


Meeting Title:	<div>Southampton Bus Service Improvement Plan</div> Southampton Enhanced Partnership Board – Notes of Meeting agreed at the April EP Board	
Date:	21 January 2025	
Time:	10:00am-12:00pm	
Location:	Executive Boardroom, Civic Centre, Southampton & MS Teams	
<u>Invitees:</u>	Cllr Eamonn Keogh, SCC Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport (Chair); Pete Boustred, SCC Head of Transport & Planning; Wade Holmes, SCC, Service Manager, Integrated Transport; Andrew Wickham, Go South Coast Managing Director; Richard Tyldsley, Go South Coast General Manager; Adam Mugliston, First Bus Network Revenue Manager. <u>Observers</u> Andrew Wilson, HCC Strategic Transport Manager (Public Transport); Iain Steane, SCC Transport Policy & Sustainable Travel Manager; Emma Baker, SCC Strategic Transport Planner; David Garney, SCC Senior Transport Planner. <u>Apologies:</u> Richard Soper, South Hampshire Bus Operators Association (SHBOA).	
Ref	Agenda Items	Presenting
1	Welcome & Introductions Cllr Keogh congratulated Andrew Wickham on his MBE for services to the bus industry.	Cllr Keogh
2	Minutes & Actions from Previous Meeting	All
	Minutes from the EP Board meeting held on 22 October were accepted and agreed at the meeting. Open actions were discussed, and progress noted. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• WH advised that a Portswood Bus Gate press release is in production.• New Service 19A. Bluestar are planning to provide ‘coming soon’ bus stop posters and a distribution of the new timetable leaflet within 400m of properties of Hill Lane and Winchester Road.• MP Satvir Kaur to attend the 19A launch event, Go South Coast to lead on the launch event.	
3	End of 2024 Review IS went through the Southampton 2024 review slides as seen in the board pack.	IS/EB

	<p>RT went through the Bluestar slides as seen in the board pack.</p> <p>AM went through the First Bus slides as seen in the board pack.</p> <p>AWS went through the Hampshire County Council slides as seen in the board pack.</p> <p>General comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Keogh is keen that the bus network is promoted as a city region as Hampshire funded bus enhancements are benefitting city residents. • AW noted that this partnership is currently in place which should see a smooth transition should devolution happen. • Cllr Keogh highlighted that progress on devolution will help with securing additional DfT funds. We can get the money, and we have an operator that can deliver. As a partnership, we need to keep getting the messages out there. • PB added that devolution and mayoral elections could happen fairly quickly if fast tracked. <p>Action – Southampton City Council and Bluestar to produce public comms to highlight 5th place in the top 10 Local Transport Authorities for bus patronage after the new service 19A has been launched.</p> <p>Action - The SCC comms team to invite the Itchen MP's along to the service 19A launch. Go South Coast are leading on the event planning</p>	
4	EP Working Group Highlights	IS/EB
	<p>IS and EB provided an update to the group.</p> <p>Punctuality and Journey times</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journey times & punctuality impacted by closures and diversions on the road network during the second half of the year. Works at St Denys Road, Lodge Road and Civic Centre junction had a significant adverse impact on punctuality and patronage decreased on Bluestar 20. • Cllr Keogh added that service 16 has been affected by utility works in the Bitterne and Midanbury areas. • AW felt that the BODs punctuality data would need to be analysed in greater detail in view of how early buses are shown. 	
5	Motions for Approval	IS
	<p>(a) BSIP 25/26 spend proposals</p> <p>IS ran through the process for the BSIP 25/26 funding process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus Grant Funding was announced in November following the Autumn Budget and includes revenue (formerly BSIP+), capital (new), capacity and capability (new) and BSOG (integrated into BGF). • Revenue funding must be spent in 2025/26 but can fund services in 2026/27 if committed. • Capital funding must be committed by March 2026 and spent before March 2027. • Acceptance of the grant requires S151 approval. LTAs also have to submit a Delivery Plan and signed MOU by 31st March 2025 detailing the schemes that will be funded by the Bus Grant Fund. • LTAs are required to publish a list of schemes that will be funded by BGF. 	

	<p>General comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AW asked whether parking along the Shirley corridor will be included in the corridor improvement works. IS confirmed that parking will be considered. • RT discussed Portsmouth's scheme painting bus lanes red and indications are that infringements have decreased as a result of the initiative. The East Park Terrace treatment is ideal. • AWS confirmed that Hampshire will contribute towards the MRT study along with Southampton. • Cllr Keogh asked whether Bluestar 10 could be increased to a 30-minute daytime frequency. RT added that the route is currently a poor performer. IS confirmed that there is not enough money to fund an enhancement, but the BSIP will fund the retention of service 10 at the current hourly frequency. The service will be looked at again as part of the potential multi-year settlement. • RT suggested that the company could look at the £1 evening and £5 group fares and what they would be able to offer commercially. <p>Action – Cllr Keogh would like to see a consistent approach to delivering bus priority in the city centre and making bus lanes and bus gates consistent in appearance.</p> <p>Action - PB would like to see for the next board ratification of the cross boundary BSIP 25/26 allocations and how it looks on a map. AWS confirmed that Bluestar represents 25% of the HCC bus network.</p> <p>Post-Meeting Note HCC have provided a list of the cross-boundary services they would be looking to support – Bluestar 1, Bluestar 2, Bluestar 15 and X4/X5 (with PCC). SCC to confirm which ones they can support.</p> <p>Maps of the 2024/25 and potential 2025/26 BSIP funded services added to the presentation slides.</p> <p>Recommendation To endorse the shortlisted schemes that have been identified as a priority for Bus Grant Funding. Subject to endorsement, the proposed budget will then be agreed in accordance with formal SCC decision making processes.</p> <p><u>Motion agreed by all parties.</u></p> <p>(b) EP Board Membership</p> <p>Recommendation To note First Bus attend EP Board meetings to represent the smaller city operators in place of SHBOA.</p> <p><u>Motion agreed by all parties.</u></p>	
6	Round Table Update	All
	<p>In addition to the board pack, the following updates were provided.</p> <p>Bluestar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driver recruitment for BSIP enhancements ongoing with a focus on recruiting females. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new buses are on order for Spring 2025 delivery. The company is pushing for electrification with a meeting with the DNO (supplier) to be progressed. PB added that this should be a standing board item going forward. The company are making good progress with electrification in Salisbury and the Isle of Wight. <p>First Bus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new First Bus brand was launch in December, with the company looking to standardise across operating companies, however the popular Solent blue brand will be retained. A push for more bus usage with the customer in mind. The company are looking at punctuality and investing additional timetable running time. The staffing situation is fragile, and industrial action may continue for a while longer at the company's Hoeford depot. <p>Southampton City Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council are in the process of recruiting a new Chief Executive. The wider transformation piece is ongoing, and the financial deficit is improving. A challenging environment but progressing in the right direction. Cllr Keogh added that the council are in a better position than 12 months ago. A paper is being prepared regarding tariff changes to the suburban car parks, the proposal to withdraw the 2 hours free parking and sets out the longer-term plan for car parks. A consultation regarding lane rental scheme will progress soon. AW and RT are happy to help with raising awareness during the consultation. Post-Meeting Note – the Lane Rental Scheme consultation is live Southampton Lane Rental Network <p>Action – Establish a process to provide MPs with an EP update to highlight and demonstrate progress.</p> <p>Action – Create a Zero Emission Working Group and report to monthly EP WG and subsequent Boards (under Working Group agenda item).</p> <p>Hampshire County Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good progress with determining the 25/26 BSIP funded improvements. Meetings have been held with the bus operators and the final list is being compiled for internal ratification in March 2025. 	
7	Date of EP Board Meetings	All
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22 April 2025 – Boardroom, Empress Road. <p>Action - IS requested for this date to be rescheduled. The new date is Tuesday 29 April 2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22 July 2025 – Executive Boardroom, Civic Centre. 	
8	AOB	
	Date of next meeting: 29 April 2025 – Boardroom, Empress Road.	

NEW ACTIONS FROM THIS MEETING

MEETING DATE	ITEM	RESPONSIBLE	ACTION	STATUS
21/01/25	3	SCC	Southampton City Council and Bluestar to produce public comms to highlight 4th place (outside London) for bus patronage per head after the new service 19A has been launched.	In progress, communications team have been working with Bluestar on social media content. Being linked with announcement of BSIP funding
21/01/25	3	SCC	The SCC comms team to invite the Itchen MP's along to the service 19A launch. Go South Coast are leading on the event planning.	Completed.
21/01/25	5	SCC	Cllr Keogh would like to see a consistent approach to delivering bus priority in the city centre and making bus lanes and bus gates consistent in appearance.	In progress. Programme to upgrade and refresh existing bus lanes allocated in the 25/26 BSIP delivery plan.
21/01/25	5	SCC	PB would like to see for the next board ratification of the cross boundary BSIP 25/26 allocations and how it looks on a map. AWS confirmed that Bluestar represents 25% of the HCC bus network.	Completed.
21/01/25	6	SCC	Establish a process to provide MPs with an EP update to highlight and demonstrate progress.	In progress. MPs attended the recent new service 19a launch and will be invited to future events.
21/01/25	6	SCC	Create a Zero Emission Working Group and report to monthly EP WG and subsequent Boards (under Working Group agenda item).	In progress.
21/01/25	7	SCC	IS requested for this date to be rescheduled.	Completed.