

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

**Setting the Strategic Direction of the  
Enhanced Partnership**

Agenda  
Item No.

**5**

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.

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

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.

