

CET/23/84

Corporate, Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee
16 November 2023

An Update on the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) Grant and In-Year Developments

Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

1) Recommendation

That the Scrutiny Committee be asked to note the following updates with regards to the progress towards delivering our Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), through Department for Transport (DfT) grant.

2) Background / Introduction

In March 2021 the UK Government published its National Bus Strategy for England – [Bus back better - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/bus-back-better). This set out their vision for the future of local bus services, linked with the recovery of public transport after COVID19. They aim to increase the importance of local bus services as an integrated part of the transport network.

The national strategy aims to make buses greener, more frequent, more reliable, easier to understand and use, better co-ordinated and cheaper and is linked with the Government's funding announcement prior to the pandemic of £3bn of new funding to improve local bus services across England.

The strategy sets out a way forward for the County Council and its local bus operators to work together and was agreed by Cabinet at their meeting on 13 July 2022. In October 2022 we formed the DevonBus Enhanced Partnership (EP) with our bus operators. We also formed the Devon BUS (Bus User and Stakeholder) Forum which has representation in the Enhanced Partnership.

We have also written our Bus Services Improvement Plan (BSIP), which was updated in November 2022 to reflect the funding grant we received from the DfT. We have detailed in this report the funding which we received, as well as our progress towards delivering the plan and spending the grant.

For more information on the Enhanced Partnership and our Bus Services Improvement Plan, please visit this web link: <https://www.traveldevon.info/bus/bsip/>

3) Update on DCC's Bus Service Improvement Plan

DCC was allocated £14.1million BSIP funding by the DfT. This is split into capital (£8.8 million) and revenue (£5.3 million) funding. This funding is for a three-year period from 2022/23 to 2024/25. The schemes to be funded were selected by the DfT from our original BSIP submission, and all schemes are subject to final approval by the DfT. Although funding was significantly less than DCC had bid for to deliver our initial plans, our BSIP remains ambitious in the hope funding may be available in the future.

A condition of receiving the BSIP funding is that Local Authorities must not cut the levels of its own funding for subsidised local bus services.

This report outlines the current schemes we are delivering with the £14.1million funding.

Table 1: Capital Schemes

Scheme title or intervention	Scheme details	Delivery milestones & current status	Outcomes at scheme level
1. Exeter Northern Corridor: New North Road to City Centre Bus Gate	Bus gate to provide more direct access to city centre for Countywide bus services approaching on 4km northern corridor between Cowley Bridge roundabout (northern edge of city) and Bus Station (city centre). Bus gate would avoid circuitous route via narrow residential streets and reduce route distance by 0.5km (12.5%) and enable stops in Sidwell Street, closer to High Street.	Project design completed by June 2023, consultation during July/August 2023 Scheme completed and operational by March 2024 <i>This scheme was approved by Cabinet on 11 October 2023</i>	Intervention achieves approximately 3-minute journey time saving per bus with 8 services per hour across 8 routes, which represents a 17% reduction in bus journey times during the peak on this corridor. Passengers can disembark the bus nearer to City Centre. 96 buses daily would be diverted from narrow streets, improving air quality on York Road, which has a school and was near the Air Quality objective level in 2019. The intervention would reduce the percentage of HGVs on York Road by 29% and on Longbrook Street by 45%.
2. Exeter Eastern Corridor: Pinhoe Road to City Centre Bus Lane and Signals Upgrade	Conversion of peak hour only bus lane to 24hrs with bus priority signals along 3.4km eastern corridor between Pinhoe Sainsbury's junction (eastern edge of city) and the city centre. Intervention involves c.750m of bus lane between St Marks Ave bus gate & Tarbet Avenue (300m) and between Whipton Community Hall & Widgery Rd (450m) including civil engineering work on Sidwell Street to support active and public transport corridor	Project design completed by September 2024 Scheme completed and operational by March 2025 <i>This scheme is currently in the design phase</i>	Intervention achieves approximately 4 mins journey time saving per bus with 8 services per hour across 4 routes which represents a 27% reduction in bus journey times during the peak on this corridor.
3. Exeter Western Corridor: Cowick Street Bus Lane	Conversion of existing peak hour only bus lane to 24 hrs along 1.6km western corridor between Buddle Lane junction (western edge of city) and the city centre. Intervention involves c.100m of bus lane.	Project design completed by March 2023 Scheme completed and operational by March 2024 <i>This scheme is going to Cabinet in January 2024</i>	Intervention achieves approximately 2 mins journey time saving per bus with 7 services per hour across 5 routes, which represents a 33% reduction in bus journey times during the peak on this corridor.

<p>4. Newton Abbot Western Corridor: Highweek St to Town Centre Signals Upgrade - (linked to access to Newton Abbot Bus Station and Teignbridge District Council funded link to Bradley Lane)</p>	<p>Junction redesign at Highweek St / Halcyon Rd junction to prioritise buses arriving / departing from Newton Abbot bus station to improve bus access on 2.9km western corridor between Hele Park (western edge of town) and the bus station (town centre).</p> <p>Scheme would integrate with active travel links to town centre and complement successful Future High Streets Fund scheme, which proposes removal of traffic except buses and cyclists from part of Queen Street in town centre.</p>	<p>Project design completed by September 2024</p> <p>Scheme completed and operational by March 2025</p> <p><i>This scheme is going out to public consultation shortly</i></p>	<p>Improved access for bus services between new development on western edge of town and the town centre (estimated 10% journey time saving in peak hour), reduction of congestion in Newton Abbot and enabling stronger multi modal integration.</p> <p>Increase bus patronage into Newton Abbot by 5%</p>
<p>5. Barnstaple Northwest Corridor: Braunton Road Bus Lane and Bus Gate</p>	<p>Bus signal priority on 1.9km northwest corridor between Chaddiford Lane junction (north western edge of town) and the bus station (town centre), with straight through priority at Pilland Way and A361 signalised junctions & extension of bus lane (around.100m) onto dual carriageway.</p>	<p>Project design completed by June 2023</p> <p>Scheme completed and operational by March 2024</p> <p><i>This scheme is being re-designed to include an additional junction & improve time savings and bus priority</i></p>	<p>Intervention achieves approximately 2 mins journey time saving per bus with 4 services per hour which represents a 29% reduction in bus journey times during the peak on this corridor.</p>
<p>6. Barnstaple Northern Corridor: North Road Bus Lanes</p> <p><i>THIS SCHEME IS BEING REMOVED AND SUBJECT TO DfT APPROVAL RESOURCES WILL BE ALLOCATED TO ANOTHER SCHEME</i></p>	<p>Creation of new bus lanes on 2.1km northern corridor between North Devon Hospital (northern edge of town) and the bus station (town centre) to provide improved public transport links to the hospital and integrated with local active travel improvements identified through LCWIP (c.0.3km of bus lane)</p>	<p>Project design completed by June 2024</p> <p>Scheme completed and operational by March 2025</p>	<p>Since our initial BSIP submission in 2021, it has become apparent that this was not a suitable or viable scheme - this is due to the fact that bus services changed in the area, and only 3 buses per hour now use the corridor. Therefore any bus improvements would not affect a large amount of bus users. Highways improvements have also been made in the area, reducing congestion on this corridor, and eliminating the problems accessing ND District Hospital. The Hospital is also developing plans for expansion and the bus priority scheme would be in conflict with those plans, with part of the scheme being on NHS land, not the public highway.</p>
<p>7. Exeter Central Corridor: Heavitree Bus Enhancement Package</p>	<p>Significant investment package on 3km central corridor between Middlemoor roundabout (eastern edge of city) and Paris Street roundabout (for city centre) including new bus lanes and series of signalised junction upgrades to improve priority and journey times for buses as well as address road safety issues for vulnerable road users on busy radial route.</p>	<p>Project design completed by March 2024</p> <p>Scheme completed and operational by March 2025</p> <p><i>This scheme is currently in the design phase</i></p>	<p>Intervention achieves approximately 4 min journey time saving per bus with 20 services per hour across 11 routes, which represents a 20% reduction in bus journey times during the peak on this corridor.</p> <p>This corridor also is the only route in the city which exceeds the national air quality objective and journey-average emissions of NOx and PM will be reduced by reducing the stop-start acceleration events for buses (this will be monitored by Exeter City Council).</p>

8. Bideford/Barnstaple Western Bus Corridor	Improvements to bus priority on 3.4km bus corridor between Bickington and Roundswell (on western edges of the town) and the bus station (town centre). Measures include bus lane / priority measures to improve bus journey times on Bideford to Barnstaple services and serving new growth areas in the town and complementing Gratton Way bus gate and scheduled improvements at Cedars roundabout.	Project design completed by March 2024 Scheme completed and operational by March 2025 <i>This scheme was approved by Cabinet on 11 October 2023</i>	Intervention on Roundswell approach achieves approximately 1-minute with 2 services per hour across 4 routes, which represents a 6% reduction in bus journey times during the peak on this corridor. Intervention on Fremington/Bickington approach achieves potential saving of 2 mins with 4 services per hour, which represents a 13% reduction in bus journey times during the peak on this corridor.
9. Countywide Bus Pinch Point Removal Programme	Pinch Point Removals, i.e., minor civils works (kerbs / realignment) or traffic management measures (i.e., removal of on-street parking) to ease flow of buses through Market Towns, using Bus Operator data/intelligence to highlight locations where bus reliability is impacted.	These will be smaller projects which will be identified, designed, and delivered throughout the course of the project. All schemes completed and operational by March 2025 <i>Some of these schemes have already been delivered and completed.</i>	We have already consulted with Bus Operators and have identified a list of priority areas across the county.
10. Bus Station Enhancements	Funding to refurbish bus shelters, provision of information, signage, seating and improve safety at Newton Abbot, Tavistock, Barnstaple, and Tiverton Bus Stations.	All schemes completed and operational by March 2025 <i>Works have started at Barnstaple – all signage to be updated and shelters upgraded</i> <i>Project plan underway at Tavistock to update signage and real time information.</i>	To increase safety, satisfaction and confidence of passengers using bus station shelter facilities, leading to the overall growth of bus patronage across the county.
11. Bus Stop Infrastructure & Real Time Information	Standardisation of flags and information points with clear information to assist passengers. Including Real Time Information (RTI) at key stops	Ongoing upgrade of stops across the lifespan of the project. Scheme completed by March 2025 <i>£1M of investment in shelters, bus stop infrastructure and real time information units is currently being delivered across the county.</i>	Upgrade end of life bus stop infrastructure. Improve reliability of outdated RTI displays.
12. East Devon Business Parks and Leisure Park - Bus stop waiting facilities upgrade (Crealy, Hillbarton & Greendale) <i>THIS SCHEME IS BEING REMOVED DUE TO AN ESCALATION OF COSTS MAKING IT UNVIABLE. SUBJECT TO DfT APPROVAL RESOURCES WILL BE ALLOCATED TO ANOTHER SCHEME</i>	Bus stop facilities upgrade for major East Devon Business Park and Leisure Park, including pedestrian crossing on high-speed road and upgrade street lighting.	Project design completed by September 2022 Scheme completed and operational by March 2023	Scheme removed due to an escalation of costs making the scheme unviable.

13. Improved Street Lighting	<p>Improve and install lighting for a safer environment in and around bus waiting areas/stops.</p> <p>Upgrade lighting in existing locations to incorporate a lighting management system, to increase safety for of bus users.</p>	<p>Schemes completed and operational by March 2023</p> <p><i>This scheme has been delivered</i></p>	<p>Safer waiting environment increases confidence of a wide range of people with protected characteristics and so advances equality of opportunity to travel by bus.</p>
14. Bus Stop Multi-Modal Integration Upgrades	<p>Bus stop upgrades to improve multi-modal integration between cycle, rail, and access to bus services.</p> <p>Three sites identified:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A38 Drumbridges roundabout 2) Tavistock Bus Station 3) Yelverton roundabout 	<p>These will be smaller projects which will be identified, designed, and delivered throughout the course of the project.</p> <p>All schemes completed and operational by March 2025</p> <p><i>Drumbridges scheme has been designed and will go to HATOC in November 2024</i></p>	<p>Increased multi-modal journey options for commuters, thereby reducing journey to work times and providing a sustainable public transport option</p>
15. Upgrade to ticket machines to enable all to read QR Codes		<p>Completed by March 2023</p> <p><i>This scheme is currently on hold due an incompatibility problem between our major operator's ticketing system and other operators' systems.</i></p>	<p>Enable seamless multi-operator ticketing and acceptance on all bus services.</p>

Table 2: Revenue/Resource Schemes

Scheme title or intervention	Scheme details	Delivery milestones	Outcomes at scheme level
<p>1. Fare reductions</p> <p><i>DUE TO THE INTRODUCTION OF THE DFT'S £2 FARE SCHEME WE HAVE SUCCESSFULLY MOVED THE MAJORITY OF THIS ALLOCATION TO 3. BUS SERVICE SUPPORT</i></p>	<p>Devon Day Ticket - Fare Subsidy</p> <p>Devon Day Ticket will initially be reduced in price to £6.60 (from £9.60) for an adult fare, allowing unlimited daily bus travel across multiple Bus Operators on the majority of bus services across the county.</p> <p>Town Fare Ticket pilot - Fare Subsidy</p> <p>Bideford, Newton Abbot and Exmouth - unlimited bus travel in each area for £3 per day.</p>	<p>New fares to be implemented from April 2023</p>	<p>Increased patronage as this will be the cheapest ticket for many bus users and will provide substantial savings on current fares. This will be both a paper and contact less digital ticket, readable by QR ticket machines.</p> <p>Over the 3-year period the aim would be to increase passenger growth sufficiently to achieve commercial sustainability.</p>
<p>2. Promotional events to encourage people to try the bus - for example: Fare Sale, nominated weekends or school holiday promotions offering reduced fares, child add-on fares for £1, special offer on Devon Day ticket</p>	<p>In association with our Bus Operators, we will design a calendar of events to promote ticket sales and encourage people to try the bus. Revenue costs include promotional activities and fare subsidies.</p> <p>There will also be a publicity campaign to</p>	<p><i>Our "Miles of Smiles" campaign has been running since January 2023 – the first tranche of this focused on the £2 Fare, and we have just moved into the second tranche which encourages National Bus Pass holders to use the bus.</i></p> <p><i>The campaign has included radio, social media, direct</i></p>	<p>Improve bus patronage and encourage people who have not tried the bus before or for a long time to give it a go.</p>

	specifically target concessionary bus users, to restore this market to pre-pandemic levels.	mailing, outdoor displays (bus side/rears)	
3. Bus Service Support	<p>In line with the aims of our BSIP (see section 5) and our original submission, we aspired to make significant improvements to bus services across Devon. When we received our funding allocation, we had to significantly reduce our plans. However the ambition remained to increase service provision, as ultimately we feel this is the only way to increase patronage.</p> <p>(see below) we have been able to maintain service levels. Re-aligning funds from our fares schemes has enabled us to achieve some of our initial proposals, as detailed here.</p>	<p>Spend has been profiled over three years to include a 12-month extension into 25/26, as agreed by the DfT.</p> <p><i>This scheme is being delivered.</i></p>	<p>We have already successfully introduced two new services as part of our initial funding – the X30 in East Devon and an extension to the 85 in West Devon,</p> <p>Delivering this scheme will ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All villages with a population of 1,000 will have at least a Monday – Friday bus service. • All towns with a population of 5,000 or more will have at least an hourly bus or train service. • All towns with a population of 5,000 or more will be able to reach their District General Hospital with no more than one change of bus. • All towns with a population of 10,000 or more will have at least a half-hourly bus service to the nearest main centre. • All towns with a population of 17,500 or more will have half-hourly town services, subject to minimum passenger numbers) • Town services carrying at least 200,000 passengers per annum will gain an additional journey per hour (e.g. a half-hourly service would increase to twenty minutes) • Exeter City services carrying at least 350,000 passengers per annum will gain an additional journey per hour. • All towns with a population of 5,000 or more within 20 miles of Exeter will have journeys for work and education. • Enhancements to existing services serving mainline railway stations • Implementation of the strategic link proposals from our BSIP submission focussing on improving access to employment and education, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o New link service – Exmouth to Exeter & East Devon Enterprise Zone o New link service – Cullompton to Honiton Station o New link service – Newton Abbot, Dartmeet and Tavistock o New commuter service – Budleigh to Exeter o Enhanced commuter service – Okehampton to Newton Abbot

BSIP+ Funding

In addition to the original BSIP allocation, and schemes mentioned above, the County Council has been allocated a further £1.7 million per year for the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25. This funding will be used to offset the impact of high contract & tender

inflation on DCC supported services, and ensure we are able to maintain the current network for the duration of the funding. These supported routes provide access to essential services within the County and have struggled following the pandemic to return to pre-covid patronage levels, which coupled with rising operating costs and inflation have put them at risk. Supporting these routes in the interim will allow further time for recovery, and extensive promotion of bus travel on these routes, will enable us to maintain the essential links and understand longer term viability.

4) Options / Alternatives

Any alternative schemes, or amendments to existing schemes, have to go through the DfT's Project Adjustment Request (PAR) process. We have submitted several PARs so far as detailed above.

Should the County Council decide to not deliver any of the schemes, or apply successfully to move monies to another scheme, then the allocated funding for these schemes will have to be repaid to the DfT.

5) Consultations / Representations / Technical Data

As per guidance from the DfT, a high-level stakeholder consultation took place in July and August 2021, prior to our initial BSIP submission. This was sent to over 500 individuals and organisations, including county, town and parish councillors, local authority representatives, local MPs, bus, community transport and rail operators, industry recognised professional bodies, other organisations representing education, health, tourism and local businesses.

We also held several workshops for elected DCC members, and through our EP have ongoing discussions and representation from our bus companies.

The results from the consultation and these workshops helped us to identify priorities when writing our BSIP.

Furthermore, in February 2023 we launched the Devon BUS (Bus User and Stakeholder) Forum. The Forum acts as an informal body to consider current issues and opportunities relating to all aspects of bus services across the County Council administrative area. The Forum will represent the views of bus users and stakeholder across the county and provide a united voice through the invited representatives. Each of the County Council's Highways and Traffic Orders Committees (HATOCs) have a representative to feed any bus related issues to and from the Forum.

All capital schemes involving work on the highways are subject to approval from local HATOCs, and also Cabinet approval following public consultation. So far two schemes have gone out to public consultation, via DCC's "Have your say" website:

[New North Road, Exeter](#)

[New Bus Lane, Roundswell, Barnstaple](#)

6) Strategic Plan

The delivery of our BSIP is well aligned with a range of the Strategic Plan priorities. Improving bus services across Devon provides opportunities to create a more sustainable future and improving individual's lives in Devon.

The table below summarises how the proposals would impact achievement of relevant Strategic Plan actions according to a seven-point scale, whereby -3 represents a large negative impact and +3 represents a large positive impact.

Strategic Plan Priority	Strategic Plan Action (& Alignment)
Responding to the climate emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support a green recovery from COVID-19 (+2) • Prioritise sustainable travel and transport (+3) • Encourage sustainable lifestyles (+3)
Investing in Devon's economic recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure investment in transport infrastructure (+2) • Improve our highway network and improve sustainable transport options (+2) • Deliver capital investment programs (+2)
Tackle poverty and inequality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote services that increase resilience, self-reliance and independence (<i>our local bus network</i> +2)
Help communities be safe, connected and resilient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable a range of transport options, including public transport (+3) • Tackle social isolation, particularly among older, younger and disabled people, and those with a long-term illness (+1) • Engage directly with people in meaningful ways and encourage participation in decisions that affect them (+2)

7) Financial Considerations

We have received the following grant allocations from the DfT to deliver the BSIP Schemes. Some capital schemes have also received a funding contribution from the LTP.

Financial Year	RESOURCE £	CAPITAL £	TOTAL £
2022/2023	1,279,565	1,906,000	3,185,565
2023/2024	2,197,573	2,840,000	5,037,573
2024/2025	1,769,132	4,065,000	5,834,132
TOTAL BSIP GRANT £			14,057,270

The capital grant expenditure in 2022/23 and projected expenditure 2023/24, suggests slippage of £1 million. The total capital grant allocation needs to be spent by the end of March 2025. Any further slippage is expected to be on the match funding, rather than the BSIP grant.

In addition to this, we have received a further amount of money for BSIP+ funding, this is resource monies and spend is detailed in section 3 above.

Financial Year	RESOURCE £	CAPITAL £	TOTAL £
2023/2024	1,677,393	0	1,677,393
2024/2025	1,677,393	0	1,677,393
TOTAL BSIP+ GRANT £			3,354,786

8) Legal Considerations

Subsidised local bus services in Devon are secured within the terms of Sections 89 to 92 of the Transport Act 1985 with reference to tendering, together with the Service Subsidy Agreements (Tendering) (Amendment) Regulations 2004 which allow de minimis exemptions from tendering.

The development of the Bus Service Improvement Plan and the forming of an Enhanced Partnership is set out in the Bus Services Act 2017 plus associated guidance.

The DfT previously mandated that Local Authorities updated their BSIPs annually. The DfT have now stated that the update for October 2023 will be deferred, pending new guidance.

9) Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change, Sustainability and Socio-economic)

Reducing the need to travel is the first priority for transport in the Interim Devon Carbon Plan. The second priority is to provide access to sustainable travel and transport options for when we want and need to go further afield.

Personal travel accounts for around two thirds of all transport emissions. By improving the choices we have around sustainable travel, we will create positive impacts to the health, resilience, safety, economics and social enjoyment of our local communities.

This BSIP provides the opportunity to shift to towards sustainable travel options such as Public Transport. The BSIP aims to make Public Transport an attractive choice while balancing the different travel requirements of our urban and deeply rural areas.

10) Equality Considerations

Where relevant, in coming to a decision the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision makers to give due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding

in relation to the protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership (for employment), pregnancy and maternity, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation).

A decision maker may also consider other relevant factors such as caring responsibilities, rural isolation or socio-economic disadvantage.

In progressing the proposals, an Impact Assessment was prepared. This is also on the Council's website at: [Bus Services Improvement Plan - Impact Assessment \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/transport/buses/bus-services-improvement-plan-impact-assessment).

The Impact Assessment is also published as an appendix to the BSIP.

11) Risk Management Considerations

The following risks have been identified, along with accompanying mitigations.

Table 3: Risk Management Considerations

Risk	Level	Details	Impact	Mitigation
Cost of schemes	HIGH	Cost of capital schemes exceed original budget allowances, a) as designs were at very early stage of development when budget set and b) increases in material prices/contracting resources greater than inflation	Reduced overall scope of work delivered on some schemes	Monthly financial reviews/Capital Project Board meetings. Fortnightly Capital Programme Manager check ins with scheme leads.
Bus network stability	MEDIUM	Withdrawal of commercial services, reduced service frequencies, more lost mileage due to driver shortages	Lack of confidence in bus services/drop in patronage figures - could result in negative media/social media attention to capital and revenue schemes	Whilst this previously was considered high risk, the network stability has increased due to a management restructure at Stagecoach SW and prudent use of the Local Transport Fund. BSIP+ is being used as a levelling up opportunity with bus services across the authority area, where there were previous commercial surrenders.
Consultation	MEDIUM	Objections to scheme proposals during consultation process	Delivery delays, further increases in design costs	Stakeholder management plan, coordinated by area
Resources	HIGH	Design resource not available to deliver capital works as per programme requirements	Increased design costs to resource external capability, delayed delivery	Pooling of resources/knowledge between DCC functions and external professional services contracts

Design	HIGH	Convergence of BSIP and LCWIP (Local Cycling & Walking Improvement Plan) programme objectives	Reduced journey time/reliability benefits, loss of support from bus operators. Potential abortive design work.	Sharing of LCWIP briefs with BSIP design teams from outset. LCWIP design team to liaise with BSIP design team when appointed. Regular engagement with EP Board/operators on design progress.
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12) Summary / Conclusions / Reasons for Recommendations

The County Council has made an excellent start with the work on its BSIP and formation of the Enhanced Partnership with our bus companies. This follows a period of significant challenge for the public transport sector following the COVID19 pandemic and the operational issues faced locally by Stagecoach during 2022.

The County Council's continued support for the network, together with Government funding allocations and the national £2 fare initiative, means we have been able to largely maintain the existing network and start to introduce improvements where possible. Challenges do remain, in particular the impact of high inflation, lower passenger numbers since the pandemic and congestion in urban areas, but we feel a corner has been turned and we can continue to ensure local bus services plays an important part of the transport network in Devon.

Meg Booth

Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Electoral Divisions: All

Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport: Councillor Andrea Davis

Local Government Act 1972: List of background papers

Nil

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