

Notes of meeting

Title of Meeting:	Suffolk Enhanced Partnership – Councillor Forum																																																						
Purpose or Mandate:	A collaborative approach to improving passenger transport																																																						
Date:	4 October 2022																																																						
Place:	Teams meeting																																																						
Times:	1000-1130																																																						
Attended:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Alexander Nicoll</td> <td>Suffolk CC Cllr</td> <td>Chair</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Simon Barnett</td> <td>Suffolk CC</td> <td>Organiser</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Timothy Stephenson</td> <td>Suffolk CC</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Andrew Stringer</td> <td>Suffolk CC Cllr</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jessica Fleming</td> <td>Suffolk CC Cllr</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Carol Bull</td> <td>West Suffolk Cllr</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Suzie Morley</td> <td>Mid Suffolk Cllr</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Phil Smart</td> <td>Ipswich BC Cllr</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Elisabeth Malvisi</td> <td>Babergh DC Cllr</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alison Cackett</td> <td>Suffolk Coastal Cllr</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Norman Brooks</td> <td>Suffolk Coastal Cllr</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Apologies</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Graham Newman</td> <td>Suffolk CC Cllr</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sandy Martin</td> <td>Suffolk CC Cllr</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>John Ward</td> <td>Babergh DC Cllr</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Julie Flatman</td> <td>Mid Suffolk Cllr</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leigh Jamieson</td> <td>Babergh DC Cllr</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Alexander Nicoll	Suffolk CC Cllr	Chair	Simon Barnett	Suffolk CC	Organiser	Timothy Stephenson	Suffolk CC		Andrew Stringer	Suffolk CC Cllr		Jessica Fleming	Suffolk CC Cllr		Carol Bull	West Suffolk Cllr		Suzie Morley	Mid Suffolk Cllr		Phil Smart	Ipswich BC Cllr		Elisabeth Malvisi	Babergh DC Cllr		Alison Cackett	Suffolk Coastal Cllr		Norman Brooks	Suffolk Coastal Cllr					Apologies			Graham Newman	Suffolk CC Cllr		Sandy Martin	Suffolk CC Cllr		John Ward	Babergh DC Cllr		Julie Flatman	Mid Suffolk Cllr		Leigh Jamieson	Babergh DC Cllr	
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Minute-taker:	Simon Barnett																																																						

Item No.	Item Description	Relevant business considered, facts noted, the decision taken and its rationale
1	Welcome	
		Apologies shared
2	Bus Recovery Grant Update	
		<p>SLB reported that the Covid support funding from DfT had definitely been extended until December 2022, with indications that a further extension to March 2023 is likely.</p> <p>AN noted that Covid persists, passenger numbers have still not recovered and lobbying for ongoing support will continue.</p> <p>AS queried why services are still being cut-back now if the funding is continuing? TS responded that the support does</p>

		not always cover all operating costs, and the initial grant conditions that prevented services in receipt of support being withdrawn have now been removed. PS added that operating costs continue to rise while operators are finding it harder to recruit and retain drivers, making it harder for local authorities or others to support routes even if funding exists.
3	EP and BSIP Schemes update	
		SB ran through progress on BSIP objectives. Specific discussion occurred on:
	Bus Priority	<p>PS supported the SCC proposal to take on moving traffic offence and bus lane enforcement from the Police as they do not do any at present. A paper relating to camera enforcement will go to SCC cabinet in November.</p> <p>PS also noted that whilst priority works are mostly focussed on Ipswich at present the town does have a higher concentration of bus routes than elsewhere and such works will benefit anyone who comes into town by bus as well as those travelling within the boundary.</p>
	Ticketing	Second draft of the multi-operator agreement is to be circulated shortly. TS confirmed that SCC had to be a party to any such agreement as it was illegal for operators to agree fares without the presence of an unbiased organisation. SCC will also lead on promotion of the final product.
	Branding/Marketing	<p>SB confirmed that the Branding and Marketing sub-group is now to be formally created and called for volunteers to be part of this. SM put herself forward.</p> <p>AN stressed that operators need to be involved and fully committed, bringing their own marketing budgets to the table.</p>
	Passenger Charter	SB reported that the passenger transport team now has a new Contract Compliance officer in place, who will be checking operators are adhering to the charter standards.
	Network Review	TS reported that the review required by the DfT to qualify for support funding earlier in the summer had painted a bleak and uncertain future for many services when said funding ceased. The 6-month extension should hopefully allow for further recovery in the market. SB to re-review with operators to see what may have changed.
4	Open Forum	
	Service Funding	<p>AS raised the concern that section 106 or other developer funding agreed and received for bus services has not been used effectively. SB to investigate and append report to these minutes.</p> <p>PS noted that rising costs may mean that amounts agreed with developers may no longer be sufficient for the planned use. Also that 106 spend should perhaps be targeted on improving existing services rather than trying to do something new.</p> <p>CB queried developer funding for Marham Park development at Bury St Edmunds. SLB confirmed that developers had been unable to reach an affordable deal with operators to provide a regular bus service but SCC and West Suffolk had</p>

		<p>agreed that a demand-responsive service would be an acceptable alternative – this is now running and operated by The Voluntary Network.</p> <p>AN suggested that the local planning authorities should try harder to get developers to fund routes as they are the ones with final approval on applications. SM countered that developments are only considered viable if they have SCC approval. CB agreed that developments should not be approved without being sustainable but recognised this could have a significant impact on local plans.</p> <p>JF felt that the EP should lobby for the planning process to be changed to enable greater funding for buses that way. AN noted that Transport East should be able to help with this.</p>
	Bus operations	<p>AC suggested that operators should be encouraged to be more creative with their services and also queried the point of using large vehicles for small loads. AN confirmed that the EP is doing just this. SB noted that if a 70-seat double decker is needed for school movements, it is more economical to continue using the same bus all day than swap it over for a smaller vehicle for non-school trips and operators don't have spare small buses so would have to buy more to do this.</p> <p>AN stressed the need for more services linking with the main towns and rail stations.</p>
	Ipswich	<p>SM queried whether this group and the EP in general clashed with the Ipswich Transport Taskforce. PS confirmed that the task force was chaired by local MPs to examine the larger strategic picture, considering options such as a northern bypass or additional river crossings. A report is due soon and the main group has officially been stood down.</p>
5	Schedule of future meetings	<p>Next meeting to be early December, with expectation of bi-monthly frequency going forward</p> <p>Suggested topics for discussion: Developer funding update Multi-modal ticketing Bus/Rail integration Demand Responsive/Community Transport Role of Transport East</p>