

26th September 2022**Agenda Item:****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, PLACE AND COMMUNITIES****ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP AND BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN****Purpose of the Report**

The purpose of the report is to:

1. To further progress the development of the Enhanced Partnership Plans for Nottinghamshire and Greater Nottingham (Robin Hood) areas, pending the confirmation of Government funding.
2. This is a key decision because it involves funding over £1,000,000 and affects all Nottinghamshire residents. The key decision was published on 19th August 2022.

Information

3. Members approved the Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes for Greater Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to be “made” at Transport and Highways Committee on the 4th May 2022. The EPs have now been “made” and these provide the legal framework to implement further bus improvements over the duration of the agreements. The current agreement runs for 5 years.
4. Also at the Committee meeting on the 4th May, as part of the same paper, members were informed that the Councils had been provisionally awarded the following Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) allocations:
 - Nottinghamshire BSIP: £18,714,046 (of which £12,897,836 capital and £5,816,210 revenue)
 - Greater Nottingham BSIP: £11,367,416 (of which £7,860,715 capital and £3,506,700 revenue)
5. The release of this funding was dependant on further information being submitted to the Government indicating how the funding would be allocated to reflect the Council's prioritised interventions, detailed timelines and costs of the proposals. This included a revised summary table and revised EPs, which included details of how the Bus Service Improvement Plan monies would be spent over the duration of the EPs. This further information was submitted at the end of June 2022 to the DfT, and further revisions have been made following further feedback from the DfT in August 2022. The Council is now awaiting confirmation from the DfT that our revised submission has been successful.

6. The revised EPs included as Appendices 1 and 2 to this report detail the proposals for BSIP funded improvements. These proposals are summarised in Appendix 3 which are split into different thematic categories and include:
 - Bus network development service improvements including Demand Responsive Transport
 - Bus priority improvements; including Automatic Vehicle Location Traffic Light Priority and pinch point package
 - Improved ticketing such as U22 Young Persons concessions and integrated ticketing
 - Improved bus service integration through the development of a Mobility Hub network
 - EP staffing support to administer the EP schemes
7. Many of the BSIP improvements require further feasibility work to be completed before any proposals are further developed and implemented and therefore may be subject to change.
8. Any highway improvements will go through the statutory consultation process (TROs) before being implemented to consider the views of all stakeholders. For larger schemes consultation roadshows will be undertaken where appropriate.
9. The BSIP improvements have been co-developed with the bus operators and they have provided support letters for the proposals.

Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) scheme.

10. As part of the National Bus Strategy the government announced the ZEBRA funding competition. This competition enabled Local Transport Authorities in partnership with bus operators to bid for monies for electric/hydrogen buses and the associated charging /fuelling infrastructure. The Council expressed an interest to bid for a second round of ZEBRA funding should the opportunity arise, and it's been indicated that there may be a further competition announcement at the end of September. The Council will continue to work with operators to prepare a bid once details of the scheme are announced.

Proposals

11. It is proposed that the draft EPs are approved for further development and feasibility work ahead of Government confirmation of funding.
12. It is proposed that the BSIP funding is accepted once Government has confirmed the funding allocation, and the EPs are finalised.
13. The Cabinet member is kept informed of any minor changes to the EPs to enable implementation and where the changes are significant formal approval is sought from the Cabinet member. An update report on the EPs and BSIPs will be prepared for the Cabinet Member on an annual basis.

Other options considered

14. Without a revised EP the Council will not secure the funding.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

15. To enable the Council to access over £30,000,000 to improve buses and bus infrastructure and help deliver Council Plan ambitions.

Statutory and Policy Implications

16. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability, and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

17. The proposed BSIP funding is outlined in Paragraph 4.

Consultation

18. Statutory consultation will be carried out for all Highways schemes and other improvements within the BSIP programmes.

Public Sector Equality Duty implications

19. The need for Equality impact assessments will be considered as part of the BSIP programmes.

Implications for Residents

20. The proposals outlined in this report support existing and future bus users to access employment, training, health and leisure opportunities whilst meeting the Council's commitments to tackle Climate Change and improve air quality.

Implications for Sustainability and the Environment

21. The proposals outlined in this report support existing and future bus users to access employment, training, health and leisure facilities. These actions are also intended to minimise the impact of COVID-19, aid the economic recovery, improve air quality and reduce CO2 emissions.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the updated draft Enhanced Partnership Plans for the Nottinghamshire and Greater Nottingham (Robin Hood) Areas be approved for further development and feasibility work, ahead of the Bus Service Improvement Plans funding allocations being confirmed by Government.

- 2) That the Government funding, once confirmed, be accepted and the Enhanced Partnership Plans for the Nottinghamshire and Greater Nottingham (Robin Hood) Areas be finalised, with the Cabinet Member to be kept informed of any subsequent minor amendments required to enable implementation and Cabinet Member approval to be sought where such amendments are significant.

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For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Constitutional Comments (LPW 22/09/2022)

22. The recommendations fall within the remit of Cabinet Member, Transport and Environment, by virtue of their terms of reference.

Financial Comments (RWK 22/09/2022)

23. The report sets out details of the updated draft Enhanced Partnership Plans for the Nottinghamshire and Greater Nottingham (Robin Hood) Areas that have been submitted to Government. If approved the plans will attract additional funding in the region of £30M. If approved amendments will be required to the revenue budget and capital programme to reflect any additional funding awarded. It is anticipated that the costs of delivering the Enhanced Partnership Plan will be funded from additional Government funding and from within existing County Council revenue budget and capital programme allocations and there will be no additional costs to the County Council.

Background Papers and Published Documents

- Transport and Environment committee -04/05/2022 - **NATIONAL BUS STRATEGY: PUBLIC TRANSPORT UPDATE**

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All