

Title of Meeting:	Suffolk Enhanced Partnership Board meeting
Purpose or Mandate:	A collaborative approach to improving passenger transport
Date:	22 nd September 2023
Place:	Teams Meeting
Time:	1000 - 1100
Attendees:	Cllr Alexander Nicoll - Chair (AN) – SCC Tim Stephenson (TS) – SCC Paul Horne – SCC Justin Wythe – Ipswich Buses Paul Martin (PM) – First Dan Bassett (DB) – Ipswich Buses Rob Crawford – Coach Services Bill Hiron (BH) – Stephensons Gavin Smith – Go East Anglia Charlton Thornhill – Stagecoach Graeme Mateer (GM) – SCC Robert Kemp (RK) – SCC
Apologies:	Andrew Pursey – Borderbus David Boden – Stagecoach Calum Poole – SCC Piers Marlow – First
Minute taker:	Robert Kemp - SCC

Agenda item	Description	Information/Reports/Comments
1.	BSIP+ Update	TS – an overview of how the EP will spend the funding has been given to both the administration and opposition groups. No objections received from either. The actual money has now been received from DfT. £450k – for the equivalent of two quarters worth of BRG payments. Have needed to find a way of doing this so not seen as state aid but this has been done. £150k – for the pipeline of improvement schemes. This is the design work only so that they are ready to go.

		<p>£1.2m – for operators to come up with ideas for their own service extensions/enhancements. Will also need to look at travel hubs and connecting with services.</p> <p>Everyone will need to fill out a SOAP (scheme on a page) to apply for funding. This will need to be evaluated by a sub-group that feeds back to the board.</p> <p>AN – operators should not be part of the evaluation panel, it needs to be non-partisan.</p> <p>PM – not comfortable with asking operators to mark each others applications. Evaluation to be done in isolation then fed back to the board. Other authorities use a scoring matrix. How much spend will be on service enhancements?</p> <p>AN – if everyone agrees on a scoring matrix then this can be done outside of the board. Evaluation can be done by SCC officers. Is SOAP used elsewhere?</p> <p>TS – yes, something very similar is done elsewhere. Agree operators should not mark their own work. Emma Forde has been appointed to assist Simon on this.</p> <p>AN – what part of the allocation is for SOAP process?</p> <p>TS – DfT want most of the funding to go to operators to give them more opportunities to grow the network. Although most will go to operators there will be some going to communities to look at how they can feed into the network. This will work best if the network is stable which is why there is some money set aside for that. If there are more services put in then it gives more opportunities to feed into it. The Cabinet member was concerned about giving funding to operators who do not participate in the fare cap or Endeavour card schemes. Are caveats needed?</p> <p>DB – regarding SOAP and method for scoring, what are we trying to achieve? Opportunities to grow capacity on existing services and grow patronage or just new services. In town, services don't have a fare over £2 therefore we can't participate in it. This needs to be taken into consideration.</p> <p>BH – judging of SOAP's shouldn't be a long process but should be fair. Part of the criteria should be sustainability. No one as yet has signed up to the next fare cap scheme.</p> <p>AN – scoring should be used as the term, not judging.</p> <p>PM – participation in the fare cap and Endeavour card schemes should pay no relevance. Both schemes are down to the operator if they want to join. Sustainability</p>
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		<p>must be the criteria. It's like pump priming a service and operators must know it can continue after the funding ends.</p> <p>TS (via Teams chat) – I am happy to go back to our Cabinet Member and explain we had a debate on fare cap and End. Card. He asked me to raise it... and I have.</p> <p>DB – agree with PM and BH. The aim should be to extend beyond the funding.</p> <p>AN – if the aim is to get more passengers on buses then this can be done by upping existing use or putting on new.</p> <p>BH – the generalisation is that building on what's already there is more sustainable than starting from scratch.</p> <p>PM – agree, but we shouldn't pigeonhole and should judge on merit. Was the funding purely revenue? Revised guidance suggested infrastructure schemes would be looked at.</p> <p>TS – DfT open to small amounts to be converted. For example, RTPI's to be upgraded. If operators are enhancing or putting on new services, the public need to have up to date information on when they are.</p> <p>AN – conclude that the board is happy with a scoring system and for SCC officers to evaluate. We should encourage creativity in thinking and be innovative. What is Emma's role?</p> <p>TS – Emma will be all things BSIP related. She was integral to our BSIP submission and amendment and through previous roles has an insight into DfT thinking.</p> <p>AN – when can they start sending SOAPs in?</p> <p>TS – Emma to ring round operators to arrange meetings.</p> <p>PM – operators are to be comfortable with the scoring. Look at Norfolk CC's model which some operators are already ok with.</p> <p>AN – important that all operators are happy.</p>
2.	ZEBRA 2 Funding	<p>RK – the Government's new ZEBRA 2 scheme was launched earlier in the month which some operators may have attended.</p> <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £129m to support the introduction of Zero Emission Buses across this financial year and next (£89m/40m split) ➤ £25m will be reserved initially for Zero Emission Buses in rural areas

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Funding available for up to 75% of the difference between a standard diesel bus and a zero-emission bus of the same passenger capacity ➤ Funding available for 75% of the infrastructure ➤ To apply LTA's must have an Enhanced Partnership in place ➤ Prioritisation for bids are: Rural LTA's LTA's that have not received ZEBRA funding previously LTA's that did receive ZEBRA 1 funding previously. ➤ Expression of interest has been submitted by SCC. ➤ Engagement now required with operators, community transport and district councils for bid proposals. ➤ Deadline to submit an application – 15th December 2023 ➤ Funding for financial year 23/24 to be awarded to successful LTA's – by March 2024 ➤ Orders placed for ZEB – 31st January 2025 ➤ Funding for financial year 24/25 to be awarded to successful LTA's – by March 2025 ➤ DfT drop in sessions fortnightly from the end of September ➤ Questions – email BUSSES@gov.uk <p>ZEBRA 2 Links</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance - Apply for zero emission bus funding (ZEBRA 2) • Apply for zero emission bus funding (ZEBRA 2): application form • Grant funding per bus score calculator Greener Bus Tool <p>AN – East Suffolk Council are looking at financial partnerships.</p> <p>GM – DfT are looking at rural areas so Suffolk is in a good place to be successful with a bid.</p>
3.	Marketing	<p>TS – Mark Nicolas has been appointed. Some items for the board to consider going forward: How should the EP manage marketing going forward, should this be a sub-group? Marketing budget Road side bus/timetable information</p> <p>AN – should be a collaboration with operators and their marketing budgets. Would like to meet with Mark soon.</p>
4.	Ministerial visit	<p>AN – Ministerial visit next Thursday 28th Sept. Richard Holden will announce the BSIP funding for Suffolk.</p> <p>TS – he wants to meet bus operators, business leaders and visit Old Cattle Market bus station.</p>

5.	Park & Ride	TS – just to highlight P&R is also an important service and how to we promote it. Ties in with marketing.
6.	AOB	<p>PM – funding for tap on/tap off is a quick and easy win.</p> <p>TS – having conversations already regarding this and would like to pursue. It might be in the MOU to operators who receive money. Data is key to reading the market.</p> <p>TS – complimented by the administration and opposition group by members in the Halesworth area regarding the money from Norfolk CC's BSIP that's trickled down into Suffolk. Thank you to those that made this happen.</p> <p>AN – would like Emma and Mark to attend meetings in the future.</p>
7.	Date of next meeting	1000 - 24 th October 2023