

**NATIONAL BUS STRATEGY
TRANSPORT ACT 2000
ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP PLAN AND SCHEME**



**DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL
AGREEMENT**

v. 5.0 as agreed on November 3rd, 2022

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PART 1 – Enhanced Partnership PLAN

**THE DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP PLAN FOR BUSES IS
MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 138G(1) OF THE TRANSPORT ACT 2000 BY:**

DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL

1. Definitions

1.1. In the Enhanced Partnership Plan, and Enhanced Partnership Scheme(s), the following capitalised terms shall have the meanings ascribed to them below in Table 1.

Table 1: Enhanced Partnership Plan, and Enhanced Partnership Scheme(s) Definitions

1985 Act	Transport Act 1985
2000 Act	Transport Act 2000
2017 Act	Bus Services Act 2017
Bus Operators (or Operators)	All Large Operators, Medium Operators and Small Operators running Qualifying Bus Services taken collectively.
BSIP	Bus Service Improvement Plan as required through the National Bus Strategy: Bus Back Better (March 2021)
BPG	Bus Punctuality Group – a sub-group to the Enhanced Partnership Board set up to work on future bus priority strategy
Confidential Information	Any information which has been designated as confidential by an organisation in writing or that ought to be considered as confidential (however it is conveyed or on whatever media it is stored) including information which would or would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any person, trade secrets, Intellectual Property Rights, know-how of and all Personal Data
CT	Community Transport
Data Protection Legislation	all applicable data protection and privacy legislation in force from time to time in the UK including the UK GDPR, the DPA 2018 (and regulations made thereunder) and the Privacy and Electronic

	Communications Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/2426) as amended
Devon Bus	Proposed Information and Network Brand Title
DCC	Devon County Council
DRT	Demand Responsive Transport
EPB	Enhanced Partnership Board – who provide governance to the Enhanced Partnership Plan, and Enhanced Partnership Scheme(s)
Enhanced Partnership	Enhanced Partnership Plan, and Enhanced Partnership Scheme(s)
EPB Members	As set out under Part 2 The Scheme paragraph 5 (Governance Arrangements)
NHT Survey	National Highways and Transport Survey
Passenger Charter	Document providing standards passengers can expect
Personal data	As defined in the Data Protection Legislation
RTI	Real Time Information
The Plan	Enhanced Partnership Plan (may also be Plan)
The Scheme(s)	Enhanced Partnership Scheme(s) (may also be Scheme(s))
ZEVs	Zero Emission Vehicles (may also be ZEV)

2. Introduction

- 2.1. Devon is a rural and diverse county, with a population in 2020 of 810,700. This figure is predicted to increase at a rate of just under 1% each year to 826,096 by 2022, and 847,433 by 2025.

Covering an area of around 6,600 km², average population density is approximately 120 people/km², one of the lowest in England. However, there is great variation across the county ranging from the city of Exeter (2,800 people/km²) to West Devon (48 people/km²) to Dartmoor Forest Civil Parish (8 people/km²). Many rural parishes have fewer than 25 inhabitants/km².

- 2.2. The population is therefore distributed unevenly across the county, focussed around the south coastal areas (Exeter/Exmouth/Torbay hinterland) and in the north (Barnstaple/Ilfracombe) all surrounding a rural heartland.
- 2.3. Much of the population live in areas with average or below average levels of overall deprivation. However, there are some pockets of higher deprivation, particularly in the north and west of the county. Furthermore, in relation to geographical barriers to housing and services, large swathes of Devon are classed as highly deprived (Quintile 1), so many rural areas would have poor access to housing and services without a suitable means of transportation (private or public). Rural bus services therefore play an important role in reducing deprivation in these areas.
- 2.4. In Devon, 29% of carbon dioxide emissions were from transport (2019), slightly higher than the total UK emissions from transport (27%). However, at the local level, transport is the second largest emitter of GHG (after buildings) and so reducing emissions from transport is key in reaching overall net zero emissions.
- 2.5. Personal travel accounts for around two-thirds of all Devon's transport-related emissions, so reducing the need for personal travel, and creating a greater reliance on public transport is our first priority. The second priority is to provide greater access to sustainable travel and transport options for travelling further afield.
- 2.6. Fortunately, the bus network across Devon is relatively stable, with various successes achieved over several years – including through the recent pandemic – through informal partnership working with our bus companies. Approximately 80% of the local bus network is commercially operated. However, without DCC subsidy, almost 80% of the county would be wholly or substantially without a bus service. We therefore believe we can build on this informal arrangement to create an Enhanced Partnership framework.

3. Key Objectives

3.1. Table 2 provides a brief overview of the key objectives set out within the main DCC Bus Service Improvement Plan (“BSIP”) and what these mean regarding the approaches used to deliver the Enhanced Partnership.

Please note that these objectives have been updated following the announcement of BSIP funding for Devon County Council by the DfT in April 2022.

Table 2: DCC BSIP Objectives and Enhanced Partnership Approach

BSIP Objectives	EP Approach
Better Connected Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure long-term sustainable funding for bus services • Improve links to rail stations/services • Enhancements to some evening & Sunday services • Common route numbering & interworking on corridors • Enhanced publicity for existing DRT (Fare Car) services
Better Bus Journey Times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce bus priority measures in key locations across the county • Establish a formal Bus Punctuality Group
Better Affordability of Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce new ticketing products – subsidized Devon Day Ticket, Town & City Zone tickets • Fare promotions – specifically designed to encourage people to try the bus
Better Accessibility to Other Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger links to rail services and integrated information • Better integration with longer distance coach services • Upgrading bus stations and key interchanges • Strengthening links with active travel opportunities • Enhance connections with ferry services
Better Passenger Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of bus stops across the county and standardize provision based on a bus stop hierarchy • Upgrading lighting at key locations • Develop RTP1 provision

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branding – develop exiting “DevonBus” brand including Travel Devon website enhancements • Promotional activity to non-users and tourists • Create and implement a Customer Charter in conjunction with Operators and Key Stakeholders, within the first 6 months of the Partnership
Better Carbon Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to investigate suitable opportunities and funding solutions to deliver a greener, modern bus fleet across the county
Better Health & Education Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore further opportunities to integrate school/FE services into the network • Better integration of patient travel needs into an improved public transport network (Total Transport & DRT)

3.2. Objectives set out above link with priorities identified by stakeholders as part of the first BSIP process when published in October 2021. They form a critical part of The Plan and link to facilities and measures to be defined and refined over time in The Scheme.

4. Supporting Policies

- 4.1. DCC's BSIP sits within national, sub-national and local policy contexts. It has been developed to complement existing and emerging priorities, aiming to harness the power of buses to improve social mobility and economic productivity and support sustainable development.
- 4.2. The BSIP is aligned with the National Bus Strategy, incorporating proposals to make bus services more frequent, more comprehensive, easier to use and better integrated with other modes. The BSIP aims to deliver a step change in bus service provision, helping to grow patronage and making buses an attractive alternative to the car for more people.
- 4.3. At the Sub-National level, the Peninsula Transport Strategic Transport Board has recently adopted a vision to *"Transform transport across the peninsula to enable our society and economy to thrive and our unique and outstanding environment to flourish"*.
- 4.4. Underpinning this vision are five goals, which recognise the importance of improving access to education, skills, and employment, supporting growth of new homes and the role of public transport in enabling communities to thrive with better, cleaner, more affordable choices of transport which are integrated with walking and cycling networks.
- 4.5. Locally, the emerging Devon Carbon Plan, produced in response to the climate emergency, recognises overall public transport has not been attractive enough and has not received a proportionate level of investment versus local roads. The interim plan seeks to incentivise modal shift to public transport and the transition to low emission vehicles.
- 4.6. The BSIP also builds upon proposals laid out by regional strategies, for example the Exeter Transport Strategy, which aims to improve sustainable transport options for journeys into and within Exeter. The proposals include more frequent buses between Exeter and surrounding local market and coastal towns, expansion of Park & Ride and improved multimodal ticketing.
- 4.7. Many proposed BSIP improvements will improve bus links to strategic housing and employment sites, including the Exeter and East Devon Economic Growth Area. They will facilitate the delivery of low-car and car-free developments, such as those laid out in the emerging Liveable Exeter Housing Delivery Programme, by providing attractive alternatives to the car for accessing jobs and services
- 4.8. The Devon and Torbay Local Transport Plan 3, 2011-2026 seeks to make public transport a general alternative and better transport choice than the car. The LTP will shortly be updated to account for the increase in importance of transport decarbonisation, and improvements to Devon's sustainable transport network.
- 4.9. This Plan is future proofed for the next five years against national, sub national and local policy, though the Scheme is likely to flex based on shorter term changes to funding and the local bus network.

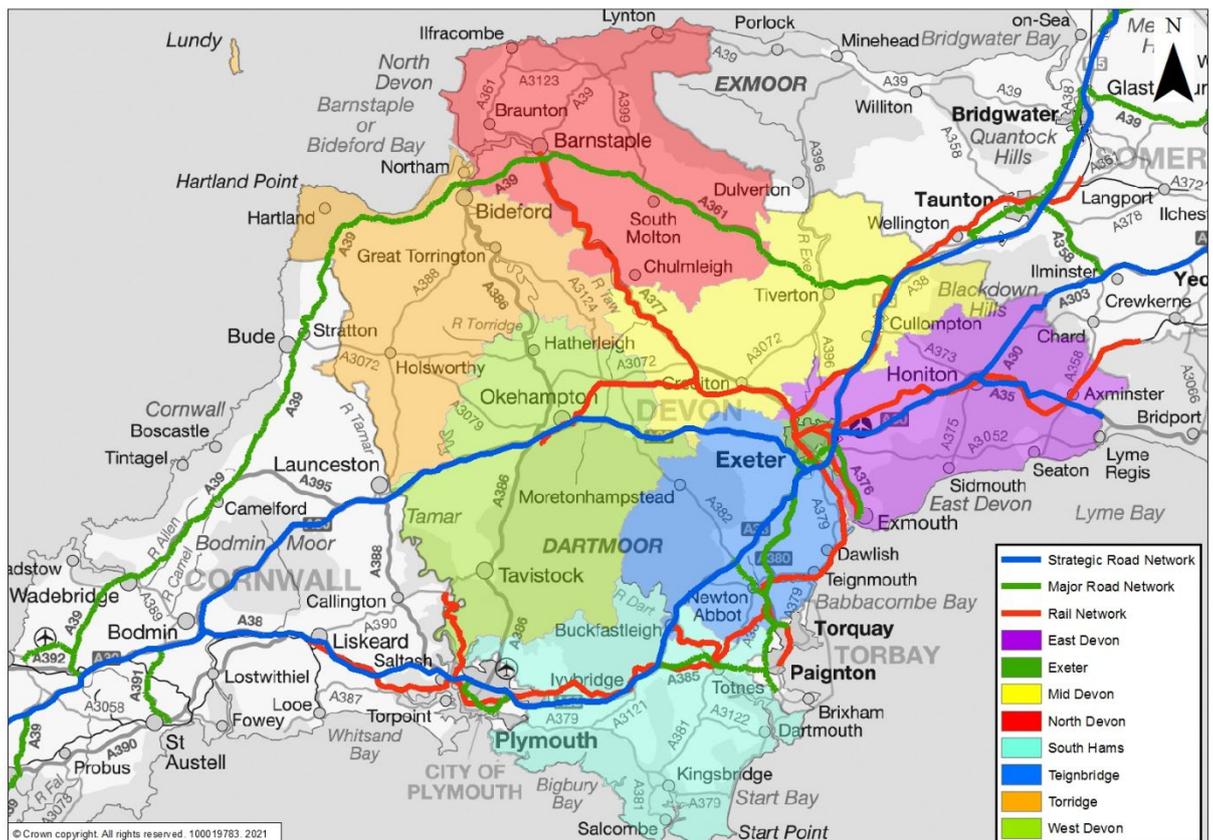
5. Competition Test

- 5.1. DCC has undertaken an assessment of the impacts of The Plan and The Scheme made on 1 April 2022 on competition and believes it will not or is unlikely to have a significantly adverse effect on competition, for the purposes of Part 1 of Schedule 10 of the Transport Act 2000.

6. Extent of the Enhanced Partnership

- 6.1. In response to the Government requirement, DCC published a notice of intent on 21st June 2021 to prepare an Enhanced Partnership (The Plan and The Scheme), in accordance with Section 138F of the 2000 Act. The Plan and The Scheme will make a substantial contribution to the implementation of the DCC BSIP.
- 6.2. This will bring benefits to passengers using local bus services across Devon by improving the quality and efficiency of the public transport network and supporting the efficient use of the road network and the delivery of sustainable growth, limiting the impacts of additional traffic congestion and air pollution.
- 6.3. The Plan and The Scheme for DCC are proposed to extend throughout the full administrative county of Devon within its boundary (Figure 1) and encompass all local districts within; any changes to this boundary at any time will represent a variation to The Scheme.

Figure 1: DCC Enhanced Partnership Plan, and Enhanced Partnership Scheme Area



- 6.4. Whilst developing separate BSIPs at this stage, DCC is working jointly with Peninsula Transport Sub-National Transport Body partner authorities, principally Torbay Council, Plymouth City Council and Cornwall Council.
- 6.5. During the production of DCC's BSIP we have also engaged with Dorset Council and Somerset County Council. The level of cross-boundary

movement is currently less versus that to/from authorities to the south and west. DCC are keen to explore improved access across Exmoor with Somerset and the gateway through Lyme Regis and along the Jurassic Coast with Dorset Council.

- 6.6. DCC liaises with neighbouring authorities regularly to discuss cross-boundary bus issues. An Enhanced Partnership covering part, or all adjacent local authorities has been considered, but will not be taken forward at this time. However, the partnership may consider this desirable in the future, for example if a neighbouring authority is proposing an Enhanced Partnership in relation to cross-boundary bus services or development, and the partnership would wish to avoid a patchwork of inconsistent standards. Neighbouring authorities wishing to engage with the DCC Enhanced Partnership would do so initially on a similar non-statutory basis through the DCC Enhanced Partnership Board.
- 6.7. All operators running bus services in the DCC area have been invited to participate in the preparation of The Plan and The Scheme. The Scheme will come into effect from the 17th October 2022.
- 6.8. The Plan will be in place indefinitely unless revoked by the LTA under Section 138O of the 2000 Act. A full review of the effectiveness of the Plan (including its extent, objectives, and partnership governance) and Scheme (including measures and facilities provided, and requirements imposed) and compliance of both with competition legislation will take place every 5 years, with the first one being in October 2027. The BSIP will be reviewed annually.
- 6.9. Any changes to The Plan will follow the formal variation procedures as set out in Section 138L of the 2000 Act. The Plan may have different review arrangements to The Scheme.

7. Bus Network Overview

7.1. The DCC Enhanced Partnership for buses can be transformational with the right level of funding and the improvements will:

- Deliver a step change in bus provision for current new bus users
- Provide a high-quality alternative to car travel

Please note that information contained in this scheme relates to the position of bus operators and market conditions when the EP was formed. This document will be reviewed every 5 years. Please refer to DCC's BSIP for relevant data which is updated annually.

OPERATORS AND THE MARKET – AS OF JUNE 2022

- 7.2. Stagecoach South West is currently the largest operator (in 2021 they operated 93% of all bus services in the county) followed by Country Bus and Dartline. However geographically speaking, this dominance is not as apparent. The smaller and medium-size operators tend to be significant providers focussed on a specific local area and provide much of the important, but less frequent, rural bus network.
- 7.3. Stagecoach South West currently operates 52% of DCC's supported network, the remainder is split across a range of other, smaller operators.
- 7.4. Market share can also be expressed by the proportion of weekly bus miles operated on local bus services (Table 3). Through this, Stagecoach South West remain dominant operating over 80% of all local bus mileage.

Table 3: Market Share by Local Bus Mileage Operated across DCC

Operator	Total Miles*	%age
Stagecoach South West	283,451	80.08%
Dartline	17,335	4.90%
Go South West	12,291	3.47%
Country Bus	10,516	2.97%
DCC Supported Services (by smaller operators)	6,686	1.89%
Filers	5,882	1.66%
Tally Ho	5,706	1.61%
First Hants and Dorset	5,132	1.45%
First South West	3,235	0.91%
AVMT	2,740	0.77%
Community Transport Services	973	0.27%
Totals	353,947	100.00%

* Figures are weekly mileage totals taken from the latest data available to us as of December 2021

- 7.5. With the notable exception of the relatively self-contained North Devon network, which has seen more than one phase of competition, there has been little disruptive competition frequently cited as a negative impact of deregulation.

LOCAL BUS FLEET

- 7.6. As of September 2021, Stagecoach South West operated a fleet of 413 vehicles across their operational base which includes other Local Authority areas. Other operators make up a further 160¹ buses on Devon's roads. Average fleet ages vary from six to 15 years, the average age of a bus in Devon is around nine years.
- 7.7. In terms of emissions, 71% of buses in Devon are of Euro VI or V emission standard. A further 11% and 18% are Euro IV and Euro III standard respectively. Only one bus is Euro II standard.
- 7.8. There are currently no zero emission (electric or hydrogen) buses in operation in DCC's administrative area.

FACTORS AFFECTING THE LOCAL BUS MARKET

- 7.9. There are several factors which are considered will affect, or have the potential to affect, the local bus market over the life of The Plan:
- Population density of 120 people/km² is one of the lowest in England.
 - A mostly rural county with clusters of higher population density
 - Distance and consequent journey times, making the car more attractive, especially where good road links and by-passes are available.
 - Bus routes are lengthened by diversions off the main road. This reflects the difficult balance between ensuring sufficient patronage with end-to-end usage.
 - Many communities may be remote from the core bus network. There is a balance between more direct routes and fewer stops while looking at developing sustainable routes.
 - Bus fares perceived as being high
 - In the urban areas or for inter urban travel, congestion levels vary
 - New housing developments not suitably located or planned for optimum bus services.
 - Availability of free or low-cost council and commercial (e.g., supermarket) parking.
 - The need for ongoing revenue funding at a high subsidy per passenger, reflecting operating costs over long distances and low demand. DRT

¹ Approximate figure, due to some companies running cross-boundary services into other local authority areas.

services can become subsidized individual taxis due to the thinly spread and sporadic nature of demand.

- Insufficient local populations to support frequent services
- Reduction in the number of 'traditional' bus users, especially in rural areas, and their replacement by newcomers to the community with different lifestyles and less intention to use public transport.
- Idiosyncratic working patterns, many unique to individuals, range of destinations and shift patterns
- Wide choice of school or colleges which partially fragments peak-time demand for education travel, attract students from a widely dispersed rural area
- Change in view of the nearest market town being the local shopping centre; more recently impacting by the move to online shopping
- Other modes (either through actions or perception) being given a higher priority over local bus services
- Decline in the number of bus operators and a shortage of drivers for existing and improved services

7.10. The pandemic has posed an existential threat to the bus industry. From the start of the first lockdown in March 2020, losses of patronage of up to 95% were reported, with overall patronage among operators falling 90% in April 2020 compared to April 2019.

7.11. It is hoped much of this patronage loss will be recovered but there is ongoing cause for concern. Industry representatives talk of recovery not exceeding 80% for some time to come. In Devon, in common with most places, we see several challenges as we seek to enable and encourage recovery:

- Some companies operate both buses and coaches and have seen their private hire business volumes shrink to near-nothing and they will rely on this sector recovering.
- Long-term impact on work travel brought about by home-working and business closures, particularly shops. Across Devon, commuter flows are not as significant as school and college travel. However, in Exeter the commuter market is significant and even a 20% loss of work travel would dent the viability of some key services.
- Future shopping patterns will be hard to predict due to the increase in on-line shopping and the closure of some high street retail outlets. In Devon there has been a long-term historical trend for shoppers to leap-frog nearer market towns in favour of more distant larger centres, and it is possible that this process could go further, with even these larger centres looking less attractive.
- Concessionary travel is taking time to recover, industry estimates are that patronage is currently 50-60% of pre-pandemic – Devon is no exception, and current patronage is 55-60% of pre-pandemic figures..

- School and college travel underpin much of the Devon bus network. Whilst most of this travel will return to 2019 levels, concern remains as to the possible impact of partial remote teaching patterns in further and higher education.
- The marketplace for local bus service contracts has remained stable.

7.12. Joint working throughout the pandemic was a tremendous success, and essential in seeing the bus network through difficult times which will have a lasting positive effect. The future development of the Enhanced Partnership constitutes a formalising of working relationships already forged out of mutual trust and recognition.

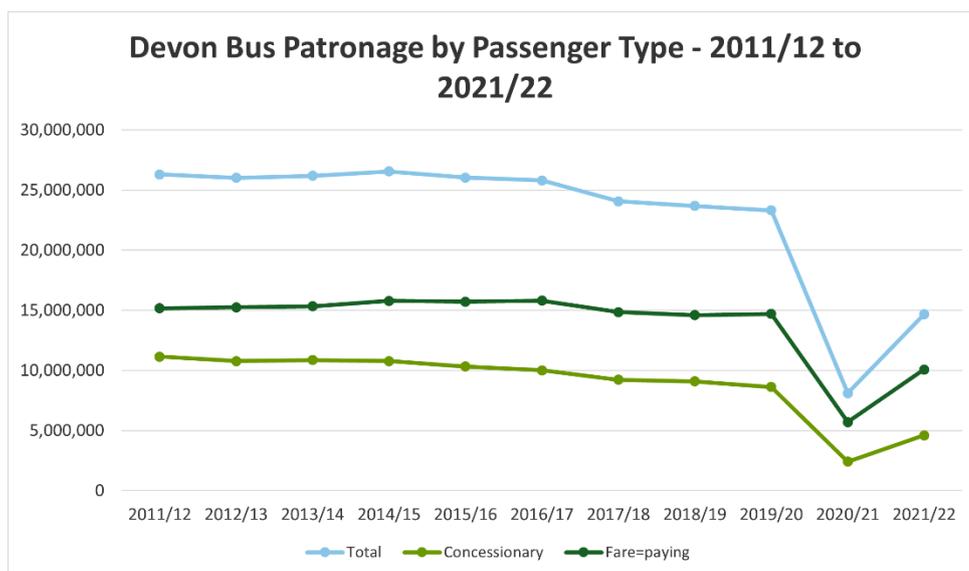
PATRONAGE

7.13. Total patronage on Devon’s bus network in 2018/19 (the last year for which data is unaffected by the pandemic) was approximately 23.7 million passenger journeys, a 10% reduction on the 2011/12 figure of 26.3 million.

7.14. In 2019/20, this reduced slightly to 23.3 million, partially due to the national lockdown in March 2020, but 2020/21 figures were most markedly impacted, with total patronage falling to just 8.1 million (Figure 2). Figures improved slightly in 21/22 but whole year figures were below what we predicted when writing our BSIP in October 2021. Figures for 21/22 were just below 15 million (previous predictions cited this at 16.5 million).

7.15. Patronage per capita has declined from 37 trips per annum (2014/15) to 29 trips per annum (2019/20). This has typically been approximately 40% of the national (England) average and 80-90% of the regional (South West) average.

Figure 2: Patronage Trends Across Devon (2011/12 – 2021/22)



NETWORK OFFERING

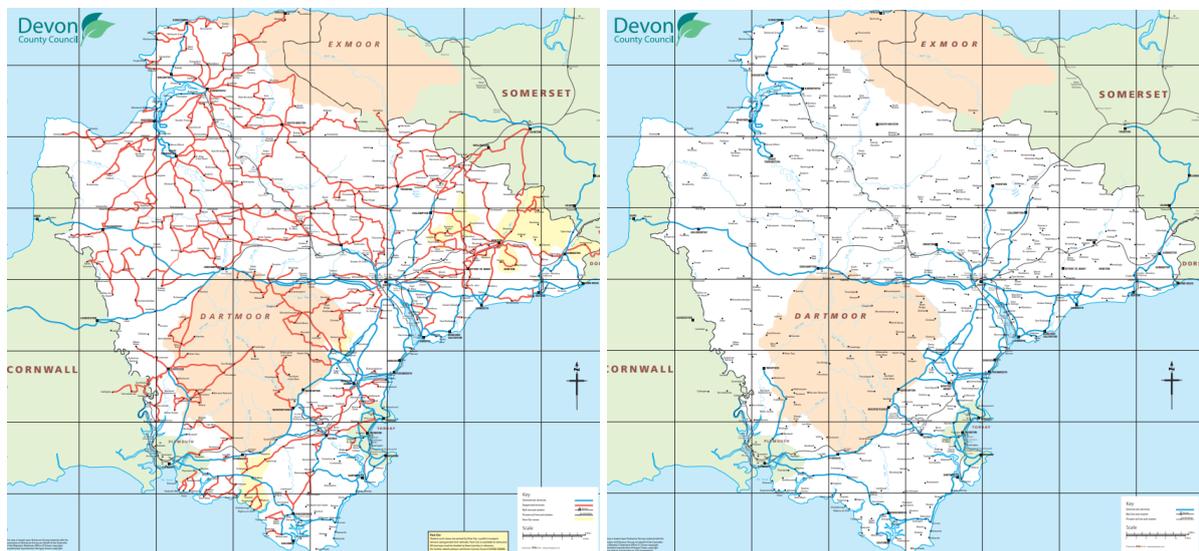
7.16. Through requirements of the Local Transport Fund Network Review, a detailed analysis of the bus network has been undertaken to understand:

- The long-term viability of commercial and supported networks across the county
- Impact of long-term passenger loss and high levels of inflation
- Relative provision of bus services and levels of service (frequencies and spread of operation by day); and
- Accessibility to a range of destinations including town centres, health, education, employment, and essential services; and the provision and adequacy of passenger infrastructure.

7.17. Devon is a rural and diverse county, bordered by two coastlines and boasting two national parks. It also has one of the longest highways networks in the country at over 7,700 miles.

7.18. There is a core corridor bus network operating across Devon (Figure 3) connecting primary and secondary towns with direct bus links. Typical service frequencies vary between different parts of Devon, many parishes around Exeter, Newton Abbot and Barnstaple having hourly or greater services, whilst many parishes in more remote areas have a less than daily service.

Figure 3: Current Core Corridor Bus Network Across Devon (Subsidised network, left; Commercial network, right)



7.19. Service frequencies are largely correlated with population/population densities of parishes. Some parishes with low populations have disproportionately high service frequencies, by virtue of being on a main road connecting larger settlements which have frequent bus services. Whilst some larger, more remote parishes have a lower service frequency than would be expected given their populations.

- 7.20. As shown in Figure 2, over the past decade, the bus network in Devon has remained relatively stable, with DCC largely maintaining its bus service support. There were budget reductions in 2011 and 2015 which reduced services, concentrating on removing support for non-entitled school children's services, smaller town services, access to leisure and some evening and Sunday services.
- 7.21. The local bus network is supplemented in some areas by DRT services plus a thriving network of Community Transport groups and schemes, providing support and transport to those individuals unable to access public services.
- 7.22. A number of rail stations within Devon have bus links for onward travel. Within Exeter, there are also good links between bus and the shared car club (Co Cars) and shared e-bike (Co Bikes) networks.
- 7.23. Aligned to the Government's ambition for bus priority schemes, there is a programme outlined to deliver improvements to prioritise buses across Devon with a focus on two aspects:
- **Facilities** to make it easier for buses to travel into and through towns, which could be physical, for example junction improvements and the introduction of bus lanes, or digital, for example giving buses priority at traffic signals; and
 - **Measures** to improve passenger experience, for example improved waiting environments and real-time information underpinned by a Passenger Charter setting out expected standards of delivery.

AVAILABILITY OF TRAVEL PLANNING AND PASSENGER INFORMATION

- 7.24. DCC maintain a supply of reliable and high-quality passenger information, both in printed formats and electronically, ensuring full compliance with Open Data regulations. Information can be provided in different formats (e.g., large print) if requested.
- 7.25. The Travel Devon website provides information on all bus services in Devon, including online timetables (all services across the county), an interactive bus map, ticketing information, information on accessibility and community transport service, and applying for concessionary bus passes. It also provides links to other modes of travel such as Rail, Cycling and Walking.
- 7.26. This website is supplemented by the @JourneyDevon Twitter feed; DCC are also partners of the organisation Traveline South West, as well as being on the Traveline board.
- 7.27. Over time DCC have reviewed and reduced the quantities of printed bus information in line with demand, as many individuals seek to view electronic information. However, there is undoubtedly still a call for this media by many bus users. The following are produced at least annually - Printed timetable books (six regional areas across Devon), a Devon Bus Map (summary of services across the county), Exeter Bus Map (services across the city) and timetable displays at key stops for all services.
- 7.28. Operator-specific information varies dependant on the size of the operator. Stagecoach South West provide on-line journey-planning information with

timetables and fares, and a mobile app with real time journey-planning and instant ticketing.

- 7.29. Other (smaller) operators are largely reliant on DCC-produced information, although do provide route leaflets (for commercially operated services), web sites (varying standard and content) and real-time feeds in compliance with Open Data regulations.
- 7.30. Finally, DCC currently provide a range of RTI-capable systems. There are over 50 RTI displays installed at bus stops across Devon, as well as digital versions of these displays available for any stop within Devon.
- 7.31. DCC is also a partner in the new Exeter Bus Station (opened July 2021), which features a range of RTI display types throughout, and has worked closely with third parties to refine and improve upon the RTI data we process and provide to the public.
- 7.32. The quantity and quality of information provision across the county is very good, reflected in the results of the Summer 2021 stakeholder consultation. Information provision/service promotion was seldom identified as a barrier to bus use, whilst making bus information easier to understand and making buses easier to use were viewed as of lower priority amongst stakeholders.

BRAND IDENTITY

- 7.33. DCC will continue to develop their existing “Devon Bus” brand. This will sit as part of the “Travel Devon” website/brand and cover all aspects of bus travel within the area.



- 7.34. The Devon Bus brand will collaborate with bus companies and stakeholders to give confidence in the consistent level of services we aim to deliver as part of the Enhanced Partnership.
- 7.35. It will be adaptable for specific markets and towns, for example Exeter, whilst recognising the success and marketing of specific services, in particular for access to leisure. The brand will also be flexible to build on the strength of existing bus company identities.
- 7.36. The “Back on the Bus” campaign, part of the post-pandemic recovery efforts, has since been shortlisted for a Modeshift National Sustainable Travel Award.

THE PASSENGER EXPERIENCE AND PRIORITIES

- 7.37. During Summer 2021, a high-level consultation was undertaken with key local stakeholders, including representatives and officers of councils at all tiers of

local government, bus operators, action/user groups and other public bodies (e.g., National Park authorities), receiving 174 responses.

- 7.38. Respondents were asked for feedback in three areas:
- The biggest barrier to bus travel in Devon at the moment
 - Priority areas for the Bus Services Improvement Plan in Devon
 - Other areas for improvement as part of the BSIP
- 7.39. Service levels (in general) emerged as the greatest barrier to bus travel among local stakeholders, whilst the design and reliability of the bus network plus fares and ticketing were also identified as key barriers.
- 7.40. Issues with the bus network were commonly cited by town/parish councils, particularly those in rural areas, with many suggesting the range of destinations is too limited, and/or routes are too indirect to be attractive.
- 7.41. Operators raised a range of issues, including concerns around the viability of routes and regaining patronage/consumer confidence post-COVID.
- 7.42. Respondents were then asked to rank seven items in terms of their importance for the BSIP:
- Cheaper fares;
 - Extending the bus network to include more places;
 - Increasing the frequency of services;
 - Expanding services into evenings and weekends;
 - Making bus information easier to understand and more consistent across operators;
 - Improving integration with other modes of travel; and
 - Making buses easier to use, with common branding, simpler fares and more easily accessible information
- 7.43. Expanding the bus network was a high priority amongst all stakeholder groups, however increasing service frequencies was significantly less important to operators than local councils, especially county/district councils. Conversely, cheaper fares was the highest priority by over 20% of operators, but less than 10% of county/district councils saw this as the most pressing issue. Of lesser importance was expanding evening and weekend services.
- 7.44. Finally, comments regarding physical infrastructure and integration were more common in response to the final question, the former including the introduction of more eco-friendly buses and improvements to bus stop infrastructure, whilst the latter being principally concerned with connections to other public transport services.
- 7.45. In summary, **enhancing bus service provision** (the overall network of routes available and service frequencies) are priorities to be addressed through the BSIP. **Improving physical infrastructure** (e.g., bus priority measures and bus stop facilities), **improving integration with other modes/services** and **making fares cheaper** also received significant levels of support.

BUS JOURNEY SPEEDS AND CONGESTION IMPACT

- 7.46. For the BSIP, an audit was undertaken of existing bus priority measures within Devon, focussing on the settlements of Exeter, Barnstaple, Exmouth, and Newton Abbot as these are the larger urban areas in the County, which experience higher levels of congestion, which can impact negatively on bus journey time reliability
- 7.47. Bus journey times can vary significantly between the inter-peak and peak periods, due to congestion on key corridors. On a route into Exeter, the inter-peak journey typically take 45 minutes versus the peak time journeys taking 76 minutes, an increase of nearly 70%. The latter trip represents an average vehicle speed of just 13.3 kph (8.3 mph).

8. Outcomes and Interventions to Improve Local Bus Services

- 8.1. Following detailed analysis of the current local bus network across Devon, plus an in-depth engagement exercise which sought the views of a wide range of formal stakeholders, we have now developed a set of key outcomes to further enhance the local bus market across Devon. These are summarised in Table 2 in section 3.1.
- 8.2. In seeking to stem the recent decline in local bus passenger journeys, objectives outlined above focus on making the network more expansive, reliable, and direct, increased affordability, greener and cleaner; thus, delivery of these objectives will improve the overall quality and effectiveness of local bus services in The Scheme area
- 8.3. The Scheme will provide the facilities and measures in detail to deliver each planned objective set out in The Plan and the accompanying DCC BSIP. Using bespoke variations under the powers at Section 138E of the 2000 Act, The Scheme will become more refined in its approach to each objective over time as the partnership process and known levels of funding become clearer through The Plan and The Scheme duration.

PART 2 – Enhanced Partnership SCHEME

**THE DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP SCHEME FOR
BUSES IS MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 138G(1) OF THE
TRANSPORT ACT 2000 BY:
DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL**

1. The Scheme Content

This document fulfils the statutory requirements for an Enhanced Partnership Scheme. In accordance with statutory requirements in Section 138 of the 2000 Act, The Scheme document sets out:

Section 2 - Scope of The Scheme and commencement date

Section 3 - Obligations on the Local Authorities

Section 4 - Obligations on Bus Operators

Section 5 – Consultation Plans and Future Funding Arrangements

Section 6 – Governance Arrangements

The Scheme can only be put in place if an associated EP Plan (The Plan) has been made. Therefore, this document should be considered alongside The Plan.

The Scheme has been jointly developed by DCC (acting also as the Local Highway Authority) and those bus operators that provide local bus services in The Scheme area. It sets out obligations and requirements on both the Local Transport Authority (LTA), and operators of local services to achieve the intended improvements, with the aim of delivering the objectives of The Plan.

2. Scope of The Scheme and Commencement Date

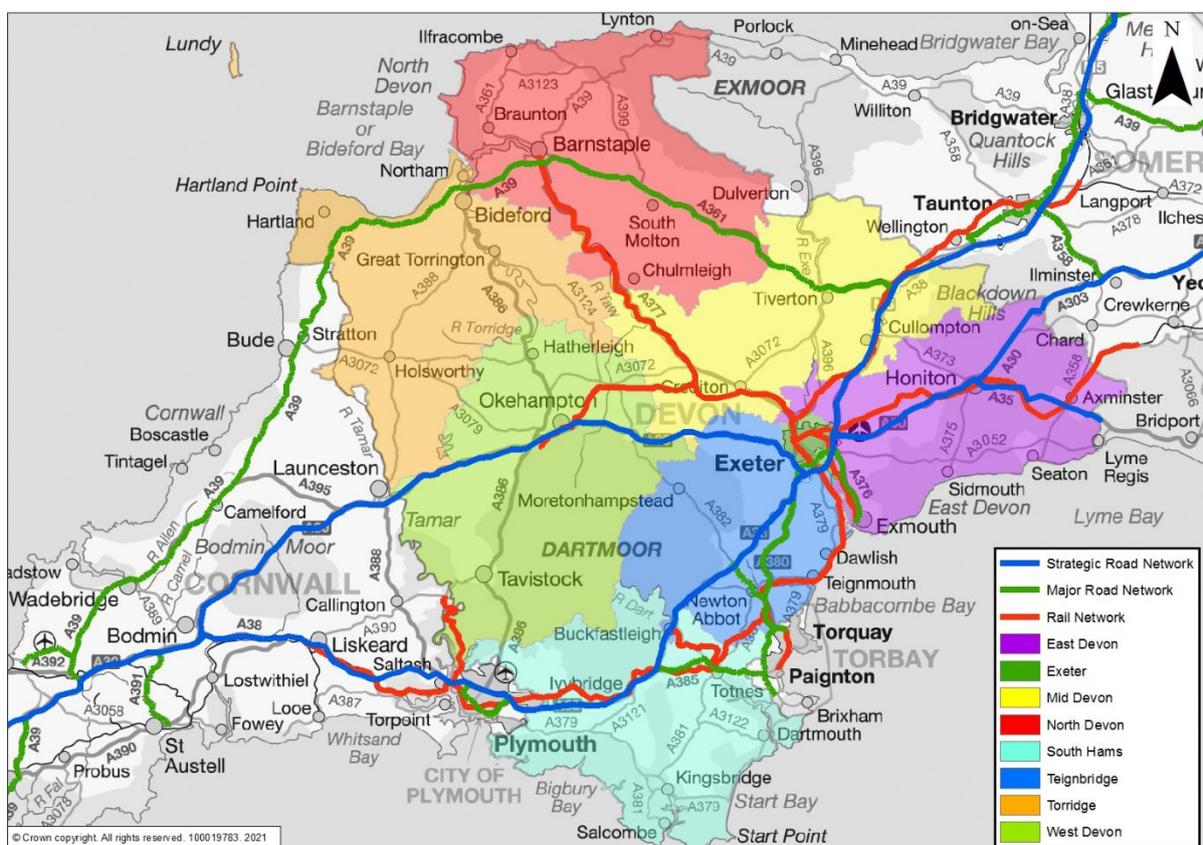
2.1 Description of Geographical Coverage

The Scheme will support the improvement of all local bus services operating in the entirety of the DCC area.

2.2 Map of The Plan and The Scheme Areas

The map below identifies the geographical area covered by The Scheme. The area is the same as that covered by The Plan and covers the administrative area of DCC which is split into eight District Council areas, and includes the major urban centre of Exeter, plus other larger town areas around Newton Abbot, Barnstaple, and Exmouth.

Figure 1: DCC Enhanced Partnership Scheme area



2.3 Commencement Date

The Plan and The Scheme are made on 17th October 2022. The Plan will have no end date but will be reviewed every five years from the commencement date.

The Scheme will have no specific end date, but progress will be reviewed by DCC every six months and publicly accessible reports will be prepared on a routine basis. The Scheme cannot be revoked unless the Plan relating to it is also revoked. Where there is a Plan in Place there must be at least one Scheme made under it (see Section 5).

2.4 Exempted Services

The following services are exempt from the requirements of The Scheme. A list of services included within the scheme will be made available upon request.

- a service which has part, or all its route registered as a local service in the EP geographical area, but where that part of its route is 10% or less of the overall route distance covered by the service from its service start to service end point.
- A service which is registered as a local service under section 6 of the Transport Act 1985, but which would otherwise be an excursion or tour within the meaning in section 137(1) of that Act is exempt from the headway requirements in section 4 of this agreement.
- A service that is specifically operating a registered service to/from or in connection with a special event (e.g., a music festival) or due to an emergency event or force majeure where the service in question is operational for up to but no more than 14-days continuously.
- Dedicated school-only services.

2.5 Proposed Funding Allocation

DCC has been provisionally allocated £14.1 million through the BSIP funding allocation by the DfT. This is split into capital (£8.8 million) and revenue (£5.3 million) funding areas. This funding is for a three-year period from 2022/23 to 2024/25 and is conditional on the delivery and implementation of an Enhanced Partnership, and final approval from the DfT.

DCC propose to apportion funding based on the priorities in Table 1 below, subject to consultation, political approval and planning processes where required:

Table 1: DCC Funding Priorities

Capital Spend	Revenue Spend
<p>Bus Priority Measures – an ambitious program to improve bus priority across the county, including schemes in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exeter – Northern, Eastern, Western and Central Corridors across the city • Newton Abbot Western Corridor (linked to access to Newton Abbot Bus Station and Teignbridge District Council funded link to Bradley Lane) • Barnstaple Northwest, Western and Northern Corridors • Countywide Bus Pinch Point Removal Programme 	<p>Fares support to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsidised Devon Day multi-operator ticket • Town Fare Ticket pilot – subsidised fare in Bideford, Newton Abbot and Exmouth <p>Promotional events based around discounted fares to encourage people to try the bus.</p> <p>Bus Service support including limited enhancements to evening & Sunday services.</p>
<p>Bus Station Enhancements - Funding to upgrade Newton Abbot, Tavistock, Barnstaple, and Tiverton Bus Stations. To</p>	<p>Marketing costs to support BSIP schemes.</p>

<p>include refurbishment, provision of information, signage, seating and improve safety.</p> <p>Bus stop infrastructure - standardisation of flags and information points with clear information to assist passengers, including Real Time Information at key stop.</p> <p>Improved & upgraded street lighting for a safer environment in and around bus waiting areas/stops.</p> <p>Bus Stop Multi-Modal Integration Upgrades.</p> <p>Upgrade to ticket machines to enable all to read QR Codes.</p>	<p>Programme Management (at DCC level).</p>
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3. Obligations on the Authorities

Based on the indicative allocation of funding as outlined in section 2.5, DCC will deliver the Facilities and Measures set out below. DCC will also pursue other funding streams if the opportunity arises.

3.1 Facilities²

DCC will provide the Facilities (schemes) set out below in Table 2 and Table 3. The Scheme will be varied if required (see Section 5) to add additional detail designed to aid the implementation of each Facility, or should any element of these scheme proposals change, following discussion and agreement with the EPB or by way of the Statutory Mechanism.

3.1.1 Better Bus Journey Times Achieved by Bolder Bus Priority Measures: Significant increase in bus priority – make the bus an attractive alternative to the car

- DCC have developed a programme of key corridor interventions across the City of Exeter and the primary towns of Barnstaple, Exmouth, and Newton Abbot
- DCC will undertake further feasibility studies and develop suitable additional programmes as required under guidance from the Bus Punctuality Group that deliver additional measures at remaining locations across the county, should additional funding be available
- DCC will pursue delivery of enhanced digital infrastructure, including Urban Traffic Management and Control (UTMC) systems at identified locations in addition to digitally enabled information provision as identified from time to time
- Column entitled “Outcomes at Scheme Level” includes estimations as to journey time savings, additional modelling of these savings is currently being undertaken. Enhanced detail of these savings and the formula used to calculate will be included in the EP update required by 31st January 2023.

Table 2: Details of individual schemes for Bus Priority

Scheme title or intervention	Scheme details	Delivery milestones	Outcomes at scheme level
1. Exeter Northern Corridor: New North Road to City Centre Bus Gate	Bus gate to provide more direct access to city centre for Countywide bus services approaching on 4km northern corridor between Cowley Bridge roundabout (northern edge of city) and Bus Station (city centre). Bus gate would avoid circuitous route via narrow residential streets and reduce route distance by 0.5km	Project design completed by June 2023 Scheme completed and operational by March 2024	Intervention achieves approximately 3-minute journey time saving per bus with 8 services per hour across 8 routes, which represents a 17% reduction in bus journey times during the peak on this corridor. Passengers can disembark the bus nearer to City Centre. 96 buses daily would be diverted from narrow streets, improving air quality on York Road, which has a school and was near the AQ

² Provided under s.138D(1) of the Transport Act 2000

	(12.5%) and enable stops closer to High St)		objective level in 2019. The intervention would reduce the percentage of HGVs on York Road by 29% and on Longbrook Street by 45%.
2. Exeter Eastern Corridor: Pinhoe Road to City Centre Bus Lane and Signals Upgrade	Conversion of peak hour only bus lane to 24hrs with bus priority signals along 3.4km eastern corridor between Pinhoe Sainsburys junction (eastern edge of city) and the city centre. Intervention involves c.750m of bus lane between St Marks Ave bus gate & Tarbet Ave (300m) and between Whipton Community Hall & Widgey Rd (450m)), including civils on Sidwell Street to support active and public transport corridor	Project design completed by September 2024 Scheme completed and operational by March 2025	Intervention achieves approximately 4 mins journey time saving per bus with 8 services per hour across 4 routes which represents a 27% reduction in bus journey times during the peak on this corridor.
3. Exeter Western Corridor: Cowick Street Bus Lane	Conversion of existing peak hour only bus lane to 24 hrs along 1.6km western corridor between Buddle Lane junction (western edge of city) and the city centre. Intervention involves c.100m of bus lane.	Project design completed by March 2023 Scheme completed and operational by March 2024	Intervention achieves approximately 2 mins journey time saving per bus with 7 services per hour across 5 routes, which represents a 33% reduction in bus journey times during the peak on this corridor.
4. Newton Abbot Western Corridor: Highweek St to Town Centre Signals Upgrade - (linked to access to Newton Abbot Bus Station and Teignbridge District Council funded link to Bradley Lane)	Junction redesign at Highweek St / Halcyon Rd jct to prioritise buses arriving / departing from Newton Abbot bus station to improve bus access on 2.9km western corridor between Hele Park (western edge of town) and the bus station (town centre). Scheme would integrate with active travel links to town centre and complement successful Future High Streets Fund scheme, which proposes removal of traffic except buses and cyclists from part of Queen St in town centre.	Project design completed by September 2024 Scheme completed and operational by March 2025	Improved access for bus services between new development on western edge of town and the town centre (estimated 10% journey time saving in peak hour), reduction of congestion in Newton Abbot and enabling stronger multi modal integration. Increase bus patronage in to Newton Abbot by 5%
5. Barnstaple Northwest Corridor: Braunton Road Bus Lane and Bus Gate	Bus signal priority on 1.9km northwest corridor between Chaddiford Lane junction (north western edge of town) and the bus station (town centre), with straight through priority at Pilland Way and A361 signalised junctions & extension of bus lane (c.100m) onto dual carriageway.	Project design completed by June 2023 Scheme completed and operational by March 2024	Intervention achieves approximately 2 mins journey time saving per bus with 4 services per hour which represents a 29% reduction in bus journey times during the peak on this corridor.

6. Barnstaple Northern Corridor: North Road Bus Lanes	Creation of new bus lanes on 2.1km northern corridor between North Devon Hospital (northern edge of town) and the bus station (town centre) to provide improved public transport links to the hospital and integrated with local active travel improvements identified through LCWIP (c.0.3km of bus lane)	Project design completed by June 2024 Scheme completed and operational by March 2025	Improved access from town centre to North Devon Hospital. Increase bus patronage by 10% Intervention achieves approximately 1 min journey time saving per bus with 6 services per hour, which represents a 13% reduction in bus journey times during the peak on this corridor. It will also improve cycle linkages between hospital and town centre
7. Exeter Central Corridor: Heavitree Bus Enhancement Package	Significant investment package on 3km central corridor between Middlemoor rbt (eastern edge of city) and Paris Street roundabout (for city centre) including new bus lanes and series of signalised junction upgrades to improve priority and journey times for buses as well as address road safety issues for vulnerable road users on busy radial route.	Project design completed by March 2024 Scheme completed and operational by March 2025	Intervention achieves approximately 4 min journey time saving per bus with 20 services per hour across 11 routes, which represents a 20% reduction in bus journey times during the peak on this corridor. This corridor also is the only route in the city which exceeds the national air quality objective and journey-average emissions of NOx and PM will be reduced by reducing the stop-start acceleration events for buses (this will be monitored by Exeter City Council).
8. Bideford/Barnstaple Western Bus Corridor	Improvements to bus priority on 3.4km bus corridor between Bickington and Roundswell (on western edges of the town) and the bus station (town centre). Measures include bus lane / priority measures to improve bus journey times on Bideford to Barnstaple services and serving new growth areas in the town and complementing Gratton Way bus gate and scheduled improvements at Cedars roundabout.	Project design completed by March 2024 Scheme completed and operational by March 2025	Intervention on Roundswell approach achieves approximately 1-minute with 2 services per hour across 4 routes, which represents a 6% reduction in bus journey times during the peak on this corridor. Intervention on Fremington/Bickington approach achieves potential saving of 2 mins with 4 services per hour, which represents a 13% reduction in bus journey times during the peak on this corridor.
9. Countywide Bus Pinch Point Removal Programme	Pinch Point Removals, i.e., minor civils works (kerbs / realignment) or traffic management measures (i.e., removal of on-street parking) to ease flow of buses through Market Towns, using Bus Operator data/intelligence to highlight locations where bus reliability is impacted.	These will be smaller projects which will be identified, designed, and delivered throughout the course of the project. All schemes completed and operational by March 2025	We have already consulted with Bus Operators and have identified a list of priority areas across the county.

3.1.2 Better Accessibility to Services by Integrating Bus with Other Modes: Stronger links with modes including but not limited to; bus, coach, rail, cycle, and ferries

AND

3.1.3 Better Passenger Experience

As detailed in table 3 below, through BSIP funding, DCC are:

- Delivering a programme of bus station and interchange improvements, including Multi-Modal Integration Hubs, in partnership with District Council’s where appropriate;
- Delivering a programme of targeted bus stop improvements across The Scheme area, targeting upgrades and improvements on a corridor / route priority basis aligned to bus priority measures delivered as ‘facilities’ to The Scheme’ and linked to further objectives listed under ‘measures’ to The Scheme. Such upgrades and improvements may be, but not limited to: bus stop poles, bus stop flags, bus stop shelters, additional bus stop furniture, lighting, timetable displays (facilities for printed formats), accessible kerbing, and bus stop cages, borders and pedestrian access; and
- Delivering a programme to identify and roll-out real time information (RTI) at further key locations across the local bus network in parallel with some bus stop upgrades and corridors subject to wider bus priority measures through ‘facilities’ to The Scheme.
- Delivering a programme to upgrading lighting at key locations to provide a safer environment for bus passengers

Table 3: Details of individual schemes for “Better Accessibility to Services & Integration” and “Better Passenger Experience”

Scheme title or intervention	Scheme details	Delivery milestones	Outcomes at scheme level
1. Bus Station Enhancements	Funding to upgrade Newton Abbot, Tavistock, Barnstaple, and Tiverton Bus Stations. To include refurbishment, provision of information, signage, seating and improve safety.	To be confirmed with discussions with colleagues from District Councils.	To increase safety, satisfaction and confidence of passengers using bus station facilities, leading to the overall growth of bus patronage across the county.
1. Bus Stop Infrastructure & Real Time Information	Standardisation of flags and information points with clear information to assist passengers. Including Real Time Information at key stops	Ongoing upgrade of stops across the lifespan of the project. Audit of current facilities completed by March 2023	Upgrade end of life bus stop infrastructure. Improve reliability of outdated RTI displays.
2. East Devon Business Parks and Leisure Park - Bus stop waiting facilities	Bus stop facilities upgrade for major East Devon Business Park and Leisure Park,	Project design completed by September 2022	To increase safety of passengers crossing the A3052.

upgrade (Crealy, Hillbarton & Greendale)	including pedestrian crossing on high-speed road and upgrade street lighting.	Scheme completed and operational by March 2023	Expected to grow patronage on 9 and 52 bus services by addressing needs of vulnerable road users needing to cross a high-speed, high-volume road (particularly people with disabilities, elderly people or families with prams reliant on public transport to access leisure or jobs in the local area)
3. Improved Street Lighting	Improve and install lighting for a safer environment in and around bus waiting areas/stops. Upgrade lighting in existing locations to incorporate a lighting management system, to increase safety for of bus users.	These will be smaller projects which will be identified, designed, and delivered throughout the course of the project. All schemes completed and operational by March 2023	Safer waiting environment increases confidence of a wide range of people with protected characteristics and so advances equality of opportunity to travel by bus.
4. Bus Stop Multi-Modal Integration Upgrades	Bus stop upgrades to improve multi-modal integration between cycle, rail, and access to bus services, i.e. A38 Drumbridges roundabout, Okehampton Parkway station or on key cycle corridors (e.g., Whipton, Honiton Rd P&R, Cowick St in Exeter and Exe Estuary Trail, Exmouth)	These will be smaller projects which will be identified, designed, and delivered throughout the course of the project. All schemes completed and operational by March 2025	Increased multi-modal journey options for commuters, thereby reducing journey to work times and providing a sustainable public transport option
5. Upgrade to ticket machines to enable all to read QR Codes		Completed by March 2023	Enable seamless multi-operator ticketing and acceptance on all bus services.

3.2 Measures³

DCC will provide the Measures set out below in Table 4.

3.2.1 Better Connected Communities

- DCC will use a proportion of the available BSIP revenue funding to support limited bus service improvements, building on the success of the existing network, and to provide more opportunities for travel to access employment, health, leisure, and education.
- DCC will also increase promotion of existing demand responsive Fare Car services, and the introduction of a digital booking service

³ Provided under s.138D(2) of the Transport Act 2000

3.2.2 Better Bus Journey Times Achieved by Bolder Bus Priority Measures: Significant increase in bus priority – make the bus an attractive alternative to the car

- DCC will establish a Bus Punctuality Group (BPG) with the mandate to continually improve and maintain punctuality across The Scheme area. The BPG will comprise (but not be limited to): DCC Highways, DCC Transport and Planning, Bus Operators and District/Local Councils and will meet at least quarterly.

3.2.3 Better Affordability of Travel Through Implementing a New Devon Fares Strategy: Fares must be simpler and lower to attract more passengers

- DCC will work with Bus Operators to improve the current Devon Day Ticket and create a subsidised product that would be interoperable across all Bus Operators and offer a significant saving on current fares.
- DCC will work with Bus Operators to create City and Town fare zones that will create daily and weekly fare levels in defined areas and a fare cap for travel; initial proposals are set out in Table 4 below, and include Exmouth, Bideford and Newton Abbot.
- DCC will explore opportunities to support targeted discounts on fares to encourage growth
- DCC will work with Bus Operators to ensure that all ticket machines are enabled to accept a range of products, and equipped with QR code readers, no later than 1 April 2023.
- DCC will find opportunities to negotiate through ticketing, multi-operator ticketing, and passenger information sharing arrangements with Bus Operators and other complimentary modes (e.g., heavy rail) such that both/all operators make reasonable endeavours to offer a single, integrated ticket for the through journey and comprehensive real time information. This will be particularly beneficial where requirements under Section 4.5 are met between two or more Bus Operators on common corridors and where co-ordination requirements in Sections 4.6 and 4.7 are met. Where such arrangements become necessary, DCC will assess the arrangements and ensure that such arrangements comply with competition law.

Table 4: Details of individual schemes for “Better Affordability of Travel”

Scheme title or intervention	Scheme details	Delivery milestones	Outcomes at scheme level
1. Fare reductions	Devon Day Ticket - Fare Subsidy Devon Day Ticket will initially be reduced in price to £6.60 (from £9.60) for an adult fare, allowing unlimited daily bus travel across multiple Bus Operators on the majority of bus services across the county.	New fares to be implemented from Autumn 2022	Increased patronage as this will be the cheapest ticket for many bus users and will provide substantial savings on current fares. This will be both a paper and contact less digital ticket, readable by QR ticket machines. Over the 3-year period the aim would be to increase passenger growth sufficiently to achieve commercial sustainability.

	Town Fare Ticket pilot - Fare Subsidy Bideford, Newton Abbot and Exmouth - unlimited bus travel in each area for £3 per day.		
2. Promotional events to encourage people to try the bus - for example: Fare Sale, nominated weekends or school holiday promotions offering reduced fares, child add-on fares for £1, special offer on Devon Day ticket	In association with our Bus Operators, we will design a calendar of events to promote ticket sales and encourage people to try the bus. Revenue costs include promotional activities and fare subsidies. There will also be a publicity campaign to specifically target concessionary bus users, to restore this market to pre-pandemic levels.	Promotional activities to run from October 2022 for length of project	Improve bus patronage and encourage people who have not tried the bus before or for a long time to give it a go.

3.2.4 Better Accessibility to Services by Integrating Bus with Other Modes: Stronger links with modes including but not limited to; bus, coach, rail, cycle, and ferries

- DCC will work with the rail sector and Bus Operators to develop services, linked information and interchange opportunities, alongside current and future developments on the rail network;
- DCC will work with providers of long-distance road transport services-to strengthen joint working arrangements, with regards to ticketing, interchange, infrastructure, and information alongside current and future developments on these networks; and
- DCC will identify and work with partners to improve first and last mile opportunities between the local bus network and other supporting modes including but not limited to walking, cycling, and lift-sharing.
- DCC will work with ferry service providers and Bus Operators to develop bus services, linked information and interchange opportunities, alongside current and future developments in the ferry service sector.

3.2.5 Better Passenger Experience Through Improved Quality of Information:

- DCC will work with Bus Operators to explore and where possible implement opportunities to set minimum passenger standards on vehicles across the network with a view to improving information, accessibility, and the passenger experience.
- DCC will further improve online / electronic information and will align current information streams between DCC and Bus Operators in order to consolidate and maximise the opportunities that already exist in this area;

- DCC will work with Bus Operators to develop a brand around ‘Devon Bus’ such that this sits as part of the ‘Travel Devon’ approach. Devon Bus will be developed with Bus Operators and other stakeholders as identified to give confidence in the consistent level of services we aim to deliver through The Scheme; and
- DCC will further promote bus use to a range of potential users for both regular and casual use. DCC aim to meet modal shift and passenger growth targets by working with Bus Operators and other stakeholders, to identify potential opportunities, such as the recent Back on the Bus campaign and other suitable approaches. A specific campaign will be developed to target concessionary bus users, to restore this market to pre-pandemic levels.

3.2.6 Better Carbon Outcomes: Through a modernised, cleaner bus fleet.

- DCC will commission a longer-term incremental decarbonisation strategy with a structured and costed delivery plan that sees DCC’s ambition kept in step with emerging technologies and improvements in the performance of existing propulsion systems (e.g., electric and hydrogen);
- DCC will explore opportunities with Bus Operators to trial electric buses in an urban context in Exeter and Barnstaple with the lessons learnt informing the next steps in the development of any longer-term decarbonisation strategy; and
- DCC will set out plans to reduce the carbon emissions of the transport sector as part of a wider package of measures that seek to reduce the need to travel across Devon. The aim will be to move those that do need to travel onto more sustainable modes by making these more attractive, consistent, and integrated, and make more of programmes such as ‘Active Travel’ to promote non-motorised modes for either whole journey lengths or first and last mile travel.
- DCC will explore and develop opportunities to bid for zero emission vehicles in partnership with Bus Operators from time to time as opportunities to access funding are made available.

3.2.7 Better Health and Education Outcomes: Through ‘Total Transport’ efficiencies

DCC will explore opportunities to further its work in relation to coordinating and integrating all aspects of passenger transport across Devon to improve ‘access for all’. DCC plans to integrate further the DRT approach further into its functions across the passenger transport discipline.

4. Obligations on Local Bus Operators⁴

The Obligations set out below will apply to qualifying Bus Operators who have joined the partnership. The Scheme can be varied (see Section 5) to add detail designed to aid the introduction of each Obligation, following discussion and agreement with the EPB or by way of the Statutory Mechanism.

4.1 Vehicle Standards

Bus Operators in Devon will work with DCC towards establishing a minimum level of passenger standards for application across existing and future buses used in Devon. Facets of this standard will relate to, but not be limited to: CCTV, on-board passenger facilities (e.g., USB ports); audio visual passenger systems, and ticketing systems.

Bus Operators will work with DCC towards a programme of minimum emission level improvements across the Devon bus fleet in line with DCC's 'measures' regarding decarbonisation in such a way that maximises the lifespan and use of existing assets.

4.2 Timetable changes

Bus Operators will work towards a system of agreed timetable change dates across the local bus network in Devon. This will take an agile approach to school and tourism related services to ensure a stable network that creates bus passenger confidence in the long-term. Where possible (having regard to commercial and practical considerations and an approach where this can be achieved without worsening the offer to existing bus passengers), there will be significantly increased coordination with local and national rail service timetables at bus/rail interchanges as well as other road and water modes of public transport in Devon.

Where deviation away from this approach is required to manage unprecedented situations, such as an operator specific timetable and/or service level changes, the Bus Operator will:

- notify the Enhanced Partnership Board of their intentions;
- have regard to the views of the Enhanced Partnership Board;
- will seek to work with DCC on any potential mitigations where otherwise any specific timetable and/or service level changes will be made.

It is recognised that from time to time there may be occasions when a Bus Operator is required to make timetable changes outside of this approach, these may be (but not limited to):

- In the immediate interest of the public;
- Due to immediately required 'emergency' service re-routing;
- To take advantage of changes to the highway network.

⁴ Under s.138C of the Transport Act 2000

4.3 Ticketing

Bus Operators in Devon shall ensure that all buses used on local bus services will be able to accept contactless payment for all ticketing products offered.

Bus Operators in Devon shall, subject to being practical and funding being identified, use reasonable endeavours to simplify fares and work with DCC to undertake promotions in targeted markets to drive growth and help achieve modal shift targets.

An agreed exit plan needs to be put in place between DCC and Bus Operators when funding comes to an end if the fare improvements have not achieved commercial sustainability.

Bus Operators will consider and use reasonable endeavours to achieve planned changes in city / town centre, area wide, and cross-boundary / Peninsula fare policies, relating in particular to daily and weekly ticket options and fare capping.

4.4 Enhancing Frequency

Bus Operators will explore and where possible implement opportunities where current local bus service frequencies can be further enhanced and establish if such enhancements will be commercially viable or if they will require initial or continued funding through the BSIP, or any other source, to achieve. This may be alongside existing services of any Bus Operator only where requirements in 4.5 are met such that additional services do not result in a negative outcome such as overprovision. Where such funding is required to support service / frequency increases, this needs to be at an appropriate level to guarantee the commercial viability of the service within a time period to be agreed and linked to the funding requirement.

4.5 Limiting Frequency

When contemplating making changes to frequency of services included within The Scheme, Bus Operators will have regard to the views of the EPB when planning to make any local bus service changes and will seek to work together on any potential mitigations where frequencies are reduced due to viability.

It is recognised that there needs to be sufficient flexibility to allow Bus Operators to run services at the right frequencies to make them commercially viable.

Where appropriate Bus Operators will be required to make reasonable endeavours to operate even headways across corridors where two or more services combine and to coordinate timetables between services across the network to enable increased interchange.

4.6 Operator Re-investment Mechanism

4.6.1

Where investment in any single facility or corridor of combined facilities as detailed in section 3.1.1 equates to measurable journey time savings on a route(s) over levels agreed no more than three months prior to delivery of the facility, Bus Operators will, within three (3) months of the facility generating measurable and agreed time savings undertake to carry out the following:

- Where the measurable journey time saving allows one or more buses to be removed from the route(s) vehicle cycle to achieve the same operating pattern the Bus Operator will redeploy these within the local bus network to either increase frequency on the same route(s) (increasing the operating pattern) or increase service elsewhere across the network in agreement with the Enhanced Partnership Board whilst maintaining the same operating pattern on the original route(s) affected; or,
- Where the measurable journey time saving does not allow one or more buses to be removed from the route(s) vehicle cycle (operating pattern) but does otherwise reduce journey time by an agreed figure on the route(s) the Bus Operator will commit to investing in additional local bus journey improvements using the operational time saved at a level commensurate with the cumulative timesaving across all journeys within one operational day in order to extend public timetable(s) outside of original operating hours prior to the facility being implemented (e.g., this may lead to new evening and weekend trips);

4.6.2

If the above clauses in 4.6.1 cannot be met by realised time savings but investment in any single facility or corridor of combined facilities equates to some measurable journey time savings over levels agreed no more than three months prior to delivery of the facility, Bus Operators will, within three (3) months of the facility generating measurable time savings, undertake to carry out the following:

- Marketing and promotional activities that demonstrate to passengers and the public the improvements now being seen on the route and consider specific route branding and further promotion (e.g., ticketing and fares) that may further increase bus passenger use.
- Invest in newer and cleaner buses to a minimum EURO VI standard for the route in question where this standard of bus represents a recognised step change over existing vehicles deployed;

4.7 Publicity and Marketing

Bus Operators will be expected to keep digital records that facilitate the provision of data required for the DCC Real-Time Information (RTI) system and DfT Bus Open Data Service (BODS) up to date, through services such as Ticketer. This includes, but isn't limited to, bus service timetables, bus routes, and bus fleet details.

Additionally, Bus Operators will be expected to enforce bus drivers following correct data entry procedures at ETMs on buses.

For commercially run services, we would expect Bus Operators to provide a basic timetable in both a printed and digital format to be distributed to customers, and where appropriate, displayed at the roadside. Should an operator be unable or unwilling to produce this, they may be asked to make a contribution towards the costs for DCC to produce and distribute this.

Any changes to timetable should be updated in all formats as soon as possible prior to the revised timetable commencing.

DCC, in association with operators, will design a calendar of events to promote ticket sales and encourage people to try the bus. Promotional events could include: Fare Sale, nominated weekends or school holiday promotions offering reduced fares, child add-on fares for £1, special offer on Devon Day ticket

4.8 Co-ordination with Rail Services

Where possible (having regard to commercial and practical considerations and an approach where this can be achieved without worsening the offer to existing bus passengers), Bus Operators and Train Operating Companies (TOCs) will coordinate local bus service timetables with light and heavy rail services where interchange locations are served as part of the local bus service route.

Bus Operators will be required to make reasonable endeavours to allow flexibility to accommodate late connections where possible.

When disruption (planned or unplanned) occurs on the rail network Bus Operators will make reasonable endeavours to coordinate services between themselves and work alongside rail operators to make special provision for services and capacity where this would benefit stranded passengers.

4.9 Co-ordination between local bus services or between local buses and other types of road transport such as Demand Responsive Transport (DRT)

Bus Operators will ensure where possible (having regard to commercial and practical considerations and an approach where this can be achieved without worsening the offer to existing bus passengers), timetables are coordinated with other road transport services at agreed interchange locations to facilitate interchange. Bus Operators will make reasonable endeavours to allow flexibility for late connections where possible.

4.10 Understanding bus user perceptions and attitudes

Bus Operators will work with DCC to develop a plan for regular bus user consultation, in line with annual BSIP review as a minimum, to inform all partners on how well bus users feel The Plan and The Scheme are being delivered in addition to participating from time to time in any other agreed user consultation activity for the benefit of promoting the 'bus' and evaluating The Scheme's, or parts thereof, performance.

5. Consultation Plans and Future Funding Arrangements

This section was moved from the “Plan” (section 9) to the “Scheme” – subsequent sections have been renumbered

- 5.1. DCC’s plans to consult with operators and passenger groups on how well The Plan and The Scheme is working. This will centre on quarterly EPB meetings and agenda items focused on task/finish/evaluate activities. This high-level review will inform DCC and Bus Operators on the Enhanced Partnership’s performance.
- 5.2. Linked to the EPB will be the Bus Users and Stakeholders (BUS) Group. This will comprise a wider range of bus user representatives and stakeholders with a vested interest in the local bus network (e.g., the rail industry, local businesses, passenger representative groups and local councils). This group will provide a second tier of peer review and performance consultation and the group will be able to challenge the success of deliverables achieved through The Plan and The Scheme, providing feedback and evaluation to the EPB via the BUS Group Chair and passenger representatives.
- 5.3. Understanding local bus service user perceptions of The Plan and The Scheme success is also critical. On an annual basis DCC will capture and present the customer satisfaction results linked to the local bus network through the National Highways and Transport (NHT) Survey. In addition to the NHT Survey DCC and Bus Operators will consult at least annually in line with the BSIP review period on the performance of the local bus network and various facilities and measures put in place to make substantive improvements. This consultation will take the form of quantitative and qualitative data gathering through a range of potential channels, including but not limited to: face to face interviews; online surveys; focus groups with results used to inform further iterations of the BSIP and record passenger perception of local bus performance changes due to changes made through the BSIP and Enhanced Partnership processes.
- 5.4. Further to regular consultation on the performance of The Plan and The Scheme, securing the right level of funding is also critical to ensure that:
 - Everyone, no matter where in Devon, is connected to opportunity; and
 - Existing business can grow, and Devon is able to continue attracting new businesses and inward investment.
- 5.5. The EPB will seek to draw on multiple funding sources where appropriate and if applications for funding are successful, to deliver the desired outcomes of The Scheme:
 - Bus Service Improvement Plan funding allocation from Central Government
 - Local Government revenue funding
 - Rural Transport Fund (RTF)

- Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) Fund
- Town Funds (TF)
- Future High Street Funds (FHSF)
- Developer contributions (e.g., Section 106)
- Reinvestment of operator revenue generated by schemes
- Other external funding opportunities as they arise (e.g., additional government grants or grants from rail operators)
- Funding from providing statutory transport functions, for example school or patient transport.

6. Governance Arrangements

6.1 Enhanced Partnership Board

The future content and arrangements for the variation and revocation of The Plan and The Scheme will be considered by the EPB, whose EPB Members comprise:

- DCC Cabinet Member for Transport – who will assume the role of Chair
- DCC representatives (as the Local Transport Authority and Local Highway Authority);
- Bus Operators who are subject to the Devon Enhanced Partnership requirements;
- Chair of the Bus User and Stakeholder (BUS) Group, who will represent the views of key stakeholders and bus users

The EPB is supported in its decision making by themed working groups (e.g., the Bus Punctuality Group), all of which take forward the more detailed workstreams. There will be oversight of the Enhanced Partnership from DCC Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee. The structure of this governance is illustrated in Figure 2 below:

Figure 2: Structure of Enhanced Partnership Board



Future content and arrangements for the variation and revocation of The Plan and The Scheme will be considered by the EPB.

6.2 Conduct of meetings of the Enhanced Partnership Board

Meetings of the EPB will be held as if they are meetings of a decision-making body for the purposes of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012. Accordingly:

- At least five clear working days' notice will be given, in writing, to each EPB Member of every ordinary meeting of the EPB, to include an agenda and accompanying reports relating to the business to be transacted at the meeting. Late items will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, with the agreement of the Chair;
- Meetings of the EPB will be held at least quarterly with the meeting arrangements including dates and times agreed by the Chair in consultation with the EPB Members;
- Agendas, minutes, and reports of the EPB will be published on DCC's website. The only exception to this relates to confidential or exempt information;
- The EPB may invite third parties to participate in meetings of the board and/or be members of sub-groups or project teams established by the EPB.
- Third parties may request to address the EPB on a specific issue or proposal. The Chair of the EPB will determine whether to grant the request.

6.3 Decision-making and Voting Rights

The EPB is a forum for collaborative discussion to formulate recommendations to its constituent organisations. The EPB Members will aim to come to a consensus view, if possible, regarding each recommendation and to acknowledge any areas of difference of opinion (subject to the bespoke arrangements for varying or revoking The Scheme set out below where the procedure set out therein will apply). Any formal decisions will be subject to DCC's constitution, and internal governance processes.⁵

Where a consensus of opinion at the EPB cannot be achieved for a particular recommendation, the decision will be subject to a vote by EPB members, and a decision made by majority vote. Each of the six members of the EPB, as detailed in figure 2 (section 6.1) will have ONE vote each. Where the votes cast create a tie, the Head of Transport Co-ordination Service for DCC will have the casting vote.

In the unlikely event that a board member or members disputes a decision, a review would be conducted to reconcile the dispute. In the event that a dispute cannot be reconciled, the board would revert to the statutory process.

6.4 Review of EP Scheme

Once The Scheme is made, it will be reviewed by the EPB every six months following publication of data on progress towards targets, as required by the BSIP – this will ensure any necessary action is taken to deliver the targets set out in the BSIP (see Annex A). DCC will initiate each review.

The EPB can also decide to review specific elements of The Scheme on an ad-hoc basis. EPB Members should contact DCC using the following email address: devonbus@devon.gov.uk explaining what the issue is and its urgency. DCC will then decide whether to table at the next scheduled meeting or plan for all or the necessary EPB Members to gather more quickly.

6.5 Bespoke Arrangements for Varying or Revoking the Enhanced Partnership Scheme

Under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000, Enhanced Partnership Scheme Variations where this section is quoted will be subject to the bespoke agreement and decision-making mechanism also as set out in this section.

Changes to, or new flexibility provisions added to The Scheme under s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 shall only be included in The Scheme if they satisfy the statutory objection mechanism as set out in The Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018.

⁵ Any change can be made to the EP scheme where any member of the Board has made a proposal for a change. The Board will then consider the proposal in due course and the proposal will be implemented if it receives the unanimous support of bus operators and the support of the County Council. This procedure is most suited to simple, uncontentious changes. The requirement for unanimity will exclude anything controversial, in that case the statutory procedure will apply.

6.5.1 Proposer of a variation

Consideration will be given to potential variation(s) to The Scheme highlighted either by DCC, one of the organisations represented on the EPB, or by a Bus Operator of qualifying local bus services. The proposer of a variation should demonstrate how this might contribute to achieving the objectives set out in the BSIP, The Plan and current local transport policies. Such requests should be in writing, on the proforma provided (Annexe B), and submitted to devonbus@devon.gov.uk DCC will forward all requests onto all EPB Members within 5 (five) working days.

6.5.2 Decision-making process and bespoke objection mechanism

On receipt of (or having itself initiated) a request for a variation under this section, DCC will reconvene the EPB, giving at least 14 days' notice for the meeting, to consider the proposed variation. If the proposed variation is agreed by all representatives of Bus Operators of qualifying local bus services present, and if DCC also agrees, then DCC will make The Scheme variation within 7 (seven) working days and publish The Scheme as revised on its website. EPB Members who are absent or not expressing a view at the meeting (either in person or in writing⁶) will be deemed to be abstaining from the decision.

6.5.3 Revocation of an EP Scheme

If DCC or another Member of the EPB believes it is necessary to revoke The Scheme, the EPB will be reconvened. If the decision is taken to revoke The Scheme, DCC will follow the legislative procedures for revocation.

If at any point in the future, any area covered by The Scheme is included in a bus franchising scheme, the relevant requirements set out in The Scheme document will cease to apply to areas covered by the franchising scheme, in line with the arrangements set out in the franchising scheme.⁷

6.6 Data sharing and Confidentiality

6.6.1 Confidentiality

DCC will only use information provided to it by an EPB Member for the purpose(s) it was obtained. Where necessary for the purpose(s), DCC may share the obtained information provided with:

- A local transport authority
- The Secretary of State for Transport
- Anyone providing services to any of the above such as a consultant (including anyone providing services to DCC who obtained the information).

⁶ This could also include proxy voting, if the bus operators concerned provide written confirmation to the LTA.

⁷ Section 123H(6)-(8) of the Transport Act 2000

6.6.2 The EPB Members shall keep confidential the confidential Information of any other EPB Member and shall use all reasonable endeavours to prevent their personnel from making any disclosure to any person of any matters relating thereto.

6.6.3 Paragraph 6.6.2 shall not apply to any disclosure of information:

6.6.3.1 Where required by any Law, provided that paragraph 5.6.4 (Freedom of Information) shall apply to any disclosures required under the FOIA or the EIRs;

6.6.3.2 Where an EPB Member can demonstrate that such information is already generally available and in the public domain otherwise than as a result of a breach of paragraph 6.6.2;

6.6.3.3 by DCC of any document which the EPB Members have agreed contains no Confidential Information;

6.6.3.4 by DCC to any other department, office or agency of the government, provided that DCC informs the recipient of any duty of confidence owed in respect of the information;

6.6.3.5 if personal data, the subject data has consented to its disclosure;

6.6.3.6 to comply with a court order or tribunal; and

6.6.3.7 in connection with the investigation of crime or for the purposes of criminal proceedings or civil action under the 2017 Act or the Transport Act 1985.

6.6.4 Freedom of Information

DCC is subject to the requirements of the FOIA and the EIRs. Information obtained by DCC under the Enhanced Partnership will not be disclosed if it is information that DCC would refuse to disclose in response to a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 where certain categories of information are exempted from disclosure. Broadly the categories of information exempt from disclosure are:

- personal data;
- information provided in confidence;
- information subject to legal professional privilege;
- Information constituting certain commercial interests.

6.6.5 Data Protection Legislation

All Members of the EPB will comply with all applicable requirements of the Data Protection Legislation. This paragraph is in addition to, and does not relieve, remove, or replace, an EPB Member's obligations or rights under the Data Protection Legislation.

Scheme Annex A

DCC STRATEGIC BSIP TARGETS

The Table below outlines the targets set in the BSIP for bus operation using 2018/19 as a baseline (representing the pre-pandemic period across England).

Table 1: DCC BSIP Targets

TARGETS*		Historical Data		Baseline 2021/22*	Target for 2025	Target for 2030	Measurement
		2018/19	2019/20				
Average Journey Speed - MPH		13.11	12.98	13.00	15.00	17.00	MPH - number of miles operated in a given time period divided by the number of operating hours in the same period
Network Punctuality & Reliability	Services operated	99.60%	99.30%	99.5%	99.6%	99.6%	% operated mileage. Annual bus punctuality survey carried out by the Council's consultants in compliance with existing DfT guidance.
	Services on time [†]	74.5%	73.1%	TBC	92%	95%	Annual bus punctuality survey carried out by the Council's consultants in compliance with existing DfT guidance.
Passenger Numbers		23.9 Million	23.6 Million	14.7 Million (previously predicted as 16.5 m)	15.4 Million 105% 21/22 figure	16.1 Million 110% 21/22 figure	Total numbers of bus journeys made. Established channels of data supply from Bus Operators to the Council backed up by data-sharing agreements as appropriate
Customer Satisfaction Level		95%	93%	TBC*	97%	98%	Transport Focus passenger satisfaction survey (*please note last survey was completed in 2019 – baseline to be established)
Modal Shift – current market share		3%		3%	5%	7%	Devon bus trips per capita (from DfT Bus Statistics) divided by South West total trips (from National Travel Survey)

**We have adjusted these targets as of June 2022 to reflect the indicative funding award from DfT, and the current state of the bus market in Devon. They will be reviewed every 6 months.*

PROFORMA FOR PROPOSED VARIATIONS TO THE SCHEME(S)

Name, Position and Company:

Proposed change to The Scheme:

Reasons for Change (*please include which objective from the BSIP this supports – these can be found on page 6 of the EP Plan document*):

Implications of the proposed change:

Signed and dated:

Date discussed at EPB and record of decision made:

Scheme Annex C

LIST OF BUS OPERATORS PARTICIPATING IN THE ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP

Axe Valley Mini Travel
Country Bus
First South West
First Wessex
Stagecoach Devon Ltd
Tally Ho Coaches
Dartline
Filers
Hatch Green
MD Buses
Oakleys
Plymouth Citybus
Redwoods
Taw & Torridge

Signed signature sheets for these operators have been received by DCC. These were in agreement to version 4.0 of this document. Subsequent versions are agreed through the variation mechanism as described in section 6.5.1 of the Scheme document.

~ END OF DOCUMENT ~