

ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP BOARD

9 August 2022

Item 4 – New EP Schemes Proposed Priorities

Executive Summary

The South Yorkshire Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme was approved by the Mayoral Combined Authority in March 2022 and commenced on 1 April 2022. Based on Government guidance at the time, the current Enhanced Partnership Scheme includes only elements for which funding was already known and committed at the time of its initial preparation (November 2021).

Once more information was available on future central and devolved funding for bus improvements, the intention was to develop further Enhanced Partnership Schemes.

This paper summarises the start of this process for early input from the Board.

What does this mean for businesses, people and places in South Yorkshire?

The Strategic Economic Plan and the Mayor's Transport Strategy both underline the importance of the bus network to businesses, residents and visitors in South Yorkshire, whilst the independent Bus Review commissioned by the Mayor indicated a number of issues with the current network. The recently completed Initial Bus Service Improvement Plan includes a range of short-, medium- and long-term actions aimed at supporting the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and providing the bus network that South Yorkshire needs to achieve its aims for a stronger, fairer and greener region. The Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme is a means of delivering the short-term actions within the Bus Service Improvement Plan

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board notes the contents of this paper and provides a steer as to what activities it would prefer to see in future Enhanced Partnership Schemes.

Consideration by any other Board, Committee, Assurance or Advisory Panel

None

1. Background

- 1.1 The South Yorkshire Enhanced Partnership Plan (EPP) and Scheme (EPS) was approved by the Mayoral Combined Authority in March 2022 and commenced on 1 April 2022. Based on Government guidance at the time, the current Enhanced Partnership Scheme includes only elements for which funding was already known and committed at the time of its initial preparation (November 2021).
- 1.2 Once more information was available on future central and devolved funding for bus improvements, the intention was to develop further EPSs. These may be on a route/service basis (where bus priority infrastructure is planned), on a geographic basis (in one of the operating areas), or on a thematic basis (zero emission vehicles or ticketing), or a combination of these.
- 1.3 Through the EP Development Group, work has started to understand what activities and interventions could be included in future EPSs, using devolved funding (City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS)) and informed by the outcomes of the 7-Point Plan work commissioned by the MCA. The EP Development Group receives and discusses a regular EPS Programme Monitoring Report. This paper summarises the work done to date for discussion by the Board.

2. Identifying Priority Activities for Further EPSs

- 2.1 The Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) contained 40 prioritised activities that were considered necessary to deliver the improvements to the bus service that all partners wish to see. These are set against four broad ambitions:
 - A cap on daily and weekly fares and free travel for under 18s, plus access to cashless ticketing to create an easy to use system
 - A faster, more reliable, and punctual system helped by significant bus priority measures
 - A better bus experience from shelters to information, backed by a new customer charter
 - A new zero emission bus fleet and on-demand bus service.
- 2.2 Out of the 40 activities, 7 are already included in the current EPS and so are assumed to be committed, and 6 are in development with funding being sought through the Levelling Up Fund. This leaves 27 activities that could form part of future EPSs (see **Appendix A** for full list of activities).
- 2.3 At its last meeting, the EP Development Group undertook an exercise to prioritise the remaining activities to determine which are most likely to be effective in achieving the EPP targets and objectives, primarily through the CRSTS funding allocated to “BSIP Improvements” within the programme. Each attendee was asked to review the remaining BSIP priority activities and select their top five.
- 2.4 This process resulted in six BSIP activities gaining a clear preference for future EPSs:
 - 2 – Pinch-point junction improvements at identified locations of greatest delay
 - 4 – Develop a pipeline of bus priority improvements across the key route network

- 9 – Ensure that ticket prices are more competitive with other modes and parking charges in urban centres
- 27 – Develop a consistent offer for under 21s and additional concessions/discounts for target segments
- 6 – “Turn up and go” frequencies on major corridors with additional services at evenings and weekends
- 13 – Implement a consistent standard across whole journey experience and all operators

In essence, the EP Development Group indicated a clear preference to prioritise bus priority measures and pricing with any future allocation of funding and EPSs.

3. Action(s) Required from Enhanced Partnership Board

- 3.1 Before proceeding with any detailed development of future funded activity, the EP Development Group wished to seek the early input from the Board on the identified priorities and whether there are any priorities within the four activities.

4. Financial and Procurement Implications and Advice

- 4.1 None as a result of this paper.

5. Legal Implications and Advice

- 5.1 None as a result of this paper.

6. Human Resources Implications and Advice

- 6.1 None as a result of this paper.

7. Equality and Diversity Implications and Advice

- 7.1 The EPP sets out the region’s plans for improving accessibility across the bus network and on board our services and the EPS is the means by which these improvements will start to be delivered.

- 7.2 Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, in agreeing any actions relating to the EPP and the EPS, the Board should have due regard to the need to:

- i. Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- ii. Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- iii. foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8. Climate Change Implications and Advice

- 8.1 The EPP sets out the scale of change required to meet the region’s net zero targets by 2035. At present the region does not have any zero emission buses and the EPP identifies the trajectory, costs and initial projects that could begin the transition from diesel to alternative fuels – some of these initial projects are included in the EPS.

9. Information and Communication Technology Implications and Advice

9.1 None as a result of this paper.

10. Communications and Marketing Implications and Advice

10.1 None as a result of this paper.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix A – Bus Priority Activities: Status

Background Papers

None