

Public Document Pack
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA ENHANCED
PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2023-2028 AND
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA ENHANCED
PARTNERSHIP SCHEME

Southend on Sea Local Bus Forum

Date: Monday, 4th September, 2023

Time: 5.00 pm

Place: Committee Room 1 - Civic Suite

Contact: John Austin - Public Transport Manager

Email: committeesection@southend.gov.uk

A G E N D A

- 1 Introductions, Apologies for Absence, and Statement of Quoracy**
- 2 Governance Arrangements, insofar as they affect the Local Bus Forum**
(Pages 3 - 6)
 - Summary of Enhanced Partnership
 - Purpose of Local Bus Forum
 - Initial Invitations to join Local Bus Forum
 - Expectations of Forum Members
 - Summary of Forum's Responsibilities
- 3 Members of the Public Invited to Ask Questions or Make Comments on the Agenda Items**

****** ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

- 4 Current Status of Enhanced Partnership and of Local Transport Board**
(Pages 7 - 8)

****** ITEMS FOR DECISION**

- 5 Setting the Strategic Direction of the Enhanced Partnership** (Pages 9 - 16)

The following papers are attached:

a) Southend-on-Sea BSIP Objectives and EP Approach

b) Southend-on-Sea BSIP Summary

- Please note that the full Southend-on-Sea Bus Service Improvement Plan was adopted in October 2021

c) Bus Network Reviews for Castle Point District and for Rochford District - Summaries of Issues and Opportunities

The Forum will aim to prioritise the BSIP Objectives and the various approaches followed in the EP, as presented in paper a) above, with the target of producing a short report to submit to the Southend Local Bus Board setting

the strategic direction for the Enhanced Partnership that the Forum recommends the Southend Local Bus Board pursues.

- 6 Nomination of and voting on candidates for Chair of Southend Local Bus Board**
- 7 Nomination of and voting on any additional representatives from other groups to attend future Forum meetings**
- 8 Date of First Meeting of Southend Local Bus Board (now that its Chair has been appointed following the vote in 6. above)**
- 9 Date of next Annual Meeting of Southend Local Bus Forum – proposed for Wednesday 4 September 2024**

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA ENHANCED
PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2023-2028
AND
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA ENHANCED
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**Governance Arrangements, insofar as they
concern the Local Bus Forum**

Taken from Section 5 – Governance
Arrangements, of ‘The Southend-on-Sea
Enhanced Partnership Plan 2023-28 and
Southend-on-Sea Enhanced Partnership
Scheme’ as presented as Appendix 1 to
Agenda Item 11 of papers to Cabinet 12
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- 1 The Enhanced Partnership will constitute two separate bodies: the Local Bus Board and the Local Bus Forum. The Local Bus Board’s primary function is to advise and agree on, and manage, the delivery of the EP Plan and Scheme. The Local Bus Forum’s primary function is to set the strategic direction of the Enhanced Partnership, and to appoint individual members of the Board, subject to the rules contained within these governance arrangements**
 - 2 All members of both the Board and the Forum are expected to act with due propriety. This means that all members should act in accordance with the broader public interest and the needs of bus passengers, and in the spirit of working in partnership to improve bus services. All members of both the Board and the Forum are expected to exercise their own professional judgement in meeting this expectation, and must not act only with their own interests or those of their individual companies or constituents.
 - 3 The Forum will bring together representatives from a wide range of key stakeholder groups to review the progress of the BSIP and EPP. It may also recommend to the Board the priorities for improving the bus network that it should consider for the following year. The Forum will need to participate in the review of the EP and of the BSIP, which is expected to take place by 31 March 2024
 - 4 The Forum will be responsible for advising the Board on the strategic direction of the EP, and may make recommendations to the Board about the priorities for improving the bus network that it should consider in the future. The Forum is an advisory body and has no formal decision-making powers over the Board, but it has two formal roles within the EP:
 - To nominate and appoint an independent Chair of the Board, to serve

a minimum period of 12 months;

- To consider and make recommendations of any variations proposed by the Board on the Enhanced Partnership Plan or Scheme.

5 The following organisations will initially be formally invited to be members of the Forum:

- Southend-on-Sea City Council, constituting the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Highways and Transport, the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning, and the appropriate Director with responsibility for Highways and Transport.
- All operators of qualifying bus services operating in the EPP Area;
- Essex County Council;
- Castle Point Borough Council;
- Rochford District Council;
- Southend Area Bus User Group;
- Transport Focus;
- Bus Users UK;
- Essex Police;
- Southend Business Improvement District.

6 The Forum may nominate additional representatives from other groups to attend future Forum meetings. Any additional members would be subject to a vote of the Forum, requiring a majority for additional members to be confirmed.

7 The Forum will be chaired by the Council's Cabinet Member with responsibility for Highways and Transport.

8 The Forum will be a public meeting, advertised on the Council's website no later than two weeks prior to the meeting. An agenda will be made available no less than one week prior to the meeting. This will be sent to all invited participants and be made publicly available.

9 At each Forum, there will be a minimum of one agenda item at which members of the public will be invited to ask questions or make comment about any of the agenda items at the meeting. Each member of the public will have no more than 3 minutes in which to speak. For the rest of the meeting, members of the public can attend in an observing capacity only.

10 Forum meetings will only take place if the meeting is quorate. To be quorate, the following Forum members must be in attendance:

- The Chair of the Forum

- At least 50% of the nominated bus operator representatives or their substitutes
- At least 50% of the nominated Council representatives or their substitutes
- Of all non-Council and non-operator parties, at least one being in attendance.

11 The Forum will meet at least annually in September of each year, with additional meetings as required. Meeting dates will be set and notified to members at least a month in advance.

12 All Forum members will be responsible for ensuring attendance at all Forum meetings that they are invited to. They should ensure that they have reviewed and understood all meeting papers in advance of the meeting, and where feasible the required mandate for whom they represent.

13 If a Forum member cannot attend a particular meeting, they can nominate a substitute of another person of a similar level or role within the same organisation.

14 All Forum members will have a single vote on all matters requiring a recommendation to be made. For a recommendation to be carried by the Forum, a majority of votes from all representatives present is required.

15 Representatives not exercising their vote, through not casting a vote at the meeting or through not attending the meeting and not nominating a substitute or their substitute not casting a vote, will be deemed to have abstained and will not have their vote counted.

16 The Council will act as the Secretariat for the Forum, with the role being performed by a member of Council staff who is not one of the nominated representatives on the Forum. The person undertaking that Secretariat role will not have the rights corresponding with representatives on the Forum at Forum meetings.

17 Nominations for the position of Chair of the Board must be received by the Secretariat no later than one week prior to the Forum meeting. No representative of the Council or any operator of registered local bus services, or any person with a financial interest in either the Council or any operator of registered local bus services will be eligible for the position of Chair of the Board. All candidates for the position of Chair will be vetted by the Secretariat prior to being put to a vote.

18 All prospective Chairs of the Board will be invited to state their case to be Chair at the Forum for no longer than 3 minutes. Once all nominations who have chosen to state their case have done so, a vote will then be taken.

19 To elect a Chair of the Board, a minimum of 50% of the representatives present must vote in favour of a Chair of the Board. Where the vote results in no candidate securing the vote of at least 50% of representatives present, the candidate with the lowest number of votes will be eliminated, and a further round of voting will take place with the remaining candidates.

Further rounds of voting will take place, with the candidate with the lowest number of votes being eliminated in each round, until a candidate wins a minimum of 50% of the votes of the representatives present.

20 All papers will be circulated by the Secretariat at least 2 weeks before a meeting. Should papers be submitted less than 2 weeks in advance of the meeting, its inclusion on the agenda is at the sole discretion of the Chair of the Forum.

21 At each meeting, the Forum will receive an update on the Enhanced Partnership and the BSIP by a nominated representative from the Board.

22 Wherever feasible, Forum meetings will take place in person at the Civic Offices, Victoria Avenue, Southend. They can also take place online via remote access, such as MS Teams.

23 Draft minutes of the Forum meetings will be circulated no more than two weeks after each meeting to all attendees.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA ENHANCED
PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2023-2028
AND
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA ENHANCED
PARTNERSHIP SCHEME**

**Current Status of Enhanced Partnership and
of Local Transport Board**

Report by John Austin, Secretariat

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- 1 The Enhanced Partnership was presented to Cabinet on 12 January 2023 and was approved to take effect from 1 April 2023.
 - 2 A Public Transport Manager was appointed, and commenced employment on 9 May 2023, for a fixed-term to 31 March 2025, financed by BSIP capability funding awarded by the DfT. This post leads on:
 - a) setting up the arrangements for the Local Bus Forum and Local Bus Board (which together implement the Enhanced Partnership) and
 - b) project-managing the development of the work of the Local Bus Board and the delivery of the measures listed in the Enhanced Partnership Scheme.
 - 3 Southend-on-Sea City Council has been allocated £479,250 of BSIP+ revenue funding by central Government to develop, in partnership with operators, bus improvement measures in 2023/24. A similar revenue amount is expected for 2024/25. It is envisaged that these planned measures will be voted on by the Local Bus Board at its first meeting, expected to be in late September 2023.
 - 4 The measures that were listed for early delivery in the Enhanced Partnership will be implemented after discussion at the Local Bus Board.

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**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA ENHANCED
PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2023-2028
AND
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA ENHANCED
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**Setting the Strategic Direction of the
Enhanced Partnership**

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The Forum will aim to prioritise the BSIP Objectives and the various approaches followed in the EP, as presented in paper a) below. The target of this is to produce a short report to submit to the Southend Local Bus Board setting the strategic direction for the Enhanced Partnership that the Forum recommends the Southend Local Bus Board pursues. Paper b) is provided in order to give the background to paper a). Paper c) is provided in order to give geographical and network context to paper a).

- a) **Southend-on-Sea BSIP Objectives and EP Approach (sections within 'The Southend-on-Sea Enhanced Partnership Plan 2023-2028 and Southend-on-Sea Enhanced Partnership Scheme')**

'Objectives of the Enhanced Partnership Plan'

The Objectives of the Enhanced Partnership Plan are those of the Bus Service Improvement Plan:

1. Manage the highway network to improve the reliability of local bus services;
2. Make local bus journeys quicker, especially on key routes in Southend;
3. Improve the quality of bus stops and waiting facilities for all users of local bus services;
4. Deliver a more integrated public transport network that is easy for everyone to use;
5. Improve the quality and accessibility of bus service information through all media channels;
6. Improve the quality standards of local bus services, including reducing emissions;
7. Market and promote local bus services in a holistic manner.

‘Enhanced Partnership Plan and relationship to schemes’

The first Enhanced Partnership scheme is focused on delivering the following elements of the Enhanced Partnership Plan and BSIP objectives.

BSIP Objectives	EP Approach
<p>1. Improve the reliability of local buses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver bus priority signalling at major junctions in Southend • To review major corridors to identify solutions that will improve journey speeds and reliability of services
<p>2. Make bus journeys quicker, especially on the key routes into and out of Southend</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver bus priority at major traffic signal junctions in Southend • To review major corridors to identify solutions that will improve journey speeds and reliability of services • To upgrade existing tickets to contactless and mobile payments, speeding up bus boarding times
<p>3. Improve the quality of local bus stops and waiting facilities for all users</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver a series of Mobility Hubs across Southend to improve connections between buses, trains, walking, cycling, car clubs, and other forms of transport • To review major corridors to identify solutions that will improve journey speeds and reliability of services, as well as improving the quality of local stops • Ensure that all local bus stops meet minimum standards of accessibility and information
<p>4. Deliver a more integrated public transport network that is easier for people to use</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver a series of Mobility Hubs across Southend to improve connections between buses, trains, walking, cycling, car clubs, and other forms of transport • To expand the current Octopus ticket to all operator mobile apps and contactless payment, and to be accepted on local rail services • To develop and deliver a single brand identity to be applied to all bus information, stops, and services.
<p>5. Improve the quality and accessibility of bus information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop and deliver a single brand identity to be applied to all bus information, stops, and services. Expand the range of media for static and real time information.
<p>6. Improve the quality standards of local bus services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To retrofit existing buses in Southend to an improved emissions standard • To ensure that all new buses in Southend are low emission
<p>7. Market and promote local</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop and deliver a single brand identity to be applied to all bus information,

bus services	stops, and services.
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b) Southend-on-Sea BSIP Summary (from pages 35 to 36 of the BSIP)

Our Action Plan - Overall approach

Our work on developing this BSIP has identified that, in order for buses to achieve their potential in Southend, significant change needs to take place, and all aspects of bus services need to improve in order to encourage people back to buses and to grow bus use in the future. During 2022/23, the Council and operators will deliver changes that can be delivered quickly and will re-establish bus use while more detailed work will be undertaken to deliver more radical changes.

Our programme has been prioritised to maximise the current strengths and opportunities of the bus network, and to get the basics of the network right first and use that as a basis upon which to build. Whilst this plan is a complimentary package of measures, we have clear priorities for what needs doing for us to achieve our objectives.

The delivery plan has several complementary packages of measures. These are summarised as follows:

1. **Improving our key bus corridors** is our highest priority and the basis of our commercial bus network. We will get more people using buses by improving the reliability of buses, improving journey times for buses, and improving the whole journey experience along each corridor. In priority order, these are:
 1. Southend Town Centre to Hadleigh (as far as the boundary with Castle Point)
 2. Southend Town Centre to Eastwood
 3. Southend Town Centre to Shoeburyness Town Centre via Thorpe Bay
 4. Southend Town Centre to Southend Airport (as far as the boundary with Rochford)
2. Supporting bus use by **improving existing services** is our second highest priority, through measures such as standardising timetables along routes, and through the EP setting minimum frequencies for daytime, evening, and weekend services along the key corridors. This will provide a good level of service along these corridors, while giving operators the flexibility to adjust their service patterns through joint working.
3. **Improving cross-town connectivity** will be our next highest priority. This will include delivering a Mobility Hub in Southend Town Centre, and launching (subject to feasibility and funding) new services between Southend Airport and Shoeburyness, Thorpe Bay, Leigh-on-Sea, Eastwood, and Chalkwell (via Southend Hospital).
4. **Improving ticketing and fares** by upgrading the Octopus ticket so it is available on smartphones and through contactless payment and can be used on local trains, and trialling a potential £1.50 flat single fare across the town on summer weekends.
5. **Better marketing and promotion of local buses**, including developing and delivering a joint marketing and promotions plan involving operators

and Essex County Council, as well as an area brand.

6. **Improving existing vehicles** by retrofitting existing engines so that their emissions are lower emissions, requiring that all new buses coming into the area are low emission vehicles, and delivering audio-visual announcements on buses.

In addition to this, funding is needed to boost capacity and capability at the Council to oversee the delivery of this comprehensive programme of improvements. This includes maintenance of bus stops, project management and delivery expertise for infrastructure and services, and supporting administrative costs.

To deliver our action plan, investment from the Department for Transport is critical in improving the infrastructure and services that are needed to deliver the transformational change that we envisage. Accordingly, this BSIP sets out our funding ask to the Department, without which this transformational change is not feasible. Operators are already making investments in improving local bus fleets, and the Council is also ensuring that the needs of buses are being prioritised through planned schemes such as Active Travel Corridors and major junction upgrades. Without this funding, these plans and their transformative potential will not be realised.

c) Bus Network Reviews for Castle Point District and for Rochford District – Summaries of Issues and Opportunities

(The complete Bus Network Reviews were published on the Essex Highways Website in January 2023)

Please note that these are independent reports to Essex County Council, are not Essex CC Policy and the projects in them are not proposed/committed/agreed measures. However, they provide a good base for discussion and ideas.

Summary of Issues and Opportunities for Bus Network in Castle Point District (section 8.14 of this Bus Network Review)

The bus network in Castle Point centres around a few key routes, where bus services run across wide timeframes and at high frequencies. However there are some routes which do not offer as high a level service; notably, in some neighbourhoods in Canvey Island, and fringe urban areas such as Daws Heath and B1014 Essex Way. This is a particular issue on Canvey Island, where residents are more likely to be dependent on non-travel modes. Access to some locations, such as Rayleigh, Chelmsford, and to the A127 corridor, has also been noted as a key issue to the appeal of bus usage.

Congestion and reliability are a key issue identified within the borough, particularly on the main entries on and off Canvey Island and on the A13. A key strategic focus for transport in the district should be to reduce the impacts of congestion along these routes, delivering journey time benefits for the bus.

Bus stop infrastructure can also be a key part of the passenger experience; whilst some areas offer high quality waiting experiences, poor information and comfort is experienced at other locations, which should be addressed where appropriate. Some features of both the bus stop and the vehicle environment can cause difficulty, discomfort, unease and frustration to users.

Summary of Issues and Opportunities for Bus Network in Rochford District (Section 8.13 of this Bus Network Review)

The bus network in Rochford District provides a number of higher frequency corridors which link the larger urban settlements within and adjacent to the district. However there are also many residential areas, particularly in fringe urban or rural areas, where frequent bus services are not available, where operational hours are shorter, and where services are only available on certain days of the week.

Congestion and reliability are key issues identified within the borough, particularly within Rayleigh town centre but also at a number of junctions in the Rochford town area. A key strategic focus for transport in the district should be to mitigate against these sources of delay; particularly given the availability of highway space in some affected locations.

Bus stop infrastructure can also be a key part of the passenger experience; whilst some areas offer high quality waiting experiences, poor information and comfort is experienced at other locations, which should be addressed where appropriate. Some features of both the bus stop and the vehicle environment can cause difficulty, discomfort, unease and frustration to users.

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