



Leicester Buses

Enhanced Partnership Scheme

2026 – 2030

1 September 2026 – 31 March 2030

Definitions

1985 Act	Transport Act 1985
2000 Act	Transport Act 2000
2017 Act	Bus Services Act 2017
Bus Operator	All Large Operators, Medium Operators and Small Operators running Qualifying Bus Services.
City Council	Leicester City Council.
EP Board	The committee of selected Bus Operator representatives and City Council officers considering recommendations put forward by the Leicester Buses EP Forum and making recommendations to the City Council including specific Enhanced Partnership Scheme Variations using the mechanism in section 6.
EP Forum	The committee of all Bus Operators, the City Council, employer representatives, Bus User Panel Chair, Transport Focus and other stakeholders responsible for considering all issues affecting the Leicester Buses Enhanced Partnership, and making recommendations to the EP Board in line with the EP Plan.
EP Plan	The Leicester Buses Enhanced Partnership Plan 2026–2030 which sets out the rationale for a range of costed interventions required to meet a set of aims, objectives and targets over four-year period. It is not binding on any party.
EP Plan Period	Means the period from 1 September 2026 to 31 March 2030.
EP Scheme	This Leicester Buses Enhanced Partnership Scheme 2026–2030 is an agreed set of actions approved by the EP Board for implementation over a given time period and given set of resources.

EP Scheme Period	Means the period from 1 September 2026 to 31 March 2030.
EP Scheme Variation	A formal variation of the relevant enhanced partnership scheme(s) pursuant to the mechanism set out in the governance arrangements of the relevant enhanced partnership scheme, which will then constitute a formal variation of the relevant scheme for the purposes of s.138E(1) of the 2000 Act.
EP (Enhanced Partnership)	The EP Plan, EP Scheme, EP Board and EP Forum.
Facilities	Those facilities referred to in the EP Scheme which shall be deemed such for the purposes of s.138D(1) of the 2000 Act.
Flexi Scheme	The Leicester all-operator integrated ticketing scheme.
Flexi Scheme area	Area over which the Flexi Scheme all-operator ticketing scheme applies.
Measures	Those measures referred to in the EP Scheme which shall be deemed as such for the purposes of s.138D(2) of the 2000 Act.
Non-Qualifying Services	The services listed as excluded in section 16.
Operators: Large, Medium, Small	Any single Bus Operator with registered commercial mileage representing the following proportions of total registered mileage for Qualifying Bus Services: (a) Large: equal to or greater than 10%; (b) Medium: equal to or greater than 5% but less than 10%; (c) Small: less than 5%.
Proposed Variation	Has the meaning given to it in section 173.
Qualifying Bus Services	A registered local bus service with one or more stopping places within the geographical area of

the Enhanced Partnership, excluding the services as set out in section 16.

For the avoidance of doubt, a list of Qualifying Bus Services will be published at the start of each City Council financial year.

Requirements

Those requirements placed upon Bus Operators identified as such within the EP Scheme, which shall be deemed as such for the purposes of s.138C 2017 Act.

Transport Focus

The independent watchdog for transport users sponsored by the Department for Transport.

Content

1. This EP Scheme is made by the City Council in accordance with section 138G(1) of the Transport Act 2000.
2. In accordance with statutory requirements in section 138A–138H of the Transport Act 2000, this EP Scheme sets out:
 - a. an introduction to Enhanced Partnerships;
 - b. the scope of the EP Scheme;
 - c. the obligations on the City Council as the Local Transport Authority;
 - d. the requirements on all Bus Operators in Leicester of locally registered bus services;
 - e. governance arrangements of the EP Scheme;
 - f. other relevant aspects.

Introduction

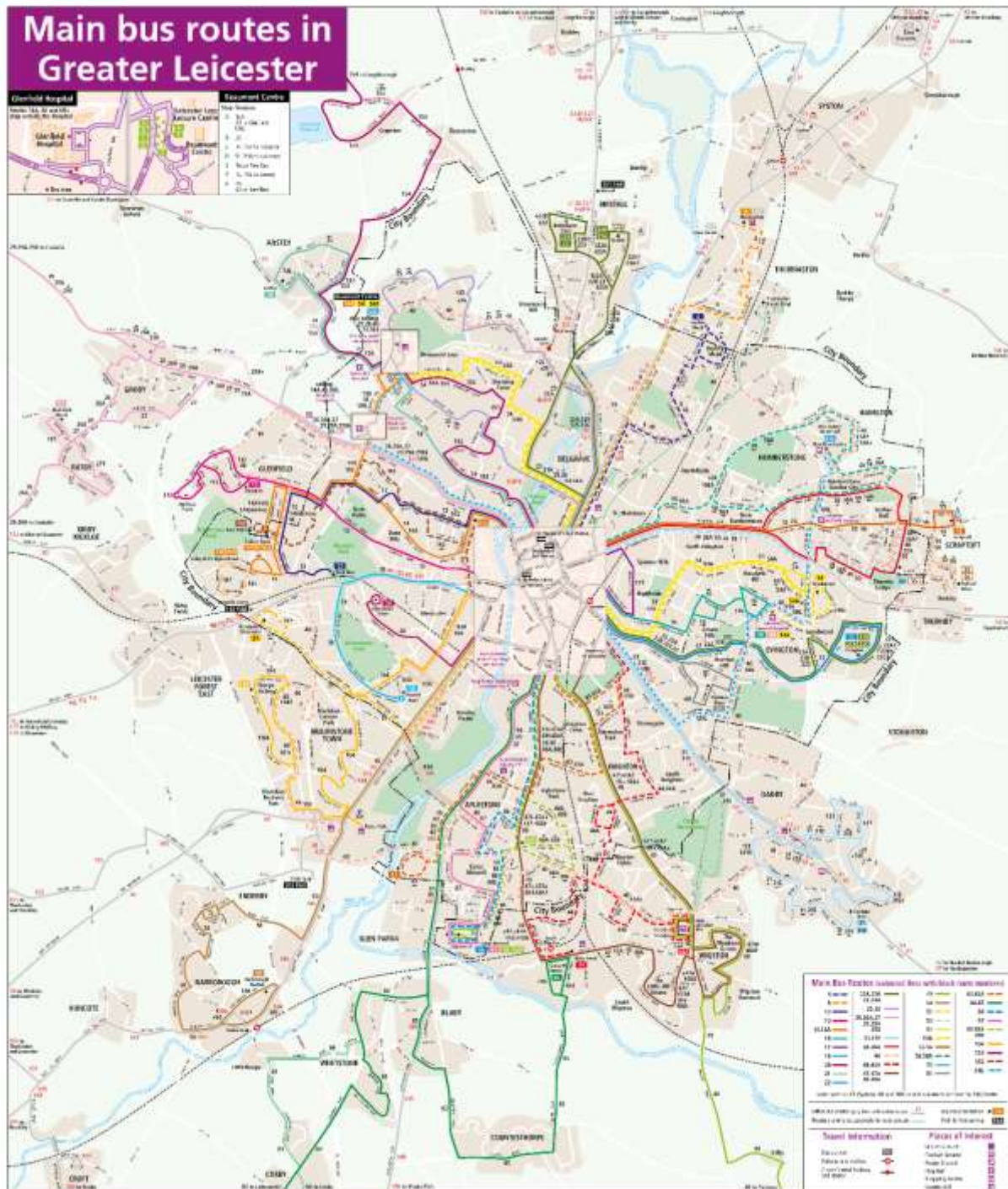
3. The EP Scheme can only be put in place if an associated Enhanced Partnership Plan has been made. Therefore, this EP Scheme document should be considered alongside its associated EP Plan.
4. When both the EP Scheme and EP Plan are made, they will be published on:
www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-strategies/transport-and-streets/enhanced-bus-partnership-scheme/
5. A summary of both the EP Plan and EP Scheme, together with regular progress updates, will also be published on the partnership website:
www.leicesterbuses.co.uk

6. The EP Scheme has been jointly developed by the City Council and those Bus Operators providing local bus services in the EP Scheme area. It sets out obligations and requirements on both the City Council and Bus Operators in order to achieve improvements which aim to deliver the objectives of the associated EP Plan.
7. The EP Plan sets out a range of costed and agreed interventions required to meet a set of aims, objectives and targets over the period from 1 September 2026 to 31 March 2030. It is not binding on any party.
8. The EP Scheme is based on LTA grant resources available and known at time of scheme consultation. It is for the period 1 September 2026 to 31 March 2030. However, revenue grant-assisted areas are currently only funded until 31 March 2029. Once approved it is binding on all parties.
9. Future additional resources to further deliver the EP Plan can be brought into play at a later date through a variation to the EP Scheme, as detailed in the Governance section below.

Scope of the EP Scheme

Description of Geographical Coverage

10. The EP Scheme will support the improvement of all local bus services operating across the whole of the City Council geographical area. This boundary is the same as the EP Plan boundary and is shown as the 'City boundary' in the route network map below.



11. There is geographical overlap with the EP Plan and EP Scheme in relation to ticketing. For operational reasons this is dealt with at a Leicester urban area level, shown by the whole map above. However, obligations under the EP Scheme relate only to the City Council area.

12. Similarly, obligations in relation to cross-boundary services are aligned with the Leicestershire enhanced partnership scheme and enhanced partnership plan, but relate only to the City Council area for the purposes of this EP Scheme

Commencement Date

13. The EP Plan and EP Scheme are made on 28 July 2026 and come into effect on 1 September 2026.
14. The EP Scheme has an end date of 31 March 2030, but this will be reviewed by the City Council annually, in conjunction with all local Bus Operators who together will make the EP Board.
15. This review will take into account feedback from the wider EP Forum – see Governance section below.

Exempted Services

16. The following local services are exempt from the requirements of the EP Scheme:
- a. any schools or works registered local bus service not eligible for the Bus Service Operator's Grant;
 - b. any cross-boundary registered local bus service with less than 20% of its registered mileage within the EP Scheme area;
 - c. any service operating with a weekday daytime (8am – 6pm) frequency averaging more than every 60 minutes AND more than 50% of route mileage outside of the EP Scheme area;
 - d. any services operated under section 22 of the 1985 Act;
 - e. any registered local bus service which is an excursion or tour.

17. A list of qualifying eligible services will be set out and reported through the EP Board and revised annually in the EP Plan.

Council Commitments

18. The City Council will be responsible for provision of the following facilities and measures.

Commitments Summary							
TABLE 1							
City Council Commitments							
No	Aim	Description	Date start	Date End	Scope	Min Revenue Cost PA	Min Capital Cost
1	Electric	Zebra Local Grant Scheme round 1	01/09/2026	31/03/2027	60 buses	£ -	£ 7,950,000
2	Electric	Zebra Local Grant Scheme round 2	01/04/2027	31/03/2029	25 buses	£ -	£ 6,000,000
3	Electric	Electric Buses on Tendered Services - existing	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	24 buses	£ -	£ -
4	Electric	Electric Buses on Tendered Services - new	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	12 buses	£ -	£ 4,500,000
5	Frequent	Financial support to commercial network	01/09/2026	31/03/2029	upto 10 services	£ 400,000	£ -
6	Frequent	Tendered services financial support	01/09/2026	31/03/2029	upto 10 services	£ 150,000	£ -
7	Frequent	Network integration management support	01/09/2026	31/03/2029	1 process	£ -	£ -
8	Reliable	Bus Lanes and Gates - retain	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	70 bus lane/gate TROs	£ -	£ -
9	Reliable	Bus priority schemes, traffic management scheme	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	5 new schemes	£ -	£ 6,000,000
10	Reliable	Bus lane and bus gate enforcement system	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	70 bus lane/gate TROs	£ -	£ 100,000
11	Reliable	Red Routes - keep, enforce and review for new measures	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	6 red route TROs	£ -	£ -
12	Reliable	Smart signalling to assist bus operations	01/04/2027	31/03/2030	1 system	£ -	£ 1,000,000
13	Reliable	Roadworks management system support	01/09/2026	31/03/2029	1 process	£ -	£ -
14	Reliable	Car park pricing policy	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	1 policy	£ -	£ -
15	Easy	Bus shelters - existing	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	500 shelters	£ -	£ -
16	Easy	Bus shelters - new	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	40 shelters	£ -	£ 400,000
17	Easy	Bus Stop totems	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	1000 totems	£ -	£ -
18	Easy	Bus Stop totems	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	200 totems	£ -	£ 600,000
19	Easy	Accessible bus stops	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	1300 stops	£ -	£ -
20	Easy	Accessible bus stops	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	50 stops	£ -	£ 200,000
21	Easy	Bus stop cages and TROs	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	250 stops	£ -	£ 50,000
22	Easy	Bus stations facilities and staffing	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	2 stations	£ -	£ -
23	Easy	Park and Ride Sites - lighting, rates and maintain	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	3 p&r sites	£ -	£ -
24	Easy	Real time information system	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	1 system	£ -	£ -
25	Easy	RTI stop displays and text to speech facility	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	500 boarding stops	£ -	£ -
26	Easy	RTI stop displays and text to speech facility	01/04/2027	31/03/2030	200 boarding stops	£ -	£ 2,000,000
27	Easy	Leicester Buses Website	01/04/2027	31/03/2030	1 system	£ -	£ 900,000
28	Easy	Printed information at bus stops	01/04/2027	31/03/2029	1000 stops	£ -	£ 100,000
29	Easy	Leicester buses branding and promotions	01/04/2027	31/03/2030	various	£ -	£ 600,000
30	Great Value	ENCTS discretionary fares scheme	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	1 scheme	£ -	£ -
31	Great Value	Unemployed discretionary fares scheme	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	1 scheme	£ -	£ -
32	Great Value	Flexi One Ticket discretionary fares scheme trial	01/09/2026	31/03/2027	1 scheme	£ 1,000,000	£ -
33	Great Value	Flexi Child/Student/Family discount scheme trials	01/04/2027	31/03/2029	upto 3 schemes	£ 600,000	£ -

19. Further details are set out in each section below, referenced to the commitment number in the table above.

ELECTRIC

Local Grant Scheme (commitments 1,2)

20. The City Council shall administer electric bus grant schemes for funding towards the cost of introducing electric buses and associated charging infrastructure on qualifying services.

21. These services must not already be operated with electric buses or have received previous grant assistance for electrification.

22. Funding will be prioritised to routes with the greatest value for money and the highest proportion of overall mileage within the City Council area.

Buses on tendered services (commitments 3,4)

23. The City Council will make available City Council-owned electric buses for use on supported bus services. These will be subject to the terms and conditions of the relevant operating contracts.

FREQUENT

Network Development (commitments 5,6)

24. The City Council will subsidise bus services to help meet the frequency and accessibility standards detailed in the EP Plan.

25. The City Council will work with operators to review any service change proposal which would be deemed to have a material impact as a defined socially necessary local service. It will work with all operators to mitigate any impact from such a proposal and will prioritise any available funds on this basis.

Network integration (commitment 7)

26. The City Council will provide a management co-ordination function to ensure that any proposed changes to the commercial or supported network adhere to the network integration principles of the EP Plan.

27. The function will be maintained for the whole of the EP Scheme Period and include third party funded services proposed to serve new developments, large employers or to connect settlements outside the EP Scheme area to the EP Scheme area.

28. On any 'Mainlines' bus corridor, as defined within the EP Scheme, where there is more than one Bus Operator with a registered service the City Council will provide a network optimisation function with the relevant Bus Operators. This will seek to achieve even scheduled headways across the commonly served section of the corridor.

29. Formal qualifying agreements between relevant Bus Operators will be maintained and new ones set up to ensure such even headways are maintained.

30. This will be continued until one or more Bus Operators notify the City Council of a proposed significant commercial change to the timetable or route, as defined and covered in sections 134–143 below.

RELIABLE

Bus Lanes, Bus Gates, Other Bus Priority Measures (commitments 8,9)

31. The City Council will keep all existing bus lanes and bus gates throughout the EP Scheme Period, subject to any significant locally required traffic management changes which will be discussed with Bus Operators.

32. Any required amendment to the existing bus lanes and bus gate will be subject to at least three months notification through the EP Board and a formal EP Scheme Variation.

33. The City Council will enforce existing bus lanes and bus gates throughout the EP Scheme Period, through its inhouse approved camera-enforcement system.

34. The City Council will initiate detailed feasibility and consultation work and allocate provisional funding for significant bus priority schemes. These will each be subject to detailed business cases and consultation before a decision to implement can be made.

Bus Lane Enforcement (commitment 10)

35. The City Council will use its discretionary powers granted in the Traffic Management Act 2004 to enforce all existing and new bus lanes and bus

gates with approved CCTV equipment for the whole EP Scheme Period.

36. A report showing the effectiveness of these cameras in relation to traffic regulation order violation will be provided to the EP Board annually.

37. There will be no ongoing charge to Bus Operators for the management and maintenance of this enforcement system and its camera estate.

Red Routes (commitment 11)

38. The City Council will provide, maintain and enforce existing red routes the EP Scheme Period.

39. The City Council shall review the case for more red routes.

Signalised Junction Priority and Smart Signalling (commitment 12)

40. The City Council will undertake a review to integrate real time bus data with the area traffic control system to allow traffic signal priority at all relevant signalised junctions for late running buses.

41. The City Council will seek to fund the recommendations of the review.

Managing Roadworks (commitment 13)

42. The City Council will formalise a protocol with Bus Operators to minimise disruption to local bus services from both planned and emergency roadworks by 31 March 2027.

43. This will include liaison with Bus Operators to ensure that the co-ordination of works across the network minimises disruption, as well as setting out their

processes and procedures for the provision and management of street works permits in the EP Scheme area.

44. It will also include a commitment for the City Council to give all Bus Operators a minimum of 7-days notice of planned roadworks on the 'Mainlines network' shown in the EP Plan.

Car Park Pricing (commitment 14)

45. The City Council will maintain a car park pricing policy for City Centre on-street and off-street parking facilities under the City Council's control that discourages all-day parking over bus or park and ride, for the whole of the EP Scheme Period.

EASY

Bus Shelters (commitments 15,16)

46. The City Council will provide and maintain bus shelters for the EP Scheme Period. These will have lighting, seating and poster cases.

47. Any proposal to remove or relocate any existing bus shelter will be subject to Bus Operator consultation and notification to the EP Board. Any savings made will be reinvested in City Council facilities and measures included within this EP Scheme.

48. The City Council will seek to provide additional bus shelters throughout the EP Scheme Period.

Bus Stop Totems (commitments 17,18)

49. The City Council will provide, clean and maintain existing bus stop totems for the EP Scheme Period, subject to continued resident and highways approval.

50. The City Council shall seek to fund and maintain new totems over the EP Scheme Period.

51. These each include a four-sided timetable unit, branded bus stop flag and clearway order plate.

52. The City Council shall regularly clean and maintain all existing and new totems from their date of installation until the end of the EP Scheme Period.

53. The City Council will reserve the right to remove or relocate any of these totems, subject to operator discussion and notification to the EP Board.

Bus stops (commitments 19,20,21)

54. The City Council will maintain stops with existing level access kerb arrangements.

55. The City Council will reserve the right to remove or relocate any of these subject to operator discussion and notification to the EP Board.

56. The City Council will provide additional stops with level access kerb arrangements over the EP Scheme Period.

57. The City Council will seek to put in an additional enforceable bus stop clearway markings and associated signage, over the EP Scheme Period,

subject to the necessary consultation and highways approvals.

Bus Stations (commitment 22)

58. The City Council will provide, staff and maintain existing bus stations and their existing associated infrastructure, subject to available funds.

Park and Ride Sites (commitment 23)

59. The City Council will provide and maintain the existing secure and illuminated park and ride facilities for use by specified contracted local bus services for the EP Scheme Period, subject to available funding.

Real Time Passenger Information (commitments 24,25,26)

60. The City Council will ensure maintenance of the existing real time information system, subject to available funding.

61. The City Council will maintain existing real-time passenger information screens for the EP Scheme Period – at bus stops and interchanges. This includes all relevant monitoring, communications costs, data input and update, power supply and repair of damage relating to vandalism and road traffic accidents.

62. The City Council will install additional real-time passenger information screens at bus stops over the EP Scheme Period. These will be maintained for the rest of the EP Scheme Period.

63. There will be no charge to Bus Operators for the management and ongoing operational costs of this system and its display estate.

64. The City Council reserves the right to remove or relocate any real-time screen subject to consultation with the EP Board

Partnership Website (commitment 27)

65. The City Council will secure the design, procurement, launch and maintenance a new 'Leicester Buses' partnership website.

66. This will cover:

- a. service timetables for all registered bus services in the EP Scheme area;
- b. maps to illustrate main settlements and road served, and a network map;
- c. scheduled and real time journey planning across all EP qualifying routes;
- d. fares information;
- e. mobile ticket purchasing functionality;
- f. contactless TOTO capping personalised account portal;
- g. news and events information;
- h. customer Charter;
- i. summary details of the EP Plan and EP Scheme.

67. There will be no ongoing charge to Bus Operators for the management of this website, with the exception of ticket retail costs – subject to discussion and agreement with operators.

68. The EP Forum and EP Board will review the website annually throughout the EP Scheme Period.

Network printed information at bus stops (commitment 28)

69. The City Council will provide and maintain co-ordinated printed bus service information at all boarding stops within the City Council area.

Network Branding (commitment 29)

70. The City Council will co-ordinate and fully resource the roll-out of 'Leicester Buses' network branding across platforms agreed by the EP Board. to the agreed design guide, for the whole of the EP Scheme Period.

Network Promotions (commitment 29)

71. The City Council will co-ordinate a programme of at least two 'Leicester Buses' themed promotions each year of the EP Scheme. The themes, promotional resource and delivery method shall be decided by the EP Board, with input from the EP Forum.

72. The City Council will allocate media space within the bus stations, bus stop totems and bus shelter cases for these promotions.

73. The City Council will also use the 'messaging' facility to promote across the whole real-time display estate.

74. The City Council will also arrange for these promotions to be publicised through other City Council media channels and on the Leicester Buses website.

GREAT VALUE

Fare Subsidy (commitments 30,31,32,33)

75. The City Council will provide funding and make arrangements to reimburse Bus Operators for the following discretionary discounted fares:

- a. half fare bus travel for the elderly residents – weekday morning peak before 0930 hrs and between 2300-2359 hrs on weekdays. Subject to available funding.
- b. free travel for disabled residents – weekday morning peak before 0930 hrs and between 2300-2359 hrs on weekdays. Subject to available funding.
- c. unemployed discount – half-fare for any adult on-bus ticket for residents who are unemployed – with relevant proof. Subject to available funding.
- d. Flexi 'One ticket' – trial discount scheme as agreed through the Flexi Scheme.
- e. Flexi Student/Child/Family tickets – trial discount scheme as agreed through the Flexi Scheme.

76. Each discount scheme will be subject to a separate annually updated reimbursement agreement with the Bus Operators.

77. Each scheme will be annually reviewed, with three months' notice given to any potential change or removal.

Local Bus Operator Commitments

78. All Bus Operators in the EP Scheme agree to the following summary commitments to help deliver the aims and objectives of the EP Plan.

TABLE 2					
Operators Commitments					
No	Aim	Description	Date start	Date End	Scope
1	Electric	Minimum Euro 6 standard inc spares	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	Network
2	Electric	Enhanced accessibility standards	01/04/2028	31/03/2030	Mainline services
3	Electric	Electric bus operation on all Mainline services	01/04/2028	31/03/2030	Mainline services
4	Frequent	Network unique route numbering	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	Network
5	Frequent	Network co-ordination across all operators timetables	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	Network
6	Frequent	Socially necessary local services – additional notification	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	Network
7	Reliable	Registration change dates – four times	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	Network
8	Reliable	Yearly delay audit by route by delay type	01/04/2027	31/03/2030	Network
9	Reliable	Yearly feasibility assessment of each pinchpoint	01/04/2027	31/03/2030	Network
10	Reliable	Yearly progress report on operational delays	01/04/2027	31/03/2030	Network
11	Easy	Network branding on all channels specified	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	Network
12	Easy	Information at bus stops	01/04/2027	31/03/2030	Network
13	Easy	Websites – networks and ticketing	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	Large operators
14	Easy	Network promotion exclusivity – LB branding toolkit	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	Network
15	Easy	Bus Stations departure fees	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	Network
16	Easy	Passenger Charter participation	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	Network
17	Great Value	Ticket definition standardisation	01/04/2027	31/03/2030	Network
18	Great Value	Participate in Flexi Scheme	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	Network
19	Great Value	Drop single operator day and period tickets	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	Network
20	Great Value	Participate in all discretionary ticketing schemes	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	Network
21	Great Value	Contactless ticketing	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	Network
22	Great Value	Single & All-operator adult day/weekly fare capping	01/09/2026	31/03/2030	Network

79. Further details are set out in each section below with referencing to the relevant commitment number.

ELECTRIC

Minimum Bus Standards (commitment 1)

80. All buses used on all qualifying EP services shall meet the following requirements throughout the EP Scheme Period:

- a. A minimum of Euro VI emissions standard;

- b. CCTV;
- c. Automatic Vehicle Location equipment;
- d. Ticketing equipment for both model 1 and model 2 contactless payment.

Electric Buses (commitments 2,3)

81. Each electric bus must have the following enhanced accessibility features above those required by the current PSVAR and PSVAIR regulations:
- Additional (unrestrained) space for a wheelchair or buggy user.
 - Next-stop visual information display that can be viewed from the backward facing restrained wheelchair space.
82. This is subject to the City Council providing sufficient external grant funding with such equipment.
83. Each Bus Operator within the EP Scheme shall operate zero emission buses on all Mainline services by 31 March 2028. This commitment is subject to the City Council adhering to its relevant external grant funding commitment in Table 1 above.

FREQUENT

Network – Registration Changes (commitment 4)

84. Bus Operators shall only change the timetable of any local service within the EP Scheme area on **four** dates per year for the whole of the EP Scheme Period. These will normally be the prevailing published start date for each school term and the start of the school Summer holidays. Dates to be agreed at EP Board.
85. Bus Operators will still be entitled to make emergency short notice changes on the approval of the City Council, who will notify the EP Board of the reasons for

its decision.

Network – Timetable Co-ordination (commitment 5)

86. All Bus Operators agree to schedule bus services, on any 'Mainlines' bus corridor within the EP Plan where more than one Bus Operator has a registered service, with the intention of achieving even scheduled headways at all times across the commonly served section of the corridor.

Socially necessary local services (commitment 6)

87. The definition of Socially Necessary Local Services is defined in the EP Plan and covers all qualifying EP Scheme services.

88. Any Bus Operator proposing to cancel, change the route or change the frequency of any qualifying service below the defined minimum frequency standards in the EP Plan will follow the additional consultation process.

- An additional 28 days notice to the City Council on top of the current legal minimum of 28 days.
- Work with City Council to find alternative ways to maintain the current levels and route coverage.

RELIABLE

Network – Route Numbering (commitment 7)

89. Bus services operating within the EP Scheme area shall not have duplicate route numbering, and Bus Operators shall re-number their routes to remove any duplicate route numbering.

90. Where duplication exists on the date of the EP Scheme coming into operation, and Bus Operators have not agreed to re-number, then the service with the highest annual operating mileage within the EP scheme area shall be entitled to retain the relevant route number, and other Bus Operators must re-number

their services.

Delay information (commitments 8,9,10)

91. Each Operator will maintain a current list of delay information (location and reason) for each of its routes, together with relevant monitoring data to analyse changes over time. This will be updated by each Operator yearly and sent to the City Council.

92. This will include a list of delays due to:

- a. Operational aspects (ticketing, vehicles, timetabling etc);
- b. Stop access;
- c. Roadworks;
- d. Signalised junctions;
- e. Parking management.

93. Each Operator will submit a list of route level options each year for improvements that can be made to improve each area of audited delay. These options should have indicative timescales, responsibility, costs and an assessment of feasibility.

94. Each Operator shall submit yearly information on progress related to delays due to operational aspects within their control.

EASY

Network Branding (commitment 11)

95. All Bus Operators shall apply the 'Leicester Buses' network branding at those channels agreed by EP Board.

96. This will be applied using the branding guidelines collectively agreed by the EP Board.

Information – bus stops (commitment 12)

97. All Bus Operators shall only show agreed 'Leicester Buses' branded and formatted integrated timetable and fares information at any bus stop, bus station or park and ride site for the duration of the EP Scheme Period.

98. Bus Operators will not show any other information at bus stops or bus stations unless collectively agreed by the EP Board.

Websites – Information and ticketing (commitment 13)

99. All Large Operators shall

- a) Show the whole Leicester Buses network, its scheduled timetable information, real-time arrivals and other dynamic information on their own website.
- b) Reference the Leicester Buses Partnership and website link
- c) Retail the full online range of Flexi Scheme tickets on their website.

Network Promotion (commitment 14)

100. Bus Operators will promote the Leicester Buses website as the default website/social media channels to use by all residents within the Flexi Scheme area. Bus Operators may not promote any promotion to the residents of the Flexi Scheme area or in respect of that area solely through a single operator website or social media channels, unless agreed by the EP Board.

101. All Bus Operators shall submit electronic service registration information, including bus workings, to the City Council in an accurate, agreed form at least 7 days before a registration change takes place, for the whole of the EP Scheme Period. This will enable all changes to be accurately reflected across all electronic real-time information display estate and Leicester Buses website.

102. All Bus Operators shall share real-time bus location information with the City Council in the digital format required to interface with the Area Traffic Control centre, for the whole of the EP Scheme Period. The City Council will use this information only for the purposes of assisting bus journey times, targeting enforcement resources and improving reliability through signal system modifications.

Bus stations (commitment 15)

103. Bus Operators will pay the prevailing bus station departure fees and adhere to the user manual as agreed through the EP Board for the whole of the EP Scheme Period.

104. These fees will be reviewed annually by the EP Board with the aim to seek alternative funding sources to reduce their potential impact on future fare increases.

Leicester Buses Passenger Charter (commitment 16)

105. All Bus Operators agree to updating and continuing the existing collective bus passenger charter for the duration of the EP Scheme Period, unless changes are made in the interim through the EP Scheme Variation procedure (see section 134-143).

106. This charter will take into account the needs of disabled travellers once the Council's Network Accessibility Plan has been finalised by December 2026 and incorporated into the EP Plan.

GREAT VALUE

Ticketing – Standard Product Definition (commitment 17)

107. All Bus Operators shall collectively agree a specification of their own tickets (commercially sold or shadow) that gives a common definition across comparable single and multi-operator 'unlimited travel' ticketing products:

- a. scheme boundary for unlimited travel;
 - b. times of operational eligibility;
 - c. age of eligibility;
 - d. days of operation;
 - e. dates of operation;
 - f. definition of forms of evidence for a discounted ticket (eg 'student', 'child'),
- and this will apply to all current and future single and multi-operator ticketing products.

Ticketing Schemes (commitments 18,19,20)

108. All Bus Operators within the EP Scheme shall participate in the Flexi Scheme multi-operator ticketing scheme for all ticketing products in terms of ticket acceptance, across the whole of the EP Scheme Period, unless:

- a. single operator fares for an equivalent product are above the Flexi Scheme fare; or
- b. it is operationally or financially prohibitive to administer a given Flexi Scheme product, and this is demonstrated to the reasonable satisfaction of the City Council.

109. Bus Operators will agree to the retail and acceptance of at least the same range of Flexi Scheme ticketing options as their own individual ticketing equivalents.

110. All Bus Operators will participate in all discretionary fares schemes set up and funded by the City Council within the Flexi Scheme area, unless agreed with the City Council following discussion with the EP Scheme partners.

111. The overall Flexi Scheme multi-operator ticketing scheme will be managed by the City Council at no cost to Bus Operators.

112. The operation of the Flexi Scheme will continue to be governed as a ticketing agreement separate from this EP Scheme.

Contactless Ticketing (commitment 21)

113. All Bus Operators shall offer contactless ticketing for all on-bus adult and group tickets for the whole of the EP Scheme Period

Single and All-operator Digital Capping (commitment 22)

114. All Bus Operators shall offer single-operator and all-operator automated fare capping with adult day and weekly caps for the whole of the EP Scheme Period.

Addressing the needs of disabled travellers.

115. It is considered that all the local operator and operator commitments set out in this EP Scheme will assist in the key aim of achieving common network

delivery standards across the main areas of bus travel.

116. Those commitments that specifically address the needs of disabled travellers are set out below:

City Council Commitments			
No	Aim	Description	Specifically assist travel for those with disabilities
1	Electric	Zebra Local Grant Scheme round 1	Enhanced accessibility features including next stop displays and announcements, extra wheelchair space
2	Electric	Zebra Local Grant Scheme round 2	Enhanced accessibility features including next stop displays and announcements, extra wheelchair space
3	Electric	Electric Buses on Tendered Services - existing	Enhanced accessibility features including next stop displays and announcements, extra wheelchair space
4	Electric	Electric Buses on Tendered Services - new	Enhanced accessibility features including next stop displays and announcements, extra wheelchair space
5	Frequent	Financial support to commercial network	Reduces distance from home to stop. Reduces need for difficult interchange.
6	Frequent	Tendered services financial support	Reduced distance home to stop and need for difficult interchange. Includes City Centre Hop! service.
7	Frequent	Network integration management support	Simplify and avoids confusion - one integrated timetable.
8	Reliable	Bus Lanes and Gates - retain	Improves reliability to increase confidence to travel by bus for essential time critical appointments such to hospital/doctors
9	Reliable	Bus priority schemes, traffic management scheme	Improves reliability to increase confidence to travel by bus for essential time critical appointments such to hospital/doctors
10	Reliable	Bus lane and bus gate enforcement system	Improves reliability to increase confidence to travel by bus for essential time critical appointments such to hospital/doctors
11	Reliable	Red Routes - keep, enforce and review for new measures	Improves reliability to increase confidence to travel by bus for essential time critical appointments such to hospital/doctors
12	Reliable	Smart signalling to assist bus operations	Improves reliability to increase confidence to travel by bus for essential time critical appointments such to hospital/doctors
13	Reliable	Roadworks management system support	Improves reliability to increase confidence to travel by bus for essential time critical appointments such to hospital/doctors
15	Easy	Bus shelters - existing	Includes seating for those with back and leg issues. Lighting for those with visual difficulties.
16	Easy	Bus shelters - new	Includes seating for those with back and leg issues. Lighting for those with visual difficulties.
17	Easy	Bus Stop totems	Same format and appearance at all stops. Timetables in the same location and format across network. Visually prominent
18	Easy	Bus Stop totems	Same format and appearance at all stops. Timetables in the same location and format across network. Visually prominent
19	Easy	Accessible bus stops	Improves accessible boarding by lowering step to bus. Often avoids the delay and hassle of using a ramp.
20	Easy	Accessible bus stops	Improves accessible boarding by lowering step to bus. Often avoids the delay and hassle of using a ramp.
21	Easy	Bus stop cages and TROs	Improves accessible boarding by lowering step to bus. Often avoids the delay and hassle of using a ramp.
22	Easy	Bus stations facilities and staffing	Includes assistance for travel, toilets, next bus displays and good lighting.
23	Easy	Park and Ride Sites - lighting, rates and maintain	Includes assistance for travel, toilets, next bus displays and good lighting.
24	Easy	Real time information system	Provides information in various accessible formats for each stage of the journey through linked apps and displays.
25	Easy	RTI stop displays and text to speech facility	Includes next bus displays and text to speech facility for those with visual difficulties. Same access format at every stop.
26	Easy	RTI stop displays and text to speech facility	Includes next bus displays and text to speech facility for those with visual difficulties. Same access format at every stop.
27	Easy	Leicester Buses Website	Will include specific accessibility features related to formatting and audio.
28	Easy	Printed information at bus stops	Sited at wheelchair level. Same consistent format at each stop. Includes simple mapping and frequency guides.
29	Easy	Leicester buses branding and promotions	Ensures reassurance of consistent network standards across all main areas of bus travel.
30	Great Value	ENCTS discretionary fares scheme	Discounted peak time travel for those with disabilities. Includes park and ride. Both not included in national scheme
31	Great Value	Unemployed discretionary fares scheme	Discounted travel for those disabled persons not eligible for a free pass, including carers
32	Great Value	Flexi One Ticket discretionary fares scheme trial	Discounted travel for those disabled persons not eligible for a free pass, including carers
33	Great Value	Flexi Child/Student/Family discount scheme trials	Discounted travel for those disabled persons not eligible for a free pass, including carers

Operators Commitments			
No	Aim	Description	Specifically assist travel for those with disabilities
1	Electric	Minimum Euro 6 standard inc spares	Low floor buses at all times
2	Electric	Enhanced accessibility standards	Extra wheelchair space, additional next stop display
3	Electric	Electric bus operation on all Mainline services	Next stop display and announcements, hearing loops
4	Frequent	Network unique route numbering	Simplification and avoid confusion
5	Frequent	Network co-ordination across all operators timetables	Simplification and avoid confusion
6	Frequent	Socially necessary local services - additional notified	Further safety net to address change proposals
7	Reliable	Registration change dates - four times	Simplification and avoid confusion
8	Reliable	Yearly delay audit by route by delay type	Improves reliability to increase confidence to travel by bus for essential time critical appointments such to hospital/doctors
9	Reliable	Yearly feasibility assessment of each pinchpoint	Improves reliability to increase confidence to travel by bus for essential time critical appointments such to hospital/doctors
10	Reliable	Yearly progress report on operational delays	Improves reliability to increase confidence to travel by bus for essential time critical appointments such to hospital/doctors
11	Easy	Network branding on all channels specified	Demonstrates everyone to one common standard
12	Easy	Information at bus stops	Mapping and simplified information at all stops
13	Easy	Websites - networks and ticketing	Accessible in different formats
14	Easy	Network promotion exclusivity - LB branding toolkit	Accessible in different formats
15	Easy	Bus Stations departure fees	Payment towards assistance staff
16	Easy	Passenger Charter participation	Common approach to all aspects related to disabled persons travel
17	Great Value	Ticket definition standardisation	Simplification to avoid confusion
18	Great Value	Participate in Flexi Scheme	Easier and simpler for those still paying
19	Great Value	Drop single operator day and period tickets	Easier and simpler for those still paying
20	Great Value	Participate in all discretionary ticketing schemes	Free bus travel at all times, including Park and Ride
21	Great Value	Contactless ticketing	Easier for those still paying
22	Great Value	Single & All-operator adult day/weekly fare capping	Easier for those still paying

Governance Arrangements

117. This section sets out the governance arrangements for the EP Scheme.

Enhanced Partnership Board

118. The EP Board will be in place from when the EP Scheme is formally made.

119. The EP Board is made up of the following participants:

- One representative from each participating Bus Operator (one vote per Bus Operator);
- Up to four representatives from the City Council (one bloc vote for City Council);
- One representative from Leicestershire County Council (no vote);
- An independent chairperson.

120. The EP Board representatives can change and evolve over time. Any changes to the EP Board participants and structure for this EP Scheme can be made using the EP Scheme Variation procedure set out below.

121. The EP Board will be formed from the point at which the EP Plan and EP Scheme are formally made. The EP Board shall remain in place throughout the duration of the EP Scheme(s).

122. The EP Board will meet on a quarterly basis, but may meet more frequently from time to time, depending on the need for an EP Board meeting. Meetings will be held face to face, with an option to attend virtually via Microsoft Teams or similar conferencing software.

123. Attendees will be notified of forthcoming scheduled meetings at least 7 days in advance of the meeting taking place, and 14 days in advance should there be a need to discuss a proposed variation to the EP Scheme. Papers for each meeting will be provided at the same time. Should non-scheduled meetings be required, EP Board members will be given as much notice as possible, with papers shared at the earliest opportunity in advance of the meeting.
124. The EP Board will be required to inform decision-making relating to the EP Scheme from time to time. Recommendations made by the EP Board will take into consideration any recommendations made by the EP Forum.
125. Decision-making will be assisted by the use of one or more decision-making tools, to help consider the relative merits and risks associated with any measures and/or facilities that could be introduced through this EP Scheme. The tool(s) will take account of various factors, including (but not limited to):
- delivery against EP Plan objectives;
 - value for money (costs and benefits);
 - deliverability including physical and practical constraints;
 - political acceptance (locally and countywide);
 - timescales for delivery;
 - land ownership;
 - planning permission considerations;
 - fit with other strategies and programmes.
126. The tools will be identified and/or developed by the City Council working in partnership with the EP Board, during the 2026–27 financial year.

127. In order to consider a variation to the EP Scheme, the EP Board will consider all inputs from the EP Forum and the above tools to arrive at a conclusion on whether to formally recommend the variation.

128. During this period, representatives on the EP Board will also undertake the necessary consultation within their respective organisations to obtain support if the variation is proposed to proceed. Once the EP Forum has commented on the proposed measures and/or facilities, the EP Board recommendation and EP Scheme Variation process shall be followed as set out in sections 134-143.

Enhanced Partnership Forum

129. The EP Forum is a wider group than the EP Board, incorporating different stakeholders as and when they need to be consulted on changes to the EP Scheme. The EP Forum will include all of the members of the EP Board, but will offer the opportunity for the following groups (as well as others not listed) to engage with the delivery of the Enhanced Partnership:

- Leicestershire and Leicester Enterprise Partnership;
- Employer representation;
- A representative of the Bus User Panel;
- Transport Focus.

130. The acceptance of different groups on the EP Forum will be the decision of the City Council, taking account of the views of Bus Operators represented on the EP Board.

131. The EP Forum is not a decision-making body but will inform and make recommendations to the EP Board in advance of decisions being taken by the EP Board.

Review of Enhanced Partnership Scheme

132. Once the EP Scheme is made, it will be reviewed by the EP Board every year following publication of data on progress towards targets, as required by the EP Plan. This will ensure any necessary action is taken to deliver the targets set out in the EP Plan.

133. The City Council will initiate each review. The EP Board can also decide to review specific elements of the EP Scheme on an ad hoc basis. EP Board members should contact the City Council explaining what the issue is and its urgency. The City Council will then decide whether to table at the next scheduled meeting or make arrangements for all or the necessary EP Board members to gather more quickly.

Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme

134. In accordance with section s.138E of the Transport Act 2000, the procedure set out in 138 may apply in place of the provisions of section 138L to 138N of the Transport Act 2000 in order to vary this EP Scheme, in the specific circumstances expressly specified in this EP Scheme, or otherwise where any variation is proposed by the City Council or any Bus Operator for the purposes of implementation of any requirement or objective of the EP Plan.

135. Consideration will be given to potential EP Scheme Variations highlighted either by a local authority, one of the organisations represented on the EP

Forum, or by a Bus Operator (Proposed Variation).

136. Any variations can be proposed to the EP Scheme, whether specified or not within the current EP Scheme, provided such variation is intended to implement the requirements or objectives of the EP Plan. The proposer of a Proposed Variation shall, so far as reasonably practicable:

- a. demonstrate how the Proposed Variation might contribute to achieving the objectives set out in the EP Plan and/or current local transport policies;
- b. identify the local services (and operators of such services) and area which will be affected by the Proposed Variation, including any requirements which would be imposed on operators in respect of local services;
- c. identify any facilities or measures which are to be implemented;
- d. identify any significant effect on competition that the Proposed Variation might have.

137. Such requests should be in writing and submitted to the Director for Planning, Transport and Economic Development at the City Council. The City Council will forward all requests onto each EP Board members within 5 working days.

138. On receipt of a request for a variation under this section, the City Council will convene the EP Board, giving at least 14 days' notice for the meeting, to consider the Proposed Variation. Each representative will consult within their organisation.

139. If the Proposed Variation is agreed at the EP Board by the City Council and all Bus Operators are present, then section 143 shall apply.

140. If the Proposed Variation is agreed at the EP Board by the City Council and all Bus Operators present whose services are affected by the Proposed Variation (notwithstanding that other Bus Operators may not agree to the Proposed Variation) then section 143 shall apply.

141. If the Proposed Variation is agreed at the EP Board by the City Council and some but not all Bus Operators are present whose services are affected by the Proposed Variation (notwithstanding that other Bus Operators may not agree to the Proposed Variation) then the Proposed Variation may be put to the operator objection mechanism as set out in The Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018, as if the Proposed Variation was a variation to this EP Scheme notified under section 138L of the Transport Act 2000 save that:

- a reduced objection period of 14 days shall apply in place of the 28-day period stated in section 138L(2)(c) of the Transport Act 2000;
- references to "the area to which the scheme relates" in section 138L(5)(b) of the Transport Act 2000 shall be taken to be references to the area covered by the services affected by the Proposed Variation, and if objections under this operator objection mechanism do not reach the statutory objection limit then section 153 shall apply.

142. Where this section applies, the City Council will consider the Proposed Variation taking into account the agreement reached by the EP Board, and shall unless they determine that there is a good reason not to make the Proposed Variation make the EP Scheme Variation and publish the revised

EP Scheme on its website.

143. EP Board members who are absent or not expressing a view at the meeting (either in person or in writing) will be deemed to be abstaining from the decision.

Revocation of an Enhanced Partnership Scheme

144. Section 138O of the Transport Act 2000 shall apply to the revocation of this EP Scheme.

Other Aspects

Implications for Small and Medium sized operators

145. Given the variety of Bus Operators involved (in terms of market share, fleet size, company turnover and structure), it is important to ensure that the effects of the Enhanced Partnership do not unduly negatively impact smaller Bus Operators' ability to engage or to comply with requirements.

146. The EP Board will therefore allocate Bus Operator votes on the basis of one Bus Operator per vote. In addition, the requirement of the Bus Operator shall not be placed upon operators of Non-Qualifying Services).

Competition

147. The City Council has undertaken an assessment of the impacts of the EP Plan and EP Scheme made on 1 September 2026 on competition. It 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.

148. The EP Scheme and EP Plan have been sent to the Competition and Markets Authority as part of the consultation process.

Monitoring and Targets

149. A list of the data that will be submitted to the City Council by Bus Operators on request will be agreed by the EP Board.

150. This will be kept confidential and only used for the purposes of monitoring and evaluation the EP Scheme.