the preparation of the EP and BSIP has been approved by the SBC Expenditure Control Panel.

4.8. Slough did not receive any BSIP funding in the DfT's announcement in April 2022. Hence, there is no budget available to cover the infrastructure proposals included in the BSIP. However, any BSIP proposals not requiring funding from SBC will still be considered by the EP for possible implementation.

4.9. The Council's support on the non-investment requirements of the plan is able to be provided on a BAU basis through the work of the Transport Planning team and colleagues as necessary. There are no implications for the budget in this regard.

(b) Legal

4.10. The Council as a LTA has statutory functions under the Local Transport Act 2008 and has a statutory duty to comply with the Transport Act 2000, as amended by the Bus Services Act 2017. This 2017 Act introduces an Enhanced Partnership, which is an '*agreement between a local transport authority (LTA) and local bus operators to improve local bus services*'

4.11. The Council is also under a statutory duty to comply with the National Bus Strategy. Statutory guidance was issued by the DfT in May 2021: National Bus Strategy: Bus Service Improvements Plans which set out the timeline for compliance with various stages.

4.12. Step 1 is for the Council to decide which statutory path to follow – pursue an Enhanced Partnership or develop a bus franchising assessment. As stated in the Strategy, by the end of June 2021, to be eligible for new funding and continued access to COVID-19 Bus Services Support Grant (CBSSG) every LTA must have published a statutory notice that they intend to prepare an EP (as required by S.138F(1)(a) of the Transport Act 2000).

As stated in section 2.3, the Council has chosen to develop an Enhanced Partnership. Formal notice of this decision was given in May 2021.

4.13. Step 2 LTA's should develop and publish a BSIP by 31 October 2021. Each plan will need to be updated annually and reflected in the authority's Local Transport Plan and in other relevant local plans.

The BSIP was submitted to the DfT on 29th October 2021 and has been reviewed by the DfT. The Transport team will manage the annual review and the alignment of the BSIP with all Council related Transport policies.

4.14. Step 3 From July 2022, the BSIP should be delivered using one of the two statutory options under Step 1 above. Subsequently, the Council must have an Enhanced Partnership in place. The proposal now is to formally commence the Enhanced Partnership from July 2022.

4.15. Although the EP is a joint commitment, with all parties accountable for the successful operation of the partnership and the delivery of the plan, the Council has ultimate responsibility for submitting the EPPS to the DfT in the first instance, and thereafter to chairing the partnership.

4.16. The EP (following on from the BSIP) will facilitate the Council's statutory duty to identify the bus services appropriate to meet the needs of their areas, and to secure provision of those services that cannot be provided on a commercial basis. However, the EP will inevitably provide new challenges as well as opportunities relating to the best way to fulfil this duty.

4.17. The commitments proposed in the EP will have implications for both the Council as Local Transport Authority and the Bus Operators, who will be the joint

owners of the EPPS. However, again in line with the BSIP, all schemes included in the EP plan and scheme are proposals at this stage, and are subject to feasibility, funding availability and consultation.

4.18. Under Part 3.5, Table 3, point 2 of the Council's Constitution, approving "... policies and plans for implementation by lead members and officers" is an Executive function and it is considered on that basis that the EPPS requires Cabinet approval.

4.19. Part 3.6 of the Constitution sets out the Scheme of Delegation to Officers and under Section 2 - Executive Directors' general delegated powers include: taking and implementing any decision required for operational effectiveness, taking any action necessary to ensure the effective development and implementation of the Council's key strategies and services relating to directorates and attending and representing the Council on partnership boards. Under section 4, specific delegation is given to the Executive Director, Place for functions relating to Transport Planning.

(c) Risk Management

A risk assessment has not been conducted specifically to accompany the preparation and submission of the EPPS and the BSIP to the DfT. However, when it comes to progressing proposed schemes, the risk assessments, notably including financial risks, will be considered and prepared as appropriate.

In broad terms, there is no financial risk associated with the preparation and submission of the BSIP and the Enhanced Partnership. Conversely, there would be a significant risk should the Council decide not to continue to proceed with its EP and BSIP commitments already made. This relates to the comments in the Finance section above.

Similarly, there are no policy related risks associated with the preparation and submission of the EPPS and BSIP. Given the options made available by Government to LTAs, the EP and BSIP route is considered the best way to deliver on policy commitments already made by the Council.

Recommendation from section 2 above	Risks/Threats/Opportunities	Current Controls	Using the Risk Management Matrix Score the risk	Future Controls
<i>To note the report for information regarding the EP</i>	<i>No risks. This is an opportunity to gain knowledge of the upcoming implications of the NBS at local level. Also to ensure that the Council's EP is as well designed as possible to meet the needs of bus users and</i>	<i>Transport team engaging with the DfT and responding to all guidance. Professional consultants with detailed knowledge of Public Transport have been engaged to assist in the preparation of</i>		<i>The EP will be presented along with a report to the Cabinet meeting on June 20th 2022.</i> <i>All proposals for EP / BSIP schemes and measures are subject to feasibility, funding and consultation.</i>

	<i>the wider community throughout the borough.</i>	<i>the BSIP and EP.</i> <i>Engagement with the bus operators is ongoing.</i>		
<i>To make any comments and requests for possible amendment to the cabinet report</i>	No risks. As above, this is an opportunity for the EP cabinet report to be fine-tuned as well as possible, to ensure that it is ultimately results in the successful further development of the Enhanced Partnership, as well as success in securing funding from the DfT to facilitate the delivery of schemes and measures proposed in the BSIP.			<p>Any responses from this panel meeting will be collated and considered by the Transport team, and applied as appropriate, in the first instance to the Cabinet report.</p> <p>Cabinet members will be asked to approve the proposed EP presented. There is limited opportunity to make amendments to the EP at this stage. Any such amendments will require a further operator objection period and stakeholder consultation.</p> <p><i>All proposals for EP schemes and measures are subject to feasibility, funding and consultation.</i></p>

(d) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

The associated cabinet report and EPPS document have been reviewed by Harrow Public Law. There are no Humans Rights Act implications in this proposal.

(e) Equalities Impact Assessment

The Equality Act 2010 outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty and under s.149 it requires Public Bodies as decision makers to have 'due regard' to achieving a number of equality goals, which includes the need to:

- a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- b. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- c. Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Relevant protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day to day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design policies and the delivery of services.

In order to assist in meeting its duty the Council has carried out an initial Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) for the EP and the BSIP and this is provided as **Appendix B** to this report. This is an over-arching assessment at this stage of the overall response to the National Bus Strategy. Subsequently, when it comes to developing plans for specific schemes within the Enhanced Partnership Plan (EPP), individual EIAs will additionally be provided for all schemes of a scale and scope considered appropriate to warrant this level of assessment.

The overall expectations are as follows:

- a) The impacts of the EP and BSIP will be positive for all groups in society, with wide-ranging opportunities and improvements across the borough, and
- b) There will be no negative impacts from the EP and BSIP on any protected group

Examples of the benefits that will be of particular benefit to identified groups include the following:

- c) More frequent services will be especially helpful to the elderly. This will lead to increased perceptions of safety and greater comfort / minimised physical pain related to traditionally longer waiting times. A more reliable network of services will also improve connectivity and social inclusion, as well as access to a range of destinations.
- d) Similar benefits will also be expected for people with disabilities, through a greater understanding of the issues, which will be shared by the operators and the Council. Where not already included, the proposed table of measures and schemes will be reviewed and strengthened to better address the needs of people with disabilities.
- e) More frequent and more reliable services will also improve safety (perceived and actual) especially for mothers of young children. Benefits will also be associated with better access to healthcare related destinations. Lower fare costs may well be of particular benefit here too.

- f) Improved bus services are expected to provide a more attractive, more efficient travel option for specific cultural groups, where there is typically a strong 'car culture' and a reluctance to travel on public transport.
- g) More reliable bus services, reduced waiting times, and a better bus network are all likely to provide a safer and more attractive travel option to those seeking to travel to places of worship across the borough.

(f) Workforce

There is a clear need for the Council to have at its disposal the relevant knowledge, experience, and skills within its workforce. As part of the overall Public Transport related responsibilities of the Council, the EPPS and BSIP will be managed by the Place directorate, Strategy and Infrastructure division. The EP and BSIP are considered to be one of the Transport service's top priorities. Additional staff may be required to cover the full range of BSIP and Enhanced Partnership responsibilities as the plan is delivered. Regular reviews will be required on an ongoing basis to ensure that all aspects continue to be covered. This will include continuous monitoring of journey times, punctuality, patronage and passenger satisfaction.

Furthermore, the success of the plan will also depend on appropriate levels of staffing resources in related service areas, including procurement, legal and financial disciplines, particularly when it comes to progressing scheme development and contractual matters within the Enhanced Partnership.

5. Supporting Information

5.1. EPPS Structure and Contents

The overarching objective in establishing the EP and the BSIP is to deliver significant improvements in bus services in the borough. This is designed to result in more frequent services, more reliable journey times, increased bus patronage, lower fares, better and easier ticketing systems, and a raft of associated benefits.

Based on DfT guidance, a combined EP Plan and Scheme document has been produced which contains two main sections (Section 1 is the introduction. Section 2 and Section 3 are described below).

Both Sections 2 and 3 also refer to detailed appendices as follows:

**Appendix A) Facilities (infrastructure),
Appendix B) Measures (technical or procedural innovations) and
Appendix C) Requirements (legal obligations)**

All of these areas are split in turn and as follows:

- i) Existing
- ii) Already approved and
- iii) Still to be considered by the Partnership.

Appendix D specifically focuses on the Terms of Reference for the Governance element of the Partnership.

This structure is designed to enable facilities, measures and requirements to be amended as agreed by the EP Board, but changes to governance require the full change process. This is in line with the legislation and with DfT guidance.

Section 2: The EP Plan (EPP, reflecting the main policy elements – objectives, targets, principles, and the summary or proposed measures – as in the BSIP)

This section provides a summarised table of all proposed measures, as well as a summary of Partnership objectives. These are in line with the original proposals and objectives set out in the BSIP. In that context, they are designed to have positive impacts on the four key targets summarised as follows:

- Improved bus journey times
- Improved bus journey time reliability
- Increased bus patronage
- Increased passenger satisfaction

The content in this section is supported by the original summarised outline funding template which was provided as Appendix B to the BSIP which was presented to Cabinet in October 2021. The prioritisation for each summarised package of measures is still to be determined (again, subject to expected DfT guidance). The original, total estimated cost for all measures is approximately £54m. This has not changed.

The EPPS does not currently contain any highly detailed scheme/project proposals for the measures carried forward from the BSIP. In addition, still in line with the principles of the BSIP, all proposals within the EPPS will continue to be subject to feasibility, availability of funding, and consultation responses, including further Cabinet reporting where appropriate.

The DfT announced on 4th April 2022 the first round of funding awards for BSIP purposes. Slough was not included in this list. However, the DfT advised that further BSIP funding awards may be made in the future. The DfT has also advised that it will welcome SBC bids to other funds / sources, e.g. Levelling Up, to contribute to the implementation of the EP. Once obtained, SBC officers will negotiate agreements with bus operators that are conditional on the level of funding that can be secured.

Section 3: The EP Scheme (EPS, focusing mainly on the Partnership governance)

EP Governance is the part of the EP Plan and Scheme document that has not previously been set out in detail in the BSIP. The governance structure and procedures have now been discussed extensively and agreed in principle with the Bus Operators, also being based on DfT guidance / recommendations.

The main points relating to the governance structure and duties are set out in the EP as follows:

EP Forum

- To consist of representatives from SBC, bus operators, rail companies, and potentially bus user groups.

- Main duties: groundwork, proposals and recommendations, including proposed prioritisation, consideration of monitoring results.
- Proposals and recommendations will be developed in the forum and referred to the EP Executive Board for formal consideration and voting.

EP Executive Board

- Membership: 3 Local Transport Authority (LTA) reps (Lead Member or Executive Director, Transport officer, Highways officer) and 4 Bus Operator reps (First Bus Group and Reading Buses as major operators, TfL (who have specific statutory duties) and a fourth to collectively represent the smaller operators).
- Main duties: Considering and voting on proposals. Assignment of working groups to investigate feasibility where required.
- When voting, proposals will be approved where there are no votes against them. Items will remain on the agenda until resolved. Hence there is no need for a casting vote or any form of arbitration.
- The Chair is proposed to be the SBC Lead member with responsibility for Sustainable Transport and the Environment, or the Executive Director for Place.
- All proposals are ultimately subject to availability of funding, feasibility assessments and consultation responses.

Implications for ward member input

There is no provision for ward member representation in the EP Forum or Executive Board. The expectation is that any requests or case-work from ward members would be provided as usual to the Transport team. The information would be reviewed and any proposal arising from this would be considered for inclusion on the agenda for an EP Forum meeting in the first instance.

Timelines for submission

Following recent changes to DfT guidance, the requirement is now to submit the EPPS to the DfT, and to formally ‘make’ the EP. The DfT is not planning to formally approve EPs, and the decision to make the Slough EP is the responsibility of SBC as the Local Transport Authority. The DfT has asked that EPs are in place as soon as reasonably possible so that authorities can benefit from other discretionary funds in the future. The planned start date for the EP is 1st July 2022.

5.2. Transport Policy implications

In Transport terms, specifically, and the links with Planning, the Council’s Transport policy is focused on providing a sustainable, integrated travel solution at local level. At the heart of this is the need for modal shift, with public transport and mass movement of people playing an essential role here. Multi-modal and linked journeys involving public transport and active travel especially are also crucial. The EP and BSIP will also support the following specific related policies:

- The Strategic Transport Infrastructure Plan (STIP)
- The Network Management Plan
- The Local Transport Plan
- The Low Emission Strategy

- The Slough Local Plan and Spatial Strategy.

Full details relating to these policies are set out in the Significant Decision for the BSIP.

5.3. Options considered

The DfT initially presented LTAs with a choice of models to implement the requirements of the National Bus Strategy, and hence a framework to base the BSIP on. Three options were available:

Enhanced Partnership

An Enhanced Partnership. This entails close working, cooperation and commitment to a formal, shared and legally enforceable plan for the delivery of bus services in and across the local authority area. This plan is the Bus Service Improvement Plan.

This is the option that the Council has selected, and has to date received funding from the DfT to the value of £150,000 to develop this approach.

The first meeting with the bus operators as part of the EP preparations took place on 25th June 2021. This led to the development of the BSIP, and in turn, preparation of the EP with the operators. The EP presented with this report has been agreed in principle by the operators, with the shared expectation that the partnership will formally commence on ratification by the DfT.

Franchising

A franchising arrangement would involve the LTA being in overall control of bus services provided in the borough, including the determination and award of franchises to be awarded to specific companies for specific routes / services, subject to successful bidding processes. This option was not feasible. As per the DfT guidance, as a non-mayoral authority, SBC would have required Secretary of State approval for this option, and this would only have been considered if we had previously fully explored the Enhanced Partnership option. In practice, it would not have been possible for Slough to have a franchising system in place by April 2022, and in this circumstance the DfT would have required Slough to have in place an Enhanced Partnership by April 2022 even if it were to consider franchising in the medium to long term.

Neither of the above / Do Nothing

It is unclear how Slough could fulfil its duties regarding the delivery of public transport while complying with all related policies and commitments in this scenario. There would also have been greater uncertainty about possible funding sources for public transport projects. This option was rejected.

5.4. Further background information

The National Bus Strategy (NBS) has been developed by Government in the context of the need to bring about a post-COVID-19 recovery across the country, and to ensure the recovery is not car-led. This follows on from the publication of the DfT's *Better Deal for Bus Users* guidance, with a commitment to help local authorities improve current services and restore lost services where they are needed most.

During the COVID-19 restrictions, demand for public transport was substantially reduced and emergency government funding was applied to maintain bus services. All formal restrictions were lifted in July 2021. In transport terms, the essential policy is for public transport to be an integral part of the overall recovery. For buses, the Government has put forward the aim to ensure that services post-COVID will be an improvement on the situation before the restrictions came first came into place.

However, even before the COVID-19 restrictions came into place, policies were in place at Slough to promote increased uptake of public transport and specifically travel by bus. Hence the National Bus Strategy strengthens existing plans and aspirations in Slough.

The first stage of the Council's response to the NBS, the BSIP, was published on the 29th October 2021, having previously been reviewed by the SBC Scrutiny Committee in September 2021 and approved by Cabinet on 18th October 2021. The BSIP and EP were also the subject of a significant decision in July 2021.

Although the EPPS document is now the main focus of attention, the published BSIP is still an important document which underpins the development of the EP. Following on, the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme was developed and again fully reviewed.

The Lead Member for Transport and the Environment was previously briefed on all aspects of the EP, with particular reference to the governance element. Prior to the most recent cabinet reorganisation, the Lead Member accepted an invitation to chair the EP Executive Board. This offer has now been proposed to the new Portfolio Holder for Transport, Planning and Place. The responsibilities in this role are listed in detail in section 2 of this report (above).

Following the BSIP submission, reviewed by Cabinet in October, the EPPS has subsequently been developed in partnership with the bus operators. The document has been shared at all stages, with revisions made in line with comments and requests where considered appropriate. Care was taken to minimise the risk of admissible objections from the operators. This had particular relevance to TfL who have additional statutory duties.

5.5. Consultation

5.5.1. Operator Objection period

As required by the DfT, the final draft of the EPPS was formally reviewed by the bus operators over a 28-day Operator Objection period. This ran from January 10th January to February 7th 2022. No objections were received from any of the operators. The overall response from the operators continues to be positive and cooperative.

5.5.2. Stakeholder Consultation

At all stages of the development of the BSIP and the EP, the Council's Transport officers have engaged in extensive discussions with all bus operators who run registered, local bus services in Slough.

SBC Transport officers have also consulted neighbouring local authorities, mainly Buckinghamshire County Council and the Royal Borough of Windsor and

Maidenhead as well as Heathrow Airport Limited. There is a shared commitment here to ongoing engagement, and to ensuring a consistent approach to routes and services that cross boundaries or where there are other shared opportunities and obligations.

5.5.3. Responses received

Following the Operator Objection period a wider stakeholder consultation took place. This ran for two weeks from February 15th to February 28th 2022. The stakeholders included The Traffic Commissioner for the West of England, The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), Transport Focus, Thames Valley Police, neighbouring local authorities, bus passenger groups, the bus operators and a number of other parties. The full list of consultees and a summary of their responses is shown in **Appendix C**.

There were no outright objections to the EPPS in the consultation responses, and no changes are required to either the plan or scheme. However, a number of questions and comments were received, and these are being addressed or will be referred to again as the partnership develops. The main points raised were as follows:

The CMA has asked for more information on the references in the EPPS to competition. The EPPS is required to consider whether its implementation is likely to have a 'significantly adverse' effect on competition. This is potentially the case, since the proposals relating to multi-ticketing and other fare related measures are by nature intended to limit the ability of operators to seek commercial advantage through ticketing.

The EPPS explains that the potential anti-competitive element is justified on the grounds of securing overall improvements to bus services to the benefit of bus passengers. This is considered to be proportionate. The CMA has asked for more information on the competition test applied by the Council. The Transport team will be providing a full explanation to the CMA and will address any further points that they may raise.

The response from **Transport Focus** was extensive and included support for the objectives and key proposals in the EPPS. This includes the key targets to improved journey frequency, reliability, patronage and passenger experience, and specifically the proposals relating to fare changes.

The response also included criticism of some elements. Transport Focus consider the proposed consultation process weak, and that the interaction with bus user groups is not extensive enough. Transport Focus have requested changes to the proposed change mechanism for the EP, which would require more extensive consultation and a more onerous process prior to amending the plan or scheme.

In response, the Council considers that the consultation proposals in place are satisfactory. These include our commitment to an annual survey (to gauge ongoing public opinion). The EP includes a robust change control process in line with DfT guidance. However, the Council welcomes the offer of support from Transport Focus to monitor performance and to assistance with the ongoing development of the plan, scheme where helpful, and appropriate.

Thames Valley Police (TVP)

The response from TVP was fairly brief, and mainly included a request for exemption in traffic regulation orders (TROS) relating to bus lanes. This request does not relate directly to the EP plan or scheme at this stage, but will be referred to again when it comes to proposing and consulting on any new specific bus priority schemes. It is general practice, however, to grant such exemptions to the emergency services, and they already have TRO exemptions, including for the A4 bus lane scheme.

Other responses

Most of the other consultees did not respond. Generally, where comments were received, these were positive. There is a common theme relating to the need for, and the benefit of, improved information provision, and more specifically, cross boundary coordination with all relevant stakeholders.

5.6. Going forward / next steps

It should be noted that there is currently no DfT-endorsed opportunity to revise the document with any significant changes. Any such changes would require a subsequent iteration of the Operator Objection period and a further round of stakeholder consultation. However, all questions and comments raised by the Scrutiny Panel will be responded to fully.

The EP is due to be presented to Cabinet for consideration and approval on 20th June 2022.

Once approved by Cabinet, the EPPS will be submitted to the DfT.

Following on, the EPPS will be a ‘live’ document which will be reviewed at regular intervals and referred to as the core document informing the partnership and all future developments. The proposal is for this to be reviewed annually. In the meantime, the EP board will be authorised to make changes to the appendices to the EP as and when considered appropriate.

6. Comments of Other Committees

The EP was considered by the Cabinet on 20th June 2022.

7. Conclusion

The key purpose of this review by the panel is to ensure that there is wider awareness amongst members of the main features and proposals contained within the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme (EPPS), comprising content relating to both the Plan and the Governance of the partnership. The EP is a new partnership in response to the national bus strategy, with far reaching implications relating to the success of public transport at local level. The plan element of the EPPS is summary of all the main elements contained within the BSIP. The Governance element has again been discussed at length with the bus operators, and agreed by the operators, as well as subject to consultation by all parties concerned. The EP Governance framework is designed to achieve progress through shared objectives and commitments.

8. Appendices Attached

- ‘A’ Slough Enhanced Partnership (Plan and Scheme)
- ‘B’ Equality Impact Assessment for the EP
- ‘C’ Stakeholder Consultation summary on the EP

9. Background Papers

- Cabinet report for the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), October 2021
- SBC Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)
- Significant Decision: Place – Strategy and Infrastructure: Response to the National Bus Strategy. Dated 12th July 2021.
- DfT: Bus Back Better: National Bus Strategy

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National Bus Strategy

Slough Borough Council
Enhanced Partnership

June 2022

www.slough.gov.uk



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1. INTRODUCTION

The National Bus Strategy (Bus Back Better), published by Government in March 2021, sets out a high level of ambition for the improvement and development of bus services in England, to reverse the historic decline in patronage overall in England, and to provide the means for bus services to recover from the significant reductions in patronage as a result of the restrictions imposed to control the Covid-19 pandemic.

Government provided Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) with a choice of pursuing franchising of bus services or the Enhanced Partnership process, with a decision required by the end of June 2021. Slough Borough Council (SBC) pursued the Enhanced Partnership process, reflecting the challenges inherent faced by a small unitary authority in pursuing franchising and the belief that many benefits could be realised more quickly through partnership.

LTAs were then required to prepare and publish Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIPs) by the end of October 2021. These documents are intended to describe the state of bus services and the market for travel, express ambition for change and develop a comprehensive suite of interventions to increase the number of passengers on bus services. Slough Borough Council's BSIP can be found here: [National Bus Strategy - Bus Back Better – Slough Borough Council](#).

The BSIP provides the overarching framework for the Enhanced Partnership Plan (EP Plan) and Enhanced Partnership Scheme (EP Scheme). The EP Plan summarises the main themes of the BSIP in setting out an analysis of local bus services in Slough, the objectives for the quality and effectiveness of bus services and how the EP Scheme or Schemes are intended to achieve these objectives. The EP Scheme describes the Facilities, Measures and Requirements to be implemented to meet those objectives and how the partnership is constituted and operates.

Both the EP Plan and the EP Scheme have been prepared by Slough Borough Council, in consultation with the bus operators and neighbouring local transport authorities, under the Transport Act 2000 (c. 38).

1.1. COMPETITION TEST

Slough Borough Council has undertaken an assessment of the impacts of the EP Plan and Scheme on competition for the purposes of Part 1 of Schedule 10 of the Transport Act 2000. The authority believes its full implementation will or is likely to have a significantly adverse effect on competition. However, the authority believes the EP Plan and Scheme(s) is justified because:

- it is with a view to achieving one or more of the following purposes:
 - securing improvements in the quality of vehicles or facilities used for or in connection with the provision of local services;
 - securing other improvements in local services of benefit to users of local services; and
 - reducing or limiting traffic congestion, noise or air pollution.
- its effect on competition is or is likely to be proportionate to the achievement of that purpose or any of those purposes.

The Competition and Markets Authority has also been consulted on the proposals as required by section 138F of the Transport Act 2000.

2. PART 1 - EP PLAN

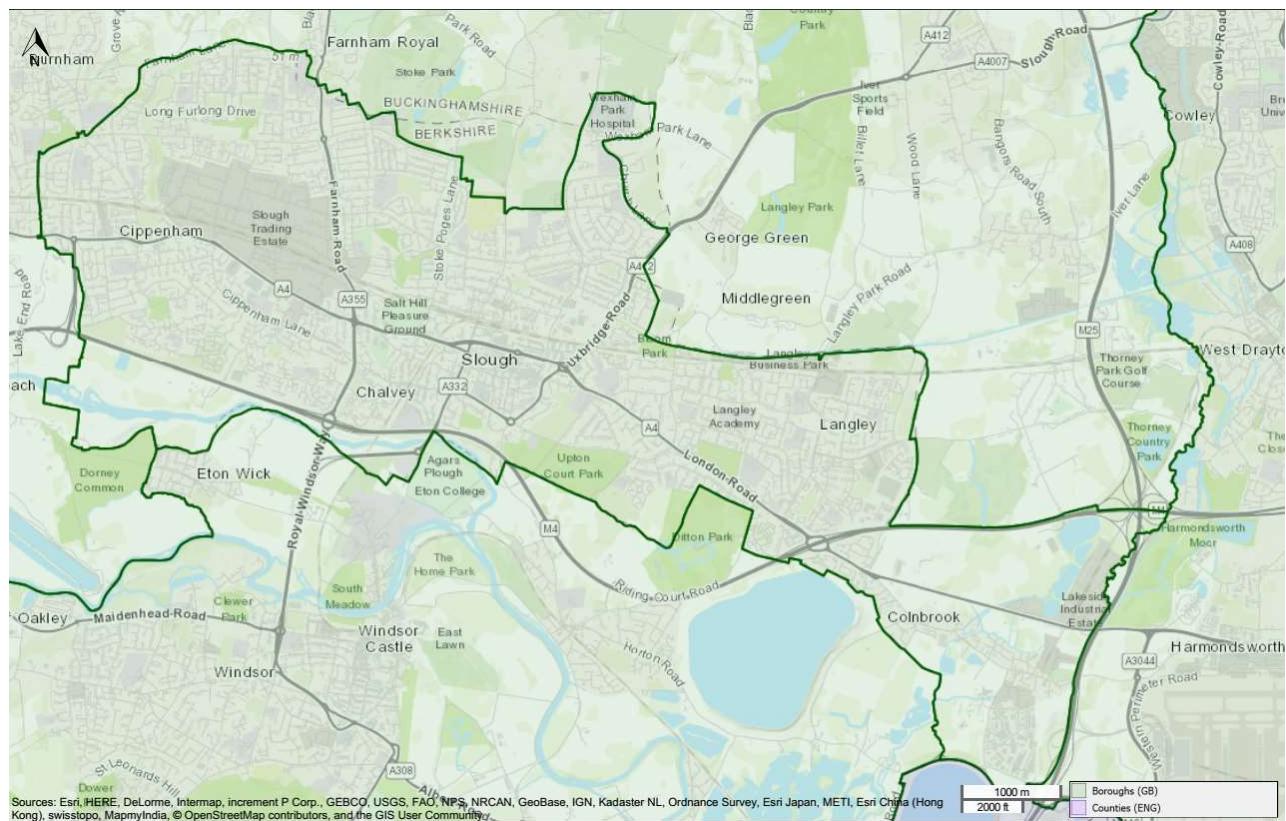
THE SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP PLAN FOR BUSES IS MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 138G(1) OF THE TRANSPORT ACT 2000 BY SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL.

This Enhanced Partnership (EP) covers the entire administrative area of Slough Borough Council as illustrated at Figure 1-1.

The EP Plan will apply during the period of 1st July 2022 to 5th April 2032 and will be reviewed in April 2023 and then every year by Slough Borough Council. Each review will be concurrent with Slough Borough Council's review of its Bus Service Improvement Plan.

Slough Borough Council engages in frequent dialogue with bordering Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) to discuss cross-boundary transport issues. This engagement will continue throughout the EP period to ensure consistency and continuity of bus service provision across local authority boundaries.

Figure 1-1 - Slough Borough Council Administrative Area



2.1. EP Links to Policy Objectives

The EP alongside Slough's Bus Service Improvement Plan will contribute to the delivery of policy objectives outlined within Slough's existing Local Transport Plan (LTP)3, including but not limited to:

- To make sustainable transport options accessible to all;
- To enhance social inclusion and regeneration of deprived areas;
- To improve the journey experience of transport users across Slough's transport networks;
- To reduce transport's CO2 emissions and make the transport network resilient to the effects of climate change; and
- To ensure that the transport system helps Slough sustain its economic competitiveness and retain its position as an economic hub of the South East.

The EP will also complement Slough's Strategic Transport Investment Plan (2021). This was presented to cabinet in draft form in February 2021. Objectives include:

- Making public transport the dominant mode of travel to and from the centre of Slough, the rest of the Borough and beyond, including to and from Slough's neighbourhoods;
- Providing the capacity for movement to and from the centre of Slough, in the form of a high quality, reliable, high-capacity public transport network, which enables a higher scale of development;
- Maximising the benefits of enhanced strategic public transport connectivity to London, Heathrow Airport and the wider Thames Valley;
- Making walking and cycling to and from the centre of Slough and the district centres the most attractive option for shorter journeys;
- Creating attractive environments in which people are put first in terms of movement and use of space for interaction, creating safe, healthy and vibrant urban spaces which encourage people to live, work and relax locally;
- Using high quality design of transport infrastructure to enhance the quality of the public realm;
- Significantly reducing the dominance of the car as a mode of travel to, from and through the centre of Slough and on key arterial roads;
- Minimising the impacts of roads, parking and motorised vehicles on the urban realm and on people, including improved air quality and road safety; and
- Key proposals include the Mass Rapid Transit network, infrastructure improvements for traditional bus services, consolidation of town centre car parks and in the longer term development of Park and Ride.

2.2. The Slough Bus Network and Bus Market

2.2.1. Bus Service Supply

Most parts of Slough are serviced by bus routes running to a half-hourly frequency, with (where they exist) hourly services on evenings and Sundays. Most residents are within 400 metres of the line of bus route.

Within Slough only one bus service provides a 'walk-up' frequency of 5-6 bph.

Services operate to a number of locations outside Slough. These include Heathrow Airport, Windsor, Egham, Staines, High Wycombe, Maidenhead and Uxbridge. With the exceptions of Windsor and Heathrow, these also operate to half-hourly frequencies.

Bus journey speeds are also relatively slow. We estimate an average scheduled journey speed in the morning peak (as at August 2021 timetables) of around 18 km/hour within the Slough boundary.

2.2.2. Bus Service Infrastructure

Within Slough there are around 500 bus stops, with Slough Borough Council also managing Slough Bus Station. These are described in more detail in the Enhanced Partnership Scheme Appendix A1.

2.2.3. Bus Fares

With the exception of single journey fares on TfL services, many bus fares in Slough are relatively high compared to nearby towns. There are also a complex range of discounts available for young people which varies based on operator.

There is no multi-operator ticketing scheme. A passenger wishing to travel from Cippenham to Wexham Park Hospital, for example, has to pay twice for their journey: once on the Thames Valley route 5 bus, and again on Redline's route WP1.

2.2.4. Bus Passenger Information

Slough Borough Council has historically maintained a bus map which it has made available on its website. It does not provide other bus service information itself but signposts to Traveline and operators' websites.

For journey planning purposes most bus operators provide websites with service information. Provision of fares information is variable. For instance, First provides information on period ticket products such as day or weekly tickets, but not for 'point-to-point' fares, nor does it produce a map showing fare zone boundaries. Thames Valley Buses by contrast provides information on all fares. Real-time information is generally available by app.

The environment of different operators providing services results in presentation of information in a variety of formats and with different levels of information provided. This makes the bus product unclear to prospective or occasional passengers. Information on fares is particularly variable. Within Slough bus information provision needs to be substantially improved.

2.2.5. Bus Fleet

Much of the bus fleet in Slough is mid-life:

- TfL route 81 (operated under contract by Metroline) – Volvo double-decks dating from 2010;
- First in Berkshire – a mixed fleet of single-deck buses including 15 hybrid buses dating from 2009 to 2015.

The exceptions to this are the Thames Valley Buses fleet allocated to Slough are generally less than two years old; and the Stewarts Coaches vehicles allocated to route BR operating between the rail and bus stations and the Trading Estate.

Emission standards are for the most part Euro VI. There are currently no zero-emission buses in the fleet. There is scope to improve both emission standards and passenger amenity on buses in Slough.

2.2.6. Bus Priority Measures

Whilst there is extensive bus priority within Slough, which is described at Appendix A1 of the EP Scheme, a number of pinch-points remain on the bus network, as do opportunities to implement more bus priority. The peak-only operation of bus lanes can lead to buses experiencing delays off-peak. There is not yet any 'whole route' priority applying to any bus route.

There is significant scope for more bus priority, and in particular there is scope to develop priorities on a 'whole route' basis to maximise the benefits of journey time reductions and improvements to service reliability.

2.2.7. Bus Service Outcomes

According to DfT bus statistics, there were on average just under 30 bus passenger journeys starting in Slough for every resident in Slough in the last full financial year before the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. This bus passenger trip-rate has been falling over recent years. This rate is significantly higher than in neighbouring Berkshire authorities but lower than would be suggested by the proportion of households in Slough that do not have access to a car. This suggests that the bus passenger trip-rate could be expected to be around 50% greater at around 45 trips per year.

There are a number of exogenous factors for this:

- There is a high level of congestion on Slough's highway network, though this appears to have fallen slightly in recent years. There are two main causes. The first is a high level of both in-commuting and out-commuting. The in-commuting in particular takes place over a very wide geographical area, much of it to the Slough Trading Estate, some distance from the town centre. It is therefore difficult for public transport to capture these trips at either trip origin or trip end. Slough Borough Council has sought to address this by combining four business shuttles into one publicly-available bus service linking Slough Station and the Trading Estate. On the other side of the coin the link from Burnham Station to the Trading Estate has been lost;
- SBC is close to the M4 motorway, and experiences variable levels of congestion resulting from incidents on the motorway, which then affects the reliability of local bus services;
- Slough town centre has lost a significant amount of retail activity over recent years;

- There is no university in the town – universities are associated with higher levels of bus usage; and
- Slough has an ethnically highly diverse population, elements of which are understood to place a high value of the ownership and use of a car as a status symbol.

2.2.8. Passenger experience and priorities for improvement

Slough Borough Council undertook on-line consultation with existing bus users, non-users and with stakeholders. This survey concluded on 1 October 2021. The results consist of 389 respondents (of whom 189 identified as bus users and 200 identified as non-users).

Around three quarters of bus users agreed either strongly or a bit that they felt safe or very safe travelling by bus in Slough. Around 40% of bus users agreed that they travelled by bus because it was reliable and affordable. Around 50% of bus users agreed that information was readily available, but the score improved to around 60% for bus users who felt that bus was accessible for them.

Considering non-users and their reasons for not using local bus services, the most frequently cited reason is that buses are too expensive, followed by buses taking too long to reach respondents' destinations, and a preference to travel by other modes. Reliability was cited as the top fourth-equal response. Consistent with bus users, personal safety was cited by few respondents.

Both users and non-users were asked what attributes would make them use bus, or use bus more. Responses that led over 75% of respondents to answer that they would use buses more, or start using buses, 'a lot' or 'partly' focused on basic journey characteristics (fare, reliability, speed, frequency, duration of services into evenings and Sundays) and information (making it easier to find out about routes, times, fares). The high response rate for fare is despite the fact that 34% of respondents had a bus pass, so amongst fare payers this also is likely to be above 75%.

Slough Borough Council propose to repeat the survey each year to inform the annual review of the BSIP and in turn to inform the priorities for delivery on the part of the Enhanced Partnership.

2.2.9. Journey time trends

There is currently no open-source information available regarding historic bus journey times in Slough. As such, information published by the DfT regarding the delay and speed on locally managed 'A' roads has been used as a proxy for understanding bus journey trends in Slough.

The data suggests that the average delay on locally managed 'A' roads within Slough has decreased year-on-year since 2016 from 113 seconds per vehicle per mile (spvpm) to 95 spvpm in 2019. As delay has decreased, average speed on locally managed 'A' roads has increased from 15 km/h in 2016 to 16.4 km/h in 2019. Despite the improvements of both metrics, which may be associated with the completion of some significant investments in the Slough strategic highway network including re-modelling at the Copthorne Roundabout on A355 Tuns Lane and dualling of the A332 Windsor Road, the values are still relatively poor in terms of journey time reliability. The increased journey times and lower levels of reliability caused by congestion can reduce the desirability of bus services to customers as well as increasing the financial cost of delivering the bus service. The measures that the EP will work to deliver are aimed at improving journey times and reliability in Slough through the delivery of bus priority.

2.2.10. Objectives

Table 2-1 sets out the objectives for Slough's Enhanced Partnership.

Table 2-1 - Enhanced Partnership Objectives

Objective	How We Will Achieve This
Review Service Frequency “More buses, More Often”	Increased frequencies, including evenings and weekends More buses at key shift change times of major employers Superbus Network Coordinate services between operators to improve service regularity along corridors
Increase Bus Priority Measures “Getting buses moving”	More bus priority measures on a number of corridors Route reviews Mitigate the impact of roadworks
Increase Demand Responsive Services	Develop innovative solutions with key employers
Consideration of Bus Rapid Transport Networks	Intensive bus priority enables services with BRT characteristics
Integrate Services with Other Transport Modes	Bus and rail integration
Simplify Services	Consider re-planning routes Specific service change dates
Review Socially Necessary Services	Evening and weekend service increases Identify opportunities to enhance supported services Provide improved access to employment
Invest in Superbus Networks	Improved frequencies in evenings and at weekends Underpinned by extensive bus priority, investment in bus stop infrastructure and passenger information, including real-time. Minimum Euro VI emission standards
Lower fares	Consistent offers to young people and jobseekers across Slough Reduce fares Multi-operator ticket means you only pay once for a journey, even if it's on buses run by 2 different companies
Simplify ticketing	Simplify fares Multi-operator ticketing Tap On Tap Off
Integrate ticketing between operators and transport	Work with TfL to explore multi-modal ticketing opportunities
Invest in accessible and inclusive bus services “Buses for all”	Accessibility improvements Information at bus stops including real time Audio visual announcements on buses
Protect Passenger Safety of Bus Passengers	Improve bus specification CCTV on buses and at bus stop facilities Passenger Charter
Improve Buses for Tourists	Develop local leisure travel Bus priority for reliability
Invest in decarbonisation “Cleaner Buses”	Seek funding to migrate to zero-emission buses
Passenger Charter	Develop a Passenger Charter
Strengthen Network Identity	Continue to review branding with bus operators

Improve bus information	Operators to share more information on each others' services Coordinated service change dates e-ink demonstration project
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Delivery of the interventions identified in the Bus Service Improvement Plan against these objectives will contribute to the four key targets for outcomes that Slough Borough Council has in its BSIP. These are:

- To improve bus journey times, with a target of 11% reduction across Slough by March 2025;
- To improve bus journey time reliability, with 86% of non-frequent services being 'on-time' and an excess wait time of 1.0 minutes for frequent services;
- To increase passenger numbers, with a 20% increase on 2022 levels by 2025; and
- Improved passenger satisfaction, as measured by an annual residents' survey.

This Enhanced Partnership will seek to identify and secure appropriate levels of funding from the National Bus Strategy and from other sources in order to deliver the schemes identified in this EP and in the BSIP as being required to deliver these targets. Achievement of the strategic objectives in the EP Plan and the related Facilities, Measures and Requirements in the EP Scheme Appendices will be dependent on overall affordability and the funding that SBC and its operator partners are able to secure during the lifetime of this EP.

3. PART 2 – EP SCHEME

THE SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP SCHEME FOR BUSES IS MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 138G(1) OF THE TRANSPORT ACT 2000 BY SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

3.1. Definitions

In this Enhanced Partnership Plan and any Schemes made pursuant to it, the following capitalised terms shall have the meanings ascribed to them below:

1985 Act	Transport Act 1985
2000 Act	Transport Act 2000
2017 Act	Bus Services Act 2017
Bus Operators (or Operators)	All Operators running Qualifying Bus Services taken collectively.
Enhanced Partnership Scheme Variation	This comprises either: A variation of the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as a result of the voting mechanism set out in section 3.7.2 with respect to Facilities, Measures or Requirements or A variation of the EP Plan or Scheme agreed as a result of the mechanism set out in Section 3.7.3. Each of which will then constitute a formal variation of the EP Scheme for the purposes of s.138E(1) of the 2000 Act.
Facilities	Those facilities referred to in Appendix A which shall be deemed such for the purposes of s.138D(1) of the 2000 Act.
Executive Board (EB)	The committee of selected Slough Bus Operator representatives, Transport for London (TfL) and Slough Borough Council representatives responsible for considering recommendations put forward by the Forum and making decisions including specific Enhanced Partnership Scheme Variations.
Enhanced Partnership	The Enhanced Partnership covering the geographic extent of the administrative boundary of the borough of Slough shown for identification purposes only on the plan at Figure 1-1.
Forum	The committee of all Slough Bus Operators, Slough Borough Council, neighbouring local transport authorities, and other stakeholders in the bus network, responsible for considering all issues affecting the Enhanced Partnership, and making recommendations to the Executive Board in line with the Enhanced Partnership governance arrangements.
Large, or Other Operator	The two Operators providing the two highest percentages of Qualifying Bus Service route mileage within Slough at the start of each Slough Borough Council financial year will be classed as Large Operators. In addition, Transport for London will be classed as a Large Operator in its role as commissioner of certain bus services in Slough as part of the London Bus Network. All other operators will be Other Operators. Where Qualifying Bus Services are provided by multiple operating companies or subsidiaries of the same owning group, they are to be considered to be provided by one Operator. For the avoidance of doubt, a list of Large and Other Operators will be published at the start of each Slough Borough Council financial year.

Measures	Those measures referred to in Appendix B which shall be deemed as such for the purposes of s.138D(2) of the 2000 Act.
Non-qualifying Bus Service	Services excluded from classification as Qualifying Bus Services.
Operator Objection Mechanism	As defined at The Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018
Qualifying Bus Service	<p>A registered local bus service with one or more stopping place within the geographical area of the Enhanced Partnership, with the exception of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any schools or works registered local bus service not eligible for Bus Service Operators Grant • Any cross-boundary registered local bus service with less than 10% of its route mileage within the Enhanced Partnership area, except where the Executive Board agree that there are particular reasons why its inclusion in the EP would be to the benefit of the EP's objectives defined in the EP Plan • Any services operated under section 22 of the 1985 Act • Any registered local bus service which is an excursion or tour <p>For the avoidance of doubt, a list of Qualifying Bus Services will be published at the start of each Borough Council financial year.</p> <p>In addition, any tendered service on which the tendering authority takes the revenue risk will not be subject to the Operator Objection mechanism, consistent with The Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018.</p>
Requirements	Those requirements placed upon Bus Operators identified as such within Appendix C which shall be deemed as such for the purposes of s.138C 2000 Act.
Task and Finish Group	A group appointed by the Executive Board to research and assess proposals for Facilities, Measures and Requirements and to prepare business cases setting out feasibility and costs.

3.2. Section 1 – EP Scheme Content

This document fulfils the statutory requirements for an EP Scheme. In accordance with statutory requirements in sections 138A to S of the Transport Act 2000, the EP Scheme document sets out:

- **Section 2 - Scope of the EP Scheme and commencement date**
- **Section 3 - Obligations on the Local Authorities**
- **Section 4 - Obligations on Bus Operators**
- **Section 5 – Governance Arrangements**

The EP Scheme has been jointly developed by Slough Borough Council in the Slough Borough Council administrative area and those bus operators that provide local bus services in the EP Scheme area. It sets out obligations and requirements on both Slough Borough Council and operators of local services in the Slough Borough Council administrative area in order to achieve the intended improvements, with the aim of delivering the objectives of the associated EP Plan.

3.3. Section 2 - Scope of the EP Scheme and Commencement Date

3.3.1. Description of Geographical Coverage

The EP Scheme will support the improvement of all Qualifying Bus Services operating in the administrative area of Slough Borough Council, as shown at Figure 1-1 of the EP Plan.

3.3.2. Commencement Date

The EP Scheme enters into force at the same time as the EP Plan on 1st July 2022.

3.3.3. Review and Duration

The EP Scheme has an end date of 5 April 2032. The Executive Board (EB) will review the EP Scheme at least annually on the anniversary of the commencement date and in line with reviews of the EP Plan in the years that these fall due. The Facilities, Measures and Requirements contained within it will be reviewed at least every six months.

3.3.4. Exempted Services

The following types of local service are exempted from compliance with all of the requirements of the EP Scheme:

- Any schools or works registered local bus service not eligible for Bus Service Operators Grant;
- Any cross-boundary registered local bus service with less than 10% of its route mileage within the Enhanced Partnership area except where the Executive Board agree that there are particular reasons why its inclusion in the EP would be to the benefit of the EP's objectives defined in the EP Plan;
- Any services operated under section 22 of the 1985 Act; and
- Any registered local bus service which is an excursion or tour.

In addition, the Executive Board may agree to exempt specific Qualifying Bus Services from any individual Requirements or exempt specific assets or infrastructure from Facilities or Measures that it agrees should be implemented.

3.4. Section 3 - Obligations on the Authority

3.4.1. Facilities

Existing Facilities maintained by Slough Borough Council are shown at **Appendix A1**. These consist of bus priority schemes; bus stations and interchanges; and bus stops.

Any change to the inventory of existing bus priority schemes or bus stations or interchanges outlined at Appendix A1 is subject to the approval of the Executive Board under the voting mechanism defined at 3.6.2. In addition, any proposal to remove bus priority schemes or bus stations and interchanges or amend the scope of these is subject to there being no objections received from Operators of Qualifying Bus Services utilising those Facilities at the time the proposal is made (see Section 3.7.2 – variation).

Facilities that the Board have agreed should be made and which have received any consents necessary from Slough Borough Council for implementation, but which have not yet been implemented, are shown at **Appendix A2**.

The full list of Facilities proposed under Slough Borough Council's Bus Service Improvement Plan not included in either of the above appendices is shown at **Appendix A3**.

3.4.2. Measures

Existing Measures provided by Slough Borough Council are shown at **Appendix B1**.

Measures that the Board have agreed should be made and which have received any consents necessary from Slough Borough Council for implementation, but which have not yet been implemented, are shown at **Appendix B2**.

The full list of Measures proposed under Slough Borough Council's Bus Service Improvement Plan not included in either of the above appendices is shown at **Appendix B3**.

3.5. Section 4 - Obligations on Local Bus Operators

The existing Requirements on Operators in providing Qualifying Bus Services are shown at **Appendix C1**.

Requirements on Operators that will apply at the making of this Scheme are shown at **Appendix C2**. Further Requirements that may be agreed by the Executive Board from time to time are also shown at **Appendix C2**.

The full list of Requirements proposed under Slough Borough Council's Bus Service Improvement Plan but not included in either of the above appendices is shown at **Appendix C3**.

Any Requirement has effect only in relation to so much of a Qualifying Bus Service as is provided in the area to which that Requirement relates.

If a Requirement applies to a Qualifying Bus Service, the operator of that service must comply with that Requirement.

3.6. Section 5 – Governance Arrangements

For decision-making purposes, the Enhanced Partnership will be governed by an Executive Board, supported by a Forum.

- Executive Board (EB) – established by the Enhanced Partnership with the mandate to take decisions using an Enhanced Partnership Scheme Variation mechanism (section 3.7.2) on issues put to them by the Forum, and other issues identified as being relevant to partnership delivery; and
- Forum – a forum for stakeholders in the bus network to monitor delivery and progress against targets and to propose Facilities, Measures and Requirements to the Executive Board for consideration.

3.6.1. Forum

The Forum will provide opportunities for discussing issues of all kinds affecting the Slough bus network, consulting with and building consensus across the various stakeholders and making recommendations for decisions to the Executive Board (EB).

Detailed Terms of Reference are shown at **Appendix D1**.

Membership of the Forum will comprise the following:

- All Bus Operators running Qualifying Bus Services
- Transport for London (TfL)
- Slough Borough Council (Passenger Transport and Highways)
- Slough train operating companies
- Neighbouring Local Transport Authorities
- A representative of any bus user group or groups that may be established in Slough
- Any Community Transport operators providing services within Slough.

In addition, from time to time other external organisations may be invited to join the Forum on an advisory basis for fixed periods to provide specialist expertise. From time to time (not more than once per financial year) a wider conference of all relevant parties, businesses and the Local Enterprise Partnership, in addition to Forum members may be invited to review and discuss the progress of, and future opportunities for, the partnership.

Meeting arrangements

Forum meetings will take place not less than twice per year, normally six weeks before each EB meeting. Forum meetings will be arranged, chaired and minutes taken by Slough Borough Council. Meeting length will vary according to agenda content but ordinarily expected to be one to two hours.

Any business for a Forum meeting must be submitted in writing (by post or email) in advance for inclusion on the agenda. Any request for inclusion of items on the agenda must include an explanation of how they fulfil the objectives set out in the EP Plan.

Agendas and meeting papers (including a copy of minutes and outcomes of decisions taken at the previous EB meeting) will be circulated by Slough Borough Council no less than one week in advance of each meeting, and draft minutes circulated no more than two weeks after each meeting. Draft minutes will be approved at the next Forum meeting.

Forum Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The final Forum meeting of each financial year will be the designated Forum AGM. All ‘Other’ Operators (other than the operator(s) of TfL services) will be invited to self-nominate or nominate other willing Operators for EB membership, to represent themselves and all other Operators in their category, ahead of the Forum AGM. A ballot will be organised by Slough Borough Council at the Annual General Meeting to select Operators’ preferred EB representatives (section 3.6.2).

3.6.2. Executive Board

Membership of the Executive Board (EB) will consist of the two designated Large Operators, Transport for London and one Other Operator elected at the Forum, one Slough Borough Council public transport officer, one Slough Borough Council highways officer, and the Chair, who will be Slough Borough Council’s lead

member for the transport portfolio or his or her selected deputy, or failing this the Slough Borough Council Assistant Director responsible for transportation.

The Executive Board (EB) will be the decision-making body of the Enhanced Partnership. Detailed Terms of Reference are shown at **Appendix D2**. The scope of the EB's decision-making will be on those matters set out in the Bus Service Improvement Plan and the Enhanced Partnership Plan. Where a decision by Slough Borough Council is required, for instance on the implementation of bus priority, the EB will have the power to make recommendations and request that such recommendations are formally considered by SBC.

Certain decisions of the EB may constitute Enhanced Partnership Scheme Variations pursuant to section 3.7.2 hereof if the requirements therein are met.

The EB will develop proposals for the design and implementation of interventions in the form of Facilities, Measures and Requirements, drawing on Slough Borough Council's Bus Service Improvement Plan and receiving advice and proposals from the Forum. It will be responsible for prioritising these interventions against available spend as required.

The EB may constitute task and finish groups as it may consider helpful from time to time to research particular matters of relevance and to develop business cases to the satisfaction of the EB members and a level of detail suitable for consideration by the EB. These task and finish groups may be constituted jointly with other local transport authorities.

EB meetings will require a quorum of two Operator representatives, one TfL representative and one Slough Borough Council officer representative in addition to the Chair. An Operator representative may, if necessary, arrange for an alternate or deputy from the same category to participate with voting rights.

Operator representative selection

The two Large Operators defined as having the highest route mileage in Slough are automatically selected to sit on the Board.

Other Operators (other than the operator(s) of TfL services) will be invited to self-nominate or nominate other willing Other Operators in writing to Slough Borough Council's Public Transport Manager prior to each Forum AGM. Where there is more than one nominee, all Other Operators will be given the opportunity to vote by secret ballot undertaken among those present at the Forum AGM for a preferred representative. Voting will be on the basis of one vote per Operator (where Operators are part of the same holding company or group, they will only be entitled to one vote between them). Where there is a tie, a run-off vote will take place between the leading tied Operators. The Other Operator representative will be re-selected on an annual basis.

In the event that a Forum AGM ballot fails to select an Operator representative for the Other Operator category, the default Operator objection mechanism set out in the Enhanced Partnerships and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018 will be used to determine the views of Operators in that category for the purposes of EB votes (in terms of objection or otherwise to the proposals) set out in section 3.7.4.

Role of EB members

Operator representatives will be acting on behalf of all Operators in that category, not on behalf of their own company alone. Representatives will be responsible for ensuring attendance at all EB meetings in that year, and ensure they have:

- (a) fully reviewed and understood all meeting papers in advance of attendance
- (b) the required mandate from the Operators they represent, and that any Requirements are capable of being fulfilled by the Operators that they represent.

EB decision-making

All decisions of the EB should be agreed by consensus among the members of the Board attending an EB meeting. Decisions of the EB will be made by way of a vote through a show of hands of those attending the meeting and entitled to vote.

Each member of the EB (including the Chair) will have one vote.

Decisions will be passed by way of a unanimous vote in favour by members of the Board attending the EB meeting and entitled to vote. Abstentions will be noted as such but will not count against the vote and so if all other votes are in favour (no votes against) the decision will be passed.

If the members of the Board do not reach consensus, further discussions can take place during the Board meeting to determine a way forward, with a new vote then taken. If consensus still cannot be reached, the matter will be held over for further discussions away from the Board meeting, with the decision then brought back to a subsequent Board meeting (regular or specially convened).

Meeting observers

Any other Bus Operator and Slough Borough Council representatives will be able to attend the EB meetings as observers but will not have the right to vote. Observers may be invited to make comments or ask questions of the EB at the Chair's discretion or invited to defer these until the next Forum meeting. They may, at the EB's discretion, be required to sign an appropriate Confidentiality Agreement if any discussions or papers submitted include information that is commercial in confidence.

Meeting arrangements

EB meetings will take place not less than twice per year at regular intervals following the Forum meetings, with provision for additional meetings as required to take decisions which in the opinion of the Chair cannot be deferred to a scheduled meeting, provided that a quorum can be achieved, with not less than one week's notice being given. Meetings will be arranged and minutes taken by Slough Borough County Council. Meeting length will vary according to agenda content but ordinarily be one to two hours.

Agendas and meeting papers will be circulated to all EB members no less than one week in advance of each meeting date, and draft minutes circulated no more than two weeks after each meeting. Copies will also be distributed to all Forum members so any issues or concerns can be discussed with the relevant Operator representative, who can then request further agenda items if required prior to the EB meeting. Draft minutes will be approved at the next EB meeting.

3.7. Arrangements for Reviewing, Varying or Revoking the Enhanced Partnership Scheme

3.7.1. Review of Enhanced Partnership Scheme

Once the EP Scheme is made, the Facilities, Measures and Requirements contained in Appendices A, B and C will be reviewed by the Forum at least every six months following publication of data on progress towards targets, as required by the BSIP. Slough Borough Council will initiate each review. The EB will be required to consider this review and decide whether changes to Appendices A, B and C are appropriate in response, taking account of available funding.

The Forum can also decide to review specific elements of the EP Scheme on an ad-hoc basis. Forum members should contact Slough Borough Council using the following email address TransportPlanning@slough.gov.uk explaining what the issue is and its urgency. Slough Borough Council will then decide whether to table at the next scheduled meeting or make arrangements for all or the necessary Forum members to gather more quickly.

3.7.2. Changes to the Enhanced Partnership Scheme Facilities, Measures and Requirements

Any changes to the Facilities, Measures or Requirements set out in Appendices A, B and C will be considered bespoke changes to the EP Scheme. Any Operator of Qualifying Local Services or Slough Borough Council may bring a proposal or proposals to the Forum where it or they will be considered. As described in Section 3.6.1 above, any proposal must be submitted in time for its inclusion in the Forum meeting agenda and must explain how it meets the objectives of the EP Plan.

If a simple majority of the Forum vote in favour, the EB will then consider the proposal or proposals having undertaken its own investigations and analysis and vote on the change proposed by the Forum at its next meeting. Slough Borough Council will then amend the relevant Appendix or Appendices to this EP Scheme if the EB votes in favour (with no votes against) of the proposal or proposals.

Slough Borough Council and the Operators acknowledge that the implementation of specific Facilities, Measures and Requirements may require separate agreements to be negotiated and agreed between relevant parties and that any such Facilities, Measures and Requirements will be subject to the relevant parties entering into such agreements.

The EB will also consider when any such changes shall come into force, and / or the linking of the changes (for instance, any Operator Requirements to take effect only once any enabling Local Authority Facilities or Measures have been implemented, taking account of the lead time for service registrations should these be required).

As per section 3.4.1 above, any proposal to withdraw or reduce the scope of any bus priority scheme or named passenger interchange or bus station Facility requires the written approval of all Operators of Qualifying Services using that scheme at the time the proposal is made.

If Slough Borough Council consider the matter urgent then it may convene a special meeting of the Forum followed by a special meeting of the EB, giving at least 14 days' prior written notice for the meeting to all Forum and EB members and for the meeting of the EB to consider the proposed variation.

In the event that a number of Operators which would trigger the default Operator objection mechanism (as set out in the Enhanced Partnerships and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018 as may be varied from time to time) raise concerns in writing to a minimum of one subsequent EB meeting about a previous decision of the EB, the decision-making process for Enhanced Partnership Scheme Variations will revert to the default Operator objection mechanism contained in those regulations to review that decision and as appropriate for future decision-making purposes.

3.7.3. Other Changes to the Enhanced Partnership Scheme

Any other proposals (i.e. content other than Facilities, Measures and Requirements as set out in Appendices A to C) for changes to the EP Scheme will be considered under Section 138L of the Transport Act 2000. The proposer of a variation should demonstrate how this might contribute to achieving the objectives set out in the BSIP, EP Plan and Slough Borough Council's current local transport policies. Any such proposals should be in writing and submitted to TransportPlanning@slough.gov.uk.

Any Operator of Qualifying Local Services or Slough Borough Council may bring a proposal or proposals to the Forum where it or they will be considered. If a simple majority of the Forum vote in favour, the EB will then consider the proposal or proposals and any accompanying evidence and vote on the change at its next meeting. If the proposal or proposals are approved by the EB, Slough Borough Council will then follow the process set out in Section 138L of the Transport Act 2000 and The Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018 on behalf of the EB.

3.7.4. Revocation of the EP Scheme

Should Slough Borough Council or any other member of the Forum believe that it is necessary to revoke the Plan or Scheme, then it must express this in writing to the Forum. The Forum will then consider and vote upon the proposal and submit it to the EB which will do the same.

Slough Borough Council will take into consideration the votes of the Forum and EB in making its own decision whether to revoke the EP Plan or Scheme. It will then follow the process set out at Section 138O of the Transport Act 2000.

3.7.5. Postponement

Should it be necessary to postpone the implementation of any Facility, Measure or Requirement, Slough Borough Council will follow the procedure at Section 138I of the Transport Act 2000. It must first use reasonable endeavours to seek the views of the Forum and the EB.

3.7.6. Data sharing and commercial confidence

At all times each member of the Forum and EB will respect data confidentiality and the Forum and EB will maintain processes to maintain and respect commercial confidentiality as required. Should any member believe there has been a breach of confidentiality, they should raise this with the Public Transport Manager of Slough Borough Council.

APPENDIX A: FACILITIES

A.1. Facilities – Existing

Bus Priority Schemes

SCHEDULE 1: Bus Lanes		
Road Name and Description	Times of operation	Direction of travel and type of bus lane
Bath Road - From a point 33 metres west of its junction with Salt Hill Avenue westwards for a distance of 178 metres.	Monday - Friday 07:00-10:00 hours 15:00-19:00 hours	Eastbound (with-flow bus lane on nearside of carriageway)
Farnham Road – from a point 15.5 metres south of its junction with Buckingham Avenue southwards for a distance of 149 metres	All times	Southbound (with-flow bus lane on nearside of carriageway)
Farnham Road – from the southern boundary of 59 to 63 Farnham Road southwards for a distance of 220 metres	Monday - Friday 07:00-10:00 hours 15:00-19:00 hours	Southbound (with-flow bus lane on nearside of carriageway)
London Road – from a point 38 metres east of its junction with Lynwood Avenue eastwards for distance of 130 metres	Monday - Friday 07:00-10:00 hours 15:00-19:00 hours	Eastbound (with-flow bus lane on nearside of carriageway)
London Road – from a point 51 metres south-east of its junction with Blandford Road South south-eastwards for a distance of 1304 metres	Monday - Friday 07:00-10:00 hours 15:00-19:00 hours	South-eastbound (with-flow bus lane on nearside of carriageway)
London Road – from a point 163 metres south-east of its junction with Upton Court Road south-eastwards for a distance of 689 metres	Monday - Friday 07:00-10:00 hours 15:00-19:00 hours	North-westbound (with-flow bus lane on nearside of carriageway)
Sussex Place – from its junction with Dolphin Road eastwards for a distance of 68 metres	All times	Eastbound (with-flow bus lane on nearside of carriageway)
Wellington Street – from a point 175 metres west of the western kerbline of Dolphin Road eastwards for a distance of 150 metres	All times	Eastbound (with-flow bus lane on nearside of carriageway)

In addition, bus priority is located at:

- Bath Road, eastbound, bus gate connecting Bath Road Service Road North with Bath Road;
- Wellington Street, westbound, bus lane between the Tesco access junction and a point just west of the junction of Wellington Street and Brunel Way; and
- Stoke Road, northbound, bus lane between the junctions of High Street and Wellington Street.

Bus Stations and Passenger Interchanges

Slough Bus Station, including associated on-street stops 11, 12, 13 and BR on Brunel Way, and stops A, B, C, D and G on Wellington Street.

Bus Stops

Including Slough Bus Station, 489 bus stops in the NaPTAN database (May 2021). Bus stop posts, flags and timetable cases are generally provided by Slough Borough Council, with the exception of bus stops served by Transport for London services. Where provided, shelters are provided under contract to Slough Borough Council.

A.2. Facilities – Approved for Implementation by the Executive Board

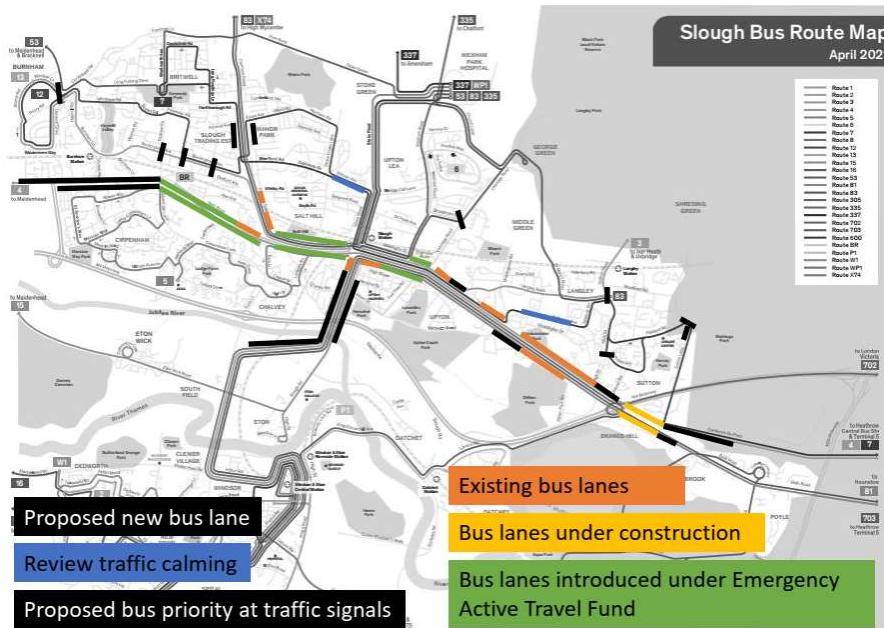
Any new Facilities or any changes to existing Facilities outlined in Section A.3 below will be subject to appropriate funding, feasibility, and approval by the Executive Board in accordance with the governance arrangements set out in paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7.

A.3. Facilities for consideration subject to funding, feasibility and Executive Board and Slough Borough Council (where required) approval

Below is a general description of the Facilities currently identified for consideration. The details of these are intended to be developed by Slough Borough Council and relevant Operators and other stakeholders through the Enhanced Partnership process. Each Facility will be subject to appropriate funding, feasibility, and approval by the Executive Board in accordance with the governance arrangements set out in paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7.

Make improvements to bus services and planning: Increase bus priority measures

- Physical infrastructure in order to reduce bus journey times and facilitate reliable operation, outlined in the figure below.



- Fill in bus stop laybys, which are identified as causing delays to buses on departing from the bus stop
- Work towards the conversion of existing bus lanes to '24-7' operation in order to provide maximum protection to buses from fluctuations in traffic flow. New bus lanes will be '24-7'. Review the classes of vehicle to be permitted in the bus lanes
- Review of each bus route to identify locations where minor works or review of parking and loading controls could ease pinch points for buses
- Review Traffic Regulation Orders in force at bus stop clearways, with a view to standardising on '24-7' operation
- Integrate potential cycling infrastructure on the A4 with bus priority infrastructure

Make improvements to bus services and planning: Integrate services with other transport modes

- A wayfinding project at Slough Bus Station to help passengers find their bus

Make improvements to bus passenger experience: Invest in accessible and inclusive bus services

- Identify and develop solutions to meet accessibility standards at bus stops across Slough
- Review facilities at Slough Bus Station to improve passenger circulation

Make improvements to bus passenger experience: Protect personal safety of bus passengers

- Implement CCTV at Slough Bus Station and selected bus stops.

Improvements to passenger engagement

- Revise the processes for the provision of roadside information and standardise display cases where possible
- Develop e-ink to provide static and real-time information at all bus stops in Slough
- Integrate Urban Traffic Management Control (UTMC) and bus passenger real time systems to improve delay and disruption messaging

APPENDIX B: MEASURES

B.1. Measures – Existing

B.2. Measures – Approved for Implementation by the Executive Board

Any new Measures or any changes to existing Measures outlined in Section B.3 below will be subject to appropriate funding, feasibility, and approval by the Executive Board in accordance with the governance arrangements set out in paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7.

B.3. Measures for consideration subject to funding, feasibility and Executive Board and Slough Borough Council (where required) approval

Below is a general description of the Measures currently identified for consideration. The details of these are intended to be developed by Slough Borough Council and relevant Operators and other stakeholders through the Enhanced Partnership process. Each Measure will be subject to appropriate funding, feasibility, and approval by the Executive Board in accordance with the governance arrangements set out in paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7.

Make improvements to bus services and planning: Increase bus priority measures

- Review the process of communicating roadworks with operators, with the aim of enabling better planning and communication of diversions
- Give bus operations control staff access to traffic cameras such that bus service controllers can identify incidents emerging in real-time and take early appropriate action

Make improvements to bus services and planning: Increase demand responsive services

- Work with major employers to establish one or more DRT schemes to serve hard to reach employment sites

Make improvements to bus services and planning: Improvements to planning / integration with other modes

- Liaise with TfL Rail and Great Western Railway on timetable co-ordination
- Re-focus cycle hire / e-scooter hire at Slough and Burnham stations at commuter journeys.
Review the provision of cycle racks at bus stops and consider the potential for mobility hubs

Make improvements to bus passenger experience: Invest in accessible and inclusive bus services

- New development to take appropriate account of the needs of bus users.

Make improvements to bus passenger experience: Protect personal safety of bus passengers

- A system in conjunction with bus operators whereby a parent is notified when a child's QR code / app is read by a ticket machine as he or she boards a bus.

APPENDIX C: REQUIREMENTS

C.1. Requirements – Existing

C.2. Requirements – Approved for Implementation by the Executive Board

Any new Requirements or any changes to existing Requirements outlined in Section C.3 below will be subject to appropriate funding, feasibility, and approval by the Executive Board in accordance with the governance arrangements set out in paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7.

C.3. Requirements for consideration subject to funding, feasibility and Executive Board and Slough Borough Council (where required) approval

Below is a general description of the Requirements currently identified for consideration. The details of these are intended to be developed by Slough Borough Council and relevant Operators and other stakeholders through the Enhanced Partnership process. Each Requirement will be subject to appropriate funding, feasibility, and approval by the Executive Board in accordance with the governance arrangements set out in paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7.

Make improvements to bus services and planning: Simplify services

- Buses to operate on consistent routeings throughout the day
- Network planning guidelines will be agreed with operators
- Standardised timetable change dates

Make Improvements to Bus Services and Planning

- Develop a more collaborative process to consider proposals to change the bus network and to consider external influences
- Work with neighbouring authorities and organisations to develop bus services which cross Slough boundaries: this will include seeking to co-ordinate with them on highway schemes which will benefit buses

Make Improvements to Bus Services and Planning: More Frequent and Reliable Services

- A core urban network consisting of the A4 east-west spine between Cippenham and Heathrow Airport, links to the Britwell Estate and the link between Slough town centre and Wexham Park Hospital. On these links the target is for a 10-minute daytime headway with maximum 20-minute headways during evenings and Sundays
- On other town routes we will seek standardised maximum 30-minute daytime headways with maximum 60-minute headways during evenings and Sundays
- We will seek funds to continue to maintain services during 2022/23 to provide network stability

Make improvements to bus services and planning: Review service frequency

- Seek funding to enable more bus services to meet key shift start and finish times, notably at the major regional employer, Heathrow Airport.
- Consistent service start and finish times across the core network, with the aim of providing last services at around midnight.

Improvements to fares and ticketing: lower fares

- Highest bus fares to reduce by around 20% to bring them into line with fares paid in other geographically similar locations
- A more comprehensive and consistent offer for occasional bus users

- Operators to accept the proposed multi-operator ticket.

Improvements to fares and ticketing: simplify fares

- A standardised young person's fare covering up to the age of 19 at not more than 75% of the equivalent adult fare

Make improvements to bus passenger experience: higher specification buses

- Bus operators to comply with a minimum bus specification, to be agreed
- In line with upcoming statutory requirements, all buses will need to provide next stop screens and announcements as standard

Make improvements to bus passenger experience: Protect personal safety of bus passengers

- CCTV will be mandated on bus services in Slough

Improvements to passenger engagement: Passenger charter

- Operators in Slough will agree to operate the passenger charter

Improvements to passenger engagement: Improve bus information

- Operators will work collaboratively to share service information on each other's apps and websites

Make improvements to bus services and planning: Integrate services with other transport modes

- Re-establish the link between Burnham Station and the Trading Estate
- Improve timetable co-ordination between bus and rail services at Langley station

Make improvements to bus services and planning: Review socially necessary services

- Improve Sunday and evening services on the core and secondary network
- Ensure that the majority of residents are within 5 minutes' walk of a daytime bus service

Make improvements to bus passenger experience: Invest in decarbonisation

- Seek funding opportunities to deliver a migration to zero-emission bus fleet with associated infrastructure over the coming years
- Seek funding to investigate the feasibility of different types of technology applied to the constraints at bus depots and the mileages being operated on bus routes in Slough in order to establish the most cost-effective means of decarbonising the bus fleet

APPENDIX D: TERMS OF REFERENCE

D.1. Terms of Reference – Forum

The Forum will:

- Consider the available evidence from Slough Borough Council's monitoring against the BSIP targets of patronage, journey time, reliability and passenger satisfaction;
- Consider how delivery of existing and potential Facilities, Measures and Requirements can assist in delivering outcomes against those targets;
- Liaise with the Executive Board on the forward work programme.

D.2. Terms of Reference – Executive Board

The Executive Board will provide detailed technical project direction and scrutiny on interventions within the Enhanced Partnership Plan as well as having oversight and direction of financial delivery and the monitoring and evaluation framework.

The Executive Board will:

- Develop and continuously review a process to prioritise available funding to potential Facilities, Measures and Requirements;
- Develop investigations, feasibility studies and costed business cases for the development and implementation of Facilities, Measures and Requirements for consideration and approval;
- Establish task and finish groups and invite the views and participation of wider stakeholders as required to assist in the development of these investigations, feasibility studies and business cases;
- Liaise with equivalent governance bodies in neighbouring Enhanced Partnerships, on matters both of policy and direction and on specific cross-boundary issues;
- Review proposals brought to it by the Forum in respect of Facilities, Measures and Requirements, and any accompanying evidence;
- Satisfy itself that the any such proposals are sufficiently and appropriately evidenced;
- Vote on whether to proceed with such a change, and request Slough Borough Council to apply its normal statutory powers as required to deliver any such change, and request Slough Borough Council to amend the EP Scheme as appropriate;
- Review proposals brought to it by the Forum for changes to the EP Plan and Scheme, and if content initiate the required process to make such changes;
- Liaise with Slough Borough Council regarding potential bids to external bodies for funding and ensure as far as possible that such bids reflect the priorities of the EB;
- Direct Slough Borough Council to monitor outcomes against the stated targets and use this evidence to develop its policy in considering proposals brought to it by the Forum;
- Liaise as required with the Forum in considering scheme proposals and in providing direction as required from time to time on the content of the proposals and supporting evidence bases brought to it by the Forum; and
- Liaise with the Forum on the forward work programme.

D.3. Terms of Reference – Task and Finish Groups

A Task and Finish Group constituted by the Executive Board will:

- Have its membership determined by the Board;
- Be constituted from time to time by the Board as required with a specific brief and timescale to report back as appropriate;
- Be expected to meet at least monthly; and
- Deliver a written response to the Board's brief for the Board's consideration.

END OF DOCUMENT

Equality Impact Assessment

Directorate: Place
Service: Strategy and Infrastructure – Transport
Name of Officer/s completing assessment: Eddie Hewitt
Date of Assessment: 14th September 2021
Name of service/function or policy being assessed: Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)
1. What are the aims, objectives, outcomes, purpose of the policy, service change, function that you are assessing? The BSIP is an essential element of the Council's response to the National Bus Strategy. This response also includes the development of an Enhanced Partnership with Bus Operators in Slough. The overall requirement is to establish and commit to a joint plan to improve reliability and quality of services, increase bus passenger levels and improve bus passenger satisfaction. The National Bus Strategy has been developed by Government in the context of the need to bring about a post-COVID-19 recovery across the country, and to ensure the recovery is not car-led. This follows on from the publication of the DfT's <i>Better Deal for Bus Users</i> guidance, with a commitment to help local authorities improve current services and restore lost services where they're needed most. During the COVID-19 restrictions, demand for public transport was substantially reduced and emergency government funding was applied to maintain bus services. All formal restrictions were lifted in July 2021. In transport terms, the essential policy is for public transport to be an integral part of the overall recovery. For buses, the Government has put forward the slogan ' <i>Bus Back Better</i> ', indicating the intention to ensure that services post-COVID will be an improvement on the situation before the restrictions came first came into place. However, even before the COVID-19 restrictions came into place, policies were in place at Slough to promote increased uptake of public transport and specifically travel by bus. Hence the National Bus Strategy is building on existing plans and aspirations in Slough. The mass movement of people on the network has long been a priority in order to deliver an integrated, sustainable transport solution in and across the borough. The headline objectives in the BSIP include targets as follows:

- Reductions in journey times
- Improvement in journey time reliability
- Increased patronage (passenger numbers)
- Increased levels of passenger satisfaction.

The proposals in the BSIP designed to realise these objectives include (but are not limited to):

- Increased bus priority on the road network
- Better service frequency
- Lower fares
- Better ticketing systems and arrangements (including multi-operator ticketing)
- Improved modal integration opportunities
- Better service information

The BSIP is the first stage in the overall response to the National Bus Strategy, and is by its nature a preliminary plan which is subject to various factors and circumstances coming into alignment. Hence, this Equality Impact Assessment is an initial, overarching review.

The BSIP has also not yet been finalised. The BSIP is currently in draft form, and will be finalised in time for submission to the Department for Transport by the 31st October 2021. Subject to Cabinet review, towards the end of October, the main content of the BSIP is, however, not expected to change significantly.

The BSIP will then be followed by the development of an Enhanced Partnership Plan (EPP) which will contain detailed, specific schemes. Further, scheme specific EIAs will be produced in due course, where the schemes are considered to be of an appropriate scale and scope, and where such schemes are expected to lead to significant impacts for any protected group(s).

2.	<p>Who implements or delivers the policy, service or function? State if this is undertaken by more than one team, service, and department including any external partners.</p> <p>The BSIP is a shared plan. Slough Borough Council and the Bus Operators of registered local services in Slough have joint ownership of the BSIP. Subject to feasibility, funding and consultation, the proposed measures will be delivered jointly, thorough the Enhanced Partnership. However, ultimately, Slough Borough Council has responsibility for leading the development of the plan and submission to the Department for Transport (DfT).</p> <p>The development of the BSIP has been overseen by the Transport team in the Place directorate, Strategy and Infrastructure division. Responsibility for regular progress reviews, liaising with the bus operators and all related administrative activities lies with the Transport team.</p> <p>The DfT is responsible initially for reviewing the Slough BSIP, and for determining any initial levels of funding. Subsequently, the DfT will also be reviewing scheme specific proposals that are set out in local traffic authority Enhanced Partnership Plans (EPPs) – the next stage in the overall process – and determining any grant funding to facilitate the delivery of the proposed schemes and measures.</p>
3.	<p>Who will be affected by this proposal? For example who are the external/internal customers, communities, partners, stakeholders, the workforce etc. Please consider all of the Protected Characteristics listed (more information is available in the background information). Bear in mind that people affected by the proposals may well have more than one protected characteristic.</p> <p>The overall expectation is that this proposal will lead to improvements for all who use bus services in Slough, with wider benefits for all.</p> <p>However, it is acknowledged that bus travel may be used and relied upon by certain protected groups more than others.</p> <p>Broadly speaking, the relevant groups are expected to be affected as follows:</p> <p>Age: Older people are often particularly reliant on public transport and bus travel especially. Service frequency, safety, access to bus stops and the bus station, information availability, and concessionary fares are all of particular relevance here. The same applies to young people, including school pupils and students.</p>

Disability:

As above, people with disabilities are often reliant on public transport. Again, service frequency, safety, access to bus stops and the bus station, information availability, and concessional fares are all of particular relevance.

Pregnancy and maternity:

There may be some specific impacts for this category, relating to access to healthcare and facilities for parents and also young children.

Race:

Generally speaking, there are no specific impacts here. However, there may be some cultural/cultural/religious aspects which relate to the perceived and actual benefits or otherwise of public transport services and patronage.

Religion and Belief:

Generally speaking, there are no specific impacts here. However, there may be some impacts, including better access to places of worship. Furthermore, as above, there may be some cultural/religious aspects which relate to the perceived and actual benefits or otherwise of public transport services and patronage.

Gender Reassignment:

No specific impacts associated with this category.

Marriage and Civil Partnership:

No specific impacts associated with this category.

Sex:

No specific impacts associated with this category.

Sexual orientation:

No specific impacts associated with this category.

Details relating to the nature of the various, expected impacts are set out in sections 4 and 5 below.

4.	<p>What are any likely positive impacts for the group/s identified in (3) above? You may wish to refer to the Equalities Duties detailed in the background information.</p> <p><i>The positive impacts for all groups identified above, and indeed for all bus travellers from all groups, are likely to be:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• More frequent bus services• More reliable journey times• Lower fares• Multi-operator ticketing arrangements (a simpler ticket and therefore easier travel)• Better quality buses• Improved air quality, reduced carbon emissions• A more extensive network of services / greater access to places of work and education, shop, services, healthcare, and other destinations• Further benefits. <p><i>Nb the above list of likely benefits is not exhaustive.</i></p> <p><i>Other likely benefits or aspects which are particularly relevant to the specific groups identified are as follows:</i></p> <p><i>Age</i> More frequent services will be especially helpful to both older people and young people. This will lead to increased perceptions of safety and, for the elderly mainly, greater comfort / minimised physical pain related to traditionally longer waiting times. A more reliable network of services will also increase connectivity and social inclusion, as well as easier access to a range of destinations.</p> <p><i>Disability</i> As above, similar benefits will arise as for older people. In addition, the BSIP and Enhanced Partnership is expected to lead to more considerate and more responsive bus companies, through a greater understanding of the issues, which will be shared by the operators and the Council. Where not already included, the proposed table of measures and schemes will be reviewed and strengthened to better address the needs of people with disabilities.</p>
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	<p>Parents and young children</p> <p>Again, as above, more frequent and reliable services will improve safety (perceived and actual) especially for mothers of young children and young children themselves. Benefits will also be associated with better access to healthcare related destinations. Lower fare costs may well be of particular benefit here too.</p> <p>Race</p> <p>Although it can be hard to demonstrate with empirical evidence, certain cultural attitudes towards public transport do appear to be of particular relevance to certain ethnic and minority groups. Themes include actual and perceived safety on public transport and a preference for car ownership and travel combined with reluctance to travel on public transport for a variety of reasons (termed sometimes as '<i>car culture</i>'). Improved bus services are expected to provide a more attractive, more efficient travel option for all, and hence the benefits here may be particularly attractive to certain groups within the community.</p> <p>Religion and Belief</p> <p>More reliable bus services, reduced waiting times, and a better bus network are all likely to provide a more attractive travel option to those seeking to travel to places of worship across the borough. In addition, there may also be some benefits in terms of safety – again, perceived or actual – for members of certain religious groups who may generally feel vulnerable on public transport.</p>
5.	<p>What are the likely negative impacts for the group/s identified in (3) above? If so then are any particular groups affected more than others and why?</p> <p>There are very few negative impacts anticipated for any of the groups identified above.</p> <p>The only impact that stands out is a possible reduction in parking availability at certain locations across the borough (although no firm plans – or even locations – have been established). This impact would potentially be detrimental to those who have a particularly strong preference to travel by private car. In the wider interests of the borough, the more important need here is for the Council, as local transport authority, to provide more education and to engage with residents better to promote more sustainable forms of travel, including public transport and active travel.</p>

6.	<p>Have the impacts indentified in (4) and (5) above been assessed using up to date and reliable evidence and data? Please state evidence sources and conclusions drawn (e.g. survey results, customer complaints, monitoring data etc).</p> <p>In preparing the BSIP, the Council has taken into account all relevant and available data sources, including data from the bus operators. Nb in the case of some operators, data is yet to be received and is subject to non-disclosure agreements, due to commercial interests. The analysis of this data is therefore not yet complete.</p> <p>Regarding other sources:</p> <p>The Council is currently hosting a public survey for both bus travellers and non-bus travellers. This survey is currently still active and is due to cease at the end of September 2021. The BSIP team is already engaged in reviewing the responses as they come in, and considering how best to respond to the results. At present, there are no early indications of any issues relating to specific, protected groups, but this will be closely monitored during the finalisation of the BSIP, subsequently the EPP, and then on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Responding to customer complaints and other correspondence are generally considered as part of the general Transport team duties. All relevant information has been discussed and referred to the authors of the BSIP document, either verbally as part of ongoing discussion, or in written form via emails. However, the information here is not extensive and there are no major points of reference relating to any specific group.</p>
7.	<p>Have you engaged or consulted with any identified groups or individuals if necessary and what were the results, e.g. have the staff forums/unions/ community groups been involved?</p> <p>Staff forums and unions have not been consulted.</p> <p>Community groups have been sent information regarding the BSIP and Enhanced Partnership development, via email correspondence, with a request for any comments to be made.</p> <p>One particular group specifically targeted is schools, with head teachers having been contacted for this purpose.</p> <p>Staff resources at the Council are quite limited, at present, but the intention is to engage further with as many relevant organisations and community groups as far as reasonably possible. This process is expected to continue for the lifetime of the national Bus Strategy, specifically the period during which the Government is coordinating the overall realisation of the strategy and making funding streams available for local authorities to bid for.</p>

8.	<p>Have you considered the impact the policy might have on local community relations?</p> <p>The BSIP is expected to make a positive contribution here. Public Transport plays a valuable role in the borough, and nationally, in providing greater mobility and accessibility to all members of the community. The BSIP contains a comprehensive list of measures and proposals designed to have the overall effect of improving connectivity within and across the town. This will be achieved through more frequent services, more reliable journeys, better value with fares, and all associated benefits. All of these impacts are expected to be valued by the community, and specific community groups, as referred to in section 4.</p> <p>The expected benefits arising from the improved air quality, reduced carbon emissions, reduced congestion levels, will all be particularly valuable in terms of greater social and environmental sustainability. Better, more reliable access to jobs, education and shopping areas will all be expected to lead to greater economic sustainability, with positive implications for all within the various communities.</p>
9.	<p>What plans do you have in place, or are developing, that will mitigate any likely identified negative impacts? For example what plans, if any, will be put in place to reduce the impact?</p> <p>As throughout this review, there are currently no negative impacts anticipated for any protected group, or indeed all members of the public. It is possible that some changes may have some unexpected consequences, including some short term detrimental impacts, but the BSIP is a 'living' document / plan, and any negative impacts will be reviewed and addressed accordingly.</p> <p>Engagement with the public increasingly takes place via online communications, and the various websites run by the Council and the bus operators, and all other sources, will continue to play a vital role in the exchange of information and comments. However, as far as practically possible, greater input from community groups will be actively sought and welcomed by the Council, through current channels and new initiatives to be explored and implemented.</p>
10.	<p>What plans do you have in place to monitor the impact of the proposals once they have been implemented? (The full impact of the decision may only be known after the proposals have been implemented). Please see action plan below.</p> <p>The reporting procedure for the BSIP has not yet been fully finalised. The current proposal is that six monthly reviews will be appropriate to monitor the effectiveness of both the BSIP and the Enhanced partnership. In addition, the Council will respond to all relevant guidance from the DfT, and will comply with all formal reporting requirements.</p>

The success of all major schemes and measures to follow via the EPP will typically be subject to evaluation reports and regular monitoring, as well as discussion at partnership meetings to come with the bus operators.

In addition, the Transport team will oversee an ongoing review of the overall development and progress of the BSIP and all associated measures, including consideration of the perceived and actual impacts on the public – including, specifically, all protected groups. The Enhanced Partnership will provide greater opportunity for the Council to engage in meaningful discussion with both the bus operators and the public on all relevant matters, and this will be expected to lead to further positive and specific outcomes.

As stated in the question, the full impacts of the BSIP, the EPP, and the partnership will only be realised initially over the lifetime of the National Bus Strategy and the local response, and subsequently beyond. For a long-term, sustainable solution, thorough, ongoing review will be vital, along with continuity and increased commitment to the essential principles and objectives established in the plan.

What course of action does this EIA suggest you take? More than one of the following may apply	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Outcome 1: No major change required. The EIA has not identified any potential for discrimination or adverse impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Outcome 2: Adjust the policy to remove barriers identified by the EIA or better promote equality. Are you satisfied that the proposed adjustments will remove the barriers identified? (Complete action plan).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outcome 3: Continue the policy despite potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality identified. You will need to ensure that the EIA clearly sets out the justifications for continuing with it. You should consider whether there are sufficient plans to reduce the negative impact and/or plans to monitor the actual impact (see questions below). (Complete action plan).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outcome 4: Stop and rethink the policy when the EIA shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination. (Complete action plan).	<input type="checkbox"/>

Action Plan and Timetable for Implementation

At this stage a timetabled Action Plan should be developed to address any concerns/issues related to equality in the existing or proposed policy/service or function. This plan will need to be integrated into the appropriate Service/Business Plan.

Action	Target Groups	Lead Responsibility	Outcomes/Success Criteria	Monitoring & Evaluation	Target Date	Progress to Date
Final version of the BSIP to be submitted to the DfT	All groups	Eddie Hewitt Support from Atkins (consultants)	Satisfactory review and feedback from the DfT, along with any relevant funding award	Review	31 st October 2021	On course
Regular reviews of the progress of the implementation of the	All groups	Eddie Hewitt / Transport	Satisfactory review findings	Monitoring	Ongoing (minimum every 6	Planned

BSIP and the Enhanced Partnership					months)	
Development of the Enhanced Partnership Plan (EPP) and submission to the DfT)	All groups	Eddie Hewitt / Transport. Support from Atkins (consultants)	Satisfactory review and feedback from the DfT, along with any relevant funding award for specific schemes proposed.	Review	March 2022	On course

Name: Eddie Hewitt, Principle Transport Strategy Officer

Signed:
(Person completing the EIA)

Name: Misha Byrne, Transport Lead

Signed:

.....(Policy Lead if not same as above)

Date: 14th September 2021

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Enhanced Partnership Statutory Consultations

Organisations/groups in guidance	Organisation	Contact	Notes	Summary of the Response	SBC comment
All operators of local bus services that would be affected by any of the proposals	Bear Buses	Glenn Massiah		No response	
	Carousel Buses	Luke Marion, Edmund Tresham		No response	
	First in Berkshire & The Thames Valley	Marc Reddy, Jonathan Lewis		No response	
	Metroline	Stephen Cahill	<small>AS an operator (Contractor to Transport for London only - made clear that all contracts have been with TfL to</small>	No response	
	Reading Buses	Robert Williams		No response	
	Red Eagle Buses	Riz Khan, Ali Khan		No response	
	Redline Buses	Riz Khan, Ali Khan		No response	
	Stewarts Coaches	Matt Hobbs		No response	
	Thames Valley Buses	Simon Fisher		No response	
Organisations that represent local passengers (e.g. bus users)	Transport for London*	Fergus McGhee, Carol Smales	* (As an operator) (also see below for (As a local authority))	No response	
	Bus Users UK	(Not known)		No response	
	London Travelwatch	(Not known)		No response	
Other local authorities that would be affected by the proposals (e.g.. neighbouring local authorities)	Bracknell Forest Council	Phil Burke		Supportive. Good summary and detail on Governance. Comprehensive coverage of Facilities, Measures and Requirements, but will need more detail post any Government funding announcements. Supportive and encouraging re cross-boundary coordination.	Noted. Pan Berkshire coordination fully expected to increase and be more effective.
	Buckinghamshire Council	Andy Clarke		No response	
	Surrey County Council	Paul Millin		Supportive. Reference to the need for cross-boundary coordination and collaboration, especially on measures and communications involving ticketing and timetable information.	Noted. Pan Berkshire coordination fully expected to increase and be more effective.
	The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	Tim Golabek		No response	
	Transport for London*	Carol Smales	* (As a local authority) (also see above for (As an operator))	No response	
The Traffic Commissioners	The Traffic Commissioner, West of England	Kevin Rooney		No response	
The chief officer of police for each area to which the plan relates	Thames Valley Police	John Campbell	Email address not confirmed	Request for exemptions in Traffic Regulation Orders for new bus lanes.	TVP to continue to be consulted as standard, as one of the statutory consultees on all TRO proposals. Exemptions already apply to all Emergency Services in bus lane TROs (include those for the recently installed A4 bus lane).

Transport Focus	Transport Focus	(Not known)		<p><i>Extensive response. Full details available on request (4 page document). Summary of main points:</i> Support for the objectives and key proposals in the EPPS. This includes the key targets to improved journey frequency, reliability, patronage and passenger experience, and specifically the proposals relating to fare changes.</p> <p>Transport Focus consider the proposed consultation process weak, and that the interaction with bus user groups is not extensive enough. The proposed change mechanism for the EP requires more extensive consultation with Transport Focus prior to amending the plan or scheme.</p>	The Council considers that the consultation proposals in place are satisfactory. These include our commitment to an annual survey (to gauge ongoing public opinion). There is a robust change control process, based on the use of appendices for the plan and scheme elements. This is in line with DfT guidance. The Council welcomes the offer of support from Transport Focus to monitor performance and to assistance with the ongoing development of the plan and scheme where helpful and appropriate.
The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)	The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)	(Not known)		<p>Request for further explanation on why SBC has stated in the EPPS that implementation of the full plan will or is likely to have a significant adverse effect on competition. Also, request for further information about the Competition Test applied by SBC in developing the EPPS. In addition, a page of comments provided for the attention of all local authorities developing EPs.</p>	The CMA appears not to have noted fully the supporting information to this statement. The gist of this is that the proposals relating to multi-ticketing and other fare related measures are by nature intended to limit the ability of operators to seek commercial advantage through ticketing. The EPPS also explains that the anti-competitive element is justified on the grounds of securing overall improvements on the network and in the services. Obliging the operators to share commercial information with other operators is also considered anti-competitive. This is considered justifiable for the same reasons. The CMA has asked for more information on the competition test applied by the Council. The Transport team will be providing a full explanation to the CMA and will address any further points that they may raise.
Such other persons as the authority thinks fit	Heathrow Airport	Matthew Wooll	Sent as they have a role in commissioning / funding bus services	No response	
	Tan Dhesi MP	Tan Dhesi MP		No response	
	Adam Afriyie MP	Adam Afriyie MP		No response	
	NHS Wexham Park Hospital	Richard Hilson	First email address not confirmed Sent as they have a role in commissioning / funding bus services	Recommends a non-Council / non-operator representative member of the Forum to attend the Board on rotation.	Potentially possible, but this would be expected to be as an observer only. No governance role available or considered appropriate for this purpose. Also, due to frequency of board meetings proposed, this would mean practically no continuity.
	SEGRO	Yin Bowers Rowan Harper Dan Holford Katie Dunn	Sent as they have a role in commissioning / funding bus services	Generally supportive. Notes that the Trading Estate is an area of change. Welcomes and agrees the overall approach. Recommends regular review. Calls for a focus on Value for Money and solutions that are attractive, workable and viable for employees and visitors to Slough / Trading Estate. Reference to the importance of new housing development and bus requirements. Stresses the need for innovation and alternative approaches.	This focus on a key area of business and activity is endorsed, and will continue to inform potential specific schemes, as well as travel planning more widely. The reference to the need for services to new housing areas and also the importance of innovation are also valued, with shared commitment to covering these aspects via the EP.
	Bath Road Central	Kanika Edwards	Sent as they have a role in commissioning / funding bus services	No response	

	AEW	Sam Archer Charles Royle	Sent as they have may a role in commissioning / funding bus services	No response (referred to SEGRO)	
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