



Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson, Executive Director - Place

Report to:	Councillor R G Davies, Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT
Date:	27 - 31 March 2023
Subject:	Lincolnshire Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme for Buses
Decision Reference:	I029212
Key decision?	No

Summary:

To seek approval for the Lincolnshire Enhanced Partnership Plan (EP) and Enhanced Partnership Scheme (ES) for Buses following the completion of the operator objection window and statutory consultation.

Recommendation(s):

That the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT

- 1) approves the making of the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme without modification in the form attached at Appendix A and B respectively with effect from 1 April 2023 and delivered through the Enhanced Partnership Board; and
- 2) approves that the delivery of the said Plan and Scheme be overseen by the Enhanced Partnership Board

Alternatives Considered:

1. To not approve the Lincolnshire Enhanced Partnership Scheme and Plan.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The EP and ES sets out achievable actions to improve bus services in Lincolnshire working within an Enhanced Partnership Board with bus operators. All the actions are achievable within existing resources. Furthermore, the Department for Transport (DfT) expectation is that every Local Transport Authority has a 'made' EP Plan and Scheme in place to be eligible for future discretionary funding in the future. Following advice from the DfT, an Annex 2 has been added to the ES setting out future aspirations if funding were to become available.

1. Background

1.1 Along with two thirds of other local transport authorities, Lincolnshire County Council did not receive funding in this round for its Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) document. However, the DfT has provided us with BSIP Capacity Funding and we have been allocated a Relationship Manager to provide support for any future funding opportunities. The Assistant Director (Communities) and Support Services Manager (Transport Services) has also met with representatives from the DfT and our Relationship Manager to receive bespoke detailed feedback in relation to the DfT. There is an expectation that the BSIP which is our funding document will be refreshed annually.

1.2 Furthermore, to be eligible for future discretionary funding, there is a requirement from the DfT that we will still continue to 'make' the Lincolnshire EP and ES. Delivery of the Plan and Scheme will be overseen by the EP Board.

1.3 Lincolnshire Enhanced Scheme and Plan

The BSIP was the funding document requested by the DfT following the "Bus Back Better" document from the Government. The Enhanced Plan (EP) and Enhanced Scheme (ES) are statutory documents which must be formed in accordance with Section 138A to 138G of the Transport Act 2000. The EP sets out overall objectives for bus services in Lincolnshire (within existing resources) and detail about the EP Board and the wider stakeholder Forum.

1.4 An interim EP Board was established in April 2021 and comprises the County Council, bus operators, the Lincolnshire LEP and two District Council representatives. It has been successful. The wider EP Forum will comprise wider stakeholders and meet once or twice per year. Its role will be to engage with interested parties.

1.5 The DfT issued Guidance in July 2021 on both the BSIP and the contents of the EP Plan and Scheme. Attached as Appendices A and B are the draft Enhanced Plan and Scheme.

1.6 The EP Plan must include:

- Overview and map of the geographical area covered (Lincolnshire)
- Factors affecting the local bus market
- Summary of passengers' experience in using bus services and the priorities of users and non-users for improvements
- Trends in bus journey speeds and Impact of congestion on bus services
- Objectives that are sought for Bus service provision
- Interventions needed to achieve the desired outcomes
- Governance arrangements
- Competition test

The EP Scheme must include:

- The scope of the Scheme and commenced date
- Obligations on the Local Transport Authority
- Obligations on the bus operators
- Governance arrangements

1.7 As we were unsuccessful for BSIP funding then the EP Plan and Scheme have had to be scaled back to reflect what can be achieved with no additional funding. Lincolnshire's draft Plan and Scheme include the following activities which can be achieved and becomes binding once agreed:

LCC Obligations	Bus Operator Obligations
Audit of bus/stop shelter infrastructure in Lincolnshire – Phase 1 identifying all marked and unmarked stops and shelters in Lincolnshire has been completed. Phase 2 is confirming ownership.	Development and adherence to the Lincolnshire Bus Passenger Charter.
Maintain existing bus stop infrastructure and bus lanes for which the County Council is responsible.	Vehicle Standards – at least Euro 3.
Consider the feasibility of new bus stop and bus lane infrastructure at one or more locations around the county.	Consider the development of an inter-operator bus ticket.
Bus priority at one or more applicable junctions – Seven junctions with bus priority in Grantham next phase is Spalding. This is based on punctuality data from the bus operators. To date there are 35 live sites with traffic light priority in Lincolnshire.	Promote PlusBus.
Managing roadworks in the EP Scheme area.	Development of Operator Information Provision.
Review all operator bus information.	
Managing Fix My Street in relation to bus infrastructure matters.	
Freedom Never Gets Old Campaign focused on bus pass holders returning to the bus.	
Promote PlusBus.	

1.8 Following the feedback from the DfT, The EP Scheme includes Annex 2 which sets out three aspirational projects if we were to obtain additional funding which are:

- Boston Driver Training school
- Development of town services in Boston, Gainsborough and Grantham
- Integration with active travel in rural areas.

1.9 The process for adopting the EP Plan and Scheme follows a prescriptive process. The first step is the operator objection window which lasted for 28 days and there were no objections raised. The next stage is the statutory consultation which lasted from 4 to 31 January 2022. The Guidance set out a requirement to engagement with a stakeholder group comprising:

- Transport Focus
- Any organisations representing passengers (we do not have any in Lincolnshire)
- Traffic Commissioner
- Chief of Police
- Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)

We also notified all County Councillors, neighbouring local transport authorities, and the seven district councils in Lincolnshire. The draft documents were also available on Let's Talk Lincolnshire. We've received five formal responses from the stakeholders and (46) comments on Let's Talk Lincolnshire.

1.10 A summary of the responses from the statutory stakeholders that responded are set out below. None of these matters require any amendment to either the EP Plan or Scheme but will be addressed.

1. Lincolnshire Police – confirming that there is nothing in the proposals that would appear to increase road danger or safety to passengers – requires no change to the documents.
2. North East Lincolnshire Council – no comments on either documents so no changes required.
3. Transport Focus (TF) – TF related the contents of the EP Plan and Scheme to research carried out that showed what bus users want to see. TF concluded that the Lincolnshire EP Plan and Scheme do attempt to meet the needs of passengers in almost all the areas identified by TF. TF commented that the market towns improvement programme and the bus driver training programme were priorities of the EP Plan that they agree with. However, TF is conscious that LCC wasn't successful in obtaining BSIP funding, so this will inevitably moderate our ambitions.
4. South Kesteven District Council – a table of specific comments on operational bus services from Councillors. This has already been passed to Network Design within Transport Services to consider as operational requests.
5. Lincolnshire LEP – Made a number of comments that are being addressed such as utilising the planning process for new developments which is already being addressed. The EP should embrace innovation and explore potential improvements/ideas to help achieve Net Zero targets by 2040 in Lincolnshire; could we explore more in terms of innovation related government funding to support pilot schemes for purchasing new buses linked to NET Zero targets and emerging fuel types?
6. Boston Borough Council, East Lindsey District Council and South Holland District Council provided a joint response from the South and East Lincolnshire Council's Partnership – the response included a number of observations about bus services and specific issues in their geographical areas. It is noted that in paragraph 5.4.3 of

the EP a list of major developments is listed and this response cites additional allocations in Boston, Holbeach and two large sites in Spalding and Holbeach. These comments are duly noted and the paragraph will be updated at some future point. There are other schemes such as Stamford North that aren't included.

1.11 Let's Talk Lincolnshire received 51 responses; 44 of which were from members of the public. The survey asked two questions:

1. To what extent do you/does your organisation agree or disagree that the EP and ES reflect the current situation and identifies the optimal solutions for improving bus services in Lincolnshire? *51% of respondents agreed, 22% neither agreed nor disagreed, 22% disagreed and the remaining answering don't know.*

2. If Lincolnshire was successful in acquiring any future funding, to what extent do you/does your organisation agree or disagree with the priorities identified in Annex B of the ES? *54% of respondents agreed, 14% neither agreed nor disagreed, 29% disagreed and the remaining answering don't know.*

1.12 23 of the 51 respondents provided more detailed comments. The Community engagement team has analysed all the additional comments and all of them relate to suggestions for enhancing current bus services. Comments made relate to frequency, cost, suggested new services and so on which matches what members of the public said when we extensively consulted before drafting the BSIP in 2021.

1.13 Having given due consideration to the responses to the consultation it is considered that none of the comments and suggestions made are ones that call for the Plan and Scheme to be modified. Indeed, the Plan and Scheme provide a framework for taking forward future developments of services as funding becomes available at which time the public comments can inform the thinking of the Enhanced Partnership Board. It is therefore recommended that the Council make the Plan and Scheme without modification.

1.14 Under section 138G of the Transport Act 2000 the Council may make a Plan and Scheme if, after complying with the preparation, notice and consultation requirements in section 138F of the Act, the Council considers it appropriate to make the plan and scheme. The requirements of section 138F have been met.

1.15 It is considered appropriate to make the Plan and Scheme because it provides a strong framework for the development of bus services in Lincolnshire. In particular, it establishes a governance model through the Enhanced Partnership Board for ongoing dialogue between the County Council and bus operators. Through the identified schemes and the future schemes set out in the Annex it provides direction for the partnership while having the flexibility to enable other developments to be added in future. Finally, it meets the requirements from government and equips Lincolnshire to attract future funding which it would not otherwise qualify for.

1.16 The Enhanced Partnership Board has proven to be a valuable forum for the development of the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme and is well-placed to continue to oversee the delivery of the Plan and Scheme and identify potential future developments and funding opportunities.

2. Legal Issues:

Equality Act 2010

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The relevant protected characteristics are age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
- Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to tackle prejudice, and promote understanding.

Compliance with the duties in section 149 may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.

The duty cannot be delegated and must be discharged by the decision-maker. To discharge the statutory duty the decision-maker must analyse all the relevant material

with the specific statutory obligations in mind. If a risk of adverse impact is identified consideration must be given to measures to avoid that impact as part of the decision-making process.

An Equality Impact Analysis has been completed and there are no adverse impacts on people with a protected characteristic arising out of any actions within the EP Plan and Scheme.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS)

The Council must have regard to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS) in coming to a decision.

The JHWS includes a section on transport and the importance of transport to allow travel for a number of reasons including for work, education, hospital appointments and leisure.

Crime and Disorder

Under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Council must exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment), the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area and re-offending in its area.

As part of the consultation, we received a response from Lincolnshire Police who considered that there were no adverse impacts on community safety from any of the proposals contained within the EP Plan and Scheme.

3. Conclusion

There are no adverse impacts to the Council by continuing with the proposals included in the EP Plan and Scheme. There could be a risk of not accessing future discretionary funding opportunities if we did not adopt the Plan and Scheme.

4. Legal Comments:

The Council has the power to make the proposed Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme as long as the statutory process under the Transport Act 2000 has been followed and the Executive Councillor considers it appropriate to make the Plan and Scheme.

The Transport Act 2000 process has been followed.

The reasons why it is considered appropriate to make the Plan and Scheme are set out in the Report.

The decision is consistent with the Policy Framework and within the remit of the Executive Councillor

5. Resource Comments:

Approving the recommendation of making the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme is not expected to have any direct resource implications.

Delivery of the activities arising from the Plan specified at paragraph 1.7 will require resource input from Officer time and external support, both of which are budgeted for within the approved revenue budget.

DfT guidance continues to suggest that access to future Government transport funding will be conditional upon having an Enhanced Partnership in place.

6. Consultation

a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?

n/a

b) Has Executive Councillor Been Consulted?

Yes

c) Scrutiny Comments

The decision will be considered by the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 6 March 2023 and the comments of the Committee will be reported to the Executive Councillor

d) Risks and Impact Analysis

A risk register was developed and monitored during the development of the BSIP and Enhanced Partnership. The key risk of not adopting a Plan and Scheme could result in the County Council being excluded from any future discretionary funding opportunities

for transport. The other key risk related to ensuring that statutory process was complied with during the development of the Plan. This included ensuring that there was an operator objector window and that the consultation met the statutory requirements and Guidance.

7. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Lincolnshire Enhanced Plan
Appendix B	Lincolnshire Enhanced Scheme

8. Background Papers

The following background papers as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 were relied upon in the writing of this report.

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Report to the Executive dated 5 October 2021 titled "Lincolnshire Enhanced Partnership Scheme and Bus Service Improvement Plan"	(Public Pack)Agenda Document for Executive, 05/10/2021 10:30 (modern.gov.co.uk)

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The Lincolnshire Enhanced Partnership Plan For Buses



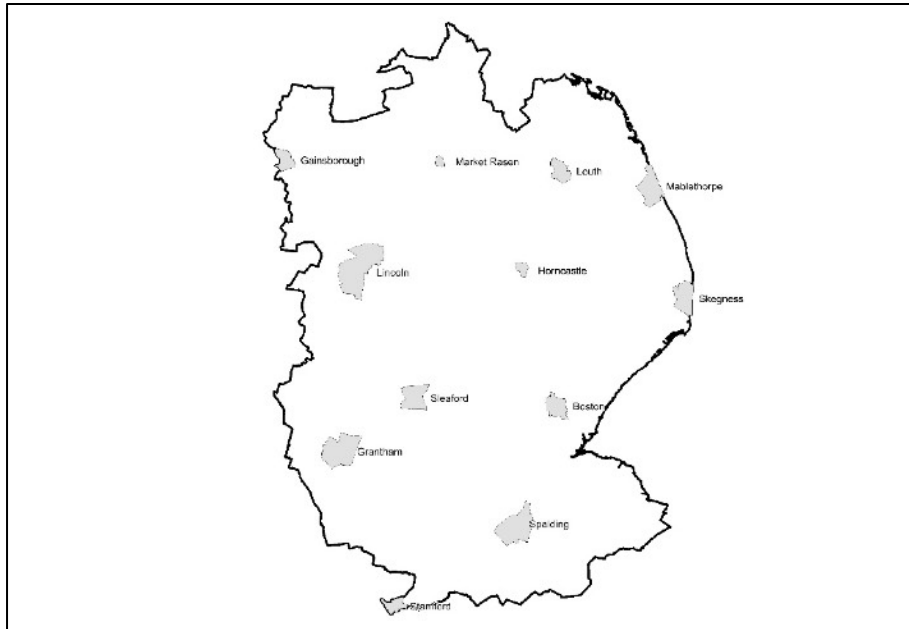
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1. EP Plan Area

1.1.1. The Lincolnshire EP Plan covers the county area of Lincolnshire, as illustrated in Figure 1-1.

Figure 1-1 EP Plan Area



2. EP Plan Period and Monitoring

2.1.1. This EP Plan initially sets out a high-level bus strategy for Lincolnshire for the period from 1st April 2023, but has no specific end date. The Plan will be monitored and evaluated against its objectives twice in respect of the initial period. These reviews will be completed by the following dates:

- 30th April 2024
- 30th April 2026

and the EP Plan shall be reviewed every two years following this if not revoked.

2.1.2. The Lincolnshire Bus Service Improvement Plan will be evaluated on an annual basis, and the EP Scheme(s) will also be monitored on an annual basis. Should either of these processes or reviews in accordance with section 2.1.1 deem the EP Plan to require potential amendment, this will be as agreed by the EP Partnership Board and implemented as a variation in accordance with sections 138K to 138M Transport Act 2000.

2.1.3. Assessing the Plan's performance against its objectives is essential to understand what has been delivered through the EP Plan and Scheme(s) and how it has performed in enhancing local bus services. The Plan will be monitored by the County Council initially, in conjunction with the Lincolnshire EP Board and Forum, which consists of local bus operator representatives, district council officers and the Greater Lincolnshire LEP. Passenger Groups will also be consulted to understand their views on performance of the EP Plan and Scheme(s), alongside wider public engagement to understand levels of bus user satisfaction.

3. EP Plan Objectives

3.1.1. The EP Plan objectives are the same as those contained within the Lincolnshire EP Plan. These objectives align with the draft Local Transport Plan and seek to improve the quality of bus services and their effectiveness in moving people around the county efficiently and at a reasonable cost. The objectives are as follows:

1. For buses to contribute to the quality of place across Lincolnshire
2. To recover bus patronage to pre-COVID levels from April 2023
3. To reduce journey times for bus services across Lincolnshire and improve journey time reliability
4. To increase bus user satisfaction rates
5. To support the perception of travelling safely by public transport
6. To increase service levels to meet the travel needs of all our communities, including those living in new developments
7. To provide efficient multi-modal connectivity between our rail, bus and other transport networks to connect Lincolnshire with the East Midlands and beyond
8. To support a reduction in operating costs through an efficient use of resources
9. To maintain the number of operators providing bus services in Lincolnshire
10. To support economic growth and the levelling up of our more deprived communities through improving access for all to education, employment health and leisure
11. To reduce rural isolation through more available and usable bus services
12. To improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions from transport
13. To reduce barriers to public transport use through attractive fares and tickets
14. To reduce barriers to public transport use through high quality information
15. To reduce all physical barriers to public transport use
16. To ensure users have a say in how bus services are provided

4. Passenger Experiences

4.1.1. The County Council has two main sources of evidence that highlight the experience of bus users as well as their views and satisfaction rates:

- 2018 Passenger Focus bus user survey
- 2021 BSIP public engagement survey

4.1.2. The 2018 Passenger Focus survey showed that:

- Overall satisfaction was 89% (88% nationally)
- For fare payers, overall journey satisfaction was 85% (85% nationally)
- Journey times in Lincolnshire are rated at 88% (85% nationally)
- Punctuality (71%) is below the national average of 74%
- Value for money in Lincolnshire is 56% compared to 64% nationally

4.1.3. Overall, the survey suggests that punctuality and value for money are two areas that Lincolnshire bus operators could improve upon compared to other parts of England.

4.1.4. Between July and September 2021, the County Council carried out an online public engagement survey to understand perceptions of bus services in Lincolnshire and their priorities for enhancing bus services. 1,705 individuals responded to the survey, and while it was a self-selecting sample, it provides a broad indication of the priorities of those respondents.

4.1.5. The top priorities for all respondents are presented below:

Priority	Bus service enhancement
1	More frequent services
2	Better information at bus stops/stations
3	Later evening services
4	Better information on local bus services made easier to obtain and understand
5	More destinations
6	Better bus stops/shelters
7	Multi-operator tickets
8	Better connectivity
9	Lower fares
10	Better connectivity with rail

4.1.6. For those respondents aged 19 and under, the vast majority (48 out of 51) stated that lower fares would encourage them to use buses more frequently. Other notable enhancements to encourage them to use buses more frequently included:

- Better and up to date information, including real time information, and
- Better bus stops and shelters

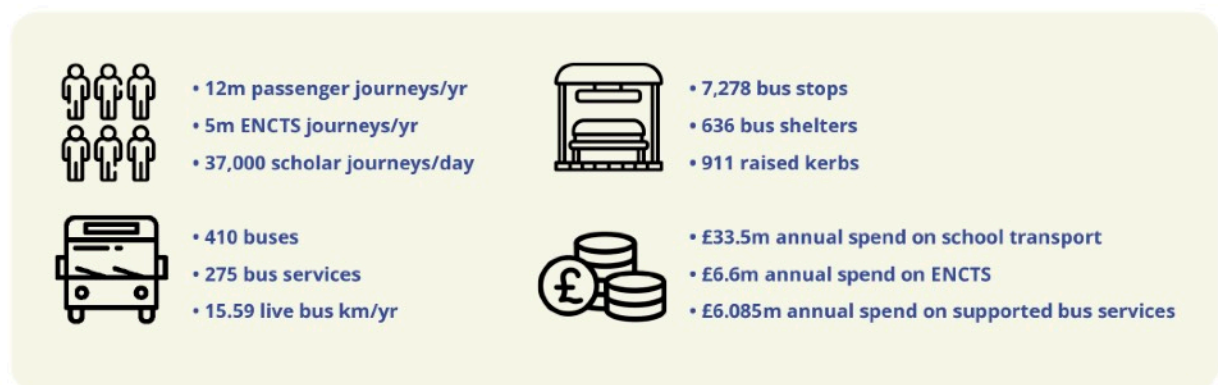
4.1.7. Better facilities for people with disabilities scored highly as a motivator among people with physical disabilities. Buses are already accessible, so further investigation is required to explore whether there are other areas of improvement for such groups, including bus stop infrastructure, access to information etc.

4.1.8. Overall, there are some clear priorities identified from the survey. More frequent services, more evening services, better information provision and better bus stop facilities accord with the general sentiments of bus operators and other stakeholders.

5. The Current Bus Offer in Lincolnshire

- 5.1.1. Given the rurality of the county, Lincolnshire presents a series of challenges for operating buses. Our bus services, however, 'punch above their weight' in the face of a variety of challenges – a sparse population, a high number of settlements away from high trafficked corridors (and fixed bus routes), high levels of car ownership (in certain areas, but not all), pockets of deprivation (particularly around our coastal areas) and ongoing funding constraints amongst others. Identifying what Lincolnshire does well helps to provide foundations on which to develop and enhance the bus offer to encourage more people to use the bus. Equally, identifying the things that Lincolnshire does less well helps to identify those areas in which the bus offer can be greatly enhanced, and which this EP Plan details.
- 5.1.2. This section documents both existing bus supply and demand in Lincolnshire and identifies the areas where there is a lack of provision or where supply could be improved.

Figure 5-1 Overview of bus provision in Lincolnshire



5.2. Bus Supply

5.2.1. A key part of the last countywide bus strategy in Lincolnshire was to develop a clear hierarchical structure for local bus services to meet the differing needs of users in different areas. This has led to the following bus network structure that remains in place today:

- Urban bus services - including 'IntoTown' services in our market towns
- 'InterConnect' (inter urban) services to create a mostly hourly service between all towns across the county and cross boundary
- Fixed route rural bus services where there is sufficient demand
- 'CallConnect' (demand responsive) services to provide a dependable service to all rural areas of the County without an alternative conventional bus service

5.2.2. Complementing the above services, the County Council is responsible for providing transport for different groups – some being statutory responsibilities while others are decisions taken by the Council. Additional services funded by the Council include:

- Integrated education travel
- Special educational needs transport
- Adult and child social care transport
- Health transport for services during circumstances such as during COVID vaccinations

5.2.3. The Council supports the commercial bus network by encouraging scholars to travel on the commercial network where there are suitable services, with travel funded by the County Council for entitled pupils. Where there are no suitable services, the Council funds dedicated school bus services, many of which are integrated into the commercial bus network before and after providing the school service. This is an efficient use of vehicles and the cost of supporting the school bus helps to underpin the commercial viability of services during the day.

5.2.4. There are 275 live local bus registrations, operated by 27 operators - see Table 5-1. The largest operator is Stagecoach East Midlands with 85 service registrations, although this underestimates the number of services as some registrations include more than one service. 21 of the 27 operators have 8 or fewer registered services, highlighting that despite a broad operator base, the majority of services are provided by a small number of operators.

Table 5-1 Number of local bus registrations by operator in Lincolnshire

Operator	Registrations
Amvale	1
Brylaine Travel	24
Cambus T/A Stagecoach East	4
Centrebus North	16
Delaine Buses	7
EYMS T/A Stagecoach East Midlands	1
F Hunt T/A Hunts Coaches	13
GDS 2016	1
Gem Mini Travel	2
GHP Trading	2
Grayscroft	8
Kettlewell (Retford)	2
Lincolnshire Road Car T/A Stagecoach East Midlands	84
Blands (Rutland)	5
Marshalls of Sutton on Trent	3
National Express	4
Nigel Dickinson & Julie Overton T/A Dickinson Coaches	1
PC Coaches of Lincoln	28
Phil Haines Coaches	3
Robert Dent & Linda Horstwood T/A Dents Coaches	2
Sleaford Taxi Company T/A Sleafordian	17
Stuart Oakland & Jane Oakland	1
TC Mini Coaches	11
Transport Connect	26
Vectare	1
W H Fowler & Sons	5

InterConnect

- 5.2.5. The core InterConnect services are detailed in Table 5-2 and illustrated in Figure 5-2. Within the 2006 Lincolnshire Bus Strategy, the target for InterConnect services was to provide a minimum of an hourly service between our towns. These services are operated at a maximum of 60-minute headways, although early morning, evening and weekend provision varies.
- 5.2.6. There remain a small number of other inter urban services to the south of the county. Delaine Buses provides services between Bourne and Peterborough, Bourne, Stamford and Peterborough, and Spalding and Stamford. Daytime frequencies are typically half hourly or hourly.

Fixed route rural bus services

- 5.2.7. These services provide a vital lifeline to many of our villages, connecting smaller settlements to our market towns. Services such as the B11 between Spilsby and Boston and the 96A between Mablethorpe and Spilsby – see Figure 5-2 - are good examples of these essential rural bus services. These services complement InterConnect services.

IntoTown

- 5.2.8. IntoTown services are relatively short urban bus services operating in and around our market towns. IntoTown services are detailed in Table 5-2. These typically operate on half-hourly or hourly headways in Grantham, Spalding, Sleaford and Boston. In addition, there are 'town services' in Gainsborough and Stamford. In Louth the 'Nipper' service provides a similar level of service to IntoTown with some services operating at hourly headways between 7am and 7pm. In addition, wholly commercial urban operations exist in Lincoln and Skegness.

CallConnect

- 5.2.9. There are 35 CallConnect Demand Responsive services providing access to essential goods and services for all those living in rural Lincolnshire without access to other local bus services. The whole of Lincolnshire is served by CallConnect, except for the city centre in Lincoln which has sufficient coverage of local bus services to provide local residents with the access they require to essential goods and services. There is also a Lincoln area Dial-a-Ride service in operation to provide door-to-door services for those with reduced mobility. All Call Connect services are provided by operators on a minimum cost basis i.e. the County Council accepts all financial risk on these services.

Supported Bus Services

5.2.10. Lincolnshire County Council has a total of 148 individual contracts for providing bus services across the County. These contracts range from individual journeys receiving a small amount of de minimis support, to entire services operating on either a minimum subsidy or minimum cost basis. 17 operators provide these services on behalf of the County Council.

5.2.11. The annual value of supported bus services in Lincolnshire is approximately £6,085,000. This includes only a small proportion of home to school services. Spend on home to school transport for entitled scholars is more than £33,500,000, while ENCTS costs over £6,600,000pa.

Geographic Provision

5.2.12. Lincolnshire is wholly covered by local bus services, as illustrated in Figure 5-2. Urban, IntoTown and InterConnect services provide coverage countywide. Away from fixed route bus services, CallConnect provides a local on-demand service for residents that require a gate-to-gate service, or those who cannot connect with a fixed route service.

Figure 5-2 Geographic coverage of local bus provision



InterConnect
Network
Map

InterConnect Services

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| 1 Lincoln - Grantham | 51 Louth - Grimsby | 59 Mablethorpe - Skegness |
| 5 Lincoln - Boston | 56 Lincoln - Skegness | 100 Lincoln - Gainsborough - Scunthorpe |
| 7 Skegness - Boston | 57 Skegness - Boston - Spalding | 505 Spalding - Kings Lynn |
| 37 Spalding - Peterborough | 53 Lincoln - Grimsby | |

- CallConnect routes
- Other key services
- CallConnect DRT area (Wheelchair accessible) 0345 234 3344
- Interchange
- Interchange with railway
- Terminus

Temporal Provision

5.2.13. The temporal provision of bus services can vary greatly, by service and by operator. The lack of evening services in some areas is reflective of a lack of a night time or Sunday economy in many parts of the county. Urban services typically operate longer hours and over more days of the week. As shown in Table 5-2, services in Lincoln, Skegness and Grantham have frequent services of half hourly or better, particularly in Lincoln. These services operate every day of the week in Lincoln, although Sunday frequencies are reduced. Services in Lincoln operate into the evening, with buses departing Lincoln on services 6, 9 and 15/16 after 2100. Despite this the need to increase frequency and capacity of public transport in the evening to support the night time economy has been identified as an issue for the city in the Lincoln Transport Strategy and Town investment Plan. In other urban areas - the last service of the day is before 1800 on weekdays.

5.2.14. InterConnect and other inter urban services operate at hourly headways from before 0800 on weekdays (except IC7). There is a mixed picture during evenings - the last departure on service 56 between Lincoln and Skegness is 2100, but for most other services, the last service of the day is before 1900. CallConnect services operate from 7am until 7pm Monday – Friday and 7.30am – 6.30pm Saturdays. There is currently no demand responsive offer on Sundays.

Table 5-2 Selection of core fixed route bus services in Lincolnshire

Urban and Suburban Services

Operator	Service	Description	Headway	1st service dep	Last service dep	Days
Stagecoach	1	Lincoln to Grantham	30 mins	0520	1815	M-Sun
Stagecoach	2	Lincoln to Branston	30 mins	0645	1845	M-Sun
Stagecoach	6 / X6	Lincoln to Birchwood/County Hosp	10 mins	0520	2130	M-Sun
Stagecoach	9	Lincoln to Birchwood	20 mins	0540	2100	M-Sun
Stagecoach	15/16	Lincoln to N.Hykeham	10 mins	0550	2130	M-Sun
Stagecoach	1 / 3	Skegness to Chapel	30 mins	0625	1905	M-Sun
Brylaine	IT1/IT2	Spalding Town	1 hour	0745	1500	M-Sat

Operator	Service	Description	Headway	1st service dep	Last service dep	Days
Brylaine	IT1 - IT6	Boston Town	1 hour	0730	1704	M-Sat
Brylaine	B13	Boston to Spalding	1 hour	0630	1900	M-Sat
Centrebus	1	Grantham - Alma Park	30 mins	0625	1805	M-Sat
Centrebus	1	Grantham - Earlesfield	30 mins	0700	1735	M-Sat
Centrebus	3	Grantham - Barrowby Gate	1 hour	0800	1745	M-Fri
PC Coaches	777	Lincoln to Saxilby	6 svcs/day	0645	1745	M-Sat

Inter-urban Services

Operator	Service	Description	Headway	1st service dep	Last service dep	Days
Stagecoach	50	Lincoln to Louth	2 hours	0555	1715	M-Sat
Stagecoach	53	Lincoln to Market Rasen	1 hour	0640	1820	M-Sat
Stagecoach	56	Lincoln to Skegness	1 hour	0600	2100	M-Sat
Stagecoach	100	Lincoln to Gainsborough	1 hour	0735	1805	M-Sat
Stagecoach	51	Louth to Grimsby	1 hour	0550	1815	M-Sat
Stagecoach	57	Skegness to Boston	1 hour	0620	1815	M-Sat
Brylaine	IC5	Lincoln to Boston	1 hour	0630	1800	M-Sat
Brylaine	IC7	Boston to Skegness	1 hour	0910	1640	M-Sat
Delaine	101/102	Bourne to Peterborough	30 mins	0610	2015	M-Sun
Delaine	201/202	Bourne, Stamford to Peterborough	1 hour	0610	1815	M-Sat
Delaine	301/302	Spalding to Stamford	1 hour	0740	1715	M-Fri
Hunts	7	Alford to Skegness	6 svcs/day	0645	1605	M-Sat

Bus Fleet

5.2.15. Based on data provided by our operators, the mean age of a bus in Lincolnshire is 13.34 years old, while the median bus age is 14 years. In 2019-20, the average age of the bus fleet in England was 8.8 years old¹, thus, the bus fleet in Lincolnshire is significantly older than elsewhere in the country.

5.2.16. As shown in Table 5-3, the emissions standards are towards the lower end of the Euro standard. For the 410 buses for which data was provided, 9 buses are Euro 2, while 123 adhere to Euro 3 standards, 123 Euro 4 and 120 Euro 5. Just 35 of the 410 buses operating in Lincolnshire meet Euro 6 standards. In addition to poorer air quality, the age profile and emissions standards of our local buses are likely to contribute to higher CO2 emissions.

Table 5-3 Emission standards for local buses in Lincolnshire

Euro Category	No. of buses
Euro 2	9
Euro 3	123
Euro 4	123
Euro 5	120
Euro 6	35

1 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/929992/annual-bus-statistics-year-ending-march-2020.pdf

Bus Fares

- 5.2.17. As the fixed route bus network is commercial or supported through de minimis payments or minimum subsidy tender, operators have full control over bus fares, tickets and other fare products. Fare scales for all operators are graduated, so passengers are charged a higher fare the longer distance they travel. All local bus operators offer single and return tickets, while day, carnet and longer period tickets are typically offered by only the 'largest' operators. All operators typically have fare products for adults and children, while some have their own commercial scholar products.
- 5.2.18. Child and young people fares differ across the bus market in Lincolnshire. Some operators do not offer child tickets before 0900 on a weekday, others offer child fares up to the age of 11 and young people fares from 11-18, while others offer child fares up to either 14, 16 or 18. The level of discount offered for children and young people also differs across Lincolnshire bus operators, ranging between 20% and 50% discount compared to the equivalent adult fare. Differences in fares policies is the result of competition law and the prevention of collusion between operators. Despite this, there is a mixed, and potentially confusing, picture for younger bus users that an Enhanced Partnership Scheme can help to overcome.
- 5.2.19. While operators have their own fare products, there are few examples of integrated fares across multiple operators. When using CallConnect, passengers can connect onto commercial services using the ticket purchased on CallConnect, and vice versa. This arrangement is a 'revenue where it falls' agreement where there is an acceptance of tickets on CallConnect and other local bus services but no exchange of fare revenue between operators. Other than CallConnect, all fare products provided by operators are for those individual operator's services only, and there are no integrated fares or multi-operator ticketing schemes in place at the present time – even where there are multiple services operating along the same corridor or in the same urban areas. PlusBus does exist however, enabling rail users to make onward journeys by bus.
- 5.2.20. The price of bus travel to the passenger is an important contributory factor to bus use across the County. Table 5-4 shows the average 'concessionary' fare for the Lincolnshire ENCT scheme since 2012-13. This shows that fares increased by approximately 18% between 2014-15 and 2019-20. During this same period, RPI increased by approximately 18% while operating costs for bus operators in 'the Midlands' increased by 9.1% according to the Confederation of Passenger Transport cost index².

² <https://www.cpt-uk.org/benefits-services/cpt-cost-index/>

Table 5-4 Change in average ENCTS scheme bus fares in Lincolnshire

Year	Scheme Ave Fare	%age change	CPT Cost Index	RPI
2014-15	£ 2.08			
2015-16	£ 2.11	1.0%	1.6%	2.4%
2016-17	£ 2.16	3.7%	1.6%	6.1%
2017-18	£ 2.29	10.1%	3.8%	9.6%
2018-19	£ 2.38	14.2%	5.5%	12.9%
2019-20	£ 2.46	18.0%	9.1%	14.3%
2020-21	£ 2.46	18.0%	n/a	18.1%

5.2.21. The TAS National Bus Fares Survey 2019 (see Table 5-5) broadly accords with Lincolnshire bus fares noted above, but suggests that Lincolnshire fares are in line with (or potentially a little cheaper than) the national average, despite the deeply rural nature of the county and the high operating costs. Compared to rural areas in other parts of the country however, fares in Lincolnshire are good value. In the South East of England, a single fare of £2.90 compares to £2.46 in Lincolnshire, while fares in the North West and South West of England average £2.78.

Table 5-5 Outputs from TAS National Fares Survey 2019

	East Midlands		National	
	Urban Areas	Rural Areas	Urban Areas	Rural Areas
Single fares	£2.45	£2.62	£2.44	£2.62
Day ticket price	£5.92	£6.63	£4.75	£6.71
Week ticket price	£21.49	£23.48	£16.72	£22.56

5.2.22. In the case of CallConnect services, the Council determines the price of fares using a distance-based zonal structure. Cash single fares range from £2.20 (2021 prices) to £4.80 for a journey between 10 and 13 miles. Discounts are offered for those purchasing a return ticket while a further discount is offered to those willing to purchase a 10-trip carnet product.

Bus Ticketing

5.2.23. All local bus operators have their own ticket offer, with cash options available on all operator services. Some operators provide their own proprietary smart cards to customers, notably Stagecoach and Brylaine Travel. Mobile ticketing is available on Centrebus, Stagecoach and Delaine Buses' services, while contactless c.EMV options are available across most operators including Delaine Buses, Stagecoach and others, including on CallConnect services.

5.2.24. Contactless EMV payment options in Lincolnshire are typically 'model 1' in nature i.e. they are retail transactions of existing tickets. For the sale of single, return, day or other period tickets, the transaction is carried out once and a paper ticket issued which is used for any subsequent journeys for which the ticket is valid. There is a desire within Bus Back Better for a 'tap and cap' model to be implemented, where c.EMV card taps are aggregated at the end of the day or period and the optimal fare is determined. At the present time, this model has not been introduced due to technology limitations to allow for graduated fare scales and for capping across operators with different ETM providers and Payment Service Providers.

The Lincolnshire ETM Loan Scheme

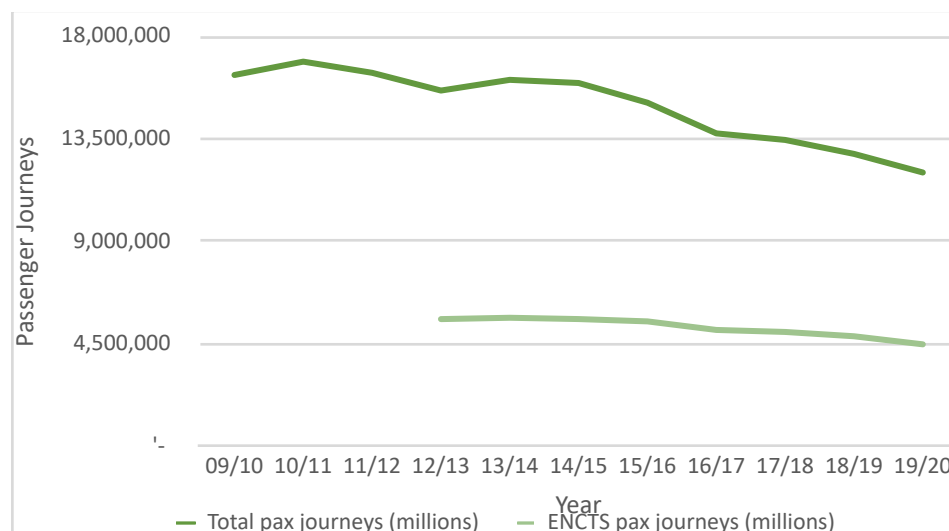
To illustrate our long history of delivering transport projects, during 2019, the County Council implemented the 'Lincolnshire ETM loan scheme' that enabled bus operators across the County to acquire modern electronic ticket machines (ETM) and other ticketing equipment through the scheme. The loan scheme, funded by the County Council, allows smaller operators who would typically not be able to afford a modern ETM and back-office system to acquire this equipment and pay a loan fee each year for a period of five years.

The scheme did not initially intend to include c.EMV readers, but due to COVID and the need to minimise cash handling, the scheme was enhanced to allow operators to acquire c.EMV readers through the scheme. 12 bus operators have acquired ETMs and offer c.EMV payments.

5.3. Bus Demand

5.3.1. Lincolnshire has had in place a structured local bus network for more than a decade. During this time, passenger journeys have been typically in decline as presented in Figure 5-3. Between 2010-11 and 2019-20, total bus passenger numbers in Lincolnshire declined by 28.8%. Much of that decline occurred between 2013-14 and 2019-20 as total bus passenger journeys reduced from 16.09m to 12.03m journeys. At the same time, concessionary passenger trips declined by 20.6%, suggesting that there has been a greater reduction in local bus use amongst commercial and other non-concessionary passengers.

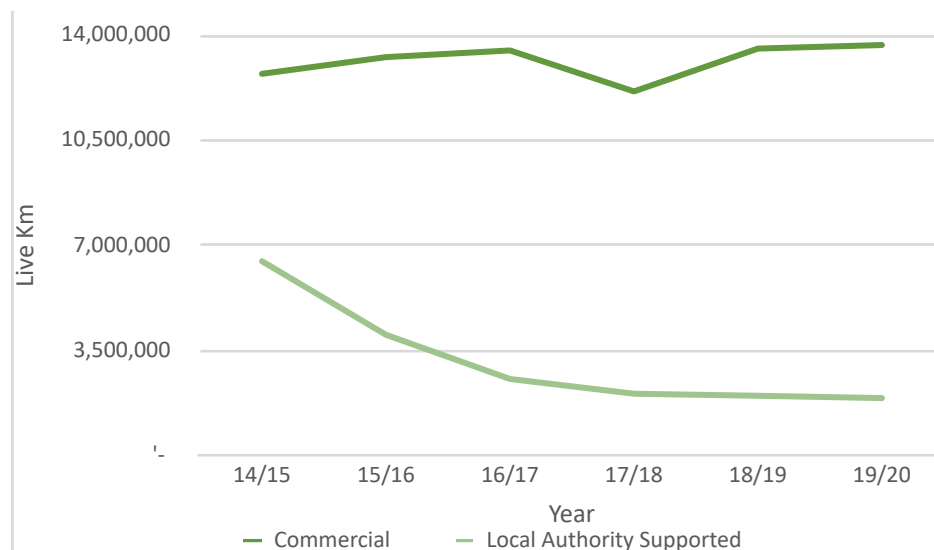
Figure 5-3 Local bus passenger journeys in Lincolnshire



5.3.2. Figure 5-4 highlights that ENCTS passengers account for around 37.5% of all passengers using local bus services in Lincolnshire. This highlights the importance of concessionary reimbursement to operator revenues, and substantiates operator claims in recent years that concessionary reimbursement underpins the commercial network across the County.

5.3.3. Comparing passenger numbers to changes in bus mileage help to explain why there are fewer passengers on bus services across the county. Since 2014-15, despite funding levels being maintained, local authority funded kilometrage in Lincolnshire has declined around 70% from nearly 6.5m km to 1.92m km per year, as presented in Figure 5-4. This 70% reduction compares to 57% across the wider East Midlands. During the same period, commercial kilometrage in Lincolnshire increased from 12.7m km to 13.67m km while total local bus kilometrage reduced by 18.7%. During this time, total passenger numbers declined by 24.6% suggesting that the reductions in mileage have had a disproportionately negative impact on bus patronage.

Figure 5-4 Live kilometres travelled by commercial & local authority supported services



5.4. New Developments and Evolving Bus Demand

- 5.4.1. Like many other parts of the UK, Lincolnshire has a significant amount of new residential and commercial developments being planned and constructed all across the County. To encourage alternative modes and offer greater travel choice, it is essential that bus services are provided from an early stage of occupation to cater for local travel demand. Understanding where these new residential developments are located is an important first step towards providing attractive bus services.
- 5.4.2. During the engagement with District Councils and operators, discussions have been held around how the Lincolnshire EPS should manage new residential and commercial developments. There was agreement that new developments should be served by bus services from an early stage to ensure new residents do not become overly reliant on the private car from the outset of living there. In addition, there was agreement that for recently completed developments, network reviews will need to be carried out to ensure they are integrated into the bus network at the earliest opportunity.

5.4.3. The following sets out a description of the larger residential developments planned in the County:

- Stamford North – A major development crossing the County Boundary with 600 houses in Rutland and 1,400 in South Kesteven. LCC Transport Services Group is currently engaged with consultants regarding the S106 Agreement.
- Grantham Spitalgate Heath – an application was made in 2014 for 3,700 houses. This has since been designated as one of the Garden Villages.
- Grantham - Prince William of Gloucester Barracks will include up to 4,000 new houses. Initial traffic modelling indicates that the road network cannot accommodate the forecast generated traffic flows from a standard housing development. It is therefore expected that this development will need to provide significant sustainable transport improvements to meet predicted transport demand and this would include bus services.
- Lincoln Western Growth corridor – 3,200 houses proposed and allocated in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan. The indicative masterplan with the outline application includes a spine road through the site which connects Skellingthorpe Road to Tritton Road with a new bridge over the railway. This spine road will have bus priority measures.
- Lincoln North East Quadrant-1,400 houses proposed and allocated in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan
- Lincoln South East Quadrant-3,500 houses proposed and allocated in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (with further potential beyond that date to deliver a total of 6,000 dwellings)
- Lincoln South Western Quadrant – An urban extension for 3,000 houses near North Hykeham allocated in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan but the development is unlikely to commence until the North Hykeham Relief Road is constructed. The development is therefore likely several years away.
- Sleaford South Quadrant (Sleaford Handley Chase) - 1,400 houses are planned and allocated in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan, with S106 requests of £1M to go towards bus services. This was granted outline consent in 2014 and construction has commenced. Around 50 houses are complete, and reserve matters applications for around 400 houses have been submitted in 2021.
- Sleaford West-1,400 houses planned and allocated in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan

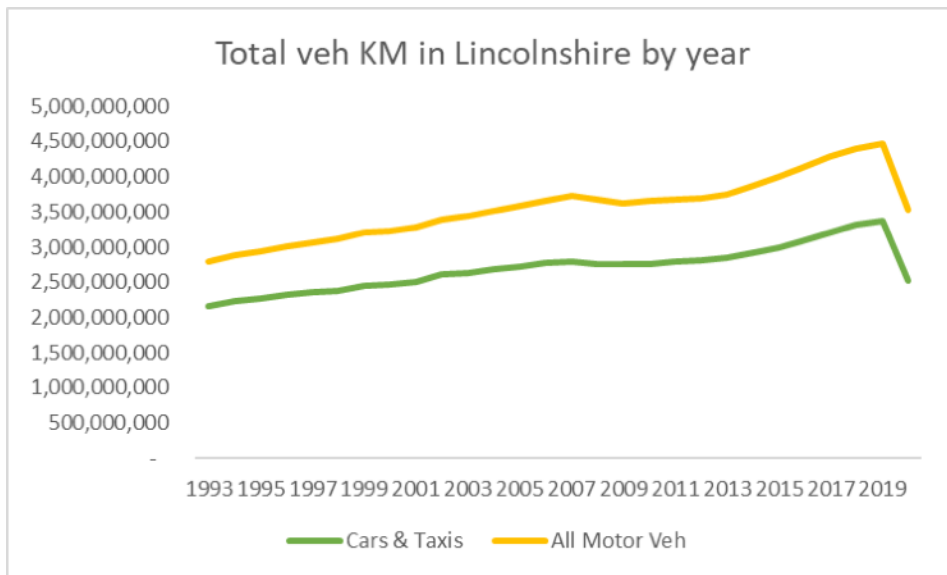
- Gainsborough North Neighbourhood-2,500 houses are planned and allocated in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan
- Gainsborough South Neighbourhood-2,500 houses are planned and allocated in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan
- Skegness Gateway on the A52 – new college and 900 houses planned. This is not allocated in the current Local Plan but discussions are ongoing with East Lindsey District Council and the Environment Agency due to potential coastal flood risk.
- Spalding 700 houses towards the north of the town. The planned relief road is progressing, albeit slowly.
- Gainsborough – 500 new houses planned to the south of the town centre, close to Gainsborough Lea Road rail station

5.4.4. Where appropriate, we always request S106 funding towards public transport services and infrastructure. However, this ask often competes with other requests for highway enhancements, education, health and community facilities for example. S106 contributions towards public transport measures therefore cannot be guaranteed.

5.5. Congestion and Traffic Levels

5.5.1. Congestion and increasing traffic volume is a major issue for our bus services and the primary factor behind the low 'value for money' scores within the 2018 Passenger Focus survey. Traffic flow has increased across the county over recent decades. Figure 5-5 highlights the increase in vehicular traffic, which up to 2019, was 60.5% greater than in 1993. During that same period, the length of Lincolnshire's roads increased by a total of just 14.74 miles, resulting in greater levels of traffic flow on existing roads and increasing the strain across the road network.

Figure 5-5 Total vehicle km travelled on Lincolnshire roads since 1993



5.5.2. The impact of the increase in traffic levels has been seen across the county. The direct impact on bus services can be seen with service 6 between Birchwood Estate and Lincoln. In 1999, the service used to operate at 15-minute headways with a 45-minute round trip requiring 3 PVR. Today, the service operates at a 20-minute headway, with a round trip of 75 minutes and requires 5 PVR. Thus, two additional vehicles are required to maintain a slightly reduced level of service compared to a little over 20 years ago. With no other changes, it is evident that this has come about due to an increase in journey times brought about by increased traffic flows and congestion.

5.5.3. Figure 5-6, Figure 5-7 and Figure 5-8 show the congestion hotspots in Boston, Lincoln and Grantham respectively. The nature of congestion varies between each, although Boston and Grantham both suffer from through traffic during peak periods, while Lincoln suffers from congestion along radial routes as vehicles approach the city centre.

Figure 5-6 Peak hour congestion hotspots in Boston

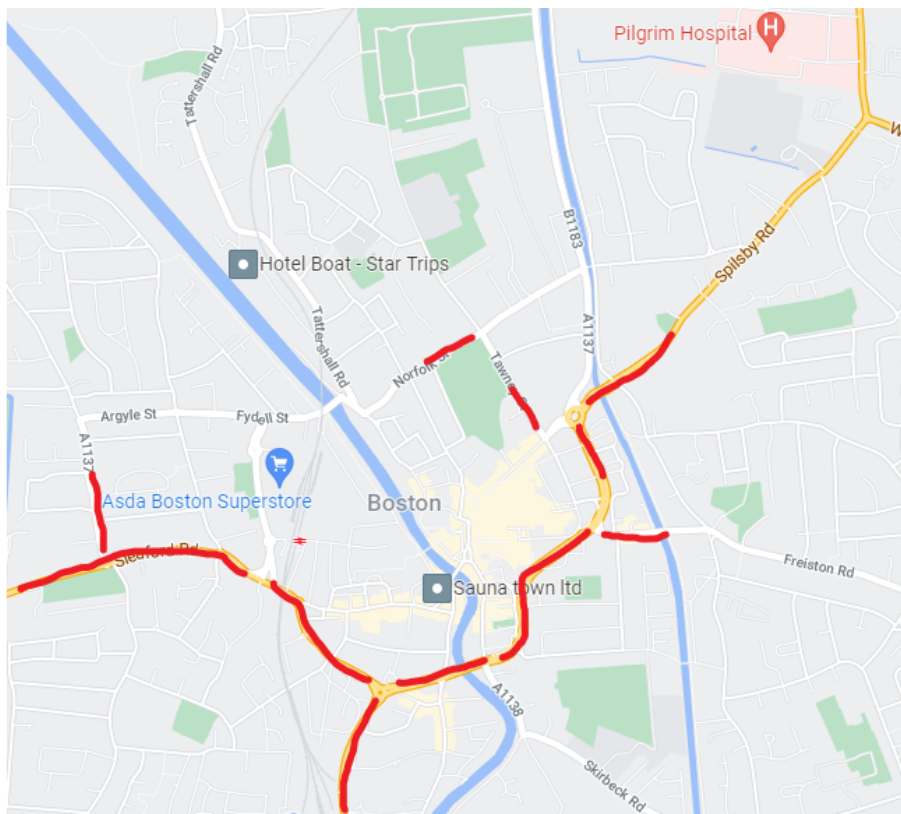


Figure 5-7 Peak hour congestion hotspots in Grantham

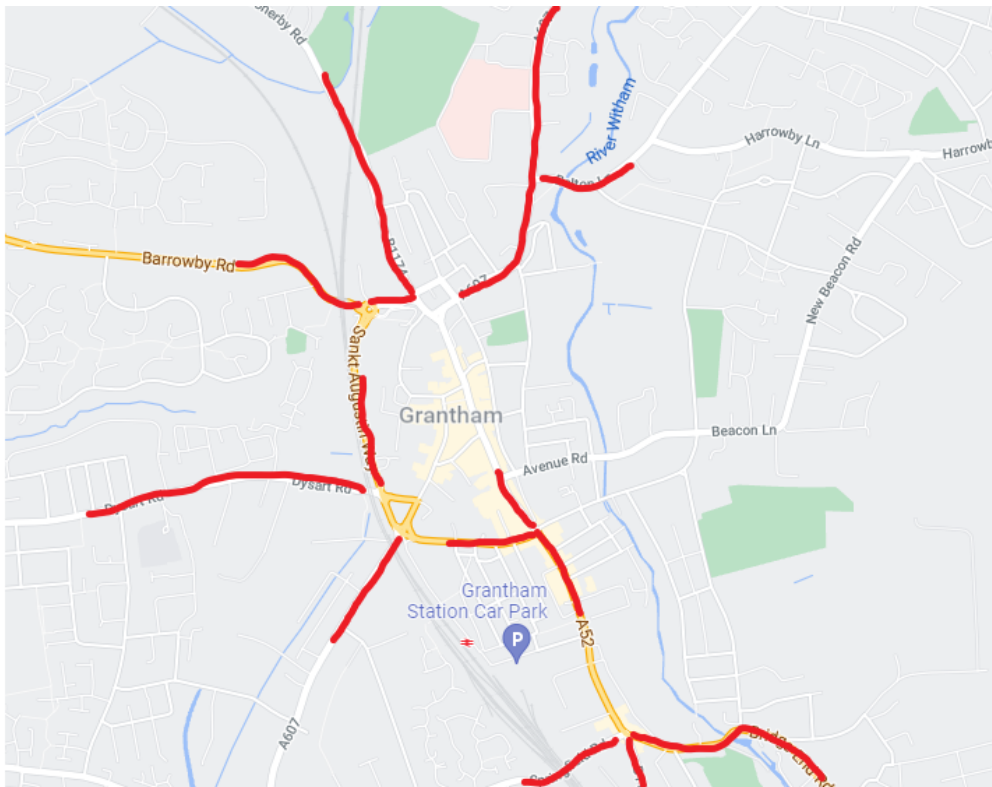
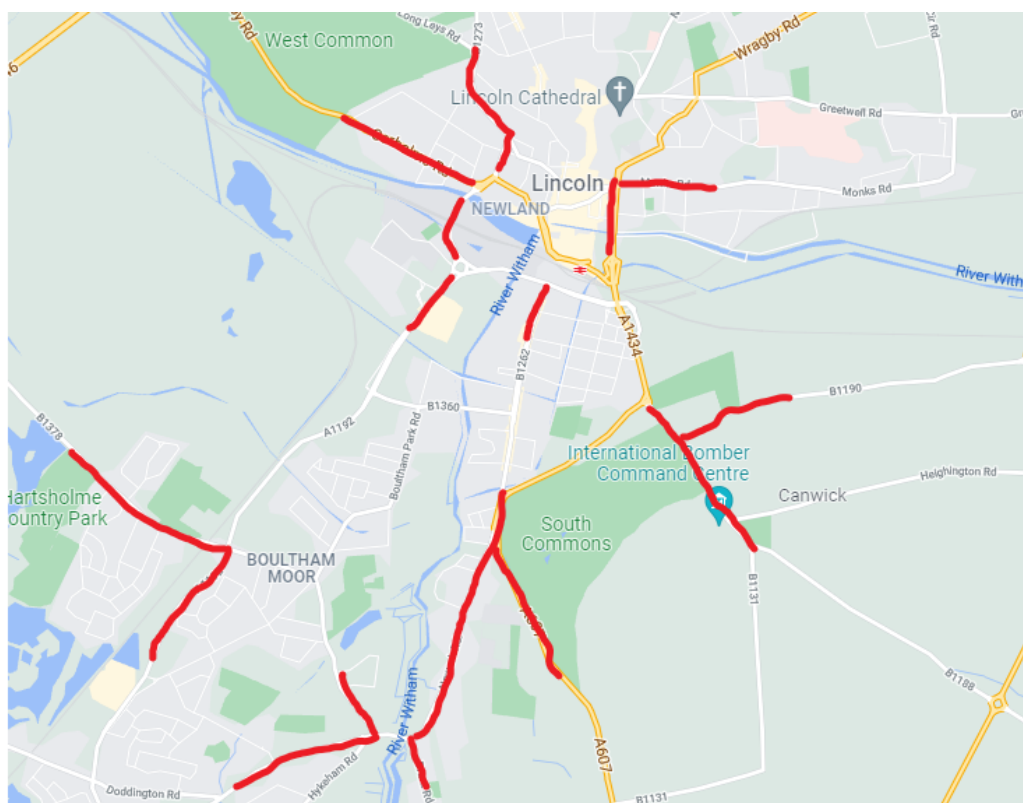


Figure 5-8 Peak hour congestion hotspots in Lincoln



5.5.4. Traffic levels and congestion also contribute to air quality issues, particularly in our urban areas. There are a number of hotspots around the county around which there is an Air Quality Management Area established. For example, Lincoln's Air Quality Management Plan identifies that 70% of air pollution within the city comes from HGVs and buses/coaches. The highest reported annual mean NO₂ concentration in 2020 was 29.3µg/m³ at the diffusion tube site 3 (Broadgate/Monks Road junction).

5.6. Car Parking

- 5.6.1. Car parking is predominantly owned and controlled by both District Councils and private operators. Lincoln – the most populous urban area within the county – has 22 off-street car parks located on the edge of the city centre. Approximately half of these car parks are owned by the City of Lincoln Council, while the remainder are owned by private operators.
- 5.6.2. During weekdays, there are 2,629 off-street public parking spaces available, with an additional 675 spaces provided at weekends. The pricing of car parks is targeted at different groups of car users, notably commuters (typically long stay), visitors and shoppers (typically short stay) with three pricing tiers, as presented in Table 5-6. The greatest proportion of parking spaces are charged at £8.50 for 4 or more hours, which includes the largest car park in the city – Lincoln Central. An annual season ticket is also available at this car park, charged at £1,261.70.

Table 5-6 Car parking prices in Lincoln on weekdays

Tier	No. of spaces	1 hour	2 hours	3 hours	4 hours	4+ hours
1	520	£1.50	£3.00	£4.30	£6.00	£6.00
2	1,737	£1.80	£3.40	£5.00	£6.40	£8.50
3	372	£1.90	£3.20	£5.20	£6.00	£8.80

- 5.6.3. For the City of Lincoln Council in particular, car parking generates a significant amount of revenue, supporting the provision of local public services. This and the required behavioural changes makes using car park reduction as a demand management tool for increasing bus usage challenging. The Lincoln Transport Strategy recognises the need to review the City's parking strategy and rebalance movement away from car usage towards walking, cycling, shared mobility and mobility hubs and this review is identified as priority by the City Council. In Lincoln, there is an aspiration to consolidate car parking and have fewer but larger more strategic parking locations in the city centre.

- 5.6.4. In our market towns, car parks are typically owned and controlled by District Councils. In East Lindsey (our largest geographical District including many of our coastal areas), the Council operates 46 pay and display car parks. The objectives in determining parking charges are:
- To cover the costs of their maintenance, infrastructure and management, including those of associated land and facilities available to the public
 - To ensure that parking is available for people using the facilities in the town and villages by ensuring a turnover of spaces in the car parks
- 5.6.5. Car parks in East Lindsey generated annual revenues of £1,798,135 in 2020-21, against costs of £1,413,695. This generated a surplus of £384,440 for the District Council. The scale of revenues generated from car parking can vary depending on the location, and this typically influences the views of politicians over the role of parking in their local areas. During engagement with district council officers as part of the development of this EP Plan, there was a mixed response to the role of car parking as a demand management tool. This presents a challenge for the successful delivery of this EP Plan and highlights the need for a partnership approach.

5.7. Driver shortages

- 5.7.1. During the autumn of 2021, bus driver shortages have had a significant impact on the delivery of bus services. Across the county, services have been reduced as operators struggle to recruit and train sufficient numbers of drivers to maintain existing service levels (which are close to 100% of pre-COVID levels). This appears to be an issue across England as the national economy rebounds following COVID-induced travel restrictions. While prominent now, in Lincolnshire this issue has existed for a number of years. Long-term solutions are required to ensure there are sufficient drivers to transport our residents and visitors.

5.8. Conclusions and implications for the EP Plan

- Every Lincolnshire resident has access to a local bus service. CallConnect services, in particular, provide a minimum level of mobility for all, overcoming the challenge of a sparse population throughout much of the County during core hours.
- The temporal provision of local bus services varies across the County, with evening and weekend services only in locations where there is a night time and weekend economy.
- In rural areas, local bus services are often provided to fit around school services, suggesting an efficient use of vehicles, but shows that the contracts provided by the Council for school services (as well as those provided commercially) underpin the commerciality of large swathes of the local bus network.
- Lincolnshire has a large number of operators (27) who are geographically spread across the County.
- Driver availability and recruitment, historically, and not just in recent months, has been a particular issue for all operators and threatened the existence of smaller operators in particular. A lack of drivers is a significant risk to enhancing bus services in the short and medium term, thus training and skills development within the bus industry is vital.
- Operational mileage across the county has declined, while bus patronage has also declined by almost 30% since 2009/10, highlighting the challenge to ensure services are commercially viable and sustainable.
- The average age of local buses is 13.34 years compared to the national average of 8.8 years. This reflects the commercial reality of operating bus services in Lincolnshire as operating costs are high (due to high mileage and sparse populations) while revenues are limited (partly due to high car ownership).
- Operators typically have graduated fare scales, with higher fares for longer distance journeys.
- Apart from the limited use of PlusBus, there is no formal integrated ticketing in Lincolnshire and very few integrated fares.
- Changes to bus fares illustrate the impact of congestion and the increased costs faced by operators just to maintain service levels. 'Making buses quicker' should help to support a long term real-terms reduction in fares.
- There is a mixed ticketing offer across bus operators, but c.EMV is available on most services now due to the Lincolnshire ETM lease scheme.

- There are relatively few day, week and other season tickets available at the current time, so the introduction of a tap and cap model will need to consider implementing new products.
- The provision of child and young people fares varies significantly. The age of eligibility for child fares can vary, the time at which child fares are available can vary and the discount compared to an adult fare can vary greatly across operators.
- Operators recognise that congestion impacts greatly on bus service reliability and punctuality - a long-term solution to this is to encourage younger people to use bus services instead of learning to drive a motorbike or car.
- The most recent user satisfaction surveys in Lincolnshire suggest that both punctuality and value for money are areas that Lincolnshire operators perform poorly compared to elsewhere - value for money scored low due to the effects of congestion, highlighting the need to give buses more priority.
- It is absolutely necessary to collaborate with the District Councils – who are the Planning Authorities – through this EP Plan to ensure new developments are well served by public transport, that new developments are bus friendly and that they prioritise buses over cars.
- Car parking across Lincolnshire is predominantly controlled by District Council's and private operators - this highlights the need to work in partnership to enable car parking to be used as a demand management tool.

6. Outcomes and targets for improvement

6.1.1. The Lincolnshire EP Plan identified a broad range of schemes and measures that are included within this EP Plan. These schemes and measures aim to:

- Increase the speed, punctuality and reliability of bus services
- Increase the number of people using bus services
- Enhance bus services to make them more attractive and better value for money for users and potential users

6.1.2. To measure the success of the EP Plan it is necessary to establish targets to ensure that the EP Plan achieves its objectives. The primary aim of the EP Plan is to get more people travelling by bus. Due to COVID-19, there are challenges in encouraging people to use buses again, not least because travel demand has changed due to changing working patterns. The first target is therefore to restore bus patronage for all commercial passengers i.e. non-ENCTS passengers to pre-COVID levels by 2023-24.

6.1.3. Achieving this target could be dependent on external factors beyond the control of the Partnership. Travel demand has fundamentally shifted over recent years as online shopping has reduced town centre footfall, while COVID has reduced demand to travel to work amongst other issues. Metrics such as town centre footfall shall therefore be reported to contextualise the impacts of measures.

6.1.4. Once patronage is restored, the next step is to grow patronage further, and most notably fare paying passengers. The second target is therefore to increase overall patronage by 8% by 2025-26. This data will be provided by operators on an aggregated basis directly from their ETM back offices. We believe this target to be a challenge, but achievable based on the enhancements this EP Plan will allow us to introduce.

6.1.5. Similar to monitoring patronage, we will evaluate the success of our measures by understanding journey time improvements on an aggregated countywide basis, as well as a localised service by service basis along corridors where bus priority and other enhancements have been made. This will give us a comprehensive understanding of the real impact of the measures delivered.

- 6.1.6. In addition to individual services, we will monitor the impact of different measures on journey times across entire towns. We have determined average journey times across all services in Lincoln, Skegness, Boston and Grantham pre-COVID and will adopt the same methodology once bus priority measures have been implemented in all four areas. Given the increase in average journey times over the past two decades, stemming the increase would be considered a success, against the backdrop of increasing car journeys and traffic congestion. However, given the bus priority measures identified within this EP Plan, we aspire to see a reduction in journey times of at least 1 minute in each of the three urban areas by 2025-26. When evaluating this metric in our annual reports we will provide traffic levels alongside the change in bus journey times to give the context of the bus operating environment.
- 6.1.7. We will also use our own PIP surveys and nationally available bus statistics to determine the proportion of non-frequent buses running on time across the County. In 2018-19, this stood at 74% in Lincolnshire, and we aim to increase this to 80% by 2023-24 and 85% by 2025-26.
- 6.1.8. Bus user satisfaction is an important metric and central to our EP Plan monitoring and evaluation plan. As identified earlier, Lincolnshire suffers from below national average satisfaction rates in both value for money and bus punctuality. Alongside overall satisfaction, these three metrics will demonstrate whether the EP Plan has been a success.
- 6.1.9. We intend for customer satisfaction surveys to be carried out in 2023-24 and 2025-26. Our target is for overall satisfaction to increase from 89% to 90% by 2023-24 and to 93% by 2025-26. Value for money targets are to increase satisfaction rates from 56% in 2028-19 to 60% in 2023-24 and 64% in 2025-26. Finally, satisfaction rates for bus punctuality are aimed to increase from 71% to 74% by 2023-24 and 78% by 2025-26.

Table 6-1 Summary targets for improvement

Evaluation measure	Target	Current / Latest	2023-24	2025-26	Method
Bus patronage	Restore pre-COVID countywide bus patronage, excl. ENCTS	12,000,000 total journeys (4,490,000 ENCTS)	12,000,000 total journeys (4,490,000 ENCTS)	n/a	Operators to provide ETM records of every passenger trip made, disaggregated by passenger type on an annual basis
	Increase countywide bus patronage by 8% compared to pre-COVID levels excl. ENCTS	7,510,000 non-ENCTS journeys	n/a	8,111,000 non-ENCTS journeys	Operators to provide ETM records of every passenger trip made, disaggregated by passenger type on an annual basis Comparisons will be made against changes to bus mileage to assess passengers per bus mile travelled as this will indicate commercial sustainability
	Increase patronage on enhanced routes/ corridors	Services: IC 56* 1&3* IC3	10%	15%	Stagecoach & Brylaine Travel to provide ETM records of every passenger trip made, disaggregated by route to enable a route analysis and comparison to be made between those that receive enhancements and those that do not. Services without similar enhancements to be

Evaluation measure	Target	Current / Latest	2023-24	2025-26	Method
		* Patronage data provided, but redacted due to commercial sensitivity			used as a control to understand 'do nothing' situation.
Journey Times	Reduce journey times on corridors with bus priority	Services: IC 56* = 115min round trip 1&3* = 73min round trip 6 = 68min round trip	IC56 = 10 mins/ round trip 1&3 = 5 mins per round trip 6 = 8mins per round trip	IC56 = 10 mins/ round trip 1&3 = 5 mins per round trip 6 = 8mins per round trip	Three heavily trafficked corridors identified where bus priority will be introduced and service enhancements made. We will use timetabled information to determine changes to journey times post implementation.
	Reduce journey times in Lincoln, Skegness & Boston	Boston = 24m 25s ave. jny time Skegness = 28m 20s Lincoln = 37m 30s	1 minute (minimum) reduction in journey times	1 minute (minimum) reduction in average town-wide journey times	Average journey times for a 5-day weekday period for all journeys operating wholly within the urban area of each town. Boston services include: IT1, IT2, IT5, IT6 & G61 Skegness services include: 1, 2, 3, 83 Lincoln services include: 6, X6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 Future monitoring will involve providing traffic & congestion levels as context towards success against targets.

Evaluation measure	Target	Current / Latest	2023-24	2025-26	Method
	% of non-frequent buses running on time	74%*	78%	82%	National Bus Statistics will be used on a countywide basis to determine the proportion of buses running on time (1 min early – 5:59 mins late)
Reliability	99.5% of scheduled journeys operated	99.4%	99.5%	99.5%	All operators to provide %age of scheduled journeys operated on an annual basis
Customer satisfaction	Increase overall satisfaction rate to over 90%	89%**	90%	93%	Passenger surveys to be carried out in 2023/24 and 2025/26
	Increase 'value for money'	56%**	60%	64%	Passenger surveys to be carried out in 2023/24 and 2025/26
	Increase satisfaction of bus punctuality	71%**	74%	78%	Passenger surveys to be carried out in 2023/24 and 2025/26

*DfT Bus Statistics 2018-19 ** 2018 Passenger Focus surveys in Lincolnshire

7. EP Plan Interventions

7.1.1. The partnership between the County Council, bus operators and other stakeholders has a long-standing history of successfully delivering bus service enhancements and ensuring their long-term sustainability. Our plans documented in this section are realistic, deliverable and will meet the needs of more bus users across Lincolnshire.

7.1.2. Where costs are provided, these have been calculated to include project management and staffing costs to enable the tasks to be carried out.

7.1.3. This section adopts the same structure as Bus Back Better, with the addition of 'stabilising the bus network'. The structure is as follows:

- Stabilising the bus network
- Intensive services and investment on key corridors
- Bus priority
- More 'socially necessary' services
- Fares must be lower and simpler
- Seamless, integrated local ticketing
- Service patterns integrated with other modes
- Services must be simpler and easier to understand
- Bus Information and a single system
- Give bus passengers more of a voice
- Modern buses and decarbonisation
- Traffic management and other measures

7.2. Stabilising the bus network

7.2.1. COVID recovery continues to be a mixed picture countywide. From April 2023 and beyond, it is likely that significant parts of the bus network will require funding to bridge gaps in revenues in order to maintain existing service levels. Without network stability support, EP Plan measures will not have their desired impact. The financial support required will likely gradually reduce over the two-year period as bus passengers return to using services.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
To recover bus patronage to pre-COVID levels from April 2023	Support existing services which are commercially unviable to provide network stability

7.3. Intensive services and investment on key corridors

7.3.1. Two decades ago, the Lincolnshire bus network was revitalised by developing a coherent network inter-urban bus services. These provide hourly services with high quality infrastructure and information designed to enable people to travel from town to town with ease. As part of this EP Plan, provided we receive sufficient funding, we will refresh the entire InterConnect network to appear more like a Super Bus network with high levels of priority where it is needed, and with fast, efficient and good value bus services.

7.3.2. InterConnect services are the backbone of the Lincolnshire bus network linking all of our market towns. Our urban bus services, however, are integral to the efficient functioning of our urban areas and a key tool to encourage modal shift away from cars in our towns and the city of Lincoln. Fixed-route rural services also play a key role in alleviating rural isolation and linking our villages with nearby market towns. For the long-term sustainability of these services, this EP Plan has various actions that will be delivered.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
<p>To increase service levels to meet the travel needs of all our communities, including those living in new developments</p>	<p>Increase InterConnect frequency to half hourly, 7am-7pm, Mon – Sat, hourly on Sundays, plus early morning & evening services</p> <p>Identify and construct bus layover locations in Lincoln, Sleaford, Mablethorpe and elsewhere</p> <p>Increase IntoTown and other urban service frequency to half hourly or better, 7am-7pm M-Sat, hourly on Sundays</p>
<p>To reduce journey times for bus services across Lincolnshire and improve journey time reliability</p>	<p>Bus lane feasibility studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Broadgate, Lincoln ● High Street, Lincoln ● Roman Bank, Skegness ● Others to be identified <p>Detailed design and construction of bus lanes where feasible</p> <p>Implement traffic light priority at all Scoot junctions</p> <p>Reduce 'lateness trigger' in Scoot to make buses quicker</p>
<p>To increase bus user satisfaction rates</p> <p>To reduce all physical barriers to public transport use</p> <p>To reduce barriers to public transport use through high quality information</p>	<p>Newer buses (operators to invest as services enhanced)</p> <p>Upgrade bus interiors, WiFi & USB charging, on-bus next stop displays, CCTV on all buses</p> <p>Upgrade bus stop infrastructure – stops, shelters, real time information, raised kerbs, street lighting</p> <p>Quality corridor arrangements where services compete, with co-ordinated timetables and integrated ticketing</p> <p>Communications & marketing</p>

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
To improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions from transport	Retrofit buses with emission capture technologies
<p>To reduce journey times for bus services across Lincolnshire and improve journey time reliability</p> <p>To increase service levels to meet the travel needs of all our communities, including those living in new developments</p>	<p>Bus network reviews in all urban areas including: Boston, Grantham, Sleaford, Spalding, Stamford, Skegness Lincoln & Gainsborough amongst other areas – reviews to consider new developments</p> <p>Engage with employers and trip attractors to ensure commercial network meets their needs, and supports a strong network for all</p>
To increase service levels to meet the travel needs of all our communities, including those living in new developments	New residential developments served by enhanced bus services to discourage car reliance – funding required to pump prime new services & adapt existing services where S106 funding is absent or insufficient
To support economic growth and the levelling up of our more deprived communities through improving access for all to education, employment health and leisure	Identify locations to integrate bus services with mainline rail stations – early morning & evening IntoTown services to connect with London rail services in Grantham and Spalding
To improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions from transport	Electric bus demonstration project in Boston or Grantham (tbc). Identify how electric buses can reduce operating costs and ensure long term viability of bus services
To reduce barriers to public transport use through attractive fares and tickets	Ticketing will be revamped with day tickets introduced in defined areas, & multi operator ticketing where multiple operators. Introduce contactless capping to speed up boarding times & improve journey time reliability, including multi operator capping once technology allows

7.4. Bus priority

7.4.1. Bus priority is essential to provide faster and reliable bus services. In our urban areas, traffic congestion impacts on bus journey times and reliability, and to attract more people to bus services, it is essential that we provide greater levels of priority for buses. There are only limited examples of bus lanes in Lincolnshire today, most notably:

- Roman Bank in Skegness
- High Street, Lincoln

7.4.2. However, the bus lanes that we have are typically short or intermittent, resulting in delays when having to re-join traffic flows. Feasibility and design work will be undertaken on the scope of completing and extending these existing sections of bus priority.

7.4.3. There are on-going transport projects, most notably in Lincoln, where bus priority is being considered. Wigford Way – a key route linking the bus and rail station with the shortest radial route out of the city – has been identified as an important route for bus services should a modal interchange hub be implemented to the west of the city centre. Where these opportunities arise, this EP Plan will be updated to identify the role that bus priority can play along such routes.

7.4.4. In addition to bus lanes, we have junction priority for late running buses at some of our Scoot enabled junctions. Bus priority has not been activated at all junctions to date, but it is technically possible, so enabling this facility at all locations is an integral part of our EP Plan to make buses quicker. Bus priority can also be provided at all non-Scoot signal controlled junctions

7.4.5. Giving buses greater levels of priority comes in many different forms. Through engaging with operators and other stakeholders as part of developing this EP Plan, we have identified a large number of pinch points and areas where small changes to highway or junction layouts, can have a significant positive impact on bus movements. Much work needs to go in to each individual scheme, but pinch points to review include, but are not limited to the following:

- North Street, Bourne (between Burghley Street and Market Place)
- High Street, Market Deeping (Godsey Lane-Mkt Place)
- West Street, Boston (around the bus station)
- Tattershall Road, Boston
- Market Place, Spilsby
- Market Place, Horncastle
- Witham Road, Woodhall Spa

- Sea Lane, Skegness

7.4.6. To resolve these pinch points a variety of options will be examined to identify the optimal solution in each case. This could involve clearways, red routes, moving parking spaces, street furniture, trees, kerbs amongst other options. In each case, we will carry out appropriate engagement with the local community and political representatives.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
<p>To reduce journey times for bus services across Lincolnshire and improve journey time reliability</p>	<p>Subject to feasibility, completion of the inbound Roman Bank (Skegness) bus lane so that it is continuous</p> <p>Subject to feasibility, extension of the inbound Lincoln High Street bus lane</p> <p>Subject to feasibility, Broadgate corridor in bound bus lane towards the bus station (Lincoln)</p> <p>Identify other bus lane and priority opportunities in areas of high congestion and bus journey delay – develop business cases</p> <p>Implement traffic light priority at all available Scoot and non-Scoot junctions</p> <p>Reduce ‘lateness trigger’ at all traffic signal-controlled junctions to make buses quicker</p> <p>In market towns and our larger rural villages we will study pinch points & identify optimal solutions. Clearways, ‘red routes’, changes to parking provision (to help reduce indiscriminate parking) and the moving of street furniture will all play a role in enabling buses to move through our market towns and villages with greater freedom and less delay</p>

7.5. More 'socially necessary' and DRT services

- 7.5.1. Lincolnshire already has a strong DRT offer with its CallConnect DRT network with over 30 vehicles operating six days a week, 12 hours a day. CallConnect provides every Lincolnshire resident (except for a small area of Lincoln where commercial bus and Dial a Ride services already fulfil that role) with access to the essential services in their local area.
- 7.5.2. CallConnect complements the commercial fixed route bus network as it operates at times and in areas where fixed route services do not serve. Where longer journeys are required, connections are guaranteed with main bus routes at interchange points.
- 7.5.3. Whilst the CallConnect service receives largely positive feedback from passengers and a high satisfaction rating of over 98%, the service at times is a victim of its own success with a level of unmet demand due to the limited vehicle resources available in any one area. This is defined by the budget available to operate the service. Due to this, CallConnect customers currently have to pre-book every journey, often days in advance to secure a journey especially at peak times. This is not an attractive customer proposition for some of Lincolnshire's residents especially the younger demographic who would prefer a more responsive and real-time offer. In addition, CallConnect services operate 7am until 7pm Monday to Saturday, preventing people from travelling early morning, late evening and Sundays using this mode of transport.
- 7.5.4. The majority of CallConnect contracts currently in place utilise eight-seater vehicles to provide registered DRT services. This opens the market up to taxi operators and other transport providers. It also allows services to access the county's small hamlets and remote locations.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
<p>To support economic growth and the levelling up of our more deprived communities through improving access for all to education, employment health and leisure</p> <p>To reduce rural isolation through more available and usable bus services</p>	<p>Enhance the CallConnect offer through purchase of additional vehicles and roll out across the network</p> <p>Develop and trial a new app-based booking platform with dynamic routes scheduling, enabling passengers to book a service within 30 minutes of travel</p> <p>Increase operating hours by 4 hours a day (7-11pm) and introduce Sunday services. We will identify where earlier services (pre-7am) would support movements to employment centres and provide these if there is demand</p>

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
	<p>Pilot urban DRT services at times of lower demand such as evenings and Sundays when commercial and/or conventional services are not viable</p> <p>DRT services will be included in countywide fares initiatives and will provide integrated ticketing with other bus and rail services when this is rolled out more widely</p> <p>Review CallConnect branding whilst maintaining the heritage and excellent reputation</p>
<p>For buses to contribute to the quality of place across Lincolnshire</p> <p>To support economic growth and the levelling up of our more deprived communities through improving access for all to education, employment health and leisure</p> <p>To reduce all physical barriers to public transport use</p>	<p>Work with communities and local businesses to identify industrial/employment areas which may benefit from DRT provision</p> <p>Promote the enhanced DRT services with particular target marketing where take up is currently poor e.g. the youth & eastern-European community</p> <p>We will also market the service more widely to support the night time economy across the County, as well as employment sites which operate different shift patterns</p> <p>Explore options and feasibility of a Total Transport approach particularly in relation to health and Adult Social Care provision</p>

7.6. Fares must be lower, better value and simpler

7.6.1. Lincolnshire is a large county with a sparse population. This leads to high mileage (and operating costs) and a customer base that is spread out, many with alternative means of travel. For bus services to be sustainable fares must – as a minimum - meet operating costs plus provide some form of profit margin. Without it, operators require financial support from the County Council or cease to operate that service.

7.6.2. To encourage operators to reduce fares, there are four options available to us:

1. Subsidise fares directly with public funds – this requires a long-term commitment from the Council and will, in all likelihood, be unsustainable in the medium term
2. Reduce operating costs so operators can reflect this in reduced prices for customers
3. Increase revenues from fare paying passengers by attracting more people onto bus services, making services better value for money and enabling a greater number of people to pay slightly less than at present
4. Increase competition so operators are encouraged to minimise fares

7.6.3. We don't believe that option 1 is sustainable. The approach is not supported by operators and without the long-term commitment of funding through the EP Plan, subsidies are likely to be a short-term initiative with fares reverting to their typical level at a later date. This creates a fluctuating level of bus service which confuses the user and reduces their trust in services. This in turn is likely to encourage car ownership and car use. Such an approach will likely discourage bus users as they are faced with a significant price increase in the long term.

7.6.4. Option 4 is unrealistic given that there is little direct competition between bus operators due to the operational footprint and geographical conditions in Lincolnshire, with the main competition coming from private cars and taxis. Options 2 and 3, if implemented through the EP Plan, can complement one another, and both can help support a long-term real terms reduction in fares. In addition, better value fares can also be introduced to enable more travel for the same price to make bus services more attractive and drive patronage (and farebox) growth.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
<p>To support a reduction in operating costs through an efficient use of resources</p> <p>To increase bus user satisfaction rates</p> <p>To reduce journey times for bus services across Lincolnshire and improve journey time reliability</p>	<p>Prioritise bus service enhancements and bus priority measures initially where they can demonstrably reduce operating costs</p>
<p>To recover bus patronage to pre-COVID levels from April 2023</p>	<p>Engage with Boston College to create and provide bus driver training courses, as well as courses for other bus industry roles. This supports operators to manage the current driver shortage, whilst providing a more skilled workforce across the county – see details below.</p> <p>To increase operator revenues, we will deliver the initiatives detailed in this EP Plan that make bus services more attractive. This includes: enhanced service provision, more attractive and accessible vehicles, improved bus stop infrastructure, more comprehensive and accessible bus information, integrated ticketing, managing car parking amongst other initiatives. All of these measures will support fares being suppressed or reduced.</p>

Driver/transport training with Boston College

- 7.6.5. All bus operators in Lincolnshire have identified a lack of qualified drivers as a significant challenge for their business and training and recruiting new drivers is carried out at a significant cost. This is a long-standing issue, and not just one that is being seen nationally at this moment in time. This EP Plan identifies a long-term solution to these challenges.
- 7.6.6. In January 2021, the government announced a new White Paper – Skills for Jobs - which outlines the ambition of strengthened, purposeful links between employers and further education providers. By positioning employers from the transport industry at the heart of defining local skills needs, Boston College is well-placed to deliver on this promise for the benefit of Lincolnshire's transport infrastructure. The proposal in partnership with the County Council is to develop and provide a bespoke and holistic training academy to meet the skills shortage in a variety of roles from driving and passenger assistance to maintenance incorporating electric and hybrid electric vehicle technologies. From April 2023, with the support of EP Plan funding, we will meaningfully engage with the College to train local people to work in the bus industry and critically, to professionalise these roles as a key career choice through the college's links with primary and secondary educational settings. Courses will range from driver training to mechanical and digital maintenance to passenger assistance, not only providing core elements of compliance but crucially, an enhanced offer to ensure that Lincolnshire's operatives are considered the 'best in class' for passenger safety, service and support. As an example, the driver training programme will commence with a 'Ready to Roll' course designed to determine an applicant's appropriateness for the job and their 'drive to drive' using an intensive 'sector skills work academy' approach. This will test a candidate not only on their driving abilities but also their individual aptitude for the role in terms of responses to professionalism and personal performance. The academy will also offer bespoke commercial training, apprenticeships for drivers and maintenance crew and short courses aimed at passenger support assistants.

- 7.6.7. By harnessing the strong synergies between existing courses and those that could meet the needs of the bus services in Lincolnshire, the partnership proposal will provide our workforce, including young people, with relevant and much-needed skills alongside a rich source of workplace opportunities during or once their courses are complete. In addition, it provides our bus operators with a pool of potential drivers, passenger assistants and other qualified roles within the local bus industry thereby reducing disruptions to service and providing a consistently first-class offer to all customers. The unwavering training standard for staff emerging from the academy will be a critical factor in achieving a key outcome of the bid – to encourage consumers to return to and use public transport through meeting exacting expectations of service.
- 7.6.8. We have also engaged with Grimsby College who are interested in developing a similar offer, using their driving simulators and other facilities to support the training of bus drivers. We will look to work with Grimsby College – which also has a campus in Skegness – to develop this to enable the training of more bus industry personnel across the breadth of the county.

7.7. Seamless, integrated local ticketing

- 7.7.1. We will move towards a tap and cap model to enable contactless and mobile phone payments across all operator's services. Having rolled out an LTA sponsored ETM lease scheme project in 2019, all local bus operators now have an ETM and can accept contactless payments. However, this is solely on a retail model and not on a tap and cap basis.
- 7.7.2. We have identified a roadmap to deliver a tap and cap model with numerous stages required before it can be rolled out. This will involve:
1. Introduction of multi-trip day tickets for operators that do not offer them
 2. Introducing single operator day tickets in defined geographic areas surrounding each of our market towns.
 3. Introduction of a Lincolnshire Rover multi-operator ticket to enable travel across the County in a given day or week. This will act as the maximum day cap for when travel occurs outside of a single urban area.

4. Develop a multi-operator offer with a minimal price premium to the single operator offer (commercial arrangements tbc). This will act as the multi-operator cap price for travel within an individual urban area once a tap and cap model is introduced. Current constraints to delivering multi-operator capping are technological as c.EMV capping is not possible at the current time across multiple ETM providers and Payment Service Providers. It is envisaged that during the delivery period of this EP Plan, this barrier will be overcome with either the Midlands Connect (Regional Broker) solution, or an alternative national solution.
 5. Work with operators to install tap out readers on buses which will enable accurate fares to be calculated for every passenger and single operator caps to be introduced. Over time, and once technology allows, multi operator capping will be rolled out across Lincolnshire using the tap and cap model.
- 7.7.3. As the ticketing roadmap is delivered, we will work with operators to provide some consistency to young people's tickets. There is a broad range of child and young person policies amongst bus operators in Lincolnshire which is confusing for the user. As part of the EP Plan, we will work to broker all operators seeking to align child fares in terms of the age of eligibility, the availability of child and young person fares at different times of day and a little more consistency in terms of the discount compared to the adult fare. Operators have committed to examining aligning policies as much as is practical.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
To increase bus user satisfaction rates	Work with operators to introduce multi-trip day tickets across all towns, with defined geographic areas
To reduce barriers to public transport use through attractive fares and tickets	<p>Work with operators to deliver a Lincolnshire Rover countywide ticket</p> <p>Work with operators to deliver multi-operator tickets within all of our market towns</p>
To provide efficient multi-modal connectivity between our rail, bus and other transport networks to connect Lincolnshire with the East Midlands and beyond	<p>Install tap-out readers on all buses and introduce single and multi-operator capping</p> <p>Marketing and promotion of new ticketing options</p> <p>Look to align young person and child fare policies across all operators</p>

7.8. Service patterns integrated with other modes

- 7.8.1. Integration of bus services with other modes will take many forms in Lincolnshire. The County Council and District Councils have invested in interchange facilities across the County over the past decade. In Skegness – as part of the Go Skegness project - the bus/rail interchange has been a significant success, reinvigorating an area that suffered from anti-social behaviour while in Lincoln, the bus station was rebuilt in 2018 and provides much improved facilities, including good connections with the rail station.
- 7.8.2. The County Council has also invested heavily over recent years to provide rural hubs that enable bus to bus interchange.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
<p>To increase bus user satisfaction rates</p> <p>To provide efficient multi-modal connectivity between our rail, bus and other transport networks to connect Lincolnshire with the East Midlands and beyond</p> <p>To support a reduction in operating costs through an efficient use of resources</p> <p>For buses to contribute to the quality of place across Lincolnshire</p>	<p>Integrate bus services with rail stations, focussing on aligning bus timetables with rail timetables for specific trains to key locations such as London</p> <p>In villages where residential developments are a distance from the local bus stop, provide secure cycle parking adjacent to the bus stop to enable people to bike and ride. Initial sites will be along the service 101 corridor including Morton, Northorpe, Thurlby, Baston and Langtoft</p> <p>Roll out bike and ride concept more widely if successful. This initiative can benefit scholars going to school and reduce the need for the school run by parents whose children are not entitled to free school transport.</p> <p>Develop plans for modal interchange hubs around Lincoln, Skegness & Mablethorpe to encourage interchange from car to sustainable modes to reduce and minimise the negative external impacts of cars</p> <p>Explore potential for modal interchange hubs in Grantham, Boston and other market towns, including where convenient pocket park and ride sites can be identified.</p> <p>Work with independent transport commissioners such as colleges and large employers to encourage travel on the commercial network. Understand their needs and explore ways in which travel can be provided efficiently</p> <p>Actively promote PlusBus tickets through Council and operator media channels more widely across the County in order to encourage more multi-modal journeys across the county</p>

7.9. Services must be simpler and easier to understand

- 7.9.1. Making bus services easier to understand is important, but we recognise that route numbers or names have existed for a long time and are well understood by users. It is essential that any changes to simplify services builds on what works well, rather than making changes for the sake of it. Collaborating with each and every operator is therefore an integral part of our policy.
- 7.9.2. As the EP Plan is delivered and services are enhanced on a corridor-by-corridor basis, we will work with operators to brand and market each enhanced service to raise awareness of the services. As part of this process, we will consider whether the services require a change to their route number or an entire re-branding, with the ultimate aim to make services easier to understand for non-bus users and make them more attractive.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
To recover bus patronage to pre-COVID levels from April 2023	Develop a marketing and communications strategy to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="735 965 1267 1003">● Support post-COVID return to buses<li data-bbox="735 1028 1289 1106">● Present a positive message about bus services<li data-bbox="735 1131 1193 1209">● Raise awareness of bus service enhancements

7.10. Bus Information and a single system

- 7.10.1. One of the potential inefficiencies of a deregulated bus market is the fact that bus operators provide information about their own services, but not for other operators. We therefore have a system where operators work in silos and the bus network appears fragmented. To overcome this, there is scope to provide service information for all operators in one, easy to access location. The County Council has attempted to do this in the past, and implemented the LincsBus.info website. However, while the website is functional, it is perhaps not as intuitive or user friendly as some other options on the market. There is also demand for providing this information in a mobile application to improve accessibility to that information for those who use mobile phones.

7.10.2. It is not only bus information that can make the Lincolnshire bus network appear disparate. Infrastructure, in terms of bus stops and bus shelters, provided across the county can vary in quality and with little consistency from one area to another. At present, around 15% of Lincolnshire’s bus stops have raised kerbs enabling level boarding and alighting from buses. This is inadequate and requires a focussed effort to raise the standard of bus stop infrastructure around the county. There will be a need to take local circumstances into account in the delivery of bus stop and interchange improvements such as conservation areas, available space etc and a priority order for implementation across the county will be developed.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
<p>To increase bus user satisfaction rates</p> <p>To reduce barriers to public transport use through high quality information</p> <p>To reduce rural isolation through more available and usable bus services</p> <p>To reduce all physical barriers to public transport use</p>	<p>Explore options and agree the most appropriate means of presenting comprehensive bus information in a customer focussed way for all services and operators</p> <p>Explore and agree an appropriate app-based solution to enable bus users to access real time information, purchase tickets etc.</p> <p>Carry out an audit of all bus stop infrastructure countywide</p>
<p>To support the perception of travelling safely by public transport</p>	<p>Develop bus stop and shelter standards in conjunction with operators. Standards will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bus stop flags ● Information/RTI ● Raised kerbs ● Shelters & waiting areas ● Lighting & CCTV

7.11. Give bus passengers more of a voice

7.11.1. We have engaged with bus users and non-bus users as a key part of compiling this EP Plan, providing them with an opportunity to identify their priorities for enhancing bus services. The two main priorities for our residents are more frequent services and better information at bus stops, and these are fully recognised within this EP Plan.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
<p>To ensure users have a say in how bus services are provided</p> <p>To increase bus user satisfaction rates</p>	<p>Formal consultation with users and non-users during preparation of the EP Plan and EP Scheme</p> <p>Include a 'feedback' function when developing the mobile app to obtain views and feedback. Data to be analysed regularly and feed in to EP Board discussions in order to update EP Plan and EP Plan in future</p> <p>Continue to offer 'fix my street' to enable residents to report issues with bus infrastructure</p> <p>Bus operators have developed a Passenger Charter, setting out operator commitments to bus users so they know what they can expect whenever they use buses. Failure to meet the standards will necessitate an offending operator to rectify any issues identified and report back to the user.</p>

7.12. Modern buses and decarbonisation

7.12.1. Buses in Lincolnshire are typically older than the national average. This is not the case for all operators – some operate newer vehicles – but overall, vehicles are typically between 13 and 14 years old. The reason for older buses is simple, operators face high operating costs due to long distances, alongside relatively low revenues due to operating within a sparsely populated county which has high levels of car ownership. The bus user market is therefore limited, a situation that this EP Plan aims to change. With high costs and limited revenues, an ability to invest in new vehicles is challenging for operators, particularly when the cost of low or zero emission buses is much greater than new diesel buses.

7.12.2. To overcome these challenges, it is necessary to develop a roadmap to include short term measures that have an instant impact on air quality, medium term measures of trialling zero emission buses to understand how they can be introduced in Lincolnshire, and long-term measures of replacing the existing fleet with low and zero emission buses entirely.

7.12.3. Our outline roadmap is below.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
To improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions from transport	<p>Develop and finalise decarbonisation roadmap for Lincolnshire</p> <p>Retrofit emission capture technologies on most polluting buses. Priority will be given to those buses operating in sensitive areas – Air Quality Management Areas, other urban areas and near schools</p> <p>Raise County Council requirements for contracted services to minimum of Euro 4 or Euro 5</p> <p>Electric bus trial in Boston or Grantham – feasibility study</p> <p>Support operators to purchase new(er) and less polluting vehicles through delivery of measures to enhance service levels, infrastructure etc as detailed in this EP Plan</p>

7.13. Traffic management and other measures

7.13.1. We have identified a number of traffic management projects that would benefit bus services.

EP Plan Objectives	EP Plan Activity
To reduce journey times for bus services across Lincolnshire and improve journey time reliability	Identify locations for vehicle loading restrictions, and implement TROs where it supports free flowing bus services
To increase bus user satisfaction rates	Examine the potential for electronic parking messages on approach to Skegness and other seaside resorts to reduce cars searching for spaces. Deliver where feasible.
To support a reduction in operating costs through an efficient use of resources	Studies to reduce indiscriminate parking in market towns

8. Impact of the EP Plan on neighbouring areas

8.8.1. We do not consider that there will be any material impacts of the measures and facilities included within the initial EP Scheme on neighbouring areas.

9. EP Plan delivery through an EP Scheme

9.1.1. The EP Scheme will assist with the delivery of the policies and achieving the objectives set out within the EP Plan. The initial EP Scheme provides both a framework for implementation of the EP Plan through the governance arrangements set out in section 5 of the EP Scheme, and also implements a number of measures and requirements which start implementation of the EP Plan. In particular:

- Existing and new bus stop infrastructure
- Existing bus lanes
- Traffic light priority
- Managing roadworks in the EP Scheme Area
- All-operator bus information
- Maintaining Fix My Street
- Promoting PlusBus
- Adherence to the Lincolnshire Bus Passenger Charter
- Vehicle Standards
- Operator Information Provision

9.1.2. Whilst these facilities, measures and standards are only a small part of the matters which it is intended to deliver through the EP Scheme, they reflect those matters which are able to be delivered early in the scheme, and which are not dependent upon further funding. The EP Scheme includes a variation mechanism allowing the parties to vary the EP Scheme when new funding becomes available and/or where agreement is reached as to how further objectives of the EP Plan are to be delivered, and therefore the initial EP Scheme also provides a framework for delivery of further elements of the EP Plan where the County Council and relevant operators agree to such further facilities, measures and/or standards and where funding is made available, including any DfT funding.



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The Lincolnshire Enhanced Partnership Scheme For Buses



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1. EP Scheme Content

1.1.1. This document fulfils the statutory requirements for an EP Scheme. In accordance with statutory requirements in section 138A to 138E of the Transport Act 2000, the EP Scheme document sets out:

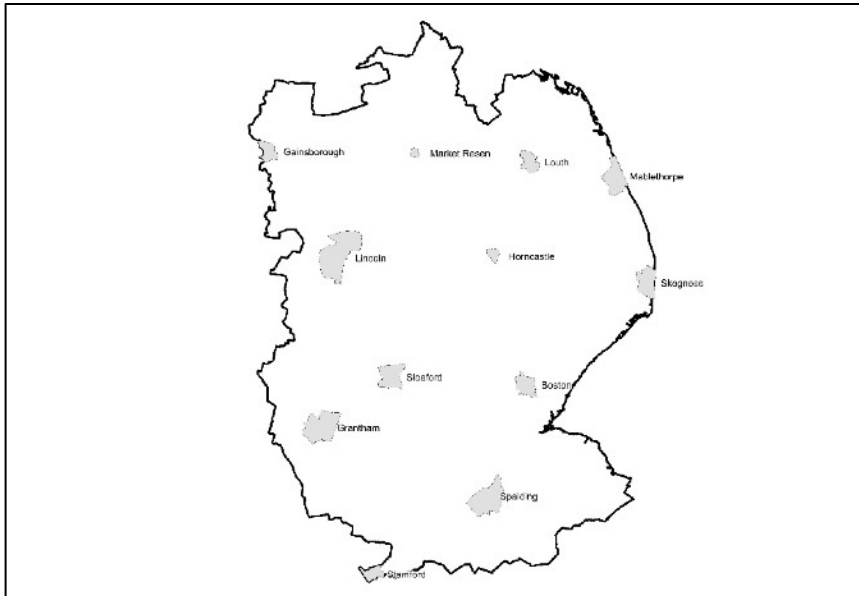
- Scope of the EP Scheme and commencement date
- Obligations on the Local Authorities
- Obligations on Bus Operators
- Governance Arrangements

1.1.2. This EP Scheme can only be put in place if an associated EP Plan has been made. Therefore, this document should be considered alongside the associated EP Plan. The EP Scheme has been jointly developed by Lincolnshire County Council, relevant lower tier authorities and those bus operators that provide local bus services in the EP Scheme area. It sets out obligations and requirements on both Lincolnshire County Council (as the Local Transport Authority and Local Highway Authority) and operators of local services in order to achieve the intended improvements, with the aim of delivering the objectives of the associated EP Plan.

2. Scope of the EP Scheme and Commencement Date

2.1.1. The EP Scheme will support the improvement of local bus services operating in the Lincolnshire County Council administered area. This EP Scheme and the EP Plan are focussed on the same geographical area, presented below.

Figure 2-1 EP Scheme area



2.1.2. The EP Plan and EP Scheme are made on 1st April 2023, and this EP Scheme shall come into operation on 1st April 2023. The EP Scheme has no specific end date but will only be in place while the EP Plan is in place, and will be reviewed by Lincolnshire County Council (“the County Council”) every six (6) months in accordance with section 5.5.

2.1.3. All local bus services within the county area of Lincolnshire are included within this EP Scheme. Services that are excluded from this EP Scheme are:

- A service which has part of its route registered as a local service in the EP geographical area, but where that part of its route is 10% or less of the overall route distance covered by the service from its service start to service end point
- A service which is registered as a local service under section 6 of the Transport Act 1985 but which would otherwise be an excursion or tour within the meaning in section 137(1) of that Act is exempt from this Scheme

3. Obligations on the Authority

3.1. Summary of obligations

3.1.1. The following table summarises the facilities and measures that will be provided through this EP Scheme and the responsible Authority.

Facilities

Responsibility	Local Authority	Local Highway Authority	Local Transport Authority
Bus stop infrastructure - see 3.2.2 to 3.2.5	Lincolnshire CC	Lincolnshire CC	Lincolnshire CC
Bus lanes – see 3.2.6 to 3.2.7	Lincolnshire CC	Lincolnshire CC	Lincolnshire CC
Traffic light priority at signalised junctions – see 3.2.8 to 3.2.9	Lincolnshire CC	Lincolnshire CC	Lincolnshire CC

Measures

Responsibility	Local Authority	Local Highway Authority	Local Transport Authority
Managing roadworks in the EP Scheme Area See 3.3.5	Lincolnshire CC	Lincolnshire CC	Lincolnshire CC
All operator bus information – see 3.3.6 to 3.3.7	Lincolnshire CC	Lincolnshire CC	Lincolnshire CC
Fix My Street – see 3.3.8	Lincolnshire CC	Lincolnshire CC	Lincolnshire CC
Freedom Never Gets Old campaign – see 3.3.9 to 3.3.11	Lincolnshire CC	Lincolnshire CC	Lincolnshire CC
Promote PlusBus – see 3.3.9 to 3.3.11	Lincolnshire CC	Lincolnshire CC	Lincolnshire CC

3.2. Facilities

3.2.1. Lincolnshire County Council will provide the following facilities through this Enhanced Partnership Scheme:

- Audit bus stop infrastructure within the county
- Existing bus stop infrastructure for which the County Council is currently responsible
- Existing bus lanes
- Consider the feasibility of new bus stop and bus lane infrastructure at one or more locations around the county
- Bus priority at one or more applicable junctions

Existing and new bus stop infrastructure

3.2.2. The County Council will continue to provide and maintain existing bus stop infrastructure, where it has responsibility for that infrastructure, across the area of the Scheme throughout the duration of this Scheme.

3.2.3. When upgrading existing bus stop infrastructure, enhancements could include bus stop poles and flags, provision of timetable cases, shelters, seating, real time information, raised kerbs and/or improved lighting, depending on need, technical constraints and cost for each stop. These decisions will be taken following consultation with the bus stop infrastructure inventory, see 3.3.2.

3.2.4. Some new bus stops may be implemented during the period of this EP Scheme. Where such additional bus stops are identified then the bespoke variation procedure set out in Section 5.5 will apply if they are to be included in this EP Scheme.

3.2.5. The County Council will maintain all bus stop infrastructure and carry out remedial works as and when required. The County Council will seek to address repairs and other remedial work in a timely manner for all the bus stop infrastructure that it has ownership and responsibility for, throughout the duration of this Scheme.

Existing bus lanes

3.2.6. The County Council will provide and maintain the following existing bus lanes throughout the duration of this Scheme:

- High Street, Lincoln
- Roman Bank, Skegness

3.2.7. Maintenance of these bus lanes shall consist of:

- Maintaining the quality of road surface to enable smooth bus journeys along the length of the bus lanes
- Maintenance of bus lane paint to ensure bus lanes are visual for all road users
- Road sweeping on a regular basis to maintain the carriageway
- Cutting back of nearby trees and vegetation (where applicable) on a 'when needed' basis

Traffic light priority

3.2.8. Lincolnshire County Council will incrementally introduce more bus priority at both standalone and Scoot-enabled junctions across the area of the EP Scheme. From April 2023 this facility will be considered and where appropriate activated on a junction-by-junction basis and will be maintained throughout the period of this EP Scheme.

3.2.9. Lincolnshire County Council will also explore reducing the 'lateness' requirement in order for buses to receive priority from the current 3 minutes late to 1 or 2 minutes depending on the junction and the potential impact on other road users. This will be carried out during 2022-23 and if considered to be feasible, changes to the lateness threshold will be actioned on a junction-by-junction basis as soon as practicable.

3.3. Measures

3.3.1. This section describes the measures that Lincolnshire County Council has agreed to take to improve bus services in Lincolnshire during the period of this Scheme.

Existing bus stop infrastructure

3.3.2. The County Council will carry out a comprehensive audit of all bus stop infrastructure and produce a bus stop inventory for Lincolnshire. This review will commence during 2022-23. This inventory will be used by the Enhanced Partnership Forum and Board to identify where bus stop infrastructure could be enhanced, see 3.2.2.

New bus lanes

3.3.3. The County Council will explore the potential for extension of existing and/or installation of new bus lanes. Feasibility studies will be carried out by the County Council to identify bus lane opportunities at the following sites:

- High Street, Lincoln – an extension to the current in-bound bus lane (initially as far as its junction with Alfred Street)
- Roman Bank, Skegness – examine how the discontinuous sections can be constructed to ensure a continuous bus lane
- Broadgate, Lincoln – examine the feasibility of introducing a new southbound bus lane

3.3.4. Depending on the outcomes of the feasibility studies, the County Council will consider how any new sections of bus lane which are identified as opportunities to implement can be implemented and the County Council will engage with the Enhanced Partnership Board to identify where and when individual bus lanes should be introduced. Where new bus lanes are identified, funding is available and all Traffic Regulation Order processes have been followed by the County Council, then the bespoke variation procedure set out in section 5.5 will apply if they are to be included in this EP Scheme.

Managing roadworks in the EP Scheme Area

3.3.5. Roadworks and the late notification of roadworks can make operating bus services challenging. Lincolnshire County Council will require a member of the Highways department from the County Council to engage with the Enhanced Partnership Forum to improve communication channels between the County Council and operators. An information sharing mechanism will be developed between operators and the County Council Highways' department, and a defined process for notifying operators of planned roadworks. Once this has been agreed, then the bespoke variation procedure set out in section 5.6 will apply if it is to be included in this EP Scheme.

All-operator bus information

3.3.6. Lincolnshire County Council currently provides information for most operators using the following channels:

- Lincsbus.info website
- Bus stop information
- Real time information at selected bus stops

3.3.7. The County Council will maintain this information provision throughout the duration of this EP Scheme and work with the Enhanced Partnership Forum and Board to improve the information provided. The County Council will work with bus operators to ensure that there is consistency and accuracy in the bus stop information provided across the area of the EP Scheme, although this may involve bespoke approaches in different areas of Lincolnshire with individual operators or corridors. The County Council will also work with the EP Forum and Board to ensure that bus stop information meets the needs of bus users.

Fix My Street

3.3.8. Lincolnshire County Council currently enables residents and interested stakeholders to report any issues with public infrastructure to the Council through 'Fix My Street'. The County Council will continue to provide 'Fix My Street' throughout the duration of this Scheme and will respond to notifications.

'Freedom Never Gets Old' ENCTS Campaign

3.3.9. Lincolnshire County Council will design and deliver a campaign to encourage ENCTS pass holders to return to the bus. The campaign will focus on overcoming some of the barriers introduced as a result of the COVID pandemic, such as fears over safety of travelling by bus.

3.3.10. The campaign will be launched in August 2022 and will continue until 31st January 2023. The campaign consists of:

- Development of a campaign slogan and message
- Development of campaign materials and 'digital toolkit' for bus operators, parish councils and other stakeholders to use
- Posters and leaflets
- Refresh of bus stop information across Lincolnshire to remove any COVID-related messaging
- Engagement plan to engage with target stakeholders
- Monitoring and evaluation plan to understand the impact of the campaign

3.3.11. The performance of the campaign will be evaluated and fed back to the EP Board to inform future campaigns.

Promote PlusBus

3.3.12. PlusBus is the 'add-on' ticket that rail users can purchase to make onwards journeys by bus. PlusBus is available in Lincolnshire, and has been available for many years, at the following stations:

- Grantham
- Lincoln
- Skegness

3.3.13. The County Council will use reasonable endeavours to ensure PlusBus continues to be available for the three existing towns.

3.3.14. Lincolnshire County Council will improve its promotion of PlusBus to raise awareness of the scheme. The Council will promote PlusBus using the following media channels:

- Through Lincsbus.info website
- On the Lincolnshire County Council website
- On social media channels including Facebook and Twitter
- During ad-hoc local promotions to encourage public transport use

4. Obligations on Local Bus Operators

4.1.1. This section describes the standards of service that those operating registered local bus services in Lincolnshire must meet.

Adherence to the Lincolnshire Bus Passenger Charter

4.1.2. All local bus operators in Lincolnshire will adhere to the Lincolnshire Bus Passenger Charter, presented in Annexe A. The Passenger Charter will come into effect from 1st April 2023 and will provide the standards expected of local bus operators throughout the duration of this EP Scheme.

4.1.3. Changes can be made to the Lincolnshire Bus Passenger Charter during the EP Scheme, subject to consultation with the Enhanced Partnership Forum and Enhanced Partnership Board. Any changes to the Lincolnshire Bus Passenger Charter will be made using the bespoke variation procedure set out in section 5.5 to vary Annexe A.

Vehicle Standards

4.1.4. Local bus operators shall operate vehicles with a minimum of Euro 3 emission standards from 1st April 2023. If and when it is agreed that minimum emissions standards can be raised across the area of the Scheme, then this will be established as a requirement under the EP Scheme using the bespoke variation mechanism set out in section 5.5, including specifying the timescales for requiring any such raised standards.

Ticketing

4.1.5. The intention is that all bus operators participating in the area of the EP Scheme will accept a 'Lincolnshire Rover' countywide day ticket to enable travel across multiple operators and across the whole of Lincolnshire. It is intended that all operators will sell and accept these tickets for travel on their local bus services and that, in addition, all operators will promote the Lincolnshire Rover ticket on their website and other media channels to encourage sales and use.

4.1.6. In order to achieve this, the Enhanced Partnership Board will collaborate to define the following aspects of the Lincolnshire Rover ticket (amongst other aspects):

- Form of the ticket (paper, smartcard, mobile)
- Ticket validity periods (day, week etc)
- Ticket variants (adult, young person/child, family etc)
- Hours of operation
- Pricing
- Revenue management
- Reporting and trip recording
- Customer services
- Marketing

4.1.7. It is intended that, subject to agreement being reached, in accordance with 4.1.6, the Lincolnshire Rover ticket will be introduced during the period of this EP Scheme, and will remain in place until at least the end of the Scheme period, and where such agreement is reached, this will be established as a requirement under the EP Scheme using the bespoke variation mechanism set out in section 5.5.

Promote PlusBus

4.1.8. Lincolnshire Bus Operators will promote PlusBus in areas where PlusBus is available. Operators in the areas where PlusBus arrangements are available (currently Lincoln, Skegness and Grantham) will promote PlusBus tickets using their own media channels including, but not limited to:

- Websites
- Social media
- On-bus advertising

4.1.9. Operators will promote PlusBus throughout the duration of this Scheme, commencing from 1st April 2023.

Operator Information Provision

- 4.1.10. Lincolnshire Bus Operators will provide all necessary information and inputs to maintain the accuracy of real time passenger information (RTPI) across the county.
- 4.1.11. Operators will also provide information specifically relating to the impact of facilities and measures implemented as a result of this Scheme to enable the Scheme to be evaluated. The data required for this evaluation process is presented in Table 61 in the EP Plan.

5. Governance Arrangements

5.1.1. This section sets out the governance arrangements for this Lincolnshire Enhanced Partnership Scheme.

5.2. EP Board

5.2.1. For the purposes of this Enhanced Partnership Scheme, the Lincolnshire Enhanced Partnership Board has been set up. The Board is made up of the following participants:

- Executive Director, Place, Lincolnshire County Council
- Assistant Director, Communities, Lincolnshire County Council
- Head of Transport Services, Lincolnshire County Council
- Representative from Stagecoach East Midlands
- Representative from Brylaine Travel
- Representative from Delaine Buses
- Representative from Centrebus
- Representative from PC Coaches
- Representative of Hunts Coaches or other local bus operator, as agreed amongst operators not named on the Enhanced Partnership Board
- Representative from Sleafordian Coaches
- Independent chairperson, who will be agreed every two years by the members of the EP Board

5.2.2. The representative from Hunts Coaches (or such other operator as smaller operators may agree between themselves and notify to the County Council) shall be the EP Board representative on behalf of all smaller operators in Lincolnshire.

5.2.3. The Lincolnshire EP Board representatives can change and evolve over time. Any changes to the Board participants and structure for this EP Scheme can be made using the bespoke variation procedure set out in section 5.5.

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

- 5.2.5. The EP Board will meet on a quarterly basis, but may meet more or less frequently from time to time, depending on the need for a Board meeting. Meetings will be held face to face, with an option to attend virtually via Microsoft Teams or similar conferencing software.
- 5.2.6. Attendees will be notified of forthcoming 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 Scheme. Papers for each meeting will be provided at the same time. Should non-scheduled meetings be required, Board members will be given as much notice as possible, with papers shared at the earliest opportunity in advance of the meeting.
- 5.2.7. The EP Board will be required to inform decision-making relating to the Scheme from time to time. Recommendations made by the EP Board will take into consideration any recommendations made by the EP Forum (as formed pursuant to section 5.3). 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 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
- 5.2.8. The tools will be identified and/or developed by the County Council working in partnership with the EP Board, during the 2023-24 financial year.
- 5.2.9. In order to consider a variation to the Scheme, the EP Board will consider all inputs from the EP Forum and the above tools to arrive at conclusion on whether to formally recommend the variation. During this period representatives on the EP Board – including County Council and bus operator representatives - 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 Board recommendation and Scheme variation process shall be followed in accordance with section 5.5.

5.3. EP Forum

5.3.1. The Lincolnshire Enhanced Partnership Forum is a wider group than the EP Board, incorporating different stakeholders as and when they need to be consulted on changes to the 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:

- Other Lincolnshire operators who do not have a direct place on the EP Board
- District Councils in Lincolnshire
- Local businesses
- Local bus user groups
- Neighbouring local transport authorities
- County Council departments that have an influence on bus services e.g. Highways Department
- Other groups or organisations that have an interest in the Lincolnshire EP Scheme

5.3.2. An open invitation to join the EP Forum will be issued to the groups noted in 5.3.1 as well as other groups, and this will be included on the Lincolnshire County Council website. The acceptance of different groups on the EP Forum will be the decision of the County Council, taking account of the views of bus operators represented on the EP Board.

5.3.3. 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 Board.

5.4. Review of EP Scheme

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

5.4.2. Lincolnshire County Council will initiate each review. The EP Board can also decide to review specific elements of the scheme on an ad hoc basis. EP Board members should contact Lincolnshire County Council explaining what the issue is and its urgency. The LTA 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.

5.5. Bespoke arrangements for varying or revoking the Enhanced Partnership Scheme

5.5.1. In accordance with section s.138E of the Transport Act 2000, the procedure in this section 5.6 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 Scheme, or otherwise where any variation is proposed by the County Council or any Operator for the purposes of implementation of any requirement or objective of the EP Plan.

Proposer of a variation

5.5.2. 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 an operator of local bus services (Proposed Variation). Any variations can be proposed to the scheme, whether specified or not within the 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: demonstrate how the Proposed Variation might contribute to achieving the objectives set out in the BSIP, EP Plan and/or current local transport policies; 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; identify any facilities or measures which are to be implemented; and identify any significant effect on competition that the Proposed Variation might have.

5.5.3. Such requests should be in writing and submitted to the Executive Director for Place at Lincolnshire County Council. The County Council will forward all requests onto each EP Board members within 5 working days.

Decision-making process and bespoke objection mechanism

5.5.4. On receipt of a request for a variation under this section, Lincolnshire County Council will reconvene the EP Board, giving at least 14 days' notice for the meeting, to consider the proposed variation. Each representative will consult with their organisation as set out in paragraph 5.2.9.

5.5.5. If the proposed variation is agreed at the EP Board by Lincolnshire County Council and all Operators present then section 5.5.8 shall apply,

5.5.6. If the proposed variation is agreed at the EP Board by Lincolnshire County Council and all Operators present whose services are affected by the Proposed Variation (notwithstanding that other Operators may not agree to the Proposed Variation) then section 5.5.8 shall apply,

5.5.7. If the proposed variation is agreed at the EP Board by Lincolnshire County Council and some but not all Operators present whose services are affected by the Proposed Variation (notwithstanding that other 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. 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;
- B. 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 5.5.8 shall apply.

5.5.8. Where this paragraph applies the County 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.

5.5.9. 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.

5.6. Revocation of an EP Scheme

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

5.7. Data Sharing

5.7.1. All data provided to Lincolnshire County Council for the purposes of monitoring the impact of the EP Scheme and the delivery of the Lincolnshire Bus Service Improvement Plan shall be treated in confidence and will not be shared with any other party, except for:

- Any external consultancies working directly for the County Council
- Department for Transport or other external parties engaged by the DfT for the purpose of monitoring or auditing EP Plans and Schemes

- 5.7.2. Where data obtained from operators is commercially sensitive, yet is required to be reported either to the EP Board, to the DfT or any other relevant body or organisation, the County Council will seek to aggregate any information it obtains where possible and appropriate - given the nature of the work being undertaken on the EP Scheme - and put in place measures to avoid inadvertently disclosing any commercially sensitive information provided by a bus operator. If an operator can demonstrate that certain information they provide is commercially sensitive, the County Council shall look favourably upon any request from that operator for a confidentiality or nondisclosure agreement.
- 5.7.3. It is not envisaged that any personal data will be collected by the County Council or the EP Board during the period of this Scheme. If any personal data is collected and held, then it will be done so in accordance with GDPR regulations and will be subject to the following Lincolnshire data protection policy: [Lincolnshire data protection policy](#).

Annexe A Bus Passenger Charter

Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) is your Local Transport Authority. LCC works to co-ordinate and improve all public transport within its borders.

All operators of bus services running within Lincolnshire have adopted this passenger charter, which does not affect your legal rights.

All our bus passengers can expect:

- your bus will normally arrive at your starting point within five minutes of the scheduled time
- your driver will keep you informed if your bus is seriously delayed
- you can expect at least 99% of journeys to be operated each week unless there are exceptional circumstances beyond the operator's control
- a clean bus - your vehicle will be cleaned internally and externally at least once every day
- a friendly and helpful driver
- CCTV in operation on an increasing number of buses for your security
- a range of value for money tickets and passes that are easy to understand and purchase
- a network of bus routes connecting our towns, and Lincoln, and running along all our major roads
- real-time next bus displays at major stops, and also on our smartphone app
- up-to-date timetable and fare information available on line
- a space on every bus large enough to take one wheelchair or two buggies
- timetable changes to be restricted to six times per year

Performance against operational targets will be published monthly on the Lincsbus.info website.

Customer feedback and queries

If you feel we have not met your expectations, please let us know - we actively welcome comments and suggestions as well as complaints. Please complain directly to us, your bus operator, in writing. Details of how to do so can be found on each operators website, or www.lincsbus.info where contact details for all operators can be found.

We commit to responding to all complaints within 7 days.

If you are dissatisfied with the operator's response, you can escalate the issue to Bus Users UK who are the only Dispute Resolution Body for bus and coach services. You can contact Bus Users UK as follows:

Post: Bus Users, 22 Greencoat Place, London, SW1P 1PR

Tel: 0300 111 0001

Email: complaints@bususers.org

Web: <http://www.bususers.org/complaints>

Annexe B – EP Scheme if funding became available

The Lincolnshire Enhanced Bus Partnership will deliver the following three schemes if Lincolnshire County Council receives funding from the Department for Transport:

- Bus driver training college, in partnership with Boston College
- Market town bus improvement programme
- Bus-cycle interchanges

These are presented in the table below.

Proposed Scheme	BSIP Objectives Met	EP Approach	Funding Request
Bus driver training college	<p>Recover bus patronage to pre-COVID levels.</p> <p>Increase bus user satisfaction rates.</p> <p>Increase service levels to meet the travel needs of all our communities, including those living in new developments.</p> <p>Maintain the number of operators providing bus services in Lincolnshire.</p> <p>Reduce rural isolation through more available bus services.</p>	<p>Work in partnership with Boston College.</p> <p>Develop a bespoke and holistic training academy including PSV drivers and Passenger Assistants to address shortages in the industry that leave smaller operators struggling to address.</p> <p>Project includes a range of transport roles e.g., Maintenance.</p> <p>Builds on an existing project focusing on addressing HGV driver shortages.</p>	£2,200,000 between 2023 and 2026

Proposed Scheme	BSIP Objectives Met	EP Approach	Funding Request
Market town bus improvement programme	<p>For buses to contribute to the quality of place across Lincolnshire.</p> <p>Recover bus patronage to pre-COVID levels from April 2022.</p> <p>Increase bus user satisfaction rates.</p> <p>Increase service levels to meet the travel needs of all our communities.</p> <p>Provide efficient multi-modal connectivity between our rail, bus and other transport networks to connect Lincolnshire with the East Midlands and beyond.</p> <p>Support economic growth and the levelling up of our more deprived communities through improving access for all to education, employment health and leisure.</p> <p>Improve air quality & reduce carbon emissions from transport.</p>	<p>Focus on Boston, Gainsborough and Grantham.</p> <p>Upgrades to stops & shelters – raised kerbs, street lighting etc.</p> <p>Introduction of real time information at key bus stops.</p> <p>Bus network review in all three towns, assessing routes, timetables etc.</p> <p>Updating of timetable information at all bus stops.</p> <p>Traffic light junction priority.</p> <p>Identification of pinch points and exploration of optimal solutions, such as bus lanes, bus gates, red routes, review of parking provision etc.</p> <p>Enhanced service levels, with increased morning, evening and weekend services to better meet the needs of local people and local businesses.</p> <p>Developing business cases for investment in zero emission buses.</p>	£4,340,000 between 2023 and 2026

Proposed Scheme	BSIP Objectives Met	EP Approach	Funding Request
<p>Bus-cycle interchanges</p>	<p>For buses to contribute to the quality of place across Lincolnshire.</p> <p>Recover bus patronage to pre-COVID levels from April 2022.</p> <p>Provide efficient multi-modal connectivity between our rail, bus and other transport networks to connect Lincolnshire with the East Midlands and beyond.</p> <p>Reduce rural isolation through more available bus services.</p>	<p>Feasibility study to identify sites for cycle parking at bus stops in rural villages.</p> <p>Priority route for Lincolnshire is the service 101 corridor (Bourne to Market Deeping).</p>	<p>£332,000 between 2023 and 2026</p>

Total Funding Request: £6,872,000



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