

# **Bus Service Improvement Plan**

Our plan for improving bus services in Southend, 2024-2029

Date: June 2024

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# 1. Introduction and Vision

## Status of this Bus Service Improvement Plan

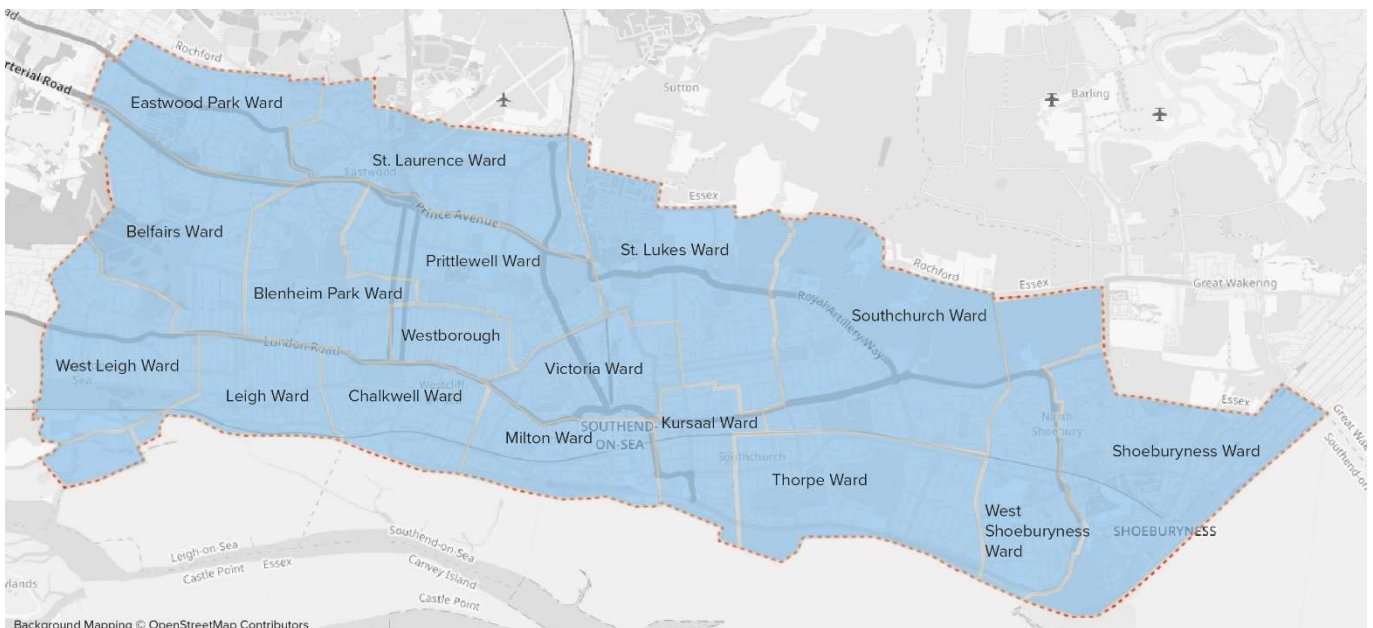
This Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) is an update of the original BSIP produced in October 2021. We have produced it in accordance with the guidance issued by the DfT: **‘National Bus Strategy: 2024 Bus Service Improvement Plans - Guidance to local authorities and bus operators’**.

## Area covered by this Bus Service Improvement Plan

Our BSIP and Enhanced Partnership (EP) applies to the administrative area of Southend-on-Sea City Council, a unitary authority which covers the roles of highway and transport authority and local planning authority (Figure 1). It does not cover the immediate hinterland of Southend where Essex County Council is the local highway and transport authority.

Essex County Council is producing its own BSIP and EP covering its own area. Most bus services run between Southend and other nearby towns (like Rochford, Rayleigh and Hadleigh) and so cross into Essex - we have worked with Essex County Council to ensure that our plans align. Our local bus operators - First Essex, Arriva Southend, and Stephensons of Essex - have helped shape the BSIP.

**Figure 1: Wards in Southend-on-Sea BSIP area**



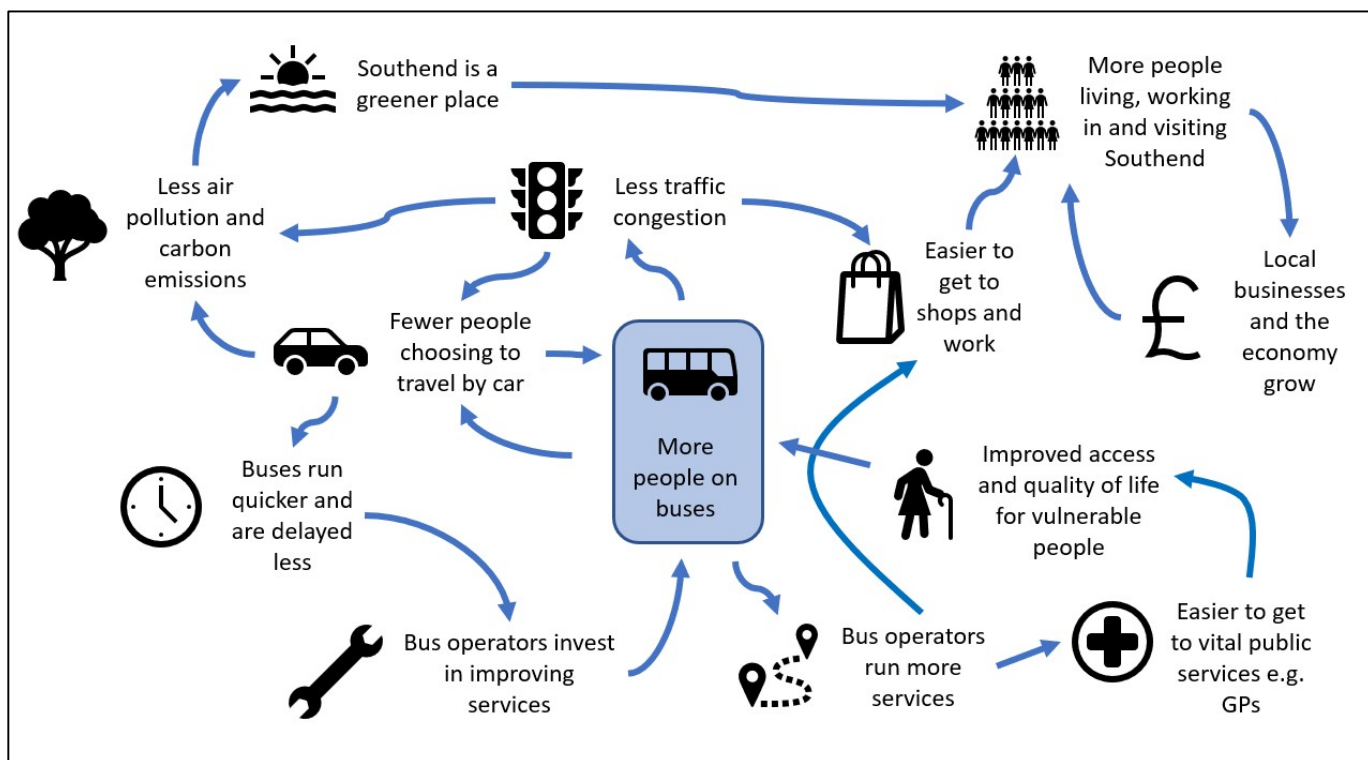
## The importance of the Bus Service Improvement Plan

Buses are important in Southend-on-Sea for our residents, business community and the many visitors to the area. The Council has been striving to improve travel options across the city so that more people will use buses and experience journeys that will make them

want to use buses regularly. This Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) sets out our plan for improving buses in collaboration with bus operators. It will make buses more attractive as a way of getting around Southend.

Buses achieve transport policy goals but when more people use them there are a range of other benefits too (Figure 2). They can reduce carbon emissions from local transport and improve local air quality, especially if people use buses instead of cars. In addition, they provide a vital service to the more vulnerable people in society, allowing them to access key public services, employment, and leisure activities. Bus services can play a vital role in making Southend a better place to live.

**Figure 2: How getting more people on buses achieves several other outcomes**



## A new Enhanced Partnership for buses in Southend

The Council and operators have established a new Enhanced Partnership for buses, covering the area in Figure 1. Government guidance in the form of ‘**The National Bus Strategy - Delivering Bus Service Improvement Plans using an Enhanced Partnership - Guidance**’ defines an EP as:

**“a statutory partnership between one or more LTAs and their local bus operators that sets out how they will work together to deliver BSIP outcomes in the defined geographical area(s) set out in the EP”**

The EP is an agreement between the Council and local bus operators to make improvements to buses in Southend. The Council entered into the EP with operators on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, following due process of consultation alongside the original version of this

BSIP, and following the approval by Cabinet on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023. The EP governance consists of the Southend Local Bus Forum and the Southend Local Bus Board.

The EP also has the role of reviewing the BSIP, to ensure that the partners deliver the plan, and recommend changes to the BSIP (and the EP where applicable) as required.

## Delivering improvements through the Enhanced Partnership

Transforming the bus network involves a carefully managed transition. The delivery programme involves transforming travel information, easier payments and pricing, bus priority measures, fully accessible services, and the acquisition of newer vehicles. These have challenged the accepted norm of how urban areas function, now undermining the dominance of the car in street design, and instead working towards more liveable communities in which bus services allied to walking and cycling become the new norm.

In delivering these improvements, we will deliver them as an integrated package of measures that are mutually supportive. Whilst individual schemes may have a benefit individually, packaging them as an integrated package of measures will boost their impact further.

A key part of this delivery is the establishment of the EP, which commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. This states that **“This Enhanced Partnership is intended to deliver the vision and ambition set out in the Southend-on-Sea Bus Service Improvement Plan 2022 – 2027.”**

This provides the mechanism through which the Council and local bus operators deliver the BSIP. Whilst both parties retain full authority in terms of financial decision making and their own processes, the EP enables the Council and operators to work in partnership together to deliver the changes needed to local buses.

## How we have developed this Bus Service Improvement Plan

We developed the original version of this BSIP (for 2022 to 2027), alongside the EP, using a collaborative approach with local bus operators, stakeholders, and community views. We requested comments and feedback into the plan as it developed. From this engagement, nine key themes emerged.



**Bus services are highly valued for the variety of roles that they play.**

Offering journeys to work, shopping, healthcare, education, and leisure including the sea front, they allow people to get around the city, even if they do not own a car.



**Bus services in the city are not fulfilling their potential.** Southend has many conditions that are ideal for a local bus service, with a high population density and attractions around the city, but the current service does not live up to its potential.



**Having a reliable and quick bus service is critical to its success.** Few things frustrate people more than when a bus is late, or they must travel all the way into the centre and change buses to get to where they want to go. Delays to buses caused by other traffic undermines their appeal.



**People face several challenges to using buses.** It is critical that the whole journey is improved, from when people plan a journey, the condition of the bus stop, ease of payment, and the journey itself. Every aspect including the price, cleanliness of the bus, or the attitude of the driver can all influence the users' experience.

Throughout this process, we engaged with people in a number of ways:

- one-to-one meetings held virtually
- online stakeholder briefing sessions
- an online survey on the Your Say Southend website
- email correspondence and sharing of ideas

Through this engagement, five key priorities emerged. These priorities were confirmed when members of the Local Bus Forum reviewed the BSIP in 2024.



**Buses need to run on time, go where people want them to go, and in quick time.** Respondents told us that the most important thing about encouraging more people to use buses is that the services run well. If the basics are in place such as reliable service, running at convenient times to the places that people want to go to, and it does not take too long, then people will use buses.



**Buses in Southend are not meeting their potential.** Respondents told us that while the core bus network is extensive, there are gaps in service provision in certain areas of the City and it is not meeting its potential as a way of getting around Southend. Rather than there being one or two big barriers to getting back on buses, there are many small barriers that when combined, discourage people from getting on buses.



**People want to see new bus services across Southend.** Many respondents mentioned specific services that they wanted to see introduced across Southend, such as a route from Eastwood and Belfairs to Leigh-on-Sea. They considered that such services could enable new connections across the city and avoid the need to travel into the city centre and change buses there.



**People want to see the local bus infrastructure improved.** Respondents said that they want to see well-maintained and clean bus stops. Some also mentioned that bus priority could be a way of making buses more reliable and run more quickly, although no respondents mentioned specific locations where it could be installed.



**People want to see buses that are cleaner and smarter.** Many stated how the experience on board the bus, from the driver to how clean the floor is, can make or break a journey. Also, while many respondents mentioned how using buses is better for the environment than using cars, others mentioned that buses could still do more to lower their emissions through more fuel-efficient vehicles.

The full range of specific issues and opportunities raised through our engagement is not fully captured by the above, but these matters were raised repeatedly by most people to whom we spoke. In response to these matters, we have proposed a large number of schemes and projects, including some projects mentioned by respondents.

Our engagement was still ongoing as we prepared the EP, and these engagement activities further influenced our plan for buses as we incorporated them into the EP. These activities originally included:

- online debate and discussion on the Your Say Southend website
- running a Consensus Conference with key local stakeholders, which made recommendations for initiatives to include in the EP
- further direct engagement, which has continued with key stakeholders such as bus operators, Essex County Council, and local councillors.

## Vision and Objectives

**Our vision is to make bus travel the priority travel choice for everyone in Southend, and by doing so make our communities greener and more prosperous.**

It is a vision forged in the context of an earlier decline in bus service provision in



Southend from around 15 years ago, following cuts to bus support in the face of huge financial pressures on the Council. We have supplemented it with a strong emphasis in this refreshed BSIP on background enhancements, thereby enabling service improvements to have more effect.

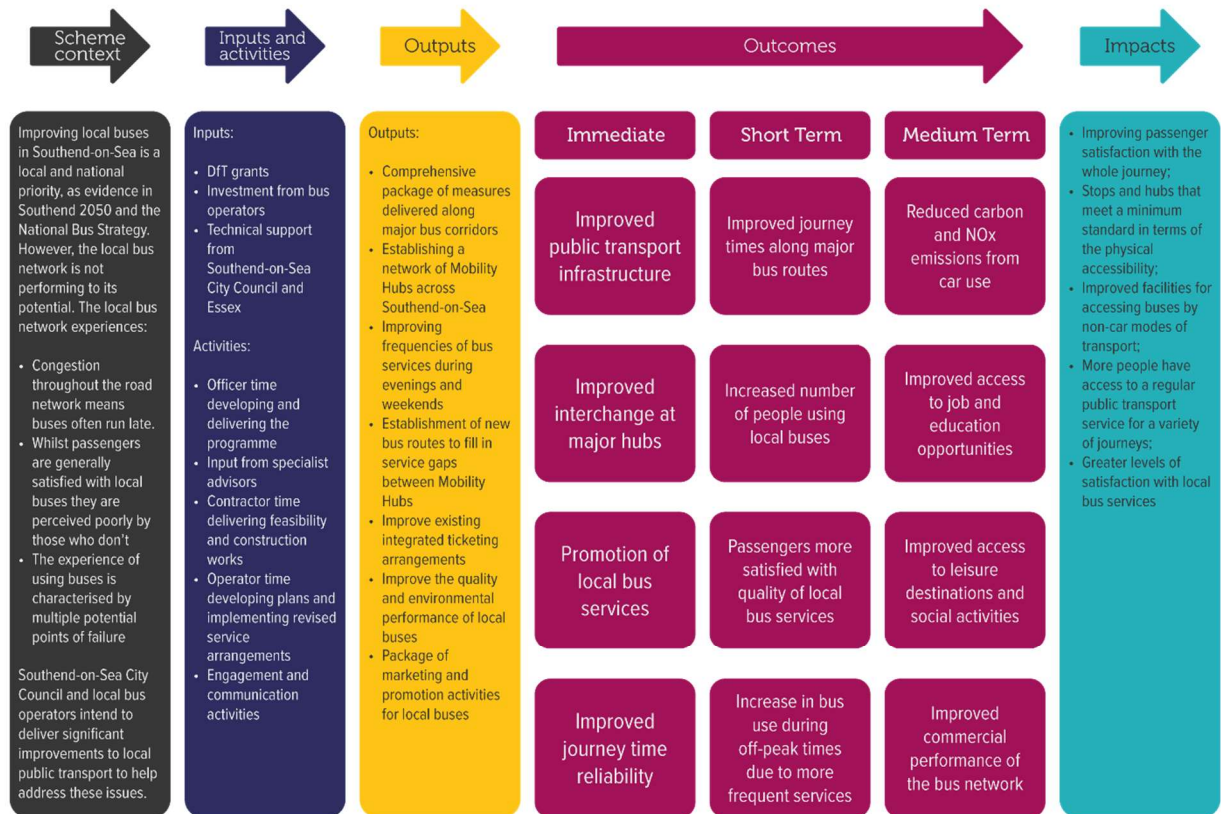
The objectives of the BSIP reflect this vision. They are to:

- manage the highway network to improve the reliability of local bus services
- make local bus journeys quicker, especially on key routes in Southend
- improve the quality of bus stops and waiting facilities for all bus users
- have the public transport network of Southend operate as a single network, and improve connectivity between buses and walking, cycling, car clubs, and other modes
- improve the quality and accessibility of bus service information through all media
- improve the quality of local bus services, including reduced emissions
- market and promote local bus services in a holistic manner

## **Our theory of change**

Achieving our vision requires comprehensive and significant improvements to the local bus network, based on a network that puts the users at the heart of what it does. Through the delivery of this BSIP, we will utilise funds from the Department for Transport (DfT) to deliver a comprehensive package of infrastructure and service improvements, undertake changes to ticketing and trialling lower fares, marketing and improving services, and establishing a dedicated resource within the Council to deliver this comprehensive programme of works. The strategic and monitoring role played by the EP underpins these activities.

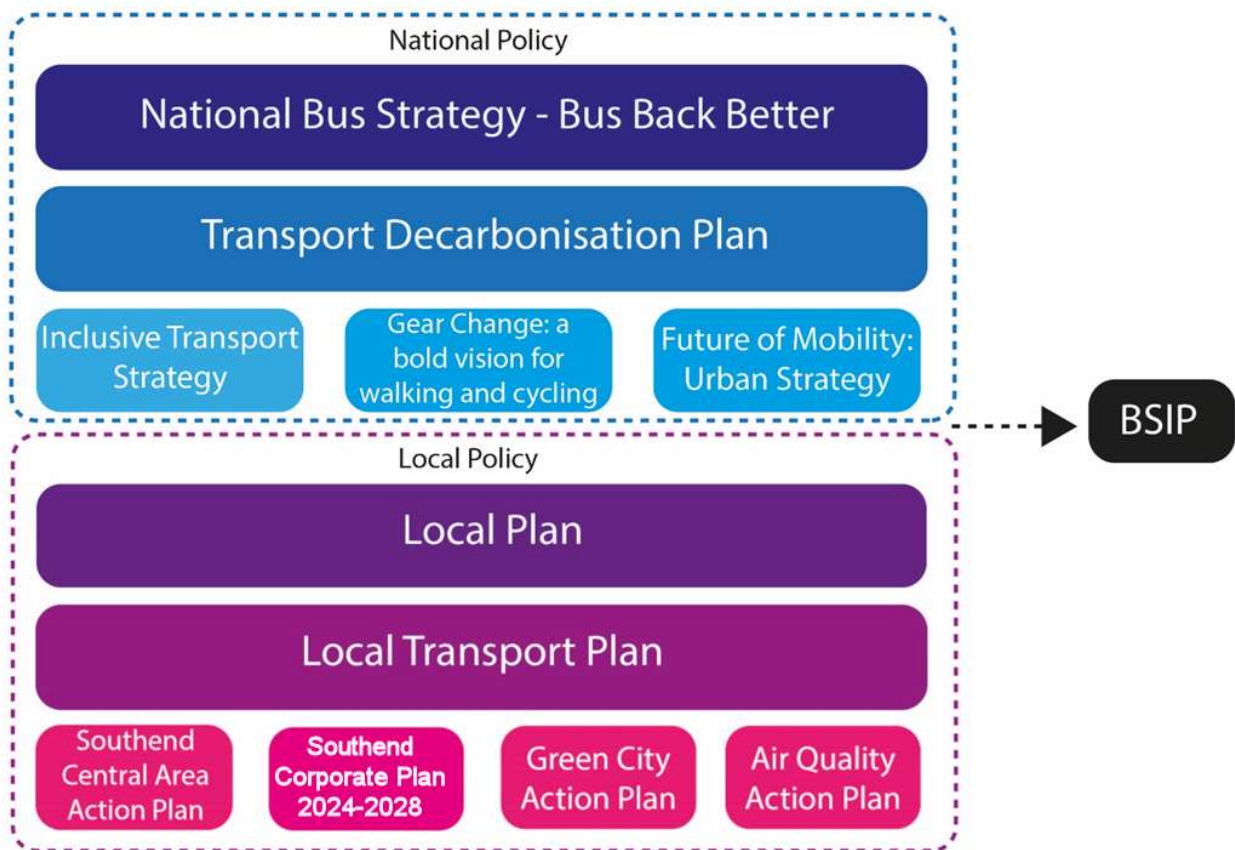
**Figure 3: Our theory of change for buses in Southend**



## Policy Context

The BSIP has taken account of the wider policy and strategic context, including national transport priorities set by central government but also existing local Southend strategies and policies which set the local context.

Figure 4: Policy context of the BSIP



### Bus Back Better – The National Bus Strategy

Producing this original BSIP was a requirement of the National Bus Strategy for England ('Bus Back Better'). It is still critical that this BSIP aligns with the aims and objectives of this national strategy, which is still current and states its goal as...

**"...to get bus use back to what it was before the pandemic. Then we want to increase patronage and raise buses' mode share. We can only do these things by ensuring that buses are an attractive alternative to the car for far more people."**

This means taking actions across several areas, and our BSIP plans to do just that.

**Table 1: Alignment with the National Bus Strategy for England ('Bus Back Better')**

Priority of Bus Back Better	What our BSIP is doing about it, with government funding
More frequent services	We will aim to have a regular frequency on all major bus routes during the weekday daytime, and we will boost the frequency of services in the evening and on Sundays.
Faster and more reliable	Subject to government funding, we will start during 2025/26 by delivering bus priority signalling. We will then undertake feasibility work later that year to identify schemes that will further improve bus journey times and reliability along the key corridors, to commence installation from 2026/27 subject to feasibility and funding. We will actively consider buses as a priority in every transport project.
Cheaper buses	We will build on the government's ' <b>Get Around for £2</b> ' maximum single fare scheme by investigating viable options after that scheme finishes, and we will improve our Octopus multi-operator ticket.
More comprehensive	We will partner with operators to introduce new routes that fill identified service gaps where appropriate.
Easier to understand	We will improve all aspects of the passenger journey, with better bus stops, clearer service information, better co-ordinated services, and improvements to integrated ticketing, and will also develop and apply a brand identity with local bus operators and Essex County Council, delivering a marketing and communications plan as appropriate.
Easier to use	We will expand the Octopus ticket to mobile and contactless payment and will aim to expand it onto local rail services with the agreement of train operators. We will also identify and exploit suitable locations for Mobility Hubs across the city.
Better integrated with other modes and each other	We will create a series of Mobility Hubs across the city, where buses will seamlessly integrate with each other, local rail services, parking and car clubs, electric vehicles, shared bikes and with local services and shops.
Better to ride in	Southend has a relatively modern bus fleet. The BSIP will ensure that the buses provided in Southend will maintain the satisfactory level of service and encourage operators to invest in further improvements as part of their fleet renewals.
Greener buses	Existing buses will be retrofitted to have Euro VI standard emissions. Through the EP, we propose to phase in the introduction of lower emission vehicles with the intention to have a low emission fleet by 2027.

<b>Priority of Bus Back Better</b>	<b>What our BSIP is doing about it, with government funding</b>
Accessible and inclusive by design	We will upgrade stops to the latest accessibility requirements where it is practicable to do so. Operators will be expected to operate to the highest standards in terms of their accessibility and customer service. We will also have audible announcements for stops on all buses.
Innovative	We will explore the potential for new types of bus service appropriate to our city's urban environment. We will also explore and install where appropriate bus priority at traffic signals where it is feasible.
Seen as a safe mode of transport	We will deliver a range of initiatives to improve safety, such as reviewing bus stop arrangements and CCTV.

## Transport Decarbonisation Plan

This BSIP will support the Government's commitments to reducing carbon emissions through local transport planning and improving the efficiency of the bus network. We will primarily achieve this through encouraging modal shift from single occupancy car use to using local buses for journeys within the city and beyond.

**Table 2: Alignment with the Transport Decarbonisation Plan**

<b>Commitment in the Transport Decarbonisation Plan</b>	<b>What our BSIP is doing about it, with government funding</b>
We will deliver the National Bus Strategy's vision of a transformed bus industry and a green bus revolution	This BSIP will deliver a package of improvements that, combined, will significantly improve the local bus network, and directly contribute to the Government's National Bus Strategy.
We will support delivery of 4,000 new zero emission buses and the infrastructure needed to support them	While this BSIP contains no specific plans to deliver electric buses in Southend, it supports the plans of Essex County Council to deliver electric buses on First Essex's route 25 which links Basildon to Southend, funded by the Government's ZEBRA 2 programme. Also, through the Enhanced Partnership, the Council and operators will work together to ensure that new buses in Southend are low emission, including electric buses when feasible.
We will improve rail journey connectivity with walking, cycling and other modes of transport	This BSIP will develop Mobility Hubs in Southend City Centre (within proximity of Southend Central and Southend Victoria stations), at Thorpe Bay station, Shoeburyness Town Centre (within proximity of Shoeburyness station), and at Southend Airport. It will also develop mini hubs at all other stations, where possible.

<b>Commitment in the Transport Decarbonisation Plan</b>	<b>What our BSIP is doing about it, with government funding</b>
We will support decarbonisation by investing more than £12 billion in local transport systems over the current Parliament, enabling local authorities to invest in local priorities – including those related to decarbonisation such as reducing congestion and improving air quality	This BSIP contains plans to increase the number of people using local bus services throughout Southend, enabled through funding from the Department for Transport through the National Bus Strategy. We will deliver this through a comprehensive package of measures as outlined in the action plan.

## Other national policy

This BSIP will also contribute to other national transport policies and initiatives, through direct action or through influencing how the Council delivers its other activities to help deliver against those objectives.

**Table 3: Alignment with National Policy**

<b>National Strategy</b>	<b>How this BSIP contributes to achieving these goals</b>
Gear Change: a bold vision for cycling and walking	New Mobility Hubs will provide for better integration between buses, walking and cycling and by providing cycle parking, and will be designed to prioritise the needs of people walking and cycling.
Inclusive Transport Strategy	This BSIP will improve all aspects of the experience of using buses for vulnerable people in the community, from bus stops to the services themselves. Our Bus Passenger Charter will also make people aware of their rights while travelling.
Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy	When delivering new technological solutions, we will consider the needs of passengers and vulnerable groups, engaging them throughout the process.

## Local policy

In addition to aligning with national policy, the BSIP also aligns with six key local policies. We recognise that a strategy for buses alone will not bring the level of change required, and so this Plan needs to work alongside other strategies to achieve this.

### Southend Corporate Plan 2024-2028

The council's Corporate Plan 2024 to 2028 provides a high-level, strategic view of the council's priorities and what it wants to achieve for the city and the council from 2024 to 2028.

The corporate plan has three overarching city-focused priorities, with a fourth priority focused on our organisation. Our three city-focused priorities, together with their outcomes, all of which this Bus Service Improvement Plan contributes to, are as follows:

- Proud and Prosperous
  - Thriving businesses, a strong local economy, a healthier, more productive labour market and people proud to live and work in Southend-on-Sea
  - Our spending is having the greatest impact possible on local communities
  - Growing tourism trade, flourishing culture sector and enhanced leisure offer, which are all boosting the local economy, creating a vibrant city for our residents and visitors and contributing to better health and wellbeing
- Safe, Clean & Green
  - Enhanced and protected street scene and environmental and air quality improvements, which support health and wellbeing
  - Build a resilient city to tackle effects of climate change
  - Improved and cleaner transport system making Southend-on-Sea a healthier and more accessible place to live, work and visit
- Caring with a good quality of life for all
  - People live well, age well and care well and remain living independently in the community for as long as possible
  - Children and young people, including those cared for by the council, feel safe at home, in education and in their communities, and have access to opportunities where all children can achieve success

**Table 4: Alignment with Southend Corporate Plan 2024-2028**

<b>Southend Corporate Plan 2024-2028 Outcomes</b>	<b>How this BSIP contributes to achieving these goals</b>
Thriving businesses, a strong local economy, a healthier, more productive labour market and people proud to live and work in Southend-on-Sea	This BSIP articulates this vision in respect of the bus network. By providing the way for the bus network to become more comprehensive, more attractive and easier to use, and therefore for it to thrive, it supports the economy of Southend. At the same time it provides a resource which supports active travel initiatives and thereby assists the labour force in becoming healthier.
Our spending is having the greatest impact possible on local communities	The securing of government funding to introduce new community-focused routes, and improvements to bus services and facilities which benefit the whole city, will make the public transport network more accessible and improved for all.
Growing tourism trade, flourishing culture sector and enhanced leisure offer, which are all boosting the local economy, creating a vibrant city for our residents and visitors and contributing to better health and wellbeing	The improved and expanded bus network envisaged in the BSIP will support Southend's tourism, its cultural activities and its leisure facilities. The wider choice of transport options for people's everyday trips will increase the city's vibrancy.

<b>Southend Corporate Plan 2024-2028 Outcomes</b>	<b>How this BSIP contributes to achieving these goals</b>
Enhanced and protected street scene and environmental and air quality improvements, which support health and wellbeing	The focus in the BSIP on Mobility Hubs in key local communities in the city will give the bus network a clear visible presence there and support and contribute to a safer, environmentally-improved streetscene.
Build a resilient city to tackle effects of climate change	The execution of our vision of a city where public transport is seen as the primary mode of choice will increase the city's resilience to the effects of climate change.
Improved and cleaner transport system making Southend-on-Sea a healthier and more accessible place to live, work and visit	A focus of Southend's BSIP is the delivery of reduced congestion and more travellers by bus, with more cleaner buses. The planned higher bus service penetration within areas of the City that are not currently served by frequent bus services will improve accessibility.
People live well, age well and care well and remain living independently in the community for as long as possible	Our BSIP provides the means to deliver better bus services to areas of the city where people are isolated socially, thus enabling a lifeline to them.
Children and young people, including those cared for by the council, feel safe at home, in education and in their communities, and have access to opportunities where all children can achieve success	The better bus services envisaged in the BSIP will support the needs of children by making the bus network easier to use and understand and more comprehensive, and thereby help make Southend a better place in which to grow up.

### **Local Transport Plan 3**

Southend's Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) Strategy Document 2011 – 2026 (Revised 2015) sets out the local priorities in relation to transport and public transport in Southend. This BSIP forms an integral part of the delivery of the objectives of LTP3.

**Table 5: Alignment between BSIP and LTP3 objectives**

<b>LTP3 Objective</b>	<b>How this BSIP contributes to achieving this objective</b>
A thriving and sustainable local economy in the City.	This BSIP contains a plan to make improvements to the local bus network that will encourage more people to travel using a low carbon mode of transport. This in turn will reduce road congestion, making the use of buses even more attractive to



<b>LTP3 Objective</b>	<b>How this BSIP contributes to achieving this objective</b>
	potential users and improving access to shops and services for all.
Minimise environmental impact, promote sustainability for a greener City.	This BSIP contains a plan to make improvements to the local bus network that will encourage more people to travel using a low carbon mode of transport.
A safer City.	Through making improvements to stops and bus services throughout the City, the safety needs of passengers and non-users will be a key priority. By delivering improvements to CCTV, lighting, and other safety features, streets will become safer.
Reduce inequalities in health and wellbeing and for a more accessible City.	Through an improved and expanded bus network, more people will have a wider choice of transport options for their everyday trips.

The Council is commencing the review of the Local Transport Plan to produce a new Local Transport Plan, LTP4, within the lifetime of this BSIP. This revision will take account of the priorities established by this BSIP and the EP, and in turn we may amend the BSIP and EP to reflect new policies and direction set by LTP4.

### **Other policies**

Our BSIP also aligns with four other local policies, as explained in Table 6 below:

**Table 6: Alignment with Local Policy**









Local Strategy	How this BSIP contributes to achieving these goals
Existing and emerging Local Plan	This BSIP includes measures to support future growth in the City, including Southend’s role as a major tourist destination. This includes improvements along the main passenger transport corridors, new bus routes to the airport, integrated ticketing, and discounted fares.
Southend Central Area Action Plan	We propose a range of measures to meet the needs of residents, employees and visitors. This includes revised bus service frequencies, including evening and weekend services, integration with rail services, real time information and ensuring safety at bus stops.
Air Quality Action Plan	This BSIP will support a mode shift from car to bus, which in turn will help to improve air quality for residents’ health and wellbeing and reduce vehicle emissions and improve the environment.
Green City Action Plan	This BSIP includes measures to reduce transport emissions by enabling a shift from private vehicles to bus in addition to promoting a low-carbon bus fleet.

## **Air Quality and Carbon Emissions**

### **Air Quality Management Areas in Southend**

There are two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in the city that are traffic-related – at The Bell Junction and a short section of the A127 Victoria Avenue, close to the junctions with East Street, West Street, Priory Crescent, and Fairfax Drive. The issues both relate to nitrogen dioxide. The primary source of this air pollution is local road traffic, of which buses are a part but by no means the primary source of air pollution.

**Table 7 – Sources of Nitrogen Dioxide at two Air Quality Management Areas in Southend<sup>1</sup>**

	<b>The Bell Junction</b>	<b>A127 Victoria Avenue (close to junctions with East Street, West Street, Priory Crescent and Fairfax Drive)</b>
<b>Sources of Nitrogen Dioxide</b>	 <p><b>31%</b> Diesel cars and light goods vehicles</p>	 <p><b>40%</b> Diesel cars</p>
	 <p><b>15%</b> Heavy Goods Vehicles</p>	 <p><b>26%</b> Diesel light goods vehicles</p>
	 <p><b>15%</b> Buses</p>	 <p><b>19%</b> Heavy Goods Vehicles</p>
	 <p><b>3%</b> Petrol cars</p>	 <p><b>9%</b> Buses</p>

The Council’s Low Emission Strategy is working towards improving local air quality. Adopted in 2018, it states its priorities for action as being:

- Reducing emissions via the Local Transport Plan (LTP3), Southend Local Plan and the Joint Spatial plan.
- The Southend Intelligence Hub, Smart City Journey, and Digital Strategy.
- Land Use Planning, Development Control and Low Emission infrastructure.
- Procurement.
- Reducing emissions from commercial vehicles, passenger cars and light goods vehicles, city wide access and parking strategy.
- Reducing emissions from taxis and buses.
- Raising awareness.

Current pollutant levels are all below the national air quality objectives of an annual mean for nitrogen dioxide of 40µg/m<sup>3</sup> due to the travel changes resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic, but we expect these to increase to the former levels over time. Data has been recorded specifically at The Bell junction on the A127 as part of pre-development monitoring which has recorded levels below the national objective for nitrogen dioxide and PM10 particulates.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Southend-on-Sea City Council own analysis: latest figures (provisional)

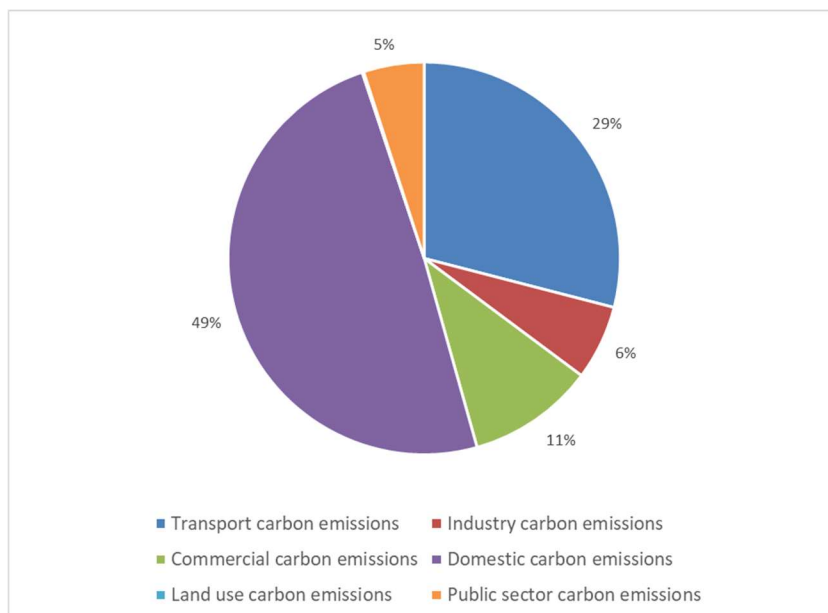
Bus operators in Southend have made investments in their buses to reduce emissions by bringing in newer buses with more efficient engines. The current bus fleet is a range of vehicles from having Euro VI engines as their standards for emissions to Euro III standards for emissions. For reference, Euro III engines have standards of 500mg/km in emissions of Nitrogen Dioxide and 50mg/km for Particulate Matter, and Euro VI engines have standards of 80mg/km for Nitrogen Dioxide, and 5mg/km for Particulate Matter.

## Carbon emissions

Local carbon emission estimates from the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) (Figure 5) shows that local transport is a sizeable proportion of local carbon emissions and accounted for 29% of all estimated local emissions in 2019. Since 2005, estimated local emissions from all sources has gradually declined by about 40%, and although local transport emissions have trailed this trend, they were estimated to be just over 10% lower in 2019 compared to 2005.

The major source of these emissions, according to BEIS, is road transport, accounting for 89% of these emissions. BEIS does not break these figures down any further by mode of transport, so we are not able to estimate what proportion of local transport emissions are from buses. However, BEIS estimates a medium petrol car emits 192g of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) per passenger kilometre, and a medium-sized diesel car emits 171g of CO<sub>2</sub> per passenger kilometre. Buses, at current levels of utilisation, emit 105g of CO<sub>2</sub> per passenger kilometre.

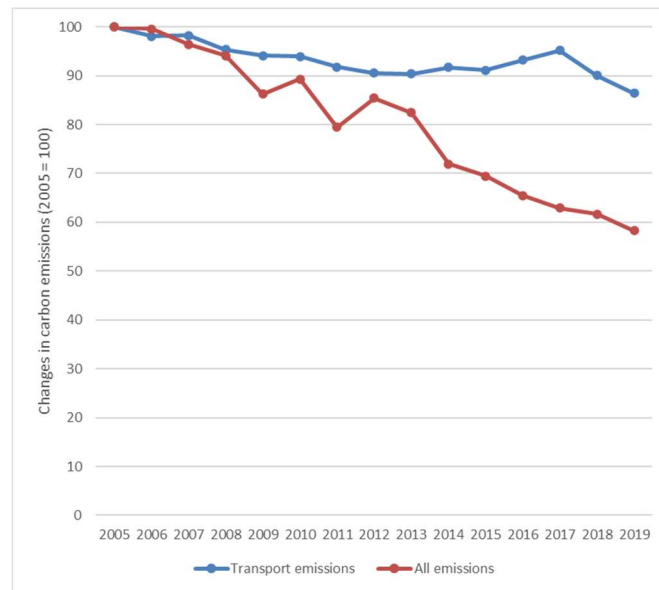
**Figure 5 – Estimated sources of local carbon emissions in 2019<sup>2</sup>**



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<sup>2</sup> Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (2021) UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005 to 2019. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2019>

**Figure 6 – Indexed changes in local carbon emissions by source – 2005 to 2019<sup>3</sup>**



## **Other factors that affect the use of local bus services**

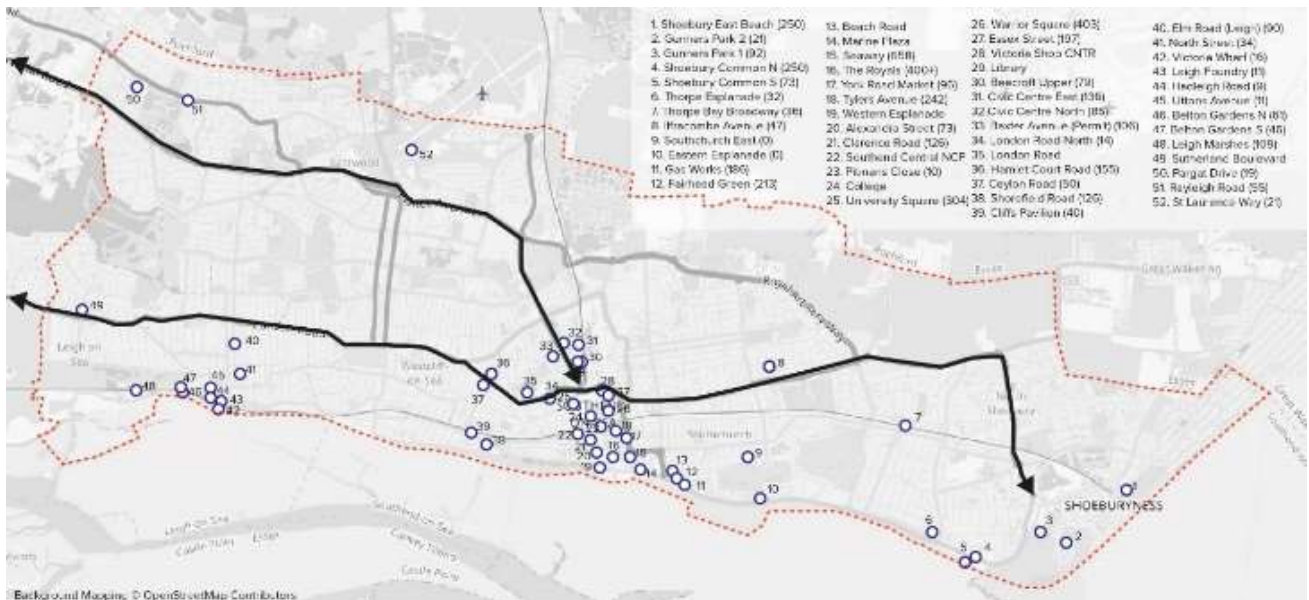
### **Parking**

Public car parking is available in central Southend and elsewhere in the city in designated car parks and extensive on-street spaces. There are over 5,000 spaces available in the central area and while the retail-related car parks are well used (but rarely full), the other parking locations are lightly used. The Council manages most car parks, but other capacity is owned or managed by large retailers, Southend Hospital, South Essex College, shopping centres and NCP at Southend Victoria, and at Southend Central, Prittlewell, Westcliff and Thorpe Bay stations. Capacity is generally underused but, at certain times of the year, demand is strong associated with seasonal activity towards the end of the year and during the summer holiday when there is a large influx of visitors.

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<sup>3</sup> Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (2021) UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005 to 2019. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2019>

**Figure 7: Public car parking in Southend**



The car parks owned and managed by the Council and for on-street control and enforcement represent a resource that could change over time as improved bus services are introduced.

## Land use planning and development

The location, scale, density, and type of development that takes place has an impact on the use of local bus services. Southend’s Development Planning Document (2015) states that:

**“...development should be located in areas which are sustainable, or areas which it can be demonstrated can be made sustainable, and accessible by non-car modes and which reduce the overall need to travel.”**, and further stating that ....

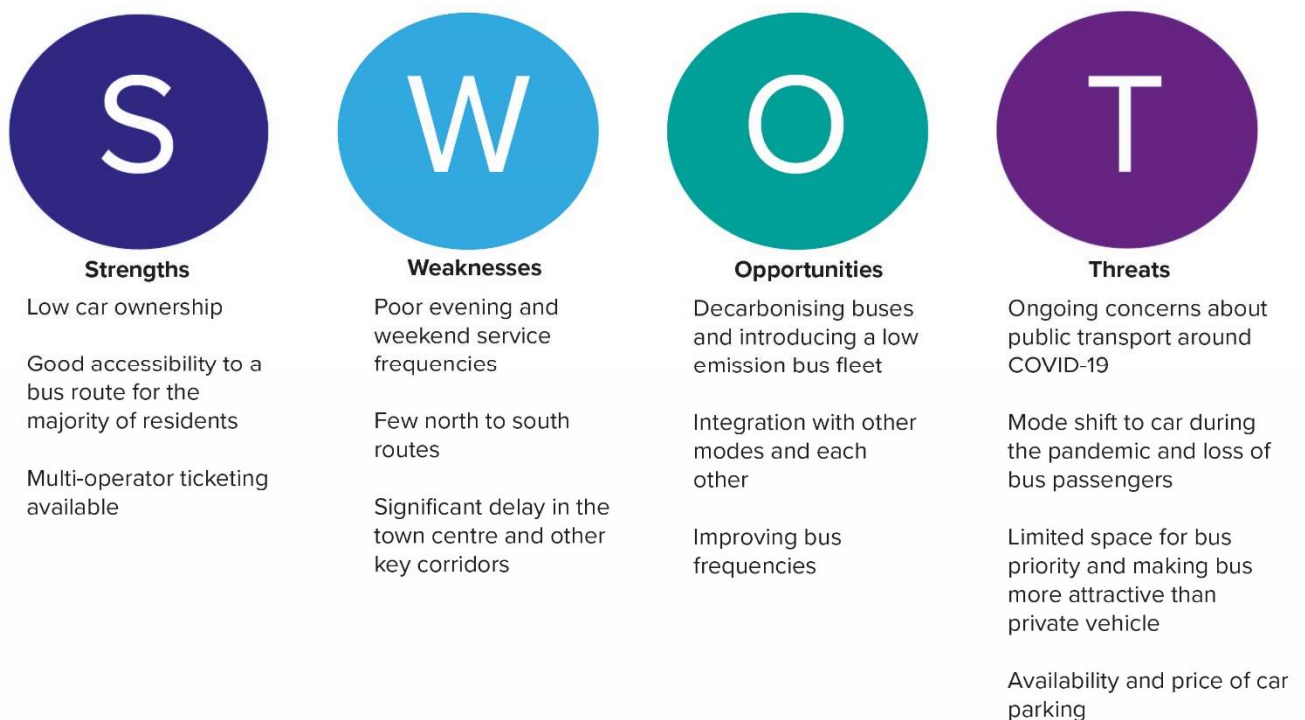
**“Developments should also facilitate opportunities for people to use public transport both for local journeys and to access the wider public transport network as a viable and practical alternative to private transport.”**

## 2. Updating the Baseline to 2023/24: Current bus offer to passengers, use and perception

### Introduction

For the original BSIP we collected data on the current bus network, how it operates, who uses it, and what people think of it. We do not think that the current situation has changed in any significant way. The general view we gathered from this analysis is that while the bus network is reasonably comprehensive (although omitting certain peripheral areas off the main corridors); and services on the key routes are frequent, the bus network is not living up to its potential. There are thirteen strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the network as summarised in Figure 8.

**Figure 8: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats to the bus network in Southend**



### Current Services

#### Overview

We give a full list of the current public buses that operate in Southend (or which operators have registered at the time of publication of this Bus Service Improvement Plan) in Table 8. Figure 9 shows all services combined on one map illustrating the current network and highlighting those corridors in which bus services are most concentrated including the A13 London Road from the west, Prittlewell Chase (another east-west corridor), A1015 Rayleigh Road, A13 Southchurch Road to the east, the city centre and seafront.

**Table 8: Current bus services in Southend (including those Registered but not yet commenced operation)<sup>4</sup>**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Operator</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Funding for some journeys or part-journeys from:</b>
<b>1</b>	Arriva	Rayleigh	Southend		
<b>2</b>	Arriva	Southend	Shoeburyness		
<b>3</b>	First Essex	Southend	Chelmsford via E. Hanningfield		Essex CC
<b>4</b>	First Essex	Southend	North Shoebury	Sun. only	
<b>4A</b>	First Essex	Southend	Great Wakering	Sun. only	Essex CC
<b>6</b>	Arriva	Southend	Garon Park		Southend CC (BSIP Phase 2)
<b>7</b>	Arriva	Rayleigh	Shoeburyness		
<b>7</b>	First Essex	Rayleigh	Southend	Eve. Only	Essex CC
<b>8</b>	Arriva	Rayleigh	Shoeburyness		
<b>9</b>	Arriva	Rayleigh	Shoeburyness		Southend CC (BSIP Phase 2)
<b>9A</b>	Arriva	Rayleigh	Great Wakering		Southend CC (BSIP Phase 2)
<b>14</b>	Stephensons	Southend	Foulness / Shoeburyness		Essex CC
<b>17</b>	Stephensons	Southend	Leigh-on-Sea		S106 Agreement
<b>20</b>	First Essex	Southend	Hullbridge		
<b>21</b>	First Essex	Great Wakering	Canvey		Essex CC
<b>21A</b>	First Essex	Great Wakering	Canvey		Southend CC (BSIP Phase 2)
<b>24</b>	Stephensons	Southend	Newington Avenue circular		Southend CC (BSIP Phase 2)
<b>25</b>	First Essex	Southend	Basildon		
<b>27/27A</b>	First Essex	Southend	Canvey		
<b>28</b>	First Essex	Southend	Basildon		
<b>29</b>	Arriva	Southend	Belfairs		Southend CC (BSIP Phase 2)
<b>60/60A</b>	Stephensons	Southend	Canewdon / Paglesham		Essex CC

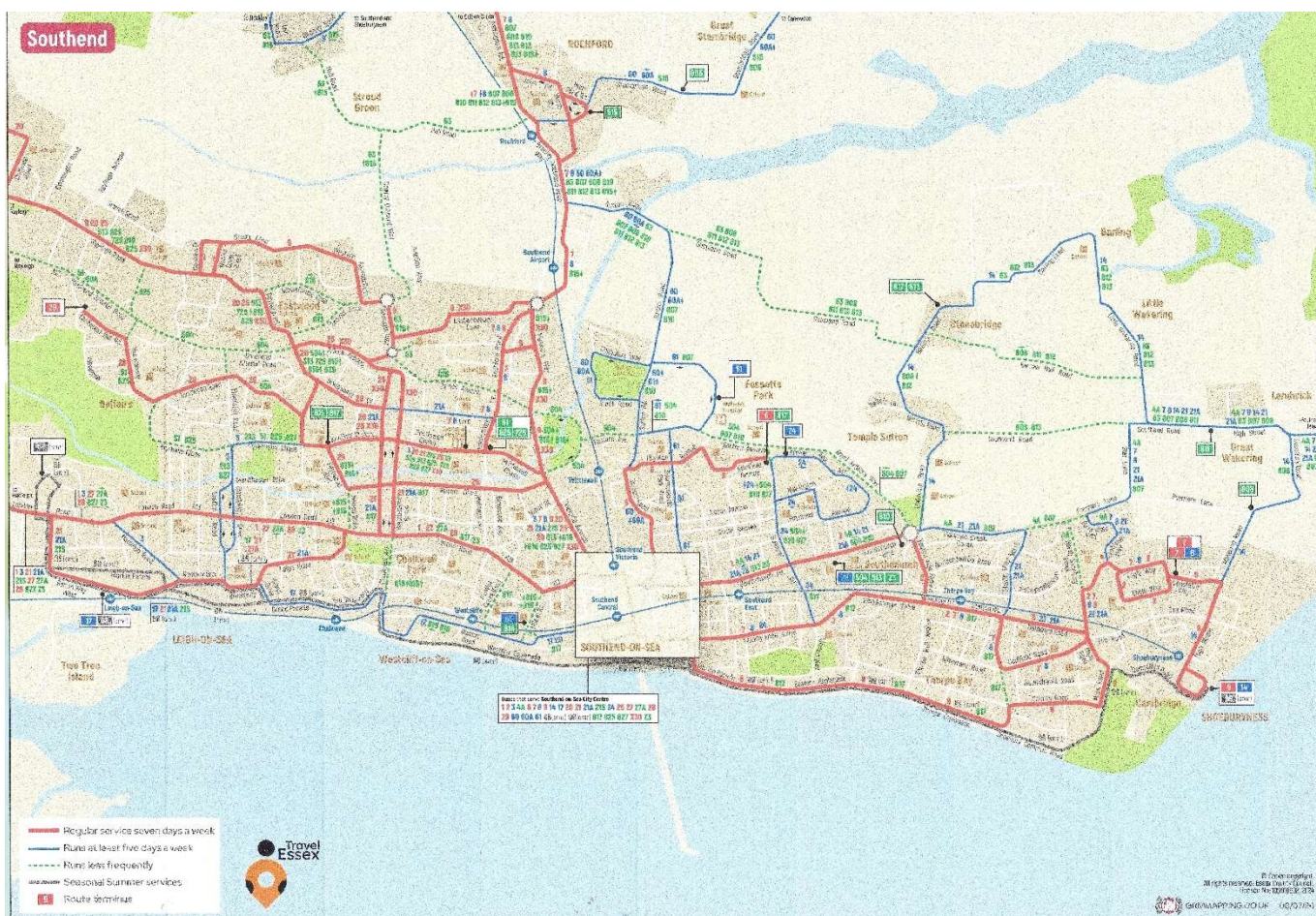
<sup>4</sup> This does not include peak time school bus services



<b>Service</b>	<b>Operator</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Funding for some journeys or part-journeys from:</b>
<b>61</b>	Stephensons	Southend	Southend (via Fossetts Way) circular	Mornings only	
<b>63</b>	First	Rayleigh	Landwick (via Tesco Southend Extra store)	Wednesdays and Fridays only	Essex CC
<b>68 (OPEN-TOP BUS)</b>	Ensign Bus	Southend Pier circular	Via Chalkwell and Leigh-on-Sea	Summer only	
<b>99 (OPEN TOP BUS)</b>	Ensign Bus	Southend Pier	Shoeburyness	Summer only	
<b>X30</b>	First Essex	Southend	Stansted Airport via Chelmsford	Limited-stop	
<b>Z3</b>	First Essex	Southchurch	Tilbury (Amazon Fulfilment Center)		Amazon

Since we produced the original BSIP service 6A (Belfairs – Leigh Railway Station) and 26 (Southend – Hadleigh) have been withdrawn. Service 21A is a new route mostly funded by BSIP Phase 2 funding. Arriva has split former service 1 into two routes 1 and 2 at Southend City Centre, to improve reliability. Z3 is a new route funded by Amazon to enable employees from the Southend area to get to and from work at the Amazon Tilbury Fulfilment Center.

Figure 9: Bus services in the Southend-on-Sea area<sup>5</sup>



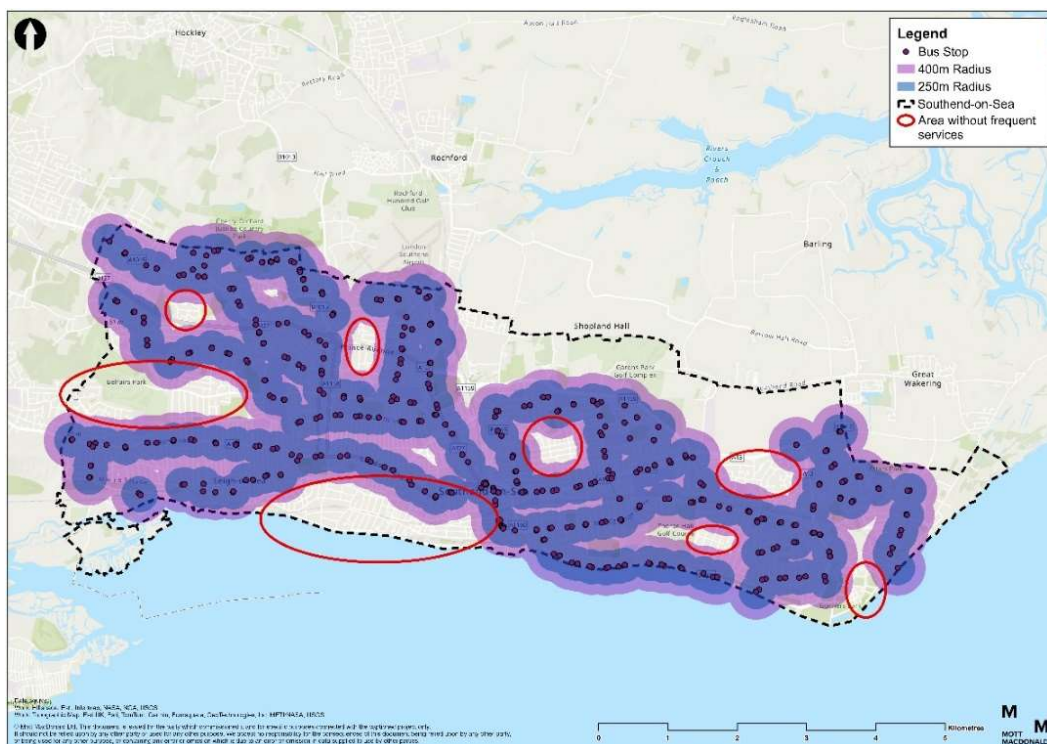
There has been some slight change in frequencies since the original BSIP, with a general slight reduction on the most frequent services, but during 2024 an increase in frequencies on some corridors where there is more than one operator running. Service 28 between Basildon and Southend city centre via Hadleigh is now the most frequent service (every 10 minutes), while 1 between Southend city centre and Rayleigh via Hadleigh and 2 between Southend city centre and North Shoebury both run every 12 minutes. Service 9 / 9A between Rayleigh and Shoeburyness via Southend has a 15-minute frequency over its main section west of North Shoebury, while services 20 and 25 provide a combined 10-minute frequency between Southend city centre and Eastwood. Most of these core services start before 0700 on weekdays with inter-urban services before 0630. Evening services are less frequent after 1900, the majority being inter-urban routes. We have restored part-evening services with BSIP Phase2 funding on three routes. This network has evolved over time as bus operators have focussed on routes that provide high levels of demand and consequently are commercially viable routes. As well as serving the city itself, these routes also run towards nearby towns such as Rochford, Rayleigh, Hadleigh and Basildon, providing an inter-urban public transport service. The result is that most bus services in Southend operate across the boundary between Southend and Essex (Castle Point and Rochford Districts), for which the local highway and transport authority is Essex County Council. Consequently, operational issues in Southend have a knock-on impact into Essex, and vice-versa.

<sup>5</sup> This map excludes those bus services in Table 8 that have not yet commenced operation (at the time of writing): neither does it identify areas around potential Mobility Hubs and Mini Hubs

## The coverage of local buses

Being in a dense urban area, most of Southend's residents are within 400 metres (or 5 minutes walking distance) of a bus stop which has a frequent bus service (a bus service with four or more buses per hour). However, because bus services tend to be concentrated on the main corridors there are some notable gaps in this accessibility, for areas that are off the main corridors but still quite densely populated. There are eight such areas in Southend (circled on Figure 10). These include the border of Belfairs and Eastwood Park Wards, in the north-central part of Prittlewell Ward, and most clearly, in the southern parts of Milton and Chalkwell wards, bordering the sea front west of the city centre. However, this area has a high-frequency train service on the C2C line, with two rail stations (Westcliff and Chalkwell). Other densely-populated areas with gaps in the coverage of frequent bus services include Highland Park, the south-eastern part of Belfairs Ward (on either side of Belfairs Park) and the border of Blenheim Park Ward, and also the eastern part of St Luke's Ward. In some parts of these areas bus service levels are being increased - in some places with BSIP Phase 2 funding and in others at the operators' own commercial risk - but services there are not yet up to 15-minute Frequency levels.

**Figure 10: Walking distance to nearest bus stops in Southend having a frequent bus service<sup>6</sup>**



## Who runs local buses in Southend?

The local network is provided mainly by Arriva and First, who operate over 90% of the route miles with some additional services provided by Stepnsons, while two open-top

<sup>6</sup> Source: Analysis by Mott MacDonald

services by Ensignbus (part of First) run along the sea front for the summer season. First, Stepsons, and the latter's associated company NIBS, provide registered school services that are open to all passengers.

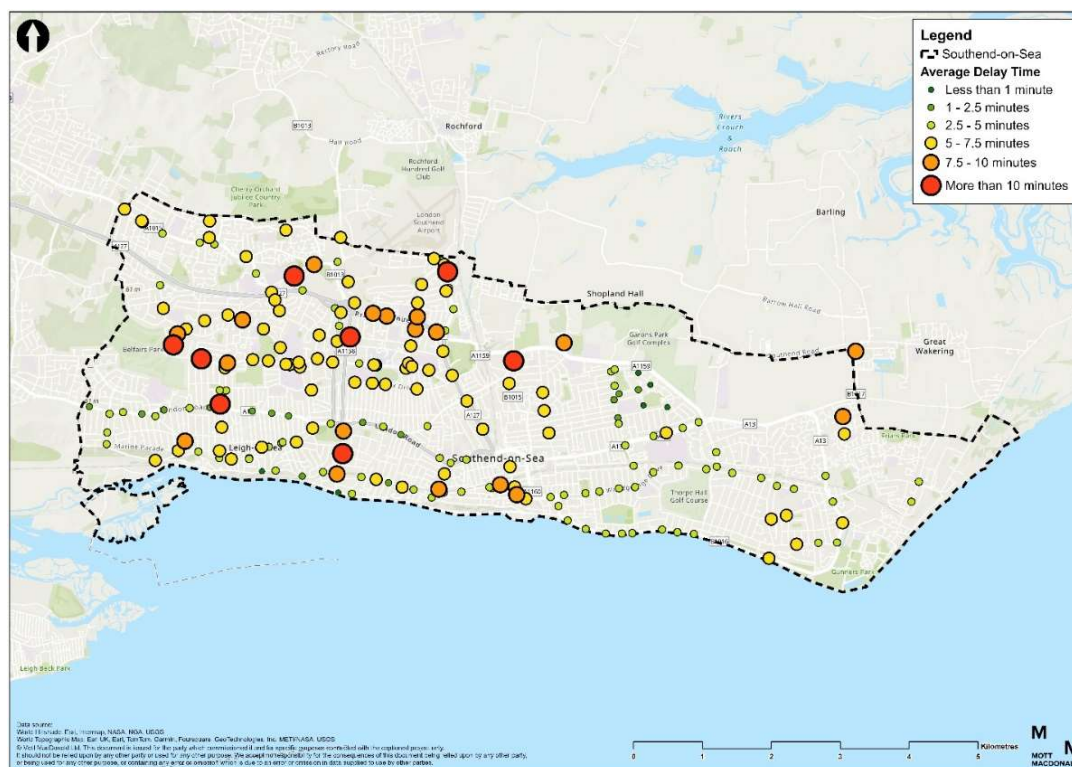
## Local authority support for buses

Until receiving BSIP Phase 2 funding Southend-on-Sea City Council did not provide any revenue support for subsidy or tendered bus services and had not done so since the early 2000s. It is currently supporting four bus service enhancements (evening services and route extensions) procured using 'De Minimis' contracts with BSIP Phase 2 funding.

## Delays to bus services

The most significant issue facing local bus services is that of delays meaning that buses can turn up late. Pre-pandemic data (2 March 2020) showed that 40% of services across the network (over 14,800 timing points) were over five minutes late. We show the main locations of current bus delays (calculated for a period at the end of 2023) in Figure 11. The hours of operation, routes and fares have been compromised by the effects of congestion that undermines efficient operation. There are limited priority measures for buses throughout Southend.

**Figure 11: Locations of bus delays<sup>7</sup>**



Whilst there are several notable delay hotspots, what our analysis reveals is that delays consistently occur at many points across routes. Whilst individually these delay locations may not be significant, over the course of a route these delays add up, resulting in late-running buses.

<sup>7</sup> Source: Analysis by Mott MacDonald

## What causes delays to buses?

There is no local data in Southend that identifies the specific causes of delays to buses in service. From engagement with local bus operators, and wider research into the causes of delays to buses from across the UK, we have identified four key factors that delay buses:



**Traffic congestion.** Buses often get held up in traffic congestion as much as any other vehicle. Their size also makes it difficult for them to manoeuvre around obstacles and obstructions that may be delaying traffic. In Southend, the spots where buses are most delayed also correlate with known traffic congestion hotspots.



**People boarding and alighting buses.** The process for people boarding and alighting services takes time. Passengers must board, pay the driver (sometimes in cash), and sit down before the bus sets off again, and many people can board the bus at the same time. Stops that are closer together, while good for accessibility, can amplify this issue.



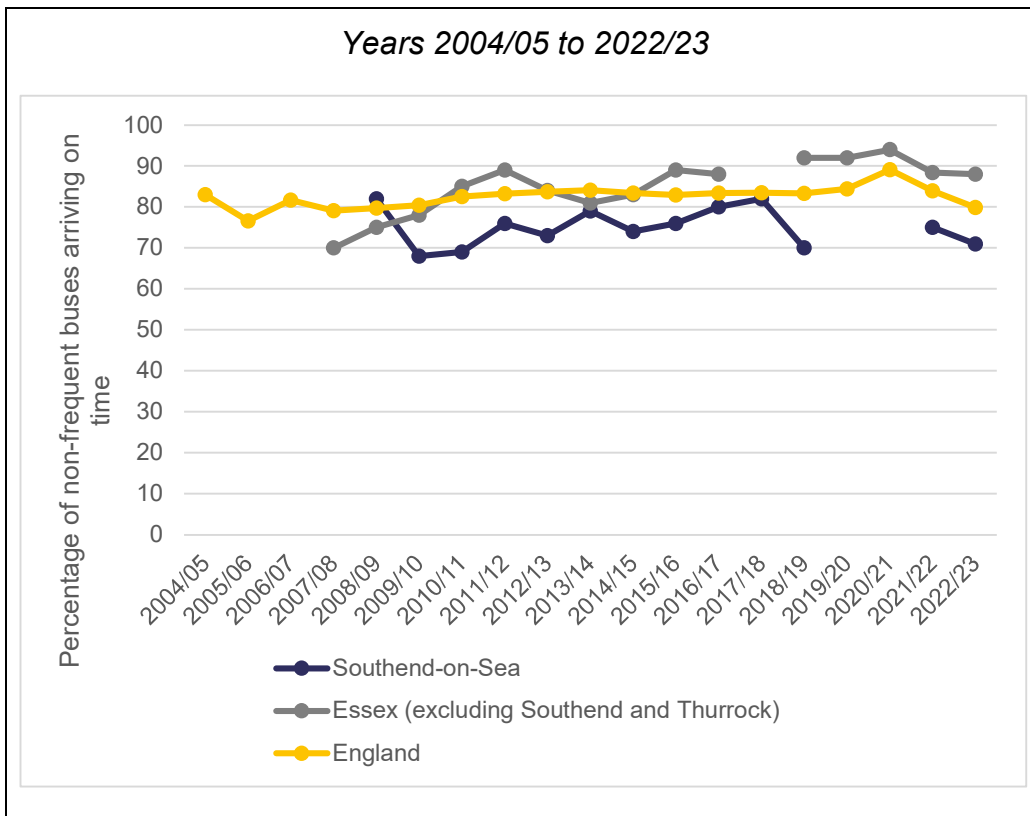
**Highway network incidents.** Sudden road closures and diversions can temporarily, and sometimes significantly, delay buses. Where works are taking place over a prolonged period, this can mean that delays happen more regularly. In the process of undertaking this BSIP Review we have identified these as a major cause of bus delays, both planned closures which overrun or have not been fully communicated to road users such as bus operators, and unplanned or very short-notice closures. We believe that a focus on resolving this issue through better planning and better communication could pay large dividends in improving bus service performance and then lead indirectly to improved bus patronage.



**Operator incidents.** Although rarer than the other issues highlighted, incidents associated with the bus or with the operator can sometimes cause delays or cancellations. Such incidents can include buses developing mechanical faults or driver availability, although these issues are very rare.

In setting their timetables, operators do try to account for delays, as they are held accountable to the Area Traffic Commissioner should buses run late, but historic evidence from the Department for Transport indicates that delays to buses in Southend are comparatively worse than the national average, as can be seen from Figure 12, below.

**Figure 12 – Percentage of non-frequent buses arriving ‘on time’<sup>8</sup>**



## The experience of using local bus service

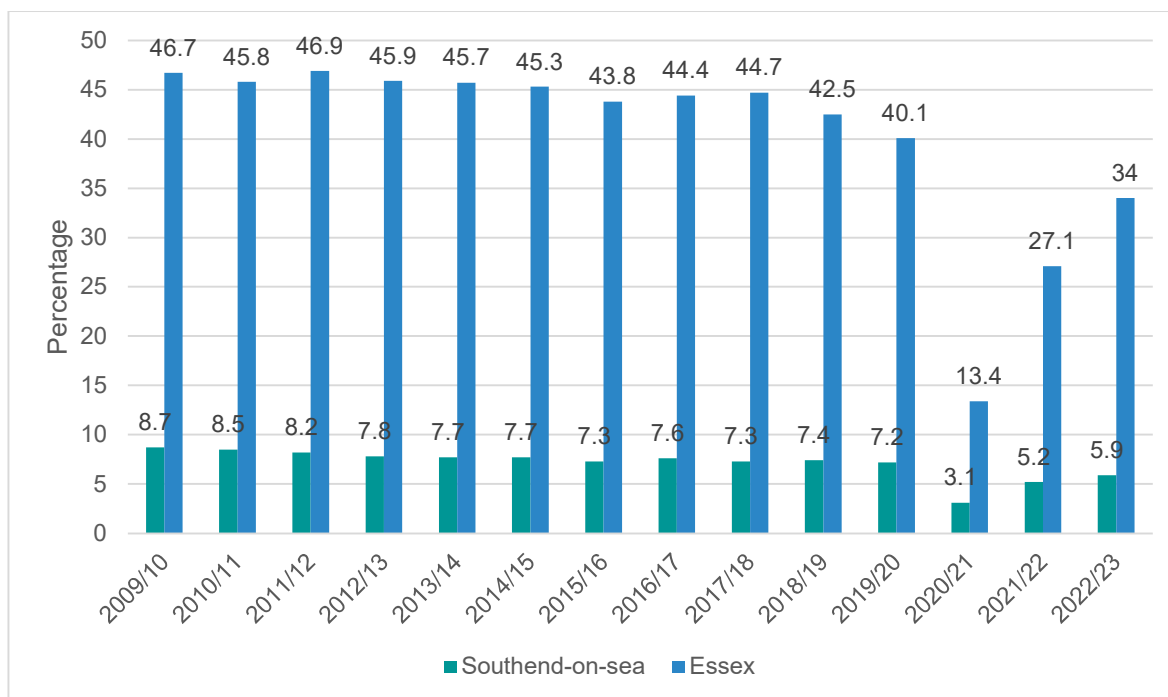
### How much people use local bus services and who uses them

Figure 13 shows how overall demand for bus use in Southend reflects the trend for Essex and many places in England before the effects of the pandemic. There has been an overall decline in bus use since 2009/10, with total passengers numbers declining from 8.7 million per annum in 2009/10 to 3.1 million in 2020/21. Although bus use has since started to climb up again reaching 5.9 million in 2022/23 this is still below the historical ‘normal’ figures.

Conversely, road traffic levels increased over a similar period, particularly on the A13 – a major bus corridor – and the A127 strategic route whose junctions with north-south bus routes can be associated with major bus delays, as shown in Figure 11 above.

<sup>8</sup> Department for Transport (2024) Bus reliability and punctuality (BS09). <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/bus09-frequency-and-waiting-times>

**Figure 13: Annual bus use in Southend-on Sea and Essex 2009/10 to 2022/23<sup>9</sup>**

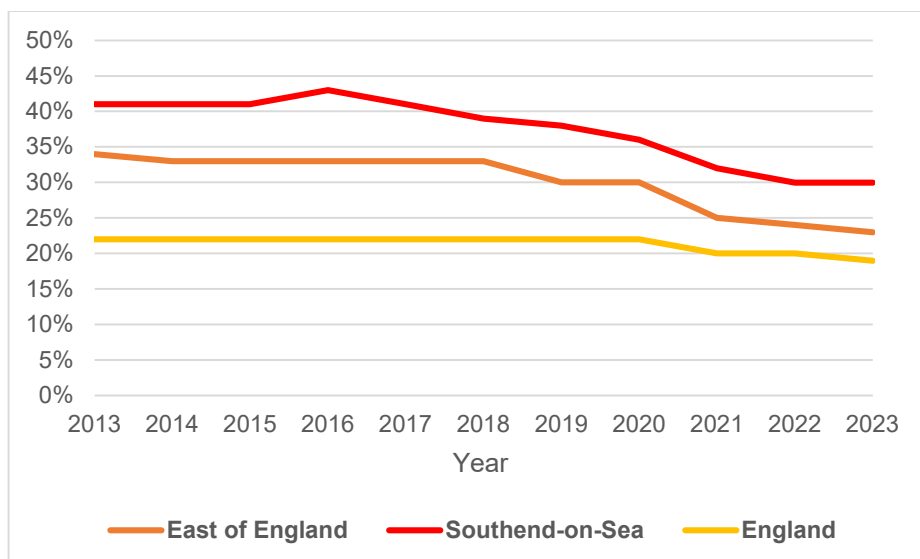


In Southend, a relatively high proportion of trips are undertaken on the National Concessionary Bus Pass, which is available to all people of the State Pension Age or older. Until 2019/20 trips using the pass accounted for around 40% of local bus trips, before dropping sharply in 2020/21 for a number of reasons, much relating to COVID and to consequent changes in trip patterns. In addition, the much wider spread of internet shopping, more prescriptions being delivered to the recipient’s door, and increased deliveries from supermarkets also accounted for a lot of change.

However, since then the higher use of the pass relative to other areas of England, became more obvious. It is worth pointing out that in Southend local holders of the pass can use buses for free from 0900 hours, which is more generous than the hours of the national concession (which starts at 0930): this may affect take-up.

<sup>9</sup> Department for Transport (2024) Local bus passenger journeys (BUS01e). <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/bus01-local-bus-passenger-journeys>

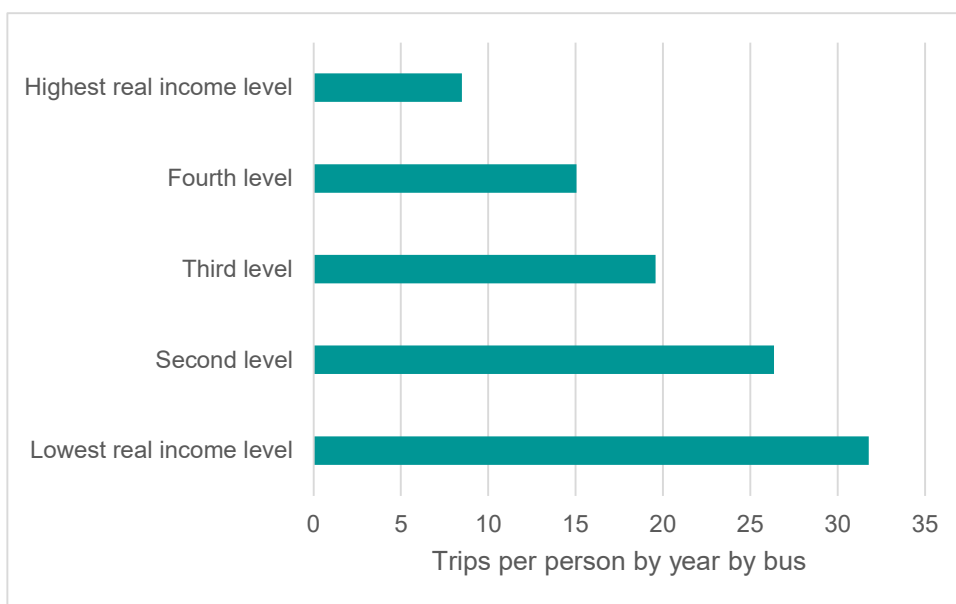
**Figure 14 – Percentage of local trips undertaken on concessionary bus passes<sup>10</sup>**



In this refreshed BSIP we have not analysed bus use by age, sex, ethnicity, and journey purpose as the data source has changed and data is no longer available at the same level of granularity as was the case in 2021.

However, data from the National Travel Survey states that households that are more likely to use buses are those on lower incomes and without access to a car, as shown in Figures 15 and 16 below.

**Figure 15 – Use of buses in households by income level<sup>11</sup>**



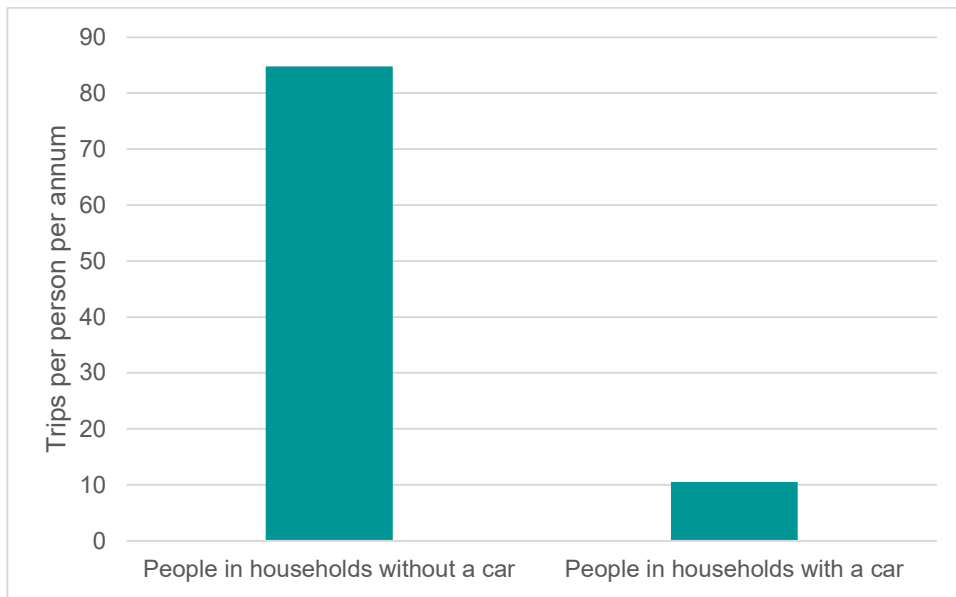
<sup>10</sup> Department for Transport (2024) Concessionary travel (BUS08c).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/bus08-concessionary-travel>

<sup>11</sup> NTSQ09037: Trips by 'Other Local Bus', household personal car access and income quintile: England without London, 2018 to 2021



**Figure 16 – Use of buses in households with access to a car, and without access to a car<sup>12</sup>**



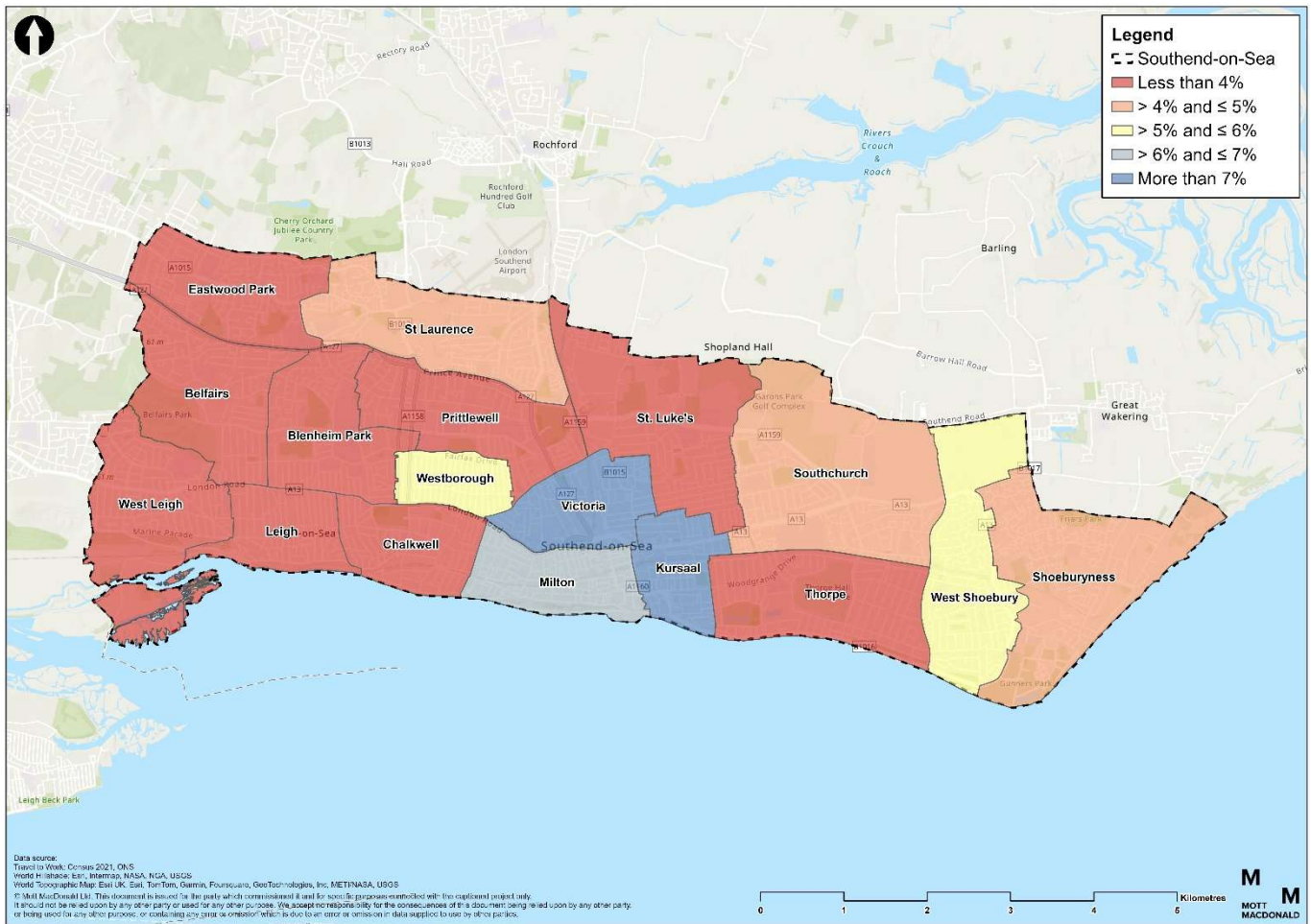
### **Where people travel to and from on buses, and where they do not**

Travel to Work data from the Census in 2021 indicates that the highest proportion of households that use buses can be found in central areas of Southend, notably Kursaal, Victoria, and Milton Wards. The number of residents working from home has been excluded from this data for a more detailed focus on the mode split.

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<sup>12</sup> Department for Transport (2021) NTSQ09037: Trips by 'Other Local Bus', household personal car access and income quintile: England without London, 2018 to 2021

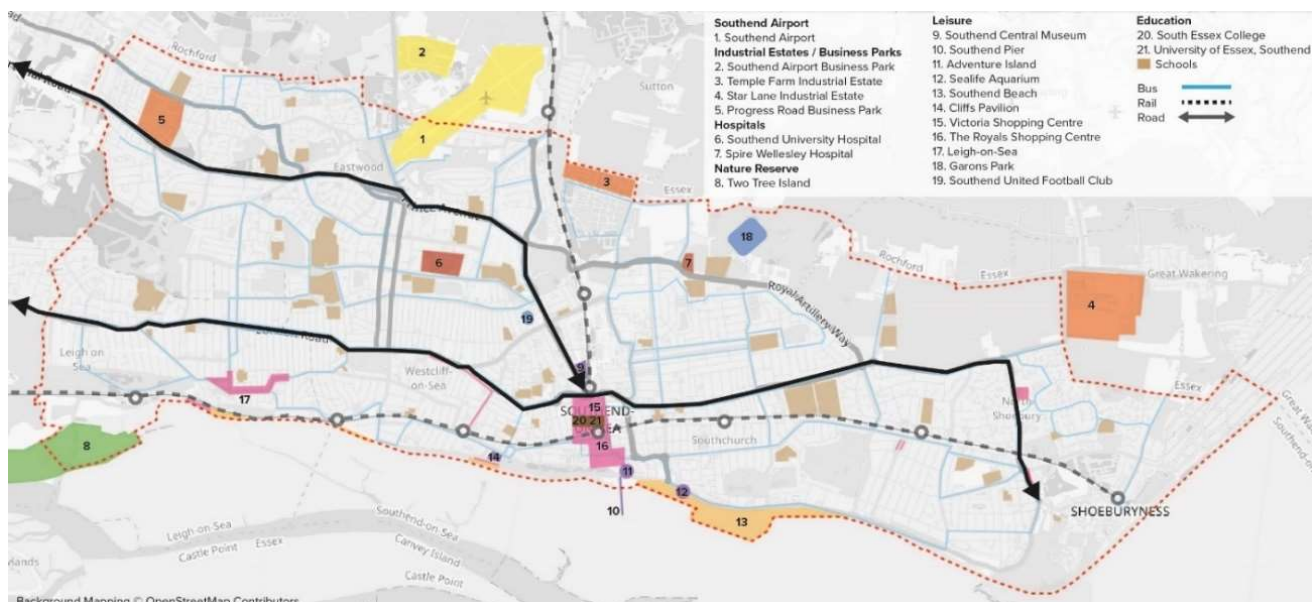
Figure 17 – Mode share of travel by bus by Southend ward<sup>13</sup>



We have also investigated main attractors in the city, i.e. places where people need to go such as healthcare facilities, rail stations, the city centre and local centres, employment areas and the seafront. We have considered the coverage, performance, and quality of current bus services to identify areas for improvement; we can expect significant benefits by introducing measures that ensure that traffic does not create delays for buses, and which enable journey times to be improved.

<sup>13</sup> Census 2021: TS061 - Method used to travel to work

**Figure 18 – Major trip generators in Southend<sup>14</sup>**

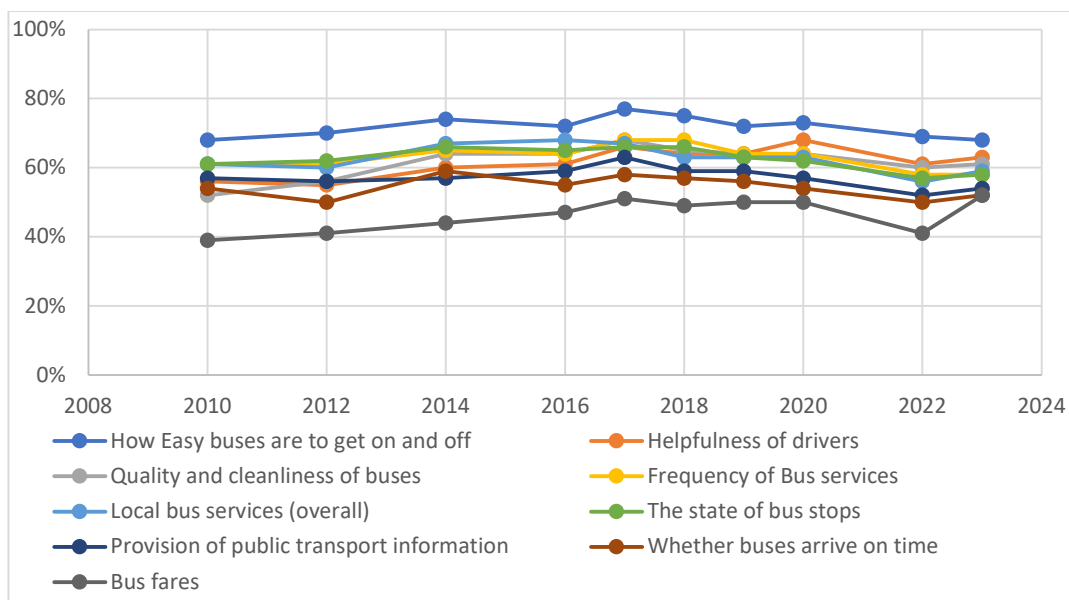


## How passengers and local people in Southend experience local bus services, and their priorities for action

At the current time we have not analysed the experience of users specifically, but conversations with the Campaign for Better Transport indicate that the views of bus users in Southend have changed very little from the situation at the time of the original BSIP in 2021. The annual National Highways and Transport Survey tracks local resident satisfaction with local bus services. As of 2023, 59% of residents are satisfied with local bus services, but a detailed breakdown shows areas where satisfaction is higher and lower. (Figure 19). It is noticeable that residents' satisfaction has declined significantly since the pandemic. Residents are the most satisfied with how easy buses are to get on and off (68%) and with the number of bus stops (67%). They are least satisfied with public transport information (41%). Satisfaction with bus fares (52%) has noticeably improved (up from 41%) from the previous survey.

<sup>14</sup> Analysis by Mott MacDonald

**Figure 19 – Local resident satisfaction with bus services<sup>15</sup>**



## Our Action Plan Overall Approach

Our work developing this BSIP has identified that, for buses to achieve their potential in Southend, meaningful change needs to take place, and all aspects of bus services need to improve to encourage people back to buses and to grow bus use in the future. During 2024/25, the Council and operators will deliver changes that we can deliver quickly to secure the re-establishment of 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 then use that as a basis upon which to build. We identify key elements as being integrated ticketing, information and marketing, and a network where operators can plan for reliable bus services because they have advance and up-to-date information on road closures and stop closures. Whilst this plan is a complementary package of measures, we have clear priorities for what needs doing for us to achieve our objectives.

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

<sup>15</sup> National Highways and Transport Network (2024) NHT Network Results. <https://nhtnetwork.org/survey-results/>

# 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 City Centre to Hadleigh (as far as boundary with Castle Point) – Western corridor
2. Southend City Centre to Eastwood – North-Western corridor
3. Southend City Centre to Shoeburyness Town Centre via Thorpe Bay – Eastern corridor
4. Southend City Centre to Southend Airport (as far as the boundary with Rochford) – Northern corridor

Our initial focus in addressing this priority is on two areas: identification of delay hotspots and planning ways of addressing them; and then helping to enable operators to plan better for reworking bus routes in the short-term in response to road closures and stop closures.

# 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 satisfactory level of service along these corridors, while giving operators the flexibility to adjust their service patterns through joint working.

# 3

**Improving cross-city connectivity** will be our next highest priority. This will include delivering a Mobility Hub in Southend City 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 is a fourth priority. However, we are addressing it earlier because it is comparatively straightforward to introduce and has universal support from bus operators. Being able to use the Octopus ticket on local trains is a lower priority but is still valuable. Trialling a potential £1.50 flat single fare across the city on summer weekends will wait until we know the likely national follow-on from the £2 flat fare scheme.

5

**Better marketing and promotion of local buses**, while a lower priority, it is proving comparatively straightforward to introduce, as the existing template in the **Travel Essex** brand, promoted by Essex County Council, already exists, and so is being introduced earlier.

6

**Improving existing vehicles** by retrofitting existing engines so that their emissions are lower, 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. The Council is grateful for the BSIP Phase 2 funding, but more is needed for project management and delivery of infrastructure and services.

To deliver our action plan, investment from the Department for Transport is critical in improving the infrastructure and services that we need to deliver the transformational change that we envisage. While this is not a bidding document this BSIP Refresh sets out our call for additional funding from 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 such funding from DfT we will not be able to realise these plans and their transformative potential.

We show Southend's planned programme of expenditure in an Appendix and break this down into separate 2024/25 plans and the '2025 and beyond' programme in a later section of this BSIP.

## Competition Requirements

We have considered the intention of bus operators to cooperate with each other without breaching competition law. We will not pursue any possible initiatives that may be regarded as anti-competitive by favouring one operator over another.

It is possible that additional bus operators will enter the market for bus services in Southend-on-Sea, but we have not yet seen evidence of that. Meanwhile there is some limited competition between operators on some corridors (e.g. City Centre – North Shoebury) but that has also very positively involved creative provision of new bus services on previously unserved roads.

The adoption of a unified identity across South Essex, through the **'Travel Essex'** brand being extended into Southend-on-Sea, will help with both the marketing of a single network and with the practical aspects of documenting and coordinating bus services along individual key corridors. However, implementing this is challenging in that adjusting times in Southend would mean adjustments in other towns because most of the routes extend beyond Southend.

### 3. The Improvement Programme in 2024/25

#### Improving tickets and fares

##### What our plans for 2024/25 will achieve

Improvements will take place in two streams: firstly in 2024/25 and then in the period following 2025: we explain this latter stream in the section ‘**Getting ready for 2025 and beyond**’. Our plans for 2024/25 will achieve the following:

- Increase the number of people boarding and alighting buses across Southend
- Deliver an improved passenger experience of using local bus services
- Encourage new people to trial local bus services

Providing an integrated ticket is an essential part of making the journey by bus seamless for passengers. Southend already has a multi-operator ticket, the Octopus ticket, which is seldom advertised or used, and is only a paper ticket. Specifically, improving ticketing and fares will deliver a more integrated public transport network that is easy for everyone to use.

Bus operators will still be able to provide their own tickets and will be able to promote them. Doing so will provide passengers with a choice of the type of ticket they can use for their journeys.

#### Proposed service improvements – 2024/25

##### Upgrading the Octopus Ticket to mobile payment and contactless payment

This plan will do the following:

- The operators will sell the existing ticket on mobile ticketing apps, and through contactless card payment. This will first necessitate feasibility work into the technological and contractual requirements to enable this. Delivery may also require an upgrade to the on-board ticket machines currently provided by operators.

	<b>Estimated cost<sup>16</sup></b>	<b>Anticipated outcomes</b>
Upgrade of Octopus ticket to contactless and mobile payment	£60,000	Increased number of people using existing bus services

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<sup>16</sup> Based on the cost of a review of technical feasibility and system upgrades



## Trial a £1.50 flat single fare for all buses

We had planned an initial trial of a £1.50 flat fare for single bus journeys across Southend, initially during weekends in the Summer, to understand the impact of having a flat fare on the operations of buses, fare revenues, and passenger numbers. However, this plan has been impacted by the £2 maximum fare that runs until December 2024 and details of our fares trial are not yet finalised at the time of writing.

	Estimated cost <sup>17</sup>	Anticipated outcomes
£1.50 flat fare trial during Summer weekends	£119,000	Increased number of people using existing bus services

## Better marketing and promotion of buses

### What our plans for 2024/25 will achieve

Improvements will take place in two streams: firstly in 2024/25 and then in the period following 2025: we explain this latter stream in the section '**Getting ready for 2025 and beyond**'. Our plans for 2024/25 will achieve the following:

- Increase the number of people using buses across Southend
- Increased awareness of local bus services across Southend amongst users and non-users
- Improved perceptions of local bus services
- Improve the quality and accessibility of bus information through all channels
- Market and promote local bus services in a holistic manner

## Passenger information

The Council is committed to providing up-to-date real time bus information at important bus stops and interchanges including those in the city centre, at rail stations and at the future local mobility hubs. This will have increasing coverage as the system expands in stages. All stops will also have up-to-date timetable information for all bus services in a single, clear, readable format.

## Branding

All operators and the Council are seeking to establish a strong single brand identity for public buses and to apply this branding across all digital and physical assets. This brand identity is '**Travel Essex**' which is already used in areas of Essex County Council that adjoin Southend. It will complement existing branding, but with a raised profile, noting that most of the bus routes extend beyond Southend into Essex. It will be the vehicle by which we execute the marketing campaigns.

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<sup>17</sup> Based on estimates of costs of feasibility, revenue loss from the trial, and undertaking the trial for one 6-week period during the summer

	<b>Total cost</b>	<b>Anticipated outcomes</b>
Develop and deliver a 'Get back on the bus' marketing campaign	£119,000	Market and promote services holistically  More people on local buses
Establish a brand logo and network identity	£12,000	Market and promote services holistically

## **Other initiatives in 2024/25**

### **What our plans will achieve**

Alongside the improvements made through BSIP funding, several other initiatives are being committed to that are also critical to the success of the BSIP. As these are cross-cutting initiatives, they will help deliver against all the objectives of this BSIP.

### **Management of roadworks and traffic**

The Council is committed to engaging with operators of essential and emergency roadworks and changes to traffic management that will affect the operation of bus routes. We will link the current permit scheme more closely to bus operators, giving them sufficient time to plan and mitigate for disruption, with operators being engaged as the work is proposed and dates agreed. It should be noted that in some instances, such as emergency works, the notification time will be limited.

### **Bus Passenger Charter**

We will devise a Passenger Charter which aims to ensure that all bus users are treated fairly and with respect so that good customer relations are maintained and constantly improved.

## 4. Getting Ready for 2025 and Beyond

Improvements for 2025 and beyond follow seven different themes. We begin with Better Marketing and Promotion, then cover Improving our Key Corridors. Improving our Cross-City Connectivity is a vital element of Southend's improvement programme, and we follow this by Improving the service level on our bus routes, and then by improved Fares and Ticketing. Finally, there is Longer-term network transformation, and Improving the existing Bus Fleet. These are all described below.

### Better Marketing and Promotion of buses

#### What our plans will achieve

Our plans will achieve the following:

- Increase the number of people using buses across Southend
- Increased awareness of local bus services across Southend amongst users and non-users
- Improved perceptions of local bus services
- Improve the quality and accessibility of bus information through all channels
- Market and promote local bus services in a holistic manner

#### Branding

All operators and the Council are seeking to establish a single brand identity for public buses and to apply this branding across all digital and physical assets, and plan to adopt the existing '**Travel Essex**' brand throughout Southend. The Council and bus operators can use this brand identity in a complementary manner to the existing branding, noting that most bus routes extend beyond Southend into Essex County Council's area. '**Travel Essex**' is a strong existing brand with several stand-out digital and physical products which are already used widely in Essex County Council's area, but which also already contain all public transport data for Southend. The Council and operators can therefore easily leverage the brand to promote public transport in Southend more obviously and strikingly.

#### Promotion and marketing of services

The Council commits to preparing and delivering a joint marketing and promotions plan to promote local bus services. We will aim this at people who are former bus users and habitual car users from where we will target growth in bus use, and we will cover all aspects of bus use from finding out about services via various media, buying the right ticket and completing the journey. We would market this under the '**Travel Essex**' banner. Exploiting the potential for collaborative working with other Essex Authorities could enhance this outcome and could be supported by the ForwardMotion brand that was developed by Thurrock, Southend, and Essex Councils through the DfT Access Fund.

## Standardised timetable changes

All operators in Essex County Council's area already commit to a regular pattern of timetable and service changes that does not exceed any more than seven times per calendar year. We would extend this practice into Southend. This would also maximise the opportunities for operators to plan for when they propose changes and would allow us to coordinate publicity material through various media that incorporates all operators' changes. It also reduces confusion for passengers and costs to operators and the Council. This development of practice would be actioned in collaboration with the operators and Essex County Council and activated through the 'Travel Essex' brand.

## Passenger information

The Council is committed to providing up-to-date real time bus information at important bus stops and interchanges including those in the city centre, at rail stations and (when these are implemented) at local mobility hubs. This will have increasing coverage as the system expands in stages. All stops will also have up-to-date timetable information for all bus services in a single, clear, readable format.

	Estimated cost per unit	Total number of units	Total cost	Anticipated outcomes
Develop and deliver a joint marketing and comms plan	£417,000 per plan <sup>18</sup>	1	£417,000	Market and promote services holistically  Increased awareness of local bus services  More people on local buses
Standardisation of timetable changes	N/A	N/A	£60,000	Reduced number of timetable changes
Link to operator websites on a shared online portal	£6,000 per annum in officer time and hosting fees	5 years	£30,000	Market and promote services holistically

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<sup>18</sup> Source: Estimated cost of developing and delivering a plan, as provided by communications professionals. It is anticipated that this would be done in conjunction with the existing resources within 'Travel Essex'.

# Improving our Key Corridors

## What our plans will achieve

Our plans will achieve:

- Reducing journey times along each corridor for buses by 25% by 2027
- Reducing the percentage of buses running late along each corridor by 15% by 2027
- Improve frequencies of buses along each corridor, and boost the frequency of off-peak services
- Increase the number of people boarding and alighting buses along each corridor.

Our vision for each corridor is for key hubs and the city centre to be linked together by frequent, high quality bus services, building upon the current strengths of the commercial bus network. These routes currently have an established bus network, and our planned improvements will focus on that network. An improved infrastructure will make buses more reliable and quicker and will deliver a lower cost to run. Without these improvements, the service improvements that are part of this plan will not be viable.

**Figure 20: Key corridors in Southend**



Along each corridor, we plan to make significant improvements to the infrastructure, ranging from improving bus stops to making improvements to bus journey times. Our priority corridors are determined by their levels of services in terms of buses and passengers, and accordingly any works will be prioritised as follows:

1. Southend City Centre to Hadleigh
2. Southend City Centre to Eastwood
3. Southend City Centre to Shoeburyness Town Centre, and
4. Southend City Centre to Southend Airport

## Our proposed improvements

### Bus priority signalling

This is the quick win to deliver along each corridor from 2025/26. We will upgrade our existing traffic control and signalling system so that when buses approach the signals at key junctions, the signals will be green for longer. This will result in some small improvements in reliability along all key corridors.

We will need to undertake more detailed scoping works at each location; however, an initial view of engineers is that we can achieve this mostly through upgrading existing signal control systems without the need for major highway works.

	<b>Estimated cost per unit</b>	<b>Total number of units</b>	<b>Total cost</b>	<b>Anticipated outcomes</b>
Bus priority signalling	£24,000 per junction <sup>19</sup>	11	£261,000	Improved reliability and improved punctuality

### Bus stop maintenance and upgrades

Starting in 2025/26 and continuing to 2029/30, the Council will undertake a regular programme of maintenance and where applicable upgrades to the key bus stops along all key corridors. The objective of this work will be to identify how bus stops can become more accessible by design along each of the key corridors.

This will commence with a full audit of all stops on the key routes, with the aim to create a consistent quality standard, which will include but not be limited to the following:

- Security of the stop
- Bus stop post and flag
- Bus passenger shelter and seating where feasible
- Quality and accessibility of information, including timetables and real time displays
- Surface markings for buses
- Ability for buses to approach and exit the stop
- Height and type of kerb
- Access to the pedestrian footway and clear walking routes

Following this assessment of stops, we will identify a programme of improvements for each key route. We will use funding for maintaining and upgrading stops to repair and maintain them, and to undertake upgrade works to ensure that all stops are of an accessible standard.

Where we can upgrade stops through Mobility Hubs or major route upgrades, explained in more detail later, then we will use funding for those projects to deliver those upgrades.

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<sup>19</sup> Source: Estimated cost based on a mixture of software upgrades and on-site infrastructure works from historic SBC costs

We will then reinvest the corresponding savings from this programme in lower priority stops identified as part of the initial audits.

	<b>Estimated cost per unit</b>	<b>Total number of units</b>	<b>Total cost</b>	<b>Anticipated outcomes</b>
Bus stop maintenance and upgrades	£29,760 per stop <sup>20</sup>	100	£2,976,000	Improved passenger experience and public perception of buses

## **Improvements to Cross-city Connectivity**

### **What our plans will achieve**

Our plans will achieve the following:

- Increase the number of people boarding and alighting buses across Southend
- Improved passenger experience of the interchange in the city centre
- New services to become commercially viable within five years

On the existing main bus corridors, there is an established satisfactory level of service. We will perform many of the actions planned under the banner of service improvements as part of the key corridors, but there are several gaps in services that we have identified. For Southend to have a comprehensive bus network, we need to fill these gaps. New services are an important way of doing this.

### **Proposed service improvements**

#### **New service: Leigh-on-Sea – Eastwood – Southend Airport**

To improve cross-city connectivity, we will establish a new service between Leigh-on-Sea, Eastwood, and Southend Airport, subject to funding. This service will fill an existing service gap in connectivity by public transport, specifically providing a regular service between the local centres of Leigh-on-Sea and Eastwood and providing connectivity to employment opportunities at Southend Airport, Progress Road and Leigh-on-Sea train station.

We will evaluate different route options and service types through a technical and operational feasibility study, as well as forecasting potential demand for the service. A preferred service option will be selected, and Southend-on-Sea City Council will procure the new service, subject to Department for Transport funding being made available.

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<sup>20</sup> Source: Estimated costs per stop replacement, based upon SBC figures

	<b>Total number of units</b>	<b>Total cost</b>	<b>Anticipated outcomes</b>
New service: Leigh-on-Sea to Southend Airport	3 PVR	£1,816,000	More people on local bus services  Significant growth in peak and off-peak bus use



### **New service: Chalkwell – Southend Hospital – Southend Airport**

To improve cross-city connectivity, we will establish a new service between Chalkwell, Southend Hospital, and Southend Airport, subject to funding. This service will fill an existing service gap in connectivity by public transport, specifically providing a regular service between the local centre of Chalkwell and Southend Hospital and providing connectivity to employment opportunities at Southend Airport.

We will evaluate different route options and service types through a technical and operational feasibility study, as well as by forecasting potential demand for the service. A preferred service option will be selected, and Southend-on-Sea City Council will procure the new service, subject to Department for Transport funding being made available.

### **New services: Shoeburyness Town Centre – Southend Airport and Thorpe Bay – Southend Airport**

To improve cross-city connectivity, we will establish new services between Shoeburyness town centre and Southend Airport, and between Thorpe Bay and Southend Airport, subject to funding. This combination of services will fill an existing service gap in connectivity by public transport, specifically providing connectivity to employment opportunities at Southend Airport from Shoeburyness. It will also complement planned commercial and residential development at Fossetts Farm.

We will evaluate different route options and service types through a technical and operational feasibility study, as well as by forecasting potential demand for the service. A preferred service option will be selected, and Southend-on-Sea City Council will procure the new service, subject to Department for Transport funding being made available.

	<b>Total number of units</b>	<b>Total cost</b>	<b>Anticipated outcomes</b>
New service: Chalkwell to Southend Airport	2 PVR	£1,280,000	More people on local bus services  Significant growth in off- peak bus use
New services: Shoeburyness and Thorpe Bay to Southend Airport	4 PVR	£2,709,000	More people on local bus services  Significant growth in off- peak bus use

## **Delivering Mobility Hubs and Mini-Hubs**

Mobility Hubs are locations where people can interchange between transport services. They are characterised as not simply being a place where people can change from one mode of transport to another, but as being a space that improves the surrounding public realm, prioritises the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users, and gives information on onward travel. They are not simply places to interchange but are integrated into the surrounding area.

The difference between a Mobility Hub and Mini Hub will be their scale of use and the range of services that are on offer at each. We summarise the types of facilities that we expect at Mobility Hubs and Mini Hubs in Table 9 and will undertake a more detailed study to define expected services and service levels at hubs.

We propose to develop and deliver a series of Mobility Hubs across Southend at the following locations:

- Southend City Centre
- Southend Airport
- Thorpe Bay Rail Station
- Shoeburyness Town Centre
- Leigh-on-Sea
- Southend Hospital

The establishment of these Mobility Hubs is subject to more detailed site investigations, feasibility studies, technical investigations, and consultation. The locations identified should be considered as indicative only at this stage.

## City Centre Mobility Hub

To improve cross-city connectivity and to support plans for a regenerated city centre, we will establish a comprehensive mobility hub in the city centre. We will undertake a feasibility study to determine the options for delivering a mobility hub there and its technical, operational, and financial feasibility.

	<b>Estimated cost per unit</b>	<b>Total number of units</b>	<b>Total cost</b>	<b>Anticipated outcomes</b>
Mobility Hub – City Centre	£1,191,000 per hub <sup>21</sup>	1	£1,191,000	Improved customer satisfaction and ease of interchange

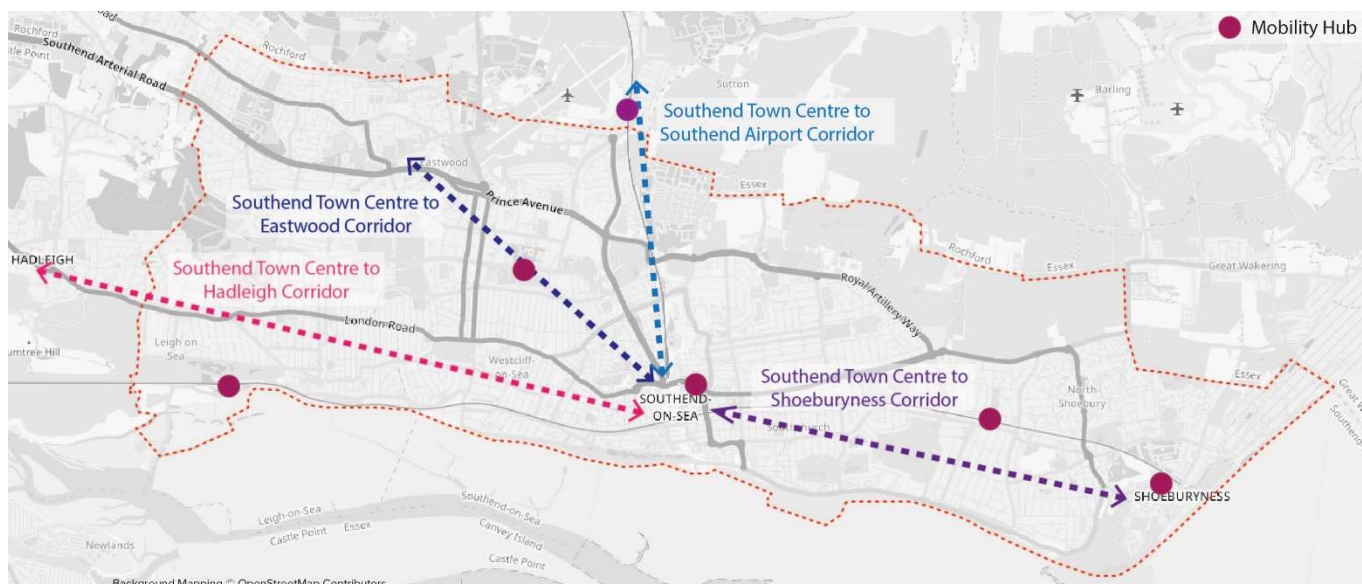
With regards to Mini Hubs, we are initially proposing to deliver Mini Hubs at Chalkwell Station and in Eastwood, as part of plans to improve the corridors there and to introduce new cross-city bus services. We will scope the locations of further Mini Hubs in further detail from 2025/26.

**Table 9: Characteristics of Mobility Hubs and Mini Hubs**

	<b>Mobility Hub</b>	<b>Mini Hub</b>
<b>Has at least the following:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A major trip-generating destination within 400 metres, e.g. Hospital</li> <li>Bus services</li> <li>Cycle parking</li> <li>Car club parking</li> <li>Local wayfinding and onward travel information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bus services</li> <li>Cycle parking</li> <li>Local wayfinding and onward travel information</li> </ul>
<b>Plus one or more of the following:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rail services</li> <li>Car parking, including electric vehicle charging</li> <li>Bike share parking</li> <li>E-scooter parking.</li> <li>Shops and services</li> <li>Delivery points</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A neighbourhood-scale trip generating destination within 400 metres</li> <li>Rail services</li> <li>Car parking, including electric vehicle charging points</li> <li>Car club parking</li> <li>Bike share parking</li> <li>E-scooter parking</li> <li>Shops and services</li> <li>Delivery points</li> </ul>

<sup>21</sup> Source: Officer review of Mobility Hubs delivered in locations similar to Southend, focussing on costs of upgrading transport infrastructure at these hubs

**Figure 21: Mobility Hub Locations**



	<b>Estimated cost per unit</b>	<b>Total number of units</b>	<b>Total cost</b>	<b>Anticipated outcomes</b>
Mobility Hubs (excluding City Centre Mobility Hub)	£715,000 per hub <sup>22</sup>	5	£3,575,000	Improved customer satisfaction and ease of interchange
Mini Hubs	£506,000 per hub <sup>23</sup>	2	£1,012,000	Improved customer satisfaction and ease of interchange

### **Better co-ordination of buses**

Under this proposal, service times on major corridors will be better co-ordinated between operators so that passengers along each corridor will have an even spread of services provided at set intervals (otherwise known as a clockface timetable). Furthermore, through co-ordinating services, operators may be able to make operational savings whilst maintaining a satisfactory level of service along each corridor. Any such co-ordination of services would need to comply with the appropriate competition legislation. We include the costs of this co-ordination in the ‘Minimum Frequencies’ figures below, under ‘Improving Services’.

<sup>22</sup> Source: Officer review of Mobility Hubs delivered in locations similar to Southend, focussing on costs of upgrading transport infrastructure at these hubs

<sup>23</sup> Source: Officer review of Mobility Hubs delivered in locations similar to Southend, focussing on costs of upgrading transport infrastructure at these hubs

## Improving services

### What our plans will achieve

Our plans will achieve the following:

- Increase the number of people boarding and alighting buses along each of the key corridors across the day
- Increase the number of people boarding and alighting buses during the evenings and on Sundays by 50%

### Minimum frequencies

It is our intention to establish minimum service frequencies along each of our key corridors through the EP. It is our intention that these frequencies should be across operators, as opposed to requiring every single service to be at the frequencies: this is subject to further discussion with bus operators:

- Every 10 minutes between 0700 and 1900 on weekdays
- Every 20 minutes between 1900 and 2200 on weekdays, and all day on Saturday and Sunday
- Every 30 minutes all day on Sunday

These should be considered as minimum service frequencies, and there are areas along these corridors where services operate at a higher frequency than this. Where there is the commercial case to further improve frequencies above any such set minimums, we will encourage operators to boost frequencies.

Important to boosting service frequencies further is reducing bus journey times and improving the reliability of services through infrastructure works. This is for two reasons. First, more reliable, and faster, buses attract more passengers, making the case for boosting services more. Secondly, improving journey times and reliability means that operators can run their existing level of service with fewer buses, freeing up buses and drivers to run additional or new services at no extra cost. Accordingly, further improving frequencies requires investment in bus infrastructure that improves journey times and reliability.

Additional services will initially be financed by grants from the Department for Transport. Through the infrastructure improvements identified along each of these corridors, and other initiatives identified as part of this BSIP, we intend that these additional services should become commercially viable over time.

In recognition of the demand for local bus services being concentrated on the key corridors and during the working week, our priorities for the delivery of these improvements are as follows, and subject to further discussion with operators and investigation of feasibility:

- Services every 10 minutes on each of our key corridors, between Monday and Friday at 0700 to 1900
- Services every 20 minutes on key corridors between 1900 and 2200 on weekdays, all day Saturday, and every 30 minutes on Sundays
- Services every 30 minutes on other corridors

Where there is a commercial case to do so, we will encourage operators to provide a level of service that exceeds these minimum thresholds.

## Additional evening and Sunday services

To meet the specified service frequencies, we are also seeking additional services along the key corridors to run during the evenings Monday to Saturday (1900 to 2200) and on Sundays. However, this would only happen if enabled by funding from the Department for Transport, for a minimum of three years. We have included the costs of these additional services, primarily consisting of running existing vehicles for longer periods, in the figures below.

	<b>Estimated cost per unit<sup>24</sup></b>	<b>Total number of units</b>	<b>Total cost</b>	<b>Anticipated outcomes</b>
Maintaining service frequencies on key corridors of every 10 minutes weekday 0700 to 1900	£83,360	19 Peak Vehicle Requirement (PVR)	£7,919,000	More people on local bus services  Significant growth in off-peak bus use
Maintaining service frequencies on key corridors of every 20 minutes, weekdays 1900 to 2200, all day Saturday and every 30 minutes on Sunday	N/A	A mixture of additional vehicles (estimated to be 6 PVR), plus extended operational times of existing vehicles and staff	£9,527,000	More people on local bus services  Significant growth in off-peak bus use
Maintaining service frequencies on other corridors of every 30 minutes, all day weekdays, all day Saturday and Sunday	N/A	A mixture of additional vehicles (estimated to be 13 PVR), plus extended operational times of existing vehicles and staff	£10,837,000	More people on local bus services  Significant growth in off-peak bus use

<sup>24</sup> Source: Standard bus operating costs of £100,000 per bus per annum at 2021 (plus inflation since 2021), with additional revenue assumed

## Improving tickets and fares

### What our plans will achieve

As already mentioned under ‘**The Improvement Programme in 2024/25**’ (above) our plans will achieve the following:

- Increase the number of people boarding and alighting buses across Southend
- Deliver an improved passenger experience of using local bus services
- Encourage new people to trial local bus services

### Proposed service improvements – 2025/26 and beyond

#### Upgrading the Octopus ticket to be accepted on local rail services

Working with local train operators to accept Octopus on local rail services. This will deliver a truly integrated public transport network across Southend but requires extensive work to integrate several technical systems and to enter contractual and revenue sharing arrangements.

	<b>Estimated cost<sup>25</sup></b>	<b>Anticipated outcomes</b>
Upgrade of Octopus ticket to deliver acceptance on local rail services	£238,000	Increased number of people using existing bus services

#### Trial a £1.50 flat single fare for all buses

Following the trial of a £1.50 flat fare for single bus journeys across Southend, during weekends in the Summer (as covered under ‘**Improvement Programme for 2024/25**’ above), to understand the impact of having a flat fare on the operations of buses, fare revenues, and passenger numbers, we will consider undertaking a more detailed study, subject to funding from the DfT.

Subject to a successful trial, this flat fare would be rolled out to become permanent.

	<b>Estimated cost<sup>26</sup></b>	<b>Anticipated outcomes</b>
Extension of flat fare trial	£1,786,000	Increased number of people using existing bus services

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<sup>25</sup> Based on the cost of a review of technical feasibility and system upgrades

<sup>26</sup> Based on estimates of costs of feasibility, revenue loss from the trial, and undertaking the trial for one 6-week period during the summer

## Longer term network transformation

### Proposed improvements

Along each corridor, the Council commits to delivering transformational change that will not only improve buses but also improve the quality of place along each corridor. These are likely to be significant projects, and we will need to undertake further feasibility work to specify the improvements that we will need to deliver.

These infrastructure projects will focus on what changes to the street environment we can make to achieve the objectives of this BSIP and the EP. Within the scope of these projects will be several potential solutions that we will investigate, including (but not limited to):

- bus priority measures
- changes in highways and network management
- improving walking and cycling routes to and from stops and Mobility Hubs
- improve the quality of bus stops along the route
- improving the quality of roadside information and wayfinding along each route.

At this stage, it is not possible to identify what specific improvements we will make on each corridor until we undertake more detailed technical feasibility works. In benchmarking our costs, we have referenced a project that delivered improvements to bus infrastructure along the A13 London Road in Southend. The scheme improved public transport along the A13 by implementing bus stop improvements, providing real time information and bus prioritisation at signals, as well as targeted junction enhancements and road widening. Southend's major scheme linked with a similar programme of improvements that Essex County Council implemented outside the City boundary. The impact of these measures included an increase in bus patronage of 10% along the route of the A13.

Although outline as this stage, the delivery of such a significant programme of works will be critical to the success of this BSIP. Such major projects will deliver the transformational changes required to improve bus services and the street environment along these main corridors that will boost journey times, patronage, and reliability.

	<b>Estimated cost</b>	<b>Total cost</b>	<b>Anticipated outcomes</b>
Major Corridor Projects – Feasibility and Major Scheme Business Case	All corridors (x4): Range from £595,000 to £893,000 <sup>27</sup>	£3,274,000	Costed, deliverable schemes that will achieve the objectives of this BSIP

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<sup>27</sup> Source: Benchmarking of costs to develop schemes from Strategic Outline Business Case to Full Business Case, inclusive of all statutory assessments and documentation, technical feasibility, and detailed design works



	<b>Estimated cost</b>	<b>Total cost</b>	<b>Anticipated outcomes</b>
Major Corridor Projects – Delivery	Southend City Centre to Hadleigh: £5,955,000  Southend City Centre to Shoeburyness: £9,527,000  Southend City Centre to Southend Airport: £4,764,000  Southend City Centre to Eastwood: £4,764,000	£25,010,000 <sup>28</sup>	Faster bus journeys  More reliable bus journeys  More people using buses

## Improving existing buses

### What our plans will achieve

Our plans will achieve the following:

- Improve the environmental performance of local bus services even further
- Introduce low emission vehicles in Southend

Whilst using the bus overall is more environmentally beneficial, and the buses in Southend are modern with a satisfactory level of customer facilities on board, it is important that the operators maintain this level of service and where feasible improve it.

### Supporting vulnerable bus users

The Council also wishes to support all users, particularly those with visual impairments and users who are unfamiliar with local bus services. An immediate improvement that could be delivered is audio-visual announcements on buses that announce the stop as the bus approaches them. This BSIP would fund a roll-out of this technology on existing buses (where not already financed by separate Government grant). At this stage, we are seeking to retrofit the existing fleet of buses, but as new vehicles start service in Southend they may also be retrofitted.

### Bus emissions

Operators have stated they are committed to phasing out their most polluting vehicles, which will be delivered through the EP. To deliver immediate improvements, we would, subject to government funding, seek to retrofit the engines of up to 100 buses with engines of an emissions standard of Euro V or earlier to be a Euro VI standard.

Both First and Arriva are involved with alternative fuel trials around the country. The Essex and Southend operations are reviewing the effects of these schemes.

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<sup>28</sup> Source: Estimated costs of A13 Corridor Upgrade, with costs of inflation added

	<b>Estimated cost per unit</b>	<b>Total number of units</b>	<b>Total cost</b>	<b>Anticipated outcomes</b>
Retrofitting existing buses with audio-visual announcements	£9,530 per vehicle <sup>29</sup>	100	£953,000	Increased use of local buses by vulnerable groups
Retrofitting existing buses to Euro VI emissions standards	£27,500 per vehicle per annum <sup>30</sup>	26	£3,573,000	Lower NOx and PM emissions from buses

## Other later initiatives

Alongside the improvements made through any future BSIP funding, several other initiatives are being committed to, which are critical to the success of the BSIP.

## What our plans will achieve

As these are cross-cutting initiatives, they will help deliver against all the objectives of this BSIP.

## Planning Applications and major developments

The Council will collaborate with operators and developers to ensure that operators are informed of major planning applications; and will seek to engage with operators on the review of networks where a major development is likely to provide additional services. The most significant planned redevelopment is in the city centre which includes major developments.

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<sup>29</sup> Source: Industry estimates of costs

<sup>30</sup> Source: Industry estimates of costs

## Ongoing Maintenance and Resourcing costs

We show below these types of costs that are associated with this Bus Service Improvement Plan.

	<b>Estimated cost per unit</b>	<b>Total number of units</b>	<b>Total cost</b>	<b>Anticipated outcomes</b>
Maintaining roadside information	£72,000 per annum <sup>31</sup>	5 years	£358,000	Delivery of programme of works
Maintaining Mobility Hubs	£60,000 per annum <sup>32</sup>	5 years	£298,000	Delivery of programme of works
Council staff and resourcing	£312,000 per annum to £417,000 per annum <sup>33</sup>	5 years	£1,979,000	Delivery of programme of works

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<sup>31</sup> Source: SBCs own costs

<sup>32</sup> Source: SBCs own costs for maintaining the City Centre Travel Centre

<sup>33</sup> Source: SBC estimates of staff time, national insurance and pension contributions of 2 staff, plus up to 2 agency staff for specialist project management and engineering skills

# 5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

## Headline Targets

We have devised targets for each of the proposed interventions, thereby linking ‘cause’ and ‘effect’ while showing the combined effect of a package of initiatives. This maintains targets at an achievable level based on the evidence available. The targets are set against a pre-pandemic baseline of 2019, based upon government guidelines as set out in Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG), noting that recovery since travel restrictions were eased will continue for some time and the initial step is to regain the market that has been lost as a result of the pandemic. All the targets accord with local policies and include performance targets – how we will improve the provision of services – and levels of user satisfaction. Achieving some of the targets will be determined by the level of funding available, notably for improved and new services for which there is a revenue risk, at least initially.

The indicators set out below constitute our core indicators, showing us that we are succeeding against the objectives and vision of this BSIP.

## Targets for journey times and reliability improvements

We have devised achievable targets for each of the proposed schemes which were shortlisted from an extensive list contributed by local interest groups and others when we produced the original BSIP. We considered each infrastructure (‘facilities’) and other proposals (‘measures’) against their expected impact, implementation time and indicative cost (high/medium/low) to provide a prioritisation. We aligned each with a target for the relevant routes measured by a defined performance indicator that embedded the fit with policy objectives. Significantly, none of the proposals on their own was associated with a large effect but collectively, the package of schemes devised adds up to a considerable targeted improvement both in the performance of services and customer satisfaction.

## Bus punctuality and journey times

With bus priority measures in place across the city, we would expect bus punctuality to improve substantially. Operators’ main requirement is to make journeys punctual with improved and predictable journey times which will be supported by the installation of bus detection equipment at key traffic signal junctions, removal of on-street parking where this is obstructive and more bus priority measures. This will be measured by operators’ records supplemented by customer surveys.

Our core targets are as follows:

**25%** Reduction in journey times between major hubs on our four key corridors in Southend.

**15%** Reduction in the number of buses arriving late at their end destination on our four key corridors.

**95%** Of all Southend residents will be within a 400-metre walking distance of a bus service running every 15 minutes<sup>34</sup>

## Targets for passenger growth and customer satisfaction

We anticipate our improvements to increase the number of people using local bus services and, combined with improvements to local buses delivered through the Enhanced Partnership, we anticipate that people will become happier with local bus services.

We have assessed the potential effects of the schemes selected as a percentage change of annual use for the relevant routes. Realistically, some schemes will have a limited effect individually but as part of a package of improvements, the change could be magnified with each element of the package supporting growth in demand resulting from more punctual journeys and a higher quality offer.

Our core targets for passenger growth and customer satisfaction are as follows.

**500k** Additional trips on local buses every year above 2019/20 levels by 2027

**65%** The proportion of bus trips in Southend undertaken by non-concessionary pass holders by 2027

**75%** The percentage of local people satisfied with local buses by 2027

## Targets for air quality and carbon reduction

In this BSIP, we are not setting specific targets for buses to improve air quality or to reduce carbon emissions. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, there is a lack of decent quality local data against which to set a target specifically for buses for each of these factors, and consequently any such target set in this BSIP would be unreliable and prone to significant errors.

Secondly, any such targets must be considered in the wider context of reducing carbon emissions from transport. The ability of buses to contribute to wider improvements in air quality and carbon emissions will be affected by policies and initiatives to improve local

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<sup>34</sup> On weekdays, between 0700 and 1900

transport. Two such policy documents (the Local Plan and LTP) are currently in the process of being reviewed. Consequently, setting a specific carbon reduction and air pollution target for buses in advance of this work is premature.

Regardless of this, the plans contained within this BSIP are likely to contribute towards improving air quality and carbon emissions through making the use of buses more attractive and increasingly a priority choice.

## Our approach to reporting and monitoring

This BSIP will be a live document, and we will update it as and when necessary to ensure that not only that we report progress reported, but that there is a continuous process for learning lessons, review, and revising the document to ensure that it remains relevant.

Our monitoring will be in accordance with the Department for Transport's guidance and aims to provide a useful means of demonstrating to others that this BSIP:

- Was delivered effectively and efficiently
- Has delivered anticipated outcomes
- Had realised any unintended affects (positive or negative)

The focus for our monitoring and evaluation is on measuring performance, understanding scheme impacts and disseminating this.

## The role of the Enhanced Partnership

The EP is the primary mechanism through which we will monitor performance against our targets and objectives, subject to funding from the Department for Transport. We have incorporated the projects, targets, and indicators contained in this BSIP into the EP. The EP's governance consists of the Local Bus Forum and the Local Bus Board.

The **Local Bus Forum** brings together representatives from a wide range of key stakeholder groups to review the progress of the BSIP and EP annually and to give recommendations to the Local Bus Board about the priorities for improving the bus network that it should consider for the following year. This is an advisory body and has no formal decision-making powers.

The **Local Bus Board** represents all the parties to the Enhanced Partnership. This is the body which will formally make recommendations on the delivery of EPP. The role of the Board is:

- To set the future aims and objectives of the BSIP, EPP and Enhanced Partnership, including recommending to its constituent organisations changes that should be made
- To develop and make policy recommendations to Southend-on-Sea City Council about planning and priorities for the improvement of the local bus network
- To develop and make operational recommendations to operators for the improvement of the local bus network
- To develop recommendations for any variations in the Enhanced Partnership agreement
- To be a consultee on any changes in policies such as the Local Transport Plan and Local Plan.

We plan that the EP will formally review the BSIP annually, making recommendations for changes to the BSIP and potentially the EP from this review.

# Overview

## Summary Information

Name of Local Authority or Authorities:	Southend-on-Sea City Council
Enhanced Partnership(s) and/or Franchising Scheme(s) covered by the BSIP:	Southend-on-Sea Enhanced Partnership
Date of publication:	October 2024
Web address (URL) of the published BSIP:	TBA

## Improvements programme to 2025

Scheme category	Title of scheme/measure	Budget / est. cost (£k) Capital	Budget / est. cost (£k) Revenue	Budget / est. cost (£k) Total	of which BSIP funding (£k) Capital	of which BSIP funding (£k) Revenue	of which BSIP funding (£k) Total	Notes on funding sources (identifying non-BSIP funding)
Fares support	£1.50 flat fare trial during Summer weekends	0	119	119	0	119	119	All from BSIP
Ticketing reform	Upgrade of Octopus ticket to contactless and mobile payment accepted on all operators	0	60	60	0	60	60	All from BSIP
Other	Establish a single network identity for Southend and South Essex that complements existing	0	12	12	0	12	12	All from BSIP

<b>Scheme category</b>	<b>Title of scheme/measure</b>	<b>Budget / est. cost (£k) Capital</b>	<b>Budget / est. cost (£k) Revenue</b>	<b>Budget / est. cost (£k) Total</b>	<b>of which BSIP funding (£k) Capital</b>	<b>of which BSIP funding (£k) Revenue</b>	<b>of which BSIP funding (£k) Total</b>	<b>Notes on funding sources (identifying non-BSIP funding)</b>
	branding initiatives							
Other	Develop and deliver a 'Get back on the bus' marketing campaign	0	119	119	0	119	119	All from BSIP



## Ambitions and proposals for 2025 and beyond

<b>NBS objective</b>	<b>Title of scheme or proposal</b> [insert additional rows for more schemes or measures]	<b>Additional description</b> (optional - 60 words max)	<b>Estimated cost / order of cost (£k)</b>	<b>Costing accuracy rating</b> (Low, Medium, High)
Service level and network coverage	New service: Southend Airport - Eastwood - Leigh-on-Sea	N/A	1,816	Low
Service level and network coverage	New service: Southend Airport - Thorpe Bay / Shoeburyness	N/A	2,709	Low
Service level and network coverage	New service: Chalkwell Station - Southend Hospital - Southend Airport	N/A	1,280	Low
Bus priority	Southend City Centre to Hadleigh Corridor	N/A	71	Low
Bus priority	Southend City Centre to Shoeburyness Corridor	N/A	48	Low
Bus priority	Southend City Centre to Southend Airport Corridor	N/A	71	Low
Bus priority	Southend City Centre to Eastwood Corridor	N/A	71	Low
Ticketing	£1.50 flat single fare on all buses - trial	N/A	1,786	Low
Ticketing	Upgrade Octopus ticket so that it is accepted on local rail services	N/A	238	Medium
Waiting and interchange facilities	Mobility Hub - Leigh-on-Sea	N/A	715	Low
Waiting and interchange facilities	Mobility Hub - Chalkwell	N/A	506	Low
Waiting and interchange facilities	Mobility Hub - Shoeburyness Town Centre	N/A	715	Low
Waiting and interchange facilities	Mobility Hub - Thorpe Bay	N/A	715	Low
Waiting and interchange facilities	Mobility Hub - Southend Airport	N/A	715	Low
Waiting and interchange facilities	Mobility Hub - Southend Hospital	N/A	715	Low
Waiting and interchange facilities	Mobility Hub - Eastwood	N/A	506	Low
Waiting and interchange facilities	Mobility Hub - City Centre	N/A	1,191	Low
Waiting and interchange facilities	Maintaining services and standards at all Mobility Hubs	N/A	298	Medium
Bus information and network identity	Develop and deliver a joint marketing and comms plan	N/A	417	Medium

<b>NBS objective</b>	<b>Title of scheme or proposal</b> [insert additional rows for more schemes or measures]	<b>Additional description</b> (optional - 60 words max)	<b>Estimated cost / order of cost (£k)</b>	<b>Costing accuracy rating</b> (Low, Medium, High)
Bus information and network identity	Include links to Southend operator websites on a shared web portal with Essex	N/A	30	Medium
Bus information and network identity	Maintaining roadside information to an acceptable and accessible standard	N/A	298	Medium
Bus information and network identity	Standardisation of timetable changes	N/A	60	High
Bus passenger experience	Bus stop upgrades and maintenance	N/A	2,976	Medium
Bus passenger experience	Standardised timetable on key corridors between all operators	N/A	60	Medium
Bus passenger experience	Standardised minimum service frequency on key corridors	N/A	28,283	Medium
Bus passenger experience	Staffing (Public Transport, Highways Team, Support and Admin)	N/A	1,979	High
Bus fleet	Retrofitting existing fleet with Euro VI standards	N/A	3,573	Medium
Bus fleet	Retrofitting existing buses with audio and visual announcements	N/A	953	Medium
Bus fleet	All new vehicles in the City to have Euro VI engines	N/A	0	N/A
Accessibility and inclusion	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Longer term network transformation	Major corridor project - Southend City Centre to Hadleigh Corridor	N/A	6,848	Low
Longer term network transformation	Major corridor project - Southend City Centre to Shoeburyness Corridor	N/A	10,420	Low
Longer term network transformation	Major corridor project - Southend City Centre to Southend Airport Corridor	N/A	5,359	Low
Longer term network transformation	Major corridor project - Southend City Centre to Eastwood Corridor	N/A	5,657	Low