

Travelwatch Presentation National Bus Strategy and Bus Service Improvement Plan Update 16 June 2022

**County Councillor Charlie Edwards
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

Background, Progress to date and timeline

- 5 March 2021 National Bus Strategy Launched – "Bus Back Better"
- 17 May 2021 DfT Guidance on Developing a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) launched with a requirement that by the end of June 2021 Local Transport Authorities to decide if they wish to pursue an Enhanced Partnership or Franchising.
- Also, a requirement to produce a Bus Service Improvement Plan by 31 October 2021.
- 24th June 2021 LCC Decision taken to develop an Enhanced Partnership.
- 1st July 2021 DfT produced Guidance on developing an Enhanced Partnerships. And from 1st July 2021 only those who agree to do either of above will receive Bus Recovery Funding.
- Lancashire wide BSIP Consultation starts 22nd September 2021 and ends 4th October 2021 over 2.5k responses. Ongoing dialogue on BSIP priorities with Lancashire's bus operators and Stakeholders.
- 28th October 2021 BSIP submitted to DfT ahead of 31st October deadline.

- Between November and December 2021 we developed the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme documentation with operators. (*Only one authority has done this previously so the process was new for everyone*)
- 23rd December 2021 LCC Decision taken to give notice to operators that the Enhanced Partnership had been prepared and to start the 28 day operator objection period.
- 11th January 2022 letter from DfT amending timescales and process. LCC to proceed as planned, to meet the original DfT timescale of April 2022.
- 19th January 2022, 28 day Operator Objection period starts until 16th February 2022. No admissible objections received from operators, moved to Statutory Consultation.
- 1st March 2022 Statutory Consultees consulted on the Enhanced Partnership – until 17th March 2022. No admissible objections from Statutory Consultees

Indicative Funding allocation

4th April 2022 DfT inform of *indicative* BSIP Allocation jointly with BWD **£34,166,701** (£23,563,890 capital and **£10,602,811** revenue) with a requirement to return a funding template with as much detail as possible on how we will prioritise and allocate funding, by 2 May 2022, subsequently changed to 3rd May.

7th April 2022 Enhanced Partnership "made" following Cabinet decision

Awaiting possible clarification meeting with DfT. (as of 30 May 22)

DfT stated Priorities:

- 1: Bus Priority Measures. Where they will make most impact not where easiest to deliver.
- 2: Ambitious and eye-catching initiatives that reduce and/or simplify fares, at pace.
- 3: Increased service frequencies and new/expanded routes.

Investment types the DfT *do not* expect to be funded from our indicative allocation

- Any schemes where it is not clear that the primary benefits accrue to buses
- Generic marketing or advertising costs that are not directly related to specific improvements (such as a fares change, or new services)
- Provision of on-bus hardware such as CCTV or audio-visual equipment. Where required, DfT expect these to be operator-led contributions and commitments to deliver them to be included in the Enhanced Partnership, if necessary as measures to be funded through operating cost savings generated by bus priority measures
- Investment in existing infrastructure unless there is an evidenced case that it directly tackles barriers to bus use (notably safety) and drives patronage growth

- On the 3rd May 2022 funding template was submitted to DfT.
- Based on BSIP priorities from bus operator partners and consultation. Also based on previous Transforming Cities Fund priority list where schemes were drawn up, and from the deliverability aspect of the BSIP timeframe to 2025.
- Now awaiting confirmation on the next steps from the DfT, and any clarification they may require.
- Although our funding allocation is significantly less than asked for in our BSIP submission it should be noted that only **31 out of 79** local transport authorities have received indicative funding. This is positive for Lancashire County Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council.
- However it is clear that our ambition exceeded the funding being made available and a number of BSIP priorities will now not be able to be taken forward, at the current time.

Priorities submitted to the DfT

Grimsargh Bridge widening (Preston)
London Road (Red Route) and roundabout junctions at Chorley Road/ Church Brow (Preston)
Ribbleton Lane bus priority and bus lanes (Preston)
New Hall Lane - bus lane and bus priority (Preston)
Water Lane / Fylde Road / Aqueduct Street junction - bus lanes
Minor enhancements to improve bus priority in Bowerham and on Ashton Road, Lancaster. HIF proposals to further improve bus priority in south Lancaster (Bowerham, Ashford Rd)

Colne town centre, Market Street bus gate

Plungington Centre (Preston) Bus gate preventing through traffic

Oliver's Place/ Pittman Way (parking and congestion issues so introduction of parking restrictions and enforcement (Preston)

Stanifield Lane/ Lydiate Road junction (South Ribble) junction signalisation with bus priority to improve reliability.

Leyland Road from Studholme Crescent to The Cawsey (South Ribble)
Removal of on street parking to improve traffic flow and bus reliability.

Rawtenstall Bacup Road bus gate – to improve journey times and reliability

Accrington Bus Station, egress priority change to give the bus priority.

Longridge Town centre – bus stop improvements, not BSIP

Super Bus route reviews – assess where measures would be of most benefit, across Lancashire. Junction improvements and minor enhancement to improve reliability and priority.

Intelligent Bus Priority: countywide traffic priority system, giving priority to buses at key signalised junctions across Lancashire.

Bus Stop and upgrades supporting local bus network enhancements – LCC funded. Improved bus shelters and boarding facilities

Fares

<u>Fares support</u>	£1 after 19:00 to support the evening economy and encourage evening use, which is limited.
	Fylde Coast Young Persons pilot scheme for 12 months. Under 22's discount scheme across all operators and standardised zonal ticketing.
	Buy Saturday get Sunday free
<u>Ticketing reform</u>	Multi-operator ticketing scheme. Reduce barriers to travel where more than one operator

Bus Service Enhancements

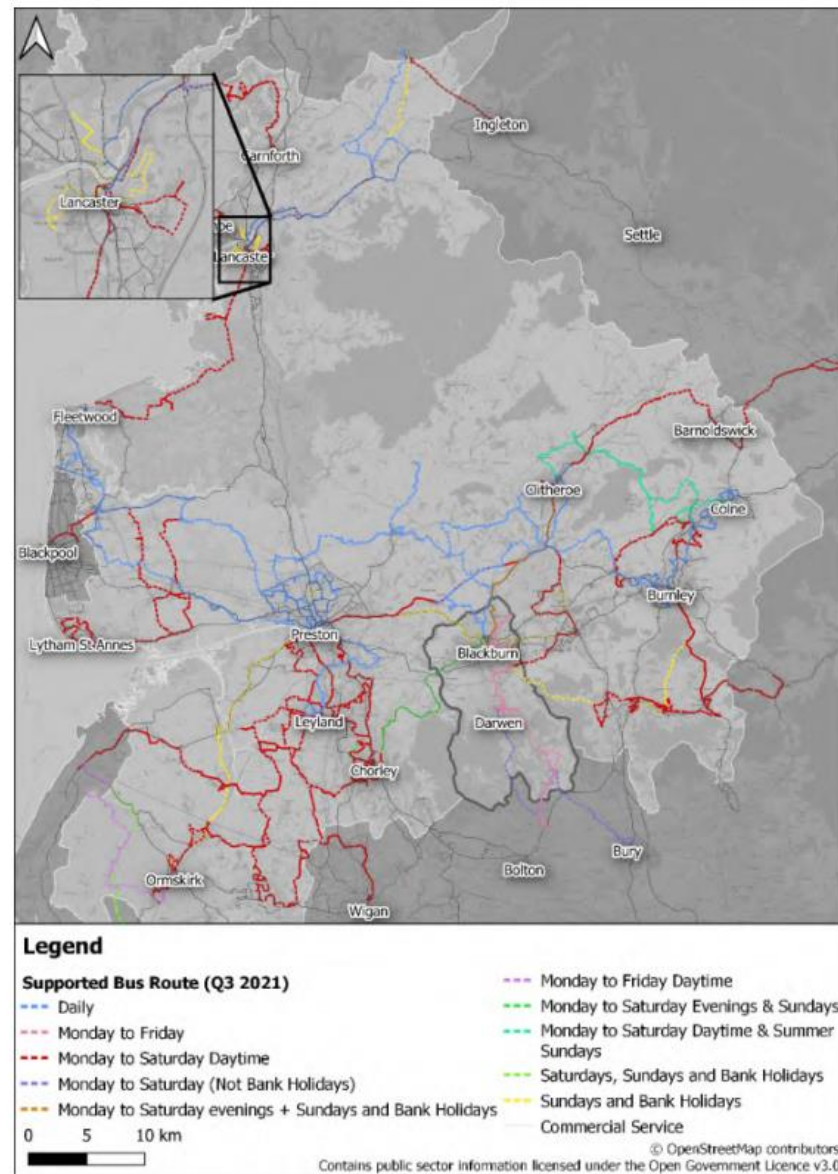
<u>Bus service support</u>	Bus Service Support: Priority 1	New service Skelmersdale – Kirkby as precursor for potential rail link. Enhance services to Blackburn in co- ordination with BwD. New DRT in Hyndburn
	Bus Service Support: Priority 2	Enhance services Morecambe-Blackpool; Overton – Carnforth. Evenings and weekends. Clitheroe – Shadsworth. 310 Skelmersdale – Liverpool enhanced evening and weekends Potential new DRT Garstang area.

Ongoing Challenges

- Current bus driver shortage limits further network enhancements and the operation of pre Covid -19 bus service levels. A major challenge for the industry as a whole.
- Concessionary bus market not growing back to pre Covid-19 levels of patronage. Less journeys being made. Change in travel habits
- Ongoing review of the bus market when all recovery funding for bus operators and local authorities ends in October.

Lancashire County Council supported network.

Commitment to support public transport in Lancashire



Thank you