



Bus Services Act 2017 Update

**For consideration by: Economic Development,
Transport and Tourism Scrutiny Commission**

Date: 14th March 2019

Lead director: Andrew L. Smith

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: **ALL**
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1. Purpose of report

1.1 On 6th September 2018, the Scrutiny Commission received the Task Group Report: “Review of the Bus services Act 2017 – the impacts and opportunities”.

1.2 This paper provides:

- a general update on relevant activity relating to public transport in the city (below)
- comments on specific recommendations and action points from the 6th September 2018 Task Group Report (see tabulated cover sheet)

2. Summary

2.1 There has been considerable activity and progress on issues affecting public transport in the city since the 6th September 2019 meeting of the Commission. Items of note are discussed below.

2.2 **Clean Air Zone (CAZ)** – in March 2018, the City Council and major bus operators committed to a CAZ which will improve air quality by delivering cleaner, Euro VI engines across the Leicester bus fleet by the end of 2020.

Proactive cooperation with our partners, the ambition embedded in our Air Quality Action Plan (2015-2026) and our subsequent CAZ agreement have already helped deliver significant benefits. Compliance with our 2020 Euro VI engine target has increased from 10% to 70% between 2015 and 2019.

Notwithstanding our good progress to date, the Council continues to work with operators to drive change e.g. by securing funding to improve engine emissions by retro-fitting 158 buses. A funding application to upgrade a further 53 buses is currently being considered by JAQU, the government’s Joint Air Quality Unit. If successful, the total spend in this area (including operator contributions) will be £6.5 million.

2.3 **ERDF Low Carbon Fund** – the city council has secured a £12.5 million package of low carbon measures which is relevant to public transport operations in that it:

- Extends our behavioural change programme promoting sustainable travel and modal shift
- Adds solar panels to the roof of St Margarets Bus Station

2.4 Transforming Cities:Tranche 1 – having won the right to compete, Leicester is one of 10 cities bidding for DfT Transforming Cities funding. Our £10 million Tranche 1 bid is currently being considered by DfT with a decision expected in early March 2019. Our Tranche 1 bid includes:

Electrification of Birstall Park and Ride Bus Service

This scheme will provide a step change in our park and ride service, improving the quality and frequency on a key corridor to the north of the city which connects the city centre to our Enterprise Zone, regeneration areas, a new University Space Campus and major housing growth areas.

Delivering Contactless Smart Payment Across Central Leicestershire's Bus Network

This scheme will deliver substantial benefits for bus passengers travelling on our main corridors, simplifying travel through contactless payment whilst improving boarding time and supporting better connectivity.

2.5 Transforming Cities: Tranche 2 – we are currently developing our Tranche 2 bid in conjunction with bus operators and other strategic partners. Tranche 2 could secure up to £100m to improve transport connectivity and access to employment across Leicester. Bids will be finalised in Autumn 2019. Public transport options under consideration include:

- improving our bus station and rail transport hubs and, importantly, connectivity between them
- bus priority measures on key radials and routes improving the speed, access and reliability of services, particularly those targeting major growth areas, employment and housing sites
- building on Tranche 1 ticketing initiatives.

2.6 National Productivity Investment Fund – Bus Pinch Points

Detailed design of the following pinch point treatments is progressing with construction programmed for 2019 / 20:

- ***St Margarets Bus Station*** – direct bus priority egress to Burleys Way
- ***Bus Lanes / Enforcement measures*** – Groby Road; Narborough Road; Uppingham Road; Duns Lane;

2.7 Data Sharing / Smart Cities

Our major bus operators are already investing in new ticket machines and contactless on-bus payment systems within their own bus operations.

This does not, in itself, guarantee the multi-operator smart ticketing environment we aspire to but it is a positive and enabling step.

The new ticketing systems do, however, improve the quality, timeliness and granularity of bus tracking and passenger data. First Bus recently demonstrated the power of their new data analytics tools. We are already beginning to share information and harness the potential of this data to improve and support our Transforming Cities and other bids.

2.8 Bus Services Act Agreement

We continue to work closely with bus operator partners on the above projects. The scale of funding, potential levels of intervention and partnership working experience gained during this process will help educate and shape our Bus Services Act Partnership Agreement.

Initial drafts of the Agreement will therefore be prepared once we have a decision our Transforming Cities Tranche 2 bid. (est. Dec 2019)

3. Recommendations

3.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

4. Financial, Legal and other implications

Financial implications - none

Legal implications - none

Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications – none

Equalities implications - none

5. Supporting information / appendices

5.1 EDTT Scrutiny Task Group - A review of The Bus Services Act 2017 – the impacts and opportunities

<http://www.cabinet.leicester.gov.uk:8071/documents/s95833/Bus%20Services%20Act%20draft%20report%20of%20findings%20for%20tg%20comments%2024%20Aug.pdf>

6. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

7. Is this a “key decision”?

No
